

**Female English Language Teachers'
Perceptions and Experiences of Continuing
Professional Development in Qatar**

A thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy

University of Reading

Institute of Education

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September, 2017

Declaration

I certify that the substance of this thesis has not been already submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person and that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged.

SABA QADHI

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my sons Mansour and Ahmad who I hope to see them one day reading it.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Alan Floyd for his patience and constant guidance. My sincere gratitude also goes to my colleagues who helped me to organizing the interviews especially Hanadi Abubaker and to the respondents themselves who generously shared their life history. I am also grateful to my housemaid Ratnaseeli who helped looking after my children. I would like also to express my gratitude to Qatar University who supported me throughout the whole research process.

Abstract

The Qatari government views English language learning as crucial to the country's future success. Anecdotal evidence suggests, however, that English Language Teachers (ELTs) employed in Qatar may not necessarily have the appropriate training, qualifications and experience to enable them to teach successfully. Despite growing research interest in the continuing professional development (CPD) experiences and needs of ELTs in Western contexts, there remains a lack of research in Middle Eastern countries in general and Qatar in particular. Furthermore, in-depth knowledge of female ELTs' CPD experiences and needs are almost non-existent. The aim of this study, therefore, is to address this gap by exploring female ELTs' perceptions and experiences of CPD in Qatar in order to develop new practical and theoretical insights into our understanding of this area.

The study is qualitative and located within the interpretive paradigm. Life history interviews were undertaken with 16 female ELTs with at least 3 years of teaching experience in Qatar schools. These data were analyzed using thematic analysis and profiling techniques and drawing on an analytical framework based on three inter-related concepts of identity, culture and CPD.

The study found that female ELTs in Qatar all had very different experiences of CPD and unique developmental needs. These findings suggest that the current model of professional development for ELTs in Qatar may need revising. The thesis proposes a paradigm shift from a traditional 'one size fits all' CPD model towards a more dynamic and interactive style of teacher development which facilitates both personal reflection and professional discourse among teachers in order to build a shared understanding of ideas by analyzing and comparing approaches and actively encouraging student involvement in the learning process. It is argued that such a shift would prove a considerable step forward for English language teaching in the country.

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Keywords

CfBT	Centre for British Teachers
CPD	Continuing professional development
ELTs	English language teachers'
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center
GCC	Gulf Co-operation Council
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IS	Independent Schools
LMS	Learning Management System
MNCs	The notion of multinational companies
NCED	National Centre for Educator Development
NPS	National Professional Standards
NSN	National School Network
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Development
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPEC	Qatar is a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PDS	Professional development specialists
PISA	International Student Assessment
PLE	Personal Learning Environment
QCEA	Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment
QF	Qatar Foundation
QU	Qatar University
RAND	Research and Development Corporation
SBSP	School-based Support Programme
SEC	Supreme Education Council
SLTE	Second Language Teacher Education
TESOL	Teaching English to speakers of other languages
TESOL	Teaching English to speakers of other languages
WB	World Bank
WTO	The World Trade Organization

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores female English language teachers' (ELTs) experiences and perceptions regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in Qatar. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the reader with a brief overview of the thesis as a whole. A rationale for the research is provided which highlights the key aims and research questions, briefly describes the conceptual framework and methodological stance taken, explains the origins of the research and explores why the research is significant and original. Finally, an outline of the structure of the thesis is also presented.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

The use and learning of English has become a key issue in the educational sector especially in Middle Eastern countries like Qatar (Ali, 2009; Elyas & Picard, 2010). This issue is especially relevant as in recent years the Qatari government has focused on the use of the English language in education as a means of achieving greater future success for the country (Nasser & Romanowski, 2011). This has led to English language being introduced as a key medium of instruction in Qatar as part of government reforms toward reaching world-class status in education for the country (Ali, 2009; Nasser & Romanowski, 2011). Indeed, in 2004 the Qatari government shifted to English as the main language used for instruction in school as a sign of the importance attributed to English proficiency (Nasser & Romanowski, 2011).

Although teaching English has become increasingly important on a national level in Qatar, personal experience and anecdotal evidence suggests that English Language Teachers (ELTs) employed in Qatar may not necessarily have the appropriate training, qualifications and experience to enable them to teach successfully (Ahmed & Abouabdelkader, 2016; Eslami,

Reynolds, Sonnenburg-Winkler, & Crandall, 2016). Because of the recent dramatic changes to the education system and reform demands, which will be explained in Chapter 2, changing teachers' practices of educating students from teacher-centered to student-centered has also been considered problematic for ELTs (Guarino & Tanner, 2012).

Currently, Qatar University has focused on increasing the importance of learning English by ensuring that all the university students are learning English as a compulsory subject (Nasser & Romanowski, 2011; Romanowski, Ellili Cherif, Al Ammari, & Al Attiyah, 2013). The government of Qatar has also identified the fact that learning English is very important, as it is an essential source of communication on an international platform (Al-Buainain, 2010; Belhiah & Elhami, 2015). However, there are certain complications that ELTs face when teaching English to the local students due to the lack of their own expertise and training (Grothe & Park, 2000; MacLeod & Abou-El-Kheir, 2017; Volante, 2012). This is the problem which forms the basis for the present study.

Despite growing research interest in the continuing professional development (CPD) experiences and needs of ELTs in Western contexts, there remains a lack of research in Middle Eastern countries in general and Qatar in particular. Furthermore, in-depth knowledge of female ELTs' CPD experiences and needs are almost non-existent. The aim of this study, therefore, is to address this gap by exploring female ELTs' perceptions and experiences of CPD in Qatar in order to develop new practical and theoretical insights into our understanding of this area.

The study is focused on investigating some of the key issues that face female ELTs in Qatar as they experience rapid change within the profession. For example, previously, teaching practices in Qatar were more teacher-centered and now they have become more student-centered (Qureshi et al., 2016; Rostron, 2009). The increasing influence of technological development is also important as it leads to the development of new teaching methods (Couros, 2008; Drexler, 2010; Soudy, Teves, Dias, Pessoa, & Dias, 2015). In response to these developments, a teacher

has to perform diverse roles, such as facilitator, mentor, and guide to the students (Couros, 2008). This requires her to continually update her teaching methods, a key aspect of professional development (Couros, 2008; Soudy et al., 2015). As a consequence, teachers may feel that they need to keep reimagining their sense of professional identity (Trent & Shroff, 2013). Moreover, in the Middle East, my experiences in Qatar suggest that women are usually treated as inferior because of their gender. Thus, through this study, female English teachers in Qatar were given the opportunity to express their opinions about a critical issue in the education sector to which they belong; empowering this population of women educators. The issues surrounding female English teachers are made more complex by the fact that most of them are from different countries with different backgrounds, training and experiences – a point that will be stressed at various points in this thesis. Therefore, their perceptions of issues such as English language instruction are seldom considered as part of research in this context.

In summary, there is a lack of research regarding the development of ELTs in the Qatari context (Reynolds, Eslami, Cherif, Allen, & Al-Sabbagh, 2016). Moreover, there is lack of understanding and consideration of how a female English language teacher's professional identity is formed and how they experience CPD within their career (Day & Leitch, 2007; Roberts, 1998; Sachs, 2001). Therefore, this study aims to address this key gap in knowledge and empower the female ELT's voice in this setting.

1.3. Research Aims and Research Questions

The main aim of the research is to explore female English language teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development (CPD) in Qatar. For this purpose, the main research question is:

- What are female English Language Teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development in Qatar?

To answer this question, the following sub questions were posed:

RQ1. What personal and professional experiences help develop female ELTs professional identities?

RQ2. In what ways do female ELTs perceive and experience the role of culture in their professional development?

RQ3. How do female ELTs perceive and experience Continuing Professional Development throughout their career?

The research questions are primarily based on the interrelationships between the concepts of identity, culture, and CPD. These three concepts form the conceptual framework of this study, which is discussed below.

1.4. Overview of the Research Methodology

Chapter four describes in detail the research methodology and research design, which this section briefly summarizes. To address the above research questions, the researcher used a narrative inquiry approach (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) situated within the interpretive paradigm. The data for this research were collected in the form of 16 semi-structured life history interviews conducted with 16 English teachers from different schools in Qatar with at least 3 years teaching experience.

1.4.1. Justification for Choosing Female Respondents

There are number of reasons that justify why the chosen participants in this study were female. One of the study aims was to empower the female voice since gender inequality is one of the most pressing issues facing the region. According to Merrill (2017), gender equality and women's economic empowerment are critical ingredients to the realization of economic growth

and sustainable development. Economic indicators reveal that among the top ten countries with the largest employment gender gap, there are six Arab countries, which are Qatar, Egypt, Iraq, UAE, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia (Merrill (2017)). Moreover, as explained earlier, female identity in the Arab countries is quite different from that of male because males have the freedom to choose their own profession. This is not normally the case with females. The perception in Arab countries, confirmed by my own personal experience growing up in this culture (see 1.7 below), is that females are obliged to get married and raise children while males are expected to work. This study sets out to make a positive impact on the situation of females in the Arab world in order to promote their professional independence and give them a platform for their voices to be heard.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework used for this study is based on the interlinked concepts of identity, culture and CPD. There are a number of different definitions of CPD, which are related to different aspects of professional life and to the context and the purpose that it serves. These different definitions focus on social life, learning skills, training approaches, CPD activities, relationships with the community, or market force impacts. In this study, in line with Fullan (2015) CPD is viewed as holistic and includes all formal and informal learning experiences throughout a person's career (Fullan, 2015). Therefore, in this thesis, the following definition is used:

“Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities, which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contributes, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire develop

critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning, and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their learning lives.”(Day, 1999, p. 4)

Thus, for the purpose of this study, CPD is viewed as focusing on all aspects of professional life - lifelong learning - rather than seeing it as a workforce requirement focusing on skills growth only. However, improvement or development of knowledge is not the only important component of CPD (Eraut, 2004). CPD is also concerned with the context in which the change or improvement will occur, in order to understand the nature of knowledge. The conditions in which the teachers work are relevant, as are the broader external environmental, socio-economic and culture factors, which affect teacher education (Day & Leitch, 2007). Thus, in order to understand teachers’ perceptions of CPD, we need to explore the cultural context within which they have been experienced as well. The culture within which a female English language teacher operates in Qatar is particularly significant: Qatar has a conservative culture wherein females are still regarded as inferior to their male counterparts in professional aspects; this makes it a significant component in the conceptual framework for this study. The concept of identity development is also crucial to our understanding in this area. This is because the identity of an English language teacher in Qatar is significantly related to the individual’s capacity for learning (e.g., continuous improvement of oneself) based on social theories of learning (Wenger, 1998) and therefore inextricably linked to their experiences of CPD. Thus, in order to explore and fully understand female ELTs’ experiences of Continuing Professional Development in Qatar it is necessary to explore the concepts of identity and culture as well. This framework is developed in more detail in chapter 3.

1.6. Significance of the Research and Originality

This study is significant as there is still little understanding of the impact of education reform in Qatar on English language teachers’ performance and CPD (Holliday, 1999; Johnson,

1999; Lantolf & Lantolf, 2000). This study addresses the seeming disconnect between English language teachers and the pedagogical demands of their new role in a rapidly changing national and global context. Therefore, the research responds by:

- empowering female teachers' voice, which has been rarely heard within the context of Middle Eastern culture. In the Middle East, women are perceived to be the inferior gender (Abdulla, 2015). Women's opinions on several national issues are not regarded as important. Nevertheless, women's participation as teachers in the educational sector is among the highest representations of women in Middle Eastern countries (Abdulla, 2015).
- understanding life history pathways within the changing education system in Qatar;
- recommending further research into the interrelated aspects of English language teachers' identity, culture and CPD;
- developing a wider professional discourse in Qatar about English teaching as a second language;
- helping to promote the notion of employing a life history method as a tool with which to design individualized CPD plans for English language teachers.
- developing, by means of appropriate CPD, the notion of a professional identity within a collaborative professional community;

While this research is small scale, it aims to provide evidence of English teacher quality in Qatar and the means by which improvements may be made throughout the educational community. In many respects, more needs to be done if Qatar is to achieve its laudable ambition to develop an educational system that befits its international status.

Therefore, one of the focal points of this study is to examine and explore the views and perspectives of teachers about what professionalism and professional development mean to

them. Specifically, this study aims to explore their ideas, beliefs, thoughts, concerns and hopes regarding their professionalism and professional development, as well as to identify the enabling and inhibiting factors. Thus, teachers' perceptions on CPD can potentially provide a reflective context for improvement and further discussion on the problem at hand Ifanti and Fotopoulou (2011).

1.7. Origins of the Research

My professional background in Qatar has determined the choice, nature and structure of this thesis. Prior to beginning this research, I taught English as a second language at Qatar University with a specialist focus on professional development. Earlier I had been a primary school and a preparatory English teacher as the head of English department and then academic vice principal. Consequently, reflection on my professional practice over time prompted critical questions, particularly in relation to how female English language teachers (ELTs) perceive and experience continuing professional development in Qatar.

I was born into a large Yemeni family who, typically, did not value education, particularly for girls. It is interesting that the World-Bank (2013,15 April) reports that only 17% of 15 years old Yemeni girls were deemed literate. Girls were normally married early (12 – 14) and so were taught how to cook and how to clean to be good wives. There was no expectation of education for them. I saw many young relatives who were married and downtrodden by working all day as wives and young mothers. I was made aware that women need men in their lives because they rely on male support financially. At an early age, I vowed that this was not what I wanted in life. Consequently, I decided to rebel and to continue my schooling despite all the problems I faced from my family who wanted me to stay home and does the house work. Every day and every year my belief in the power of education increased. I was the only one in my family to complete high school, which made me determined to aspire to a university education. Meanwhile, the pressure to get married presented a serious threat to my aspirations.

In response to this situation, I decided to stop eating, not talk to anyone and to reject any marriage proposal. At that time, I had to sell my father's house that I had inherited and to give the money to my brother in order for me to go to college. Since I had no choice in the matter I chose teaching as a socially acceptable career for women. I had wanted to be a computer programmer, but my brother disagreed because it was seen as a mixed gender profession. Fortunately, a new private university for girls only opened, so my brother enquired about suitable courses from which he chose the English department without even consulting me. Happily, for me, my brother travelled abroad a lot, so I was able to join language institutes without anyone knowing in the family. I was studying hard most of the day translating and memorizing vocabulary. I was studying in both university and language institute at the same time, doing all the homework and translation and memorizing. My marks improved, and I proved very good in English. I graduated with good marks and became an English language teacher. I started to teach in a private school and had my first salary. I keep remembering the moment my family knew I got my salary and I was now an independent person. They started to change the way they looked at me and felt proud, especially my mother. She told everybody about her daughter being an English language teacher.

I moved to Qatar after one year with my brother in order to teach there. I worked hard to change the way of teaching English language by integrating technology, and by regarding students as the focus for learning. In 2003, I was awarded a certificate for my distinctive teaching style. In Qatar, I joined many workshops, peer review groups, and other training, which was compulsory for all the teachers. As a new teacher, I found it useful and formative, even though I was not asked to identify my own professional needs. In 2004, when education reform in Qatar took place, international companies provided extensive training such as Center for British Teachers (CfBT) Education Trust or formerly known as Education Development Trust, about all aspect of pedagogies that were required by the education reform. At that time, I was promoted to be Head of English department after which I worked as an academic vice principal.

I gained my Master's degree in curriculum and instruction from the University of Phoenix, America. It was an online course and knowing that such courses are not acknowledged by the education system in most of the Arab countries, I embarked on a Master's degree in education leadership from Qatar University. While I was studying for these degrees, I was working part time as a translator with an Australian professional development company. I had to translate a lot of training material, presentations, school guides and policies. After the leadership Master's I joined Qatar University as a Professional Development Specialist to provide training in schools.

As a teacher, I considered that the starting point for my study would be teachers themselves: to empower their voice by exploring their experience and perceptions of professional development. With this in mind, I adopted a life-history approach since it reflected my own experiences and seemed appropriate to the varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the teachers involved in the study.

1.8 Overview of Thesis

Chapter 1: This is the first chapter of the study, which introduces the topics of the study. Chapter one is a brief summary of the study. It presents the research aim and objectives, on which the entire study has conducted.

Chapter 2: Chapter two provides a contextual background of the study focusing on globalization and education in Qatar.

Chapter 3: The third chapter is related to the literature review, in which the concepts of CPD have been discussed, along with numerous models and implementation strategies within the context of the teaching profession. This chapter also discussed the areas of teachers' identity and the role of culture with respect to their professional development. It also highlights the conceptual framework of teachers' perception about CPD itself. This chapter includes the discussion of the conceptual framework as the basis of the focus of the study: identity, culture, and CPD. Here, multiple paradigms of CPD related to English language teachers from different regions and countries of the world are discussed.

Chapter 4: Chapter four is related to the discussion of research methodology, through which the data has been collected and analyzed. Qualitative narrative inquiry was the research approach used for this study. The chapter includes further explanation about the research design from the beginning to the end, in which the key milestones about literature review, data collection, analysis and reporting are discussed. In addition, it discusses the philosophy of research along with approach and methodology and provides justification for their use. This chapter is also highlighted the data analysis techniques and justifies their use with scholarly materials. Finally, it provides the details of ethical considerations, which underpin the study.

Chapter 5: Chapter 3 shows that the conceptual model of the study will include: identity, culture, and CPD. These three concepts will be specifically discussed as reflected in the findings

in chapter five, chapter six, and chapter seven, respectively. Chapter five is concerned with research findings or results showing experiences and perceptions of teachers in relation to identity.

Chapter 6: Chapter six is concerned with research findings or results showing experiences and perceptions of teachers in relation to culture.

Chapter 7: Chapter seven is concerned with research findings or results showing experiences and perceptions of teachers in relation to knowledge development through CPD.

Chapter 8: Chapter eight is the conclusion of the whole study. The chapter reveals the detailed insight and arguments which the researcher learned through this study. In addition, it also discusses the professional implications of the study and gives recommendations for further research.

1.9. Conclusion

This section of the thesis has been able to outline the basic idea of the thesis. Subsequent chapters will develop the key arguments and themes highlighted here in more detail.

Chapter 2: Study Context

2.1 Introduction

This section of the thesis is primarily concerned with the study context, which is approached in three interrelated parts: globalization and international education development; the local context of Qatar; and the research context.

2.2 Conceptualizing Education and globalization

For education, globalization is considered to be most apparent in the convergence of education systems that is moving towards making a common international model of policies and practices (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). For example, a centralized education system in most countries has a typical format: a ministry of education coordinates the system and supervises schools that are organized into classrooms led by certified teachers (Shields, Race, & Pratt-Adams, 2013). Unsurprisingly, the education reform that starts in one country is eventually adopted by other countries. For instance, American education policies are partially applied in Qatar. Furthermore, many countries, including Qatar, have increasingly used standardized tests, such as the national tests from the United Kingdom, for benchmarking performance (Shields et al., 2013).

Much of this ambiguity can be attributed to the complex and multifaceted nature of globalization: it is not a unitary process or force, but rather a set of interrelated changes. The term globalization has become widely used in nearly all aspects of life, including media, private business, and non-profit organizations; however, for this reason it is difficult to define globalization accurately. Alongside these are rapid developments in science, technology and communication. To produce one single world market, globalization is considered as a set of changes in the international economy (Berger, 2000).

2.2.1 Globalization and Education development

From the outset, many questions need to be addressed which concern the nature of globalization, its history and, specifically, its impact on education. Globalization is a conceptual lens that is used in academic discourse and which implies ‘a set of ideological aspects’ that have an impact on education (Tarc, 2012). Globalization is not a new phenomenon: it usually includes the transition from national and regional economies to global and free markets. This implies decline of geographical, national, and cultural borders and boundaries. It also involves information technology and more extensive global networks (Lauder, Brown, Dillabough, & Halsey, 2006).

Moreover, Coatsworth (2004) defined globalization as “what happens when the movement of people, goods, or ideas among countries and regions accelerates” (p.38). Globalization also refers to the process whereby countries become more integrated because of movements of goods, capital, labour, and ideas. To clarify the history of globalization, Coatsworth (2004) defines a theory based on four cycles: the first cycle began with the conquest of Spain and Portugal and colonization of America that included regular trade between the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Following this, the Europeans colonised the ‘new world’ and that is referred to as a second cycle of globalization (Tarc, 2012). In the late nineteenth century, the third cycle began when Europe extended its power to Africa and Asia and this cycle witnessed increases in international trade and technological inventions and flows. During this third cycle migratory flows provoked nationalist and even nativist reactions in many host countries (Coatsworth, 2004). For example, educational reformers in Argentina and the United States focused on educating immigrant children as well as adults to become loyal citizens through the new primary school curricula, which emphasised the acquisition of basic skills in the dominant language. However, four domains are thought to have influenced the new global developments that affect education worldwide (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004):

- 1) the phenomenon of globalization and its impact on the economy;
- 2) the globalization of media and the information and communication technologies;
- 3) migrations made from one country to the other;
- 4) cultural production and adoption.

The mentioned domains will be explained in more detail later in the thesis. In fact, each cycle of globalization raised an amount of productivity of the economies concerned where openness to external trade, immigrants, technology and capital has promoted economic growth (Coatsworth, 2004). In the case of migration, a prominent feature of globalization produced an outcome in the overall change process by which populations, skilled and unskilled, move in search of better economic opportunities (Auer, Clibbom, & Lansbur, 2012).

In the later parts of the 20th century, a new way of conceptualizing globalization took hold. Particularly in European colonies that had recently won independence, education was linked to a country's social and economic development (Bloom, 2004). According to Bloom, this colonial relationship had proved mutually beneficial and natural: colonized societies benefited from supposedly superior European governance, while the colonizing countries obtained access to low-cost raw materials and basic labor and their development was a relatively minor aspect of this relationship.

The close of World War II marked a turning point in international political relationships between colonial Europe and colonized countries. The rapid withdrawal of European governance created a set of problems where colonies were left with an unstable government, limited infrastructure, and an economy highly dependent on trade with the colonial powers (Shields et al., 2013). This situation led to the establishment the United Nations, which represented the first coordinated international effort to address these problems, supported by a

range of financial institutions, most notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). These organizations were established to stabilize international trade and to finance the reconstruction of countries decimated in World War II, but later they extended their activities to play a role in international development. Some argue that the amount of support that was provided by the WB and IMF is highly commendable, despite the suspicion that there might be a hidden agenda behind this work (Coatsworth, 2004). A summary on the influence of these multilateral agencies on education will be presented under the section heading of education in this chapter.

Part of the problem is thinking about the effects of globalization centers on the cold war between the US and Soviet Russia, since both had ideological differences in terms of their political economies. America believed in free market capitalism and multi-party democracy while Soviet Russia advocated centrally planned economies and the global solidarity of the communist party. However, both powers sought to extend their influence to other parts of the world by the introduction of aid programmes to gain political influence in strategic areas (Coatsworth, 2004). Since the attack on the Twin Towers in New York on 11 September 2001 and the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, questions about the status and viability of the United States as an empire and its implications for the rest of the world are being raised on the whole (Lauder et al., 2006). In addition, the decisions that closely relate to the military response in the Middle East have led to the belief that the United States are seeking to control oil and its trading as well. This kind of speculation has been reinforced by neo-conservatives opposed to the Bush Administration, who talked of “a new American Empire”, and the “new Rome” (Lauder et al., 2006). It is argued that the neo-conservatives place more emphasis on politics and culture than the neo-liberals who emphasize market freedom and free trade. The neo-conservatives are associated with an aggressive worldwide foreign policy agenda designed to impose a particular view of democracy and equal individual rights in other countries. They believe in the use of state power to build patriotism and promote unilateral foreign policy, especially in view of their

dislike for multilateral origination that may undermine national interest (Kristol, Himmelfarb, & Kristol, 2011).

2.2.2. Theoretical Perspectives on Globalization

A great deal of discussion on globalization focuses on its effects, rather than its process (Beckfield, 2010; Shields et al., 2013). For example, there is evidence that involvement in international organizations is associated with policy in the domains of human rights, democracy, environmental protection, and education (Beckfield, 2010). Some of the studies suggest that globalization underlies a “clash of civilizations” between the “Christian West and Muslim East” (Huntington, 1996; Inglehart & Norris, 2003). Several theoretical conceptualizations of globalization address why and how globalization occurs and these perspectives have much in common: all acknowledge that one change associated with globalization is that countries and their education systems have become isomorphic: governments have the same structures, ministry structures, and local governing bodies (Shields et al., 2013; Vaira, 2004).

Two perspectives are discussed in this chapter: neoliberalism and culture theory, and the extent to which these perspectives offer different interpretations of this isomorphism and the underlying nature of globalization (Shields et al., 2013). For Qatar, the relationship between neoliberalism and culture creates a real dilemma: how does the country become a member of an elite group of rich countries who depend on a worldwide profile based on commerce and positive relationships with western economies whilst preserving its traditional values and culture. This dilemma is at the heart of the kind of education that Qatar seeks to develop and its impact on students and teachers.

2.2.2.1. Globalization as competition: neo-liberalism.

Harvey (2005) Defines neo-liberalism as:

“There has been a theory related to economic and political practices which mainly proposed by the strong property rights, free trade and free markets that the well-being of the humans can be enhanced by advancement in liberating the entrepreneurial freedom along with the skills of the individuals within the framework which has been characterized through strong.” (p. 2).

According to Stromquist (2002), ‘the globalisation within the country is based on two complementary factors: the economic sense of globalization with respect to neoliberal development model mainly emphasises on the market along with the technological revolution that has also increased the information technologies, speed of production and ubiquity.’ (p.48). There are three aspects to the neo-liberal state’s response to economic globalization that is going to be discussed in this section: (1) education is regarded as the central point for the economic competitiveness, (2) the state mainly provides different opportunities in terms of employability, (3) the individuals are also responsible for the employability (Lauder et al., 2006). The author described these aspects as deceptively simple ideas that belie some fundamental changes in the role of the state to change the power over the education and its correlation with the labor market.

First aspect that forms neo-liberalism is that the politicians and policy makers view education as central to economic competitiveness that is dependent upon the knowledge and skill of the workers because of the emergence of the new technologies (Coatsworth, 2004). According to the neoliberal perspective, the key element of globalization is a removal of barriers to international competition. For instance, reduced import or export taxes and increased international trade results in having free trade agreements, the free flow of information and communication throughout most of the world by using the internet; increased travel and

migration because of reducing restrictions on visas (Shields et al., 2013). Neo-liberalism argues that these changes have a positive impact because they create competition, economic growth, and promote technological innovation, all of which ultimately improve individual lives (Shields et al., 2013). The second and third aspect of neo-liberalism refers to opportunities for employability and the individual's responsibility to find a job.

Neo-liberalism claims that it increases job opportunities for billions of talented workers around the world. However, these changes also create challenges and instability because individuals face constant uncertainty about the future of their jobs because multinational organizations can reallocate jobs cheaply in countries (Shields et al., 2013). The net result is an increased power of multinational organizations and their binding declarations weakens national governments and its citizens (Verger, 2009). In neoliberal states such as America and Britain the mission to augment human capital has much wider implications because it has been accompanied by reducing the welfare commitment to individuals and families on the assumption that if they possess the right qualifications, job opportunities will continue to exist (Lauder et al., 2006). Despite the loss to the individual, neo-liberalism argues that globalization is largely inevitable, and individuals would face isolation and even greater levels of insecurity without it (Shields et al., 2013).

2.2.2. Globalization as culture: culture theory.

Steger and Roy (2010) refer to globalization as the intensification and expansion of cultural flows across the globe. Others consider it as severe threat for the century-long traditions, authority structures, worldviews, and values along with the religious identities. (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004), authority structures, values, and worldviews (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). World culture theory, also referred to as neo-institutionalism or world polity theory, views globalization as a diffusion of cultural values that include democratic, citizenship, respect of every individual's rights, rational decision making, autonomy and self-determination

of the individual (Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Shields et al., 2013). World culture theory differs from neo-liberalism because it claims that international organizations are key agents of globalization through their declaration and commitment and because these institutions establish and disseminate the values of world culture; although, the theory argues that nation-states create the membership of these international organizations as a result of globalization (Shields et al., 2013).

2.3. The Rise of Multinational Corporations

The notion of multinational companies (MNCs) covers a complex institutional purpose that goes from economic exchange to the formation of political consensus. Moreover, these companies cover a variety of subjects, some of them represent regional blocks while others are represented worldwide (Rodríguez-Gómez & Alcántara, 2001). Multinational companies play an integral role in the global economy. The main feature of MNCs is the allocate of human properties and trade relation plans and practice across national restrictions and having the potential to effect the regional economy and work policies (Auer et al., 2012). MNCs have grown more rapidly than world economy and their budget is often larger than some national budgets (Lauder et al., 2006). However, the most important feature of these organizations is that they have numerous administrative and financial power that can define the work outlines of wealthy and deprived countries alike (Lauder et al., 2006). According to Lauder et al. (2006) “The UN identified that there were 73 million people or 10% for the employment in the non-agricultural activities which are directly employed for the multinational companies globally and at least 130 million of the people have also their jobs which are indirectly controlled with these companies.” (p. 34). In addition to the above statement, the development for the MNCs within the emerging markets is a distinctive phase for the wave of contemporary globalisation, with the significant implications for the understanding of the world’s economy, international political economy and the global business”(Goldstein, 2009, p. 24).

With regards to appropriateness, The activities of multinational cooperation were difficult to supervise or control by governments who have experienced a drop in their capability to govern or their activities (Ball, 1998).

In addition, the cases of the multinational companies to be talked about further in this section and their effect on education related strategies: The World Bank, The World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Development (OECD). The dispersal of these impacts in an international context can be comprehended in two different directions; the first and most direct is the streaming of thoughts through social and political systems; the global ideas and thoughts (Popkewitz, 1996). In addition, by a procedure of strategy obtaining in both the UK and New Zealand has filled in as 'political labs' for change in the countries. Besides, the development of graduates, from US colleges, indicates to 'convey' thoughts and makes a sort of social and political reliance which attempts to degrade or preclude the possibility from securing 'local arrangements (Ball, 1998, p. 123). Nonetheless, neo-liberal thoughts, which explain the advantages of 'unhindered trades', focus on dictating the policies and regulations for the multilateral organizations that administer exchange, foreign aid, and information creation and its circulation over the globe.

2.3.1. The International Monetary Fund.

The international Monetary Fund (IMF) is not just a lending agency; it plays a significant role in the economic development of underdeveloped countries. Nevertheless, the IMF has been the subject of protests and criticism by scholars, activists, and politicians (Dreher & Jensen, 2007). According to Dreher and Jensen (2007), the IMF is considered as the main agent who is associated with the US policy of foreign trade.

2.3.2. The World Bank

The World Bank was established to provide monetary help for the redevelopment of Europe after the second World War (Steger & Roy, 2010); however, in 1950s its drive was extended to supply several trade developments in developing countries everywhere (Steger & Roy, 2010). The World Bank took the lead among the multilateral banks to offers funds to developing countries, on conditional terms satisfying specific demands consistent with the neo-liberal belief, acknowledged as Structural Adjustment Programmes (Lauder et al., 2006). The neoliberal ideology that dominates the World Bank currently, which primarily focuses on providing market solutions (Klees, Samoff, & Stromquist, 2012), complaining the effectiveness and justice of government involvements, whereas a liberal standpoint propose remarkable acknowledgement of the inefficiencies and injustices of markets and trust in régimes (Klees et al., 2012). However, the World Bank is less attentive to research that does not support its ideological commitment to neo-liberalism; the World Bank's opinions on the educational policy transformed sharply from its liberal ideology between the 60s and the 70s to an expanding persuasive neoliberal standpoint from the early 80s (Klees et al., 2012).

2.3.3. Globalization and educational borrowing and lending

For experts in domestic policy and school reform studies, an international influence and guidelines are now considered as a necessary thing for research developing such policies (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). When studying neo-liberalism, theory, culture, decentralization and standards in education, reference is often made to the international dimensions of particular school movements. This section responds to the global trend of transnational borrowing and lending in education policies and attempts to understand the impact of policy borrowing and lending on education reform particularly in Qatar. A common misconception among practitioners holds that comparative researchers compare educational systems and selectively

borrow or lend ‘words’ transferring it from one system to another (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). Many studies refer to why education reforms are transplanted from one context to another, whether borrowing is ever wholesale or by design selective and finally, the interest in understanding the relationship between transnational policy borrowing and international convergence (Steiner-Khamsi, 2004). Steiner-Khamsi doubts whether globalization necessarily leads to a ‘world culture’:

“internationality,” or “internationalism” in education that is to an international model of education; and the scholars fear a hybrid of the international model of education that is composed of borrowing bits and pieces from various high-income educational systems; whereas others fear more specifically, a complete Americanization of Educational reforms in the rest of the world. (p.4)

2.4. Education and the global knowledge economy.

Globalization has been integrated in all aspects of the world including education across the globe and continuous developments in science and technology forms a number of serious challenges to the educational systems in each country. The process of globalization is affecting educational works; therefore, extensive reform processes are being supported industrialized countries such as the United States or developing countries like Qatar as a way to cope with the new global challenges and the demands that they possess. However the situation is not the same in undeveloped countries (Bhatti, 2010). Many observers see globalization as positive for many reasons: it promotes economic development and intercultural exchanges (Tarc, 2012). Others perceive globalization as a threat to their culture, identity, religious, traditions, and values (Ball, 1998). Clearly, a major challenge for education is that different groups and political parties will have their own views as to what constitutes an educated person: education may be the repository of hope for future generations but what form it should take is subject to fierce debate. Moreover,

it has fueled arguments over the type of people the education system should be able to produce within a national context. For this reason education will always become a major source of political and social conflict (Lauder et al., 2006). Lauder suggests that globalization has different dimensions; objective, subjective, and ideological which makes it difficult to assess its impact on education given a lack of consensus about the processes with which it is associated.

Lauder et al. (2006, p. 31) claimed that conceptual problems globalization are a useful investigation tool because it allows us to recognize a variety of rules, practices, and procedures that establish a new stage in industrial development. Globalization may continue to pose many challenges for education and create new opportunities, especially for the international organizations who will continue to be the major benefits for financial deregulation and the changes in the technological sector. The political and economic power will continue to determining the profiles of rich and poor countries in relation to their employment statuses (Lauder et al., 2006). It is significant to recall that instruction in the past was linked directly to the oppression of colonized societies that provided a ‘dangerous’ minimum level of education; as the demands for employment would be increased by the educated members of the society (Bloom, 2004).

In recent times, education has been viewed as an essential factor in bringing both economic benefits and raising highly educated individuals:

In turn these people are less likely to be without a job or find themselves in poverty, hence the reason behind decreasing the obligation to social protection for employees because neoliberals claim that globalization makes it difficult for the state to commit to full employment terms because technologies and consumers’ tastes change so rapidly (Lauder et al., 2006, p. 48).

Although government officials in state and the national legislatures and executive headquarters share a neo-liberal viewpoint that public school students are all facing academic challenge and produces workers that are underprepared; this is primarily found to be done through student's reports and the results taken from their tests. Consequently, preparing students for the contemporary economy is explained in narrower terms of proficiency, liability and standardized test (Lakes, 2008).

2.5. International Marketing of Western Education

The global market of Western education is increasingly a public phenomenon, insignificant to no considerations are taken to the appropriateness of Western pedagogy to the students that are located internationally (Altbach, 2002). Many researchers have stated that the country should adapt the Western curricula in order to facilitate learning among different cultures (Feast & Bretag, 2005; Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000); If social opportunities are not reflected, education could remain compromised. This is found to be marked on multinational campuses where Western mentors are tasked with making Western programmes available to students that have different cultures. If the class material are not associated to students' expectations neither they can have any form of cultural opportunities, then the quality of education may get worse as they learn. In the present situation, the teachers need to depend on their own observations of the students' culture to develop alterations to their teaching style to ensure student accomplishment. As the studies progress, nevertheless, social individualities that influence the classroom can be acknowledged and promotes learning. Despite the positive changes, the notion of anti-globalization criticism is contested (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). The response to economic globalization considered as an idea that is manipulated by power is extended to the labor market (Lauder et al., 2006). In order to create the world based on their image, it can be seen that the United States plans to do this by having an American styled democracy in states such as the Middle East (Lauder et al., 2006),

which is primarily motivated towards the concern that the present system is unstable in nature (Lauder et al., 2006). Paradoxically, they view democracy as creating political stability, which serves as a prerequisite for maintaining oil supplies.

Today higher education suffers a tension between globalization and individualization: two terms describe the approach to this - 'exist' and 'adaptive' strategies. Exist strategies are employed when they are confronted by domestic constraints and they use the regional and global realms to reduce or overcome such constraints. An example is the underfunding of British universities, which led them to develop their overseas market whose students now make a significant economic contribution to sustaining the British university system. Likewise, Singapore and Qatar are seeking to become a regional hub for research and development through the rapid expansion of hosting leading universities from around the world, who have established campuses rather than relying on indigenous growth (Lauder et al., 2006). All the issues discussed so far provide the international context to the study. The following section outlines the national context.

2.6 Local Study context- Qatar

The State of Qatar is an independent state, located in Western Asia, which occupies around 11,571 km² (a small fraction of the Arabian Peninsula). Compared to other countries, Qatar is considered to be a small country with a population of only 2.900 million (WorldBank, 2016), the majority of whom are foreigners outnumbering Qatari citizens (Fromherz, 2012). The foreign residence status represents up to 85% of the population and 90% of the total labor force (Volante, 2012). According to the latest national census, in 2010 Qatar had a total population of 1.77 million, the census does not distinguish between nationals and non-nationals, that means Qatari nationals number somewhere in the region of 250,000 and of these, some 10,000 to 15,000 are thought to be members of the extended ruling Al-Thani family (Kamrava, 2013). As shown in Figure 1, Qatar has a single border that it shares with Saudi Arabia to its south.



Qatar's Geographical Map

2.7 History

The earliest evidence of human was found in the Qatar Peninsula around 4000 BC (Teebi & Ben-Omran, 2010). Qatar's location attracted Arab communities, especially from the Nejd Desert in Saudi Arabia. The Tribes of Qatar appear to have originated from two sources: the Arabian Peninsula or by settlement along the coast from different parts of the Gulf (Johnstone & Wilkinson, 1960). In seventh century AD, people embraced Islam with Qatar playing a significant role in spreading the religion to various parts of the world (Teebi & Ben-Omran, 2010). In 1970 the oil attracted foreign workers and Qatar population increased. Expatriates who lives in Qatar are not granted citizenship, mainly because: tribal identity, and the government commitments to share Qatar wealth. However, expatriates can take advantage of subsidization of many aspects: such as water, electricity, gas, some foods, free telephone calls, and no taxes are paid for municipal services (Brewer et al., 2007).

2.8 The Monarchy

Qatar was under the Portuguese protection in early sixteenth century and later on were overthrown by Ottomans, originating from Western Turkey, who governed Qatar for four centuries (Teebi & Ben-Omran, 2010). The Ottoman Empire fell into disorder and with the

success of the Arab revolt, the Ottoman rule eventually collapsed. Since the mid-nineteenth century Qatar has been governed by an absolute monarchy, The Al Thani family.

Qatar became a British protectorate on 3 November 1916 signing an agreement with Sheikh Abdullah bin Jassim Al Thani not to have any agreements with other country without permission of the British Government. The British Empire weakened after World War II, because of Indian liberation movement in 1947. Qatar officially obtained its independence in 1971 from the United Kingdom. Khalifa bin Hamad Al Thani seized power in 1972. Qatar General Petroleum Corporation took control of all oil operations in 1974 since then Qatar became one of the rich countries.

2.8.1. Qatar Today-Economy

Qatar's previous status as the poorest of poor nation's falls within the living memory of the older generation, the only trade in their time was in pearls. With the pearl price collapsing and the disruptions of the Second World War, the traditional exports of the Gulf were harmed. (Fromherz, 2012) refers to a description of the capital, Doha, by a British resident in 1940,

“Doha is little more than a miserable fishing village straggling along the coast for several miles and more than half in ruins... the roads were dusty tracks, there was no electricity, and the people had to fetch their water in skins and cans from wells two or three miles outside the town.” (Fromherz, 2012, p. 2)

For decades, Qatar is exclusively reliant on producing as its only source of income, whereas now, it depends on different types of investments such as states and worldwide trades. Oil was struck in 1939 but exploitation was delayed by World War II (Stasz, Eide, & Martorell, 2008). Commercial exploitation began in 1949, leading to rapid development of the country.

Since then, oil revenues have contributed to the modernization of the country's infrastructure (Teebi & Ben-Omran, 2010).

According to Naser, Al-Hussaini, Al-Kwari, and Nuseibeh (2006) Qatar is growing fast within the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries and hosts exchange stock market in the area. The country's permanent investment development enlarged from US \$1,332 million in 1997 to US \$3,732 million in 1998 (Naser et al., 2006). Compared to the other GCC countries: Qatar known by its world third biggest gas reserves (Squalli, 2007). It is the main exporter of gas production that make Qatar one of the top ten wealthiest country (Volante, 2012). Qatar's economy has been prosperously growing at an estimated percentage of 20.5% (Squalli, 2007).

Under the Emir, Sheik, Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani who has governed Qatar since 1995, Qatar has been radically transformed into an internationally recognized rich and influential region within 28 years. His vision successfully increased the country's income to \$200 billion by 2012 (Bahry, 2001). Though small in size, Qatar is a member of the Organisations of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and has a local product of US\$ 75,426 (Dargin, 2007). The government's vision, formed by the Sheik Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani in 1995, is not only to improve the country's economy but also to become internationally recognized for its achievements. To realize this vision there have been a range of government reforms, including an overhaul of the education system, which is discussed later in this chapter.

Qatar has approximately 5% of the world's oil reserves and more than 15% of the world's proven natural gas reserves (Raffer, 2007). Besides oil refining, Qatar produces ammonia, cement, fertilizers, petrochemicals and steel. It is trying to attract investment to diversify away from oil, as it knows that the oil will run out one day and it must prepare itself for the inevitable. Wells have been dug to develop agriculture, and products include beef, dairy products, fruits, poultry and vegetables (Rostron, 2009).

The country has a comprehensive welfare system, and many of its services are free or highly subsidized: education, water and electricity, monthly allowances for Special needs, orphans, widows, and divorcees (Al-Misnad, 2007). In addition, free housings are given for Qataris (Stasz et al., 2008). Non-citizens, who once lived or were born in Qatar are not eligible for government benefits: however, water, electricity, and gas are inexpensive, local calls are free, personnel pay no tax for possessions or public facilities (Stasz et al., 2008).

2.8.2. Politics

Qatar has invested heavily in soft-power diplomacy, utilizing international media at an early stage by hosting platforms not only for Arabic news on Al-Jazeera Network but also for hosting IslamOnline (Fromherz, 2012). In 1996, the Al-Jazeera satellite television station was launched in Qatar that based on lack of restrictions and allow access to data (Rostron, 2009). Al-Jazeera won a reputation for tackling controversial issues connected with the Arab world. IslamOnline offers detailed information in Arabic and English about Islam, and articles on Islamic history (Gräf, 2008). Some countries choose to block this website because they say it is dangerous for their people because it has a strong influence. For example, it was blocked in Tunisia because it was believed that, IslamOnline had been used to organize religious and political activism and opposition (Fromherz, 2012). Yet, Qatar's control of IslamOnline, is a remarkable operation with a dedicated coterie of approved Muslim scholars answering questions from users throughout the world (Gräf, 2008). Besides the two prominent media outlets, Al-Jazeera and IslamOnline, Qatar makes large financial commitments in order to win bids to host major sporting events such as the 2020 FIFA World Cup and the Asian Olympics games that were held in Doha in 2006 (Amara, 2005).

2.8.3. Qatari Foreign Policy

All of these activities indicate that Qatar is seeking recognition and by playing an integral role between some countries that have conflicts draws attention to itself, especially after 1995, when Sheikh Haman bin Khalifa came to power. According to Kamrava (2013) uniquely for a country of its size, Qatar plays peacemaker rule to ensure the settlement of many global and local struggles across the Middle East. As a consequence, it has appeared as one of the world's practical peacekeepers in latest years, mostly throughout the Arab Spring uprisings (Kamrava, 2011).

As a small and rich country Qatar always seeks protection from other countries. This forms a foreign policy that dates back to the former Emire, Sheikh Kalifa bin Hamad Al-Thani (1972-1995) who sought to guarantee his country protection by Saudi Arabia, but the Gulf War exposed Saudi Arabia's inability to protect its allies that consequently led Qatar to seek protection from the US (Kamrava, 2011). The imperative of US military security affects many aspects of Qatar's foreign and domestic policies such as economy, trade and education; this latter will be discussed in more detail in the education section which focuses on how Qatar is adopting the US education system by hiring the Research and Development Corporation (RAND): a non-profit global policy think tank.

Qatar has found itself between the two opposing countries, Iran and the United States, mainly because Qatar houses key USA airbases. Even though military tension between these two powerhouses decreased after the end of the tenure of President Bush (Kamrava, 2011), Qatar sought to balance its relationship with both Iran and the United States; despite some of its activities being opposed by the United States, such as supporting the Palestinian cause. Activities seen as contradicting foreign policy often provoke sharp criticism from traditionalists, especially the relationship between Qatar and Israel. Qatar is trying to maintain a good relationship with its neighbors, Iran and Israel (Rabi, 2009).

2.9. Education system in Qatar

Education during the twentieth Century primarily took a religious form. In 1900 approximately ten 'Kuttab' existed, these were informal settings in mosques and teachers' homes where students were taught recitation of the Koran and Islamic jurisprudence (Stasz et al., 2008). In the Kuttab children were taught to memorize the Koran, while in public schools only boys from rich family are eligible for education and they there taught core subjects such as Arabic and Mathematics (Rostron, 2009).

The first serious attempt at reform was in 1913 when a formal Education system was set up, which remained open until 1938. In 1947, with a comprehensive curriculum, Hamad ibn Abd Allah who was the only teacher responsible for fifty boys opened the first school (Rostron, 2009). In 1951, the government funds the schools, to support education, the government launched three schools for boys that mainly taught Islamic studies, Islamic history, Arabic, arithmetic, geography and English (Brewer et al., 2007). During the early 1950s Qatar Elementary School opened its door to four classes, totaling one hundred and ninety pupils. A more formal education system was adopted in Qatar in the fifties. The boys' education system was based on three main stages; primary which is six grades; intermediate which is three years, and secondary which includes three years and this system still exists (Yamani, 2006).

As a result of education increasing in popularity, the first girls' school was established in 1952, funded by the government. The following year, two more schools opened and the rapid expansion of schools led to the formation of a National Education Department in 1955 (Brewer et al., 2007). By 1957, this department had grown into the ministry of Education. At this point schools number had risen to fourteen elementary schools and the number of pupils exceeded one thousand (Rostron, 2009). According to Rostron (2009), Qatar University opened in 1973 as the only national tertiary education institution that taught men and women separately. Government schools and Qatar University have been gender separation since their

establishment, and this continues to be the rule (Rostron, 2009). Gender segregation is to promote equality, regardless of the view that this is a form of domestic oppression. Orthodox Muslims believe that gender segregation allows individuals to thrive, as their environments are conducive to learning, and affords females greater opportunities as parents often perceive them as a 'safer' learning environment.

In 1956, Qatar's Ministry of Education was established and offer free education, however, Qatari students were given a salary 1962, and expatriates' children who worked for the government are entitled for free education (Brewer et al., 2007). Since then, three education levels have been assigned; primary (grade 1-6), preparatory (grades 7-9), and secondary (grades 10-12). The government has created a split gender schooling system where even the teachers are from the same sex, with the exception of what is known as the 'model' school for boys who are taught by female teachers and administrators (Brewer et al., 2007). Boys from grade one to grade six study in what is so called a Model schools that means the teachers and staff are female only. Preparatory schools mainly focus on enhancing primary education. Secondary schools are more-specialized streams of education that students can follow scientific, arts, business, and management track. Additionally, there are alternative options including business, technical and religious (Brewer et al., 2007). A Centralized Committee of teachers is responsible for the development of exam grades. The required average for a pass is set at fifty percent (Brewer et al., 2007).

2.10. Education Reform (Education for a New Era)

Education reform reflects the trend towards globalization. Debates and arguments about what is important for a child to learn and how to learn it leads to education initiatives and reforms. Education reform in Qatar was one of the social and political transformation in Qatar, such as women wider opportunities and increasing democratic rule (Brewer et al., 2007). In order to change Qatari education system into a well-known education, Qatar has established

Education for a New Era initiative that has been admired worldwide as an essential development (Yamani, 2006).

The outcomes of current system and education policy in Qatar did not meet the benchmarked of a recognized standardized assessment. For instance, Programmed for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Romanowski et al., 2013), the Qatari policy maker were anxious about the quality of Educational learning outcomes. Therefore, the Education for a New Era reform was instituted as a response to the government's main focus i.e. improve the education of Qataris to allow them to become employable in their own economy, and play an essential role on a global level (Zellman et al., 2009). This revolution embraces shifting the current inflexible, centralized education system into a up-to-date, decentralized and efficient system (McKeown, 2011; Yamani, 2006).

The Qatari government elected one out of the three options that were presented by RAND. Officials in Qatar were aware that the reform would involve major changes, and opted for a system, which supported a charter model that was mainly characterized by decentralization and encouraged the development of Independent schools (IS). The Qatari Education Reform principles are mainly: 1) school autonomy; 2) accountability; 3) variety in schooling alternatives; and 4) parents' choice (McKeown, 2011). To apply these principles two different institutes were established to implement and assess them; an Education Institute is accountable for applying curriculum standards and providing professional development for teachers, leaders, and stakeholders; the second institution was an Evaluation Institute responsible for measuring the students' learning outcomes and the school's performance (McKeown, 2011).

From a relevant culture point of view, education is considered as a mean to improve social position of the family or tribes in terms of tangible outcomes such as certificate and extrinsic motivation that seek to avoid family punishment (Rostron, 2009). In combination with educational reform, the country's leaders gave priority to a national policy named

“Qatarization” to guarantee that Qataris have a dynamic role to control the public and private education, which encourages the involvement of Qatari peoples in the labour force (Guarino & Tanner, 2012). Despite government efforts toward Qatarization, there is a lack of teaching staff (Stasz et al., 2008). One of the key reasons for staff shortage is that the schools system gender segregated and this causes a problem in boys’ schools and labour shortage (Guarino & Tanner, 2012).

2.10.1. Charter Model

The Qatar education reform attempted to address all the problems highlighted by RAND by launching independent schools. The core for the education reform revolved around establishing independent schools that fund by government run by school principal under the Supreme Education Council authority (Semmar & Fakhro, 2009). According to the Supreme Education Council (2012) website, (as cited in Romanowski et al., 2013), “an Independent school is a government-funded school that is granted autonomy to carry out its educational mission and objectives while being held accountable to terms agreed to in an operating contract” (p.112).

After launching the first Independent schools (the schools called independent after the education reform) in 2004, twelve schools were opened (Tok, Alkhater, & Pal, 2016). Each Independent School had the authority to choose their own curriculum and teaching methodology to achieve the National Curriculum Standards for English, Mathematics, Science, and Arabic and to pass the yearly National tests (Romanowski & Amatullah, 2016). Curriculum standards refer to what students should accomplish in each grade and the content that should be taught (Brewer et al., 2007). The curriculum standards were based on international benchmarks for English, Mathematics, Science, and Arabic to specify content and performance standards, for students from Kindergarten to grade twelve (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). At the same time, an

evaluation institute provided and encouraged the growth of students, moreover, special attention was paid to professional development to provide adequate teachers' professional development including school leaders and the board of trustees (Ellili-Cherif, 2014; Romanowski et al., 2013).

In the academic year of 2005- 2006, twenty-one more schools that are independent opened. A total of forty-six independent schools were operating in 2006-2007 alongside approximately one hundred and sixty-four Ministry schools and two hundred and ninety-two private schools (Guarino & Tanner, 2012). All the ministry schools in the country have acquired independent statutes and currently over one hundred and seventy independent schools operating in Qatar (Romanowski et al., 2013). Unlike, public schools, these new, independent schools craft their own philosophy and teaching approaches and employ their own staff who is required to achieve curriculum standards in core subjects (Semmar & Fakhro, 2009).

Qatar, of all the Arab countries, took the first step in applying 'western' standards in schools. It changed the education system by adopting a 'western brand' - American standards, in its reforms and began to focus on performance, professional development, and parent and community involvement. What is happening in Qatar is evidence of the considerable attraction of the American system that appeals to developing countries: Applying higher standards in American education has appealed significant consideration recently, due to noteworthy teaching strategies and challenged activities, however, there has been a restricted experiential research of the structure and operation of this movement (Swanson & Stevenson, 2002).

2.10.2. Curriculum Development in Schools

Each year saw a new cohort of schools opting for the education reform. The primary medium of instruction in independent schools was English: teachers were required to plan in English, use English resources, and read the curriculum standards that were written in English.

The use of English as a foreign language has challenged both students and teachers in different developing countries that implement it in formal education (Rassool, 2013). This situation raised many questions and concerns from all parties including parents, stakeholders, and decision makers.

It was eventually realised that demands to adopt changes within a few years of the reform were unrealistic, given that many teachers and leaders were untrained. Uncertainty and inconsistent changes affected the reform's progress, and in 2011 the Independent School curriculum moved from teaching merely English to a bilingual method (use of English and Arabic) for mathematics and science only (Guarino & Tanner, 2012). As Mathematics and Science teachers were not qualified to teach in English many of them continued to teach in Arabic regardless, as a result of a lack of prior training for those teachers (Tupas, 2015).

As a result of globalization, many schools now apply international standards to improve and prepare their students to be lifelong learners and competitive for entry to international colleges around the world. The SEC was established to operate independent schools, apply international curriculum standards, financial management, professional development, and support school leaders to operate the new schools. A second institute called the Evaluation Institute was responsible for collecting data through two kinds of assessment: (a) Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment; this assessment was based on Qatar curriculum standards, and (b) International Assessment; which compared the results of the Qatari students with other students in different countries such as PISA and SATs tests.

Certainly, the Educational Institute conducted different types of assessments for school and students as explained previously. The purpose of assessment in Qatari schools is to respond to the accountability required by the 'Education for New Era' and the 'No Child Left Behind' policy adopted from the USA. The SEC also applied the development of the Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment (QCEA) exam: standardized national assessment based

on core subjects syllabus a “scale scored” to allow SEC to track student progress (Guarino & Tanner, 2012).

The SEC encourages independent schools to use different kinds of assessments and other forms of collecting evidence to measure the yearly progress of students and independent schools’ performance. Schools consider QCEA a challenge and believe the assessment result reflects the administrator’s performance and not the student’s performance. Schools accept that student learning is central to the key responsibilities of SEC, so they comply with SEC accountability requirements. As part of this, students’ and schools’ performance are checked and compared to annual National Tests (Yamani, 2006).

Independent schools serve both Qataris and resident expatriates. There are two kinds of independent schools: Arabic and English that follow the Ministry of Education curriculum and aim primarily at Arabs who prefer national curriculum (Stasz et al., 2008). Other private schools apply curricula from other countries and are aimed at expatriates representing that country such as Indian School, Al-Ahram school (Egyptian), Pakistani School, and Tunisian School (Brewer et al., 2007).

The Ministry of Education introduced some regulations and monitored the two types of private school – public and international schools (Brewer et al., 2007). One aspect of the ministry regulations and monitoring is to ensure that the Ministry approves the curricula followed in private schools. Furthermore, private schools must ensure that they have a license from the Ministry and meet guidelines concerning health issues, record keeping, library achievements, employee activities, and scholarships from individuals and companies (Brewer et al., 2007).

2.11. Globalization and Education in Qatar

As well as the issues discussed above, globalization has had an enormous effect on developments in education; it includes distance learning, online coursework (introduced by Qatar University), technology-interfaces, study abroad programmes, and international branch campuses (McNulty & Enjeti, 2010). In 1995, the Qatar Foundation (QF) that focus on science, research, and community development, attracted world-class universities to Qatar's Education City to serve students to develop students' essential skills and update economy knowledge of revenues from energy resources. The main sponsored projects by QF are the foundation's flagship projects: "Texas A&M (engineering), Weill Cornell Medical College, Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Design, Carnegie Mellon (business, computer and information systems), and Northwestern University (journalism and media)" (Rostron, 2009). Notwithstanding its benefits, Western Universities are important because, crucially at this stage, they are trained professionals with academic qualifications who graduated from known universities; these Universities were selected by Sheikha Moza AlMissned, the Emir's wife, and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad (Rostron, 2009). Furthermore, the government launched a scholarship programme to support skilled students who desire to study abroad (Brewer et al., 2007).

There are a number of choices for higher education in Qatar. The first national College of Education was founded in 1973 with a small population: the college admitted "fifty-seven male and ninety-three female students" (Qatar University Website, 2013). In the past Qatar University (QU) was the only option after finishing high school, but now more options for higher education. Qatar University is state-sponsored and when established in 1977, it had only four colleges: "Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Science and Sharia and Islamic Studies" (Stasz et al., 2008). Engineering college was built in 1980, followed by Administration and Economics College in 1985 (Brewer et al., 2007). Education College used to offer a

different subjects Bachelor's degree, and general education. However, since 2000 there have been many changes. General Education degrees were withdrawn, physical and arts bachelors were introduced as a temporary alternative, and now students can have a diploma in early childhood or special needs (Stasz et al., 2008). The Higher Education Institute (HEI) was established along with other Education reforms and now forms part of the Supreme Education Council (SEC). One of the responsibilities of HEI is to offer scholarships and to ensure quality in the provision of programmes available for students studying abroad and make sure that these programmes are offered by the world's best colleges and universities (Stasz et al., 2008).

Despite all the facilities and choices provided by the government, “a majority of Qataris do not join post-secondary studies, especially Qatari males” (Stasz et al., 2008). This is mainly due to the accessibility of protected, well-paid opportunities that do not require post-secondary education. This indicates that learning opportunities provided by the government alone may not be sufficient for choosing to pursue post-secondary studies (Stasz et al., 2008). To bridge the gap between the lack of highly educated males and labour market needs, official organisations provide training in specific skills such as ICT, English, and training courses delivered outside of Qatar. There are plenty of opportunities for training, the quality of which will be discussed in more depth in a later chapter.

2.12. Liberal arts Education as a New Trend

Qatar's higher education system took place when the Education City was established in 1995, adopting a western style of teaching that was mostly student-centered around discussion, independent research, speculating and hypothesizing. Liberal arts characterize the Higher Education reforms that took place in Qatar. However, Education for servility in the past included all the subjects that prepared the student for a practical trade and occupation (Rostron, 2009). University curricula and education goals changed much more rapidly and focused on useful education (Rostron, 2009). The principles underlying liberal arts education in higher education

in Qatar may seem somewhat different from the outdated interpretation of education dominant in Qatar, which thoroughly link to religion (Islam) and are based on repeating and orality (Rostron, 2009). Unsurprisingly, religious researchers, some parents, and teachers are strongly against liberal arts education. So this debated issue make Education City a zone of tension and dialogue

“where seeds of American liberal arts education are being transplanted into the desert soil of this Arab Muslim country, with western faculties bringing their academic standards, requirements and expectations to unprepared local students, and using teaching methodologies that have never been implemented in Qatar before.” (Rostron, 2009, p. 220)

Developing intercultural competence is considered to be a key priority for higher education institutes in Qatar today, because it might reduce a “clash of civilizations” in the classroom as many western educators are witnessing (Haber & Getz, 2011). Intercultural competence encompasses an individual’s “set of cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts” (Haber & Getz, 2011, p. 97). The focus “is changing from the mere composition of variety within the organisations and onto individuals’ knowledge, skills, and ability to understand different cultures in a deeper way, and interact effectively with people from a variety of cultural backgrounds” (Haber & Getz, 2011, p. 463).

Independent schools in Qatar were also influenced by the trend of liberal arts education. The curriculum standards documents reveal the importance of focusing on higher thinking skills, student-centered, independent research, working in groups, and debating. The application of Liberal arts education in independent schools was encouraged. For instance, the results of applying the critical thinking skills in independent schools were investigated by Semmar and Fakhro (2009) in their study that is considered to be the first of its kind. The study indicated that

independent schools' teachers performance is different from government school counterparts on the way they teach all Blooms' Taxonomy "application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to develop students' critical thinking skills ([Semmar & Fakhro, 2009](#)). Thus, the result of this study may shed some light of other practice in independent schools that need to be investigated. In Qatari schools where students were taught using the old method - no thinking only memorizing - were shocked after applying the curriculum standards that required higher thinking skills. In addition, the gap between the school system and the higher education system is different from the teaching methods.

Qatar University, which is the sole university in the state, adopted foundation programmes to enhance the use of English and mathematics to solve the academic level gap problem. Qatar University established a Qatar Foundation Unit that aimed to "provide Qatar University students with the required knowledge of English and Mathematics through active learning. It hoped to equip students with problem solving, critical thinking and study skills through student-centered approaches" ([Qatar University Website, 2014](#)). The number of the students who pulled out of the course was significant and forced the university to change its policy on English language requirements.

2.13. Education Reform and CPD in Qatar

In the year 2001, the ruler of Qatar, Hammad bin Khalifa Al Thani hired experts from the RAND Corporation to examine and improve the kindergarten system of the country through grade 12 (K-12) systems. At that moment, there were 220 schools which employed 9218 administrators and teachers and served more than 72,325 students ([Brewer et al., 2007](#)). In addition, Qatar's Leadership at that particular time continued to have highly ambitious plans for the country. Moreover, the leaders were also responsive to the fact that the students who had left school were not prepared for leadership in the expanding economy of the country.

According to Brewer et al. (2007), past efforts for reforms of education in Qatar go back to the 1990s where efforts had been undertaken to improve the education system, which includes the introduction of educational technologies such as computers, both in classrooms and in central education administration. Other improvements include the diversification of the secondary education and school libraries by introducing new courses for pupils. In 1999, there were three schools, which were opened that included two scientific secondary schools, and one vocational school, (one for the girls and one for boys). They were subsequently followed by scientific elementary schools along with two scientific preparatory schools (Zellman et al., 2009). Collectively, in these scientific schools most of the instruction was provided through the English language. Furthermore, these schools were regarded as a clear move towards national reform as most of the schools were operated through the Ministry of Education in Qatar.

The original Qatar Leadership design was based on the K-12 education system from the USA; however, there was restricted communication between the Ministry of Education and the key stakeholders (Zellman et al., 2009). In this context, parents and students received no feedback on the mid-term and end of term examinations. The analysis carried out by RAND revealed that there were some positive forces for change where most of the students and teachers appeared to be enthusiastic at the prospect of having an active role within the learning processes. Furthermore, school leaders also wanted more authority and autonomy in order to increase the participation and motivation of students. In addition, parents appeared to be open to new ideas about the new schooling options. Thus, there appeared to be an appetite of support for curriculum reform, especially in relation to CPD practices.

2.13.1 Status of CPD in Qatar

In recent years, English language teachers' Professional development has been given considerable attention and has topped the agenda for Education Reform in Qatar, especially

following the introduction of English as the main language of instruction. In an effort that was intended to increase the competency levels of English language teachers, the Supreme Educational Council (SEC) provided a variety of programmes with other educational institutions both within and external to Qatar. Different parties and institutes were responsible for the provision of CPD for teachers in Qatar: such as SEC, schools, Qatar University, and School support organizations. This meant that the English language teachers were included in the SEC professional development agenda at Qatar University. This included general school plans, department plans, and individual plans. However, this has led to a certain amount of confusion and some mixed messages. Additionally, this put teachers under a lot of pressure: their voice was absent in key decision making and they did not have a say in developing the required CPD that was provided by different providers.

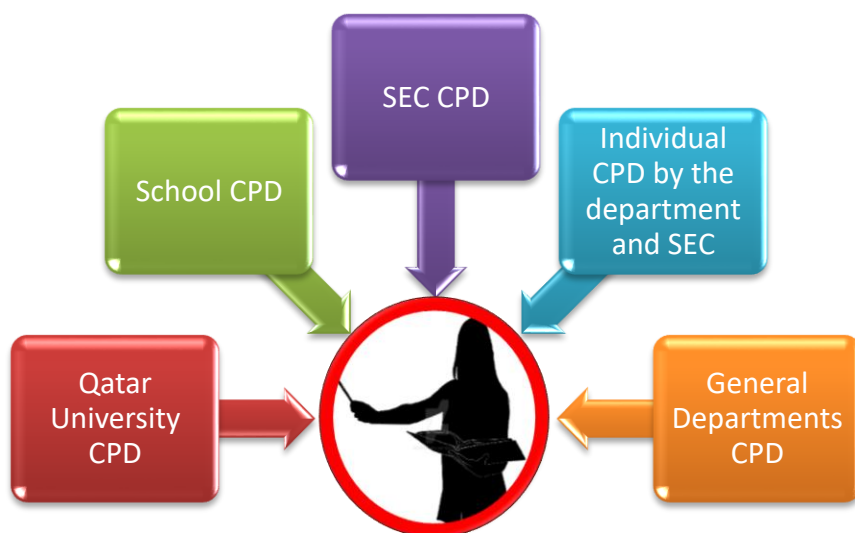


Figure 0-1 Teachers' CPD in Qatar

Consequently, not all teachers wished to enhance their competency levels for a number because they felt they had a “lack of involvement in developing PD programmes and in decision making” (Nasser & Romanowski, 2011, p. 165). Hence, English teachers’ responses to professional development programmes to date have been variable.

Education Reform in general, and using the English Language as the reforms focus, has received some criticism. Examples of criticism include the use of English language as a medium to teach Maths and Science, the requirement for teachers to collate and use multiple resources as part of their teaching methodology; the teaching strategies they were expected to employ; and, finally, teacher qualifications. In response to these criticisms, the decision makers at the SEC worked with Qatar University to provide an in-service professional development programmes for schools that were considered to be among the poorest performing in the region. In-service professional development initiatives aimed to increase the teaching standards of each independent school participating in the programme in order to enhance their performance. To date, this programme covers four subject disciplines (Maths, Science, Arabic, and English) and leadership.

An important hypothesis underlying a successful professional development strategy is that the innovation will be conducted by informed decision-making grounded in research-based best practice. Without the availability of educational expertise in the schools, the “innovative” practices implemented will, in fact, be simply educational services that are poorly designed and delivered. In recognition of this, the Supreme Education Council (SEC), to date, has relied primarily on international school support organizations to carry staff development; as a consequence, Qatar’s educational entities have not trained the home workforce (Abu-Tineh, 2013).

In order to develop Qatar’s internal workforce, it is proposed that a National Center for Educator Development (NCED) be established at Qatar University (QU) (Abu-Tineh, 2013). Consistent with the reform initiatives at QU, the proposed NCED would identify QU as a critical national resource for the development of personnel to meet the nation’s strategic goals. Specifically, this initiative would provide Qatar University’s National Center for Educator Development with the experts, funds and accountabilities to work with the different partners

such as SEC, Independent Schools, and international partners to improve and apply a Qatari-based national comprehensive educator development programme.

Given the multiple demands and the limited number of educational facilities and staff at QU, currently they do not have the ability to achieve the personnel development needs of IS. To build this capacity, the initiative that is proposed seeks to establish key faculty roles and recruit highly qualified teachers identified in independent schools.

The faculty would also receive advanced training and support to ensure a high-quality content and design of professional development. The primary responsibilities of these faculty members are to deliver university and field-based professional development for teachers in independent schools. In-service professional development would be provided by Qatar University for teachers in independent schools, and the training would be acquired during the hours of employment. The main objectives of the Centre as stated on the [Qatar University Website \(2014\)](#) are to provide pre-service preparation and professional development based on Qatari culture and research best practice. In-service training provided by NCED is a form of practical training that is offered during the hours of employment to teachers in independent schools by the Professional development specialists (PDS). It is considered on-going professional development where the teachers are supported for two days a week. The main focus for the first month for all the PDSs is to build trust and rapport with the schools' teachers ([Qatar University Website, 2014](#)). The NCED provides continuous professional development for teachers by providing in-school professional support to some selected independent schools that were identified by the SEC and NCED-Qatar University according to the schools and individual teachers' needs that called School-based Support Programme (SBSP). English language was the medium of instructions for most of the provided courses at Qatar University until 2013, which for most course then shifted back to Arabic because of a government decision.

2.13.2. Designing CPD for the New Era

Before launching a comprehensive Education Reform in 2002 in Qatar, teachers' professional development and training were mainly dependent on Qatar University as the only resource for providing initial training for teachers. As a result of the dramatic change of the education system in Qatar, nine years later, "among these changes is the introduction of Professional Standards for teacher and school leaders and Qatar's first system for the registration and licensing of teachers and school leaders that are directly linked to the professional standards" (Ellili-Cherif, Romanowski, & Nasser, 2012).

Initial teacher education in Qatar has changed considerably. Higher education was traditionally responsible for initial teacher education and had a significant role in defining a new form and content of training courses that could fulfil the new reform requirements. In response to the comprehensive educational reform needs in Qatar, which include shortages in qualified teachers for the Independent Schools, Qatar University is the only institute that currently provides an undergraduate degree in teacher education (Nasser, 2017). What became apparent after launching the comprehensive reform in Qatar is that it would not be practicable to accommodate all the introduced changes immediately.

2.13.3 English Language Teacher CPD

As observed by Burns and Richards (2009), external pressures such as globalization, trades, and communication has had a great impact on English language teacher education that requires regular updating of language teaching policies and standards. However research on language teacher CPD has been noticeably missing from professional discourse; for example, TESOL Quarterly's increasing indexes from 1980 to 1997 reveal that only 9% featured articles about the topic *teacher training* (Freeman & Johnson, 1998). This low number provides

evidence of problems not of access but of emphasis on what is essential to consider and understand in this study.

Despite the centrality of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) to second language teaching, it appears to be largely ignored in the professional literature associated with the continuing professional development of teachers' second language (Wright, 2010). Thus, it is also expected that this study will contribute to discussions on English language teacher education together with efforts at reform and renewal in English Language training and CPD.

2.14. Conclusion

The primary emphasis in this chapter has been to review two main globalization theories; the neo-liberal view of globalization as competition, and globalization as culture. In addition, world culture theory was helpful in understanding some of the factors that inform the education decision-making and changes, particularly in the Qatari context. This study considers globalization as a centralized phenomenon that has definite points of origin: a process initiated by advanced industrialized countries and pursued through both formal and informal means (Auer et al., 2012). The formal means in this chapter were presented as international organizations that operate beyond national borders; a discussion on how their agendas are applied around the world is included. In addition, this chapter explored the informal means and the hidden agenda of powerful countries and parties. In summary, globalization is a new way of thinking and communicating with the rest of the world (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004).

This chapter has given an overview of the context and has discussed in several ways how Qatar has experienced a radical but apparently smooth transition from pearling to petroleum, illiterate to educated, and poverty to prosperity. To understand the process of education development, many significant dimensions were discussed such as the historical background and other impacts on education, such as geography, politics and culture.

As explained, many initiatives have taken place in Qatar, in a short period. Qatar is taking big steps in response to globalization. Based on RAND's recommendations, the government began a comprehensive education reform, 'Education for a New Era' to build a new education system that would meet the countries new demands. Nine years on and the landscape of the Qatar Education reform has made significant changes related to using back Arabic Language to teach the core subjects, the introduction of teachers' and leaders' professional standards, and registration and licensing of teachers and leaders.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will seek to demonstrate that teacher education has increasingly become a major item of political concern where it was not always so. The chapter will discuss the nature of language teacher identity, Qatari culture, and language teacher CPD and its association with teachers' professionalism in a context of decisions made by the Qatari government.

3.2. The Study Framework

The conceptual framework on which this study is based is built on the interlinked concepts of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), identity and culture. One of the main theories linked to CPD is Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (McCarthy, 2010). Kolb's (1984) theory provides a complete depiction of the learning process through experience, including cognitions, environmental factors, and emotions (McCarthy, 2010). In the experiential model, Kolb described two different ways of understanding what experience is: concrete experience and abstract conceptualization. Concrete experiences promote reflection, which is essential in the learning process (Kolb, 1984). By facilitating or promoting learning, the teachers can ensure that they can constantly improve themselves and their perception of teaching as well (Guihua & Singh, 2011). In connection to this study, teachers bring their experiences as the basis for their perceptions in relation to their professional development in English language instruction. This is reflected in the main research questions: what are female English Language Teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development in Qatar?

CPD has been expressed and used in different contexts and with different specific purposes (Kennedy, 2005; Weerakkody, Al-Esmail, Hindi, Osmani, & Irani, 2015). Each of the purposes can provide an opportunity for teachers to take control of their learning. These can include teachers placing an emphasis on developing their professional identity, improving their

professional autonomy and what knowledge they had before they enrolled themselves in continuous education (Girvan, Conneely, & Tangney, 2016). For example, an action research and transformational model may be able to help them in improving their skills and provide them with the necessary skills to constantly improve themselves (Girvan et al., 2016). The core components of CPD also include introducing or enhancing knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote continued learning or the development of individuals (Eraut, 2004; Gibbs, Brigden, & Hellenberg, 2006; Kennedy, 2005). However, (Eraut, 2004) stated that improvement or development of knowledge is not the only important aspect of CPD; it also relies on the context or culture within which the change or improvement occurs (Kennedy, 2011). This is considered significant in understanding the nature of knowledge. Therefore, it is important to analyze the context where organizing and analyzing CPD for teachers occurs. This can help the researcher expand a deeper understanding of the role of CPD and its role in improving student learning. Researchers have also highlighted the role of culture in the context of CPD. For example, Avalos (2011) suggests that those institutions which are culturally supportive of the teachers seeking continuous education and growth can influence how the entire school environment works. However, a culture that is not open to change may impede the success of CPD (Rassool, 2013). Therefore, culture within the context of CPD for teachers of English language in Qatar will be considered for this study.

This study, therefore, will adopt a conceptual framework which will influence the design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the study findings. The study assumption is that educational change is viewed as a complex system and that change is a non-linear process that needs to be supported by a framework which places teachers at the centre (Louws, van Veen, Meirink, & van Driel, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary that more than one factor is considered when determining what can be done in order to improve the development of teachers in Qatar.

Thus, this chapter will discuss the nature and links between language teacher identity, culture, and CPD and its association with teachers' professionalism in a context of decisions made by the Qatari government. CPD has always been necessary for language teachers because of constant changes in curricula, teaching methodology, and the emphasis on using English as a medium of instruction for some subjects like mathematics and science (Louws et al., 2017). The conditions in which they work are relevant, as are how they view themselves as professionals and the broader external environmental, socio-economic and culture factors which affect teacher education (Baguley, Findlay, & Kerby, 2015). As referred to earlier, if proper care is not taken in the context of developing and improving the knowledge of the teacher, then it can result in their not being able to improve pupil learning (Baguley et al., 2015). Figure 3.2 below demonstrates the study's conceptual framework which is used to help understand female ELTs' perception and experience of CPD in Qatar.

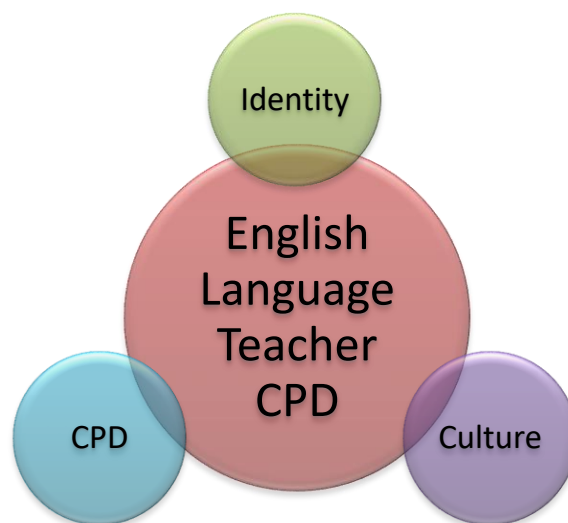


Figure 0-1 Study's Conceptual framework

3.3. Professional Identity

This section will mainly focus on concerns regarding the professionalism and identity of the English language teachers. Some examples of how teacher professionalism in general and second language teacher professionalism in particular can be defined differently by both

professionals and politicians according to the context, time and place will be discussed. Two main discourses shape the discussion in this section: managerial professionalism and democratic professionalism are identified, both of which are considered as the source of shaping professional identity for the teachers in general (Adkoli, Al-Umran, Al-Sheikh, Deepak, & Al-Rubaish, 2011).

3.3.1. Professional Identity

Professional identity is mainly derived from the dynamic and complex equilibrium where the professional self-image are considered to be balanced with the different roles for the teachers which they consider to have being played rather than the stable entity which cannot be fixated or interpreted (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004a). In the period of fundamental changes, teachers' identity considered as negotiated, undeveloped, fluctuating, uncertain and not a fixed object (Bernstein, 2000; Pausigere, 2016). According to Sachs (2001) identity can be seen as:

“Professional identity is used to refer to a set of externally ascribed attributes that are used to differentiate one group from another, that provides a shared set of attributes, values and so on so that enables the differentiation of one group from another” (p.153).

Bernstein refers to professional identities as 'retrospective and prospective' which change in the light of continuous education reforms (Brennan, 1996). The retrospective identities are shaped by 'national religious, cultural, grand narratives of the past' (Bernstein, 2000) and utilise as resources for the narratives related to the past and mainly provides different examples along with criteria for future and present actions. Alternatively, social movements have launched prospective identities which are necessarily future-oriented which may utilise narrative resources for the prospective identities (Sachs, 2001). It is seen that if a culture is based

on regulatory and measurement oriented performance, then it could have a damaging consequence on the autonomy and identity of the professional teacher (Mockler, 2012). It has been argued by Bernstein (2000) that

“Prospective identities change the basis for collective recognition and relation. Prospective identities are launched by social movements, and engaged in conversion through their engagement with economic and political activity to provide for the development of their new potential” (p.79).

Further, the prospective identity of a teacher should be open, negotiated and shifting based on the culture and the present need of how students should be taught (Chan, Ross, & Keyes, 2017). Moreover, considering the impact of political and industrial circumstances that impact on teachers’ professional identity is significant (Bernstein, 2000).

It is also argued that that there links between practice and identity as it requires the individual responses from the communities that implies that they have to surrender the sense of being a person in that context and to negotiate new identities in a professional context (Wenger, 1998). To clarify this, the author identifies five dimensions of identity, which can be useful for associating it with the professional identities. They are:

(1) Identity is considered as the negotiated experience where the teachers can eventually define the purpose about who they are in the direction where they experience themselves as the teachers through participatory activities along with the direction other refers themselves;

(2) Identity of the teachers as being in the community membership where the teachers can explain what they are through who they are by using known and unknown terminologies,

(3) Identity as being the learning trajectory from where they can explain about what they are what will be going to in the future;

(4) Identity as the relationship for the various sort of membership in which they can explain who they are through the directions of reconciliation in different forms of identity;

(5) Identity as an association between the global and local where they explain who they will be negotiating in the local directions of belongings for the broader arrangements along with manifestations of the discourses and broader styles (Wenger, 1998, p. 149)

The implications of this for this research project are that when teachers are faced with change, whether enforced or negotiated, they may feel not only threatened personally but they may view the changes required as a threat to their professional identity. One example of this is the effect of the seemingly arbitrary decision to reinstate Arabic language teaching in all subjects in Qatar, which had clear implications for those, was English specialists. This will be developed in later chapters.

Alvesson and Willmott (2002) and Opfer and Pedder (2010) refer to two identity processes structure: identity-regulation and identity-work. Identity-regulation is organization regulations or mediated, identity-work is considered to be the second that refers to employees' constant work to form their self-image (Handley, Sturdy, Fincham, & Clark, 2006). As Handley et al. (2006) explains that, negotiation between the organizations and regulation form the identity-work. It can be contended that the professional learning of teachers could have the capability to shape the teacher identity on the basis of both a professional and a personal context (Mockler, 2012). As predicated by Duff and Uchida (1997), teachers and learners of language try to adopt diverse cultural as well as social identities: for example, students, tutors, mentors, peers, colleagues, family members, as immigrants or expatriates, speakers of English as native or second language, as people belonging to different nationalities, members of groups, organisations and communities. All these roles and identities are considered as significant ways of constructing and reconstructing personal and professional identities.

3.3.2. Professionalism

The definition of teacher professionalism depends on the background, situation and perspectives. In addition, classroom teachers are not always trained in professional practice as part of their initial training. Mockler (2012) states that the quality of the teacher is an essential component of education transformation. Five main aspects of professionalism are identified by Sockett (1993, p. 9) for teachers to develop their character and teaching quality.

The first aspect claims, as Cain (2015) defined, that people overlook to the importance of the teaching act related to teaching; however, Jones (2015) has stated that it is considered to be impossible to separate the character of a teacher with how they are teaching their students. It can be stated that the act of teaching is considered an aspect with which a professional teacher are those sets by example. The second aspect of teacher professionalism, as stated by (Sockett, 1996), is commitment to change and continuous improvement: determined to regulate changes that seem certain for teaching quality (Sockett, 1996). Teachers' commitments to change lead to constant self-improvement of practice to meet the students' individual needs (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). It is necessary for the teacher to make sure that they are committed to building positive relationships with their students in order to be successful (Jones, 2015). This definition raises some questions: how does teachers' professionalism change or not change at different stages of teachers' careers? Does education reform influence teachers' commitment to their profession and to the school where they work? One questions in this study that needs to be addressed is whether professional development supports teachers' commitment to the teaching profession. This also raises a further question about the level of support given by school leaders: do leaders influence teachers' commitment directly or indirectly through peer support?

The third aspect, as described by Sockett, is that the teacher should be equipped with the depth of understanding and knowledge about what they teach in the classrooms and have knowledge about their pedagogies along with the skills for teaching. The author has clearly

identified that there is a distinction between the two perspectives for the professionalism; one is associated with an effective understanding of the subject but does not have prior teaching methods knowledge along with skills for teaching students (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). It is stated by Mockler (2012) that teacher professional learning and development is considered to be critical towards addressing the deficiency of quality of teaching that is exhibited by some teachers. It has been highlighted in the study conducted by Pasternak and Bailey (2004), the teachers should have declarative knowledge regarding the pedagogies and practical ability in the classrooms. However, in the case of teachers of English language, there are three key areas which are related to procedural and declarative knowledge: (1) knowing about the use of targeted language, (2) having prior knowledge related to the teaching in culturally appropriate ways and (3) knowing related to the behave appropriately according to the relevant culture (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004). The final category is related to the typologies presented by Sockett regarding teacher professionalism which refers to the obligations and working relations that are beyond the classroom level and mainly concerns the interpersonal characteristics of the teachers that enables communicate effectively in the school communities (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005).

Two approaches to professionalism are identified by Sachs (2001) which relate to significant changes in government policies and education reform: democratic and managerial. These approaches are affecting teachers' professional identity. Managerial discourses calls that effective management is a solution to most problems that the public sector can adopt private sector practices (Bates, 1996; Rees & Rodley, 1995). The second claim is that managerial values have been promoted as inherently good. Managers can be considered as the heroes who should be provided with the room along with autonomy for managing other groups that should accept the authority. Moreover, the professionalism of the managers can be reinforced through the employing authorities by policies related to the professional development of the teachers that mainly emphasise on the effectiveness and accountability (Sachs, 2001). These two ideologies are prevalent in education bureaucracies and schools, especially in the practices of management

(Sachs, 2001). From the principles stated by Sachs, it can be seen that both managerial and democratic professionalism could influence the teaching profession through internationalization and foreign involvement (Johnston, 2015). Education reform initiatives contributed to the emergence of 'managerialism' as a way of conducting the management activities that led to the systematization of professional activities and to the emergence of clear lines of accountability for those working in educational establishment (Kydd, Crawford, & Riches, 1997). Accountability was one of the core principles of education reform in Qatar where teachers, leaders and parents believe they have an objective and transparent assessment system for the success of learners.

The second of the discourse is democratic professionalism. According to (Sachs, 2001) the alternative option to state control which is not considered as the traditional professionals, however, it can be considered as the democratic professionalism which seek to clarify the professional effort along with the emphasis on the cooperative and collaborative actions between stakeholders of education and teachers. According to this approach, the teachers have more duty other than the specific classroom that mainly embraces the contribution towards the system, community, schools and the collectives' responsibility for observing them as the professionals (Bernstein, 2000). Moreover, there are certain school projects which are premised for the democratic perspective in terms of professionalism, for instance Innovative Link Projects along with the National School Network (NSN) (Sachs, 2001). Furthermore, the main aim of such projects can foster the improvement and understanding of the practices and helps the instructors understand the theoretical background for the practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Sachs, 2001).

3.3.2.1. English language teacher identity.

This section explores the reason behind exposing the non-Western discourse system which can result in the renegotiation for the professional identity within the context of teachers

of English language (Scotland, 2014). In the field of language education, the study of identity was first adopted in relation to language learners, whereas, at the end of the 1990s, researchers began to turn their sights to language teachers' identity construction (Martel & Wang, 2014). Language can be of particular importance when any group or system attempts to impose identity values on other groups or systems. It is all the more important since language is intimately linked to how people define themselves and how they have been defined over the course of their lives (Brisk, 2013). In the words of Blot (2003), "language is inescapably a badge of identity" (p.3).

As referred by Varghese (2010), Second language teachers' identity education is considered recently as part of their education. The concept of professional identity is considered to be essential and offers a set of guidelines to evaluate and determine how they should conduct themselves (Johnston, 2015). The core elements of professionalism include, "disciplinary-based knowledge, ethical principles, time and place specific work practices, practitioner autonomy, a commitment to clients' needs, supportive collaborative cultures, and a strong sense of professional identity" (Scotland, 2014, p. 33). By understanding the emotional context of teacher's practices and decisions, it can present a better insight into how teachers perceive themselves in their environment with respect to their profession (Mofrad, 2016). In this sense, "professional identity is a continuous process of interpretation and re-interpretation prompted by professional experiences and contextual factors" (Rus, Tomşa, Rebeqa, & Apostol, 2013, p. 316). It comprises professional and personal interactions between different factors that one of them may become essential at a certain time . However, Western teachers' identity education is mostly investigated where apparently little research has been conducted about how professional identity for English language teacher are constructed (Maum, 2002; Richards & Nunan, 1990; Scotland, 2014) and numerous scholars have begun to rethink the terminology, theory and principles or research involving such teachers (Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2003; Moussu & Llurda, 2008). Pennycook (2001) argues that dichotomies between Western and Eastern cultures, practice, and professional identities are undeveloped. It can be seen that language

teaching lacks a coherent view of the social, historical, culture and political perspectives related to language learning (Rahimi & Sajed, 2014). It is considered a responsibility of the teacher to make sure that the difference in the culture and the language barrier among the speakers of English, both native and the non-native is minimal and the people who do not speak English can understand it well.

Medgyes (1992) pointed out those native and non-native speaking teachers “reveal considerable differences in their teaching behavior and that most of the discrepancies are language-related, however, that non-native speaking teachers are by definition less efficient” (p.345). Such teachers often face identity crises while they are looking to be part of the profession where some of the researchers started to highlight the conflicting and evolving identities of non-native teachers who become English teachers (Richards & Nunan, 1990). Many researchers (Maum, 2002; McKay, 2003) critiqued the separation of English Language teachers’ identities in this way, arguing that this approach could reify discriminatory practices and are not productive in examining the benefits of bilingualism in teaching English. If so, how does the education reform in Qatar influence the identities of English teachers?

3.4. Culture

This section aims to discuss English Language teacher CPD in relationship to environmental factors, geo-political and economic changes that influence teaching language and the cultural dimension in particular in order to understand how the organization cultures can create opportunities for English teachers and how teachers can be identified as active learners. This section will emphasis on the characteristics of teacher growth that are considered to be socially situated and constructed by focusing on two level of organization culture; macro level and micro level. In the study context, the focus will be on macro culture level and education reform as well as notions of organizational culture. The purpose here is to highlight the main aspects of the organizational culture that has a great impact on the teachers’ identity and CPD.

Why is culture a necessary ingredient in language teacher education? A sociological definition of culture describes it as “a dynamic social activity that is situated in physical and social contexts, and distributed across persons, tools, and activities” (Johnson, 2006, p. 237). These include the likes of different beliefs, languages and customs as well. It is seen that culture and language have a significant relationship with each other as it is able to represent what the culture of the individual is (Pereira, 2016). As such, it is essential that the people are able to understand the cultural differences found in those individuals in broader terms (Rahimi & Sajed, 2014).

Moreover, tasks and activities are structured by rational way and applying collaborative tasks that Lave and Wenger (1991) have called “a community of practice”. Accordingly, individual knowledge is improved through communities of practice awareness where individual contributes (Johnson, 1999). Socio-cultural theories argue that human mediated development is essential for human mental function that is structured by cultural artefacts, actions, and ideas (Ratner, 2002) in which individuals involve. Socio-culture theory can help in determining this as it provides a more holistic approach towards learning about culture (Fahim & Haghani, 2012). This is because it emphasizes the importance of the central aspect of any teachings which is that the students should be taught all aspects of knowledge rather than presenting them with isolated concepts (Fahim & Haghani, 2012).

This indicates that Professional development is fundamental to build efficient learning environment, however, “This proposition holds true for teachers throughout the world who are pressured to modify their practices in ever changing political and policy climates” (Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010, p. 267). This is particularly true of Qatar – the subject of this study. For success of any invention by either government or individuals social relationships and sense-making norms is critical aspect (Billett, 2006). Culture within this context is a complex phenomenon as it can be viewed on three levels, namely, culture within the context of one’s

own ethnicity and gender, culture within the context of one's profession, and culture in terms of 'organizational culture' (Messenger, 2013). As Spradley and McCurdy (1975) considered culture as way of interpreting and generating people behaviour.

(Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010) view found culture critical in generating education innovations and help to encourage teachers' learning through creating opportunities and motivate teachers to accept change. This view is highly supported by scholars who believe that the schools reform develop within schools (Hargreaves, 1980). Research confirms that "professional learning is not only cognitive, but also contextually situated and intrinsic to the contexts within which individual interacts" (Jurasaite-Harbison & Rex, 2010, p. 268) so as a result, culture, physical, historical, social, and personal aspects of professional knowledge understanding is required. In the case of Qatar, the National Strategic plan aims to design programme for how to continue providing the best education and employment opportunities in a prosperous, stable and secure society that nurtures its members (Planning., 2011). The Qatar Strategic Plan reflects the government response to the existing and labour market requirement. The argument refers to what the teachers cannot avoid from the influence of changes in society. This is illustrated very clearly by changes in the societies of the developed world, where education considered as a locus of investment in human capital, where the independence of nation-states is under threat, and where education for all is seen as the means of providing equality of opportunity (Byram & Risager, 1999). School culture has a significant impact on how teachers interacted with constant changes (Fullan, 2015).

3.4.1. Macro Culture

In many countries, public education is constantly change because of the introduction of various policies that attempt to strength government, schools and parents with the bound up with market forces and economics modern view (Creasy, 2018). On recent education reform in Qatar

and some aspects of education borrowing policies from other countries from USA, England, Australia, and New Zealand, marketization of education can be understood as a global phenomenon. Therefore, the different cultures need to be understood in order to develop a holistic approach which is essential to ensure that an overall understanding of economic and social justice is established (Hill, 2007). In this sense, socio-economic activity is the response by educational institutions to the global demands (Botting, 2014).

Indeed, the global phenomenon in education is related to the rapid change in economic, political and cultural change. As stated by Whitty (2002), “political-economic variables will affect the ways in which different education systems respond to processes of globalization” (p.95). According to Brewer et al. (2007) Education Reform for a New Era in 2004 draws on ideas based on American policy and practice. However, the extent to which is this applicable to Qatar is problematic: unlike Qatar, American provision varies across states and districts in the United States, takes account of parental choice, school autonomy, and other features, such as the private school voucher experiment. In New Zealand, education reform shift from a central government education system to decentralization whereas budget, staff employment and educational outcomes are the schools responsibility (Prosser, 2012). This idea was also applied to Qatar. Qatar also adopted a common feature of the Australian system of education reform, which focuses on decentralization, and the significant of global market on supporting teaching based efficiency and standards achievements. In effect, Qatar was borrowing from a disparate number of foreign sources in the belief that they could be shaped into a holistic framework of principles and practice that could be applied to the state’s education system.

The employment in Qatar of School Support organizations teams from America, Australia, New Zealand, and United Kingdom and their advocacy of new ways of running schools and classes provides increasing evidence of the impact of the marketplace over the traditional indigenous culture. Corporates’ involvement in education reform in Qatar came to

be seen as a threat to the Qatari culture and identity especially when English was chosen as the main reform language for delivery of curriculum.

Some have argued that the marketization of education could lack in making sure that a cohesive environment is provided to the students. This can result in the economic development becoming weaker than it is intended to be (Prosser, 2012). Others (Idris, Hassan, Ya'acub, Gill, & Awal, 2012) suggest that teaching new forms of identity is important to the education systems. The promise and sophistication of the education reform agenda in Qatar, are reminiscent of Ritzer (1998) views of society as the 'McDonaldization of Society'. He argues that society adopts a McDonalds' organizational approach across several sectors in society. In this scenario, students have become less able or paralyzed by the paradox of choice of services, whereas schooling is about the training of desires and not allowing business to run schools according to their commercial interests (Carroll, 2013; Prosser, 2012).

Education Reform and Changes

The reform context involves the development of "a school culture that encourages and supports teacher learning through creating opportunities and providing a stimulating context for teacher change has been found to be essential in generating educational reform" (Jurasaitė-Harbison & Rex, 2010, p. 268). The potential role of the second language is redefining the social and economic interdependence of our societies and this is fueled by advanced telecommunications and the global demands of communication. On the grounds that all this change is inherently intercultural, language learning and teaching can offer new perspectives and build new knowledge about others, and a more open approach to differences (Lawrence, 2010).

The changing statue of language teaching.

Looking from global perspective, the argument is that English internationalization helps improvement and equal access for English learning, whereas others seek to understand whether and how language influences cultural factors, aspects of human behaviour such as perception, cognition, and communication. However, the relationship between language and culture has been a major focus in many disciplines that are related to assessing how a culture can influence aspects of human behaviour (Madárová & Čančinov, 2016). This section is seeking to consider the relationship between cultural and language teaching by discussing how cultural factors influence many different characteristics of ESL use.

Research in the 1980s focused mainly on culture in other language and learning focused on the effects of body language, eye contact, and other overt behavioural and communicative paradigms, such as punctuality, while in the 1990s the language classroom culture is frequently reduced to foods, fairs, folklore, and statistical facts (Hinkel, 1999). It can be seen that language is synonymous with culture due to it being the main means by which one can control their social lives and use it to communicate with each other (Castro, 2007). Recent social and political changes might be expected to have an effect on teaching and learning that may have a significant contribution in the acceptance of otherness as well as serving the interests of the nation-state.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is the key to organizational excellence and such a complex concept might help researchers and practitioners by presenting a set of basic assumptions and models that can help them to solve problems related to external adaption or internal integration

From a literature viewpoint, organizational cultures have been known in terms of four main themes: first, culture is a learned entity; second, culture is regarded as a system belief; third, culture is seen as a strategy; and the fourth theme is to view culture as mental programming (Sun, 2008). Teachers themselves form part of the professional culture that is capable of either adopting or rejecting any changes to the way they themselves are

‘programmmed’. Therefore, it is essential that they are involved in any change process from the outset. The design of any training programme must take account of the views of teachers and the concerns that they may have. Otherwise, improvement initiatives are unlikely to take hold because teachers’ have no sense of ownership. This approach presupposes that organizational culture offers a shared vision and values that are deeply rooted and shared by the personnel in any organization (Sun, 2008).

With such a definition of culture in mind, this research project is defined accordingly. That is, it seeks to understand the assumptions that underlie teachers’ beliefs about and attitude towards their professional learning and improving performance, and whether these comprise a community of practice with common goals and vision that is, a professional culture.

3.4.2. Micro Culture

So far, in this chapter, the focus was on the macro level of education. The culture aspects of the macro level of the organizational culture that described above create more or fewer boundaries, which have impact on the school system, status and power to lead the reform change. In the study context, micro level is used to describe the school culture that might be a department, programmes, community practice, working with others, and school practice and regulation. In other word, can the school generate a positive and informative micro culture to boost the English language teacher performance?

It is a general perception that knowledge comes into being or takes a concrete shape through living examples and ideas, which people actually practice in their life. To the extent that the individual knowledge is considered, it is usually extracted from living communities and their internal culture. The knowledge which individual acquires from his/her surrounding environment tends to play very significant role in one’s cognitive growth and development. The social surroundings trigger the mental process and boost the learning activities of an individual.

The context of social surrounding varies from people and professions. Insofar teachers and teaching are concerned, the concept of development is foundational stone and necessary for innovation and improvement because this field constantly evolves and is influenced by both political and policy factors.

3.5. CPD

A relatively new idea about the knowledge nature, philosophy and education which is termed a 'situative perspective' (Greeno, 1998; Liu, 2010) is fueling current reform movements in education. These reforms are built on consolidating current research and understanding of teacher learning and trying to identify the topics that can be investigated for future researchers (Information Resources Management Association, 2016). In the past, researchers and policy makers have worked to find out how to help students develop profound knowledge of content, meaningful contexts, and communities' involvement. However, they have paid less attention to teachers' education and new roles consistent with the reform outline or to how teachers learn (Putnam & Borko, 2000). Research from a 'situative' perspective allows for multiple conceptual perspectives and multiple units of analysis. These provide powerful tools for understanding teacher learning in the social context and, also, to discover patterns of participation in learning activities (Borko, 2004).

Others believe that 'the primary mechanism for learning in this perspective is self-regulation, whereas context and social impacts such as ways of teaching and learning are either disregarded, or considered as a way for facilitating the individual knowledge acquisition (Brodie, 2005; Greeno, 1998).

3.5.1. Professional Knowledge nature in Language Teaching

The impact of teacher knowledge is a measure of teacher effectiveness and student learning (Liu, 2010). It is argued that the ideals and the skills of the teacher can help in

determining the style with which they teach (Korthagen, 2017). A definition of knowledge itself may be recognized differently by different people even within the same organization (Messenger, 2013). Two types of knowledge were distinguished by Nanaka and Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995): explicit knowledge which can be precisely and formally articulated and shared, and tacit knowledge which is subconsciously understood and applied, and which is often difficult to articulate. This is because of how it is shared through conversation, since tacit knowledge consists of intangible factors that are implicit in the individual's beliefs, values and experiences (Zhu, 2012). Thompson (2004) suggests a link between knowledge and theory where he distinguishes between 'formal' and 'informal' theory: 'Informal learning' is emphasised in adult education, because it recognize social significance between people and learners' freedom and flexibility. It also indicates greater opportunity for individual activity than group because it is seen as complementary to learning by involvement (Eraut, 2004). One of the tools that can help in improving the capacity of the organization and the mean of spreading and sharing new knowledge is through communities of practice (Li et al., 2009). There would seem to be an inextricable link between knowledge and being a professional because most of 'professional' definitions refer to knowledge in some way (Brock, 2006; Messenger, 2013).

English language teaching field emphasize on learner needs responsibility, and development based on the idea of professional knowledge for/in teaching English language (Raza, 2010). Freeman (1996) stated that language teacher knowledge have disregarded from discussion for long time. Recently, studies start to focus on teachers' views about how their knowledge, expertise, skills were constituted (Banegas, 2017; Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly, & Driscoll, 2005; Hall, 2017; Van Canh & Renandya, 2017; Zhang & Liu, 2014)

3.5.2. Knowledge-based Language Teacher CPD

Continuing professional development term refers to teachers' activities that design during their career course which are planned to improve their work' (Day & Sachs, 2005). On-going training and education is known as continuing professional development. This term started to be used extensively. It embraces all official and unofficial learning that improve individuals skills (Earley & Bubb, 2004). It is defined as a way for an individual to improve the skills that are related to their profession and as a means with which constant development is gained from it that can help them improve themselves (Alibakhshi & Dehviri, 2015). In the context of teaching it can be beneficial as it can help them perform efficiently within their working environment (Alibakhshi & Dehviri, 2015). CPD definitions are relatively different from other source. Thesaurus of the Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) refers to professional development as "activities to enhance professional career growth." (Fullan, 2015) develops the definition "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement" (p. 326) . Therefore, the CPD definition by Day that is used in this study as referred to in chapter two is:

“Professional development consists of all-natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities, which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contributes, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning, and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their learning lives.”(Day, 1999, p. 4)

It is significant to understand what CPD is. This is possible through first understanding the fact that English language teachers education is perceived in different ways in teachers' education field (Raza, 2010).

The knowledge that a teacher has can be influential in bringing about a coherent change in the educational system (Witterholt, 2009). For example, the key features of effective professional development, based on such research, found that teacher knowledge is essential to foster teacher learning and lead to a change in practice by encouraging professional development (Verloop, Van Driel, & Meijer, 2001). Teacher knowledge is fundamental concerns o in language teacher research lately; however, studies of English as a Second Language (ESL) have been limited in scope, largely confined to empirical work on pedagogical content knowledge. Understanding what constitutes language teacher knowledge helps to maximize students learning and teachers' preparation (Kayi-Aydar, 2011). Johnston and Goettsch (2000) suggest that the main influence on the current attention to teachers' knowledge base is the work done by (Shulman, 1987), emphases on seven categories of knowledge types in teacher education include "content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational values" (p.8).

Shulman's conceptual frame for understanding teaching knowledge profession is important because individual teachers learn from their experience all the time. This raises the question, of whether there is a mechanism to share their learning as a whole. There is a further question of how knowledge base for teaching be created to ensure to long-term improvement? Does the professional programme introduce strategies to analyse practice? Language teaching pedagogical knowledge is essential for the teacher to employ different scaffolding techniques and activities when they are teaching their students (Reeves, 2009).

Highlighting the knowledge base of teachers might contribute to the current understanding of EL teachers' knowledge, in which sense, this research will re-explore the of language teaching knowledge in the expectation that it will contribute to the current applied CPD model in Qatar. The researcher will ask the CPD trainer on what knowledge base they concentrate more or they would prioritize on Shulman's conceptual frame, as described above, for understanding the knowledge base of teaching. Teachers will be asked about the base of their knowledge when giving an explanation related to a language issue.

Professional knowledge in teaching English literature is identified in various ways. The research intention is to introduce various types of knowledge-in-use; this means that tasks performance forms the basis for the identification of relevant aspects of knowledge. From an epistemological point of view, efforts have been made to give a systematic explanation of knowledge, such as cognitive theory; others have formulated knowledge typologies to serve as a basis for instructional design theories (De Jong & Ferguson-Hessler, 1996). In these approaches, it is pertinent to introduce two dimensions that describe knowledge: types of knowledge and quality of knowledge. It can be seen that, unlike procedural and conceptual knowledge, it uses its own independent function for problem solving (Lindmeier, 2010). This definition of knowledge is necessary to avoid the introduction of still more types of knowledge that do nothing with English language CPD beyond describing properties of generally accepted knowledge. Propositional, individual, practical and local knowledge will be explored in relation to the teacher CPD. To understand the CPD model, it is worthwhile to identify different knowledge types that have impact on language teacher CPD.

Situative Perspective

To learn English, it is considered to be essential that care is taken towards increasing the improvement in the communication skills in different situations through the use of different tools and resources that the community provides to solve communication problems (Alhawsawi,

2014). The situative perspective is defined to be an approach that is known to treat knowledge as an activity or a process that happens among the individuals, the instruments that they use and the practices that they participate in (Vosniadou, 2007). Researchers such as Schoenfeld (1999) and Sfard (1998), advocate a synthesis of both cognitive and situative approaches, which are different and suggest both have strengths and weaknesses that enable comprehensible growth on certain research projects (Schoenfeld, 1999; Sfard, 1998). To make sense of new situations, it is helpful to consider learner's thinking in terms of cognitive structure (Sfard, 1998). Cognitive and situative perspectives propose similar methods but different levels: practice and explanation. For example, cognitive and situative theories recommend that when learners discuss their thoughts while they are working in groups. While, a cognitive perspective proposes that learners' thinking can be clarified as they articulate their ideas; while a situative perspective suggests that the group social influences the individual and produces ideas beyond the individual ideas (Guarino & Tanner, 2012).

Cognitive Perspective

The cognitive perspective focuses on the competence of teacher's as individual 'self-direct' and self-agency to define personal development (Beatty, 2000; Roberts, 1998). Such a viewpoint emphasises on the significant of 'prior knowledge' for the teachers as a main inspiration on understanding new achievement to inform supervision and course designers, the value of cognitive dissonance in practice teaching contexts' (Boekaerts, 1997; Hollingsworth, 1989). Teachers' individuality and autonomy is valued by the cognitive perspective, however, teachers may seek guidance through different interventions such as formal supervision, peer review, self-directed approach or formal feedback (Roberts, 1998). The main goal of the cognitive approach is to primarily address the problems of inert knowledge and to make learning activities visible for both the teachers and students (Woolley & Jarvis, 2007). Therefore, this

study focuses on teacher identity, the cultural setting, and the knowledge base of English language teachers and their implications for CPD in Qatar.

3.5.3. Types of Language Teacher Knowledge

Mapping out knowledge requirements of a profession are associated with the design of training courses or the niceties of regulations concerning entry to the profession, as a consequence of which the type of knowledge is labelled according to traditional assumptions about where and how it will be acquired (Eraut, 2004). Different types of knowledge help to unpack what types of professional knowledge are required for the CPD model in Qatar to inform English language teacher education. For example, personal, practical and theoretical knowledge, conceptual knowledge, and control knowledge that might have an impact on the English language teacher CPD.

Personal Knowledge

As stated by Freeman and Johnson (1998), personal knowledge is vital in teachers' overall knowledge. They believe that the knowledge base for a language teacher should be reconceptualised on the premise that they should be enriched when examining how to do, what to do and how to do. According to Freeman and Johnson (1998)

“Teachers are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills; they are individuals who enter teacher education programmes with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do in their classrooms” (p. 401).

Burns and Richards (2009) refer to teachers' personal knowledge “the research indicated that teacher-learners have strongly held conceptions of and tacit personal theories about teaching through which they filter input from educational courses” (p. 117). Teacher learning is viewed

as personal construction, which is a philosophy grounded on learners knowledge that is actively constructed and not passively received (Richards & Nunan, 1990). If the need to promote teacher learning is recognized, then care should be taken that the feelings, thoughts and needs of the teachers are taken into account as well (Korthagen, 2017).

Control Knowledge

As defined by Eraut (2004), “control knowledge refers to knowledge that is important for controlling one’s own behaviour” (p. 81) and excludes that concerned with the control of others that would be processed knowledge.

Teachers’ self-awareness, belief in teachers’ self-management, self-development that contributes to learning, understanding classrooms, and activities that emphasis on teachers’ awareness and personal interpretation through reflecting journals and self-regulation (Richards & Nunan, 1990).

However, further research about what types of knowledge base that influence language teacher’ CPD need to be explored, depending on and not ignoring the teachers’ experience.

Practical and Theoretical Knowledge

Professional knowledge tends to be constructed on practical and theoretical knowledge which is well known in taught courses, whereas practical knowledge is develop while working (Eraut, 2004). Carter (1990) identifies three different approaches in practical professional knowledge: information-processing sides that generally focused on teachers’ cognitive processes and decision-making; studies of teachers’ practical knowledge that focused on teachers’ knowledge; studies of pedagogical content knowledge that focused on teachers’ knowledge about the subject and how they translated and represent I to students in order to elicit pupil understanding.

Practical knowledge is essentially considered ‘experiential’. It is developing ‘on the job’ and allowing teachers’ reflections on their performance that help to go beyond what is known to be effective strategies and rules (Raza, 2010; Woods & Çakır, 2011). In terms of practical knowledge, teachers face two dilemmas: teaching according to some standards of good student behaviour and reaching comparable learning results across league tables, or teaching which takes into account student identities by proposing goals adjusted to a singular population of student body (Calvo de Mora & Wood, 2014). They present the following table:

Table 0-1 Comparison of Technical Knowledge and Cultural Knowledge

Technical Knowledge	Cultural Knowledge
Standards	Ideographic
School rules	School climate
Law-curriculum	Family Status
Teaching Regulations	Corporative Loyalty
Profession Assessment	Confidentiality

Source- Calvo de Mora & Wood, (2014)

The table demonstrates on the left side the practical reality within the school system: schools inside of their educational system and schools involved in singular local education cultures, whereas the right side of the table presents what student teachers learn at university, along with experiences, reflections, professional development, and through dialogue.

Regarding language teacher cognitions studies, teachers’ practice is not constant with theoretical knowledge (Woods & Çakır, 2011). This inconsistencies were attributed to external

teacher's background knowledge factors, such as constraints, teachers' uncertainty, experience and formal policies (Woods & Çakır, 2011).

Conceptual Knowledge

Conceptual knowledge is defined as a “set of concepts, theories and ideas that a person has consciously stored in memory, where it is available for use in analysing issues or problems, or debating policies and practice” (Eraut, 2004, p. 80). In his view, the concepts may be consciously stored in memory, but its use is unreflective, whereas the opposite problem occurs with concepts learned in academic contexts that are more under critical control, but rather less likely to be put to practical use. Raising teachers' awareness of their conceptual knowledge is helping them to be more aware of how they already think, so they can bring their knowledge under greater critical control. Eraut (2004) states:

Conceptual development is often best started by as short discussion paper, which seeks to clarify the field, sort out the term and pose some important issues. Individuals note how they use the terms, or other similar terms, in their own current practice and add further issues to the agenda. (p.91)

He concludes that, concepts can be introduced to help people acquire a range of different ways of perceiving and understanding phenomena. This will help the teachers to be more conscious and more critical of their existing conceptual knowledge, recognize the potential of new ideas, take responsibility for their own continuing development of conceptual knowledge and, more obviously, practical types of knowledge.

3.5.4. Acquiring professional knowledge in English language teaching

Recently, the focus in teachers' education is more on what teachers' know and acquire knowledge, rather than what type of professional development they need (Carter, 1990). However, the fundamental question to teachers' education is how teachers learn to teach. Teacher knowledge is complicated in nature: it is based on theories and experience, which requires to use different forms of knowledge that should be included in teacher training and understand how teacher learn (Tinoca, Ponte, Galvão, & Curado, 2013).

The language base of language teachers has historically separated the two components: language and teaching into familiar dichotomies: content/pedagogy, theory/practice, and knowledge/skills (Burns & Richards, 2009). Therefore, the focus of the language programmes was to transmit the two-parts of the language base and learning theory (Crandall, 2000; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). In 1980s research on teacher cognition and the way teachers learn shifted from knowledge based to the focus on their identity, and previous knowledge (Burns & Richards, 2009).

3.5.5. Conceptualization of Teacher Education

A number of perspectives of teacher learning sometimes overlap and may be understood differently by different theoreticians and although such perspectives of teacher learning can be found underlying teachers education process (Richards & Nunan, 1990). These perceptions are discernible in language teachers' development field and programmes design. Skill learning in language teaching must necessarily complemented by actives that developed teachers' self-awareness, self-monitoring and self-evaluation to allow reflection and decision making awareness (Eraut, 2004; Wright, 2010).

Teacher Learning as Skills Learning

The view here is that if teachers received appropriate assistances, quality of teaching will be developed (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996). Education programmes involves presenting and modelling the skills and providing opportunities for teachers to learn variety of different skills which produce quality teaching (Richards & Nunan, 1990). Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) stated:

Knowledge-based advantages of teacher development are well known. They are practical in that they focus on methods that are understandable to and usable by teachers in their own classrooms. Where they are presented not just as one-shot workshops but with support and follow-up for teachers in their own classrooms, evaluations indicate positive support among involved teachers along with improved levels of use in the newly acquired skills. (p. 3)

Teacher Learning as a Cognitive Process

Teacher cognition term refers what teachers believe, think and know (Borg, 2003). Cognition, learning experience, and teacher education are the main themes that lead the language teachers' cognition discussion. (Borg, 2003). This perspective determines teachers' personal growth. And self-direct (Richards, 1998; Williams & Burden, 1997) because they have development potential and teachers are aware of their individual needs. According Hoban (2002) teachers' prior knowledge is fundamental to understand the cognitive perspective because it is consider as a main guidance on understanding new learning. Therefore, the cognitive perspective consider teachers' individuality and encourage autonomy, however, this might not be always suffice as a guide for learning because teachers may need formal support through non-directive interventions like formal supervision, counselling, peers feedback to

facilitate self-directed development (Boekaerts, 1997; Hollingsworth, 1989). This implies that teacher’s interaction with others to form a community of learning is important to for developing their teaching skills.

Teachers have knowledge as indicated in the diagram below, that explain teachers’ different aspect of work (Borg, 2003). The figure below is Borg’s schematic conceptualisation in which teachers’ cognitions play an essential role.

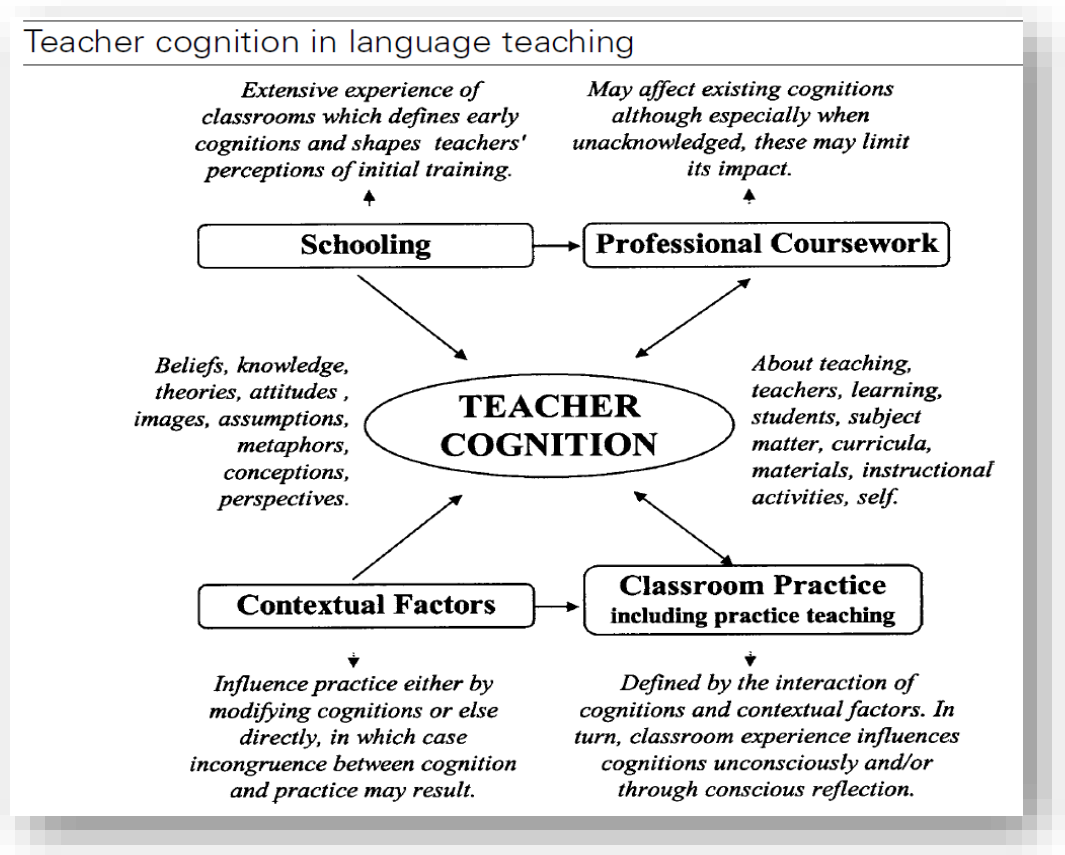


Figure 0-2 Teacher cognition in Language teaching

The relevance of this to the Qatari context is that from an early age the mode of teaching is predominantly didactic at all levels, so this inevitably informs the way prospective teachers see their role. Despite the reforms of 2004, which encouraged a more child-centred approach, this traditional approach still lingers in teachers’ understanding of their professional role.

For the study purpose, two main points are important to address when collecting data. First, CPD is more likely have an impact on language teachers' practices when it is based on an understanding of teachers' beliefs. Second, teachers' beliefs shape what teachers' do.

Teacher learning as a personal construction

Learning was perceived as on-going process based on personal constructivist view involving thought and action (Stuart, Akyeampong, & Croft, 2009). Different sources such as formal training, culture, school policies construct teachers' reality. (Wright, 2010). In addition to these conventional sources, teachers' can also access the web in order to adapt the learning environment which is appropriate to their needs (Drexler, 2010).

Personal constructivism suggests learner autonomy and increased self-regulation. However, the rapid increase in educational technology has to be taken into account, because of which teachers' responsibilities have increased. Teachers participate in learning based research network need be more self-directed, which presents for them a challenge to traditional forms of teaching and learning (Drexler, 2010). Such a challenge requires teachers to reconstruct the professional self-awareness. So, formulating network learning and the a community of practice can provide a foundation for their CPD. Steeple, Jones, and Goodyear (2002) contend that "learning in which information communication technology is used to promote connections: between one learner and other learners, between learners and tutors, between a learning community and its learning resources" (p.2).

Couros (2008) developed networked teacher model that exemplifies an teachers' Personal Learning Environment. (PLE). He suggested that "A teacher is better equipped to facilitate networked learning if he or she has experienced the construction so such a model first hand" (Couros, 2008, p. 67). The model of a teacher network, as shown below, has a substantial impact on a teacher personal development as shown in the figure 4 (Couros, 2008).

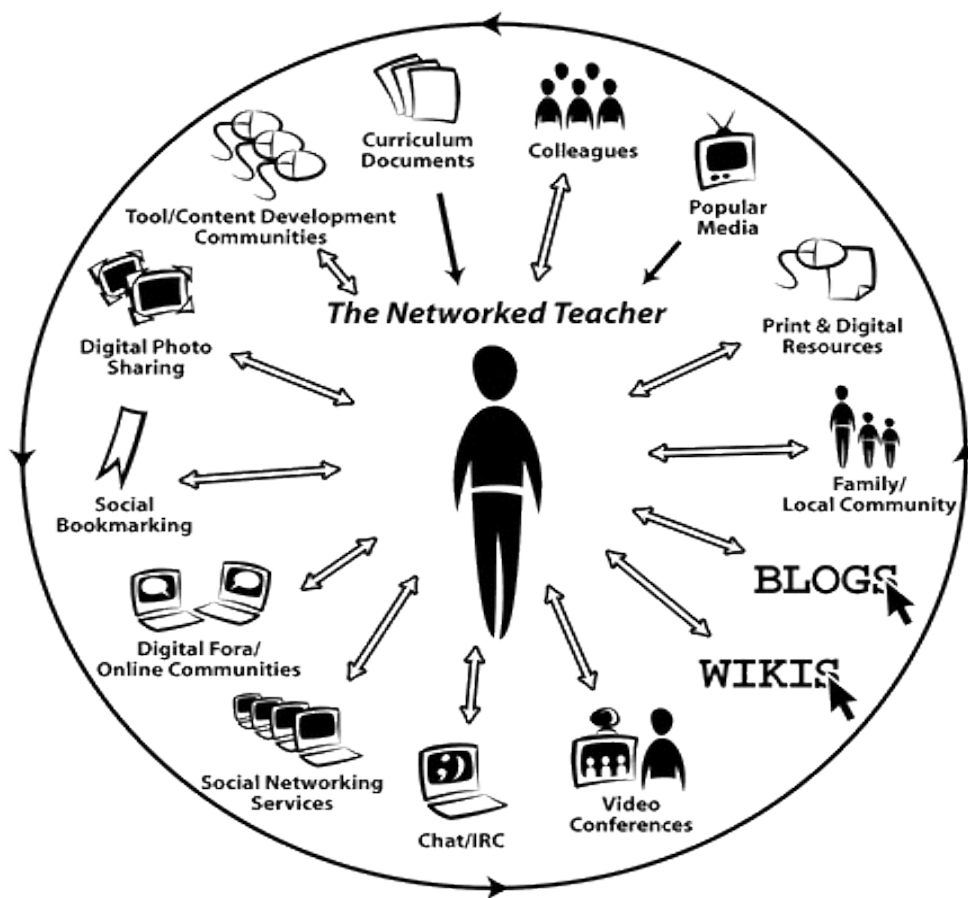


Figure 0-3 *The Networked Teacher* (Couros, 2008)

Networking helps teachers to build professional connections to support their practice and constructs a personal learning environment (Drexler, 2010). Teachers' success towards a new work model, which includes technology integration in their personal learning, will entail different ways of thinking, teaching, and training.

Teacher learning as a reflective practice

Reflective practice assists teachers to critique their performance and make decisions; however, this view is widely not accepted in language teacher education contexts (Burns & Richards, 2009). What reflective practice means in practice is not clear because this term is connected with a variety of teacher-learning activities and partly because the nature of

reflection, like other cognitive skills, remains somewhat elusive (Burns & Richards, 2009; Larrivee, 2000).

Ghaye (2010) defined reflective practice as “links between what we do (what we can call our practice) and how we might improve our effectiveness (by developing our practice)...also help us understand the links between feeling, thinking and doing. How we feel affects how we think. This affects what we actually do” (p.1).

Reflection on practice may appear very daunting for many teachers, especially in intuitions or education systems that do not recognize such broad responsibilities for teachers (Burns & Richards, 2009).

3.6. Recent Research in CPD

According to Pamment (2016), CPD is essential for updating and upgrading teachers’ knowledge because of the increasing rate of educational and social change in the Gulf countries. Moreover, CPD programmes help teachers acquire up to date knowledge about their teaching subject. They also need to be aware of the wider context because it informs their knowledge in terms of the content, pedagogy, and curriculum designed by them (Hameed & Qazi, 2011).

Internationally, professional development opportunities and experiences for teachers have become increasingly important. For example, in South Africa, national policy frameworks have been developed to help improve teacher development and practice (Bush, Kiggundu, & Moorosi, 2011). In addition, collaborative learning has been identified as an important strategy in improving teaching practices (Almalki, FitzGerald, & Clark, 2011).

These findings are also reflected in the Arab peninsula , where prestigious high-profile events in relation to CPD which have drawn the attention of the international community and media.Almalki et al. (2011). As highlighted by Qablan, Mansour, Alshamrani, Aldahmash, and Sabbah (2015), there has also been a significant development in CPD in Saudi Arabia. A study

conducted by Sabah, Fayez, Alshamrani, and Mansour (2014) highlighted that a large number of teachers in KSA have enrolled in various training programmes within the kingdom.

There appear to be two different types of training programmes in Saudi Arabia for teachers that include in-service training and pre-service training which is provided in colleges and universities and is part of their training has been updated in line with the present trends (Rayes, Hassali, & Abduelkarem, 2015). However, there remain some training issues which are associated with the management of classes, communication with the parents, along with the use of technology within the classrooms(Pamment, 2016). However, broadly, it can be inferred from the literature that CPD in the Saudi Arabia has been updated on the continuous basis for the development of the teachers and betterment of the education system in the country. While this may be the case, in-depth research on ELTs' teachers' professional development in the rest of the region is very sparse and these gaps will be highlighted below.

3.7. Research Gaps

In previous research of the Gulf countries, researchers have focused on the effectiveness of the CPD within the context of development of the teachers and their countries. However, the number of studies has been very limited. Moreover, the main gap identified is that little importance has been given to study the phenomenon of CPD in Qatar. Hence, the present study has been designed to fill the gap in the existing the research as there is a noticeable lack of ELTs professional development research in the Qatari context (Reynolds et al., 2016). The second reason is to empower the female voice in the education field, as there is a lack of understanding and consideration of how a female English language teacher's professional identity is formed and how they experience CPD within their career (Day & Leitch, 2007; Roberts, 1998; Sachs, 2001).

3.8. Conclusion

This literature review summarized the study's conceptual framework which is based on three interrelated concepts: Identity, Culture and CPD. It has been argued that this framework is fundamental to understanding the problematic nature of professional development for female ELTs in Qatar. As a Qatari and professional development specialist in a university context, I am well aware of the constraints which arise from social and culture imperatives that influence change in the country. Thus, I have chosen this framework to help illuminate and explore some of these issues, as well as offering new theoretical insights into the phenomenon of female English language teachers' experiences and perceptions of CPD in Qatar.

The next chapter outlines the key methodological decisions that were made during this study.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1. Introduction

The aim of this research is to explore female English language teachers' (ELTs) experiences and perceptions of continuing professional development (CPD) in Qatar. The study was informed by three closely related factors - identity, culture, and CPD. This chapter describes the methodology and research approach that was used to answer the research questions. In addition, the research design is explained, which includes the approach to data collection and analysis. Finally, ethical considerations are considered, including the standpoint of the researcher and limitations of the study.

4.2. Research Questions

The main research question is: what are female English Language Teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development in Qatar?

To answer this question, the following sub questions were posed:

RQ1. What personal and professional experiences help develop female ELTs professional identities?

RQ2. In what ways do female ELTs perceive and experience the role of culture in their professional development?

RQ3. How do female ELTs perceive and experience Continuing Professional Development throughout their career?

4.3. Philosophical Stance / Research Paradigm

In general, there are two main research paradigms. The scientific paradigm aims for objectivity, predictability, measurability, patterning, controllability, and the ascription of laws

and rules of causality. Normally, it involves the use of quantitative methods and experimental design to determine/verify hypothesis and the paradigm is based on findings that can be generalized (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). In contrast, interpretive research is concerned with understanding meaning in its context and participants' perceptions. As opposed to positivism, which is concerned with objectivity independent of the thoughts of people, the interpretive paradigm seeks to build theories from participants' experiences. Researchers who adopt this paradigm assume that meaning and knowledge can be interpreted, hence there is no independent and objective knowledge. Interpretivists show an interest in subjective meanings while exploring social settings and events that influence individuals. Such researchers prefer to use a variety of data collection methods that include interviews, ethnography, and extensive contextual description (Bryman, 2012).

In line with the study's research questions, this study is framed within the interpretive paradigm. Within this paradigm, the research has been undertaken from an ontological perspective based on the assumption that the perceptions of the participants' are informed by their social reality and their work setting. Crotty (1998) defines this as "the study of being". Therefore, the study is not based on a social reality that is objective or external to participants' awareness; rather, it is based on a reality that is socially constructed.

The epistemological assumptions underlying this study centre on the English language teachers' prior experiences, the scope of their knowledge and the justification of their beliefs about how they perceive themselves as a teacher (their identity). The study explores teachers' awareness of their previous experiences by means of semi-structured interviews and the relationship between what they know about themselves. Thus, the epistemological aim is to understand the subjective meaning and interpretations that teachers attach to their teaching instructions and performances; and gaining this insight enables a better awareness of the issues emerging from their CPD experiences. This relationship is shown in Table 4.2.

Table 0-1 Paradigm Justification (Ponterotto, 2005)

Interpretivism/ Constructionism	Links to this research aims	
Ontology	Reality, according to the constructivist position, is subjective and influenced by the context of the situation, namely the individual's experience and perceptions, the social environment, and the interaction between the individual and the researcher (<u>Ponterotto, 2005</u>).	The study explores English language teacher CPD in Qatar by interpreting the subjective experiences of the research participants linked to identity, culture, and CPD
Epistemology	Epistemology is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about social world and focuses on questions such as: how can we know about reality and what is the basis of our knowledge? (<u>Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013, p. 6</u>).	The research sub- questions are all based on the study's conceptual framework understand English Language teachers' perceptions (subjective) of their experiences of CPD.

4.4 Methodological approach

The central research question and the objectives determines what type of methodological approach should be appropriate for the research with qualitative research often being associated with the interpretive paradigm (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). According to Cresswell (1998) qualitative research...

..could be expressed as a process of inquiry for understanding that is based upon the distinct and methodological traditions for inquiry which explores a human or social problem. A multifaceted general picture, analysis of words, details, informants and the conduction of study in a context which is natural...
(p.15).

So, within the interpretive paradigm, the study has adopted a narrative approach because it aimed to explore the life histories of the teachers with respect to their experiences and perceptions of continuing professional development in Qatar which links closely to their identity formation and cultural experiences. Thus, in this research, a narrative approach, specifically life history, has been adopted:

Narrative as a term comprises several meanings and could be used in various disciplines to refer many aspects but usually is used as a synonym for story... analytical attention is paid by a narrative scholar in the area of figuring out how the facts assembled in such way. How the story got made and the purpose behind it and for who was it constructed? What kind of discussions on the culture it draws on the-take for granted? What have been attained? (Riessman & Speedy, 2007, pp. 428-429).

Narrative research allows flexibility in the data collection process, however, the structure for data collection is coherent and logical and helps in addressing the research question. “Narrative research is the study of participant’s lives with contemporary narrative inquiry being characterized as the amalgamation of several interdisciplinary approaches which mainly revolve around the interest in the biographical particulars narrated by the people who live them” (Floyd, 2012, p. 223). Narrative inquiry is considered as a developing field that is related to the experiences and personal perspectives of people associated with a series of events or a particular event. Therefore, the approach is associated with studies that are based on research questions that explore perceived and subjective experiences of individuals, such as this one.

According to Chase (2007) “narrative inquiry is a field that hasn’t been constructed; it is still in progress” (p. 651). However, the narrative method has a rich tradition which has originated in the fields of anthropology and sociology with life history research being used for over 100 years (Goodson and Sikes, 2001). Researchers influenced by the life history approach

express it as a narrative which comprises participants' experiences (Chase, 2007). Since the 1980s, there has been increasing interest in life history research to understand the life of teachers.

Atkinson and Delamont (2006) have argued that the life history method highlights the important impacts, experiences, situations, problems, themes and learnings of a person's life time (p.7). According to (Bryman, 2012), "the life history interview method is a kind of invitation for a flashback in the course of life" (p.488).

By definition 'life history' refers to an autobiographical narrative the purpose of which is to answer the questions such as who are you and what do you believe? It explains the actions that are taken by individuals: "life historians study the behaviour and attitude of respective individuals while observing the depth of the events witnessed by them" (Goodson & Sikes, 2001, p. 2). Given the study's main research question, it was felt that a life history approach, situated within the interpretive paradigm, was the most appropriate.

4.5. Participants in the Study

The study participants are 16 English language teachers in independent schools who are involved in in-service training programmes that are provided by mainly the Supreme Educational Council (SEC), Qatar University, which supervises eight schools for every two years, and their own school. Thus, the selected sample consisted of full time teachers who have three years' teaching experience. One of the reasons for choosing qualified teachers is to be able to produce a comprehensive assortment of perceptions and awareness about English language teacher CPD. The second reason is that the selected sample is involved in CPD that is also provided by Qatar University. This means that the English language teachers are under the SEC professional development agenda, Qatar University, and their schools plans. Since a key aim is

to empower the female teachers and give voice to a group who have previously not been heard, all participants are females.

4.6. Data Collection

Data collection strategies are a process of deciding among available alternatives for collection data and making decisions about how to capture the reality of the phenomena (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006).

As far as other data collection methods are concerned like study of documents, questionnaires, or surveys does not clear the fundamental concepts of beliefs and sentiments of the people (Briggs, Morrison, & Coleman, 2012), whereas life history procedure does. The life history approach uses semi-structured interviews to gather information. The question formed and asked in semi-structured interviews are quite open handed that does not limit the interviewee to give a specific answer (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; McCracken, 1988). The main objective of creating such an environment is to comfort the speaker and listener both to discuss the story in detail.

According to Seidman (2012), ‘the main process of interrogation, then, is interviewing. Depicting stories of events has been a basic manner of recorded history that helped humans relate to the occurrences of life. Such type of interview is very meaningful to examine a particular notion of an individual’s life in difficult life story context. Few could ask is life history or life story science? Reason and Rowan (1981) response:

The most captivating tales are those which has the potential to touch the minds, hearts and souls of people and that can give an insight to their own selves including their issues and inner emotions and feelings. The objective is to attain a human science, which can support this goal in a better way. The question, then, is not “Is storytelling science?” but “Can science learn to tell good stories?” (p.50)

Considering the nature of the study, the narrative approach (specifically life history interviews) has been selected as appropriate to meet the study's aims.

4.7. Seeking Approval

Before conducting interviews with teachers ethical approval was requested and granted by the University of Reading Ethics Committee – (see [Appendix A](#)). A letter was sent to each school principal about the study aims in order to invite the English language teachers' to be part of the study. Having gained ethical approval, the researcher started contacting the school principals and communicating with the teachers.

4.8. Interview Schedule

The data collection tool selected for this study is semi-structured interviews. [Cohen et al. \(2007\)](#) states that semi-structured interview is open-ended to permit rearrangement, digression and extension, discovering new concerns. The interviews were organized with the teachers from independent schools. Using this tool, the researcher is directly involved with the study sample. To conduct a semi-structured interview, the researcher does not have to follow a formally structured protocol and with this flexibility in mind can direct the conversation in any way as and when the opportunity arises. This kind of interview is very useful when it comes to exploring a topic in depth. However, it is hard to analyze semi-structured interview data if the researcher fails to choose a systematic way to do so ([Trochim, 2003](#)).

The semi-structured Interview Guide ([Appendix B](#)) comprised of three themes with prompt questions: theme one refers to; English language teacher identity and explores life history; theme two, refers to the school culture that create opportunities for teachers' education and how teachers can identify themselves as active learners; theme three refers to teachers' CPD experiences.

4.9. Interview Processing

Three stages were applied to collect data: First, giving the participants the information sheet (see [Appendix C](#)); second, face-to-face interviews; third, sending a copy of the interview transcript to participants. The first stage is important because participants could have time to read the information sheets that includes a brief description of the study. After explaining what is the study about and what they could expect from the interviews, an Informed Consent was given to them (see [Appendix D](#)). The consent form contained participants' information regarding their rights and confidentiality. It also explained that the participants have the right to withdraw at any time. The second stage was face-to-face interview. The first step was emailing the participants to arrange a mutually convenient place and time to meet. The meeting would last for 1-2 hours. After the interview, the transcript was sent to participants for their comment and to them a chance to propose adjustments or choose to reject permission to use certain information in the transcript.

4.10. Interview Technique

The technique used to facilitate a personal response from the participants, using their own words and reciting what happened to them in order. This entailed putting them at ease and ensuring that they did not feel in any way threatened. Each interview was recorder for easier transcription and improved validity of findings. Moreover, the interview was conducted in English.

An open-ended questioning approach was adopted: for example, 'tell me about yourself'. Alternatively, as appropriate the researcher would tell the respondent about her own relevant life history to establish an invitational feeling in the conversation. It was expected for this approach to enable the researcher to understand what may be complex relationships and experiences that may otherwise be difficult to uncover.

According to Goodson and Sikes (2001)

... Most of these strategies and techniques are concerned with establishing and maintaining a positive and trusting relationship between interviewer and informant... Thus the researchers are advised to share their own experience and perceptions, and to establish common ground through the clothes they wear, the interests they profess, the company they are seen to keep, the language they use and how they present themselves. (p.28)

What is important here is that the conversations should be conducted in a non-judgmental manner and that although they may be at times untidy they can produce illuminating insights that are worthy of analysis. This may require the researcher to be adaptive in questioning, especially in following up interesting lines of thought. It also indicates the importance of being a patient and attentive listener.

Before starting the interviews, the following actions were taken. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and their anonymity, told that they receive an interview transcript, so they could offer any comments or concerns they might have. For the purposes of writing up the interviews, each would be given a pseudonym. All the participants have the right to decide when it is suitable for them to have the interview. Respondents were reminded that although they have already given their permission to be interviewed, they could withdraw it any time.

4.11. Data Analysis

The study data analysis follows rigorous in-depth planning and careful attention to the phenomenon under study. The beliefs that underpin the data analysis is that people can subscribe to different views and they can accommodate to the world in different ways that make different adjustments (Newby, 2010). Therefore, the researcher has not striven to be neutral. Data analysis was almost simultaneous with the data collection stage. The approach in this study was to

interview five participants and start to analyze the data. Reflexive analysis or reflexivity is the main reason for chosen to start analyzing the interview to ensure the quality of the research (Good, Herrera, Good, & Cooper, 1985). Hence, the data is filtered, authorized and organized in respect to relative subjects and topics, which consists of five-step action: (a) Indexing; (b) Familiarization; (c) Mapping and interpretation (d) Identifying a thematic framework; and (e) Charting (Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003).

The very essential stage is familiarization that defines a phase when researcher is more familiarized and involved in the material by hearing the recording or reading the text of the information gathered (Ritchie et al., 2013). The researcher wrote notes of the recurrent themes. The second stage is identifying a thematic framework after being familiarized with the emerged themes or issues. Ritchie et al. (2013) This stage is mainly known to make summary of the repetitive arguments. The next stage is recognizing the particular model after being familiarized with the developed topics and issues. Ritchie et al. (2013) said, it is necessary to keep a broad mind by not enforcing the material to compensate the previous issues which usually supports the thematic framework. The third step is indexing, that highlights the different segments of the data that links with specified themes. Ritchie et al. (2013) suggests that numerical system is used for indexing purposes and elucidated at the side of the text. The fourth stage is charting, which is specified to topics that were listed in charts; it means the facts and figures must be allocated in charts which includes heading and sub-headings (Ritchie et al., 2013). The last step is mapping and interpretation, which includes feature study of the key concepts. Researcher interpretation is supported through this analysis.

4.11.1. Coding and developing themes.

The raw data is gathered in the above mentioned five steps, after which the second stage in analysing the data process consists of interpreting the qualitative data from the semi-

interviews: the reasoning is mainly thematic rather than digressive (Riessman & Speedy, 2007). To study the data, a coding system was received (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Miles and Huberman (1994) gave an elaborative and refined structure of this process. They propose of starting with a transitional ‘start list’ of codes formulated earlier to framework. The agenda derives “from the theoretical groundwork, series of research questions, complications, hypotheses, and/or leading variables which is brought by the researcher to analysis” (p.58). In this framework, according to Miles and Huberman (1994) coding system, the antecedent codes appear from the exploration of studies. The researcher struggled to make sure that the coding system has all the needed data. After coding and organizing data into specific sections, the results were classified in a systematic manner and recorded in a detailed way. This study used Maxqda software to analyse the information. Maxqda is a software programme designed for computer assisted qualitative and mix method data, multimedia and text analysis in scientific, educational and business institutions, as exemplified below:

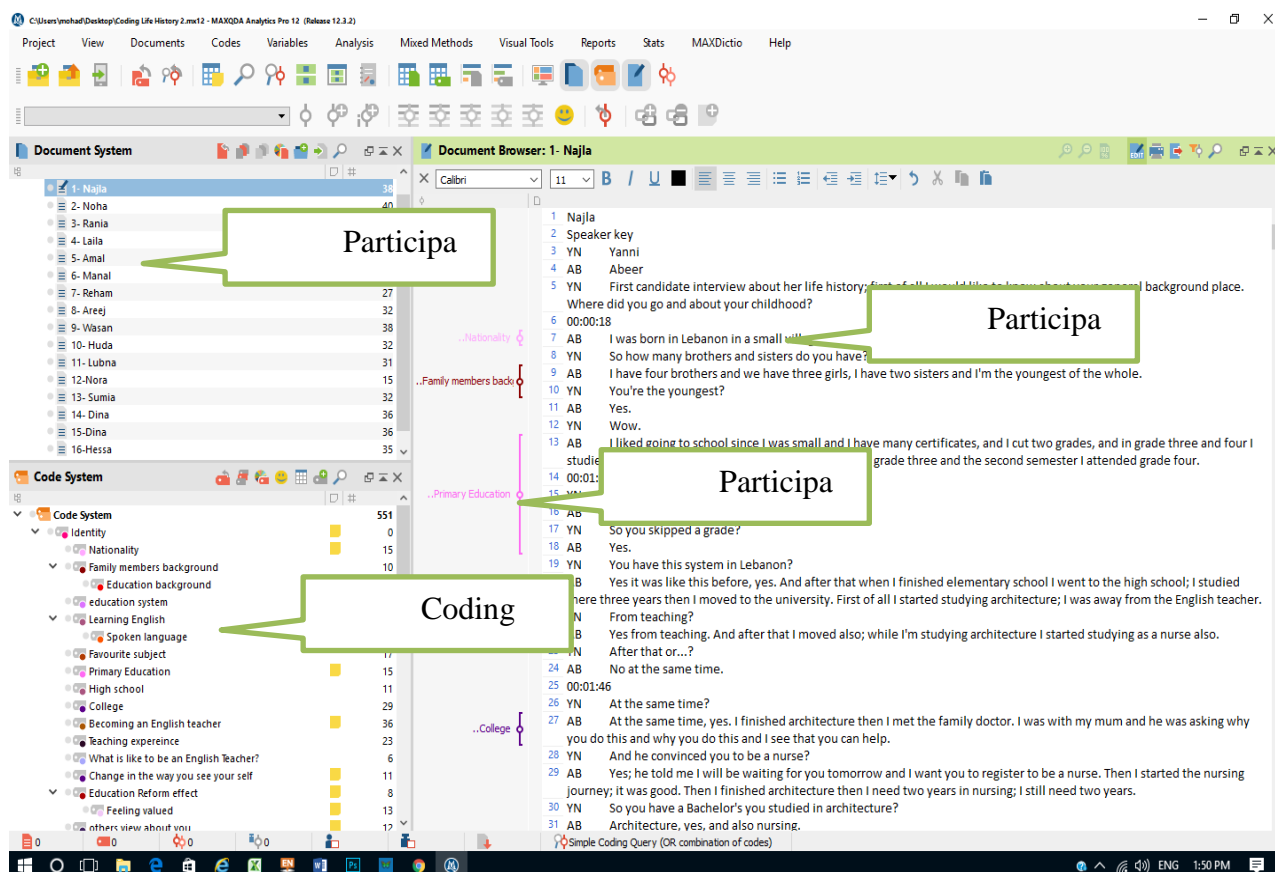


Figure 0-1 Coding System

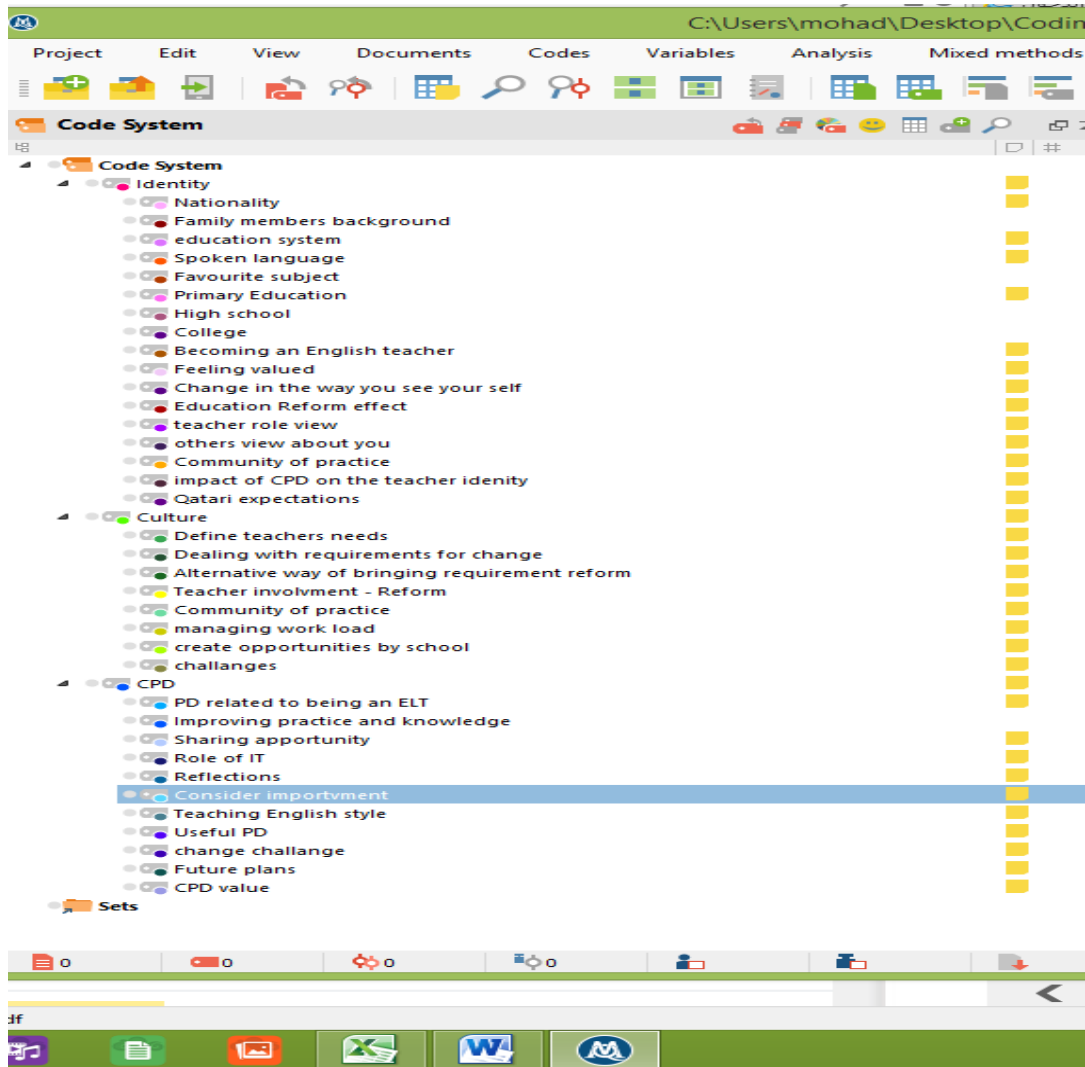


Figure 0-2 Coding (MAXQDA software)

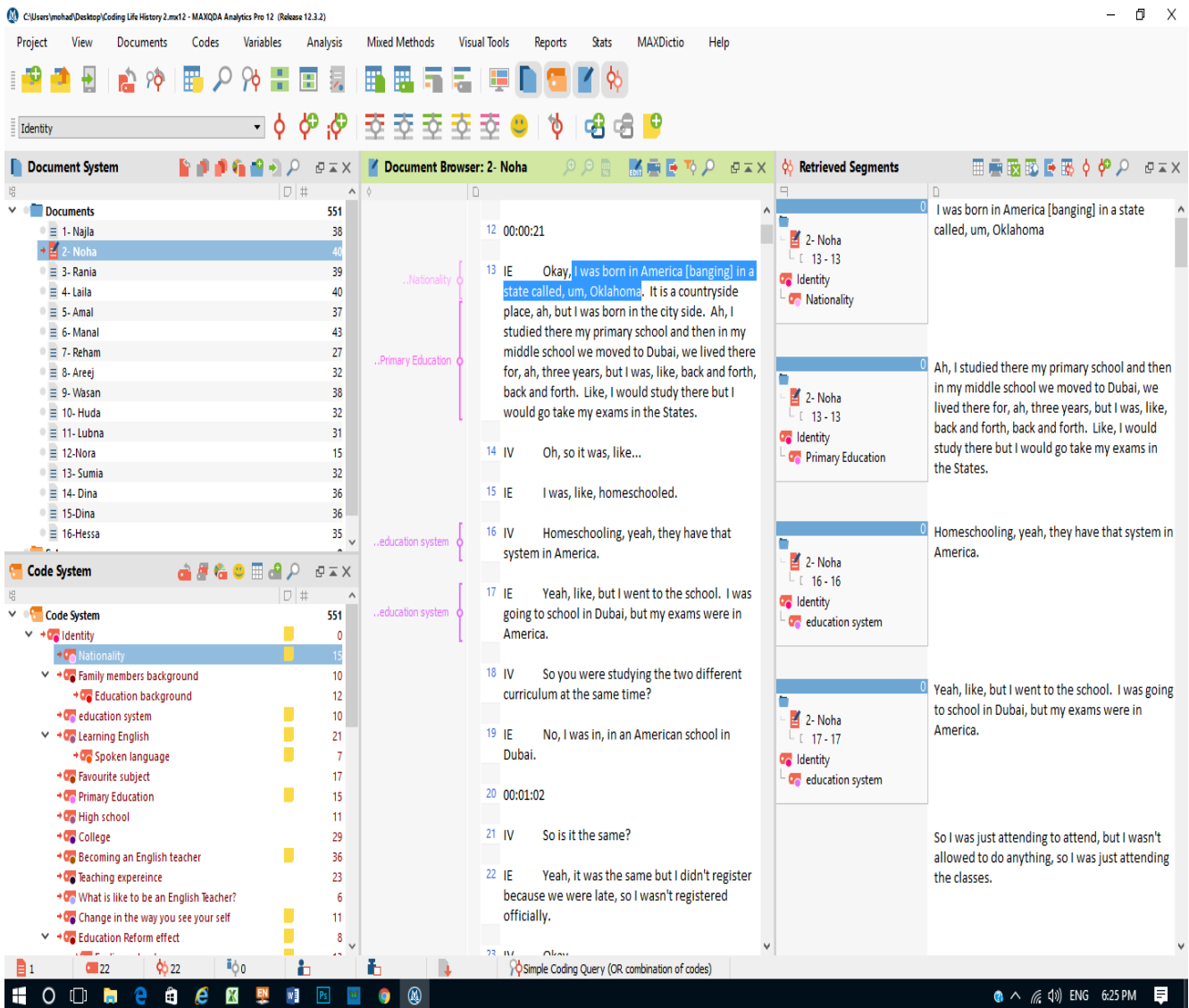


Figure 0-3 Documents Browsers

Few recommended applications were prepared in mind for coding activity throughout.

- It is important to code frequently that may enhance the perception of the data and support in theoretical sampling. It also benefits in being overloaded by your data at once that usually happens if you do not come across the analysing procedure completely until the period of collecting the data.
- Go through your basic documents and manuscripts without referring to any notes for interpretation; and at the end list down what you find beneficial and impressive.

- Recheck your collected information but do not forget to form important key points of your study.
- Revise your codes to look for repetitive words that give the same meaning and check on your codes if they link with the matter that is mentioned.
- Bring general concepts to relate with your codes. Make a connection with your theories that are being developed. Give a detailed overview to the existing literature. And see if you can confirm on the information through some authentic links.
- Manage the coding in context. Analysis should not be mixed with coding (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

4.12. Trustworthiness

The essential issues that arise in findings is the authenticity and credibility of the results mentioned. The reader and researches needs to acknowledge the importance of research study, describing the procedure used, and the data perceived. There should be a difference in research methodology and personal research paradigms. Hence, the analysis should be checked repeatedly before reaching the final stage.

One more method of interpreting the quality of research is to correlate the paradigm and methodology employed with written research. According to Shenton (2004), “the credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative research is usually taken into question by the opponents, because their theory of validity cannot be forwarded in same naturalistic way” (p.63). It is referred that the reliability of qualitative and quantitative research contrasts. For example, the idea of exterior validity as “a contract among two efforts to share the identical thing in differentiated procedures is linked with investigating generalization” (Hammersley, 1987, p. 73), However, the objective of qualitative research is to develop hypotheses for future discussion rather than testing it. The debate in utilizing quantitative study to ensure quality is elaborate in Newby (2010):

Some qualitative researcher researchers have decided to reject not only the methodology of quantitative research but also the terminology and have substituted their own. The reason why they reject validity as a criterion for quality is that they believe that it must require the assumption that there is a single real world that we research. They substitute for, example, credibility (for validity, dependability (for reliability) and confirmability (for objectivity. These may be perfectly good terms in their own rights but, in many ways they are just as unclear as the originals (p.121).

There is certainly disagreement on contrasting terms to focus the plausibility of qualitative research findings and methods, such as dependability, triangulation, and credibility.

However, qualitative research, as it applies to this study, views the world through three different lenses that are identity, culture, and CPD. This is appropriate in describing and understanding the significance of language teachers' CPD experiences and how they describe their professional identity.

This study provides an overview of common terms and provides details description of participants' background. Lincoln and Guba (1985) and replaces reliability and validity with the corresponding concept of 'trustworthiness', which encompasses four key aspects: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2008), which are discuss below. Therefore, this approach was adopted to form an evaluation base of research effectiveness.

4.12.1. Credibility

To improve the study credibility, the researcher followed what Nolan and Behi (1994) identified as a certain method to establishing qualitative data credibility. As stated by Cutcliffe

and McKenna (1999) presenting and verifying data in qualitative studies depend on heavily on the participants agreement with what is presented.

Transcripts were sent by email to the participants in order to check that they agreed their accuracy. Such a checking technique decreases the chances of misrepresentation and guarantees viewpoints were translated correctly into data (Krefting, 1991). This approach is considered to be appropriate for the study design. As stated by Cutcliffe and McKenna (1999)

“ ... perhaps the most useful indicator of the credibility of the findings produced is when the practitioners themselves and the readers of the theory view the study findings and regard them as meaningful and applicable in terms of their experience” (p.379).

In this sense, it could be meaningful when the study findings are shared and discussed with experienced practitioners who have a professional interest in them. Extended involvement allows the researcher and participants to make sure that researcher is accustomed to participants’ perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Intense participation improves research findings through friendly familiarity and detection of otherwise hidden information (Kielhofner (1982)).

As explained in the process of data analysis, the researcher intended to start analysing the data after the first five interviews. The purpose of this step is that the researcher would be able to assess the influence of his/her personal background, perceptions, and interests during the data analysis in order to ensure that exaggeration does not happen. This strategy is named reflexive analysis or reflexivity (Good et al., 1985). In this sense, Aamodt (1982) states that qualitative approach is considered to be a reflexive approach because of the research involvement, not merely an observer. By adopting such a reflexive approach to the researcher can to avoid any unconscious bias.

During the interview, credibility can be established by restating questions, questions repetition, or questions expansion (Krefting, 1991). Finally, a detailed explanation of the investigator background is important in qualitative research to provide detail on the person collected the data (Patton, 1990).

4.12.2. Transferability

In conventional research, making generalizations includes an interchange between internal and external validity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Cronbach (1975) “when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalization is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion” (p.125). In qualitative research generalization has been termed naturalistic generalization, that refers sensing the natural conversations and to similarities and issues of objects within the context (Stake, 1978). However, regarding this research nature, findings transferability cannot be specified: the researcher can provide adequate explanations that the reader decide whether the study approach and the findings are appropriate to the situation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the case of this qualitative study, the assumptions was made at the beginning that the findings are in nature descriptive (Krefting, 1991), demonstrating life viewpoint through life history interviews with generalizability not a key aim. Indeed, generalizing goes against the key assumptions of the methodology. Instead, it is hoped that the findings may be *transferable* to similar situations and contexts.

One strategy to address transferability of this study is to give detailed characteristics of the participants (Krefting, 1991). Therefore, the researcher provided background of information about the participants. Details background of participants is essential in life history methods. As Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Firestone (1993) noted, the researcher’s task is to provide an adequate data base to allow transferability judgements to be made by others.

4.12.3. Dependability

Dependability can be achieved through a process of auditing through confirming that the research process is reasonable, observable and clearly documented (Schwandt, 2001). Thus, this thesis includes a great deal of detail on the research process and data collection and analysis techniques.

4.12.4. Confirmability

One of the strategies to address the research confirmability is to address the researcher position and background. According to Goodson and Sikes (2001), in life history research personal and emotional aspects of the researcher should be acknowledged. Thus, I included my own biography in chapter 1. Please see table 4.3 for a summary of what was done to ensure trustworthiness in this study.

Table 0-2 Summary of Trustworthiness Criteria

Criteria	Strategy
Credibility	Participant checking Extended engagement Reflexivity Interview techniques Detailed description of the investigator
Transferability	Dense background of participants Full description of the study's related conceptual framework, local context and related factors such as globalization and marketization
Dependability	Audit trial Code-recode procedure
Confirmability	Confirmability audit

	Documentation
	Resources
	Researcher position

4.13. Ethical Consideration

Most of the people think of ethics as rules that help them to distinguish between what is right or wrong. Ethical norms and moral development occur throughout life and most people learn ethical norms from their parents, teachers, and social. Societies have legal rules and laws that control people behaviour, and laws exist to force the people to accept the moral standards of the society. Apparently, ethics and the laws are not the same because an action could be legal but not ethical. Ethical concepts can be used to evaluate or interpret laws that are set by people. Many discussions about ethics definitions begin then end with disagreement about the answer. Many people tend to equate ethics with religion, feelings, or following the laws.

The researcher also followed established ethical protocols for undertaking qualitative research. Participants in this study are referred to by the pseudonyms to protect their identity. It is important to understand the ethical and legal responsibilities of conducting educational research because the researcher deals with human beings. Most people think of ethics as rules that help them to distinguish between what is right or wrong. Ethical norms and moral development occur throughout life, and most people learn ethical norms from their parents, teachers, and society. Societies have legal rules and laws that control people's behaviours and societies used laws to force the people to accept the moral standards of the society.

The ethics principles that are considered in this study, as presented by (Schumacher & McMillan, 2006), are;

1. The researcher has a responsibility to the ethical standards to which the study adheres,

2. The researcher should inform the subjects of all the research aspects,
3. The researcher should be honest with the subjects as possible,
4. Subjects must be protected from physical and mental discomfort and danger,
5. Written informed consent must be obtained from the participants or institutions before participation in the study,
6. Confidentiality must be ensured,
7. Potential misinterpretations and misuses of the research should be avoided.
8. The researcher should provide subjects with opportunity to receive the results.

All above-stated issues affect the quality of the research and finding, if the researcher ignored any of these items, the quality of the research is questionable.

Through the informed consent process, participants were presented with the ethical issues and information that they need to know before participating in the study. The participants who were found eligible based on the characteristics of the sample needed for the study were given copies of the Informed Consent (Appendix D) through email. The forms contained the following details: (a) title of the study, (b) purpose of the study, (c) sample characteristics, (d) confidentiality and data security measures, (e) options for exit or termination of participation, (f) scope of participation, and (g) risks involved when participating in the study. Those who agree to the terms of participation discussed in the informed consent were asked to sign the form and send a signed copy through email. By signing the form, the participant signified that she (a) understood the content of the consent form and (b) agreed to participate. After receiving the signed informed consent, each participant was contacted through phone calls or email conversations to schedule the data collection session.

4.14. Method Limitation

There are several considerations when conducting a life history interview as a tool of collecting data. First, interviews provide information clarified through interviewees point of view (Creswell, 2013). Second, interviews are conducted in a designated place rather than a natural setting. Third, the researcher's presence may bias the participants' responses. Fourth, participants tend express their feelings and talk about their experience in way that satisfy the researcher's (Cohen et al., 2007).

To avoid the limitations, the researcher explained in depth in 'Quality Criteria' how some stated issued can be avoided.

4.15. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined and justified the methodological choices taken by the researcher throughout this research project. The following chapter presents the findings and data analysis.

Chapter 5: Data analysis and discussion 1

5.1. Introduction

This section will present the main findings obtained by conducting 16 interviews from EL teachers in Qatar and will address the first research sub question which is what personal and professional experiences help develop female ELTs professional identities? As discussed previously in the literature review chapter, the identity of a language teacher cannot be detached from issues related to language knowledge proficiency, social interaction and teaching skills (Pennington & Richards, 2016). Several key themes that are related to the professional identities of EL teachers in Qatar emerged from the data analysis. These themes are combined together to develop the main themes as follows:

- educational experiences and family background;
- higher education and initial career experience;
- becoming a teacher;
- influence of their teachers;
- teacher-student relationships, challenges, relationships with colleagues;
- changing role of teachers, CPD, educational reforms in Qatar;
- communities of practice and cultural expectations.

This chapter summarizes the findings of the present study under each theme pertaining to the identity development of EL teachers and analyses it in accordance with the literature and conceptual framework. It serves to understand the perceptions of teachers working in Qatar in terms of professional development, learning, contextual influences, and how these and other factors shape their overall professional identity. The data presented in this analysis were chosen according to unique aspects of the sample and representativeness. For example, one teacher represents a group that was raised in an illiterate family; another was chosen because she represented teachers who were raised in an educated family. The data were selected and grouped

carefully to represent all aspects of a teachers' life, such as the personal circumstances that lead to becoming a teacher and their family background.

5.2. Personal Circumstances and Identity Formation

As discussed in Chapter 3, in teaching of second language, the development of identity of teachers is a new and evolving field of inquiry (Pennington & Richards, 2016). The research in this field can be tracked back to two comparatively separate and independent schools of thought on the identity of language teachers. One line of thought is related to the investigation of knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of teachers in applied linguistics, which makes the teacher the epicenter of research focus. Examples of beliefs and attitude were teachers' strategies used, which may reveal teachers' personal and professional identities (Xu, 2012). This line of research emphasizes the social and cultural as well as socio-political facets of the identity of language teachers. Examples of socio-political characteristics that may reflect identity of teachers include gender, race, family background, socio-economic status.

Becoming a language teacher means learning what is required to be an effective EL teacher, i.e. to develop a specific identity of EL teacher. Identity refers to the different roles, cultural as well as social, that teachers endorse when communicating with their colleagues and pupils (Beijaard et al., 2004a; Taylor, Busse, Gagova, Marsden, & Roosken, 2013). These roles are dynamic and are developed through the social processes that take place inside and outside of classrooms (Beijaard et al., 2004a; Richards & Farrell, 2011). The sense of identity of English language teachers - who they feel they are and who others take them to be - is shaped by various factors, such as their personal background, their age, gender, culture, work conditions and school culture (Richards & Farrell, 2011).

Examining how the identity of a teacher develops has garnered considerable attention from researchers and academics alike (Durmaz, 2015). Various studies were conducted in the

context of ESL teaching while focusing on the identity development of teachers as per students' requirements, emphasising on various steps in the process. In language teaching, studies of identity started in relation to the learners of language, but by the end of the 1990s attention of researchers drifted towards the development of identity of language teachers (Martel & Wang, 2014). It can be taken from the outcome of these studies that to create better working environments for teachers and provide better opportunities professional development, understanding what constitutes English language teachers' professional identity, the issues that influence the identity development and the contexts in which the English language teachers' professional identity of are developed are important.

Consistent with this second perspective, many related research interests have emerged, such as the marginalization of immigrant teachers, the situation of language teaching as a profession, the position of non-native speaking teachers and the relationships between teachers and students (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). The origins of research into teacher identity lie in the interests of researchers in applied linguistics and educational research, such as the knowledge and cognition of teachers, professional development, teacher beliefs and reflective practice. These areas of research can be seen as the precursors of research in teacher identity since they focus on the key factors that impact on the development of teacher identity.

Scotland (2014) points out that identity development is fundamental in teaching and provides a framework for tutors to develop understandings of acting, behaving and becoming what is required from their place in the society. Moreover, socialization influencing language teachers' professional identity within a community of practice where teachers cooperate with their students, with other teachers, with administration and with teacher mentors. These issues were be developed further through the following data analysis and discussion.

5.3. Family Background

To understand English teachers' identity, their family background is considered as a critical element that plays a significant role in shaping their identity. Beijaard et al. (2004b) claimed that family background is a significant component or foundation of the identity of a teacher. Schepens, Aelterman, and Vlerick (2009) further claimed that the family orientation of a teacher as they were growing up determines the professional identity of his or her future self. This explains why teachers commonly claim that they belong to a family of educators, because their family background is a strong driver of their professional identity. This observation was also prominent or evident in the answers of the participants, as discussed in the succeeding paragraphs. Based on the results of the study, the theme of family background under the concept of identity revolves around the nationality, native language, family background, education of parents, and childhood experiences of the teachers. Table 5-4 below shows a summary of the respondents' demographics. As can be seen from the table, seven teachers came from Egypt, two from Lebanon, while others came from USA, Palestine, India, Jordan, Tunisia and Syria. All the participants had at least three years of teaching experience.

Table 0-1 Summary of Participant and Country of Origin

	Participants	Country	Age	Teaching experience	Qualification
1.	Najla	Egypt	29	4	Literature and Translation Studies
2.	Noha	Egypt	34	8	Education and Art faculty, English department
3.	Rania	Egypt	40	12	faculty for education
4.	Laila	Egypt	45	18	faculty of education, English department
5.	Amal	Egypt	30	5	English language literature
6.	Manal	Egypt	35	9	English literature and Art
7.	Reham	Egypt	40	5	English literature
8.	Areej	Egypt	37	10	English literature
9.	Wasan	Lebanon	33	7	Faculty of art and education
10.	Huda	Lebanon	30	5	English language literature (Bachelor)
11.	Lubna	USA	28	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2yrs Medeia • English language Literature
12.	Nora	Palestine	30	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English literature (4yrs) • Diploma in education (2yrs)
13.	Sumia	India	41	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General English, English Literature, Economics and Political Science • Master in English Literature
14.	Dina	Jordan	31	4	Italian and English literature
15.	Deema	Tunisia	49	12	Bachelor in Teaching English language
16.	Hessa	Syria	35	9	Bachelor in Teaching English language

The teachers came from varied cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, in terms of their nationality, financial and social status, size of family, educational background of the family, birth order and family values. This means that their socialization had a great influence on their identity formation. Differences in native language were also important factors. The native language of 14 of the teachers was Arabic, one English, one Hindi, while one speaks French and Spanish and one speaks Italian and Germany. For example, Huda's mother was French and did not understand a word of English, so she had learned English from her daughter. However, a common factor among these teachers was that they had developed a liking and an inclination towards English as a foreign language. Their responses reveal their beliefs and attitudes about English, which suggests that learning English is a source of pride for them, regardless of the dominance of their own native languages.

One teacher, Lubna, was born in the city side of Oklahoma, USA, and later moved to Dubai for three years. She would go to the US for her exams. She attended her primary school in the US and middle school in Dubai. Then she began high school in the States, while her family moved to Qatar. Finally, she joined her family in Qatar in the last year of her high school. So Lubna was exposed to different education systems: in Dubai, in the US and in Qatar as well as the cultural diversity that she experienced during her progress from childhood to adulthood. Another teacher, Wasan, was born in a small village in Lebanon and later moved to the city side. Some teachers came from small families and had 2-3 siblings while others had more than 3 siblings. For example, Wasan has four brothers and two sisters and is the youngest in her family. Another teacher from Egypt, Laila, is the oldest child in the family. Her parents are uneducated, yet they encouraged their children to study. She recalls:

I was born in a family in Egypt. My family consists of four, father, mother, my sister and my brother, I am the oldest one. My father and mother they were

illiterate people they do not know how to read and write. In spite of this, they insist on teaching us. I am an English teacher, and my brother is an engineer. (Laila)

She adds:

My mother taught me how to be responsible as I am the oldest one and because she was illiterate, so she insists on teaching... or how to teach my brother and sister. So during the summer holidays she insist to bought the books from neighbors for the other grade and during the summer holiday we started teaching each other. (Laila)

The diversity in experiences of teachers is found to be a key influential factor on their personal and professional identities. For example, Wasan was from Egypt has an elder brother who works in Egypt while she lives in Qatar with her father. Her mother visits her during holidays and sometimes she goes back to her home in Egypt during holidays. Deema comes from a big family in Tunisia and married after finishing secondary school. She has three children. She is the only sister of six brothers, i.e. the only girl in the family. She spent 20 years in Tunisia and then went to Qatar to continue her education. Her experiences as the only girl in the family, a married woman and later as a mother shaped how she sees herself as a teacher. Amal from Egypt recalled that her father died when she was seven and her mother is a housewife.

Many of the teachers have parents or siblings who were also teachers or had a strong educational background where family background is prominent in models of education achievement (Freund, Schaedel, Azaiza, Boehm, & Lazarowitz, 2018). Parents' educational background, income and family structure were also found to be very strongly associated with their children's education accomplishments (Erola, Jalonon, & Lehti, 2016): for example, a teacher from Syria, Hessa had a mother who is a class teacher in a school and her father is a

civil engineer. A teacher from Egypt, Manal, comes from a family where both the parents are in the field of education i.e. the father teaches biology and the mother teaches mathematics, while her brothers are a doctor and an engineer. She is married to a mathematics teacher and has three daughters. Another Egyptian teacher, Reham, reports that her parents are educated and work as accountants while her sisters are both English Language teachers. She recalls:

I was raised in a family that loves education and encourage us all the time to be well educated. So, you know, my idea about life is, if you are well-educated and you are a good person it will be measured, the criteria will be through your education and the degree that you have, and how you are successful in your professional life. It was a little bit strange because in Arab countries sometimes for a girl her dream shall be marriage, getting married to a good man and I say that the first is, like, education is the Second one... The priority, the first priority... because my dad does not have boys... That is why he was encouraging us all the time to study harder. (Reham).

A study in Oman about female career choice has shown that parents' influence their children's career goal differently (Al-Lawati & Subramaniam, 2017) and young adults look to their mothers for career guidance, whereas others (Poulter, 2006) consider that fathers have a more significant impact on children's career expectation. According to Jacobs, Chhin, and Bleeker (2006) research results that indicate parents' expectations are considerably associated to children's own anticipations and to their career choices. In this research, the interviews show that the experiences of these teachers who were surrounded by parents who are teachers, doctor and engineer affected their personal and professional identities differently from the teachers who were not influenced by educated people. According to Scotland (2014), socialization plays a key role as it shapes and influences the language teacher professional identity within a community of practice where they interact with the learners, teachers, other staff. Participating

in a community of teaching practitioners, and experts, a teacher is exposed to the impacts of this community on the development of their identity. For novice teachers, who have tentative identities, influenced of the environment and may require to be conscious of how identities will be formed by this situation. For instance, a Palestinian teacher, Nora recalls:

I am Palestinian and I was born in Gaza...from a big family...four sisters and three brothers. I was the second daughter from my parents. My father has a factory, he graduated from Secondary school...And my mother also is a great woman and she also graduated from secondary school and she didn't complete her study because of her father's condition. (Nora)

Huda from Lebanon recalls:

Yes. I was in Grade 5. I was writing more than those students writing were perfect writing in Grade 5. Even though I was total in my mind that I would continue my studies as English teacher, it was already my father entrenching in my mind you will be in management - hotel management, business, blah blah, blah blah. (Huda)

Overall, the results reveal that the teachers come from diverse backgrounds. The educational background of the families also varies greatly. Some parents had a strong educational background, which led them to put a greater emphasis on their children's education. Other parents were not well educated and some were even illiterate, yet they supported their children's education. This strongly suggests that all of these teachers had an upbringing where education was at the forefront and a priority, either because it ran in the family or because parents could not acquire education and so they wanted their children to be well educated. The family background appears to be essential in the teachers' identity development.

5.4. Educational Experiences

An educational experience of the participants also is crucial in English language teachers' identity development. Findings of a longitudinal study about professional identities of teachers in their first few teaching years reveals that, Teachers' personal and professional histories and pre-service preparation, together with school culture issues and management, appear as resilient impacts in defining the types and same constancy and uncertainty of professional identities which teachers grow in early stage (Flores & Day, 2006). Some of the teachers in this study who were interviewed had a natural inclination towards the language; others got inspiration from teachers or family members. The diversity of the educational experiences of these teachers gives clues about their different and unique identities and the various educational experiences that shaped who they are. One teacher, Lubna, who was from the United States, reported that she finished her primary education in Oklahoma, then moved to Dubai in middle school and would go to the United States to take exams. Nora from Palestine, on the other hand, reported:

As you know in Gaza, there is occupation and going to school is like a challenge...there was a lot of fear in the border areas but things are not that much...but strong teachers and challenging ones. (Nora)

For teachers like Nora, education is more of a challenge, than a normal part of their daily lives, especially because she had lived under Israeli armed occupation of the West bank and Gaza Strip since 1967. Education for Nora is considered a matter of survival and being determined to succeed professionally. Wasan from Lebanon recalled that she liked going to school since childhood and that she has many certificates and has skipped two grades. She passed grade three and four in one year because, as she described herself, she was intelligent and smart. She went to the high school after finishing elementary school, where she studied for three years and then moved to the university. Then she started studying architecture and nursing

simultaneously and later studied English. Currently, she is a nurse and an English Language Teacher as well as a make-up artist, which she pursues as a hobby. Wasan has very different educational experiences than Nora, because she was lucky enough not to grow up in a war-zone.

Experiences of studying in government and private schools also revealed major differences. Researchers have shown that the identity of the teacher is also strongly influenced by the kind of education he or she obtained (Chong & Low, 2009). For example, having a K-12 educational background provides a different identity as compared to teachers with a different structure of education. In this study, the teacher from Syria (Hessa), whose mother was a teacher, recalled that she studied in a private school and moved to a government school in grade 8. Huda recalls:

I was in a private school first up until Grade 6 then there are economic problems in my country so my father didn't have the opportunity to put us in a private school so they moved us to a public one. So this point it mean a lot for me to leave the school, your friends, your teachers, you're accustomed to a certain situation and a public school not like private school. (Huda)

Feelings of isolation, which she experienced at school, are also apparent in Huda's responses:

So I feel that I'm strange, I am...Yes, I am old. I am not related to this group of people. They did not learn or study at home. They depend on the others to help them... It is just normal talk with them because I do not have someone to talk about him and usually they asking... I felt that I am intruder, I am not normal girl. I do not have someone to talk about. You start searching and looking for someone to talk about. (Huda)

This finding is supported by Ziegler (2013), according to whom isolation due to variety of language and cultural is a challenges that students may find in a multilingual classroom. Multiculturalism and multilingualism are two of the functional realities, especially in European societies. These social, lingual and cultural realities challenge the outdated and traditional ideas of language education, where languages are taught one after another. However, efforts to encourage and support multilingualism through the single-language paradigm of language teaching often face resistance because of contradictions that exist at various levels. One main contradiction is related to the English language teachers who apparently work for multilingualism, yet have typically been educated and trained as an expert in only one language (Ziegler, 2013). In relation to this study, a teacher with multicultural educational background or experience have more favourable or positive outcomes or experiences in teaching as ELTs as compared to those who were not exposed to multicultural environment while they were studying. The importance of exposure to multicultural environment during the years of education provides a learning experience for the teachers, especially with the use of different languages, which may be common for their English class students in a Middle Eastern educational setting.

5.5. Motivation to be an English Language Teacher

The study reveals that contextual and teachers influence had a remarkable impact on forming their professional identity.

5.5.1. Contextual influences

Flores and Day (2006) studied how contexts shape novice teachers identities in Portugal. They attempted to recognize how socialization influences language teachers' identity in terms of early teacher training programmes alongside the impact of important others, like family, relatives and teachers. Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) also emphasise the significance of social

contexts in a study they conducted in Estonia. Pre-service teachers were interviewed and their personal experiences were explored related to teaching and found that role models like teachers play a key role in teachers' identity growth because they can add to the understanding of essence of teaching.

In the context of the present study, Noha started learning English in the preparatory school and wanted to become a journalist but she became an English language teacher instead. Her sister was also an English teacher, but the major influence on Noha was her father and her teacher, Mr. Mustafa, whom she seemed to admire. About her father, she recalled:

I do not know from where he learned English but he liked English pretty much. He was good, very good in English, liked to read anything with English.

(Noha)

Her teacher also had immense influence on her as it showed from her conversation in the way that she talked about Mr. Mustafa enthusiastically. To her he is the one who influenced her to become an English language teacher:

My teacher, Mr. Mustafa, ah. I like English very much from him, um. He always depends on translation, always give us translation, yeah, like translate, translate, all the time, from English to Arabic, Arabic to English. He gives me simple sentences, yeah, like; translate it, all the time. (Noha)

As discussed earlier, Scotland (2014) stressed how professional identity is fundamental to the profession of teaching and how the notion of identity gives teachers a framework to build understanding about how to act, how to be and how to understand their role, work and place in the society in which they live. Although she now has been teaching English in Qatar for four years and she really likes children, it was not always like that. When she started with her tertiary studies in English, she did not like it initially and found it tedious. Her responses reveal that she

did not choose the teaching profession herself, but her father is the one who encouraged and convinced her to become an English language teacher:

Ah, I do not know. I love him very much. I love so I, I - anything he say to me, I agree, totally agree with him. No discussion, yeah, he is my dad. (Noha)

On the other hand, Nora, from Palestine, also wanted to be a journalist but her father did not encourage her at all to pursue journalism because it is a 'risky' job:

I started to like English when I was in primary school and prep school..No I wanted to be a journalist then after, you know, occupation and the violence and the blood you saw on TV. (Nora)

One of the major findings of the present study is that teachers have a considerable influence on the students, their motivation, behaviour and educational outcomes. Huda, for example, shares her experiences of studying in a public school in Lebanon at length. She recounts that the teachers in her school did not focus on the students and did not care if you miss a lesson or if you do not understand something. The teachers were all old, around 50 years of age. Huda added:

While in my previous school, they were in their 20s, newly educated. They have more spirit. They have more energy...Because in a public school, for example....some teachers...were teaching my mum. Imagine, they will remain in the same school in the same area without making any development for the teacher up to the age of 65...I was not accustomed to this situation up until... it took me about two years to be accustomed to this mood and to depend on myself more than the teacher all of the time. Just depending on myself. (Huda)

Huda also recalled how the teachers used to abuse the students verbally:

... usually they said bad words for the student, even though you are a polite student but they said for the whole of the class bad words. Sometimes these words, it hurts. Bad words. It hurts a lot. (Huda)

Therefore, the negative affect is evident here as there is a clear lack of support, both emotional and academic on the part of teachers, which may have negatively affected the well-being of teachers' experiences at the public school may have had a considerable influence on the development of identity as an English Language teacher. These findings are consistent with the study of Jonsson et al. (2010) who asserted that the teacher's support and behaviour has clear implications for the emotional well-being of students, which may positively or negatively affect the identity of teachers. Well-being comprises of positive and negative effect where positive effect refers to the extent to which students feel positive emotions, such as vigour, enthusiasm, and the like, while negative effect refers to negative feelings, such as nervousness, anxiety, distress, anger, loneliness, and isolation. Negative effect is associated with problems in the academic careers of students, such as not completing homework, lack of concentration, less interaction with classmates, and poor attendance.

In contrast, Nora started studying English in grade 5, from the alphabet and numbers and found it interesting, but difficult. She was the only girl in her class to get full marks in the first assessment. Her love for English grew because she was motivated, encouraged and appreciated by her teacher. This indicates that there was a positive effect on her well-being. She also cited another teacher who believed in her:

He was also encouraging me and Mr. Said he does not... he did not teach me but he knew me. Always he is... he encouraged me a lot and he showed... he told me I would like to see you a great English teacher. In addition, I met him after I graduated from university and he told me, I told you before. (Nora)

It is also interesting to note that Nora did not initially plan to be a teacher and wanted to study English, but not teach. Therefore, she went to a university in Gaza to study English Literature, after which she got her diploma in English teaching. At the same time, she was also giving private tuition to English language learners. Her teachers influenced her directly, or indirectly, to pursue the profession of teaching.

On the other hand, Laila, from Egypt, was good at mathematics and Science but was average in English because, as she reports, anybody, even those studying psychology, philosophy or history teachers could become English teachers. Her English language teacher in grade seven actually had a background in philosophy. Students just wanted to pass exams because they lacked motivation. That year, she failed in English. Then, in grade nine, she had a young, male English language teacher who was a fresh graduate:

... When I was in grade nine it was a new teacher. He was new graduated teacher, he was enthusiastic, he was eager to learn and teach us, and he wanted to show the others that he was able. (Laila)

This teacher apparently had a profound influence on Laila because of his teaching style and enthusiasm that he managed to transfer in his students. As reported by her, he had a friendly relationship with the students and engaged them in learning. She recalled how he encouraged, motivated and involved the students:

By motivating us, you are excellent, you do deserve the best, and maybe some get small gifts. One pound note, he wrote on it and just sign on it, until now I keep it in my mother's house. (Laila)

Laila talked about how this teacher kept encouraging her to pursue higher studies in English.

He said you are going to join the faculty of education, English department. Moreover, he... he himself he filled in my application form as an English teacher...He hoped to complete his study. He wants to study English to, uh, as you can say he wants to put his dreams on me. You are going to... you are going to...You are going to fulfil my dreams on you; this is what he believes.... So it was my choice, it was my own choice and I was not forced I was eager as you said to fulfil my teacher's dream of me. He told me that from the beginning, you are going to be an English teacher and I followed. (Laila)

She describes how this teacher would call her by another name because he did not want the names of his students to be associated with failure. That year, she passed with full marks. She reported how in secondary school she again got an English teacher who came from a philosophy background. Interestingly, the things Laila remembers about her teachers revolved around their teaching style and behaviour. She added,

He has some mistakes but I do not find them until I reach the aggregate but you do not remember them. You have the whole character, how does he deal with you, how he treats you how he encourages you, this is the image that is still in my mind. (Laila)

This suggests that students might overlook and forget trivial mistakes and shortcomings of the teachers but they remember their behaviour for a long time. Overall, the major contextual influence on the identity is the influence of teachers as role models who, directly and indirectly, affect the motivations and perceptions of students, which ultimately have a profound influence on their academic and professional careers.

Similarly, this study shows that the teachers who were interviewed are a part of communities of practice at different levels. Wasan, for example, reported that she is a part of an

online community as well as the community of teachers at her workplace and she feels welcomed in both place:

When I came here, thanks God, that was great for me; I met great people and we are all together all the time, everything; if you are angry, if you are sad, if you are happy, we are all... (Wasan)

Laila, from Egypt, reports that she attends teacher conferences and she is a trainer for novice teachers. Another teacher, Hessa, from Syria, reports that she communicates with other teachers around the world and is a part of the global community of teachers. She said:

Actually, I'm sharing on the social media and I'm trying to encourage all my [friends / colleagues] here in the school, but, you know, here life is so difficult and hectic here, you do not have that much time to spend on, you know, attending some webinars, but for me, I'm trying to try a way out, okay, just to...to improve my experience. (Hessa)

Some teachers told that they sometimes attend workshops and discussions, but not regularly. Other teachers, such as Manal from Egypt, report that they have regular meetings at school with other teachers where they discuss their successes and failures and they plan together. Nevertheless, she is not a part of any online communities of practice, which indicates they are not regular or competent users of Internet. Reham, who is also from Egypt, reports that she is a part of community of practice to some extent as she is connected with teachers at her current school and her previous school where they sometimes share resources and practical experiences.

As discussed earlier, Flores and Day (2006) studied how contexts shape the identities of novice teachers in order to understand the influence of socialization on the identity of teachers. Their conclusion emphasises the influential relationship among individual histories, experiences and the related effects of the work. The workplace plays a crucial part in determining the

understanding of teachers pertaining to teaching as well as facilitates or hinders their professional development and learning. Another significant outcome of this research is that contextual factors play a liaising role between teachers' individual histories and their identity. In the context of the present study, Sumia recalled:

Well, my colleagues, they are very nice with me. I do not know what they think about me exactly because they are always very nice to me. And my coordinator supports me for everything and they appreciate if you do something good. (Sumia)

Along the same lines, Dina reports:

I think that, ah, I am okay. I think that I am okay. Some of my colleagues, they just come to, for my advice. ... and some of them, maybe some teachers now they just, they are, I think that they are just like the teachers that they used to taught, the teachers. They are just sitting there and..Yeah, it is very old-fashioned. Therefore, I do not think they ...As you said it depends on the culture, it depends how you were raised, how you are thinking. This is the thing that I just touched when I just, ah, I just, ah, I am just dealing now with different cultures, different nationalities....And how they see themselves as a teachers. (Dina)

Considering how teachers act out their identities in social contexts, the standpoints that emerge from the socio-cultural theory are valued as the changes that occur in teacher's identity over time are socially constructed and culturally situated. Similar findings are reported by Ahmadi, Samad, and Noordin (2013), who studied the discourse socialization of in-service English teachers in Iran through observations, interviews, group discussions and reflections. The results show that teachers who contribute in-group debates discussed their views more freely, and their relations with experts and more teachers that are skilled help to form their

identities and make them feel welcome and a part of their discourse community (community of practice). Najla reports:

Maybe my, my colleagues, they really work with me in a... We treat each other in a very good way. If they feel that I am not sharing or that I'm not good, they won't let me enter their group again. (Najla)

Along similar lines, Nora recalls:

My friends... I came to this school I like the team, I like my coordinator and the members of my grade teachers are so cooperative and friendly. They help and support me to be honest. (Nora)

The responses show that acceptance and feeling welcome by the more experienced teachers has a profound influence on how the teachers see themselves, with the implication that is not feeling welcome may negatively affect the identities of teachers because of the lack of a sense of belonging:

Um, first, maybe when I've came in, in the department, they feel that she's strange; she didn't know anything about us, about our programmes. They start making, like, talking aside with each other so I did not ask about what is going on. I am not curious at all. If you want to talk, talk. If you do not, it is up to you. When they know how I am behaving, how I am treating all of them in a respectful way... I got involved and I became familiar with them. (Huda)

Successful communities of practice, according to Hanks (2017), take full account of their personal continual personal and professional development and learning, acquiring external support and help as appropriate. However, learning communities, at least superficially, are formed when teachers learn from one another through collaborative activities such as

discussion, observation, collaborative teaching, and collaborative planning (Kennedy, Dunsmuir, & Cameron, 2017).

5.5.2. Teacher influence

When probed, the respondents of this study reveal mostly positive perceptions of themselves from the perspective of their students and colleagues. For colleagues, they use words like cooperative, friendly, help, and support. They used words such as care, love, respect and closeness when sharing their opinions about how their students perceive them. For example, Lubna from Oklahoma has a strong connection with her students and believes that the relationship of teachers with their students plays a very important role in the life of teacher as well as students. She emphasized:

I know that they respect me and I know that they love me, and I know that they, they do not fear me. I know anything that they do is out of respect, not from fear, which is what I like. Like, I told the principal when I first came: I do not... I do not want my students to hate me. and, no, I will be close to them, because they were having an issue with me being close to my students, but no, I told them, no, as long as you're not seeing me doing something wrong and something that is not allowed, then you cannot tell me I'm not allowed to be close to my students. I will be close to my students, because that for me is a huge... like, in America, we're really close to our teachers, but not close in the terms, like, going-to-houses close; no, close in a way that if they need someone to talk to, they come to me. If they... ah, they are not feeling like they have. (Lubna)

Lubna added:

Yes, I am always, like, saying, you know, I care about them. I, I laugh with them. When there is time for us to, like, talk, we talk...I am not doing this as a job, I am doing this as... because I want to do this. Yes, it is a job, but at the same time I feel like me being close to my students is a huge, huge, huge, huge deal, and that's what's allowed me to be... like, to have this what, what I think is successful with them, because of my relationship with them. It plays a huge role. (Lubna)

The teacher–student relationship, according to Liberante (2012), “is one of the most powerful elements within the learning environment” (p.2). Teachers and students relationship is a key factor that affects students development, their motivation levels and engagement because it forms the foundation of the social context of learning and also influences the behaviour and academic outcomes of students (Hughes & Chen, 2011). When the relationships between teachers and students are positive and supportive, a sense of belonging is created among students and they are encouraged to participate in classroom activities and to cooperate with their teachers and peers. Other teachers, specifically, Wasan, Noha, and Nora, also said that their students perceive them as ‘a good teacher’, and that they respect them, like them, love them, care about them, and want to learn from them:

What do I think? According to what I see that they are happy with me and happy for my work and they are all the time encouraging me. I always hear nice words from all...and sometimes they say attractive, motivated, these things. (Wasan)

I think they love me and even those who attend my lesson, um, I have... I try to fill the... in myself this is me and I do not like to sit all the time. Just moving about I try to motivate them, involve them in my lesson. (Laila)

My students' maybe, yes I think they like me because they care about me. Sometimes they ask me Miss, are you angry of us? Do you like us? When somebody came to our class and observed me then the day after they asked me – Miss how was your class? How were us? We were very quiet and cooperative with you. I think they care about me, so they love me, I hope, I hope. (Nora)

Um, my students, I think they, see me as; saw me as a good teacher, I think. They told me all the time, because I have a really - I love them very much. (Noha)

However, rules are important too as emphasized by Nora:

Maybe some of them feel me... feel I am strict. I like rules to some extent. I like rules, you know, not every day quiet and smiling. (Nora)

These findings suggest that the character of the teacher forms and believes are a vital part of their teaching. This is consistent with what Walter and Lippard (2017) says, as discussed in a study about changes in teachers' beliefs. These findings are also consistent with Tichenor who asserts that a teacher's character comprises of their personal characteristics, such as respect for students, determination, patience, and courage (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005):

Yeah, they see me as a good teacher, a patient teacher, sometimes. I am kind with my students. Sometimes nervous and moody. (Amal)

Um, maybe someone... Some of them love me. Maybe, some of them, they hate me. I do not know... (Najla)

I know myself, you know. I am a sociable person; I like the relation with... I want to make any relation. I am funny character, I think. (Noha)

Huda emphasises the importance of language for teacher-student relationships that, in some circumstances, can create barriers for communication between teachers and students and consequently prevent strong relationships from developing:

I do not know. It is a difficult question. Some of the students from their eyes you will feel that they love you and respect you and they want to learn from you more and more. Some students, from their eyes, their eyes talks, go out of the class and no one you reply, especially the student who do not know any English words and I do not know how they will reach to high school without basic... without any base of English, English language. Their language is very poor. Sometimes I have asked a student to take for speaking exam to read from the book, they cannot read, their background is poor, some students, especially the parents who did not know English. You find these students from Pakistan - in Pakistan they speak English very well - but I do not know, maybe her family is not educated. (Huda)

5.6. Frustrations and Struggles of a Language Teacher

Kang and Cheng (2013) studied of teachers' professional identity development in terms of the development of their cognition in the workplace in China. They conducted interviews and observations and found that the development of teacher's cognition and identity was an outcome of repeated relations between the beliefs and knowledge of teachers and classroom practices. The study defined a favourable work where the workload is appropriate and manageable, there is mutual support and there are plenty of learning opportunities. For example, the present study found that some teachers, such as Reham, expressed frustration with the workload:

For my students here, sometimes they feel bullied from me because I keep repeating things on them and I do not let them have free time in my classes. So,

sometimes, yes, I think, yes... you are working a lot, Miss, you are troubling yourself. (Reham)

She seemed to be having a hard time managing her personal and professional life because of the increasing demands of both areas of her life:

And for my colleagues, no, I think, yeah, I'm okay. I am not a teacher who is devoting all her time and her life to teaching. However, I am not the other one. I am not the one who is not paying any attention or just careless about teaching. I am in between... Because I have a personal life. I have my own problems. I have...I do not think that you should devote all your life for your work. Especially if you are a [mother] ... You have to manage....You know, on weekends you go with your children, you have many tasks you have to finish by weekend. So, how can you imagine, give me time out to become fresh. (Reham)

Another teacher, Huda said,

Ah, when I came, ah, when I became an English teacher, first, I have hated this field but the life changed me a lot. I did not change my mind; I did not study another field or another management. (Huda)

Similar findings were reported by Ruohotie-Lyhty (2013) who conducted a study in Finland to study the teachers in order to analyse the identity development process. They found that teachers experienced certain challenges and frustrations initially, while their identities as teachers were still developing which indicated the dynamic nature of identity. Furthermore, the results of the study highlighted the significance of efficient and effective trainings because the challenges that teachers experience while they are being trained may pose risks and have an

adverse impact on teachers' identities. This is reflected in the responses of Reham who commented:

... They are asking for many tasks. I know, what to do, where to do, finish your job. Okay. Finish my job but give me time. Paperwork, you know. Preparing booklets for weak students, preparing booklets for you because, you know, you cannot during the weekdays, it is difficult. (Reham)

These findings are in line with Valli and Buese (2007), who report that high-stakes and rapid-fire policy directives create an environment where teachers are expected to deal with their students in a different way, implement pedagogies that are in conflict with their own ideas of best practice, and experience great levels of stress. The cumulative effect of excessive and rapid policy demands frequently leads to discouragement among teachers as well as vague roles.

The findings of this study are also consistent with the study which Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) carried out in Canada to understand the professional identities of novice teachers through images that created by teachers themselves. The study revealed that when their careers started, novice teachers were prepared for the challenges of teaching; yet, later into their careers, rather than feeling all set for the challenge; they get used to it and enter into a survival mode. Thomas and Beauchamp (2011) argue that experience alone cannot be responsible for fostering the development of identity and awareness needs to be raised about the process through which identities develop. Reham adds:

And most of the days I do not leave at two, by the way. Most of the days I leave at three. I stay to finish something. It is not obligatory to stay here but you know, you feel that, I want to finish. I want to go home without thinking about...The work that I have to do at home as well. (Reham)

Manal expressed similar sentiments:

It is a good... ah, the ideal teaching language, I think it is good. In my country it is a good thing to, to be an, ah, second, ah, other language, French teacher, English teacher. It is a good... However, ah, what stands in front of me always that sometimes, ah, I feel hopeless when, when facing some students with... I can... ah, some... sometimes I feel that I can do something with them. There is a big gap between what I have to teach and what they have learned or what they have known... Yes. It feels frustrating... Yes, the frustration affects my life, my private life, I think. (Manal)

Along the same lines, Scotland (2014) maintains that exposure to non-western dialogue systems can lead to a change or a ‘renegotiation’ of the professional identities of English language teachers. According to (Martel & Wang, 2014), language can be particularly important when other groups or systems try to enforce identity values on them. So it is even more important as language is closely related to how English language teachers define themselves and others have defined them throughout their lives (Brisk, 2013). Language, according to Blot (2003), is inevitably a symbol of identity. Similarly, in education as well as in other areas of social life, beliefs and identities are created, negotiated and transformed continuously through language (Tsui & Tollefson, 2017). Manal adds:

First, um, ah, I saw myself a loser. When first I, I have to enter the class. I have to make a group work. I have to divide students, make, ah, new strategies, ah, it was difficult for me to apply this; very difficult to apply this in the students here, and I find myself loser, and sometimes I came out of the class and, crying, ah, and... I am trying to, ah, to convince myself that a month or two months then I'm going to have to go back to my home, ah... And it is okay. I have, I have two-month salary, and that is all. And that's... that's... That is fine. (Manal)

Manal's experiences reflected the importance of culture. A change of culture can add to the frustrations of a teacher's already hectic life. In this situation, their role as managers becomes more important because they have to manage and juggle through their professional and personal responsibilities without burning out:

Yes. You know, it is difficult for me, new for me, so I cannot apply it. I cannot. I am a teacher. I taught for eight, ah, years, ah, and I was a successful teacher. Now, a new thing, I cannot apply it. This is number one... Number two, students, somehow, are....treated me... Yes, treated me as stranger. They are not motivated to do what I, I, I want... I want to do exactly. Yes. Different culture. Um. This is make me... despair. Yes. First, it was my first experience. Ah, but now, Al-hamdulilla (thank God)., every strategy I am very happy to apply it, in my class.

(Manal)

5.7. Changing Role of English Language Teachers

Teachers also hold hidden and tacit beliefs about their students, their roles and responsibilities, which ultimately influence their teaching practices. For example, Farrell (2011) attempted to study the ESL identities professional role in Canada who were experienced and found that teachers adopt different roles throughout their teaching careers, such as professionals, managers, and acculturates. Farrell (2011) contended that reflective practices allow teachers to be more conscious of their parts and how their identities are formed during the course of their teaching career.

Along with the roles defined by Farrell, Harmer (2007) explained that language teachers facilitate, control, prompt, tutor, and participate. Other roles include models, supporters, sponsors, acculturates and educators. Similarly, the present study found that when respondents

were asked if their role as teachers as changed over the years, most of the teachers agreed that their role has changed in various ways. Wasan from Lebanon observes:

Every year, or every time, maybe between class and class it differs so you have to change yourself. You have to change the teacher's role in this class according to what the class needs. An example, maybe this activity will work in this class but in the other you cannot, you have to change it or... You have to change your role; you have to say something else or you have to give something else so this class will understand it. Maybe the abilities of this class are less than the other or the opposite. (Wasan)

So her role keeps changing because teachers have to be familiarize of new roles according to the needs of the learners. In other words, the 'one size fits all' method does not work because learners have different needs and abilities. She adds:

It was a lecturer all the time. It was teacher's talk. The teacher is the centre and the teachers talk but now maybe also before maybe in the old school also we were, but now, I think that you have to be only 75 per cent the students' role and 25 per cent is the teacher's role and the teacher's talk must be less than the students' talk. (Wasan)

Wasan recalled that her previous role as a teacher had a more teacher-centred approach. However, she realizes that now the role has changed and become more student-centred. Now, students play a greater role in their learning process than do teachers. Similarly, Nora explained how the role has changed because of technology and how that has led to the development of new teaching strategies:

I feel that I have to modify myself to somehow to be able to use these strategies and that technology at the class. As I said in Gaza we do not have technology...we do not use technology. I told you that everything was manual but here you have to deal with technology you have to do deal with the modern strategies of teaching... yes, it is different. (Nora)

Huda's role as a teacher seemed more reflective and intuitive:

First, when I start teaching English I was behaving all of the time like a student, giving them advice and suddenly I have caught one word that affect me that you should, between me and myself, no one say it to me. I sit like a tape recorder going in my mind, how I changed from the first year, what I achieved. From first year to second year what did I achieve. Did I achieve? Did I improve myself? I have tried thinking and I have tried search a lot internally about what I should do to help my student to reach and love English because at first when they said they hate English I did not understand. (Huda)

Amal, from Egypt, believes that while her role did not change, her personality did. She reports feeling more confident and comfortable now, than she did two or three years ago. However, she recalls that her first year in the teaching profession was 'horrible'. She recounts:

I could not deal with the students; it was very difficult for me - but now, okay. Because I did not used to deal with this number of students - 30 or 29 students inside one classroom is very difficult. Therefore, in my first year, it was difficult but now it is okay. (Amal)

Amal identifies her role as a 'guide':

In my first year, the whole role was on me but now no, I am just a guide. I want to make my students participate, I want to make the 70% of their speaking, on the students not me. (Amal)

This indicates that, as a language teacher, she has adopted a participative role. She discarded the authoritative one and willing to allow students to be responsible about their learning. This is because there are differences in values and expectations when it comes to cultural and value conflicts between the native and host countries of English language teachers.

Amal notes:

... But because in Egypt we do not have this system in teaching, the main role inside the classroom is for the teacher and the students are listeners, only listeners. (Amal)

Manal reports that her role is very different now. She was more dominant before, but now she is more participative. She also identified her role as a ‘monitor’:

Ah, first I used to...I am dominant in the class. I used to teach. I used to read and students used to stay, just stay and listen. Then, you know, they are going to have a test and they are going to produce what they have learned, and that is it. However, when I came here I felt that teaching, I am a monitor....So I have to participate with the students. (Manal)

Dina, from Jordan, also agrees that teaching is more student-centred now. However, speaking about the difference between her way of teaching and the way she was taught, she thinks that there is not much difference:

Not to that extent, no. But, usually for the reading lessons, no. The teacher used to read, we have to read, then we just underline the difficult words, and then

we have to study it. I am not saying that it was not good. It is good and that is why we are speaking English now. Now, maybe they are more motivated. They want to now, especially when they are working in groups but still this is for the high achievers. The low achievers sometimes I feel they are lost. (Dina)

She believes that students are more motivated when working in groups, however, this works only for the high achievers. She identifies a gap where high achievers are enjoying the new environment, which is more student-centred and collaborative, but low-achievers are still struggling:

Because she cannot read and sometimes I feel sorry for her. I just come and she's saying to me, this, I have a student.. Every day she is coming to me...I want to become excellent. In addition, she is trying hard but she is already weak....So I feel like there is a gap, you know, the high achievers, they are just enjoying it and then the lowers they are still the same because...Struggling, yes. (Dina)

Najla identified herself as a sister, mother and a friend to her students:

Yeah, of course. It is developing...I just developed from just the... As I told you, from just giving a lesson, to just be a sister, and to be a mother, and to, to be a friend to these girls so that they can be motivated to learn. They will not learn if they feel that there is no connection between them and me. They will just... Maybe they will not talking, but they will not learn. (Najla)

This indicates the importance of personal and emotional connections between the teachers and students, and students may not learn if that connection is lacking. Sumia sees the role of teachers as lifelong learners:

If you are... you are a teacher, so learning is a continuous process for you. Because the way I studied, and the way I am teaching, it is very different now, you know. The things have changed. In addition, the level of understanding of the kids are also different, they have different thoughts in their mind. Moreover, sometimes it is difficult to manage the same lesson in the class with the same concept. We cannot treat the five girls in the same way. They have different intelligence levels. So, for that, we have to know first, as a teacher, that what is my target in that class and how I can improve it in that class. Therefore, I believe that learning is very important. It is a... practice... continuous practice. Every stage you learn and you have to practice, and it will make a change, for sure, yes. (Sumia)

5.8. Conclusion

The present study investigated the details and dynamic nature of the identity development of English language teachers from a holistic perspective that involves two key features: the assimilation of the personal and professional experiences of English language teachers, and the application of conscious and rational as well instinctive and implicit thought processes. The outcomes of this study pertaining to the identity aspect of the conceptual framework suggest that the professional identity of teachers is deeply rooted in their personal life histories. The respondents' beliefs, insights, perceptions, understandings, and explanations cultivated in the family environment have clearly had a strong influence on their educational experiences at school, college, and university.

This early educational influence determines the choice of careers, teaching practices, personal teaching philosophy and identity as English language teachers. The results suggest that it is important to explore and investigate the personal life experiences of teachers to acquire an in-depth and holistic understanding of the major influences on their identity development. The

different words, terms, metaphors, and concepts associated with teacher identity indicate that the notion of identity is a multi-layered and dynamic, multidimensional phenomenon.

The life histories of the teachers presented in this chapter highlighted that teacher cognition and identity is shaped through participation in social activities and interacting with other key social actors, such as family, friends, colleagues, and students. In addition, the findings suggest that the language teachers mainly enter the teaching profession with fundamentally tacit and unspoken, yet deeply entrenched, concepts, ideas and philosophies.

The findings discussed in this chapter represent different facets of identity, circumstances, and contexts. The aspects about identity discussed in this chapter include factors that influence identity: the relationship between language and identity; the development process of identity pertaining to life experiences of the teachers within the study; the relationship between workplace and identity; identity versus role strains and frustrations; and the teachers' role and the negotiation of identity. Additionally, the contexts wherein this study was conducted are significantly diverse and different from each other, which enable an understanding of how identity is shaped and transformed in different contexts and situations. The next chapter explores in more detail how these cultural experiences affects the participants' CPD experiences.

Chapter 6: Data analysis and discussion 2

6.1. Introduction

This chapter explores how culture influences the participants' CPD experiences. By drawing on the notion of culture at both a macro and micro level, it is hoped that the chapter provides new theoretical insights into how female English language teachers in Qatar experience and perceive their role and identity. The chapter addresses the second specific research question, which is: what ways do female ELTs perceive and experience the role of culture in their professional development? The chapter is organized into seven sections, with the discussion moving from a macro to a micro level of conceptual analysis. The data selections in the analysis chapters were chosen according to the sample representation. For example, the chosen data represent teachers who experience different aspects of school reform which impacts on their practice, different ways of defining their needs in schools, and different ways of participating in communities of practice. Following the analysis procedures outlined in chapter 4, the data were selected and grouped carefully to represent the role of culture in teachers' professional development.

6.2. Impact of Reform and Supreme Education Council Requirements on Teachers

More than a decade ago, Qatar initiated a series of school reforms, which were based on the perceived need to reverse the previous unsuccessful decisions of the Supreme Education Council (SEC) that made it mandatory for the schools to teach Mathematics and Science in the English language, instead of Arabic. While teachers were notified of the change beforehand, many lacked proficiencies in English to teach Science and Mathematics. Consequently, test scores declined and so did students' interest in Mathematics and Science. Scores are still low and students now must spend years in bridge programmes to get into universities. Abrupt policy changes, apparently, are part of the problem (Said & Friesen, 2013).

A major concern that emerged from this study was that appeared to be a lot of requirements made by the SEC. The general awareness among teachers was that their amount of work could not be managed during the day. Wasan shared her concerns reflecting how the reform and SEC requirements affected her. According to her, the medium of instruction in some schools of Qatar is still English, while at other schools, the medium of instruction has been changed to Arabic. Laila, for example, also felt this was an issue:

I think that sometimes they are not facing the facts. They are just not real. They give you a new lesson plan, a new idea, a new strategy. Then ask you to do this but they are not just very realistic that even, okay I can do it and if I can, if I do it maybe in other school sometimes I say what are you teaching in the Oxford or, because they are not realistic, it will not work. Sometimes I feel that it is just a burden on the student, they are just struggling...My idea is that [if the] strategy is excellent, everything is fine. Maybe the student can do it in an excellent way but did hey [get] the idea from the lesson? Did they understand though? It is a gap.

(Laila)

She was frustrated about not being able to apply new and innovative strategies, such as English labs, in a school where the medium of instruction is Arabic now, because students lack basic skills in English language even though they were studying English since grade one. Her dissatisfaction with her job as a teacher became apparent when she said that she is not satisfied even after getting positive feedback from the coordinator:

Ah, no I am not satisfied because I feel that most of the students did not get the idea. They just answered the worksheet, they got everything but I am not satisfied. Moreover, I cannot work like this. That is why sometimes in the second

class I have to go back and said, okay who didn't understand you all close your eyes, raise your hand. I see most of them didn't, I repeat it and no other way. (Laila)

This response reflects dissatisfaction of the teacher because of abrupt changes in the language of instruction as it is negatively affecting her ability to teach and her students' ability to learn and understand what is being taught. Rania, who came from an illiterate family points out:

I think there is a big gap between the, ah, national tests and what we are teaching. I think it is the only solid rock we have... we are facing. Because we are teaching, when it goes side by side with the curriculum standards of teaching, all the year, and then when we came to the national tests, very difficult for the level of the student. Big gap between what the students have tried, struggling to, to learn. They are struggling to learn. The level of the students is not good in the national exams. I think the national exam is very difficult for my students. (Rania)

And Manal said:

I think taking from the curriculum...between the curriculum standards and the...Yes, trying to match between them, between what the students have learned in their curriculum standard, now what, what, they have to answer in their exam. So the reading passages are difficult, more difficult than what they have been [taught]. (Manal)

These responses show that there is a perceived gap between the new standards and the current skill levels of students. Although, generally, teachers believe in high expectations from students, many teachers are not adequately trained to apply teaching practices based on high standards. Most teachers are used to applying old-style instructional models based on rote

learning and repetitions of facts without emphasizing key thinking skills (Pennington & Richards, 2016), as Dina explained:

Therefore, I am not seeing this thing. Why do we have to do this? Why the students they just do not get it. Is it for the students' sake or is it for the SEC's sakes? Then, ah, there are many strategies. You can read about them in the, online rather than, you know, presented by someone else and they will tell you just go and do it. Nevertheless, to a limit I am forced because, okay if I will not do it maybe I think that my evaluation will not be okay. (Dina)

These findings were also found by Romanowski et al. (2013), who investigated the implications of the Qatar educational reform from the perspectives of principals, teachers and parents. The study analyzed the challenges faced by the principals and the schools and revealed a major challenge. They described the constant and abrupt fluctuations from the SEC as well as the impracticable demands and necessities enforced on teachers and schools by the SEC.

In the context of study at hand, most of the teachers responded that they get many emails and memos about the different requirements and then meetings are arranged with coordinators to discuss the requirements of SEC that must implement in their teaching practice. Laila reported that her school has a clear, structured process for dealing with the requirements of the SEC, which includes meetings, feedback and discussions.

See, whatever they ask us from SEC...Whatever and whenever any workshop is offered, the schools immediately forward the e-mail to us and ask us to join them. This is what the school can do. Moreover, if you are really, ah, a teacher with positive attitude, you will surely like to learn something new. In addition, you will like to join that which will help you learn, in all the cases to learn new things. (Laila)

While the above response suggests a positive attitude towards the SEC requirements, most of the teachers indicated a generally negative perception of the reform and SEC requirements that they are obliged to comply with. For example, statements like “Whatever the SEC wants, it has to be done. This is a state-owned school”, “requirements, it is a lot of requirements”, “sometimes it is confusing”, “the school accepts anything”, “they have very severe criteria”, and the like show that teachers are struggling to follow through with the new requirements. Whatever requirements that come from the SEC they discuss it with the teachers, they hold a meeting with the teachers and tell them... we had this for example the SEC sent asking for this and that and, uh we are going to do it. How are you going to do it? They have to discuss everything with us first but in the end, it is just informing us because whatever comes from there it has to be done.

Areej said:

Sometimes. You... sometimes you got an idea and you complete your work, suddenly they give you another one. For example, the objectives, at first we can write the objectives as we want but now no, there are some verbs you should use in your objectives like identify, summarise, define...and verbs like read a match and so on we cannot use in our objectives. So sometimes, it is confusing. The abrupt and recurring changes in the policies and roles of teachers and having to constantly adapt to the new changes leads to confusion and disorientation and makes it difficult for the teachers and the administration to deal with and implement new policies changes. (Areej)

Correspondingly, the study of Romanowski et al. (2013) also found that one of the main challenges tackled by principals is the confusion created by the SEC and their apparent lack of clear planning. The principals interviewed in this study also pointed out that their job is to comply with the orders. However, the principals also noted that the hastiness and sense of

urgency created by the SEC is unrealistic and detrimental to the success of reform. Reforms, according to them, take time to show results. Schools struggle with a dearth of qualified teachers and school leaders have to face conflicts and resistance to change from teachers, students and parents. Another important challenge is, therefore, to communicate effectively with the teachers and the parents and involve them in the decision-making about the implementation of the changes from SEC.

6.2.1. Reform and teacher involvement.

While the role of school leaders and principals is essential in the successful application of reforms in education, researchers have argued that the role of teachers may hold more value and significance for the success and effectiveness of educational reforms (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Since the experiences of teachers facilitate their understanding of the realities of schools, classrooms and communities, they can offer a unique perspective on aspects, which is different from that of decision makers. Improving the effectiveness of Qatari Education reform is based on deep understanding of how professional development experiences influence English language teachers efficacy and students effective learning (Reynolds et al., 2018).

Moreover, teachers are the ones who can shed light on and lend valuable insights, ideas and suggestions concerning which strategies work and which do not. In the context of this study, most of the teachers were in favour of teachers being a part of the decision-making process, however, in reality, their schools were not considering their opinions and ideas and their willingness to adapt to the new requirements.

For example, Reham reported:

I am not forced. I, for me, I shudder, sometimes I say I'm not doing it even if you want to attend my class and see that I'm not doing it. Okay, you cannot evaluate me but I'm sure it is not working. Just, and you face the truth. (Reham)

And Dina said:

Because we ask you to do this and other schools they did this and why are, it is you...you are the fault, you are not doing it correctly. But, no, it is not me.

(Dina)

When asked whether she thinks involving teachers in the decision-making process is important for her, Areej stated:

Yes, yes, because the teacher is the nearest one to the students and she knows what they need, more, maybe, than other people who are away because I am connecting to them every day. I am connected to the students. Meetings and surveys, they can involve us...It is better to ask the teachers...maybe the teachers can see more in the students, more than one who is away. (Areej)

Two teachers, Huda and Hessa said that they want to try out new strategies in their classrooms, such as taking students out in the garden to make lessons fun and interesting. However, there are consequences for them if they do not comply with the policies of the SEC.

Huda explained:

Okay, this is the rules, one, two, three, and then there is a reward. However, they all say that there is punishment, and every day, there is a new thing and there is a new punishment. So even if its lose its interest when they say, you are punished. Okay, give me the paper, I will sign the punishment. (Huda)

Hessa stated:

Miss [Sara] likes the lesson plan to be direct and to the point result, making putting peppers and sauce in the lesson plan, she wants the student just to get the point. She wants us to achieve the activities that are inside the book, [instead of] taking it from outside. That is what she wants us to do. (Hessa)

These responses show that teachers are not involved in the decision-making and do not have discretion in choosing whether to implement the new strategies or not, depending on their effectiveness or in choosing alternative strategies that they may have learned elsewhere. However, previous research has shown the importance of a supportive culture and teachers' involvement in decision-making which can lead to organizational commitment and motivation (Al-Sada, Al-Esmael, & Faisal, 2017) and suggests that this may be a key issue for policy makers and school leaders to consider. Indeed, all participants expressed that they are in favour of being involved in decision-making processes. The fact is that Arab countries appear to have a high power distance, wherein the person in an inferior position in relation to decision making hierarchies perceives that his or her power to decide on critical issues is significantly lower than those who are superior positions (Al-Buainain, 2010) and this hinders the teachers from being allowed to make crucial decisions and can affect their motivation. Talking about the SEC requirements and coordinators who insist on implementing the new strategies, Wasan expressed,

...Okay, why did you do this, why did you follow this, why didn't you do this, but when I am alone with my students, like, I do... I try to skip some things that I do not think that they are important or those they... I know that they already have, and, like, move on to something else. (Wasan)

Nora reported that she is involved in the decisions about implementing the changes required by the SEC. Speaking about how the coordinator of her school involves her in making decisions, it was clear that this was very important for her. She said:

She will make for us a meeting and she will talk with us. She asks about our opinion, what we should do if you have any suggestion. So we will make a meeting and we discuss it together before taking any decision. (Nora)

Another perspective shared was that even if they are involved in decision-making, implementation of their ideas is not a common practice, as Areej states:

Um, last year I think they had a meeting with some of the teachers. They chose a group of teachers from different schools and, uh, the minister sat with them and told them what your problems are? What things do you think need to be changed? What things that should be implemented, uh, but until now we have not seen anything happening and it is the same it is the same routine going on. (Areej)

Overall, the findings showed that the reform has affected teachers significantly and their abilities and competence have been challenged to a great extent. The major concern about educational reform is that key changes at the school-level depend on teachers (Lieberman & Mace, 2008). It can be argued that most educational reforms are, by nature, a top-down process. This approach suppresses teachers' voices and can end up hampering the success of the reforms. The top-down process for decision making and implementation of the reforms also reflects the culture of most Arab countries, like Qatar, where people in superior positions (e.g., principals, administrators, government officials) are perceived to have more power than those who are not in high positions (e.g., teachers) (Hofstede, 2006). Mandated reforms rarely consider the involvement and feedback from the educators and disregard the importance of teachers as professionals who are able to make decisions for the benefit and welfare of students and the

parents (Schweisfurth, 2002). Furthermore, (Lingam, Lingam, & Sharma, 2017) argues that inflexible policies and applications of education reform that established without teachers' involvement significantly impact on the competency of teachers performance and students' outcomes. Teachers are ultimately the vital component of educational reforms, therefore, leadership and change that do not involve teachers in the process of change will, inevitably, fail (Fullan, 2015).

6.3. Cultural Challenges Among English Language Teachers

Brewer et al. (2007) openly declared that the education system of Qatar is outdated, inflexible, and unfriendly to reforms. This idea is reflected in some of the findings in this study, especially in relation to ELT. Findings reveal that English language teachers face considerable issues and challenges while teaching in multicultural contexts. In this context, the key sub-themes are cultural challenges, linguistic challenges, technological challenges, and gender-age tensions faced by the teachers in their respective schools.

Al-Buainain (2010) asserted that teachers can become a valuable source to bring positive reform and innovation if they are given an opportunity to be involved in policymaking. However, this study found that teachers are key actors in educational settings but their insight is least valued and considered. This point has also been agreed by (Schweisfurth, 2002) that most reform are driven by a top-down approach, in which the views of teachers are ignored which not only causes problems for teachers but also for students and parents.

As discussed earlier in the literature review, Zellman et al. (2009) debated that the Ministry of Education in Qatar issues a curriculum, but it is not of high-quality and does not create an interactive environment between teachers and pupils. The low retention rate of foreign teachers and their lack of professional development also affects schools negatively. Likewise, findings of this study showed similar challenges, in which it was found that both teachers and

students deal with their own unique problems. For example, teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and they face issues in adapting to Qatar's local environment and culture as well as to the culture of the schools they work at. Similarly, due to their diverse linguistic backgrounds, they try to cope with the Arabic dialect used in Qatar. For example, Hessa responded:

In a long time, I have not used Arabic. When I was in primary school, that was the last time I was exposed to it, so when I came I did not know anything. I would hear, I would recognize, but their accent and language are different, they use so many different words. It was very hard to communicate with the girls - very hard. (Hessa)

She added,

Yeah, but later they realized that actually that it is ... that it is serious, because they would, like, say something; I wouldn't realize what they're saying. Everyone who would attend my class, they would tell me that there is a problem with, my speed and my language and that I have to slow down or try to show more, and I did try to slow down and show more pictures, and, like, try to do this ...but the first two weeks were terrible, I could not explain properly. (Hessa)

When talking about the linguistic challenges English language teachers face in teaching students who are used to studying in Arabic, Sumia also responded:

Some teachers complain, some of their students, they cannot even decode a word...because they did not know the letters. (Sumia)

Overall, there is a low rate of motivation among students regarding education, which is supported by Romanowski et al. (2013) who found that 51% of the teachers indicated a lack of

motivation on the part of students. Similarly, parents do not play an effective role in persuading them to excel in studies. Only some of the private schools have introduced innovating teaching pedagogies in order to inculcate learning skills in them. Generally, students are not willing to learn and they even question the credibility of teachers from diverse cultural contexts. Deema commented:

They do not like us, just because we teach English. When I go inside the class, sometimes I feel they do not like studying, especially when it is the seventh block or something...and they are so tired and fed up, and sometimes I am so tired and fed up. [So, fine]. [We will] not teach English today. We will talk about whatever you want to talk and I let them [choose what] they want to talk about.
(Deema)

Similarly, Amal responded:

Sometimes, some students, they are, you can say, like, disrespectful. They are not paying enough attention, because they do not like English, but you escape English and talk about anything else, other than English, they become so attentive and they like and they share and they talk to you and do whatever you want them to do. (Amal)

Deema also responded in a similar pattern:

Just say a few words. Sometimes the words I am saying to my student they did not understand it in Arabic what I mean. I am giving them advice, I am obliged to talk a little bit in Arabic, sometimes I am saying words they start laughing because they understand it in a different way. Some words I say it, it is good in my

country but here it is not good, it is not the way that they say it, they start laughing at me. (Deema)

Apart from these linguistic problems, another obstruction comes in the form of cultural differences. Most of the teachers face problems in understanding and adjusting to Qatar's social culture. The responses of the participants revealed that this cultural element heavily influences their teaching styles:

In my country, you can shout at the student. Here it is not allowed to talk even a small word to the student. (Huda)

This aspect also influences the teaching styles. Most of the teachers reported that the English language could not be taught in groups exclusively. There is a need for individual sessions with each student. Nonetheless, schools' policies do not allow them to do so. For example:

Yeah, I have many restrictions. We are obliged to be always sitting in groups. I do support the group work, but I do not support that all the time. There is time for group work, but not always. (Lubna)

It has been found that this issue usually emerges because students do not possess a background of English. They have no basic information about it and they oppose it, which causes considerable difficulty for the teacher:

Yeah, they are naughty and they have a difficulty in the English language. Ah, I think because they are not qualified well to learn English...In primary school, um, they came to preparatory school, they have not... they have not a background. No prior knowledge. [they are supposed to learn English] from early grades but they are not starting well. Yes sometimes I ask students about vowels or some

letters, they mix between letters...And if I ask a girl to read or write or whatever, she says, I cannot read English. English is very difficult, I cannot read. I cannot understand English. (Amal)

Finally, the most significant problem is of gender and age-relatedness. In this regard, one of the teachers suffered a lot and she stated this problem in detail that that she found it difficult to teach teenage boys in the beginning:

Yeah, you know I remember once I was teaching this, uh, grade 10 and there was a boy whenever I go he follows me, I do not know why. Moreover, I was teaching in grade 12. In addition, he was like, standing in front of the class, not doing anything but, like stalking me...I felt annoyed. One of the students, you know, that he did not say anything and then the next day the boy who was stalking he asked me what did you tell Mustapha? I remember the other boy, Mustapha, I did not tell. Because he came to me and said Miss, [she is] my cousin if you do anything to her I will kill you. He threatened my student from grade 12 threatened my student from grade 10 because the other one was also my student. Nevertheless, do not annoy her she is my cousin; do not do anything to her. (Wasan)

Rania stated that she has hijab (head cover) issues. She is used to wear hijab in her country, but the school system in Qatar does not allow it. It causes conflict both in her personal and professional life. These findings are supported by the study of (Romanowski & Amatullah, 2016), according to whom, increased workload, lack of motivation among students, students' behavioural issues and lack of parental support are major challenges that teachers face throughout the reforms. Hence, in the light of the above discussion, it can be concluded that English language teachers in Qatar face several challenges, which range from professional life

to personal lives. This theme is closely linked to the previous theme of the study in which respondents asserted that they prefer to work in a team environment.

The challenges faced by these teachers persuade them to opt for teamwork. For example, the issue of sexual and physical harassment is one of the vital reasons to choose group interaction, teams, and communities. Similarly, the linguistic problems can also make them interact with each other on a regular basis so they can improve their Arabic. In addition, technological problems can be resolved through the online interaction of teachers in which they are able to suggest multiple strategies to each other. The responses reveal that all these cultural, technological, and linguistic and gender-age related factors significantly influence the personal and professional identities and realities of English language teachers.

It is a general perception that knowledge comes into being or takes a concrete shape through living examples and ideas, which people actually practice in their lives. As far as the knowledge of individuals is concerned, it is usually extracted from living communities and their internal culture. This knowledge, which an individual acquires from the surrounding environment, tends to play a very significant role in cognitive growth and development. The social surroundings trigger the mental process and boost the learning activities of an individual. The context of a social surrounding varies from one person to another person and across different professions. For educators, the concept of development is a core idea that is necessary for the promotion of two of the most important objectives of education, which are innovation and improvement.

6.4. Defining Needs

According to Ali (2009), needs assessment or needs analysis is a tool to examine the existing areas of improvements and needs for training within an organization. It helps identify areas for improvement in performance of teachers where training is required. After identifying

the need or the problem areas, the aims and objectives, content, execution, target as well as outcomes of training or intervention are identified (Cohen et al., 2007). This study revealed that schools use surveys, checklists and observation to identify the needs of teachers. Najla reported that her school requires her to write an application specifying her needs, which are fulfilled by the school. Wasan adds:

Yes; sometimes I want the teaching strategies or maybe classroom management. For example, sometimes you have teachers, they do not know how to deal with the students so she will ask that she wants workshops about classroom management and we are having these workshops. (Wasan)

Sumia comments:

They always, um, give us just papers, like this, and we write inside some papers what do we need, what are our needs for the next year, ah, so they can make a survey and the New Year they can give us what we need. (Sumia)

The findings show that these schools have formal, albeit not standardized, methods, such as needs assessment surveys and checklists, to identify the needs of teachers in terms of tangible classroom resources. These may include materials, supplies and technology, as well as intangible resources, such as counselling, guidance, training and workshops. However, the presence of formal mechanisms to gauge teachers' needs is not enough: effectively responding and meeting those needs to make teaching efficient and effective is crucial. This is especially important in a digital age when teachers are required to learn and implement new teaching methods and pedagogies. The current situation is that schools and the teacher training and preparation programmes are unable to fully prepare novice and experienced teachers to integrate technology effectively in their professional teaching practice and they are unable to provide the administrative support required by teachers (Aanthony W. Bates, 2015). As a result, teachers

face great challenges and barriers in a rapidly changing technological world as well as with greater diversity of students (Ali, 2009).

This study also highlights the teachers' need for adequate resources. According to Amato (2015), many teachers, particularly in urban schools, are working with students who are at-risk, without being provided with adequate resources from the school administration, as indicated in the responses of some teachers, Lubna states:

... but they never ask us, what do we need? They... it is always what do they need from us, but they never ask us what do we need. We do not have the freedom to print, we do not have the freedom, ah, to be given materials, we do not have the freedom to, ah... a budget. Like, everything we have, it is from our own accounts. They are not willing to print anything else other than the lesson plans or if we have a worksheet from, ah, a week before...I pay for everything myself. I do not have... like, they do not give me a budget, and other schools, you do have a budget.
(Lunbna)

This finding, while not surprising, is important because many young teachers are enthusiastic when they enter the teaching profession but they soon lose their enthusiasm and get frustrated and even leave due to lack of support from school administrators and leaders (Garner, 2015). According to Amato (2015), in many schools, teachers have to pay for basic items, such as markers, tissues and other supplies. They are allowed a certain number of prints and photocopies per semester and if they run out of them, they are required to pay for additional copies. This leads to the teachers spending more time on purchasing the required resources and material instead of teaching. Support from school administration in the form of access to resources and freedom over the curriculum is, therefore, a pressing need. Lack of support and respect for teachers and their autonomy destabilizes and de-professionalizes the teaching career (Amato, 2015).

Another key finding under this theme is the importance of classroom observations as highlighted by Reham:

When someone from outside sees how you are performing in class, he knows about your points of weakness and strength. Sometimes you are not aware of these because you are busy trying to explain to the students, make them understand. (Reham)

This finding is supported by Stuhlman, Hamre, Downer, and Pianta (2015) who recommend that by identifying the areas of weaknesses, strengths and challenges through classroom observation scores, school leaders or coordinators can gather important information about school-wide weaknesses in instructional methods and target these to provide rigorous on-the-job training for teachers. Moreover, having profiles of weaknesses, strengths, challenges and areas of improvement for teachers' gives leaders a valuable starting point for developing individualized professional development plans which can target improvements in different areas of pedagogical practice and provide on-going support.

However, none of these schools in which the interviewees belonged to have an organized way and standardized tools for classroom observations. According to Stuhlman et al. (2015), without the systematic use of observational tools that are reliable, standardized and validated by research, observations and feedback provided by coordinators or school leaders do not carry much value. Without a reliable and uniform system in place, teachers may receive different, inconsistent or even inaccurate feedback and support for adopting effective strategies and practices throughout their teaching practice and career.

6.5. Creating Opportunities to Improve Teaching

Education systems across the globe aim to provide pre-service and in-service teachers with opportunities for Continuing Professional Development CPD to prepare them for the

challenges of a career in teaching as well as to retain a workforce with highly trained and experienced (OECD, 2009). According to Stuhlman et al. (2015)., providing professional development opportunities with on-going support, feedback and training are one of the factors that facilitate improvement in teaching practices. According to the study by OECD (2009), a great majority of teachers reported that they participate in some form of professional development; however, half of them think the professional development they undergo does not meet their needs. This study revealed similar findings.

Many of the interviewed teachers reported that their schools provide professional development in the form of workshops, lectures, meetings, and model lessons. Noha said that her coordinator helps her with last minute plans, observes her and provides her with constructive feedback, which she finds useful. While all the teachers receive some form of professional development, mostly in the form of workshops, the frequency of these workshops varies. Other teachers report that their schools provide them with opportunities to attend in-house and external workshops as well as to conduct the workshop. Rania also said participating in online training on National Professional Standards (NPS) for Teachers and School Leaders by the Supreme Education Council (SEC).

Nora states that her school provides her with regular opportunities to attend and observe other teachers in their classrooms. Laila, however, expresses dissatisfaction with the school because “the main part here in the school, is students, not the teachers”, although she had received some amount of professional development. This reflects a lack of focus of the school on teachers’ professional development. However, in many countries, the role and functions of schools and expectations from teachers have been changing. Teachers are now required to teach in more multicultural and diverse classrooms, to emphasize the integration of students who have special learning needs in the classrooms, and to effectively use ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) for teaching and learning. Regardless of how valuable pre-

service training is for teachers, it may not be able to prepare them for all the problems and challenges that they may encounter throughout their teaching careers.

Another important point to consider here is the perceived value and usefulness of the training that teachers receive. However, the ideal concept of training that teachers should receive is different from the actual value and effectiveness of the training that is a matter of objective evaluation. In the context of this study, some teachers found the professional development they received useful:

However, the workshop, I am not saying that all of the workshops were [beneficial] for me, but most of them were really [beneficial] and were different.

(Najla)

Whenever they find...seminars...or even modern lessons in any other school, they always send the invitations and they ask us [to attend]. They are not forcing but of course...they sent it so you should go and attend...Yes, you have to... if [it is] not beneficial...mostly... you will learn [something from it].(Areej)

Last year [I] spent a whole week before the exams because...most of [the students were] absent. Therefore, we had [some free time]. She took us every day one hour and gives us five PTs in sequence for the new teachers. It was good. Some of them were not new information for me was not new, but some were good.

(Reham)

However, talking about NPS (National Professional Standards) training, Amal stated,

Yes, I am taking this national standard here and that's it, and for me [laughs], it didn't add anything for me. I already know all... (Amal)

These responses reflect that quality of professional development is also a matter of concern for these English teachers. Because the promotion of (a) high-quality professional development and learning opportunities, and (b) standards for the teachers are aligned with the goals and mission of the school and the government, teachers are given the opportunities to collaborate and include constant feedback and follow-up (DeMonte, 2013). Mendels (2012) claimed that promoting a culture that encourages feedback between teachers and their superiors to promote healthy work environment, which is needed for implementing successful policies and reforms. Therefore, the responses from the participants about the importance of creating opportunities for improvement of teaching may be reflected in the promotion of a culture of effective communication and feedback mechanism (DeMonte, 2013; Mendels, 2012).

The findings of this study show that there is a need for a structured mechanism or plan aimed at the improvement of the quality of teaching, in order to improve student achievement. While this need has always been felt and expressed, it has been ignored in many cases. Moreover, given the present situation of Qatar, which is undergoing educational reforms, the demand for high-quality professional development as a part of the reforms is evident. These reforms centre on the philosophy that better teaching may lead to better student outcomes and achievement. Yet, the same gaps and loopholes that affect traditional professional development can challenge the effectiveness and success of these educational reforms (DeMonte, 2013).

However, the responses of the teachers may exhibit how the culture of encouraging professional development may or may not be evident, depending on the task or activity involved. This scenario is reflected in the responses of teachers showing some aspects of development are considered mandatory, while others are posed to be optional. For example, some professional development activities may be considered necessary because the knowledge, skills and competencies that these activities aim to develop are believed to be essential for quality of teaching or teachers. In certain cases, involvement in such activities is mandatory for licensing

and certification. It can also be significant for teachers to use their own expert judgement by recognizing and participating in activities and events, which are going to be most useful to them in their present or future contexts.

High levels of obligatory professional development may suggest a highly-managed professional development system where teachers do not have much discretion to choose the activities they think may benefit them (Kennedy, 2016). This is also applicable to equal access in teacher professional development where online learning and development opportunities are available and teachers have an online community of practice where they learn and grow together without the need to be physically present in the same place (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001).

6.6. Managing Workload

A significant amount of literature is available demonstrating the relationship between workload and stress. In the study of Roughton (2013), 45% of teachers reported that they perceive their current workload to be unmanageable; thus, increasing their stress levels and the desire to leave their teaching facility. Algozzine and Anderson (2007) also highlighted the everyday stress of teachers as they prepare lessons plans that may ensure student engagement. In most cases, despite the best efforts of teachers, students still lack engagement; thus, increasing the stress levels of these teachers (Algozzine & Anderson, 2007). However, promoting the culture of manageable workloads to educators has been shown to decrease stress and improve effectiveness among teachers Pogodzinski (2014). In relation to this study, promoting the culture of manageable workload among the English teachers may be helpful in improving their effectiveness at work.

This study reveals that most of the teachers are frustrated because of workload, the amount of paperwork they are required to do and a lack of workplace balance. Gu and Day

(2013) showed that a majority of teachers complained about too much paper works, which affects their stress levels and effectiveness in teaching. Lingam et al. (2017) also showed how documentation requirements and excessive paper works tend to cause frustration and stress among teachers. In this study, all the teachers emphasize that they are overloaded and have to work extra hours at home. Manal, for example, says managing her workload is hard because she has three children to look after. She has to juggle schoolwork with housework and her responsibilities as a mother and wife. She reports spending two or three hours every day preparing for the next day. On weekends, she spends 2-5 hours working on the Learning Managing System, uploading quizzes, homework, and lesson plans.

Some teachers like Reham and Najla complain about the extensive amount of paperwork. Reham talks about how she has to work at home because she does not get time to do it at school: remedial plans, analysis, pre-lesson plans, student performance evaluation, and the like. Najla reports:

Paperwork, you know. Preparing booklets for weak students, preparing booklets for you because, you know, you cannot during the weekdays, it is difficult. Because, you know, you leave school at what time? At two o'clock. I...maybe you took one hour until you go home. In addition, most of the days I do not leave at two, by the way. Most of the days I leave at three. I stay to finish something. It is not obligatory to stay here but you know, you feel that I want to finish. I want to go home without thinking about...Yes. It is so stressful. (Najla)

While Areej claimed that teaching means non-stop working, frustration over a lack of balance in her personal and work life:

So frustrating because, you know, I do not have that private life, my family life, you know... (Areej)

Noha reported that she is stressed out because of the workload and she has to work extra hours at home, because there is no other option. The responses show neglect of children and their needs. One of the teacher's voices:

Sometimes when I am returning from work to home, just kissing my kids and sitting again on the laptop. After that, somebody's shaking me, wake up, your kids need you so I've decided that when I've come back home, just at least sit one to two hours with my kids without doing anything, just sitting with them, talking with them. Ah, I play hide and seek, whatever that they want with them; colouring, cutting papers, bobble, whatever, and then I will sit on the laptop. Moreover, usually, you know, when they sleep I start with... (Huda)

You know, on weekends you go with your children...you have many tasks you have to finish by weekend. So... how can you imagine, give me time out to become fresh. (Reham)

These findings are consistent with what (Al.Sabbagh & Al.Megbali, 2008) found. They studied teachers' retention reasons in Qatar where many teachers change career paths. The key reasons they found were workload, work-related stress, and job satisfaction. The study highlighted the significance of job satisfaction and workload by demonstrating an indirect relationship between stress outcomes and teaching context. Work-related stress among teachers may lead to serious health risks and may jeopardize their wellbeing (Taris, Schreurs, & Van Iersel-Van Silfhout, 2001).

However, the values, beliefs and personal resources of people may be significantly different as they assess their contexts and situations differently. As such, stress is not experienced in the same way by people who work in different contexts (Karimi & Alipour, 2011). This is what the current study reveals. While most teachers express frustration over the

increasing demands of the teaching profession, especially workload-related factors, other teachers are more optimistic and have a relaxed attitude towards workload:

It is not a workload, uh, it is a load but not but if you have a load but you enjoy doing it, its' okay. (Laila)

Wasan talked about how she struggles with her life as a teacher. Therefore, she manages her time by setting priorities and creating to-do lists. About working at home, she remarks:

... without that we cannot survive [laughs]. (Wasan)

Some teachers like Huda and Rania said the use of checklists to keep everything in one place is essential. Huda also said that working extra hours at home every day but she did not seem to be concerned about it. Areej states:

However, I love it I do it out of love not out of obligation. I need to do... I need to learn things so I cannot do it here because there is no time I have my blocks I have my supervising other teachers. Therefore, whatever stuff I have to do I go back home and, uh, after I finish my daily work at home I sit down and do it. Nevertheless, this is because I want to improve myself. (Areej)

Her responses show that she is a self-directed learner and has taken charge of her personal and professional development. Rania is also a self-motivated teacher who wants to grow as an individual and a professional, as reflected in her response:

Ah, if I have a lot of work I just do not speak with anyone, I just have my Nescafé, I start working, working. Then my colleagues just know, Dina that she is working now... Sometimes I have at home when my son sleeps, I just open YouTube,

I have ideas and then I just work here. I just take the ideas at home; I do not worry because sometimes I feel that in the school I just focus more. (Rania)

Other teachers have made peace with the situation keeping in mind their personal contexts. Lubna, for example, points out,

By being patient, by knowing why I am here in Qatar, by the idea of I should work to help my family, I should work to feel myself...at first, I was working maybe three or four, maybe five hours a day at home because I was slow and I didn't have...(Lubna)

Manal, who works two extra hours every day reports:

Trying to... arrange myself and manage myself, ah, at school, and my... and at home. Trying to do what, ah, is wanted from me, because work is work. (Manal)

The differences in perceived workload and coping mechanisms of the teachers, as discussed above, could be explained by individual differences of age, gender, and the like, which influence the vulnerability of teachers against stress as well as their ability to cope with the stress. Research shows that younger teachers are more emotionally exhausted than older and more experienced teachers are. This response may be related to the difficulties that young teachers face in implementing appropriate coping strategies to reduce their levels of occupational stress caused by their job (Al-Buainain, 2010).

Furthermore, female teachers have been shown to experience higher stress levels and lower levels of job satisfaction which usually arise from undesirable classroom situations and student behaviour, as well as from a lack of balance between work and personal lives(Abdulla, 2015; Kantas, Vasilaki, Triliva, & Besevegis, 2001). Therefore, it is imperative that an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the moderators and sources of stress is gained as well as an

understanding of the different coping mechanisms that teachers use which help them overcome or manage the effects of stressors (Srivastav, 2007) and the chronic stress that may cause burnout (Martel & Wang, 2014).

6.7. Organizational Culture and Communities of Practice

Liberante (2012) defined groups in a cultural context as those, which possess similar, cohesive, and unified activities or norms, that is, a cultural group. Schein (1990) further extended the view of Holliday (1999) and argued that organizational culture, especially within firms, emerges from those practices or ideas, which are learned by groups to solve certain problems of organizational integration and to deal with the issues of external adaptation. Eventually, these practices and ideas turn into organizational codes of conduct, validated by employees and taught to new employees. In this regard, these practices take the shape of a certain culture or develop patterns of behaviour, which are known as organizational culture.

In the context of this study, it is concluded that the workload for English teachers in Qatar is considerably cumbersome. Nearly, all the participants of the study report this factor and consider that their administrative and teaching responsibilities are so huge that they often do not get time to be with their family and children. The significant aspect is that this culture is widely established in Qatar's schooling system and constantly practiced by most of the schools.

With relation to such a teaching environment, Lubna specifically said in her response that American teaching methodologies significantly differ from Qatar's. The basis for the response is the background of the respondent in American education. Consequently, her method of teaching in Qatar has already been influenced by the local context:

If it is , like, they're professionals when I meet... when I say professionals, I mean from other [countries especially foreigners because...I know in America we have [several ways] of teaching...I know that we put students first, so that's why

I prefer taking advice from them, but here I feel like people just do it as a job and just to do it, so I do not feel like they put that much effort into it. (Lubna)

She also says that if she were in America, she would be adopting numerous approaches to develop learning skills in students. However, in Qatar, most of the teachers constantly juggle with administrative tasks and it is a standard environment there. Hence, she develops her teaching skills accordingly and prefers to work alone instead of in teams, to fulfil her administrative and teaching tasks.

Similarly, Lantolf and Lantolf (2000) described a significant aspect of organizational culture where group interactions are seen as a major source to grow and develop in cultural and linguistic context. They considered that family and friends, both as groups, help an individual to develop multiple socializing skills. In this context, schools, sports teams, and working in a professional environment offer foundations on which to encourage personal development. This point is reflected in Rania's responses:

I like teamwork...Um, yeah, for example, each teacher has her personality, his, her way of going to teach, I do not know, but I think that interacting with the others, with other personalities, with other histories, with others from different backgrounds...is the ideal development... very useful. (Rania)

This response has clearly addressed all the aspects of cultural learning. Personality, background, ethnicity and history are key factors that distinguish one culture from another. This response demonstrates that when teachers work in groups, they tend to acquire so many tangible and non-tangible characteristics from their peers.

Most of the other teachers are also in favour of teamwork because they learn and grow personally and professionally:

I like to be part of a team. Even when I came here, I was a pre-university teacher but there was a certain problem, they have changed me. Because I am very good at work, I did not make any other troubles. They have changed me from the pre-university to English teacher. (Huda)

See, sometimes it is very important to work your own, to have your things in your... and your concepts and targets clear to you. Nevertheless, working with a team is always useful. When you work with together, you achieve your targets together, which is very important. However, if you are thinking that you are alone, so no-one... I am sorry to say, I mean, no one is perfect. (Sumia)

We go to each other and we assess each other. Sometimes, not just not for assessment... I think that ...Yes, [to] reflect new ideas and a new strategy. I just, I'm not sure it will go well so I ask one of my colleagues, my friends, and just come and tell me do you think they just took off the idea or not. (Dina)

No I love working with a team, I can never work alone. (Areej)

I can work in a team, but you have to be cooperative and if the other one cooperates with you, so you are willing to share and cooperate with them. (Hessa)

Similarly, Amal responded:

I am talking about my team in the English department. I am really lucky about this, because, from the first day, they really accepted me. Even though I was the youngest and I do not have experience, but they react to me as I'm a good teacher, and all of them gave me help. In addition, if there's any advice that they gave me that would... Therefore, I am, I am happy with my team. This is one of the most reasons why I did not leave the school. (Amal)

The response of both Deema and Najla reveals that group interactions are the basis on which to develop cultural and linguistic skills. Deema experienced cultural development and Najla went through her professional development with the help of her team members. Hence, in general, this study finds that diversity and teamwork help to grow individuals both professionally and socially.

In the context of small learning communities, Fullan (2015) observed that faculty members criticize each other's work in a constructive manner. They ask difficult questions and try to validate each other's work, without appearing to be critics or adversaries. In this regard, faculties in universities are normally seen as a significant factor in professional career development and success. The faculty members, in cooperation with each other, not only develop a considerable budget to improve staff capacity, design curricula, monitor and evaluate each other's performance, but also invest time for joint planning and implementation of tasks.

Similarly, in the context of schools, members prove more helpful to each other because normally there are diversified tasks and targets associated with teaching and its administration. Consequently, tasks, which are fragmented, periodic, and occasional and disconnected, are easily handled. In findings, the response of Nora accurately summarized this debate:

At first, I was very weak at computer skills and my colleagues helped me a lot, how to make a worksheet, how to prepare a lesson, how to search for information and ways of teaching on the internet. At first, it was very difficult for me but with the help of my colleagues now it is okay, now I'm doing perfect worksheets. (Nora)

In addition to these details, the findings reveal that teamwork not only strengthens the cultural, linguistic, and socializing skills of teachers, but it also pushes them to seek other online forums too, in order to deal with their professional issues. For example, teachers said that they

use online forums: YouTube, WhatsApp, and Facebook to connect with other online communities of teachers. These communities help them to improve their teaching skills, classroom control and manage administrative responsibilities:

Um, I think we are supposed to, but I do not think they're following that. Like, it is my own practice by myself. Everything by myself. I am learning a lot from Sunadi. She is helping me a lot. She gives me a lot of ideas, and I by myself, when I go and I have difficulty in teaching something. I use YouTube, most of the time, to get ideas on applying strategies on how to do this, how to do that, and when I share something, I share it online with other people. Like, to say, okay, I did this, this, this, what do you think is a better option or... like, I ask.. but with my colleagues, no. (Lubna)

Under this theme, one of the significant patterns is that most of the teachers favour teamwork to the non-cooperating environment of schools. It shows that they find solace in each other's company and give each other healthy criticism for improvement. It further reveals that these teachers need considerable support and a cooperative environment in their schools. Consequently, they have recourse to informal groups to compensate for this problem:

I think it has advantages and disadvantages working with a team...Because for example sometimes you have different ideas...sometimes you are closer to your students so you are the best one who knows their needs. Moreover, if for example if I have a strategy that is complicated I know it will not manage with my students. Because of their levels, it does not...meet their needs. In addition, it has, you can share ideas with them, you can make use of their ideas because maybe they are more experienced than me. (Nora)

Based on this discussion, it is clear that teamwork has significant benefits both at individual and group level. On one hand, individuals learn to cope with their professional shortcomings and on the other hand, a friendly environment is generated within schools. This environment not only helps to complete administrative tasks efficiently but also has a healthy psychological impact on individuals. This is the reason that most teachers in this study prefer working in groups and teams and are reluctant to perform individually.

6.8. Conclusion

This research explored female ELTs' perceptions and experiences of CPD in Qatar in order to develop new practical and theoretical insights into our understanding of this area. It was found that a major concern of the teachers was the extensive requirements made by the SEC that cannot be managed with their current workload and without a given timeframe. Because of this perception, teachers feel dissatisfied with their work. Moreover, there is a perceived gap between the new standards and the current skill levels of students when it comes to the English language because the culture of students is inclined towards the use of their native language at home rather than English. Because of the culture, students are more familiar with Arabic than English is; therefore, many of the teachers are not prepared to implement teaching practices based on high standards.

The challenges that teachers face lead them to choose to work as a team. The problems related to language encouraged them to interact with each other on a regular basis to improve their knowledge of Arabic. Moreover, teachers also interact to help each other address cultural, technological, and linguistic issues, which have significant influences on the personal and professional identities and realities of English language teachers.

The findings of the study also suggest the need for a structured plan for the improvement of teaching quality, which is needed to improve student achievement. Moreover, given the

current reform implemented in Qatar, and the issues that teachers experience in relation to this reform, there is a need for high-quality professional development as a part of the reforms is evident. However, the findings of the study showed that teachers perceive the nature of professional development activities differently. In some answers, teachers show professional development is mandatory, while others claimed it to be optional but not necessarily useful.

The overall findings have shown that the reform has affected teachers significantly and their abilities and competence have been challenged to a great extent. Moreover, there is a need for individual professional development plans for teachers. These plans must consider and address the cultural and language issues that teachers have expressed.

Chapter 7: Data analysis and discussion 3

7.1. Introduction

The rapid changes in the economy and society have inexorably infiltrated the public sector including education and educational systems across the globe, such as Qatar, have been through prolonged changes, restructuring and innovations (Webb et al., 2004). In such a context, teachers are expected to manage their workload with increased demands and are required to define and redefine their professional development needs and their professionalism. The idea of teacher professionalism is closely linked to teachers' professional development (Evans, 2008). High-quality professional development, according to Guskey (2002) is one of the most critical components in almost every current scheme and plan for transforming education. A substantial part of previous research has investigated teachers' professionalism and their professional development as well as the factors that affect their growth. However, the opinions, insights and perceptions of teachers themselves about the issues and challenges they face have been largely ignored (Swann, McIntyre, Pell, Hargreaves, and Cunningham (2010)).

This chapter addresses the question of how English language teacher perceive and experience CPD. It discusses the key themes that emerged from interviews conducted with English Language teachers in Qatar in light of the reviewed literature. The data selections in this chapter, like previous analysis chapters, were chosen according to the sample representation. For example, the examples used represent different views about the provided CPD, and professional development sharing opportunities. The data were analysed using techniques highlighted in chapter 4 and the excerpts selected here have been grouped carefully to represent how teachers' experience CPD differently.

7.2. Value of CPD

Based on the results of this study and considering some key theoretical issues pertaining to professional development and professionalism discussed in the literature review, it can be claimed that the English Language teachers in this study are aware of the importance of professional development and professionalism. As demonstrated in the previous two chapters with the results and analysis related to Identity and Culture, the positive attitude and approach of the teachers to become and remain teachers demonstrates that they are striving to overcome the challenges and difficulties in their everyday professional and personal lives.

Campbell (2003) posits that teachers are powerful agents who define their professionalism and they are the ones who will decide what their needs are and how they can be fulfilled. The teachers in this study describe teaching as a challenging and demanding job, which should be facilitated by on-going, lifelong learning activities together with their careers (Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011).

Thirteen of the sixteen teachers who were interviewed were unanimous in their opinion that continual professional development was important. Learning new things and lifelong learning was found to be one of the most important motivators for English Language teachers to pursue continuing professional development. The responses below effectively reflect this finding:

We cannot say it is a waste of time. Sometimes it is beneficial. (Nora)

No, because, you know, back home we have a saying, until we die, we do not stop learning. Professional development is a way of learning new things, for every day, we learn new things. It is not a waste of time, no. (Deema)

The responses above show that teachers value new learning and continuous improvement and development. Four teachers reflected on the importance of change and adapting to change:

No, I do not think so because not even in our career, in every career you have to develop yourself. You have to [do] courses... You have to you know, nobody is perfect and everything is changing so you have just to go with the flow as they say. (Dina)

No, you can learn. Even though none of us is perfect. Each time our life is changing. Each time there is a new lesson and a new development. (Huda)

No, it is not a waste of time. Each time, each workshop, each development, meeting, you get just one idea, one new idea it is a good thing you should do. (Amal)

As I told you, no one is perfect. After taking one or two workshops if I think that I am a perfect teacher, it is not true. Therefore, when you are giving me any workshop, or any PD, or any outside opportunity, of course, it is helping me out, to learn something new. (Sumia)

Sumia pointed out that professional development must bring new ideas and incorporate latest trends and developments in the industry, instead of repeating the same old material. She also gives an example of storytelling.

Yes, I feel it is a big field, it is a wide area, and I am missing many things. Sometimes work gives a professional development course, they always take a very small, tiny bit that no one had taken or seen before and he starts giving his lecture.

Because it has to be something new to attract the people so I say, my God, how did he get this idea, where am I? (Areej)

Moreover, sometimes I have to start reading again... I have to learn. Even a small, we had the workshop recently about speaking and the entire teacher did, she just came in...the presenter with six pictures and we had a session for an hour and a half with these six pictures and I enjoyed it. And I said this is an excellent idea for recovering classes when the teachers are absent and if I'm an experienced person, mature over 30 and I'm there listening to this and I'm so interested, what about the students? They would love it, just to think of stories this woman is divorced, she's drunk, she has this, she smokes, look at her face, look at her wrinkles...They have a vivid imagination. They would enjoy it. (Areej)

The relevance and usability of information and ideas derived from professional development activities are what the teachers are more interested in i.e. practical knowledge and skills that they can actually practice in their classrooms, instead of theoretical knowledge. In relation to CPD model, the focus is on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that promote continued learning, which can be either cognition-based or situation-based. Moreover, (Kolb, 1984) claimed that in order to learn, one of the best sources of learning is experience, including environmental factors, and emotions. These concepts and theories support the perceptions of the teachers who participate in the study. These teachers claim that they prefer practical knowledge and skills (situation-based) to be included in a professional development programme as compared to theoretical knowledge (cognition-based). Therefore, these teachers prefer experience-based learning, as they can easily engage and understand the information when it is related to their practical life:

Sure, it helps, you know. I love to learn. Sure, it helps. Even if, you know, I go and spend my.. Sometimes my workshops are silly because, you know, I went to one about.. It was from the American Embassy. The professor was giving us a lecture and I was very happy. I will go there; sure I will have good [and] useful information. Much useful. (Reham)

Yes, we took the standard courses [at the SEC] the first one, the basic; I thought it was, I did not get the idea why we are taking this. The second one was more like, the first one was theoretical. The second one was practical. Like more, the lessons from every teacher from every school I enjoyed a lot. I took many ideas... (Dina)

Many developments are provided by Qatar University. It is more than useful. They focus on every aspect, skill in language teaching. How to teach the vocab, how to teach listening, how to teach reading, how to manage your classroom, they gave us new methods, every time. (Manal)

Similar findings were reported by Alibakhshi and Dehvari (2015), who claim that similar to teachers from other fields, English language teaching experts also believe that continuing professional development is very important, especially in today's constantly and rapidly changing world. Furthermore, many studies present arguments in support of teachers' continuous professional development. For example, (Jafri, 2009) claims that professional development enables teachers to improve their teaching practice and to keep up-to-date with the current developments, practices and research in the field. Likewise, Mizell (2010) also asserts that continuing professional development helps teachers identify the best instructional methodologies for the improvement of students' learning processes. Moreover, Richards and

Farrell (2005) also stress the importance of continuing professional development for in-service teachers to become conversant with the latest trends, strategies, methodologies and resources.

Some teachers like Sumia, and Najla, however, found professional development and workshops of little use, redundant, disorganized and a waste of time, which raises questions about the quality of professional development provided for them:

As an English teacher, I mean, the department, they provide us with PDs and teachers were coming every week to help us out. Therefore, this is...The SEC also organizes the workshops outside and...They are good sometimes. Sometimes they are not very well organized. Its okay, not that satisfactory. Sometimes they are good, but not every time. (Sumia)

Ah, some of them, a little. But, but the problem about this is that, maybe many at the supreme council of education, they just know the names of workshops, so they bring those people, those instructors, from outside, and they give us the workshop, and then we discovered that we didn't learn anything, we just have wasted our time. Moreover, we put this as a comment when they told us... Tell us to give the feedback. We put this, that it was a waste of time. We did not benefit anything. So I just want them to be specific...Do not know if this will really benefit us or just it is titled and it is named. (Najla)

Dina highlighted that they are only interested in attending workshops if they have something new to offer, otherwise they consider it a waste of time because they have more important things to do then spend the time to do things they gain nothing from.

Yes and sometimes, we do not... I do not need it. Or its' a waste of time for example when they train us for making the... putting exams every time the same work, the same... the same, the same, every three clusters, three-time meeting with

the three... not different, the same. The same material may be different, but you have the same starting in alphabetical order from the shortest to the longest, the same one. If you have something new invite us but if you do not have, there is no time for wasting time and no need, yes. (Laila)

Moreover, this depends on your positive psychology and if you are [laughs] sick minded. I am sorry for this but [laughs], I mean, you cannot get it. You will say, oh, my God, you are repeating the same thing I have taken in the two years before, the same PD... (Sumia)

But, actually, I do not feel, um, I benefit from it. Because I am not learning new things. All of the things they are saying, we have... Alternatively, that they are saying, we have just learned it here. So all the strategies, all the way, they are talking, it is not... It is nothing new, so I just waste my time. (Najla)

Every week, I finish my two classes here and then I go from 10 to 2PM, from 10AM to 10PM. And the, the course itself, or the session itself, won't take more than one hour. Nevertheless, the content itself won't take more than this, but they're just filling the time, so we have to... it is a waste of time and we have other things to do. (Najla)

This finding is supported by ([Craig et al., 2003](#)), who maintains that not all professional development, even if the impact is positive, is relevant and applicable in the contexts of all teachers. In the context of CPD, the teachers are more inclined towards the situative perspective of professional development ([Liu, 2010](#)). Expressing that they prefer workshops that are new and applicable to their methods of teaching highlights the importance of practical knowledge to the teachers ([Greeno, 2015](#)). Teachers see the relevance in professional development though gaining practical knowledge as compared to theoretical knowledge. [Johri, Olds, and O'Connor](#)

(2014) explained that a situative perspective tends to be more appealing to people, especially teachers, because it involves information that are easily relatable and easier to apply in a real-life setting, such as the classroom. Therefore, for CPD to be valuable to individuals, such as ELTs, the information taught must be perceived as relevant or practical depending on the individual undergoing professional development.

Reham points out that sometimes as part of their professional development, they are required to do things that are irrelevant or may be of no benefit to the students because they do not contribute to their learning. The study of Ifanti and Fotopoulou (2011) supports this finding where the authors observe that teaching has become more demanding and restricted due to ongoing reforms and teachers are now required to work in ways they were not taught as students. This evolving nature of teaching influences the work of teachers and consequently the concept of their professionalism (Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011). Deema says that what is more important for her is her student is learning. She expresses her frustration over how some strategies do not fit with the lesson she is giving.

I do not think that developing itself is a bad thing, but It [has] to be used in a good way, not just... Sometimes they just asked us to give... Put strategies in the lesson plan and we have to apply the strategy. And sometimes I see that the lesson [does not] need this strategy. I do not have to make a strategy. I just want the students to learn. That is my goal. So, if they learn about the strategy, the name of the strategy, or even if they do not learn what its name, they will... What is important is they learn. (Najla)

Hessa points out how she knew her students well while outsiders who evaluate them do not know them. She, as a teacher, understands how her students learn best, what is beneficial, and what is not, in her particular context. Not all strategies are beneficial in every setting, and some are just a waste of time, because students get bored, lose focus and get distracted.

So sometimes, this is what makes me object, that I do not have to, all the times, to give strategy. But sometimes, this strategy is very beneficial to the lesson. So, for example, today we used a strategy called numbers head strategy. Moreover, it is for cooperative learning...So this one, for example, is beneficial for me and it is useful. When I use it with students, they felt that they understand. However, sometimes, some of the strategies are just a [waste] of time. Sometimes the students themselves lose the meaning of why they learn this lesson and just started to be, um... Not concentrating because of the many strategies or the many ways of asking them to change their places, or asking them to stand up or sit down. (Najla)

Sumia argues that a professional development activity is valuable and whether or not the teacher will find that activity useful depends upon certain factors:

It depends on the person's teachers, the psychology and the way she thinks. Maybe she will find it useful and maybe she will find it not very useful, depending on... But, for me, I feel it is not a waste of time, it really contributes a lot. Because, even if you have taken that workshop, the same style, maybe the presenter has her own style and she has some different activities in it. Not all the professional development activities are so wonderful, but they are very helpful, to be honest, and they really help me. In addition, when I was working with you and with, [Miss Sarah] it was helpful. They support really well, your lesson planning and how to double your differentiation in the class. It was helpful, a valuable contribution, I can say. (Sumia)

The responses clearly suggest that professional development is important to these teachers, they are eager to learn new things and constantly improve their teaching and learning and they are committed to lifelong learning. Learning from others, such as teachers, colleagues

or even students, and benefiting from their knowledge and experiences was also found to be a key factor motivating the teachers to be involved in their professional development.

You are never too old to learn. Even if you are experienced, you still have things to learn from other people. You know, maybe I am old enough now, I am a little bit older than other one, fresh graduates may bring more ideas for me.

(Reham)

This finding is aligned with the study of Martin-Beltran and Peercy (2014), who observed that English teachers are more effective when they learn from each other. However, the focus of Martin-Beltran and Peercy (2014) was co-learning between teachers, which may not necessarily be in the context of formal training set-up.

7.3. Sharing Opportunities

This theme explores the teachers' inclinations to share their learning with fellow teachers, partners, and friends, who they acquire through CPD. Nonetheless, the literature review tends to give a more general picture of concept of sharing. According to (Edmonds & Lee, 2002), those teachers who efficiently apply CPD are likely to become more enthusiastic and confident. CPD specifically helped them collaborate with other teachers, design and share best ideas and practices with them, and gain maximum personal satisfaction.

Research suggests that the concept of sharing is a core idea of CPD and should be present at every level and stage. The data collected from the participants in this study also addresses these concerns in a general manner. The findings present more specific and detailed information, which can be assumed as a practical implementation of ideas emerging from the literature review. After a thorough analysis of data, it is found that this sharing occurs in two manners: informal and formal, which can also be considered as sub-themes of this section.

In the context of informal sharing, it is found that teachers take initiatives on their own: whenever they sit together casually, they like to share the details of their learning and enlighten each other. Some of them also used multiple mediums to demonstrate their new skills, in this regard, online sharing, webinars and participation in conferences are very significant. The answer of Wasan further demonstrates this notion, even though she practiced both informal and formal sharing simultaneously:

I come and give it back to my friends; I talk about it and I explain it. Sometimes friendly; it will be like this where we are sitting and I will tell this, this, this, and sometimes no, it will be more professional, to have it as a PD also, Yes; it is better to register that you attended this and you will be evaluated on it; it is better that you will give it as a professional. (Wasan)

Similarly, Hessa responded that she employs informal ways of sharing through the Internet and uses social media and webinars to improve her skills:

Yeah, I am communicating with all English teacher around the world. I have a lot, actually. I found it by myself, and no one recommended anything for me, by the way. Actually, I am sharing on the social media and I'm trying to encourage all my ... here in the school. However, life is so difficult and hectic here; you do not have that much time to spend on attending some webinars. Nevertheless, for me, I am trying a way out, just to improve my experience. (Hessa)

The response of Hessa reveals that CPD teachers are themselves aware of the significance of sharing. In this regard, they utilize their maximum efforts to gain some tangible results and online communities are one of those attempts. Similarly, Huda seems to apply the simple strategy of sitting with friends and talk. She says:

Just we will sit together, or I have learnt it from my old school, I say it with my friend in an informal way. (Huda)

The response of Sumia shows how much she enthusiastically applies the notion of sharing in her learning capabilities. In fact, she also shares the experience of this very research, its research questions and scope with her friend:

Yes, we share sometimes; we show them the file we made with you. I show them to my partner, see, this was free listening, during listening and all the instructions we were given there. Therefore, they are very useful. I still keep that file with me and I show that to my colleagues even. I share everything with whatever I'm having in my files.. (Sumia)

Rahsa was asked whether she has a particular style of teaching English, such as in group form or audio. She responds:

It depends on the lesson actually. I searched for new teaching ways on the Internet, searches for strategies, and sometimes the coordinator asked us to search for a strategy and after that we will give a workshop about what we searched for. Yes, I found some information about this strategy, after that, I give a workshop to my friends about it. Maybe twice a year. (Rasha)

This response demonstrates two things simultaneously. First, she uses online searching and Internet to boost her teaching skills. Second, in order to share her knowledge gained from the Internet, she organizes a workshop to share and discuss with other teachers and friends. This response reveals both formal and informal context. First, she organizes a workshop, which is a formal way of sharing in its own way. Second, she shares this knowledge mostly with her friends, which is an informal act of sharing.

Just like informal sharing, formal sharing is also very significant in practice. In the study of Martin-Beltran and Peercy (2014), the authors showed how co-learning between teachers, which may be an informal kind of sharing information, has led to becoming more effective as ELTs. Therefore, for CPD to be of value to ELTs, learning must not only come in the form of formal workshops or training. Knowledge sharing in informal or non-structured methods, such as collaboration in teaching English, may also be considered. Teachers also value these forms of learning for professional development.

Nevertheless, some of the teachers' responses revealed that sharing is an official practice. The data showed that the formal sharing incorporates school's instructions, in which teachers are formally asked to sit together and share their experiences with other teachers. In this regard, Nora responded:

When we have preparation sessions or when you go to a workshop outside school you have to come and tell them or to share with them. (Nora)

This response indicates one of the very significant elements of a workshop. Workshops are organized settings, which are specially designed to conduct certain activities. Nora reveals that whenever she goes outside to attend the certain workshop, she is expected to share her learning with colleagues. Laila also records the similar response, but it is more limited to internal settings of school:

Weekly meetings on Sunday if there is something new and we have certain agenda for our professional development. (Laila)

Najla's response agrees with Nora, in which she also stated the element of workshops:

Yeah. They asked to, maybe, sometimes make a workshop. To represent, yes. For example, last semester, I had a workshop at Qatar Foundation. It was at the University, and one of these workshops was about a new website. (Najla)

In earlier lines, the response of Huda shows that she shares her learning in an informal manner. Nonetheless, she also reports that formal sharing is also a part of her job. In this regard, she said:

Nevertheless, if I went here to another school, I will tell the rest of the department what I have learned. Yes, formally. (Huda)

Just like Huda, Rasha also reports both informal and formal means of sharing. In this regard, she said an organized setting which a university professor attends in order to induce discussion and ask teachers to share strategies:

We have something provided by Qatar University. Professors came to us once around discussion and then we usually have it. I read a book called 101 strategies for student centred learning; I [downloaded] it from the internet. Moreover, I gave it to all the teachers to read and then I told them each one of you let us sit together read a strategy...And it is very successful. (Rasha)

Manal's response is somehow similar to Rasha's response, in which she explains the significance of meetings and sharing of ideas in them:

Yes, always we are having, regular meetings. We share together every idea...if we have new ideas if we have new strategies, and if we applied [a] new strategy did it go or not? Moreover, how can we improve it, and so on? (Manal)

It was found that in certain situations, some of the teachers incorporated both informal and formal learning, like Wasan, Rahsa, and Huda. These findings indicate how seriously their approach is towards improving their learning skills both individually and collectively. These findings are supported by Landt (2002) who agrees with this notion of sharing and asserts that the CPD is only functional when teachers learn in an active and authentic environment, characterized by sharing, participation, engagement and collaboration. Jones, Swafford, and Thornton (1992) believe that teachers can only practise their learning when they are able to negotiate, share, and reflect their learning tasks and achievements with each other. This point is further supported by Kaagan (2008) and (Anderson, 2001) who contend that learning skills, gaining knowledge, and sharing are major tools for positive change and improvement. In this regard, programmes under CPD should inculcate this culture so the needs of all teachers and participants can be equally met.

7.4. Needs of Teachers

Under this theme, an attempt has been made to evaluate the professional needs and requirements of the teachers in the context of CPD. In this regard, the teachers were asked that whether they feel any necessity for improvement in their work, knowledge of English language and its practice. Often, it is interchangeably used for the problem, want, gap, interest, or desire of either an individual or group to demonstrate any lack or weakness. This aspect has been further explained by (Collinson, 2000): teachers' personal needs can be of two types, either intrinsic or extrinsic. Those that arise from an intrinsic core are related to personal improvement through acquiring of new knowledge, developing learning, getting skills, practising of new attitudes, values, and disposition.

In this study, teachers discuss multiple dimensions of their needs. Some of them report that they have no such specific need to address, while, others explain their concerns more deeply. Wasan reports:

No. Whatever I need I will attend, or whatever I have I will attend but there is nothing special. (Wasan)

On the other hand, Noha says:

I need help just to help me how to write and say, good say. I would like help at grammar. I would like help in writing, in speaking area because we are, with the students we just use the simple words for the school as well. Enrich my English speaking. (Noha)

Noha's point differs from Wasan because she needs help in a wide range of speaking and writing while Wasan has plainly rejected that she has any sort of special need.

Overall, Nora has major issues in dealing with students. She explains that she has difficulty in understanding the individual needs of every student in her class. In this respect, she included weak students, average students and high achievers, simultaneously. She discusses the very significant aspect that every curriculum has a certain standard and this standard cannot fulfil the educational and learning needs of weak, average and strong students in an equal manner. She asserts that this curriculum issue causes many students to underachieve for most of their student life. Nora further stated the problems of grammar and fluency in speaking as major hindrances in teaching English as a foreign language. Rania also enthusiastically responds to the question of needs:

Yes, as I told you before, I learn so much from Miss Hanadi, always communicating with her. Sometimes, whenever I am planning, just for the lesson, I want to do, she has the books at home, so I tell her, this task, I want to do it like this and she says, no it is better to do it like that and so on, and we share, yeah. (Rania)

Laila was asked if her training of professional development played any significant role to improve her personal and professional personality:

Yeah, it changed a lot, it changed me a lot. I [did not] know what is meant by curriculum standards I [did not] know how to write and objectives, many things. [didn't] know how to stand up in front of teachers to give them.... classes it is okay, I [didn't] know to make... how to organize my lesson. How can I start it, how can I move from one smoothly without and stops? How can I make an assessment after each objective? (Laila)

This response clearly shows that generally, professional development training influences the teacher's personality in a positive manner. At an individual level, Laila's response shows that this training has given her a better understanding of teaching, of which she was earlier unaware. Similarly, when she asked whether there still an area for further improvement, she responds:

Yeah I was... I was... they commanded me to do it but were unfortunately the school here forgets to recommend... to write my names and send my names to SEC and as a kind of mistake. Therefore, it was for training a professional trainer. (Laila)

In this answer, she shows that she has a huge enthusiasm for improvement, but it curtailed by institutional mistakes. Hence, later she was specifically asked about her needs as English language teacher:

I want to learn how to motivate my teachers ... I have excellent teachers who are excellent but some of them they have experience but they do not know how to get it out. Maybe they are shy, maybe they say that maybe [I am] not going to

agree with us, maybe she is going to... every lesson I have to check. How to deal with the special needs? How to motivate students? Not in my class but in other classes and I usually do my observation lessons in there. (Laila)

In this regard, she gives a opposite answer because it is somehow a personal question. Nonetheless, her response shows that she has a feeling that there are considerable shortcomings in other teachers, which can be easily removed by simple guidance. She believes that these teachers are not the capable of handling weaknesses on other own and therefore she wants to take a step forward to address it on a personal level. Deema responds:

Um, especially writing. We have a problem with the writing section. How to teach writing. And we have difficulty to - how to, ah, motivate the student to write. Because they tend not to write. It is a difficult skill. They do not like writing, we have a problem to motivate them how to write, how to start writing, how to imagine something and try to write it down. We have this problem with our students. (Deema)

The response of Deema accords with earlier responses, in which she stated the issue of writing, which needs further improvement and upgrading. Similarly, she also stated that she does not only face this problem of writing but it is also a huge problem for her students as well. In addition, they are not motivated to write English, which is discussed earlier. In this regard, both teachers and pupil suffer from writing drawbacks and are unable to cope with them. Similarly, Hessa responds:

Actually, I am sending everything to them, but you know, we do not have that much time to discuss and sit. Actually, I am discussing with my friends online and, teachers who... teachers who are attending with me these webinars, and we have become now good friends and we know each other, you know, online. (Hessa)

It indicates that whatever problem she faces and whatever she needs to resolve she tries to sort it through the internet, in which webinars and online communities play a very significant role. Similarly, Neima says:

Giving instruction because usually, I have given long instruction. Keep it short. Make it short. Sometimes student did not get the idea quickly, so he should repeat or ask who got the idea to explain the idea again, to get it from their friends, maybe it will be better from the teacher again. (Neima)

Well, time management in which way? Sometimes a student, I have in my class it is very, very good student, all of them, great and the highest mark in the rest of the class is 47. The highest mark in their class 40. Imagine the difference, okay? They need time and they ask a lot and you can't ignore your student a question. Sometime they will think about the question they will want to ask it. If you ask her to wait, some student will forget the question that he is going to ask. It took a lot of time more than the other classes. For example, sometimes there are classes they find the lesson in 30 minutes, 45 minutes and the rest, 15 minutes, we will work on workbook. In this class, I cannot do it to work on the workbook. I will give them homework, we will correct it together, I say...(Huda)

Manal points out:

More training opportunities and a better level. Something likes... something higher level. (Manal)

We can do that, we need some practice, like, with our building system of teaching. Moreover, regarding knowledge, like, there are many changes happening now, you know, even in the language and the vocab. So we should be

updated with that really, we need something like that, something updating your knowledge. Like, what is happening currently in the English language field? Therefore, I need something, something like that to be done. (Sumia)

Neima stated three key needs and problems she usually comes across which need solutions. First, she has a problem with giving instruction in an easy and concise way in order not to confuse her students. Similarly, time management is another issue because there are large numbers of students in her class. They need individual time, which Neima does not have. Sumia says that teaching English is a whole issue for her. In this regard, she reports her desire that there should be workshops and seminars through which teachers could be given advice on their various issues:

Teaching English... see, if they are giving workshops relative to teaching English, they are always going to help them out. This is what I believe. Because if they are not providing them it means that knowledge, you are having will be getting older and you are not updated with the new system. (Sumia)

However, Areej stated the issue of grammar and memorizing which is problem for her and her students as well:

I would like to improve... yes-teaching grammar. I would like to improve how... I would like to find a way to motivate students to learn grammar, to not just to answer the...the MCQ questions, to speak well, grammatically correct and to...to improve my teaching of grammar because I feel this one of my defaults. I cannot give the message of grammar to the students. Just, uh, because I was not taught it. I got it... I learnt it..I acquired it I did not learn it. So for me grammar is not rules that should be followed I it is the way you speak, it is the way you write, I do not know. Moreover, this is just memorizing and I do not like memorizing, I like to

understand what I am doing first. So teaching them grammar means I have to learn the rule first then I have to go to verb to B and God knows what to get to what in the end. Moreover, this I am not good at. (Areej)

Amal says that overall there is a need for a completely new strategy to teach English as a foreign language. Similarly, she also stated the problems of curriculum, which is discussed in the literature review. She asserted that due to the curriculum peculiar structure, there is a problem to deliver exact learning to the student. She responded:

Ah, to improve, yes of course. Um, even every time we need the new ways of teaching, how to deal with the students, how to make a professional lesson, um, what else? How to understand the standards of English curriculum good. Because they are difficult. They are difficult. Sometimes I read the standard but I do not understand what the meaning of it is. (Amal)

Manal asserts that there is an overall need for an aesthetic sense in teaching English. Due to lack of literature, it appears boring subject for students' because they are unable to take any interest:

Yes, I think I have for, ah, forgotten about, literature, drama, and poetry, when I think of this I [become] despair...To improve my language, to improve myself. I am very sad about what I had learned in college, and I did not use them. I have no time. I had no... I have no time to...To improve myself in this section. (Manal)

Dina highlights that she has problem in delivering exact punctuations so far, which affects her teaching skills. She feels that there should be some specified course or courses, which would address these minor problems for teachers:

I would like to improve learning in teaching. Yeah, I need to learn the punctuation marks. I always say I have to take a course for punctuation marks [laughs]. I would like to take a course how to teach vocab. Ah, we already started with [this person] but, ah, still sometimes I feel that I just need more. (Dina)

Reham stated that she has a language problem that she wants to address:

Yeah. My language. They are busy working with us as teachers. Moreover, they leave all the subject matter. Moreover, they did not give us time to develop ourselves. I cannot have time. You know, I want to take the How come? Even on holiday...My English language is not developed. Because, you know, all the time you are working on strategy and the blah, blah, blah, and your students are below your level. You are not going to learn from them. Well, if I did the admission test again to be, you know, certified from the AAC, sure I am going to fail. (Reham)

These findings are congruent with the study of Muijs, Day, Harris, and Lindsay (2004) who illustrated that there is an intense inter-relationship among teachers, students, and school outcomes which have their own kinds of need. These relationships and their needs can be facilitated by CPD efficiently. Loucks-Horsley, Stiles, Mundry, Love, and Hewson (2009) explained that usually, training models are very important for teachers' professional development. They help teachers to acquire knowledge and skills either through individual or group instruction. Overall, they fulfil the teachers' need to improve their shortcomings.

The above discussion seems to establish a strong ground for the concept of needs in teachers. It highlights that generally there are two types of need for professional teachers, personal and professional, which can both be addressed by CPD (Muijs et al., 2004). In addition, the point has been made that government policies have a strong role in facilitating the needs of

government. However, if there are weaknesses and drawbacks in these policies, they might further increase teachers' professional and personal gaps instead of overcoming them.

7.5. Knowledge of learners and their characteristics:

According to Liu (2010), teacher knowledge shapes the intellectual development of students and ultimately governs how effectively teachers teach and students learn. As well as subject knowledge, as discussed in the literature review, knowledge is also what teachers believe about their classroom and practice, their expert awareness and contextual information that provides teachers with a framework to assess and integrate new experience and knowledge (Durmaz, 2015) and improve student learning. Along similar lines, (Drexler, 2010) introduced a conceptual model to understand the knowledge base of teachers, which includes knowledge of learners and their characteristics among others. Knowledge of learners and learner characteristics include the assumptions and beliefs of teachers about how students learn. In the context of this study, the responses of teachers reflect their knowledge of learners' characteristics and way of learning. For example, Nora said:

Sometimes I feel [that] they convince me...I do not say no at all. I try. Then I discover if [I can manage], it has okay. I would follow it. [Nevertheless] if {I cannot} manage it, I will not waste my time in doing something that is not beneficial for my students. Nevertheless, ...somehow, they benefit me. (Nora)

The above response reflects how teachers are better able to judge the competence level of students for a particular activity or learning outcome. Areej also commented on how teachers understand their students and how they learn better than the external evaluators and observers who usually judge based on what they see in a specific context and a short period:

Sometimes it happens but usually whoever is observing, he has a point to make. it didn't happen before but, whoever attends the class the comments are

different you should have change; you should have taken less time in that activity. Nevertheless, for me as a teacher of this group I know very well what time I should take with my students. I know this activity for example writing it will take 20 minutes to write a paragraph. Someone told me no, it will take only five minutes. Okay sure it will take five minutes if the students know the language. If the student has the skill but if they do not, I am the teacher. So sometimes I think the comments okay, you have a point but, you do not know my students. (Areej)

This response suggests that the teacher is aware of and is confident about the skill level of her students and she tries to accommodate the needs, weaknesses and shortcomings of the students in her lessons. Another teacher, Nora, highlights the importance of appropriateness of strategies to the skill levels of students:

I think it is useful but to somehow it is not suitable to for my students, the modern strategies and the curriculum standards I think not all... it does not suit all my students. I have very weak levels of students. (Nora)

To give an example, she added:

...for example today the text they have to skim and scan the text to find the number and a name of a place. They cannot read the number in English. How am I going to ask them to find it and to understand the passage [when] they cannot read the number? When I check their writing, they are so very weak. They mix the capital letters. Their letters, letters, letters and you cannot read them. I took that sheet with the lines and I started... but I do not have time and I have the standards and the test will not be letters it will be the test for the old students. So I am teaching and I am thinking of the test and the results. Moreover, I cannot skip the

curriculum. I wish I could skip the curriculum for some time I work according to their needs. 30 students of the class. 29 maybe. (Nora)

Nora also highlights how teachers are so caught up in implementing all kinds of strategies and complying with standards that they are unable to cater to the actual needs of the students:

We have a plan in general for grade eight. However, we do not have time. They have seven classes per day they return home, when can you give them the plan? In addition, you have the odd standards and that, the strategy you have to follow and that...and the test is national test, it is not new test. I wish I could skip the book for some time and I teach, as I want to teach according to their needs. (Nora)

This response has also been reflected as an issue in education sectors of other countries. Purcell and Lloyd-Jones (2003) claimed that the imposition of teaching standards, which is inappropriate and misaligned with the needs of the students and teachers, may have negative effects on the performance of the teacher and the students. An example would be the controversies that surrounded the Common Core Standards of the United States (Shanahan, 2013). One of the controversies is that the standard system for accountability and assessment cannot be applied to all students and teachers across the different states of the country (Shanahan, 2013). Therefore, though standards may be helpful in promoting professional development, focusing on catering to the needs of students is also important.

7.6. Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management

Research suggests that teaching strategies and classroom management are two different phenomena, which are simultaneously practiced within classrooms. In this regard, both aspects designed and adjusted together. Nonetheless, Jones and Jones (2015) identify the link between

teaching strategies and classroom management in the way that an efficient teaching cannot be conducted in a poorly managed class. Hakim (2017) whose study focused on the importance of classroom management in the Arab context, also agrees with this point and further explains that effective classroom management is a 'vital zone' to enhance learning and boosts the productivity of teachers along with the creativity of students. The data revealed that some of the teachers have difficulty in addressing both concepts simultaneously in class. They report that they have difficulties in adopting specific strategies whilst maintaining class discipline. In this regard, a respondent shared her feeling that:

Sometimes of course, it is not easy; sometimes it is not... sometimes okay I can consider things but not always. (Areej)

As far as the findings of this study are concerned in the context of teaching strategies, Najla replies:

Yeah before, before yeah they used to tell me, I do not have clear instructions. I talk very quickly. When [Miss Sara] started there with us the last year, she used to always tell me, no clear instructions. You are talking very [fast] now, no, I am taking it slowly. I just, look at here, look at me please, we have this question, and you have to match this one. I am taking it slowly. (Najla)

This response shows that speaking fluently but slowly is a good approach, which can be used as a basic strategy to induce learning in students. Nonetheless, some of the teachers have problems in delivering a lecture in an interesting manner and speaking fast is one of those issues. Dina stated that each class varies from other classes; therefore, similar strategies cannot be applied on all of them. She said that:

The students by the way, yes, you can teach the same lesson to three different classes and the outcome at the end would be very different. In one class, we would say wow what a well-planned lesson. In the next class my God what happened here. (Dina)

Hessa reveals that sometimes curriculum differs from practical teaching and learning. In this regard, she gives the example of grammar where most of the things are not practiced but they are taught to students to improve their writing and speaking skills. She also stated that moving around the class and encouraging students to participate is another effective strategy, which keeps them engaged with the lecture and help them to learn:

It was on last Thursday I had a lesson here for teaching grammar, it was my teacher... they ask me to... the old time grammar is not involved in the exam so we do not know why we teach it, so we teach it for the sake of speaking and writing. Therefore, I make a lesson here for speaking. There was a comment of a teacher and she asked me, I was playing with them a mental game. Moreover, I just get from the group but they tell me if you let the students themselves take the paper and move around... the entire class move around they will be involved and there was another motivation. Therefore, I think ...it works. (Hessa)

These findings are backed up by previous research. For example, in the context of classroom management, Meyers, Bender, Hill, and Thomas (2006) highlight one of the important aspects of classroom management is that conflicts among students are a key source of disruption which challenges the teachers' authority, cause objections to requirements of the course and classroom routines. It has been found that the sources of conflicts are not gender, age, race, size of the class, or experience of the teachers. Rather, they emanate from the overall school's policies, which recognize and cater to students' needs and requirements. It means that

when students are satisfied and know that they can communicate their issues with teachers and counsellors, there are fewer chances of conflicts among them.

Furthermore, McPherson and Liang (2007) identify the issue of compulsive communicators in the class who are those students who participate enthusiastically in class and have answers for each question. They are mostly bright students and enthusiastic learners, but in context of their psychology, they want to remain the centre of attention. Therefore, there are risks that they start dominating the class and hamper the learning opportunities of other students. The dilemma is that it is the responsibility of the teachers to keep the high morale of these students but also to motivate weak and average students to participate in classroom activities and discussion. Wanzer, F, Wojtaszczyk, and Smith (2006) noted that humour during lessons boosts the learning and creativity of the students. It has been argued that by adding funny stories, jokes, pictures, costumes, and riddles makes the lecture more interesting and easy to understand. However, there is need to differentiate between inappropriate and appropriate humour.

In the light of this literature review, the findings of this study have provided more or less similar points. For examples, Rania says:

Um, maybe group works. Where students like to group, not to work but to, to play, to... we have problem with the group work as students. We think that per at least - no more than pairs work, but group work, we find the problem to manage five, six groups. [We managed this] through grouping the students according to their, ah, personality, whatever, to their levels - differentiation. We have a problem how to make any group homogeny and cover the whole levels in one group. This [is our] main problem as a teacher. (Rania)

This response reveals that she has issues with class management. Chiriac (2014) claimed that group work for students might be ineffective due to the loss of focus and a higher likelihood

of conflicts related to the task, especially when the group is too big. However, with proper teacher facilitation and cooperation between members, group work can have positive effects, especially with an equal division of labour, which minimizes the required effort for each member to accomplish the overall objective of the task (Chiriac, 2014). This point shows that group work is not devoid of difficulties, which might demonstrate themselves at any level. Similarly, Reham reported a similar issue, in which she said that group members chatting with each other interrupts the main purpose of group work:

Frankly speaking. I am teaching advanced classes, business classes. Once you say group work you are going to lose the class. They turn to each other, start chatting. (Reham)

Reham presents the issues of teaching strategies and classroom management in a unified way. She explains that teaching strategies can only be applied when the number of students is between 12 and 15. She explains that it is difficult to manage the class and teach when there are 35 students to deal within 55 minutes:

Yeah. Most of the time [I teach them individually]. Because, you know, you are going to lose your... ..if you want to apply strategies, especially in English, in teaching a language, the maximum number of class and it is scientifically recognized. The maximum number is 12 or 15, maximum. How can, how come you give me a 35-student class and you want me apply strategies. There is going to be, they are different abilities. Yeah, you have different abilities, different levels. How come? You give me only 55 minutes. (Reham)

Lubna stated a similar problem. She said that a large number of students in one class destroy the creativity of each individual and the teacher is not able to focus all individually, which is a very frustrating situation for her:

I do all of this. I am trying to apply all the strategies, you know, for, for informational, persuasive, argumentative, narrative. I am trying to apply all the strategies, but you know what, the class... okay, the numbers of the students are so 30 and 32, and if we want to apply strategies like this, you have to have at least... 18 or 20, to apply these strategies. Nevertheless, I am trying to, to find my way out, and, I have noticed a lot of improvement in my students', you know, achievements, but not all of them, which for me are somehow frustrating. (Lubna)

Rania stated a similar problem: the number of students in any class puts considerable pressure on teachers' productivity and creativity:

Here in school, no. I am trying to do my best just to do... I do not know how to say about, applying and implementing...the strategies that I got, but here, I couldn't because you know the number of the students and I've tried, especially this year, but last year all the strategies that I got, I applied, and it was amazing. (Rania)

7.7. Online Professional Development

According to Tarone and Allwright (2005) and Alibakhshi and Dehvari (2015), English Language teachers are more likely to adopt the latest innovations in educational technology and language teaching theories which allow them to adapt to the technological changes taking place around them and mold their teaching methods accordingly. The study at hand reveals similar findings. Teachers reported using ICT for teaching and learning. Noha observes:

Yes I had online courses; my sister lives in the US and she used to look for me, improve yourself more; she does not like to .. I'm working, okay, I have my job, I'll stop...She sends me websites; these online courses..(Noha)

You can meet others; you will have questions and answers about many things, it is very, very, very helpful. Some of them [are about teaching] yes. I attended three online courses. Reading, I got something about reading and something about communication, or communicating with others. (Wasan)

... after being a teacher, I always work on myself. Because my work needs to [be updated]. I searched for new teaching ways on the Internet, searches for strategies, sometimes the coordinator asked us to search for a strategy and after that we will give a workshop about what we searched for. IT is very important because without, Internet we cannot get all the, up to date ideas, strategies, ways of teaching, and we need, in our lessons we need videos, things like this to attract students to attend the class and to help us to convey our ideas correctly. (Amal)

The responses above illustrate the importance of online professional development for English Language teachers and highlight how they can keep up with the current trends and developments in the industry by renewing their knowledge and skills online.

7.8. Effectiveness of ICT in teaching

This theme explores English Language Teachers' perceptions and opinions regarding the effectiveness of ICT in teaching. The responses show an overwhelmingly positive response from most of the teachers:

IT plays a very important role. In teaching English, especially. I can give you some examples, like, when I gave my model lesson last year, cosmetic surgery. It was on LMS and it was wow. Moreover, the girls, they presented their presentation on the screen and the whole class was involved, and they were working in groups. It was... it was something, wow, yeah, and they learned. (Sumia)

Two teachers, Sumia and Rania, also highlight the importance of student-centred lessons. They expressed how their students love the idea of lessons taught with ICT.

It was entirely a student centred lesson and it was very clear to them. And they demanded me for another lesson, like, goodness sake, all we want to have lessons like this in the IT lab. (Sumia)

A lot. We have interactive CD, we have that, computers, like, all these materials help us a lot, a lot, a lot. Yeah, and our students like this technology, generation have it...in general, like in PowerPoint, like, and then, IT technology. (Rania)

Noha comments on how teaching with ICT is useful and enhances student learning and points out that she does not believe in spoon-feeding answers to students:

It was peaceful. I have no problem with IT, [laughs] I love IT. It is something very useful. Moreover, you know when they search on-line that their vocab unconsciously... and it increases, and they learn many things that we cannot respond with. I do not believe in spoon-feeding the answers. I used to give the answers before, but now, from this year, I have started this practice. Therefore, I encourage them to get their own answer. Moreover, by the end of the lesson they have to share the answers with me, if it is good or not. (Noha)

Manal reported how ICT is a part of her teaching and that her school provides all the facilities, such as smart boards in the classrooms:

It goes side by side with teaching English. I cannot do... I cannot prepare my lesson without inserting ICT technology; without. My lesson, whether

searching for video, searching for link, searching for, important sites, to teach something, and so...we do video lessoning. (Manal)

Laila, however, points out that using ICT for her is a “big problem”. But she also stresses that using ICT makes teaching easier, motivates and engages the students and makes the lessons more ‘student centred’:

Um, IT for us is a big problem; we are not using it that much. Still the very old style PowerPoints and stuff like that for, um, [Non English] we will use the smart board soon. It makes teaching easier, it makes the students motivated more, it makes them... it makes the class... the students centre more having technology in the classroom makes the students really [engaged] in the lesson. (Laila)

Amal reports the use of LMS (Learning Management System) for teaching:

In my subject, we use LMS education model. It is a new technology in schools. LMS, electronic education. Here in Qatar it is a new system for all the schools in Qatar. We take the students for the lab, computer lab. Moreover, each student has user name and password. Account, and for us as teachers, account, for the parents, they have account. It is a new system. I prepare the lesson on the LMS. We make quiz, online quiz. (Amal)

Wasan asserts that using ICT in classroom breaks the monotony:

It is very beneficial somehow. It breaks the routine when you let them watch a video related to your topic. When you let them listen to a song also related to a topic. When you make like a PowerPoint...when you, uh, it helps you to change. It is a kind of change in your class. (Wasan)

Yeah, YouTube, we use videos, we presented broadcast we showed them change, depending on a lot of... again we use it to cover the standards. (Laila)

Reham believes that ICT-based lessons are helpful and attract students' attention. However, as pointed out by three teachers, there are certain challenges in using ICT in classrooms and Areej even received a warning letter because of using music in her classroom. The challenges are apparently cultural and religious, as with using music, because Qatar is an Islamic country and Islam prohibits music. The responses below illustrate the challenges teachers face in implementing ICT in their classrooms in the context of social, cultural and religious norms and values:

Yeah, it is very good, so helpful. You know, students, like to, to see, to hear.. You can play games with them, educational games; they like it. It attracts their attention. Like, you know, this part, part...using some videos, some songs. Because they are daily exposed to these songs, to these videos, they are nothing. I have taken a, a warning letter because of one of these. The coordinator told me that it is not accepted; here in this country, it is not accepted, but for me it is normal. I do not know, but I do not know what to say but [laughs]...Yeah, its maybe against, against the school rules. (Hessa)

IT, we are using it only as a starter sometimes. Sometimes just to, if we are taking grammar or something just to emphasize the rule. Sometimes we use it to Google the spelling must learn of the words. It depends on the culture and it depends on the, no, of course [laughs]. Like the movie Jane Eyre, they took the story of Jane Eyre. We have to watch the movie, we have to make sure that there is anything against the tradition or the students, they cannot see so we have to cut

and ...Everything, yeah. The video, if there is a starter I watch with the coordinator, watch it and then we just agree that it is okay. (Dina)

Okay, we are using this. We use those things, they like visuals, sure. Nevertheless, you cannot guarantee any other time they will... you will give them much benefit of this. Yeah, sometimes you do not find the suitable material to show. In addition, you have... maybe related but they are concerning the traditions of Qatari society and Arabic societies, you cannot show, yeah, because it is coming from other people. So, other countries...So, we cannot, sometimes you feel that you are restricted...you cannot use everything other people show on the internet. Sometimes, you know, they are very helpful. (Reham)

7.9. Reflective Practice

Reflective teaching is a process where teachers think over their teaching practices, analyzing how they are teaching something and how practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes. The theme Reflective Practice refers to the process whereby teachers evaluate their everyday actions and practices in order to come up with better ideas and strategies and to incorporate them into their future lessons. The literature review further provides an insight into reflective teaching. As Moon (2004) explains, it is the reprocessing of ideas that helps to compile unstructured thoughts sometimes also incorporated with emotions in order to formulate a better strategy for the next time. Dewey (1933) stressed the importance of Reflective Practice and considers an individual's lived experience as the starting upon which their future learning develops. He also considers that individuals who lack the capacity for Reflective Practice are the ones who are moved and controlled by their instincts and not their brains and thus are unable to understand and cope up with emerging challenges and situations.

Schön (1987) termed Reflective Practice as *Reflection in Action* and *Reflection on Action*. In his explanations, he broadly classifies the process of reflection into two categories; reflecting while doing it and reflecting after you have done it. For instance, when a person is going to give a lesson and is standing and delivering his thoughts, he might make the necessary changes according to the requirements of the classroom or the students. This part is referred to as 'reflection in action'. After successfully delivering the lesson when he reflects back, he may come up with some flaws, which will shape his subsequent planning and restructuring, which then contributes to a cycle of continuous learning. Biggs and Tang (2007) discuss Reflective Practice as the systematic change in teaching skills carried out by the practices an individual makes in his past guiding him to the correct path and thus enhancing students' learning.

It is found out that almost every teacher acknowledges the importance of reflective practice: it is the means whereby everyone acquires the message that differs in each case. Some teachers prefer to note down their experience and then read out to extract the best or maybe sometimes to discard the wrong strategy in the future lesson delivery. Sumia says:

Well, with me, I feel that I keep on trying new things in the class. I do write it. Moreover, even I write the reflections after the class, you know. I love to keep a diary. I write whatever happened in the class [and] if I had anything, which really helped me. Once you have a look at the diary at the end of the year you feel like, yes, these things happened, and you are more conscious next time. You will not repeat something that was bad or you will repeat something that was good. (Sumia)

Sumia agrees with the idea of writing notes adding that reflection for her is the motivational factor that helps to improved performance for the next time:

Very important. Reflection, as a teacher is very important. You have to keep writing the reflection. Not every time possible to... for a teacher because you are

very busy. But you should keep a journal. Moreover, you should write whenever possible, at least something good happened in that class, to make you feel happy at the end of the year. (Sumia)

Wasan expresses similar views:

Sometimes I am so happy what I did, I feel happy that this class was perfect and everything was okay and sometimes no, I have to change this, I have to change this. Yes sometimes I write. (Wasan)

Sometimes, teachers also discuss things with the staff members and their coordinators and then come up with solutions based on which new strategies emerge. The phenomenon of sharing issues with an experienced colleague is sometimes thought to be a good way to resolve underlying issues and to cope up with them:

Yes sometimes, I tell my coordinator all I did in this class but I think it will not work with this, with other girls; I must do, or I must change something.. And I always write notes. Sometimes, you have to change a little bit, even if a little bit but it differs, with some students it differs. (Wasan)

Wasan's remark reflects the same idea:

[I] share it if I have a problem; they felt that there is much, a very big problem. I go to my coordinator or other teachers who are more experienced and I ask them directly what to do. I do not have time to write about these things. (Reham)

There are cases in which the responses and behaviour of students convey messages to the teacher about how she is performing while delivering the lesson and how far she is successful

in delivering the concepts and ideas she is supposed to convey. This helps a teacher to shape future approaches to learning:

Sometimes, when you enter, at the first... If you, for example, have two classes, when you enter the first class, you see that, you made a specific point; it did not work correctly with the students, so that, on the other class, when I enter, I try to make it differently. To maybe simplify it for them so they can answer the activity easily. (Najla)

Teaching is a continuous process of learning where not only students learn but the teacher also absorbs so many things in their day-to-day interaction with students. Teachers also evaluate the extent to which they are successful in delivering the concepts. Huda expressed the same views:

From the students' understanding, sometimes I feel my students enjoying, like yesterday's lesson. Because the topic of the lesson was very easy, it was about healthy food, the pyramid of food, so it was very easy, the students were involved in the lesson. I showed them a video about the pyramid food, they liked it very much and when I finished all my objectives, I understand that my lesson was perfect. I have at least four objectives in my lesson; Reading, writing, speaking, listening. If I finished my objectives, so the lesson was good. Sometimes we write at the bottom of our lesson, the plan, there is a part to reflect. However, sometimes it depends on the class where you are. Some classes are required, the lesson goes very well, [and] it goes very well inside this classroom. (Huda)

Sometimes teachers are so busy that their schedule does not allow them to write notes. Even in that case, teachers claim to have gone through the process of Reflective Practice. They recall happenings in the classroom and based on them they formulate their future actions.

Nonetheless, they do not deny the significance of noting down the things and its contribution to the better evaluation. Noha comments:

Sometimes I like the lesson, I taught the lesson as I prepared it but sometimes I think it was not good. (Noha)

Nora expressed similar views when she said:

Every day I have different reflection. I think about it after the class.. I wish I could write. I told myself from the beginning I will write. Sometimes I feel satisfied and happy. For example, if I use a new strategy with the specific students [and] which does not manage I keep it in mind I have to modify some points. For example if I explain something and I discover I have to modify, I have to change. (Nora)

Although every teacher has a different approach towards reflecting back on her actions, there is no debate about the significance of reflective action in each case and every participant stressed the importance of reflective practice in order to gain a better perception of her own performance and helping her to evaluate their skills and knowledge. This in turn significantly guides her to move in a right direction and shape a better course and set of actions for the future and leads to developmental insight.

7.10. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how teachers perceive the value of CPD: whether teachers find it useful and relevant or not. The opportunities they get to share their learning with their colleagues and others; their CPD needs; their knowledge of their students; how they learn, teaching strategies and classroom management challenges faced by them; openness to criticism, change and personal challenges faced by the teachers; the effectiveness of ICT in teaching and learning and reflective practice. The findings pertaining to this part of the framework reveal that

most of the teachers find CPD valuable because they get to learn new things and can constantly renew their knowledge and skills. However, some teachers find CPD to be disorganized and irrelevant to their needs and contexts, which raises questions about the quality of professional development.

It is important that government reforms and policies take into account the needs and voices of teachers in order to achieve effective implementation of changes as well as to provide support to the teachers and reaffirm their sense of professionalism. As the findings of this study suggest, schools and teachers have been experiencing extensive reforms and changes, raising professional standards and work demands, ultimately affecting their roles and responsibilities (Day & Leitch, 2007).

The findings also reveal that teachers are better able to judge the worth of new strategies and teaching methodologies because they know their students better than outside evaluators. Therefore, they must be given the autonomy to apply strategies at their own discretion and understanding and not be forced to make changes that are not relevant, needed or beneficial to their specific contexts. The findings in this chapter also highlight the importance of using ICT for teaching and learning. All the teachers reported that ICT improves their teaching and students enjoy learning with ICT. It breaks the monotony and engages students in learning. Investment in professional development for the teachers is essential. They need support to fulfill their education requirements and build their knowledge base effectively (Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011).

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1. Introduction

This chapter briefly reiterates the purpose, objectives, research questions and methodology of the study. It also summarizes its major findings. The limitations of the study are discussed and implications for policy and practice and recommendations for future research are addressed. Finally, the chapter ends with a personal reflection.

The purpose of this study has been to explore the perspectives and experiences of English language teachers in Qatar with respect to their professional development. The theoretical and conceptual framework involved an interlinked conceptual model based on three themes: identity, culture and CPD. The study was qualitative in nature and an interpretive framework was used in order to gain a deeper understanding of the opinions, perceptions, feelings and challenges faced by teachers in the process of CPD. A narrative inquiry approach proved to be useful and helped the researcher to understand how teachers give meaning to their experiences. To collect data, a life history approach was adopted in order to understand the personal experiences of the teachers through their own narratives and stories. The life history approach enabled the researcher to understand how the personal identities of the teachers changed over time and how their identities were constructed and reconstructed through their lived experiences as they acquired or rejected new knowledge. It helped the researcher to understand the intricacies and complexities of teachers' experiences and the relationship between the participants and the researchers played an important role in this regard. Below is a summary of the key findings.

The teachers who contributed in current research belonged to different backgrounds that influenced their beliefs about teaching as a profession and contributed to their identity development. This was linked to their country of origin - the teachers in this study came from

Egypt, Lebanon, USA, Palestine, India, Tunisia, Syria and Jordan – but also linked to their family upbringing. For example, one teacher taught her French-speaking mother English. Another belonged to an Egyptian family and while her parents were illiterate, they encouraged their children's education. Many other stories are presented in the study that demonstrate that the teachers belong to diverse family backgrounds in which a few families were highly educated, few had received moderate education while some had not received any education at all' Interestingly, all of these diversified families encouraged their children to pursue education and supported them morally and financially.

Furthermore, it has also been shown in this study that the English Language teachers' identities are deep-rooted in their personal life histories. Their perceptions, views, philosophies and cultures from their family environment influence their educational experiences, their career choices, teaching methodologies, practices, and their overall identity as EL teachers. The outcomes of the study show that it is essential to examine the personal life experiences of teachers to acquire detailed and complete comprehension of the influences on the development of their identity as teachers. The different words, expressions, metaphors, symbols and ideas associated with the identity of teachers explain the identity concept which was found to be multifaceted, constantly changing and complex.

8.2. Theme 1: Identity

The main research question was: what are female English Language Teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development in Qatar? To answer the main question the first sub question was: what personal and professional experiences help develop female ELTs professional identities? The key findings extracted through the interviews from the teachers and their responses to the concept of identity development revealed important insights into the minds of the teachers.

Under the theme of identity, the researcher investigated the complexities and dynamics of identity development of English language teachers holistically and involved two important features i.e. the combination of professional and personal experiences and stories of English language teachers, and the application of explicit, rational, instinctive, and hidden thought processes. The beliefs, expectations and interpretations of English language teachers were also explored in the study regarding their professional, personal or educational experiences on the development of their identities as teachers.

The findings represent different aspects of identity, situations and contexts. It is evident that professional identity of a teacher in EL teaching has been considered as an essential element of teaching; however, the self-identification enables teachers to develop their perceptions of their own actions, roles and behaviour in the workplace. Further, socialization is a key factor in building teacher identity.

The study reveals that varied educational experiences reflect diverse identities. The teachers interviewed for this study all had different educational experiences. Some teachers learned English language through their own interest while some learned English because of family's inspiration or teachers. So, the key findings emerging from the views of different teachers are expressed in terms of isolation, cultural differentiation and the diversified experiences of education. This is considered to be the most vital factor in the construction of self-identities of teachers.

Under the sub-theme of becoming an English language teacher, different aspects, which influence the whole experience of education, are highlighted, such as contextual influences. One teacher wanted to be a journalist, but the aspiration to indulge in teaching arose because her sister was an EL teacher. The role of fathers and teachers in influencing or persuading them to become teachers is also considered significant for a few teachers. Families and teachers are considered important and have been pictured as role models, who directly or indirectly lead

them towards establishing their identities and influence their academic or professional careers. These views reveal that contextual influences are also significant in the development of teachers. The results in the study suggest that teachers influence their students highly and students usually remember the behaviour of teachers for a significant period of time. This finding highlights the significance of teachers' attitude in shaping the behaviours and personalities of students.

As such, the association between teacher and student is a considerably significant factor that helps the students to learn effectively. The relationship between student and teacher is also important in that it influences the students in the development of their own identity while it improves their motivational levels and involvement. The respondents (teachers) demonstrated varying views about the relationship of student and teacher. Most of the teachers thought that their students perceive them positively and they report receiving words of appreciation from their students. Teachers also claim to treat their students as their own children and appear to be genuinely concerned with their learning, growth and wellbeing. They use words such as love, care, closeness and respect. The findings reflect that the relationship between teachers and their students is strong. Students often consider their teachers as a role model and the character of teacher can be significant in the personality building of students.

Previously, in Qatar, the role of a teacher was more teacher-centred, whereas now it has become student-centred. The role of technology is also found to be significant in changing the roles of teachers that resulted in the development of new tactics and methodologies, such as project-based learning. Other roles reported by the teachers are reflectors, guide, monitors, lifelong learners, friend, mother, sister, and the like.

In line with previous research [Scotland \(2014\)](#), the study finds that communities are considered in playing a significant role for the development of teachers' identities. Teachers that have contributed in the study belong to different communities of practice, which leads them

in building their identities. Most teachers are a part of formal or informal communities at their schools. Other teachers were a part of online communities through social media. Teachers recognized the importance of being a part of communities of practice and how they can learn from others i.e. their coordinators, colleagues, and the like. It also reflects that the social context and communities influence teachers while developing their personalities and perceiving their self-identities. Teachers attended conferences, workshops, seminars and meetings. In line with (Scotland, 2014), this study showed how contexts shape the identities of new teachers and the influence of socialization on the identity of teachers.

The study also highlighted the powerful relationship between teachers' personal histories, their experiences and contextual factors. It was revealed that the workplace is an important element that affects the teachers' understandings regarding teaching which not only facilitates but also sometimes hampers the development of their professional learning experiences. The teachers' responses also showed that feeling accepted and welcome by more experienced teachers affected how they see themselves, which suggests that feeling unwelcome may have an adverse effect on the identities of teachers because they feel they do not belong.

8.3. Theme 2: Culture

The second research sub question was: in what ways do female ELTs perceive and experience the role of culture in their professional development? This question was aimed to see how macro level culture and micro level organisational culture influences how English Language teachers' experience Continuing Professional Development. The aim was to explore the relationship between organisational culture, market forces and education reform in Qatar and to comprehend the effects of such factors on their professional development experiences and needs.

Consistent with previous research, this study found that building a strong culture within the organization is necessary for growth of business. A strong culture within the organization is usually based on the themes identified in this study: for example, defining needs, creating opportunities to improve teaching, managing workload, impact of reform and SEC requirements on teachers, involvement of teachers in the reform, communities of practice and challenges faced by teachers.

The research discovered that some of the schools to which the research participants belonged often conduct surveys, checklists and observations to identify the needs of teachers. Findings reveal that schools implement formal but unstructured methods of needs evaluation. There are usually diversified needs of teachers in schools such as requirement of physical classroom equipment, including supplies, technology, materials, and the tangible resources including workshops, counselling, guidance, training sessions and seminars. However, there is a perception that it is not enough to have a formal method of needs identification, but there should be adequate, structured and standardized techniques and methods to identify and fulfil those needs. The study highlighted the need to understand the major issues that help in improving the teaching practices of EL teachers.

The importance of classroom observation was also highlighted in this study. In line with Stuhlman et al. (2015), this study found that through identifying strengths and weaknesses of teachers and their teaching practices through classroom observation, schools could identify school-wide weaknesses and areas for improvement and target these areas to provide customized training for teachers. However, the schools in this study did not have an organized way or tools for conducting classroom observations. Stuhlman et al. (2015) warned that without systematic, reliable and standardized observation tools, feedback given by coordinators is worthless because it may be inaccurate, inconsistent, biased and irrelevant.

In line with OECD (2009), most of the teachers reported that they participate in some form of professional development; but some teachers reported the inadequacy of the practices to enhance the professional development which do not meet their needs. It has further been explored that several teachers reported that the schools where they work offer them opportunities for the development of professionalism by arranging workshops, lectures, meetings and model lessons. It was also reported that coordinators also provide continuing support and guidance to the teachers along with feedback. Opportunities to conduct workshop and being involved in online professional development were also reported by a few teachers.

The findings suggest that the function and roles of schools and their expectations from teachers have changed. Teachers today teach in diverse classrooms and are required to integrate students with special learning needs and use technology for teaching and learning. The data also showed that regardless of the frequency, CPD programmes may fail to help teachers in order to avail opportunities while facing the major challenges that they will face in their careers. Consequently, the perceived value of the CPD is also an important factor to consider, regardless of the actual value. The majority of the tutors included in the research were contented with the CPD received they found it useful. However, some found it redundant, repetitive and out dated. This finding sheds light on the importance of quality of CPD which is often ignored by schools and training organisations. Thus, school leaders and administrators should develop a structured and organized programme of professional development. Ignoring the quality of high-quality CPD in times when schools are undergoing reforms can be counterproductive as these reforms operate under the philosophy that improved teaching leads to improved student achievement (DeMonte, 2013).

Under the theme of managing workload, the study revealed that a majority of the teachers was frustrated with the amount of paperwork they are required to do as well as the overall workload. A lack of balance between personal and professional lives was evident. All

of the teachers reported working extra hours at home, along with managing their households and needs of their family. Many teachers also worked on weekends, in addition to the extra hours they work at home during weekdays. This work involves making remedial plans, grading, analysis, performance evaluation, writing booklets etc. Because teachers were overworked, their work life was stressful and that stress carried forward to their personal lives. Rania was particularly frustrated because working extra hours at home led to neglect of her children and their needs. However, as argued by Karimi and Alipour (2011), not everybody experiences stress in the same way and people may assess their situations and workload differently. Consistent with that, this study found that some teachers had a casual and relaxed attitude towards increased workload. Teachers like these have found different ways to manage their workload, such as creating to do lists, checklists and setting priorities. Sumia, in particular, was less bothered about workload and reported that she loves working extra hours and does not do it out of obligation. She asserted that she wants to learn and improve her personal and professional self.

This finding highlighted the importance of self-directed learning and taking charge of one's personal and professional development. These differences in how teachers perceive the workload and how they cope with it can be explained by age and gender differences, which could affect their predisposition to stress and their ability to deal with it. Research also shows that female teachers are more stressed out and less satisfied with their jobs due to undesirable classroom conditions and behaviour of students and due to a lack of work-life balance (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Thus, it is important that a comprehensive understanding of the mediators and causes of stress is acquired and the different ways teachers deal with stress (Srivastav, 2007).

Under the theme of reform and SEC requirements on teachers and in line with Said and Friesen (2013), the study revealed that teachers were frustrated over abrupt changes in policies, excessive and unrealistic demands and requirements of SEC and lack of involvement in active

implementation of reforms at school level. It was reported that the teachers were already overloaded and reform has only added to their burdens and has made it more difficult for them to manage teaching. Noha was particularly disappointed and frustrated because she was unable to implement new and innovative strategies due to the limitations and restrictions from SEC. She reported that even positive feedback from her coordinator who is responsible for the English language teacher is meaningless when the strategies fail to enhance student learning. Her responses reveal frustration with abrupt changes in the medium of instruction, which has an adverse impact on her ability to teach and her students' ability to learn.

The findings also highlighted a gap between the new standards imposed by the SEC and the current skill levels of students. It was also found that tutors are not prepared appropriately for the implementation of teaching skills on high standards because they are accustomed to traditional models of teaching that involve rote learning without understanding and critical analysis (Garet et al., 2001). Hessa revealed that to a certain extent, she is forced to implement the strategies that the SEC requires them to implement because it could negatively affect their careers and evaluation. The perceptions of teachers regarding the reform and SEC requirements were generally negative and it is evident from the findings that teachers are struggling to implement them.

Furthermore, research shows that the role of school leaders and principals is important for successful implementation of reforms in education. However, as argued by researchers, the role of teachers is more important for the success of educational reforms (Margolis & Nagel, 2006) because the successful implementation of educational reforms depends upon the involvement and ownership of teachers with respect to the new changes (Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 2017). Teachers are the key change agents in times of change as the experiences and teachers themselves help students to understand the realities of schools, classrooms and communities.

Teachers also provide significant insights and various perspectives on different dimensions of teaching.

In this research, teachers' involvement in decision-making about the changes required by SEC was found to be minimal for all of all of the teachers. It was reported that they receive emails and memos from coordinators who are working as a head of the department about what changes are to be implemented and some discussion and meetings are also held. The sudden and recurrent policy changes and changes in the roles of teachers and continuously adapting to the new changes were reported as a source of confusion for teachers. Romanowski et al. (2013) supported this conclusion in their report that the confusion of SEC and their lack of clear planning is the significant element that affects the teachers and school leaders.

With respect to communities of practice, the literature suggested that organizational culture develops from practices learned by groups to solve problems of organizational integration. In the end, these practices turn into organizational rules, regulations and codes of practice, corroborated by employees and communicated to new employees. According to Lantolf and Lantolf (2000), a noteworthy side of organizational culture is that within an organization, interaction in groups are a major source of growth and development in a cultural and linguistic context. Most of the teachers reported that they like teamwork and that interacting with other teachers helps them learn about their personal histories, which enriches their knowledge and understanding. Teachers' perceptions about teamwork were favourable as teachers appeared to be committed to long-term learning process for personal and professional growth.

One of the major findings regarding this particular them was that majority of the teachers were in favour of teamwork because the overall environment of schools was non-collaborative and there was a lack of cooperation. Informal groups in such a situation were reported to have helped teachers and provided them with the required support and guidance.

Teachers highlighted various challenges. According to Brewer et al. (2007) and confirmed by this study, the education system of Qatar is outdated and inflexible. Zellman et al. (2009) argued that the curriculum developed by the Ministry of Education in Qatar is poor and does not encourage a collaborative learning environment between teachers and students.

Furthermore, low rates of retentions of foreign teachers and their lack of professional development have a negative influence on school. Similarly, linguistic challenges were explored where both teachers and students deal with problems of communication due to differences in languages. English language teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and sometimes find it hard to adjust with the local culture of Qatar and the schools situated in Qatar. In addition, as Manal pointed out student motivation levels are low and their parents do not actively encourage and motivate them. The attitude of students towards English was also reported to be negative.

Other than linguistic challenges, another barrier is cultural difference. Most of the teachers reported problems in understanding and adapting to Qatar's local culture, which ultimately affected their teaching styles. For example, teachers reported that back in her home country, teachers are allowed to shout at students but in Qatar, it is not allowed. Another challenge was group work: teachers reported that collaborative learning is not always helpful and English language cannot effectively be taught in groups all the time, which highlighted the need for individualised sessions. However, school policies do not allow this as some schools focus mainly on collaborative learning and group work. Furthermore, because absence of backgrounds in the English language and their attitudes towards learning is negative so teachers have difficulties teaching English. The lack of their own basic English language skills makes it hard for teachers to teach them at levels higher than their current levels.

In addition to linguistic and cultural challenges, some of the teachers also stressed technological challenges. Teachers pointed out that we are living in a technological era, so using

technology to teach motivates and engages learners. However, lack of access to technology is a barrier for many teachers. Other challenges were related to age and gender, as exemplified by Laila who reported difficulties teaching teenage boys. Romanowski et al. (2013) also found that greater workload, low motivation levels, behavioural issues and lack of support from parents are main challenges that teachers face throughout the reforms. Hence, it can be established that English language teachers in Qatar are facing numerous challenges ranging from professional to personal lives cultural, technological, and linguistic and gender-age related factors that considerably affect the identities of EL teaching, whether professional or personal.

8.4. Theme 3: CPD.

The third part of the framework, CPD, related to the third question: about how do English language teachers perceived and experience CPD? The rapid societal and economic changes have unavoidably affected the public sector across the globe, and education is no exception. Qatar also has been through struggling through extended changes, reformation and advances (Webb et al., 2004). Such changes require teachers to manage their jobs along with greater than ever demands. To cope with such changes, they are required to redefine their professionalism and professional development. As discussed earlier in Chapter 7, the professionalism of teachers is essential to their professional development (Evans, 2008) and high quality professional development is one of the most vital components in all existing and on-going reforms. Much research has examined professionalism development of teachers and major factors that influence the success of teachers. However, the perceptions, opinions, beliefs, insights and philosophies of teachers themselves about the problems faced by them have been mostly understated (Swann et al., 2010).

The research suggests that the professionalism of teachers is also linked to on-going educational reforms, which can also adversely affect their professionalism, especially when the policies are not managed and implemented properly and the professional development needs of

teachers are ignored (Day & Leitch, 2007). Well focused CPD can shape teacher professionalism and promote a culture and atmosphere of cooperation, support, teamwork and collaboration, which eventually develops their learning (Webb et al., 2004). Thus, a pivotal aspect of this study was to explore the perspectives of teachers on their professionalism and its development. The research also aimed to explore their beliefs, ideas, point of view, worries and expectations with respect to their professional development, along with the identification of major challenges and success factors.

The findings showed that EL teachers knew the importance of professional development and professionalism. This finding was in line with the emphasis placed by Alibakhshi and Dehvari (2015), Jafri (2009), Mizell (2010) and Richards and Farrell (2005) which highlighted the prevalence of professional development amongst teachers. As established in the earlier chapters on Identity and Culture, the positive outlook of teachers to develop as teachers may not be in itself an indication of their professionalism, but they seem to be driven and are motivated to overcome the problems, difficulties and challenges of their everyday work lives and to engage in their professional development. Most of the teachers held the view that school-based and on-going professional development is important because it focuses on issues central to teaching: improving the quality of teaching and learning. Most teachers reported participating in on-going workshops while some reported being involved in online professional development. On the other hand, it was also seen that some teachers had negative attitudes towards the real impact or effectiveness of existing programmes in improving teachers' knowledge and skills. While most of the teachers found workshops and training they attended to be useful and practical, others were not satisfied and found it disorganized, irrelevant and outdated. All teachers wanted to learn new things. They were looking for new ideas, and found it a waste of their time to be involved in activities that did not add value to their personal or professional lives.

Most teachers agreed that continual professional development is useful and not at all a waste of their time. They reported that lifelong learning and learning new things were their major motivating factors that encouraged them to pursue continuous professional development. Teachers used words like ‘beneficial’ and made statements like ‘until we die, we do not stop learning’, ‘professional development is a way of learning new things, for every day, we learn new things’. A few teachers highlighted the importance of change, adapting to change by saying that development is crucial for every career, and since change is constant, teachers must change with times. Teachers pointed out that all kinds of professional development help her to learn something new. It was also highlighted by Dina that professional development must introduce new and innovative ideas and discuss developments and innovations in the education sector, instead of reiterating familiar content.

An interesting finding was the potential of storytelling in the classroom as an effective strategy for young and adult learners to keep them engaged in learning. This is an example of the applicability and relevance of the content of professional development which teachers were more concerned about i.e. practical ideas and skills that they can implement in their classrooms, instead of theoretical content. It was pointed out that sometimes workshops can be inappropriate and sometimes teachers had no idea why they were taking a particular workshop because the content was theoretical and not applicable in real life.

A few teachers found professional development of little use: redundant, unsystematic and a waste of time, which highlights the importance of quality of professional development provided to teachers that is so often overlooked by schools. Teachers were only interested in professional development if it offered them something new; otherwise, it is a waste of time for them. These teachers did not feel they benefit from the workshops they attend because they are not learning new things. This finding was supported by Craig (2003), who stressed that all professional development, even if the immediate effect on teachers is positive, is not relevant

or applicable in the contexts of all teachers. It was also pointed out that sometimes teachers are required to do things that are irrelevant for their particular contexts or may not be beneficial to the students. Ifanti and Fotopoulou (2011) stressed that teaching has become more challenging and controlled because of persistent reforms. The learning of students was more important for teachers, instead of access to new strategies and tactics and frustration with irrelevant and inappropriate strategies was evident.

Another important finding of this study is that some teachers asserted that they know their students better than external evaluators. Teachers understand how their students learn best and what is beneficial in their contexts and what is not. Some strategies even make students lose focus and become distracted. However, the worth of a professional development and its applicability, as argued by the teachers, depends upon some factors like the teachers of the teachers, their psychology and the way they think. Some may not like the trainers or their styles while others may have problems with the content of training. This was also an important finding. It emerged out of the analysis because so often the personality of the trainer and other factors related to the trainer or the person providing professional development. It is ignored and considered secondary for the effectiveness of training.

Teachers used words like useful, more than useful, and valuable contribution. Such responses evidently suggest that teachers consider professional development an important activity and they are keen to learn new things and improve their teaching and learning constantly and want to be lifelong learners. Learning from others was also found to be an important reason, which encouraged the teachers to be involved in their professional development.

In terms of sharing opportunities, the study found that teachers were inclined to share their learning with other teachers. According to Edmonds and Lee (2002), teachers who effectively apply CPD in their practice become more excited and confident and CPD helps them collaborate with other teachers, share best practices and ideas with them. Research shows that

the notion of sharing is a core idea of continuous professional development and it is required at every level. The findings of this study revealed that teachers engage in two kinds of sharing which are both informal and formal. Teachers reported taking initiatives on their own, sitting with other teachers and sharing what they learned, outside of the professional settings. Teachers reported that they engage in informal sharing through Internet and social media. Online communication with other teachers around the world, as emphasized by Reham, was also an important aspect that this study found. For this purpose, some teachers belonged to online communities of practice.

Some teachers also reported formal sharing where they are required to hold regular meetings to discuss what they learned in a particular workshop. Formal sharing allows teachers to share new ideas, strategies and areas of improvement with others. However, most of the sharing was found to be informal. Yet, the teachers were actively involved in sharing what they learn with others and were found to be exploiting all opportunities of sharing. Landt (2002) supported these findings by stressing out that continuous professional development is only useful when teachers learn in a dynamic and genuine environment, characterized by sharing, involvement, engagement, and cooperation.

The professional needs of English language teachers were explored. In this study, teachers discussed multiple dimensions of their needs. Few of them reported that they have no specific needs, while most others expressed their concerns and unmet needs. Some teachers needed to get support for enriching their English speaking, grammar and writing. Others needed help with classroom management as they were having problems dealing with students. Huda pointed out a need to understand the individual needs of learners because there are different kinds of students in every class, ranging from low, weak, average and high achievers. It was suggested that curriculum standards could not effectively and adequately meet the different

needs of different types of learners, which is the reason many students are labelled as underachievers or failures.

Other teachers highlighted the need to learn how to motivate other teachers and how to deal with the special needs of the learners. Nora wanted to learn how to teach students to write because they do not like writing and are not motivated to write. Time management also emerged as an important need of teachers because of large class sizes. Moreover, teachers also expressed the need to have more opportunities for quality training and professional development. Teachers pointed out the need to have a mechanism for teachers to update their knowledge of the field and keep up with the latest trends. Other needs included developing lesson plans, understanding the standards of English curriculum, emphasis on literature, drama and poetry, punctuation and vocabulary. Overall, the findings under this theme showed that English language teachers in Qatar not only lack proficiency in English language but also lack the tools and techniques to teach the four major aspects of English language: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Under the theme of knowledge of learners and their characteristics, Shulman (1987) conceptual model was discussed in order to understand the knowledge base of teachers, which comprised of knowledge of learners and their characteristics among others. Knowledge of learners and learner characteristics include the assumptions and beliefs of teachers about how students learn. In this study, the responses and reactions of teachers reflect that they have knowledge of their students' characteristics. Teachers were quite assertive when it came to implementation of strategies required by the SEC. She said that she would not waste her time doing things that are not beneficial for her students.

With respect to specific teaching styles of English language teachers, it was revealed that there are no particular teaching styles that teachers use in every situation, which means teaching styles and strategies change with contexts and one strategy or style that is suitable or effective in one situation may not be effective in other situations. Therefore, teachers were aware

that one size does not fit all. The findings showed that teachers are better able to judge the competence level of students and their capabilities. Teachers claim that they understand how students learn, better than the external evaluators and observers who judge them based on what they see in a specific context and a small period. Teachers are aware of and confident about the skill level of their students and try to accommodate their different needs, weaknesses and shortcomings as well as their strengths. Rania also stressed the importance of suitability of strategies to the skill levels of students.

Furthermore, it was also noted that teachers are forced to focus on preparing students for tests and examinations and have little or no control over the content and methodologies they use to teach. Dina's response was particularly reflective on, as she called it, the 'wretched state of the education system' of Qatar, stressing that she wished she could ignore the curriculum and teach according to the needs of the learners. She also believed that teachers are so preoccupied with the implementation of strategies to meet the standards that they cannot meet the actual needs of the students.

With respect to teaching strategies and classroom management, teachers reported that they have been told to change their teaching strategies and classroom management practices by their coordinators who observe them regularly: for example, by talking slowly and providing clear instructions. Teachers opined that the effectiveness of strategies depends upon the context and not all strategies can be applied across all settings. They maintained that it is possible for the teacher to teach one lesson to three different classes with different outcomes. The lesson may go well for one class and may be a total 'disaster' for another.

While research and practice encourage collaboration and group work, teachers in this study reported difficulties in managing groups and highlighted it as one of their main problems. Students start talking to each other and get distracted. Teachers maintained that most teaching strategies could only be applied with small class sizes i.e. 12-15 students and these strategies do

not work with classes that have 35 or more students. Teachers also thought that students have different abilities: some are fast learners, while others are not. So it is not possible to manage large classes, whatever the teaching strategies.

The study found that, in line with Tarone and Allwright (2005) and Alibakhshi and Dehvari (2015), teachers use ICT for teaching as well as for learning. Some teachers stated doing online courses, meeting other people, using the Internet for new strategies and methodologies. The responses under this theme accentuated the importance of online professional development for English Language teachers and foregrounded teachers need to keep up with the current trends in the profession by constantly renewing their knowledge and skills.

Under the theme of effectiveness of ICT in teaching, English Language Teachers' perceptions and opinions regarding the effectiveness of ICT in teaching were explored. The findings revealed a highly positive attitude of most of the teachers. For them, 'IT plays a very important role. In teaching English, especially' and 'the whole class was involved, and they were working in groups. It was something, wow, yeah, and they learned'. Some teachers who gave examples of how their students loved learning with technology saw the importance of student-centered lessons as a priority. Teachers effectively reflect this finding. ICT, according to these teachers, is useful and enhances student learning. They pointed out that she does not believe in spoon-feeding answers to students and reported how ICT is a part of her teaching practice and that her school provides smart boards in the classrooms. Teachers felt that teaching was incomplete without ICT so she regularly prepares lessons with videos and uses the Internet.

For this study participants, ICT was a big problem, yet she stressed that using ICT makes teaching easier for her and motivates and engages the students in their learning process and makes the lessons more student-centred. A teacher also reported the use of LMS (Learning Management System). Apparently, LMS is still a new technology that most schools in Qatar are

not aware of and these schools mostly have an IT laboratory for all students in the interest of technology integration. Using ICT in the classroom, according to Amal, breaks the monotony, contributes positively to student learning, and is a good change. It was agreed that lessons infused with technology are helpful and attract the attention of students. However, as seen by some teachers, there are several challenges in using ICT in classrooms in Qatar and Noha reported receiving a warning letter because of her use of music in classrooms. The challenges are cultural and religious, because Qatar is an Islamic republic and music is prohibited in Islam. Reham said how they have to watch videos before showing them to children so that they can filter out the 'indecent' content that is not appropriate for children, especially in a Muslim country like Qatar.

The theme of reflective practice focused on teachers' continuous learning by critically evaluating their actions and efforts to improve and become better teachers. According to Moon (2004), the reprocessing of ideas helps to collect unstructured ideas which are sometimes also fused with emotions to frame better strategies for the future. Dewey (1933) Dewey saw the importance of reflective practice as considering the lived experiences of people as the starting point upon which their future learning develops. This study found that most of the teachers were aware of the idea and the importance of reflective practice, if not the terminology. Some teachers noted down their experiences and learning and then read it later to extract effective practices and identify strategies or practices that were ineffective so as to avoid them in the future. Rania reported that she keeps trying new things in the class and writes reflections after the class in a diary. At the end of the year, when she looks at her diary, it helps her remember what worked and what did not so she can learn from her reflections.

For Deema keeping a diary or journal is very important and helpful for all teachers as it serves as a motivator for them and helps them to improve. Amal reported that she goes to the coordinator or other teachers for help and ideas and she does not have time to write reflections.

Feedback from students was also found to be an important factor that helps teachers reflect on their practice and adapt their approaches accordingly. Teaching is therefore a continuous cycle of learning where teachers and students learn from each other and grow together. Najla reported that she does reflect after every class and wishes that she had the time to write them down. Overall, reflective practice was evident in the responses of the teachers, regardless of the frequency and specific approaches they used. This finding suggests that these teachers are eager to improve themselves personally and professionally and are conscious about the consequences of their actions and their impact on students and their learning.

8.4.2. Evolving Role of Teachers

Most of the teachers interviewed stated that their roles had changed in various ways. Wasan, for example, contended that she had to continuously change or adapt to new roles in response to the needs of their students. The role of the teacher had changed from teaching to lecturing and from being teacher-centred to being student-centered according to Wasan. According to Nora, technology had brought changes to how teaching and learning was done. According to Amal, it is not her role that had changed but her personality. Even so, she had assumed a more participative rather than authoritative role. In general, it emerges that the roles of the teachers interviewed changed from what they were initially with teachers adapting to their different situations. The results of this study confirm the theory by Rus et al. (2013) that professional identity development is a continuous process that is informed by experiences and situational factors that surround teachers.

8.5. Contribution to Knowledge

A number of studies have been conducted on the perspectives and experiences of teachers with regard to their professional development. Many of these studies have been conducted in western countries, which the implication of which is that their findings may not

be generalized to other nations, countries or cultures. Furthermore, many of the previous studies have focused on the professional development of both male and female teachers specializing in different subjects. This study claims to make an original contribution to knowledge by extending existing knowledge and understanding on the phenomenon and exploring female experiences only, thus providing a voice to professional who have traditionally been under-researched in this culture. It achieves this end by using an interlinked conceptual model based on three themes (identity, culture and CPD) to explore the professional development of female English teachers in Qatar. The study found that female ELTs in Qatar all had very different experiences of CPD and unique developmental needs. These findings suggest that the current model of professional development for ELTs in Qatar may need revising. The thesis proposes a paradigm shift from a traditional ‘one size fits all’ CPD model towards a more dynamic and interactive style of teacher development which facilitates both personal reflection and professional discourse among teachers in order to build a shared understanding of ideas by analyzing and comparing approaches and actively encouraging student involvement in the learning process. It is argued that such a shift would prove a considerable step forward for English language teaching in the country.

The section that follows highlights implications from this original piece of research. With all hope, this discussion may help in further understanding and developing career theory, especially about creating better working environments for foreign female English Language Teachers in the region

8.8. Recommendation

While it is acknowledged that the results from this study cannot be generalized, it is hoped that some lessons can be learned for ELT CPD policy in Qatar, and teachers and leaders in similar situations elsewhere. The existing models of CPD experienced by participants in this study provide teachers with strategies, ideas, activities, lesson plans and other practical solutions

without training them to incorporate the theoretical underpinnings and appropriate reflection. This means that, according to the old saying, they are provided with a fish, but not taught how to catch fish. Teachers are more focused upon becoming proficient at different teaching methodologies instead of developing the thought processes that are required to understand the theory behind sustained educational reform. As such, technical skills, effective teaching and educational reform treat knowledge as independent and objective, and they focus on learning and applying these predefined sets of teaching methods and approaches and implementing different technical classroom management skills under the guise of progress. The theoretical and epistemological grounds that must be upheld and constantly improved to transform education are disregarded, which is detrimental to the endurance and success of any educational reform.

The major issue that requires urgent attention is that the teachers' voices, opinions, ideas and insights must be incorporated in the formulation of professional development programmes as well as in policy-making. Furthermore, teachers must also realise the importance of professional development for their own lifelong learning and growth. It is suggested that several issues should be taken into account, not only for successful and effective professional development but also to facilitate the success of educational reforms in Qatar.

These are the major recommendations:

1. First, a collegial and collaborative learning environment needs to be developed in schools where theory and practice are inseparably linked. This environment requires that education go beyond the traditional formula where instructional experts do the thinking and teachers do the implementing. The new formula should involve teachers in both thinking as a result of implementing and implementing because of thinking. This would lead to a virtuous cycle of action and reflection.

2. The current model of professional development for ELTs in Qatar may need revising. The thesis proposes a paradigm shift from a traditional 'one size fits all' CPD model towards a more dynamic and interactive style of teacher development which facilitates both personal reflection and professional discourse among teachers in order to build a shared understanding of ideas by analyzing and comparing approaches and actively encouraging student involvement in the learning process.
3. The study findings revealed that the proficiency levels of these teachers is very low. Their English speaking and listening skills were found to be very weak, which implies they need to have structured training especially designed for English Language teachers.
4. It is also recommended to provide continuous support to teachers in Qatar as they come from different cultural backgrounds, which requires different types of assistance in order to help teachers in successfully transferring their learning from the professional development setting to the classroom setting.
5. It can be argued that most educational reforms are, by nature, a top-down process. This approach suppresses teachers' voices and ends up hampering the success of the reforms. The top-down process for decision-making and implementation of the reforms also reflects the culture of most Arab countries, like Qatar. Policy makers may need to re-assess the decision-making policies and process to improve the current situation in Qatar and involve teachers for the successful implementation of its educational reforms. Teachers must also be involved in the formulation of educational policies because, as discussed previously, their input is very important for the success of reforms as they are the key agents of change.
6. The study findings reveal that teamwork not only strengthens the cultural, linguistic, and socializing skills of teachers, but it also pushes them to seek other online forums

too, in order to deal with their professional issues. Therefore, such practice needs to be part of the school routine and policy.

7. Critical reflection skills in teachers should be developed, especially in times of educational reforms. They must not only learn to reflect but also to develop their higher order skills to cultivate rigorous learning strategies and action plans that help students and schools.
8. The current situation is that schools and the teachers training and preparation programmes are unable to fully prepare novice and experienced teachers to integrate technology effectively in their professional teaching practice and they are unable to provide the administrative support required by teachers. The use of ICT must be integrated into teachers' professional development programmes.
9. School leaders, to create and sustain their schools as learning organizations, must cultivate a culture and environment that encourages and promotes continuous professional learning, collaboration and teamwork among teachers, team learning and sharing of knowledge and learning. Exchange of ideas and experiences must be encouraged at all levels and open communication should be encouraged between teachers, coordinators and school leaders.
10. The implementation of policies and changes required by the SEC must be flexible and teachers must be given freedom of choice for the application of strategies that they find suitable because their understanding of students is greater than any external evaluators.
11. A research mindset should be developed among teachers through continuous professional development so that they can be learners, researchers and teachers at the same time and contribute research-based and effective strategies and practices to the field of education.

12. Schools should develop a structured and standardized system for identification of teachers' needs so that they can be fulfilled. Teachers must be provided with the resources they need to effectively perform their teaching duties and schools must allocate a budget to increase access to resources.
13. Effective and reliable feedback mechanism must also develop as a result of needs assessment so that teachers can get timely, constructive, consistent and accurate feedback in order to improve their teaching practices.

8.9. Limitations and Implications for Future Research

The major limitation of this study was that only female English Language teachers were interviewed. A larger sample could shed more light on the diversity of experiences and perspectives of English language teachers with regard to continuous professional development. Furthermore, the research did not ascertain whether these teachers had an authentic English Language teaching qualification and license to teach, in view of the fact that the interviews and findings revealed that the proficiency levels of these teachers is very low. Their English speaking and listening skills were found to be very weak, which implied they had not undergone structured training especially designed for English Language teachers. Therefore, any future research would adopt a life history approach with a larger sample of teachers who are licensed and have an authentic teaching qualification. Future research could also explore the perspectives of school administrators in order to gauge their views about continuous professional development and whether, in their opinion, teachers are eager to be a part of professional development activities. Similar studies could be conducted with primary, middle and high school teachers with male and female teachers.

Considering how this study involved teachers in independent schools of Qatar, other researchers could study the perspectives and experiences of teachers from public schools and compare it with the studies conducted in the context of independent schools. This study could

also be replicated in other contexts: in countries, such as India, Pakistan, and other developing and underdeveloped countries. This study could help as a reference point for future studies conducted with teachers of other subjects, such as Mathematics and Science. CPD and teachers' experiences with CPD could also be explored in the context of male teachers since it would be interesting to see whether male teachers experience CPD in a different way from female teachers because of differences in their cultural and social roles and responsibilities. As this study highlighted, various aspects of CPD, other than the perceived effectiveness of CPD, such as sharing opportunities, needs of teachers, teaching strategies, classroom management, online professional development, effectiveness of ICT for teaching and learning, reflective practice, managing workload, teacher involvement in reforms, communities of practice, everyday challenges faced by teachers. Future search could explore these aspects further to gain insights and develop plans of action for improvement in schools through action research.

It can be concluded that teachers are indeed key agents of change because they form a bridge between school administration and students. If they are given effective continuous professional development and training to improve teaching practice, pedagogy and methodologies, along with the liberty to exercise their freedom in the choice and application of teaching strategies, they can lead significant changes at the classroom level. Therefore, it is for the school administrators to understand that teachers lie at the core of education and they are the most important resource that must be considered an asset that needs to be developed. When teachers are involved in reforms and their inputs are used to develop policies, major changes can be implemented effectively at the level of schools, teachers and learners.

8.9 Reflection

I described my early experience of education, which was not promising, particularly because the broad cultural expectations for girls were that they would marry early and dedicate their lives to raising a family and maintaining a household. However, my own self-regard and

determination to succeed led me the achievements that I have made in my professional life. This background has, clearly, shaped the questions posed in my present research and the conclusions drawn. The circumstance of girls and women in education is not just an issue for Middle Eastern countries: it remains, in varying degrees, problematic throughout the world. My contribution to our understanding of this, although modest, is significant. Those teachers who provide primary and secondary education for girls are exclusively female in my country, so it is all the more important that they are not only well educated themselves but that they are prepared appropriately in their professional role to meet the requirements of a rapidly changing society in which women, such as I, are essential. At present, the dominant mode of teaching is not fit for purpose: it remains traditional and didactic, with little imagination. I have argued that positive change can be achieved both in the qualifications that are required to teach and, essentially, in the in-service professional development programmes provided by those responsible for the provision of education and, not least, by the teachers themselves.

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Appendix A: Ethical Approval Form

Tick one:

Staff project: ___ Postgraduate project: PhD ___ EdD ___

Name of applicant (s): Saba Mansoor Qadhi

Title of project: Female English Language Teachers’ Perceptions and Experiences of Continuing Professional Development in Qatar

Name of supervisor (for student projects): Dr. Alan Floyd and Tony Mcfadyen

Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf.

	YES	NO
Have you prepared an Information Sheet for participants and/or their parents/carers that:		
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	√	
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	√	
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	√	
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	√	
e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	√	
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	√	
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	√	
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	√	

i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email . If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	√		
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants	√		
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows: ‘This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct’.	√		
k)includes a standard statement regarding insurance: “The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request”.	√		
Please answer the following questions	√		
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on blackboard to ensure this).	√		
2) Will you seek written or other formal consent from all participants, if they are able to provide it, in addition to (1)?	√		
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?		√	
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security which can be found here: http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/InformationComplianceTraining/imps-information-compliance-training.aspx	√		
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	√		
6) Does your research comply with the University’s Code of Good Practice in Research?	√		
		NO	N.A.
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to gain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?	√		
8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?			√

9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give parents/carers the opportunity to decline consent?			√
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data ¹ , or if it involves audio/video recordings, will you obtain the explicit consent of participants/parents?	√		
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			√
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?	√		
12b) If the answer to question 11a is “yes”, does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?	√		
13a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 5?		√	
13b. If the answer to question 12a is “yes”: My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University’s insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			√
If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below			√

PLEASE COMPLETE **EITHER SECTION A OR B** AND PROVIDE THE DETAILS REQUIRED IN

SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION, THEN SIGN THE FORM (SECTION C

A: My research goes beyond the ‘accepted custom and practice of teaching’ but I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications.	
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¹Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words. Attach any consent form, information sheet and research instruments to be used in the project (e.g. tests, questionnaires, interview schedules).

Please state how many participants will be involved in the project:

This form and any attachments should now be submitted to the Institute's Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.

Study aims

This study is a life history of 16 English language teachers exploring the concept of identity, culture, and CPD and their perception of CPD in preparatory and secondary government schools in Qatar.

It explores how CPD for English language teachers shapes their professional identities by enhancing their teaching and learning skills.

Participants

The participants in this study are 16 (female) English language teachers in independent schools who are involved in in-service training programs that are provided by mainly Supreme Education Council (SEC) and, particularly, Qatar University that supervises a sample of eight schools every for two years. In addition, the participants have to engage with the individual training plans offered by their respective schools.

Method

This study is qualitative and naturalistic: it seeks to explore and understand a group in its natural setting. An interpretive framework for the study seeks to understand the English language teacher CPD model, and to gain a deeper understanding of the feelings and concerns of teachers regarding the training that is a mandatory requirement in their professional capacity to inform the study.

A narrative inquiry approach is applied because it is based firmly on the premise that, as human beings, we come to understand and give meaning to our experience through oral or written communication. The researcher adopted a life history approach as a specific term to describe an extensive audio biographical narrative that covers most of the respondents' experience as English teachers.

Instrument and procedures

The interview procedures attached. The interview will be in English language.

<p>B: I consider that this project may have ethical implications that should be brought before the Institute’s Ethics Committee.</p>	
<p>Please provide all the further information listed below in a separate attachment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. title of project 2. purpose of project and its academic rationale 3. brief description of methods and measurements 4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria 5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary) 6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them. 7. estimated start date and duration of project <p><i>This form and any attachments should now be submitted to the Institute’s Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.</i></p>	

C: SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT:

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed: Print Name.....
Date.....

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE ETHICS COMMITTEE

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed: Print
Name..... Date.....

(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative)*

* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Research interview schedule

Interviewee:.....Data:

Research Focus	Interview Questions	Discussed
Introduction	Study background and aims	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Participant Prerogatives	<input type="checkbox"/>
	General background Place, family background, childhood?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Education background Schools, courses taken, subjects favoured, achievements? Higher Education, courses, subjects, achievements?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Career history General work history, changes of job, types of job	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Identity	1. What are the professional and personal circumstances that lead to becoming English language teacher?
2. What is it like to be an English language teacher?		<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do English Language teachers define themselves as members of community of practice?		<input type="checkbox"/>
4. What do you think works well in the Education Reform in Qatar, as it affects you?		<input type="checkbox"/>
5. How has education reform in Qatar affected the way you feel being an English teacher? Do you feel valued?		<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you think you have changed in the way you see your teaching role over the years?		<input type="checkbox"/>

	7. How do you think others-colleagues, pupils- see you?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8. Do you think that CPD as you have experienced it changed the way see yourself as a teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9. How did you manage to adjust to the Qatari expectation of you as an English teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Culture	10. How does your school create opportunities for you to improve your teaching?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. How does your school decide what your needs are that will make you a better teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	12. What approach does your school have to the SEC requirements for change? Can you give me an example that has affected you as an English language teacher?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	13. Do you think that there is an alternative way of bringing about the required reforms? For example, should teachers be directly involved in how to implement them?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	14. Do you see yourself as either a teacher who works on her own in general terms or one who belong to a community of practice-within or beyond the school? E.g online community.	<input type="checkbox"/>
	15. How do you manage your work load?	<input type="checkbox"/>
CPD	1. What kind of professional development have you had to date in regard to being an English language teacher? What did you think of it? Is there anything more you would like to have had to help your professional development?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Are there any specific area of your knowledge and practice of English teaching that you would like to improve on?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. Do you have the opportunity to share with colleagues what you have learned from CPD?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4. Do you have a style of teaching English? Pair, group, audio	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5. What do you think is the role of IT in developing learning in your subject? Are there any limitations/ restrictions?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6. How do you reflect on your teaching? Do you think it is important to do this?	<input type="checkbox"/>

	7. Does the professional programme help you to consider improvement to your practice?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8. What professional development so far has helped your job as a teacher, both in your school and elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9. Can you give me an example of being required to change your practice which you found difficult to do? How did you manage it?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	10. What is your future plan regarding your CPD?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. If somebody said to you that CPD is a waste of valuable time, what would you say?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conclusion	Any other comments?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	What will happen to data?	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Follow up meeting/respondent validation	<input type="checkbox"/>

Participation Information Sheet

Life history of female English language teacher in Qatar: identity, culture, and CPD

Name, position and contact address of Research Team

Principle Investigator Saba Mansoor Qadhi PhD Student Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 07913333326 Tel: 0097466689996 E: wp817460@reading.ac.uk	Supervisor Dr Alan Floyd Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Management Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 0118 378 5934 E: alan.floyd@reading.ac.uk
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You are invited to take part in the above research study of English language teacher Education by a Qatar University Scholar. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

The study aims to seek the opinions of English language teachers about their experience of continuing professional development (CPD). Specifically, it aims to explore how English language teachers define, perceive and experience teaching English in Qatar in order to

highlight and disseminate models of good practice, so that recommendations to improve policy and practice can be made.

These aims will be achieved through one stage life history interviews. At this stage, the researcher will conduct semi-structured interviews with 20 English language teachers, including new and experienced teachers, who are involved in the CPD provided by Qatar University and the Supreme Education Council. The recordings will be transcribed and anonymized before being analyzed.

Why have I been invited to participate?

You have been invited to take part in the project because you are an English teacher who is working in one of the schools that work in partnership with Qatar University who provide a programme of in-service training.

What will happen if I agree to take part?

You will be invited to take part in a one-to-one interview based on your career history, including your current experiences as an English language teacher/ coordinator. This interview will be face to face at a mutually convenient date and time. With your agreement, the interview will be audio recorded and transcribed. This transcription will then be shown to you for you to check its accuracy and for you to confirm that you are still happy for it to be used in the study

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you participate or not. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign a consent form. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any

repercussions to you, by contacting me via Tel: 00974-66689996 or email:

wp817460@reading.ac.uk

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

In agreeing to take part in this study there will be a time commitment to consider, as the interview is likely to last up to 1 hour. While there will be a time commitment required from participants, it is felt that the benefits of involvement will outweigh the costs.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

It is hoped that individual participants will benefit from the opportunity to reflect in detail on their experiences of being an English language teachers/coordinator, which has considerable potential for their personal and professional development. Additionally, in evaluating this crucial but under-researched role, it is hoped that a more thorough understanding of English language teacher education will emerge, which is important for policy-makers, managers and researchers. Such research, for example, may lead to an improvement in professional development by devising specific training, development and support for English teachers and coordinators. Participants in similar studies have found it interesting to take part.

Will what I say be kept confidential?

All information collected will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations). In order to protect the anonymity of each participant, pseudonyms will be used to ensure participants cannot be identified. The University name will also be changed. All electronic data will be held securely in password protected files on a non-shared PC and all paper documentation will be held in locked cabinets in a locked office.

In line with University policy, data generated by the study will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of five years after the completion of the research project.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Following respondent validation as outlined above, the data will be analyzed and used in my PhD and future publications in appropriate academic journals and/or books. All participants will be able to have access to a copy of the published research on request.

Who has reviewed the study?

This application has been reviewed by the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee and the Open University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Name, position and contact address of Research Team

PhD Researcher Saba Mansoor Qadhi PhD student Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 07913333326 E: wp817460@reading.ac.uk	Dr Alan Floyd Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Management Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 0118 378 5934 E: alan.floyd@reading.ac.uk
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Life history of English language teacher in Qatar: identity, culture, and CPD

Name, position and contact address of Research Team

Principle Investigator: Saba Mansoor Qadhi PhD Student Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 07913333326 E: wp817460@reading.ac.uk	Supervisors: Dr Alan Floyd Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Management Institute of Education University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading, RG1 5EX Tel: 0118 378 5934 E: alan.floyd@reading.ac.uk
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Note: You can contact Professor Suzanne Graham; e-mail: s.j.graham@reading.ac.uk

This application has been reviewed by the University of Reading Research Ethics Committee and the Open University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct.

	Please initial box	
1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	<input style="border: 1px solid red; width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.	<input style="border: 1px solid green; width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
3. I agree to take part in the above study.	<input style="border: 1px solid blue; width: 50px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	
	Please tick box	
	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant
Date
Signatur