

**Investigating the provision of academic
development initiatives - a case study of a
tertiary institution in the United Arab Emirates.**

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ACRONYMS

CAA	Commission for Academic Accreditation
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
HCT	Higher Colleges of Technology
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
ILTHE	Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
MOHE	Ministry of Higher Education
NCIHE	National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education
PSF	Professional Standards Framework
SEDA	Staff and Educational Development Association
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAEU	United Arab Emirates University
ZU	Zayed University

Abstract:

This study is an attempt to investigate the provision of academic development in a case institution in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The study was set in the context of a newly emerging higher education (HE) sector of the UAE. The study explored the nature and extent of academic staff development provisions for tertiary teachers through a case study of one higher education institution in the UAE. It drew on the experience and opinions of new academics, experienced academics, heads of departments and academic managers on the issue of professionalisation of teaching.

The focus of the study was on identifying the provisions, policies and practices of academic development and hence ‘professionalisation’ of teaching in HE in the UAE. The ‘professionalisation’ of teaching in HE has received increased attention in the past decade mainly due to the changing context of higher education worldwide. This has been reflected by the numerous courses offered by HE institutions, both as initial training for new academics and as CPD(continuous professional development) for experienced teachers.

The study revealed that the traditional method of academic staff development in developing teaching and administrative skills through work experience is still in practice in the UAE tertiary institutions. Although teaching was the main priority in the case institution, it lacked a unit for educational development and there was no systematic training for new teachers. The continuous professional development (CPD) workshops focused primarily on the use of technology in teaching and English as a foreign language, yet the majority of the content teachers had no previous training in pedagogy generally. Due to a reliance of a ‘ready-made’ expatriate workforce in the UAE, an accredited systematic course of study to prepare new academics or further develop experienced academics for their teaching roles is almost non-existent.

The study suggests that there is a need to strategically position the HE sector in general in the UAE in order to begin any formal ‘professionalisation’ of the teaching role. It suggests that faculty/academic development needs to be supported by specialized structures and resources. Finally, the study recommends that HEIs in the UAE must create a more integrated coherent regulatory body for higher education which would then allow the formulation of an ‘Academy’ whose aim is improving the students’ experience in higher education.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

1.1 Setting the scene

Just within a span of about 30 years, the United Arab Emirates has witnessed tremendous growth within the education sector, supported by the huge wealth accumulated mainly from oil revenues. The higher education sector in particular has seen phenomenal growth, satisfying most of the immediate needs of a burgeoning population. However, this sector is now plagued with signs of fatigue and maladjustment. The UAE higher education (HE) sector, like many HE systems elsewhere, is faced with increasing student numbers, globalization, student preparedness to pursue higher education, an unprecedented focus on 'bottom-line' accountability for expenditure, more stringent accountability requirements, the advent of ICT and increased pressure from the government to produce graduates who are employable. This sector's challenge now is to tune itself so that it becomes more sophisticated, more efficient, more effective, better coordinated and more sensitive and responsive to these needs of a different era and a different socio-economic landscape.

This is a critical time for higher education in the United Arab Emirates - the UAE is rapidly developing into a regional and global model for economic and social development. The United Arab Emirates, since the establishment of the UAE University in Al Ain, in 1976, has made outstanding progress in higher education, expanding possibilities for *Emaratis* (nationals of the UAE) and providing quality programs. The federal higher education campuses are well positioned to build on their accomplishments for the future. As *Emaratis* comprise approximately 20% of the total population, it is imperative that UAE citizens attain high levels of education in order to provide leadership for the country's future and a talented workforce for its growing economy. Higher education can increase employment opportunities for success for men and women and serve national progress.

Higher education was explicitly developed to fulfil this mission. The aim of higher education in the UAE is seen more in terms of its key contribution to socio-economic growth than as contributing the outcomes of inquiry to the intellectual and ethical growth of society. Higher education is perceived as a partner to diversify the economy of the future, sustain and improve the energy exporting capacity of the

UAE, and increase the number of nationals in the private sector. Therefore, a critical goal is economic growth. There is a growing perception by the government of higher education institutions as production houses, turning out employable graduates for consumption of a rapidly growing economy.

Unlike in western higher education institutions (HEIs), changing contexts in UAE higher education has not led to academic development being given priority. The UAE HE sector has unfortunately relegated academic development in favour of employing the perceived finished products - 'experienced western academics'. Government funded universities such as the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) and Zayed University (ZU) tend to be staffed by expatriate teachers, often from the West, while the students are all *Emaratis* (UAE nationals). As a result of this demographic scenario, UAE HE is developing through different cultures of learning. The interaction of students' prior educational experience, and Islamic culture with HE teachers' western models of education create a distinctive challenge for the UAE higher education sector. Although the HE sector's main mandate is to ensure *Emiritization* (ensuring qualified UAE nationals are appropriately trained to gradually replace the expatriate workforce in the country) *Emiritization*, or nationalization of the teaching faculty in their own tertiary institutions, remains elusive.

There are few academic development programs in the UAE HE sector, and the meagre continuous professional development (CPD) funds in many of the federal HE institutions in the UAE are faced with dilemma of balancing funds allocated for advancement of faculty in their content areas against teaching and learning programmes. The problem is compounded further in the UAE due to the very transient mainly expatriate HE workforce I mentioned earlier. Policy makers are reluctant to invest money to train these teachers on short- term contracts.

Altbach's (2003) documents in his book 'The Decline of the Guru: the Academic Profession in Developing and Middle-Income Countries' the challenges facing developing country HE systems. He succinctly explains that "conditions of work and levels of remuneration are inadequate, involvement in institutional governance is often very limited, and the autonomy to build both an academic career and academic programs in the university is often constrained" (p. 2). These challenges are further pronounced in a transient expatriate academic environment. Mercer (2005)

highlights this lack of autonomy and power in the UAE HE sector, where employers have the “legal right to dismiss any of them [teachers] for any reason” (p.273).

Within this context, there is an eminent need for higher educators in the UAE to reconceptualise their role, to prepare teachers who can transform teaching and learning practice rather than reproduce conventional practice, to develop new capacities to employ more local academics, and for all to acquire new pedagogical knowledge and skills to facilitate the learning experiences of students. Professional development of higher educators is multi-faceted and includes teaching, researching, counselling and administrative functions in which most faculty engage during their careers. This research acknowledges this multi-faceted nature of teaching in HE, but for the purpose of this research, I will concentrate primarily on the development of the teaching function commonly referred to as academic or educational development

Academic development (AD) in basic terms refers to the support and development of teaching function of universities, and hence ‘professionalization’ of teaching. In the UAE, such academic staff development is still in its infancy, and teaching in tertiary education as it is currently practiced in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is something of an enigma.

In contrast, the focus on accountability in, for example, UK HE gave rise to concerns that standards of teaching were uneven and this was linked to the preparation of academic staff in HE for the evolving teaching role. Unlike other educational sectors, teaching in HE requires no mandatory training. However, the changing nature of higher education mentioned earlier has been instrumental in the need to professionalize teaching in HE. The impetus to support HE teachers to meet the challenges above was addressed by the Dearing report in UK (NCIHE, 1997). This report presented the professionalization of teachers as one of the key requirements to deliver a world class HE system.

We recommend that the representative bodies, in consultation with the Funding Bodies, should immediately establish a professional Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education [ILTHE] (Recommendation 14, NCHIE, 1997).

The ILTHE was to be a body that would accredit staff development programs run by HEIs, stimulate pedagogical research into HE and promote innovation in teaching and learning in HE. This proposition raised the fundamental questions of what it meant to be a ‘professional’, teaching in HE. The recommendation to establish the ILTHE was

inspired by the recognition of the increased importance of effective teaching and learning support. A more recent DfES report, 'The future of higher Education', again clearly emphasized the need for more effective teaching: "all students are entitled to be taught well, and to be given the support they need to learn effectively" (DfES, 2003, section 4.1). This report also recommended "all new teaching staff to obtain a teaching qualification which meets the standards from 2006". These standards have been published recently as the "UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education" (HEA, 2006).

Without this kind of governmental intervention, HE teachers in the UAE acquire their pedagogical knowledge through trial and error, reflecting on their teaching by means of student evaluations and feedback. However, in many cases, this unsystematic, unplanned 'training' for teaching is insufficient for the generation of appropriate pedagogical knowledge and for its beneficial application in actual classroom practice (Watts, 2000). To be a true 'professional' one has to have academic knowledge of the subject combined with a professional knowledge of teaching and education. A number of researchers have considered whether academics need training to support their teaching roles, and increasingly research is demonstrating the positive effects of training academics (Rust, 1999; Coffey and Gibbs, 2000; Ho et al., 2001; Gibbs and Coffey, 2004).

Professionalisation of teaching in HE refers to the adherence by the HE teacher to a specific set of teaching standards, a code of conduct, and values that underpin the area of teaching and learning in higher education (McGettrick, 2005). Professionalising HE teaching therefore requires a systematic course of study that introduces the theoretical discourse of university teaching and learning in order to ensure that teachers are using scholarly approaches in facilitating learning. As Gordon (2004) puts it, "I am reasonably confident that professionalization of teaching in higher education, in some form or another, is here to stay" (p.4). Macdonald (2003) points out that "academic development has, in recent years, moved from the margins to the mainstream in many institutions" (p.5). This is mainly due to the changing context of higher education, particularly 'massification', formalized external regulations, increased student diversity, the advent of new technology and the lifelong learning agenda (Nicholls, 2001; Watson, 2002; Ling, 2005). Clearly then, the changing nature of higher education is affecting the way in which academics have to function.

While professionalising teaching in HE seems like a sound decision, like any initiative in any profession, it's not without its challenges. One of the major challenges for supporting educational development initiatives, claims Macdonald (2003), is that "supporting management 'top-down' initiatives and the needs or wishes of 'ordinary' staff mean that academic developers can sometimes feel like either the filling in the sandwich or a cushion between conflicting interest" (p.9). .

1.2 Research questions and aims of the study

This study will explore the perspective of academics (faculty), including academic managers, with regard to the professionalization of teaching and provision of teaching development initiatives for academic faculty. The intention is that this knowledge will inform the way in which HEIs enable effective professional development across academic staff.

This research is both timely and pertinent given the current UAE HE context mentioned earlier. Internationally, most academics are working with changing national policy directives, increasing and shifting demands and expectations on their institutions and on themselves as professionals. Additionally, in the UAE, faculty are being imported into new working environments (both linguistically and socially), and facing increased accountability and emphasis on the use of technology.

The flurry of activities in the area of academic staff development in mature HE systems, such as the UK, illustrate the current climate of academic or educational development in 'western' HEIs. As yet, relatively little is going on to support the development of teaching for higher educators in the UAE. This is not to suggest that we in the UAE should necessarily follow Anglo-American practices. Rather, the UAE needs to find its own way of supporting the professional development for its higher educators that fits with our situation, our culture and the resources available. It is hoped that the research presented here will stimulate discussion in the relatively under-researched area of educational development in the UAE, and encourage other researchers to look further into other aspects of development for teachers and for UAE HE policy makers to take an active role in this area and resource academic development appropriately. It is hoped that the more advanced academic staff development research and the comparative study presented

in this study will provide an impetus for growth and transformation in the area of academic staff development,

Another motivation for this study was the belief that much has been written about how academics approach their teaching (Trigwell et al. 1998; Trigwell and Prosser, 2004, Biggs,2003), but very little attention has been paid to how teacheres within emerging country HE sectors conceptualize the professionalisation of teaching, and their values and beliefs concerning their own teaching professional development.

My study will have two main foci: the first one is to investigate attitudes and perceptions towards professionalizing teaching in the UAE HE sector; the second main aim is to understand the rationale for, and current level of provision of, academic staff development in a case HE institution in the UAE.

My study is partly based on the DEST (Department of Education, Science and Training) project, with the obvious change in context from Australia to the less mature HE context of the UAE. This study commissioned in Australia in 2000, investigated how thirty-two Australian universities prepare their academic faculty for their teaching roles. The study gathered data from academics with varying teaching experience about the current provision of professional development to support their teaching role. A second phase of the study investigated perceptions and attitudes of key university stakeholders about the issue of professionalizing teaching (Dearn et al. 2002).

The UAE HE/tertiary education sector is still in its infancy, as previously mentioned, and at the moment there is no system for training or accrediting HE teachers. Therefore, the main focus of my study is to identify and evaluate the appropriateness of what is in place as initial and CPD provision for tertiary teachers in the UAE, its fitness-for-purpose, and to ultimately consider a basic framework for future development.

The main research questions of the present study are as follows:

- 1) *How do academics, senior managers and policy makers conceptualize the 'professionalization' of teaching in higher education in the UAE?*
- 2) *What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare both 'new' and experienced expatriate faculty to enable them to*

deal with issues arising from the socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the Emirati tertiary learner?

- 3) What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority of new and experienced indigenous faculty in order to support the government's Emiratization strategy?*
- 4) What are the perceptions of academics and senior managers about the implementation of a systematic formal training programme of learning and teaching in HE in the UAE?*

1.3 Significance of the study

This study will explore the perspective of academics (faculty) including academic managers with regard to professionalization of teaching and provision of teaching development initiatives for faculty. The intention is that this knowledge will inform the way in which higher education institutions enable effective professional development across academic staff (faculty).

This research, with its distinct and original focus on the perspective and voices of academics in UAE HE about the provision of professional development, will likely be of interest to a range of stakeholders across the UAE and the international HE sector. This study aims to address three primary issues of concern. The first and perhaps the most significant issue is academic development initiatives in developing HE systems such as in the UAE. .

The second significant issue is how best to develop teaching prowess in those academics mainly drawn from industry with little or no pedagogical training. Unlike most western countries, where the main issue in academic staff development is the research-teaching nexus, in countries such as the UAE and other Arab-Gulf countries, the main priority of higher education is to rapidly develop their indigenous faculty. This has resulted in employing academics with 'fresh' industry experience. Even those who do have pedagogical training face the challenge of teaching content to students where English is a foreign language. This situation creates a unique cross-cultural teaching context with a host of teaching challenges affecting teaching and learning. This study hopes to add insights regarding the academic development of expatriate academic manpower in developing countries. Concurrently, this study also aims to provide insights on how best to develop indigenous minority academics in the

area of HE teaching and learning. Little or no empirical research has been done on how best to support contractual (rather than tenured) expatriate academics and to develop an indigenous teaching workforce in a country with an only recently developed higher education system. Thus, the significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of professional development issues concerning both expatriate academics and local academics, and the challenges these pose in a newly developing higher education system such as the UAE.

The third significant issue is the need to expand educational research in the area of academic staff development in the Arab world. Faculty development, like many areas of educational research in the UAE and the Arab world, remains a seriously under-researched area. There is a paucity of research literature on the expatriate academic experience, and, as Richardson and McKenna (2001) explain, much of the literature on expatriates in general has concentrated on corporate expatriate management. However, due to globalisation and the increased mobility of corporate executives and students, there is also an increasing trend of academics going abroad for work.

Finally, the research hopes to highlight to policy makers in developing country higher education systems the urgent need to professionalize the HE teaching workforce and to initiate some sort of teaching framework and accreditation agency for HE teachers, appropriate for our region. This study ultimately hopes to shift teaching development initiatives and provision from having an often purely pragmatic and ad hoc approach to having a central role in shaping both policy and practice within the UAE HE sector

1.4 Limitations of the study

This study, being an attempt to understand the academic staff development structures and processes in a single case institution in the UAE higher education sector, cannot be taken as an inclusive study of the issue in question. The specific limitations of this study are as follows.

First, it is embedded in a country with a relatively short history of higher education, as mentioned earlier. The UAE higher education sector currently has over 35 colleges and universities that are as varied as the UAE population in their structures, missions and policies. Given this diversity, together with time and financial

constraints, it would be a colossal if not an impossible task to investigate the full range of institutional academic development provision and structures in the UAE. Therefore, all the subsequent findings and conclusions are limited to the case institution where the data was collected. Any application of the findings to other higher education institutions must be made with extreme caution and sensitivity, keeping in mind the investigated institution's idiosyncrasies.

Secondly, academic/faculty development can be promoted at various levels of agency. It can be conducted individually or as part of 'communities of practice'. Due to the limitation of time, it has to be acknowledged that, by focusing on the role of the institution in providing developmental activities, the study does not take into account the role of the individual academic in self-development.

1.5 Structure of the study

This thesis consists of six chapters. The present chapter sets the stage for the study. It highlights the challenges facing the higher education sector in the UAE, specifically focusing on the need for more systematic academic and staff development initiatives. It poses four research questions, before closing by explaining the significance and limitations of this study.

Chapter 2 provides a description of the challenges facing both the formal and higher education sector in a relatively new 'wealthy' developing country such as the UAE. It also provides a brief introduction to the structure of HE institutions, funding of public HE institutions and faculty recruitment and *Emiritization* of the teaching force. Faculty development initiatives in other Arab countries are also discussed in order to anchor the research in previous academic development initiatives and research in relatively similar contexts. The chapter ends with my personal perspective as an *Emarati* about the development of teaching proficiency in the UAE.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature on training university teachers. It identifies the key issues relevant to the current study which include the imperatives driving 'professionalization of teaching'; the 'what', 'why' and 'how' of professionalizing teaching in higher education. The chapter also considers the literature on culture, learning and the role of ASD, and ends with the literature on how academic and institutional needs should inform academic/faculty development policy making and

practice. This chapter ends with some of the challenges of the current academic development initiatives.

Chapter 4 considers methodological issues involved in this study. It justifies the philosophical stance and the use of both qualitative interviews and quantitative questionnaires in the study. This chapter also describes the research design in terms of the questions asked, the negotiation of and access to informants and data, and the ethical issues and trustworthiness of the research.

Chapter 5 and 6 focuses on data processing and analysis. They explore academics' and heads of departments' attitudes towards professionalizing the teaching role. The chapter also examines academic development processes and practices, and institutional professional development policies and structures in the case institution by focusing on the data generated from a questionnaire survey among 150 academic staff. It also draws on qualitative data from focus group interviews about their experiences of current PD initiatives.

Chapter 7 concludes the study. It highlights the study's significance and makes recommendations concerning key issues identified in previous chapters. It also makes suggestions for future research on academic development that is strategically aligned with institutional and national goals for higher education.

Chapter 2: The UAE context: education and academic development

2.1 The United Arab Emirates (UAE)



Figure 2.1: Map of the UAE

This chapter will first briefly introduce some aspects of the economic and social development of the UAE in order to have a better insight into the educational system of this country. Higher education faces numerous challenges almost universally, and the UAE HE system is no different. This chapter hopes to highlight these within the social, political and economical context of the UAE. The chapter will present an overview of the background of the UAE, trace the evolution of its educational system, both K-12 and HE, and highlight the challenges and demands of this newly developed HE system. .

To understand the UAE education sector, one has to first examine its social, political and economical evolution. The United Arab Emirates, commonly known as the UAE or the Emirates, were formed in 1971 as a constitutional federation of seven states or emirates after having been a British protectorate until the late 1960s. The seven emirates comprise Abu-Dhabi (the capital state), Dubai (the largest sea-port and a popular tourist destination), Sharjah, Umm-Al-Quwain, Fujeirah, Ajman and Ras-Al-Khaimah (figure 2.1). The UAE is located on the south-eastern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, and occupies an area of 83,000 square kilometres. Its population is approximately 6 million, with more than two-thirds being expatriate workers and their families. There has been a rapid population growth in the UAE following the

provision of a better quality of healthcare and affluent standards of living. Population growth rates for the GCC¹ countries are over 3%, and about 60% of the population is below the age of sixteen (Coffman, 2003). This young population has a huge implications in terms of the availability of higher education.

The tribe or '*kabilah*' has been the principle building block of UAE society, and tribal roots remain strong and influential for most UAE families. The indigenous people of the UAE are referred to as '*Emaratis*'. In comparing the *Emaratis* with other Middle-East and Arab countries, Shaw (1997) describes the dominant Islamic culture in the Arab-Gulf countries as "more traditional, religious, more communalistic, somewhat defensive and more inclined to cultural retrospection in some domains" (p.16).

The UAE national population during the independence period lacked both in numbers and credentials (most of the population were illiterate) to drive a modern state. Despite a high fertility rate (encouraged by government policies, subsidies and special child allowances) and improved healthcare, the UAE had to import most of their labour force. The UAE, like most of the other Gulf countries, welcomed this foreign labour force, but maintained strict restrictions on acquiring citizenship and political participation (Al-Sayegh, 2004). Even citizens in the UAE have limited political participation, mainly through a form of consultative council known as *Majlis Shura* and the Federal National Council (FNC), although currently a lot of progress has been made in ensure more national participation. The UAE law is derived from the Islam law known as the '*Shariah*'.

The seven emirates have a single religion, culture, language and currency but are quite diverse in their terrain, raw materials, trade and tribal origins. Only the capital, Abu Dhabi, contrary to popular belief, bases its economy primarily on the oil industry. The rulers of Dubai realised early on that they need to diversify their economy and have thus made great strides in commerce and tourism. Dubai's neighbouring emirate, Sharjah, has invested in higher education and culture, and was the first emirate to establish, in 2000, a 'University city'. The other smaller emirates, namely Ras-Al Khaimah, Fujairah, Umm alQuwain and Ajman, are much less developed both in terms of economy and infrastructure. Due to this marked variation in the different emirates, HE graduates commonly have to relocate to the more economically robust emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi to secure employment.

¹ GCC countries or Gulf Cooperation Council countries include six members of the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council nations: UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar

However, this creates a serious problem for women who are not so mobile due to cultural and social restrictions.

Neither the country's expatriates nor citizens pay direct taxes. The cost of infrastructure and development is funded by the government. In less than four decades the UAE has been radically transformed from a region of small isolated fishing and trading villages to one of booming cosmopolitan cities. This has been mainly due to oil revenues, which have attracted thousands of expatriate workers to this wealthy, tax-free and relatively safe country. The result is that the UAE heavily relies on these expatriate workers in all sectors, from industry to the education sector. UAE nationals account for only 10% of the total workforce. To counteract this, the UAE government has launched a major movement, known as '*Emiritization*', to ensure the nationalization of the workforce in order to reduce the number of expatriate workers and allow UAE nationals to obtain employment in all sectors.

2.2 Formal Education in the UAE

Education in many parts of the world, and even more so in a conservative, relatively wealthy developing country such as the UAE, is influenced by the social and cultural traditions, ideas, beliefs, expectations, political and legal frameworks. All these factors have a profound effect on the way teaching and learning takes place (Shaw, 1997). Since the federation was formed, education has been viewed as an integral part of UAE development: the UAE constitution states that "education is an essential element in achieving the progress of society" (Mograby, 2002, p.20). The system includes a year in kindergarten followed by a 6-3-3 pattern of elementary, intermediate and high school. The elementary stage is mandatory, and all stages are free for UAE nationals. The children of expatriate workers normally attend the numerous private schools, and increasingly young *Emarati* couples are sending their children to private schools due to the terrible reputation of the government free schools.

The UAE has made significant progress in expanding access to education, although much remains to be done in order to prepare our graduates to compete in a global economy. The school system faces a number of problems in particular. First, issues concerning funding for federal education pose a huge challenge. In a country devoid of income tax, the nationals have clear expectations that the government will

provide not only the basic necessities of healthcare and formal education, but also higher education and subsidized housing schemes. In the more affluent emirates, this is funded by huge oil and industry revenues. In the smaller less fortunate emirates, however, this continues to be a serious challenge as the Emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi continue to disengage from the federation and funnel their wealth towards their own state

Another major challenge facing the UAE education sector has been the dramatic indigenous population growth, mainly due to the improved healthcare and low child mortality rates, with the majority of *Emaratis* now being in their teenage years. In addition, UAE government policies to correct the demographic imbalance caused by the influx of expatriate workforce, encourages UAE nationals with monetary benefits to have more children. This has further spurred birth rates. This has had a significant impact on education in terms of staffing and resources.

Although there has been a huge increase in the number of people with formal education in many Arab-Gulf countries such as the UAE, this quantitative increase has failed to produce graduates with the skills that the countries need (Bahgat, 1999). Hokal and Shaw (1999) comment that attrition is very high in high school, especially amongst boys. Other challenges concerning UAE education are grade-repetitions and low achievement. Gardner (1995), comments that “the school-system is both internally and externally inefficient; too many students fail and ultimately drop out” (p.2).

One of the reasons for this state of affairs lies in the rather neglected social-service infrastructure, including schools, partly due to the lack of experienced, qualified local service staff. In the UAE school system, there is heavy reliance on an expatriate workforce from neighbouring Arab countries, such as Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Yemen. Some of these foreign teachers are professionally ill-equipped and inexperienced, and they often have a conflict of interest because they provide students with private coaching in order to supplement their income (Shaw et al., 1995). The government hopes to solve this problem by ‘*emiritizing*’ the teaching workforce in the K-12 sector.

The few descriptive research papers written about the UAE schooling system mention the over-reliance on rote-memorization, didactic teaching methods, outmoded curriculum and ill-prepared graduates (Gardner, 1995; Shaw et al, 1995; Hokal and Shaw, 1999; Rugh 2002). The bulk of the curriculum, especially in the

primary stage, is occupied by Arabic language and Islamic religious studies. The majority of the Islamic studies teachers themselves received a traditional 'recitation' mode of education (Shaw et al., 1995). The formal education system in the UAE, as in many Arab countries, teaches students how to learn and retain answers to fairly fixed questions in problem situations with little or no meaningful context, and thus reward those skilled at being passive knowledge recipients (Shaw et al., 1995; Harold and McNally, 2003). The result of this didactic and text-bound teaching methodology is that there is little time allowed for discussion and reflection by the student.

Another major challenge is the lack of reliable statistical information concerning the schools; partly due to the speed of the country's development, lack of effective management and rigidly centralized decision-making by the ministry of education. Inevitably, therefore, teachers are constrained towards a rigid view of both the curriculum and their teaching approaches, in which "the textbook is the syllabus" (Hokal and Shaw, 1999 p.176).

There is also a lack of a well-articulated strategic educational leadership focus for the expansion and transformation of education in the UAE. Due to the lack of direct taxation, state education is perceived as a free gift for citizens and in that sense not accountable. Although the state school system in the UAE is closely monitored, curriculum and management issues do have a place within "a coherent and explicit tradition of public policy" (Shaw et al., 1995, p.9). Cassidy (2005) explains that the educational systems in Arab countries are failing to produce graduates with the requisite knowledge and skills needed for a global and knowledge-based economy (Baghat, 1999).

In response to these problems, at the federal level, the UAE ministry of education (MOE) has recently dramatically increased the budget allocated to education, and a new minister of education has been selected with the main aim of improving the education system. At the same time, the emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi have recently taken matters into their hands to establish and resource their own educational councils with the main aim of revamping their own educational systems. The more impoverished emirates continue to rely on the centralized ministry of education. The under-preparedness of secondary school graduates naturally significantly impacts on the tertiary/HE education sector. For example, UAE HE education institutions have to spend considerable sums strengthening the basic skills of new tertiary students (AlBayan, 2005).

2.3 Higher Education in the UAE

2.3.1 UAE Higher education institutions

Since 1976 when the first university was set-up, federal higher education policy in the UAE has been broadly speaking based on a dual level system with two main types of state-provided tertiary institutions. One type is represented by the universities and the other by university-vocational type hybrids known as higher education colleges. The first university, the UAE University (UAEU), was formed in 1976, just 6 years after the federation. It is a large multi-school, multi-department institution with separate campuses for male and female students. Findlow (2005), one of the few prolific writers on UAE higher education, comments that the UAEU, with its “deep-rooted religious and traditionalist Egyptian influences, has tended to be the institution of choice for traditionally minded students and their families” (p.26). The UAEU now employs more UAE nationals than any other HEI (HE institution) in the UAE (table 2.1).

<i>Percentage full-time teaching staff (2005-2006)</i>			
	UAEU	HCT	ZU
British	4	31	2
American	10	15	39
Egyptian	22	1	4
Canadian	10	15	14
Australia	2	11	8
New Zealand	0	4	4
Ireland	0	2	0
UAE	26	2	0
Others	26	19	29
	100	100	100

Table 2.1 Percentage by nationality of full-time teachers in UAE federal HEIs

The newest university in the UAE, Zayed University (ZU), a women-only institution, was founded in 1998 with a mission to prepare graduates to take leadership positions in the modern UAE. The medium of instruction is primarily English and the largest single group of teaching staff are American (see table 2.1). The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) are English language medium institutions formed in 1988. The HCT is a system of 12 vocationally oriented higher education

institutions spread across different emirates and based initially on a Canadian community college model. In addition, there are also a number of HEIs specifically for the police, military, petrochemical and health sectors. Coffman (2003, p.18) comments on how the Gulf countries, in their race for globalization, have adopted foreign language as the language of instruction in HEIs: “even the use of English as a medium of instruction has been embraced without reservation, in contrast to the bitter confrontations in other parts of the Arab world over the use of former colonial languages over Arabic.”

The UAE HE terrain is a breeding ground for the higher education tensions associated with ‘global-local’ ‘indigenous-imported’ ‘traditional-modern’ and ‘idealistic and pragmatic’ Findlow (2005) . This can in part be reflected in the different nationalities of the personnel in UAE HEIs, where the Egyptian presence is more prominent at the UAEU, and American/Canadian at the HCTs and ZU (see table 2.1), where ‘western’ models of education are more readily embraced. These tensions are also associated with the debates about the outcomes of higher education: global competitiveness versus occupational competence and the blurring distinction between technical vocational and academic education.

There are an ever increasing number of fee-paying private higher education institutions in the UAE, as in the Gulf countries generally. Unlike in Saudi Arabia (AlKhazim, 2003), private HEIs are permitted and encouraged by the authorities in the UAE. . The private universities in the UAE are either locally privately owned (for example, the Al-Ghurair university) or joint ventures with foreign universities or satellite campuses of the latter. The Harvard Medical School in Dubai is an example of such a joint venture this. Both Dubai and Sharjah have created academic cities in their commitment to encourage private higher education institutions to set up campuses in the UAE.

Coffman (2003) has discussed the “Americanization of higher education” (p.18) in the Gulf countries. The urgent need for more private HEIs in the region occurred in the mid 1990’s after the initial need for primary and secondary education in the country had been fulfilled and the countries were faced with huge numbers of high school graduates, which the existing public higher education institution could not absorb. This burgeoning private HE sector in the UAE is due to a number of reasons Coffman (2003). First, due to the strict Islamic and traditional customs of the gulf

people, females² are rarely permitted to pursue their education abroad, which leaves private or public higher education in their country as their only option. Males on the other hand are more free to explore higher education options abroad. However, the September 11th events, made many male students reluctant to pursue their studies abroad (especially in the United States); opting to stay put in their home soil, which further increased the demand for private ‘westernised’ higher education institutions in the Gulf regions (Al-Sayegh, 2004).

The dramatic growth in the private HEI sector in the Gulf will hopefully not only solve the increasing demand for higher education for its citizens, but also cater to the needs of long-term expatriate residents of the Gulf-countries and attract students from neighbouring Arab states (e.g. Egypt and Syria), Iran and Asia (India and Pakistan).

In the UAE, the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), a division of the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), was set up in 1999, mainly to accredit these private higher education institutions to ensure their quality of education. The federal HEIs themselves are not subject to similar external accreditation scrutiny.

Federally funded HEIs in the Emirates are currently playing a crucial role in producing the skilled and professional graduates necessary for the rapid development of this country by taking responsibility for various aspects of economic, industrial, agricultural, commercial and professional projects as mentioned in chapter 1. In this respect, the UAE sees higher education as playing a vital role in manpower development. The aim is that HEIs will produce a sufficient number of indigenous qualified workers to meet the demands of the labour market and eventually reduce the large number of foreigners employed in the UAE due to the lack of qualified *Emirati* personnel.

Like the schools sector, the UAE HE sector is also currently facing a number of problems, although on the surface these might seem less acute. During their rapid growth, UAE HEIs have borrowed western higher education models - almost unquestioningly at times. However, as Nicks-McCaleb (2001) explains, educational reform should be viewed holistically. This means resisting the temptation of a ‘cut and paste’ approach of borrowing curricular approaches that have worked elsewhere

² In Islam, females are not permitted to travel alone for more than three days without their *mahram* (the legal guardian, who is the father, brother or husband)

(normally in a different socio-cultural environment to the UAE) and adopting rather than adapting and modifying them to meet the local context.

The open enrolment policies into higher education of the 1990s, are proving to be difficult to sustain. Current figures suggest that almost a third of *Emarati* high school graduates are being denied entry into federal HEIs due to recent budget constraints. Nicks-McCaleb (2005) contends that the ‘frozen’ HE budget is a government strategy to limit the number of *Emarati* HE graduates - in a way forcing them to take up some of the lower skilled jobs in the economy. *Emaratis* have traditionally favoured ‘white-collar’ jobs such as management and teaching and rarely take up ‘lower jobs’ such as found in the construction industry, which are normally allocated to workers from Asia.

Another major challenge is that federal HEIs (and even some private/semi-government ones) are male-female segregated in keeping with Islamic-Arabic traditions and culture. This has resulted in a ‘doubling-up’ of resource costs such as those associated with teaching staff, libraries and laboratories.

2.3.2 Higher education research in the UAE

In his 1997 book, ‘Higher Education in the Gulf’, Shaw lists some of the problems in UAE HE, such as the lack of research in educational matters, he attributes this to a number of reasons. The main ones being the lack of resources such as books and journals in Gulf universities due to stringent censorship, and a lack of women (who are the majority in education) being allowed to pursue their post-graduate studies abroad in western countries due to religious and cultural restrictions. In addition, the heavy teaching load in most higher education institutions leaves academics little time for research and publication, and UAE HE continues to be staffed by expatriates who are, according to Shaw (1997), “less likely to be sympathetic and co-operative in the research endeavour, and probably guarded in their response especially if these express criticism” (p. 17). Cross-gender research (i.e. men conducting research interviews with women and vice versa) can be quite difficult, and Shaw contends that this could be a reason for the ubiquitous use of questionnaires in educational research in the Gulf. I was lucky in that the case institution I was conducting my research in was staffed by Western expatriates and thus there were no

issues in interviewing the faculty. However, in spite of numerous requests, I was unsuccessful in obtaining interviews with any *Emarati* males.

Following Shaw's (1997) call for more research into the Gulf HE system, there has been a trickle of research in different aspects of UAE and Gulf HE systems. One example is Findlow's (2005, 2006) work on tensions in higher education between global-modern and local-traditional that exists in the UAE HE system, and the challenges associated with linguistic dualism. Findlow's work underpinned this study in understanding the complex terrain of HE in a rapidly developing country, especially the fervour with which HE institutions have embraced ICT and English as a medium of instruction to ensure global competitiveness. Mercer (2006a; 2006b) has attempted to explore the leadership challenges of appraisal systems in a country that imports and 'cherry picks' the best teachers, and where poor performance can have the severe repercussion of being repatriated back to one's own country. Mercer's study concurs with Richardson and McKenna (2002); Richardson and Zikic's, (2007) work on how academic expatriates perceptions of their position in their host country and the precariousness nature of their posts in his article 'the darker side of expatriation'.

2.3.3 Higher education Students in the UAE

The number of students in federal HEIs has steadily risen, with a four-fold rise in the number of students enrolled in federal HE in the UAE within the last 10 years. More females enter higher education than males (Nicks-McCaleb, 2005) (see table 2.2), which could be due to the strict Islamic and traditional customs of the gulf people mentioned earlier.

Institutions	Male	Female	Total
Private HEIs	262	624	886
ZU(Zayed University)	0	379	379
HCTs (Higher Colleges of Technology)	1237	2085	3321
UAEU (United Arab Emirates University)	438	2093	2531
Total	1937	5180	7117
Percentages	27	73	100

Table 2.2: Number of UAE national students in accredited federal and private HEIs, by gender 2001/2002 (Nicks-McCaleb, 2005)

Various other authors have commented about the disproportionate number of females and males in the UAE HE sector. Coffman (2003) comment that 60% of university graduates are female in the Gulf countries, Abdullah (2006) suggests the high proportion of Emarati females in the federal HE institutions is due to two main reasons – governmental support and encouragement, and free and segregated (male-female) tertiary institutions.

This increase in women's participation in HE has not, however, had a corresponding effect on employment rates, particularly in the private sector which continue to be dominated by male expatriate workers. The only exception is the banking sector, which introduced an *Emiratization* quota system. Overall, less than 15% of *Emarati* women are in full-time employment. The low female employment rate is due not only to resistance of a profit-seeking private sector which normally employs cheaper labour from neighbouring countries such as the sub-continent and poorer Arab regions, but also due to internal socio-political issues. Abdulla (2006) discusses family socio-religious obligations (for example, the resistance of family members to a woman working after having a family), the preference of some women for working in a female only environment, and the competition for the few available

public sector jobs where women are afforded better shorter working hours, paid maternity leave and tenure.

The lack of employed women does not just affect them as individuals: “the dearth of women in positions of power has undermined their ability to exert influence over economic and social-decision-making structures” (Abdulla, 2006, p.2). This issue about decision making and power resonated well amongst my Emarati female participants in the focus group interviews.

Although the unemployment problem is more acute for female HE graduates, it is starting to be a problem amongst the male graduates as well. Al-Sayegh (2004) claims that the 1980’s economic slump in the UAE saw reduced government spending, an increased focus on profitability, an economic diversification from the oil sector and the proliferation of private multi-national companies. These factors together caused a reduction in the number of public sector jobs, and hence unemployment amongst *Emaratis* started to emerge.

2.4 Faculty development initiatives in the Gulf and Arab world

In the Arab world, as in all other regions, there is no doubt that teaching is the prime task of most university faculty. Despite this fact, these experts may be among the least prepared persons to perform the job requested of them

(Hares, 1994, p.15)

Confirming Hares’ view, the UAE higher education academy is essentially a teaching profession, since the majority of time is spent on this rather than research, even in the more ‘traditional’ universities such as UAEU and Sharjah University. By comparison, most HEIs in countries like UK, Canada and Australia place a great emphasis on research, thus sometimes relegating teaching excellence in favor of the more highly regarded research. This difference suggests that HE educational development in the UAE must go beyond the ‘transplanting’ models which have evolved in countries where academics have dual allegiance, or even preference for their research over their teaching.

The nature of the students, the heterogeneity of the academic workforce, and the way the UAE HEIs are funded and administered creates institutions that reflect the UAE's unique society and complex mix of cultural influences from which it is formed. An

important task then is to develop educational initiatives which are likely to succeed in this milieu, recognizing that some strategies will not find ready acceptance, while others will succeed only after a process of transformation. Kelly (1997), in her research on an EDU (educational development unit) in Hong Kong, questions the validity of ‘western’ conceptions of academic development in the context of Confucian heritage culture (CHC). Similarly, any educational development program in the UAE must acknowledge the factors mentioned earlier, such as the predominance of teaching, socio-cultural factors and linguistic ‘dualism’, where Arab students are studying in English (the second language) in the newer HEIs such as ZU and the HCTs.

Academic staff development (or faculty development as it is frequently referred to in many Arab higher education institutions) still remains at the periphery. My literature search has revealed few indigenous studies in this field, and there are few educational development units (EDU) in the UAE. The key reason for the *laissez-faire* attitude of UAE HEIs towards staff development, despite facing similar pressures to those in Western countries (such as expansion of HE, accountability pressures, and technological innovation mentioned in chapter 1), has been the ease, to use Mercer’s (2005) term, of ‘cherry-picking’ academics from across the world. This has removed the need for EDUs and serious staff development initiatives, since the perception has been that these academics are experts and need very little professional development support.

In the UAE, faculty or academic staff development still operates on a master-apprentice model. According to government regulations, only UAE nationals may be employed straight from universities or colleges; all other academics must have experience in their respective countries to be appointed in any federal UAE HEI. Federal HEIs in the UAE employ Emarati teachers as trainees and then place them under the guidance of an experienced academic who was trained years ago. An inherent weakness in this kind of system is that the product will typically be a copy of a person (who may or not have any pedagogical training) of which the institution already has many versions. The number of Emarati academics remains extremely low, especially in the newer HEI in the UAE (see table 2.1), as Shaw (1993) succinctly put

it, “indigenisation of the workforce is part of the local rhetoric, but it involves far more than simple substitution” (p.38).

Another major challenge for academic/faculty development in the UAE is that there are no clear career paths for either academics in universities or instructors in higher education colleges. A possible reason for this is that the rapid growth of higher education has created an urgent need to employ ‘ready-made’ expatriate academics, while faculty development for nationals has been pushed to the sidelines.

In 1991, an ‘Arab Network for Staff Development’ was launched in agreement with UNESCO; their main objective was to set up programs for the pedagogical training of university faculty in Arab universities (Hares, 1994). Unfortunately, I was unable to find any follow-up papers or articles on this initiative. Following a chance meeting of the ICED (International Consortium for Educational Development) with a prominent staff developer in Germany, Brigitte Berendt, who was one of the contributing authors in this UNESCO document, I was able to receive reports of some of the faculty development work she has done with Syrian and Jordanian professors in Germany. Berendt (2005), observes that there is a dearth of literature on academic/faculty development initiatives in the Arab world, and few existing HEI staff development centres, even in countries like Jordan, that have a long history of higher education

On the other hand, there has been an ever increasing emphasis on integrating VLEs (virtual learning environments) into HE teaching in many Arab HEIs, specifically the rich Arab-Gulf countries such as the UAE. Regarding the use of IT such as VLEs, Sabieh (2001), raises an interesting point concerning the importance of appropriate faculty development in order for technology to be appropriately integrated into teaching and learning within institutions. “Building confidence in the educator remains the universal pedagogical challenge” (p.2), referring to confidence in understanding the relationship between IT and learning theories and practice. However, what she fails to address is how current faculty development in Arab universities tackles the prerequisite to all this: the theories and practices of learning and teaching in higher education. The article touches on learning theories and then links this with technology, but it does not explicitly stress the need to understand generic theories on student learning before proceeding to integrate learning with technology. During my study, the research participants raised similar grievances

concerning their institution's emphasis on on-line learning and use of ICT, while providing little professional development support on the pedagogies of VLE.

In summary, the UAE higher education system has transformed itself in a short span of time, from a 'one- country-one university' model to one in which places at different kinds of HEI are now available to a high proportion of eligible high school leavers. The current practice of hiring Western expatriate teachers in the newer HEIs in the UAE has positioned teaching development initiatives as inessential, and this move has to some extent de-legitimized academic development.

2.5 Teaching proficiency: personal and institutional perspectives

One of the impetuses for this research was my own personal experience as a 'trainee teacher' in the UAE higher education sector. Having come from the healthcare sector, I was quite comfortable with my disciplinary knowledge, but felt I needed assistance in applying this knowledge to enable effective student learning. I was profoundly struck by the lack of resources available to assist me in my development as a teacher. There was no teaching and learning centre to provide guidance on teaching strategies or the latest innovations in the research literature. Assistance from my 'western' colleagues or more senior supervisors was limited, since they were busy with their own careers. In retrospect, this lack of educational development support from the institution was probably due to a common perception amongst academics of the non-problematic nature of teaching. As Weimer (1997), explains, one of the most common assumptions in academia that devalues teaching is the idea that it requires no initial training or CPD.

In addition to this non-supportive environment, as one of the few '*Emirati*' faculty, I felt the expatriate teachers (most with over ten years experience) would view my seeking help as revealing an inadequacy as a teacher. This created a significant dilemma since it could undermine my self-worth and the value of my 'western' qualifications (perceived in the UAE as the ultimate educational attainment). In addition, as I had been hired as a 'teacher trainee', an apparent lack of teaching proficiency could potentially risk unfavourable information coming forward in future appraisal decisions.

Unfortunately, little has changed in the way new academics are supported in the UAE tertiary education sector in the last nine years since I started

teaching. There is extensive and longstanding research about effective learning and teaching in higher education (Biggs 1991;2001;2003; Ramsden, 1992;2003; Prosser and Trigwell, 2001); yet this literature is not widely known by the majority of academics. Instead, personal experience and shared myths about teaching are deemed sufficient to equip one to teach effectively. This situation is very peculiar given that most tertiary academics (unlike school teachers) receive little or no pedagogical training, yet spend more than 80% of their time teaching. It's even more peculiar since academics are trained to question their assumptions, to think critically and demand evidence – but many seem to forget this when it comes to teaching practice. This is even more true in the UAE HE sector, where little or no research is going on in most institutions.

Another important issue is that within the vocationally oriented higher education institutions in the UAE, the majority of faculty are hired because of their industrial knowledge and experience. Few of these recruits from industry receive formal instruction in the basic concepts and principles of education. It is taken for granted that expertise as an industrial professional will translate into proficiency in teaching.

In sum the current approach to developing UAE higher educators (expatriate and nationals) can be described as one of government encouragement without the necessary intervention or financial investment.

2.6 Summary

The UAE has had phenomenal growth in the last 30 years since the federation was formed. The education sector has witnessed huge changes from the time of the traditional Quran classes to the current modern schools and universities. However, this growth has not been without its challenges.

In the primary and secondary education sector, the major challenges have been due to the initial reliance of Arab-expatriate teaching force, the lack of reliable research, non-accountability, lack of effective management and over-reliance on outmoded methods of teaching and learning. The higher education sector similarly has its challenges, including the lack of empirical research, over-reliance on expatriate academics, under-preparedness of students entering the HE sector, and students having to study in a second language. Academic staff development (faculty

development) is still in its infancy in the UAE. This is due partly to the rapid growth of development, which has resulted in the under-development of indigenous academics, but most importantly due to under-funding and undervaluing the importance of academic staff development.

Chapter 3: Review of the literature: Professionalisation and Academic Development

3.1 Introduction

The unprecedented changes that have occurred in HE in the last decade or so have had a significant impact on teaching across the HE sector. The old model of ‘professional scholar but amateur teacher’ is increasingly untenable in an era of increased accountability, widening diversity technological and institutional diversity.

The discipline of teaching and learning in higher education was under-recognized just a few decades ago. Academics taught with meagre professional development in the area of teaching and learning in higher education and without formal teaching qualifications.

Yet, as Weimer (2001) claims, most faculty are unfortunately still not adequately prepared to teach, despite many national policies that encourage better preparation for the teaching role. Traditionally, university teaching was relegated in favour of research, and higher education institutions were judged based on their research endeavours. Promotion and reward structures were clearly skewed this way as well. As a result, the first priority of most academics has been to keep up with developments in their academic discipline and contribute to them through research. Developing teaching expertise usually takes second place, due not only to the institutional structures and reward systems, but also to individual choice (Bucklow and Clark, 2000).

Now, however, due to the changing context of higher education, the quality of teaching in higher education is being placed under intense scrutiny and HEIs are being required to improve and account for this. There has been tremendous growth in the literature of HE teaching and learning in the last decade, in areas of effective teaching in higher education, student learning and the scholarship of teaching (Biggs, 1979; Ramsden, 1996; Gibbs, 1996, 19998; Entwistle 1998; Prosser and Trigwell, 2001). The need to professionalise teaching has been a direct result of this changing HE context. Baume (2006) acknowledges that

Professionalisation of teaching comes, however, with numerous challenges and issues. Rowland (1998), for example, clearly highlights the controversy regarding professionalism in HE teaching, with reference to educational development as “non-academic” and developers as “professors who have nothing to profess” (p.135). This

chapter examines the literature related to academic development, professionalisation of teaching and resulting academic development policies, imperatives and practices. It also deals with aspects of professional learning, communities of practice and cross-cultural teaching practices. This literature review is mainly drawn from the UK experience with the aim of judging its worth for UAE higher educators and UAE teacher development policies and practices.

This chapter is subdivided into three main parts: the first part of the chapter reviews the literature on professionalisation of teaching (the why, what, when and where of professionalisation). This literature will offer an analysis of the various concepts and definitions of professionalization of teaching, challenges facing professionalisation and models of academic staff development for teachers at various levels of their careers. This is hoped will provide the theoretical ideas and concept to unpack the first and the forth research questions. The second part of the chapter explores the literature on preparing for new academics roles, the issues of accredited programs for teaching and learning and their challenges. This part also reviews the meagre research available on expatriate academics in their host institutions; an important issue within the UAE HE context. This literature will hopefully provide some insight into the first parts of the research questions two and three. The final part of this chapter will explore some key influences of CPD practices of academics in HE within the current context of change, competing demands and expectations. This literature will be used to underpin the analysis of the second parts of the second and third research questions. The theoretical underpinning provided by this chapter will guide my research and underpin my analysis and will also serve as a tool in stimulating the advancement of knowledge in the field of academic development in emerging HE sectors.

3.2 Professionalisation of teaching in HE

Boyer's (1990) seminal work 'Scholarship reconsidered: priorities of the professoriate' emerged as a dominant ideology in HE in the West, and provided the first encouragement towards the professionalisation of teaching in HE. Boyer categorised academic work into four scholarships: the scholarships of discovery, integration, application and teaching. This study, and others that followed, provided

the impetus for many institutions to reassess the way they recognize and promote academic staff. As a result,

the professionalisation of university teaching is of increasing political and public interest. Simultaneously, the trend in education as a whole appears to be towards competency-based frameworks which allow for standardization and comparison and, in parallel, there is a trend towards ‘evidence-based’ teaching and quantitative methods of evaluation (McLean and Bullard, 2000, p.80)

In the UK, both the Dearing report (1997) and the governmental White Paper (2003) clearly demonstrated an increased interest in the quality of teaching in higher education. In follow up to this a later report states that, “all students are entitled to be taught well and to be given the support they need to learn effectively” (DfES, 2006). The professionalisation of teaching in HE, the notion of imposed or enforced training and the setting up of an institute to accredit the practice of UK HE teachers were some of the key Dearing recommendations.

Section 3.1 concentrates on discussing certain aspects of the professionalisation of teaching in higher education with the subsections organized around the following questions:

1. What is professionalisation of teaching in HE? This sub-section attempts to conceptualize the professionalisation of teaching.
2. Why has ‘professionalisation of teaching in HE gained such momentum in recent times? What imperatives have driven professionalising teaching in HE?

3.2.1 Conceptualizing professionalisation

There is no contention amongst educational experts that teaching in pre-16 education requires knowledge of learning in children and the skills and knowledge needed to support this, and only those with these pre-requisite requirements and a recognized teaching qualification are allowed to teach. Yet, “in higher education in the United Kingdom, there is no received view of the requirements of a professional approach to learning and teaching” (Bucklow and Clark, 2000, p.9). In many parts of the world, it is common and mandatory for primary and secondary educators to have specialized training in both disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to enter into the teaching profession. Unfortunately there has not been a similar strong drive to ‘professionalize’ teaching in higher education. Until the recent advent of HEFCE and Teaching fellowship schemes, it was rare that expertise in teaching to be

a route to career advancement , with most promotions in HE related to research or administrative expertise and experience.

In attempting to understand the complex concept of ‘professionalisation of teaching’, we can first begin to define what a profession and a professional are. A ‘profession’ is characterized by two main features: autonomy and regulation by a professional body. Therefore, a ‘professional’ is defined as a person who possesses certain expertise as specified by a professional body (Bucklow and Clark, 2000). Brown et al. (2002) lists the qualities of the professions. Amongst them are expertise, autonomy, self-regulation, a code of ethics. Other key characteristic is the requirement of a professional to undergo a lengthy period of higher education in order to acquire and develop a specific body of knowledge. Others include a systematic body of knowledge to meet professional demands and a requirement for a code of ethics.

Certainly we would expect staff in HEIs to have specialist knowledge of and high levels of quali. cation in their own subject, but this does not necessarily extend to a detailed understanding of and well-informed background in the theories and practice of teaching. (Brown et al., 2002)

McGettrick (2005) provides a similar list of professional characteristics related to teaching in higher education: working for the ‘good’ of students; acting with honesty and integrity in the interest of individual students and society in general; possession of a ‘knowledge base’ in order to operate in the interest of students; maintaining an interest in the area of ‘the scholarship of teaching’ and undertaking courses, programmes and activities that will enhance this. Although post 1991 (after the ILTHE establishment) a number of HEIs have provided teaching development courses, nevertheless this provision is still patchy in some institutions. Therefore in terms of comparing HE teaching with other professions, gate keeping in relation to teaching expertise (as opposed to subject knowledge) is rare. (Brown et al. 2002).

The critical questions then that will guide this research is whether:

- experiential knowledge sufficient to acquire all the skills and values of teaching in higher education?
- higher educators require a lengthy period of formal training in teaching?
- academics have stronger alliance with their disciplinary areas, or do they perceive themselves as belonging to a teaching profession.

3.2 .2 Imperatives driving professionalisation

This sub-section attempts to answer the question of ‘why’ professionalise. The main answer to this is the aim of ensuring the quality of teaching and learning which has moved academia to professionalizing teaching and learning in higher education. As Lueddeke (2003) explains:

The ‘professionalisation’ of teaching practice in higher education is becoming more important as universities try to respond to an increasingly diverse and discerning student population, issues relating to standards and quality, growing international competition, and generally ‘doing more with less’

The rest of this section will further explore these professionalisation imperatives that have arisen in higher education.. Lueddeke (2003), explains that professionalising teaching in higher education has been the result of a number of challenges facing HE today. These include a move from elite to mass higher education, diverse student body, students as paying clients, vocationalization of the curriculum, the need to develop students’ transferable skills and the advent of ICT.

The advent of new technologies, and their application to both the administrative and teaching functions within HE institutions, has transformed teaching and learning in the twenty first century. New technologies are required in all aspects of academic work from administrative duties, multi-media lecture presentation and the use of virtual learning environments (VLE). In HE there has been a move to offer students more flexible modes of learning, such as distance education and open learning. This requires teachers to learn new skills to prepare them to deliver or rather facilitate these computer-assisted or web-based courses, which are very different from preparing traditional face-to-face courses.

None of the above incentives are likely to weaken. These, and numerous others, act as source of pressure to reconceptualize the business of teaching and learning in higher education. These imperatives are forcing HE institutions to define the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of teaching, learning and assessment. This changing context in HE demands that the teacher is more skilled, and possesses a wide repertoire of conceptions and approaches to facilitate learning. As a result, it is argued “that the identity of university teachers is in the process of being redefined” (McLean and Bullard, 200, p.80).

In addition, academics need to recognize that mastery of an academic discipline is only one of the requirements needed to teach in the 21st century. All these changes imply that HE teachers will have to be knowledgeable about how to support the diverse needs of their students. “The concept that students in higher education attend courses to receive whatever concept of education the teacher happens to have in mind will be increasingly less tenable” (Bucklow and Clark, 2000 p.10). In the US, some private HE institutions require their academic staff to undertake a teacher training program on their own expense before a contract is offered, as a way to verify their teaching quality (Cunningham et al. 2000).

3.2.3 The need to professionalize in emerging UAE HE sector

In the UAE’s newly emerging HE sector, similar challenges to those highlighted above exists. These include the following diverse academic faculty, ICT advent, increased accessibility of higher education, and numerous others. The rest of this section details these challenges.

The numbers of faculty are growing rapidly in both the federal and private HEIs. This is due to the burgeoning young population attending universities and colleges in the UAE. This rapid increase has resulted in a huge diversity of faculty educational backgrounds, represented by more than 20 countries . Some of these faculty members (especially in the vocationally oriented HEIs) are recruited into higher education straight from industry, due to the HEIs focus on employability: of ensuring graduates emerge from the system with certain skills and knowledge to equip them for the world of work.

The use of technology is particularly pertinent in the UAE because, as Quinn (2001) points out, the country is one of the most “technologically-advanced Islamic nations” (p.150), with, for example, the only e-government portal in the Arab-world linking more than 23 government departments. Besides being competent in the use of technology, most academics need an understanding of the pedagogical implications of ‘digital delivery’ and the how that can facilitate learning (Webb and Murphy, 2000). This huge growth of IT is reflected in some HEIs being labelled ‘laptop’ universities and in the large emphasis within teachers’ PD on ICT training.

In the UAE, the accessibility of higher education has produced a very diverse student body. The number of women in the UAE HE sector has tripled. Less than ten

years ago, most female *Emaratis* barely completed formal schooling before marriage. Now these students are combining family life and responsibilities for higher education. There are now more students from low socio-economic backgrounds such as those from much poorer eastern regions of the UAE. In addition the number of mature students with prior learning experience returning to HE has increased considerably, especially with the opening of more private universities and colleges. Consequently, a greater emphasis must be placed on teaching and flexible teaching practices to meet the needs of this diverse group of learners

In many western HE systems, student attrition rates remain high due to curriculum overload, perception of poor teaching, loss of interest in their subject of study and lack of academic advisory services (Lueddeke, 2003). The UAE HE sector is no different. In spite of the burgeoning literature on how people learn and meeting the needs of diverse learners, in the UAE HE sector we are left with failure and high attrition rates that should cause some discomfort and even alarm, although statistics on this are not made public³. The majority of higher educators are quick to blame the formal education sector for the failure of HE students, as the interviews with faculty and managers will later reveal in chapter 5. However, the need for professionalizing teaching or the lack of is hardly acknowledged

At the same time, some challenges are unique in the UAE HE sector, or at least more pronounced there is a new form of casualization of the academic workforce, where the majority of academics (faculty) are on short fixed-term contracts. This form of the contracted expatriate academic creates a number of problems for academic development. The first problem is to justify developing the perceived 'expert' bought in from the west, since in most cases this expert possesses all the necessary disciplinary skills and knowledge. However, as the data in chapter 4 will reveal, the majority of expatriate academics in the UAE do not possess pedagogical qualifications. The second problem is to ensure that the expatriate academic managers develop processes to develop the national work force. However, this means, in effect, training their replacements, and ultimately driving themselves out of a job.

Another important issue in the UAE HE sector concerns research and teaching priorities mentioned above. Research production is not a driving force in most UAE

³ I have not come across studies that look into attrition rates in the UAE HE sector, but my experience in this sector has indicated quite a high attrition rate especially amongst foundation year (pre-university year) to year 1.

HEIs, disciplinary specialisation continues to dominate. As a result, keeping in pace with ones' disciplinary areas normally takes precedent in many academic environment. The UAE HEIs do not treat research as their primary activity, yet teaching prowess is still relegated to second place. The UAE HE sector for example exhibits much heterogeneity from its predominant short-term expatriate academics, the diversity of academics' educational-social background, to their emphasis on employability. Research activity in these institutions plays an insignificant role in the academics' priorities; teaching and preparing the future 'workforce' is the key role.

There is also a lack of Educational development centres in most higher education institutions in the UAE. Educational development units (EDU) have emerged in anticipation and response to the changing context of HE in most western HE institutions. These units are concerned with providing various forms of support for the clarification of educational aims, training new academic inductees for their teaching role, together with the other resources which support teaching and learning. In the UAE the lack of EDUs has resulted in development being largely ad hoc, unregulated and, most importantly, not adequately resourced. Professional development sessions tend to emphasize content, IT skills and EFL (English as a foreign language) tips and strategies (the analysis of PD provision in the case institution in chapter 4 clearly reveals this). The focus is on faculty competency in subject matter, and skills and tips of teaching, rather than in the discourse of teaching. This emphasis is a serious disadvantage in developing the discourse of teaching and learning in UAE HE. Professional development sessions offered, normally within the institution premise emphasize content. The focus is on faculty competency in subject matter, rather than teaching. This emphasis on content rather than on methods is a serious disadvantage in developing the discourse of teaching and learning in HE.

In summary, the changing context in the more matured western institutions and the newly emerging HE system in developing countries such as the UAE both require the HE teacher to be more skilled, and to possess a wide repertoire of conceptions and approaches to facilitate learning. In addition to this, academics need to recognize that mastery of an academic discipline is only one of the requirements needed to teach in the 21st century. All these changes imply that HE teachers will have to be knowledgeable in how to support the diverse needs of their students .

The above points provide a source of pressure to reconceptualize the business of teaching and learning in higher education. Within such a challenging environment,

quality of teaching has assumed a high priority and come under the spotlight with the resulting expectations that teaching skills should be developed.

3.3 Professionalisation and academic development

A theoretical basis for tertiary teaching and learning emerged in the late 1960's, in response to the massification of higher education in many Western countries. However, it was not until the late 1980's that this distinct pedagogy penetrated the discourse of the university teaching (D'Andrea and Gosling, 2001). There now exists a rich and ever increasing literature on HE pedagogy and the development of tertiary teaching practice (Entwistle, 1998; Prosser and Trigwell, 2001; Biggs 2003; Ramsden, 2003; Fry et al, 2003).

There has been increased investment to improve the quality of teaching in HEI in many countries, in direct response to all the above imperatives. Programs and initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning in higher education are collectively referred to as 'academic development' or 'educational development', or in the case of North America 'faculty development'. In this study, the term academic development or educational development will be used. Academic development is about improving the experience of student learning through improvement of teaching, learning, curriculum development and evaluation; provision of pedagogically sound and disciplinary relevant development for academic staff; the systematic and scholarly support for improving the practice of higher education teaching, and the promotion of the scholarship of teaching; institutional management of teaching and learning strategies; and development of academic staff (Candy, 1996; Gosling, 1996; D'Andrea and Gosling, 2001; Stephani, 2003). "Educational development, in its most comprehensive sense, attempts to promote the improvement of teaching and learning in academic organizations by systematic means"(D'Andrea and Gosling, 2001, p.67).

Brand (2007), compares the historical perspective of academic staff development in the UK to a "long and winding road" (p.7). SEDA (Staff and Educational Development Association) was set up in 1990. Without governmental impetus, or external government imposition, a group of colleagues formulated the SEDA teacher accreditation scheme, underpinned by a set of values and principles. This was followed by the influential Dearing report in 1997. This report called for the establishment of an institute of learning and teaching in HE and for new academic

appointees to achieve at least partial membership: “it should become the norm for all permanent staff with teaching responsibilities to be trained on accredited programmes” (NCIHE, 1996). The ILTHE (Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education) quickly followed in 1999, which later got subsumed within the current HEA (Higher Education Academy). In response to the White Paper (2003) (The future of higher education) recommendations, the UK professional standards framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education was launched in 2006 by the HEA. Central to this framework is the acknowledgement of a distinct discourse of teaching and learning in HE, a scholarly approach to pedagogy, respect for the autonomy of HEIs, and the importance of improving student learning.

Professionalising HE teaching through academic development requires a systematic course of study, introducing the theoretical discourse of university teaching and learning in order to ensure that teachers are using scholarly approaches to facilitate learning. To this end, there are a growing number of higher education teaching qualifications available, many accredited by the HEA. Many HEIs in Western countries provide some form of initial training for their academic staff, but it’s mandatory in only a few countries such as Sweden and Norway. Nevertheless, the increasing number of formal teacher development programmes globally is indicative of a commitment to raise the professional status of teaching in higher education. In many UK and Australian HEIs, new teachers are required to undertake professional development programmes that may or may not lead to formal qualifications (Gibbs and Coffey, 2004). These programmes are usually run by faculty/staff development units or a school of education and sometimes collaboratively by both. Many teacher development programmes in the UK are submitted and endorsed by the HEA in order for their staff to gain professional recognition.

Numerous countries have invested heavily in educational development initiatives. For example the Netherlands government invested 240 million US dollars in 1995 in a bid to improve Dutch HE teaching programmes over a three year period. Similarly in South Africa funding was provided to set up standards for competency-based national qualifications for new lecturers (Fraser, 2005). In Australia, Dearn et al. (2002) reported that most Australian HEIs provided graduate certificates in higher education (GCHE) teaching, and a small fraction of these were compulsory for new probationary teachers. Bamber (2002) also reported the spread of the GCHE in the UK, mainly in response to the Dearing report.

It is the norm in many 'Western' developed countries to have well-established and resourced central units for academic staff development, normally called 'educational development units' or 'academic development centres'. Whatever their title, they all have as a central concern (whether explicitly stated or not) the quality of the educational experience of students, and perceive the unit's main purpose as initiating and implementing a wide range of policies to improve the quality of teaching the students receive (Gosling, 1996; Gosling and D'Andrea, 2002). It suggests that many western countries have now recognized the importance of academic development and have established centers, whose main aim is to work with academics and departments for the improvement of teaching and learning.

Educational development units (EDUs) in many developed countries play a key role in providing award bearing programmes for university teaching, normally known in the UK as PGCHE. For ease of writing I shall refer to these in general as GCHEs (Graduate Certificates in Higher Education) due to the fact that there are many different awards with different designations in different countries. Just in Australia, Dearn et al. (2002) reported 11 different names for 21 programmes of this nature. The dominant model of a GCHE is the 60 credit post-graduate certificate accredited by the UK's HEA. This program tends to be provided by some form of centralized educational development unit, and to exhibit similar learning outcomes, structures, content and assessment methods, usually underpinned by Schon's (1983), 'reflective practitioner' theoretical model of professional development.

GCHEs differ in many other respects besides the naming terminology. The length of courses varies considerably from one university to another and from country to country. For example, the Australian GCHE comprises between 200 and 660 hours, with participants taking two or four courses over a period of one to two years. (Dearn, 2002). Whether it is new academic staff or post-graduates or full time staff that take the GCHE also varies from place to place. Gibbs and Coffey (2000) in their survey of 23 programmes in eight different countries also noted the variation in course aims, structures and assessment modes. For example, they reported five different types of goals in the GCHEs in the countries surveyed: behavioural change, conceptual change, reflective practice, student centered learning and teacher efficacy.

In order to truly enhance the discipline of teaching in higher education, GCHE provide more than generic tips and skills on teaching. They emphasize the scholarship

of teaching and learning in higher education (Fraser, 2005). From the SEDA accreditation philosophy shown in Table 3.1, it is evident that their accreditation is based not only on particular skills and competencies but also on values (similar values underpin HEA accreditation). While participants requiring accreditation must demonstrate accomplishment of specific tasks, most importantly these must be underpinned by the values in the table.

Award recipients will have shown how their work is informed by the SEDA-PDF Values	
1	An understanding of how people learn
2	Scholarship, professionalism and ethical practice
3	Working in and developing learning communities
4	Working effectively with diversity and promoting inclusivity
5	Continuing reflection on professional practice
6	Developing people and processes
Table 3.1: SEDA values that must be demonstrated for accreditation	

Educational developers however differ in the way they conceptualize the GCHE, and this is reflected in the numerous frameworks that underpin these courses. Gibbs and Coffey (2000), in their survey of 23 programmes in eight different countries, reported variations in course aims, structures and assessment modes, finding five different types of goals in the GCHEs in the countries surveyed: behavioural change; conceptual change; reflective practice; student centered learning; and teacher efficacy.

Gibbs and Coffey (2004) view educational development programmes as “counterweights” to departmental cultures that might not take teaching seriously. Ferman (2002), claims that “effective university teaching is not something that occurs without conscious effort, the importance of sound professional development programmes for academics is clear” (p.147). One outcome of all these changes has been the development of formalized educational development programs, mainly aimed at new academics. Programs for more experienced academics have been less formalized and varied amongst institutions.

3.4 Preparing academics for teaching

The research on student learning perspective (Prosser and Trigwell (2001); Ramsden, (2003); Biggs (2001) has theoretically underpinned programs for teacher training for academics. In summary this literature highlights that students adopt qualitative different approaches to their studies depending on their prior experience of studying and the particular context in which they find themselves. These different approaches lead to qualitative different learning outcomes. Surface approaches, in which student focus on reproducing the content and processes they are studying, which strongly correlate to high workload and assessment methods demanding reproductive learning. Deep approaches on the other hand seem to be associated with student experiences that the teaching is good, goals are clear and that there is some freedom on how and what is learned.

Concurrent to students' approaches to learning, two qualitative different approaches to teaching have been identified (Trigwell et al. 1994). The first is referred to as student-focused and the second conception is termed teacher-focused. Student – focused approach is about changing students' conception of the material to be learnt, that is encouraging deep learning. On the other hand, teacher-focused approach is about transmitting the content of the material to be learnt. The significance of this research is that there is an association between teachers adopting a student-focused approach to teaching and their students adopting a deep approach to learning (Trigwell et al. 1998).

Therefore in order to improve students' learning experiences we need to concentrate about both the context and their experiences of that context. Institutional policies and practices of academic staff development, academic staff perception of their teaching environment would be expected to have substantial effects on the way they approach their teaching and structure the teaching and learning context.

Therefore non-conductive factors for good teaching within the new higher education context according to Knight and Trowler (2000) include:

- 1) Increased work-load (both teaching and research)
- 2) 'Managerialism' in HE. Increased accountability and increased in administrative tasks
- 3) Lack of collegiality mainly due to lack of time as a results of the first 2 factors listed

- 4) Financial constraints, 'doing more with less'
- 5) Ageing, malaise and marginality even amongst mid-career academics

Even within these less than ideal conditions, the practice of teaching and learning is amenable to change in local contexts. As Ramsden (1998) succinctly puts it:

There is evidence that the environment of academic departments- including their leadership- influences the quality of teaching and learning in universities. Again, the key factor in the equation is the staff member's perception of the context of academic work.
(p. 63)

The remaining section will explain in greater detail the programs and activities that Western HE systems use to prepare their academics. The first section defines the concept of 'newness' in academia, and compares this with 'newness' in the UAE HE sector.

3.4.1 Defining 'new' academics in the UAE HE contexts

The concept of 'newness' in academics has not been well articulated. In most studies (e.g. Ferman, 2002; Lueddeke, 2003), length of lecturing experience is the benchmark. Experience of 1-3 years is normally categorized as relatively inexperienced, and 10 years or more as very experienced. The GCHE is typically taken during the first two years of a new lecturer's appointment, and in many universities in the UK it forms part of the contractual requirement for new and inexperienced appointees (Fraser, 2005). In the UAE, HE sector however (this is particularly true in federal HEIs), there are no true novices *per se*. The official policy states that most HE appointees must have a minimum of three years teaching experience in their home country. As Mercer (2005) comments, 'cherry picking' of experienced expatriate faculty aims to counterbalance the unsatisfactory teaching that Emirati students have encountered in their formal schooling years.

3.4.2 Academics at different career stages

Although the literature of academic development has focused on new academic appointees, it is crucial that developmental initiatives are congruent with the academic career stages of all academics. "What is critical in training university teachers varies depending upon the stage of the teacher's career" (p.67) explains McKeachie (1997). Blackmore and Blackwell (2006) warn that "a generic approach

that assumes that all have the same concerns and motivations, and that these are unchanging over a career, is not likely to be successful” (p.380).

Lueddeke’s (2003) study concluded that years of teaching of academics has moderate impact on approaches to scholarship of teaching, although academics in their early careers (less than 5 years) and late careers (16-20 years of teaching) are more likely to be interested in staff development than mid-career teachers (averaging 6-15 years). This lack of involvement by those mid-career academics may be due to a conscious or unconscious desire to avoid change or the fear of confronting old patterns of behaviour and that the change behaviour will not be right or good enough. To overcome these fears, the best approach is offering support and building trust with teaching innovators. Enforcing or pressurizing action on the other hand will be counterproductive (Critchley and Casey, 1998, cited in Lueddeke, 2003). This closely confers with Lueddeke’s (1999) study, which highlighted that change should be dictated ‘top-down’ but also requires a commitment from all stakeholders in a collaborative way.

A chronic challenge facing higher education is how to engage ‘mid-career’ teaching staff, who may need to learn to ‘operate more from a stance of not knowing rather than from knowing (Lueddeke, 2003)

In designing GCHEs, academic developers are faced with dilemmas of designing courses that are not only suitable for academics at different stages in their careers but also who are from different disciplines. According to Fraser (2005), it is crucial to have a mix of both experienced and not-so experienced academics in a single cohort, and from different disciplines. This is to enable interdisciplinary enquiry for “cross-fertilization of ideas, for questioning and learning about different ways of teaching in different contexts” (p.161). Fraser (2005) also believes that it might be more challenging to get this ‘cross-fertilization of ideas’ from academics very new to teaching.

Sharpe (2004) therefore suggests that in planning and developing PD activities, the aim should be to design programs in keeping with the teachers’ existing conceptions and concerns. In other words, start off with teacher centred views with their corresponding technicalities of teaching (methods of teaching, running tutorials etc). However, he also clearly states that longer term development in teaching can only be achieved by concentrating on conceptual change.

3.4.3 Accredited programs

Webb and Murphy (2000) predict that institutions will increasingly require accreditation of their teaching staff as a part of their contract: “the next generation of academics will be inducted into their profession and will have to demonstrate continuing professional development while they remain a member, just as it is a requirement in almost every other professional area”(Webb and Murphy, 2000, p.22). “Accreditation has proved to be the most controversial element of the mission of the ILTHE, despite the existence of well-established accreditation schemes within the majority of professional and statutory bodies” (Bucklow and Clark, 2003 p.85). University teaching is under great scrutiny and is in the process of being redefined. There are two critical elements in training university teachers: skills and knowledge. Skills include teaching methods, lecturing, assessments (formative and summative), using technology, providing feedback etc. Knowledge, includes not only the subject matter to be taught, which is not usually a problem for university teachers who in most cases have terminal degrees in their areas, but also teaching knowledge. Teaching knowledge is the teaching knowledge of the subject matter. (McKeachie, 1997)

Teachers need to know more than just their subject. They need to know the ways it can come to be understood, the ways it can be understood, what counts as understanding: they need to know how individuals experience the subject.' (Laurillard, 1993, p. 3 quoted in McKeachie, 1997, p.68)

For new academics “the most critical element is the development of basic skills, such as leading discussions, lecturing, testing and responding to student question” (McKeachie, 1997, p.67). While PD for HE faculty needs to encourage reflective practice, deep pedagogical knowledge etc.. in the long term, in the short term it needs a different focus for new faculty. However, in most UK HE systems it is these new entrants that are required to undertake a graduate certificate in higher education, which aims in most cases to have a deep appreciation of the knowledge of the subject matter and epistemological beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning.

According to Bamber (2006), the Dearing recommendation achieved wide acceptance in UK HEIs, in that most universities provided training for their new lecturers. This was especially so in the post-1992 universities, which introduced their courses in the mid 1990's, in the run up to Dearing. However, the lofty goals of most GCHEs are incongruent with the developmental stage of the academics. McKeachie

(1997) commented that only after the initial survival stage, can university teachers begin to understand and truly reflect on the goals of education, knowledge about the nature of teaching and learning and the context in which teaching occurs

The main criticisms of the GCHEs are the time needed, often competing with an academic's departmental commitments and disciplinary research, their detachment from the academic discipline because of centralized generic activities (as is the case of most GCHEs in UK universities (Hanbury et al. 2008). Many academics also have many other tasks, such as administrative duties, academic leadership (as course coordinators, programs chairs etc.), disciplinary and subject professional development. A lengthy teaching and learning course tends to be perceived as an extra burden.

3.4.4 CPD for experienced academics

Traditionally academic staff have always understood and embraced the idea of continuously keeping pace through scholarship and research their subject areas. However this same fervour has not always translated in their teaching roles. Due to the multiple roles of most academics (disciplinary expert, researcher and teacher) subject knowledge alone although crucial is not the only developmental needs of the academics. There are necessary developmental needs for academics in the area of teaching, learning and academic management skills. (Partington,1999).

Most of experienced HE teachers were from the generation prior to HEA, socialised within their disciplines, where teaching and learning “are often nor rationalized or examined, and are accepted as a set of mutually accepted givens” (Cooper, 2004, p.80). Bucklow and Clark (2003) explain that one of the reasons that the accredited programs for teaching have not been embraced by experienced academic staff is that they are still perceived that professional credentials and expertise in subject areas is adequate to ensure teaching competence and that the “skills required to teach can either be picked up on the job by trial and error or learned in one of two days’ training” (p.85). They explain that this is the result of such experienced staff lack of awareness of underpinning research in teaching and learning and tend to characterize the development of professional approaches to teaching and learning support as technique oriented conception.

Due to their core involvement and power, experienced academics within their departmental community of practice, any teaching innovation and evidence based

teaching that new GCHE graduates bring to their department is in danger of being rejected.

Systematic and embedded schemes of CPD require considerable commitment from both the individual and the organization, in respect of understanding and valuing its role and potential, as well as the investment of time and resources. (Partington, 1999, p.248)

However, continuous professional development for more experienced teachers is receiving more attention lately with the launch of the professional standard framework and the Higher Education Academy professional recognition schemes in 2008 (HEA, 2008).

In early 2006, the HEA put forward their new framework national framework for professional standards in teaching. The UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education recognises that the scholarly nature of subject inquiry and knowledge creation, and a scholarly approach to pedagogy, combine to represent a unique feature of support for student learning in higher education institutions. This framework was produced in direct response to a proposal made in the White paper-The future of Higher Education (2003). The framework has 4 main aims:

- 1) To implement a clear and concise strategy for professional development of academic staff for their teaching role
 - 2) To foster a more systematic and continuous approach to develop teaching amongst academics
 - 3) To deliberately exhibit to all HE stakeholders the professionalism in teaching within the HE community
 - 4) To ensure uniformity and quality of the student learning experience
- (HEA, 2006).

The PSF (professional standard framework) provides a description in 3 general areas- areas of activity, core knowledge, and professional values . The HE institutions' role is to determine their own criteria in the application of the PSF items within their professional development programmes. All the criteria within the PSF were derived from the HEA accreditation scheme. The purpose of the 'area of activity' is so that students have a clear and attractive view of their own learning. An implication for this is that a teacher makes explicit the learning, teaching and assessment strategy to all concerned students. 'Core knowledge' refers to that

knowledge that might demonstrably inform teachers' practice? Example might be teachers knowing about their subject area and theory and practice related to that particular learning and teaching. The 'professional values' implications for HE teachers is to their commitment to scholarship (both in their disciplinary area and teaching), to working with diversity and promoting inclusivity, to confidentiality and to continued reflection on and development of practice.

Following the professional standards framework, the HEA launched its new Professional Standards Framework scheme (HEA, 2008). The scheme is based upon three categories of recognition open to staff engaged in teaching and supporting learning in higher education, each bearing their own post-nominals. The Academy confers 'Associate', 'Fellow' and 'Senior Fellow' status on individual in recognition to their commitment to enhancing the student learning experience.

Although there has been some progress in CPD for teaching and learning, there still exists 'fault lines' as Clegg (2003, p.37) elucidate. CPD in higher education is faced by a number of tensions and challenges:

- 1) The dual role of HE educators as providers and consumers
- 2) What exactly constitute CPD in HE?
- 3) The challenge of Academic identity.

The issue of the dual role with regard to CPD revolve mainly around the issue of provider versus the consumer role. HEIs are established providers for CPD for others but less developed in provision for CPD for own staff (Clegg, 2003). Another key issue is that staff development is organized differently in different institutions, concerned with issues of location and status. And thirdly the complex range of approaches, cultures, priorities, beliefs and actions which impact on staff developers, institutions and individual academics (Land, 2001).

The second challenge surrounds the question of 'what constitute CPD in higher education? the debate of formal versus informal learning. As Knight, 2006 explains "not all professional knowings are explicit" (p.31). As well as accredited courses, CPD can be seen as arising from person scholarships, and normal working activities (Becher, 1999; Clegg, 2003). A crucial question then remains which is, how are the increasing external demands example of implementing the standards framework impact on this debate? The final challenge is on the crucial issue of academic identity. "...two academic tribes-those who prioritize research within their careers and those who tend to prioritize teaching" (Ramsden cited in Trigwell and Shale, 2004). The

issue of research teaching nexus disproportionate status, and research was traditionally more recognised and rewarded. Hopefully the new professional standards for teaching will change this conception and elevate the status for teaching. Another issue connected to academic identity is that of academics is that of their different 'community of practice' (Wenger, 1998). Due to this there potentially exists different discourses, understanding of CPD, CPD requirements, professional histories, priorities and approaches to teaching and learning.

Clegg (2003), advises we should continue to 'problematised ourselves' with regards to continuing professional development in HE. She recommends a shift to a focus on learning, then being inclusive across the institution so that everyone involved in student learning working together on common projects. A way forward could be in encouraging experienced academics to engage in teaching development projects such as collaborative research or peer learning (Boud, 1999, Warhurst, 2006) and attending pedagogical disciplinary conferences and undertaking teaching related sabbaticals. McKeachie (1997) explains that for older faculty, who are sometimes labelled as 'deadwood' because they seem to have lost motivation for teaching, it is necessary to build on self-perceived strengths. With the challenges facing higher education as highlighted in the beginning of this chapter, the older faculty often feel unappreciated and unsupported. For these faculty, any top-down imposed workshops or activities intended to improve teaching are likely to be perceived as a threat.

3.5 Challenges of current academic development provisions

One large study (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004), which looked longitudinally at trainee lecturers and their students in 22 universities in eight countries, reached four main conclusions; training can increase teachers' student focus, training can improve a number of aspects of teaching as judged by students (for example, organization, group interaction, rapport), and, most importantly training can change teachers such that their students improve their learning.

They concluded that centralized training programs provided a kind of 'alternative culture' that counter-balanced the negative influences of the departmental-level cultures that often go unchecked. Although the authors clearly claim that there is evidence of a range of positive changes, they also admitted that "we are still not in a position to demonstrate that it was the training that resulted in the positive changes,

not merely that those institutions that had training also had teachers that improved” (p.99).

The main criticisms of centralized graduate accredited programs are that the program is not congruent to those very new to teaching, challenges when initiatives are mandated top-down, have not taken into consideration academics’ allegiance to their specialization, and the important literature of harnessing community of practice.

3.5.1 Academics new to teaching

The issue of GCHE not being congruent with those new to teaching was mentioned earlier, when discussing the needs of academics very new to teaching. As Ho et al. (2001) explain, for new teachers faced with the demands of a new job, a GCHE that aims to introduce critical reflection and inquiry might be inappropriate. What they need most is support in terms of practical skills and strategies: basic pedagogical skills and strategies to ‘survive’ their first year or so. Being a participant in one such GCHE in a British university, I concur with this sentiment. The new academics tended to be more interested in ‘how’ things are done (such as preparing a lesson plan, tips for classroom management, motivating students, appropriate use of OHP and Powerpoints etc.), rather than ‘what’ and the ‘why’ issues. These skills were quite routine and mundane for the more experienced teachers, and the more critical kinds of enquiry mainly occurred amongst the more experienced academics.

“I believe it can be a mistake to encourage or require academics who are very new to teaching to take a GCHE” (Fraser, 2005, p157): the kind that tries to achieve critical enquiry in the area of teaching and learning in HE. What they (new academics) initially need are ‘survival’ tricks in order to gain confidence in their everyday teaching. Only after this period “will they be in a better cognitive space to engage in educational theories and understand the complexities of the discipline” (p. 162). Fraser (2005) recommends a preparation for teaching programme for new academics in line with university and departmental policies, with or without cross-disciplinary discussion. The participants for these teaching preparation programmes can vary (from full-time, part-time, graduate assistants or a mixture) and so can the time frame for such programmes. But the most critical aspects for teacher preparation programmes for new academics are:

- (1) they must be a compulsory component of probation for all new teachers new to academia

- (2) the rationale and aims of the programme must be made explicit to all participants and a clear linkage of the preparation program and the GCHE must be made.
- (3) after the completion of the preparation programme, new teachers must be given 12-18 months before they can enrol in a GCHE
- (4) the GCHE must also be explicitly linked to further courses of study such as diplomas, masters etc. in the discourse of teaching and learning in HE.

3.5.2 Compulsion

In countries like Norway and Sweden, initial training of HE teachers is already compulsory (Rust, 2000). Compulsory tertiary teacher development programs are also gaining momentum in the UK, following the recommendations of a White Paper report (DfES, 2003). However, Trowler and Bamber (2005) used the Norway experience of compulsory higher education teacher training to illustrate the numerous pitfalls in implementing such a policy. The paper concluded that due to the complex nature of HEIs, compulsory teacher training may not achieve all of its goals of enhancing teaching and learning, and that any policy of compulsory teacher training needs to be prioritized and aligned with other existing policies and structures. Compulsory teacher training in HE seems like a good idea, at least on the surface – the rationale being that trained teachers will be better teachers than untrained ones. However, such a blanket policy is littered with problems:

- 1) One major flaw with such a policy, claim Trowler and Bamber (2005), is that “seeing policy implementation as goal-oriented and logical is unrealistic” (p.80), due to numerous other institutional policies and practices that are concurrently at play.
- 2) There is a lack of a systematic explicit theory of change on which to anchor HE development policies, and thus an underestimation of the complexity of implementing and embedding such a change.
- 3) There is a lack of clear points or levels at which to aim teaching and learning enhancement interventions, whether for individual academics, institutions, disciplines or departments.

To ensure that a compulsory training policy in HEIs achieves its aims, it has to be guided by the following main guiding principles: a learning architecture, an enhancement culture, alignment of institutional priorities with policies, provision of appropriate resources and reward structures, explicit policy intentions, flexible

policies that fit with current practice and local context, synergistic embedding of the new policy with current existing policies, and a sound theory of change (Bamber, 2002). All these factors are even more crucial in a rapidly growing and evolving HE context such as the UAE.

Bamber's (2002), empirical research on the issue of compulsory training in UK HEI also revealed similar trends. This included a lack of management culture and practice to consistently implement this proposal; the merely rhetorical support from educational leadership; failing to prioritize the initiative amongst universities policy makers; the divided opinion about the value of the training in an environment with competing games; the power of departmental heads to support or hinder the policy; the way new academic staff approved of such initiatives in principle but lacked the time and sometimes enthusiasm to wholly commit to the process.

The Norwegian implementation of compulsory training revealed a number of lessons: (a) initial resistance to the imposed rules (b) slow implementation across the ten universities due to institutional inertia (d) controversy regarding the value of training in relation to the time invested (e) divided views amongst the different stake holders and (f) lack of clear evidence that compulsory training created cultural change (Trowler and Bamber, 2005).

3.5.3 Communities of practice (CoP) and professional learning

Membership of a community in HE is more normally related to subject or institution rather than to a profession of teaching claim Brown et al. (2002). This is partly due to the common practice of HEI teachers gaining their teaching knowledge and skills on the job as being part of a community of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term 'community of practice' or CoP as is commonly known in relation to their work on situated learning. They showed that the learning of members of community is situated (learning by being a part of a social context). 'Legitimate peripheral participation' is the process by which newcomers integrate and learn in occupational groups and by which 'old-timers' continue to learn. These teachers mainly learn informally and experientially, and to a lesser extent through formal university mechanisms such as courses or workshops.

HE teachers belong to various groups within the context of HE, such as their teaching teams, department, discipline and institution, and it is within these areas that "their working knowledge and identities as teachers develop" (p. 323). Therefore,

departmental or disciplinary based teaching development seem advantageous. Boud (1999), Knight and Trowler (2001) and Knight et al. (2006) have all proposed professional development in teaching within departments, thus harnessing the teachers' relevant community of practice.

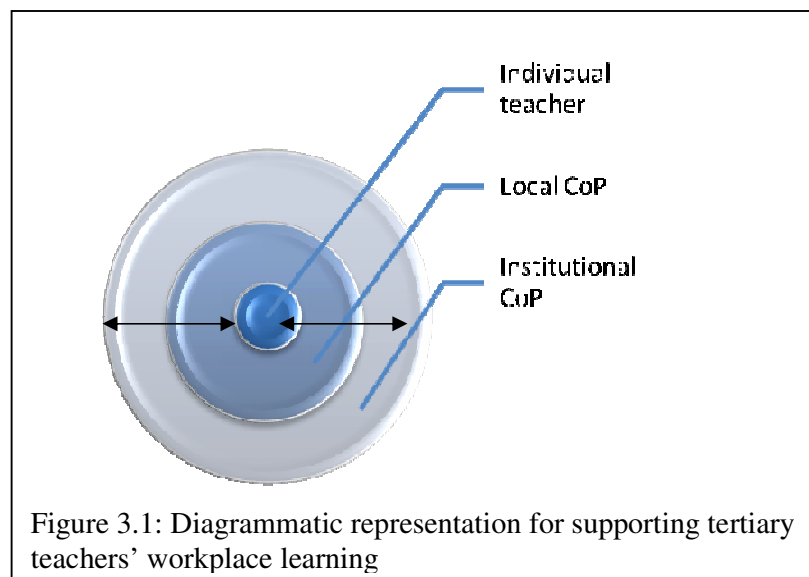
Professional learning and development lies at the heart of educational development work. Sharpe (2004) organizes professional learning into four sub-questions: What do they learn? How? Where? and When? Knight et al. (2006) added to this by asking the question: 'Why do professionals learn?' They envision professional learning as "an interplay between individual and their environments" (p. 320) as a result of situated social learning. Event-based educational professional development then should complement and work synergistically with situated social learning.

A large study commissioned by the Open University, headed by Peter Knight (2006), looked at the effects of post-graduate certificates in more than 20 UK universities. The aim of this research was to explore the academics' perceptions of the effectiveness of the program and an important issue not routinely analysed in research that looks into effectiveness of ASD programs, the influence of informal work-based learning compared with formal programs. Overall the respondents of the research reported a shift in their approach to teaching from being teacher to student focused, having more confidence, and commented on the positive benefits of social interaction with other academics offered by the programmes. Interestingly past participants tended to rate the programmes more highly than current participants of GCHE, suggesting a delayed appreciation of the impact of the programmes. However the participants also felt that learning on the job, their own experience as students, and non-formal workplace interactions with others were also highly influential on their development as teachers.

Educational development centers in most HEIs assist the individual practitioner to develop new knowledge in the area of teaching and learning, their emphasis on individual improvement rather than on process and institutional change will be unlikely to lead to organizational learning. The assumption here is that "institutional training policies to enhance teaching and learning mistakenly assume that interventions at one level automatically have repercussions at another" (Trowler and Bamber, 2005, p. 84). This kind of "methodological individualism" occurs due to under-theorizing the complexities of change and dissemination.

Viskovic (2006) drew on Wenger's (1998) situated learning and CoP theory to explore the informal learning environment, and used it as an alternative approach to supporting in-service tertiary teacher development. She proposes an integrated framework that links learning for the individual HE teacher, the local community of practice and the institutional community of practice.

Figure 3.1 below depicts an individual tertiary teacher located within a CoP (such as a department or teaching team) which is in turn is located within an institutional CoP. The double arrows indicate policies and activities that run across the three components, building a network of interactions. The advantage of utilizing such an approach, claims Viskovic (2006), is that teachers are already learning informally anyway through working in collegial groupings. The framework harnesses this so that institutions encourage change by working with what is there already. Another advantage is that it offers a whole institutional framework around teacher development (rather than just focus on an individual teacher).



Viskovic (2006) provides an alternative model for educational development where the focus is moved from the support of the individual teacher through normally generic activities such as formal courses in teaching and learning to supporting informal collaborative learning in work groups. With this framework in mind, developers could provide training for mentors, community level consultations, assist with departmental projects and research, and encourage 'border-crossing' opportunities amongst teachers of different CoP.

However Viskovic's (2006) proposal on workplace learning can be criticised for two main reasons. Knight et al. (2006) explains that, to evoke workplace learning a number of things have to happen: the creation of shared understandings and meanings; power-relationships within the CoP that encourage collegiality and participation; and appropriate procedures and practices. What Viskovic (2006) fails to explicitly address, however, is how individual tertiary teachers and institutions balance and reconcile this informal learning with more formal pedagogical knowledge.

3.5.4 Academic Identity

“..... the academic role is in flux” (Blackmore and Blackwell, 2003, p.19)

The issue of academic identity within academia has been elaborated by a number of authors (Jenkins, 1996; Blackmore and Blackwell, 2003; Clegg, 2003;) who highlighted the importance of aligning academic professional development and academic disciplines. Educational development initiatives and learning enhancement programs for academic faculty often fail to take into consideration the extent to which academic staff identify with their discipline when planning and developing teaching. As Jenkins (1996) puts it, “failing to recognize this will limit the effectiveness of any curricular or educational development project”.

As Becher (1989) shows, academics' first allegiance and loyalty is to their discipline and academic department, so the academic department remains a highly significant site of faculty learning about academic practice. Both Boud (1999) and Hicks (1999) among others have criticized the traditional centralized activity model of academic development, and called on a more disciplinary departmental integrative model of academic development, based on a theory of conceptual change which would more likely enhance pedagogical practice. This kind of academic development model still provides access to 'generic topics' but the main PD activities are based on the specific development needs of the department as well as encouraging the professional development of the individual academics. The academic development unit in this case would be flexible enough to focus on a specific department for restructuring, curriculum change and quality development, in consultation with heads of department and deans. This perspective highlights the need to recognize and respect the force of the disciplines in generating improvements in their own learning and teaching practices..

One of the biggest challenges for complex bodies such as HEIs trying to ‘professionalise’ academic roles, is the academics’ membership of and allegiance to their disciplinary areas (Blackmore and Blackwell, 2006). Becher asserts that academics’ primary allegiance is towards their “academic tribe”, their discipline, rather than towards their institution.

It is arguable that disciplines are the life blood of higher education: alongside academic institutions, they provide its main organizing base and its main social framework ... such disciplinary groups can usefully be regarded as academic tribes each with their own set of intellectual values and their own patch of cognitive territory ... Disciplinary cultures, in virtually all fields, transcend the institutional boundaries within any given system. In many, but not all, instances they also span national boundaries. (Becher, 1994, p.153)

McGettrick (2005) concluded that academics normally have stronger alliance to their disciplinary areas, rather than perceive themselves as belonging to a teaching profession. Despite the fact that most UK universities have HEA accredited courses, number of academics who have completed the programs remains low. (Ryan et al. 2005). The three main reasons cited by Dearn et al. (2000) for why academics do not engage in educational developments are their heavy teaching load, the few institutional incentives linked to educational development, the fact that GCHEs are not disciplinary specific. Another reason is that formal teaching courses in higher education are still being received by academics with much criticism and scepticism. Rowland et al.’s 1998 article ‘Turning academics into teachers’ clearly highlights this point: “we will not turn an academic historian into a history teacher merely by making her attend a course in teaching skills” (p.135). This quote clearly highly highlights the importance attached to the disciplinary discourse.

In order to ensure that GCHEs recognise and build on disciplinary teaching, it is imperative that educational developers “value and build on staff’s concerns for their discipline” (Jenkins, 1996, p.5, cited in Fraser, 2000). One way to do this is to provide the participant with a disciplinary mentor. Another way is to focus on activities such as teaching / assessment matters that the academic are currently involved in, for example, peer observation of teaching of already scheduled classes, reviewing assessment strategies of the courses that they are involved in, or interviewing their students about their learning.

Lueddeke's (2003) study concluded that both teaching conception and disciplinary orientation influence approaches to scholarship and strategies that enhance teaching scholarship. He explains that scholarship of teaching is more likely to occur if it is closely aligned to the conceptual structure and epistemology of the disciplinary area. The study concluded that, due to the epistemological and paradigmatic nature of most disciplines, to a large extent teachers of hard/pure or applied subjects such as mathematics are more likely to employ an ITTF (Information Transfer Teaching Focus) orientation to their teaching. On the other hand, teachers of soft/pure or applied subjects such as psychology are more likely to assume the more facilitative CCSF (Conceptual Change Student Focus) orientation. In addition, this CCSF group are more likely to be open to teaching innovation and learner centered practices. Lindblom-Ylänne et al. (2006) and Trigwell (2000) also found that approaches to teaching are affected by discipline and teaching context.

Faculty are more likely to accept a pedagogical intervention if it can be shown to work for a colleague in the same disciplinary area, and, second, that it is important not to separate pedagogical developments from the disciplinary contexts in which they are to be implemented (Jenkins, 1996; Healey, 2003)

3.5.5 Disciplinary expertise versus teaching expertise

A common assumption by academics that devalue teaching is the significance accorded to disciplinary content at the expense of scholarly teaching. The emphasis on the coverage of material on most HE courses makes them like a “marathon in which only the fittest survive” (Wiemer, 1997, p.57). Yet, this focus on content coverage can mean ignoring what students have actually learnt and whether they can actually apply this knowledge.

Shulman's (1986) ideas on ‘pedagogical content knowledge’, clearly conceives a teacher's knowledge as comprising both content knowledge (theories, principles, and concepts of the discipline) and pedagogical knowledge. Pedagogical content knowledge thus “goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching” (Shulman 1986, p.9, quoted in Major and Palmer, 2006). Acquiring pedagogical content knowledge and developing methods different from those the teachers experienced themselves as students requires “learning opportunities from teachers that are more powerful than simply reading and talking about new pedagogical ideas” (Major and Palmer, 2006, p.621).

Smith (2001) similarly comments that “most faculty are experts in the scholarship of their discipline but only novices or advanced beginner stage in their development as scholars of teaching” (p.75)

3.5.6 Teaching as a set of tips and skills

A common idea that has arisen in the research literature, especially with HEI faculty, is that teaching excellence is synonymous with technique. This conception of teaching as skill-based is insufficient. When teaching is seen largely as a craft acquired as a set of skills and techniques, then learning on the job and the apprentice model seem appropriate. On the other hand, if teaching is seen as more of an art, a way of being and thinking, involving complex relationships between the learners and the facilitator, then this understanding requires more complex engagement than the wisdom of practice.

This is not, however, to denigrate teaching skills. As McKeachie (1997) explains, basic teaching skills such as lecturing, leading discussions and assessing students are essential, especially to a beginning faculty. However, as faculty ‘mature’ there should be less emphasis on skills and more consideration of the aims of higher education and knowledge about the nature of teaching and learning

Knowledge and skill are helpful but they are not sufficient. The effective teacher needs not only to know how (skill) and what (basic knowledge) but also to know when (strategic knowledge). (McKeachie, 1997, p.68)

The problem of conceiving a teacher as being only a collection of methods or tricks is that when methods fail to engage students, the difficulty tends to be viewed as at best ‘not having the right technique’ or at worse ‘it’s the students’ fault they are not learning’. As Biggs’ (2003) model of teaching highlighted earlier, this level 1 conception of teaching (focusing on what the teacher does, and blaming the student for lack of learning) is not likely to result in students’ utilizing deep learning strategies.

Weimer (1997) explains that one of the main assumptions of HE that explicitly or implicitly devalues teaching is the idea that teaching in HE requires no initial training or CPD. The unwillingness of many HE instructors to base their teaching on relevant research and scholarship, specifically educational research, clearly indicates this. “The very concept of a scholarship of pedagogy, is still very unfamiliar to many university teachers” (Baume, 1997, p.4).

3.5.7 ‘Wisdom of practice’

McGettrick (2005) has questioned whether current ways of learning on the job (experiential knowledge) are sufficient to produce the kinds of skills and values listed above for professionals in HE teaching. Professional learning includes both experiential knowledge and reflective practice (REF). What we know about teaching and learning can be derived from various kinds of knowledge, such as that derived from empirical research work, knowledge from theoretical constructs and frameworks, as well as knowledge that is experiential. Weimer (2001) calls the knowledge gained from experience the “wisdom of practice”.

Faculty learn how to teach by teaching. They learn important and valuable lessons; hence, what they learn may be correctly called the *wisdom* of practice. And yet, despite its pervasiveness, little has been written about the wisdom of practice and the largely intuitive and experiential understanding it brings of how students learn and how instructional policies, practices, and behaviours influence those learning outcomes. (Weimer, 2001, pp. 45).

The biggest controversy in this debate is that most academics have at least two degrees, if not more, and are thus skilled at lifelong learning (learning from life, learning for life and learning throughout life). This being the case, the question would be whether they need to undertake yet another credential for teaching if, through their learning from experience, their teaching skills will improve anyway.

However, unsystematic, unplanned ‘training’ for teaching is insufficient both for generating appropriate pedagogical knowledge, and also for applying it beneficially in actual classroom practice. According to Hativa (2002), for example, “this type of training-on-the job with virtually no supervision and without input from peers can cause misconceptions regarding both students and teaching, and can lead to maladjusted instruction” (p.29).

What, then, is the nature, role and problems of experiential ‘wisdom of practice’ knowledge? According to Weimer (2001, p.45), “Experiential knowledge influences pedagogical thought and action in some less-than-desirable ways”. With time, teachers learn from their mistakes and adjust. But this kind of experiential learning is quite intuitive: “feelings in our guts dictate what we do and don’t do in the classroom” (p.46). The result of this is that most teachers are unable to be explicit about their theoretical frameworks or articulate their instructional choices in terms of

empirical educational research: 'I've tried this and I know it works' seems to be the premise underlying most academics' educational frameworks.

Smith (2001) claims that experienced teachers can sometimes be stuck in a 'rut' and become resistant to new ways of doing things and might even disengage from their courses and classes. He claims that "they do not reinvest the extra time they have gained from the experiencein teaching or in the scholarship of teaching", most he claims dedicate their time to disciplinary research. I would partly concur with this statement, however rather than place the blame firmly with the academics, the promotions and reward structures in many HE have greatly contributed to downplaying the teaching role.

Weimer (2001) considers three main problems with this kind of experiential knowledge base for teaching and learning. The first problem is that this 'wisdom of practice' exists without a theoretical or conceptual framework. A second problem with this kind of experiential knowledge is that it is not well connected to empirical outcomes. 'I've tried this and I know it works' is the premise underlying most academics' educational frameworks. There is some obvious benefit of these pedagogical practical techniques, but the real contention lies with the intuitive, non-reflective and often uninformed knowledge base on which they rest. Unfortunately most disciplinary publications and individual academics are not well informed about educational research; probably because, as mentioned previously, teaching and learning tends to be trivialized, and because the assumption that 'if you know it you can teach it' still exists in academia.

The third problem concerned with the 'wisdom of practice' is that it "generally ignores the peculiarities of fit" (Weimer, 2001, p. 49). How does an individual faculty decide what strategy, practices or techniques to use in different contexts?. It is not my intention here to discredit the 'wisdom of practice' or intuitive learning, which, as Weimer says (p.49), is a "legitimate way of knowing". Rather, I want to agree that "there are problems when so much of the knowledge base exists at this level" (p.49):

we do not deny the fact that important parts of teaching, like any other skill, must be learned and honed in the process of doing them. You cannot learn to teach effectively if all you ever do is read books about how to teach any more than you can learn to play the piano or paint a picture by listening to lectures. But it is equally counterproductive to try to learn all you need to know about teaching as you teach " (Weimer, 2001, p.52)

The result of this experiential intuitive knowledge, claims Weimer (2001), is that most teachers are unable to be explicit about their theoretical frameworks or articulate their practice in terms of empirical educational research about their instructional choices.

3.6 Challenges in professionalisation teaching in the UAE HE sector.

This last part of the literature reviews details the tension and challenges involved in the provision of educational development initiatives and hence professionalisation of teaching in the UAE HE sector. It is important to highlight the unique challenges that exist in this emerging HE sector. Regarding HE in the UAE, with such a large transient expatriate academic community, a shrinking HE budget in the UAE tertiary sector and a pragmatic view of the role of higher education, the most important question for the federally funded institutions is determining the returns from professional development initiatives for both the institution and the UAE HE sector in general.

The challenges and tensions regarding professionalisation and academic development in the UAE can be categorized into five key areas:

- 1) Casualization of academic workforce
- 2) National and institutional contexts for teaching development
- 3) Nationalization and expatriation
- 4) Approaches to teaching in cross-cultural environment
- 5) EFL and ICT emphasis

3.6.1 Casualisation of the academic workforce

The UAE is rather different to the UK and other developed countries where there has been an expansion in the number of part-time academics, ranging from one-third up to a half of all academic teaching staff (Husbands, 1998; Watters and Weeks, 1999; Husbands and Davies, 2000). The growing trend for employing this flexible and non-permanent academic labour force allows HEIs to cope with reduced government funding, the massification of student numbers, and the research time afforded to full-time academics (Blackwell et al. 2001; Anderson 2007). This development has not been without its numerous challenges, the main two concerning employment rights and developmental opportunities. The NCHI (1997) report

severely criticized UK HEIs for their reliance on part-time academics and their lack of educational development support, which could ultimately impact on student learning. Recent research on part-time academics has demonstrated the need to balance the flexibility afforded by this group of workers with the need to provide basic employment and development rights. Anderson (2007), for example, recommends that some PD activities (workshops and conferences) be scheduled to allow part-time academics to attend, and Blackwell and Channel (2001) describe how ‘teaching circles’ can be used as a teaching developmental activity for part-time teachers.

Mercer (2005) claims that CPD (continuing professional development) is paradoxical in the UAE HE environment because the institutions have the funds to employ the ‘best’ teachers and the “legal right to dismiss any of them for any reason” (p.273). Policies set to ensure that the students get the ‘best’ teachers negate the whole concept that “people are an institution’s most precious resource and need to be developed at every opportunity”(p.273). The assumption here is that this ‘hire-fire’ policy removes the necessity for staff development.

As Mercer (2005) succinctly explains, there is a paradox in CPD in the UAE HE sector, due to the constraints of the contractual agreements of academics. Her study concludes that the academic employment features of the UAE HE sector “present a considerable challenge to the popular notion that people are an institution’s most precious resource and need to be developed at every opportunity” (p.273). Thus, in the UAE HE sector there exists a new kind of casualization of the academic workforce not seen elsewhere, in that the academics are full-time teachers, but are subject to very different kinds of social, political and national value systems than they would be in their native country.

3.6.2 National agenda and institutional contexts

This tension links very closely to the issue of the casualization of the academic workforce mentioned above. The national agenda for higher education, as discussed in chapter 2, is to ensure that *Emaratis* have sufficient skills to enter the workforce – to ensure ‘Emiritization’.

In the race of globalization and consumerism, UAE HE has implemented highly prescriptive programs of study in line with the labour market’s demands. This is due to the rapidly growing UAE economy, where employers cannot patiently wait for new graduates to mature and develop. Mission statements for the federal HEIs clearly

indicate this, by outlining the expectation that graduates should be prepared to operate in English in the global economy and participate in the continued development of the UAE. However, an issue not clearly articulated in UAE HEIs' missions and visions, is that of academics maintaining their standards of both teaching and research.

Land (2001), has revealed that academic development approaches are influenced to great extent by institutional culture. Institutional cultures include factors such as: type of institution, leadership and management style, mission of institution, history of institution, source of income, staff and student profile and institutional structures. Academic development similarly is about assisting social and group learning in an HE organizational setting. The literature on organizational learning emphasizes the need for organization to provide a conducive environment where individuals can reflect and learn and this ultimately will enable the institution to develop (Blackmore and Blackwell, 2006). Academic development needs to be systematically embedded within institutions' decision-making processes if it's going to meet the challenges facing HE today. A whole institution approach to educational development would synergistically link key institutional policies with appropriate institutional structures and practices to achieve the institution's aims (D'Andrea and Goosling (2001),

In the UAE federal HE sector, however, most of the above factors are externally driven by the governments' main agenda of preparing the future workforce. Therefore, there is a high degree of uncertainty as to how any process of 'professionalisation' of teaching could be formalized within a higher education culture that has a specific mandate to prepare the future workforce of a rapidly developing nation, which includes employing teachers who are the perceived 'finished product', rather than developing them professionally.

At the same time, the institution's goal is to ensure that a quality education is provided to the students. Most HE public institutions in the UAE have detailed quality assurance systems a key part of which concerns teaching quality. As candidates for the UAE HE sector, academics are required to prove their teaching competency in the interview process and later on through referees. During the probation year, teachers are frequently observed in their classroom, albeit through what I call 'snap-shot' sessions. More experienced teachers have a yearly review and student evaluations. If this system is as efficient as policy makers claim it to be, then it negates the whole issue of formal training and systematic CPD. However there is a huge variation in the

nature of these QA systems across institutions, or even within the same institution in different departments. In some institutions it is highly developed and effective, while in others it is mere rhetoric. Any lengthy teaching and learning course would be perceived as an extra burden by faculty who have many other tasks, such as administrative duties, academic leadership (course coordinators, programs chairs etc.) and subject-specific professional development.

As mentioned in chapter 2, there is a history of minimal state intervention in federally funded higher education. There are no external national quality systems and no serious financial pressures requiring higher education institutions to demonstrate value for money or the quality of their education processes. This is probably due to the fact that the country is still in the capacity-building stage, and thus the key quality audit criterion for most institutions is to produce employable *Emaratis*. There seems to be less of a requirement to ensure that the expensive expatriate academic staff they employ are actually competent teachers and that development processes are in place to ensure teaching excellence.

The case institution has in place a system of program quality assurance (PQA), that states that the primary emphasis of the quality system is the “quality of student learning outcomes and experience” (Case institution, PQA document). The institution’s PQA program is implemented at the level of academic program teams, which are required to demonstrate the quality of their work through keeping evidence of teaching, learning, employment satisfaction etc. The teams’ activities are then reported annually to a quality assurance committee through a written report. As will be elaborated later chapters , a huge number of sessions are provided to faculty to ensure that they understand the requirements of the PQA system and the data that they need to collect for this exercise.

Biggs (2001) argues that quality in higher education can be divided into two main areas: retrospective QA (quality as value for money), and prospective QA (quality as ‘fitness for purpose’ of the institution and quality as ‘transforming’ Prospective QA is concerned with the present and the future quality of teaching and how this fits in with the purpose of the institution. Biggs (2001) also coined the term ‘quality enhancement’, which is about getting academics to teach better. According to Gosling and D’Andrea (2001) enhancement of student learning is more likely to occur when quality assurance systems are closely linked to educational/academic

development. They therefore propose a more holistic model (figure 3.2), which takes into account these challenges and contexts. The model proposed provides a crucial linkage across a range of institutional strategies which would lead to more effective, systematic, and long term educational development initiatives across the institutions. This model proposes to take a holistic view of educational provision by ensuring that development, implementation and evaluation processes are informed by the process of curriculum development and the current discourse of teaching and learning in higher education. A key implication of the proposed model is that any initiative must have faculty involvement, approval and commitment.

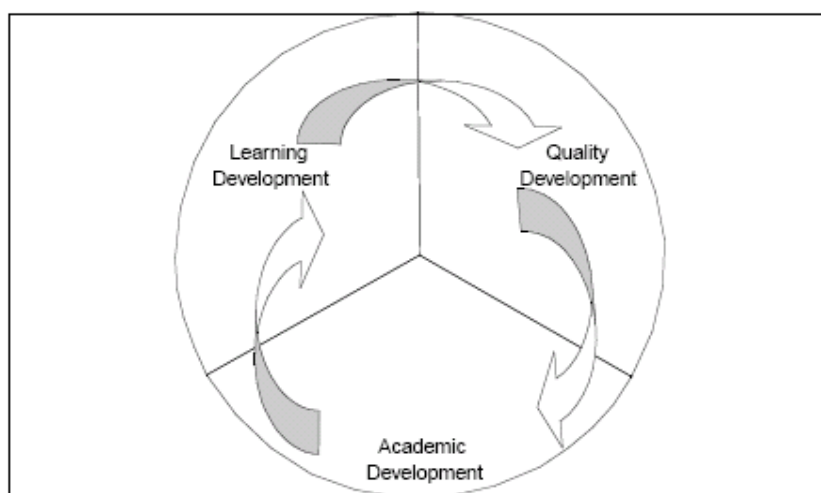


Figure 3.2 : Holistic educational development model
Source: Gosling & D'Andrea, 2001

3.6.3 Nationalisation and expatriation

Richardson and Zikic (2007) comment on the increasing trend of international mobility in academic careers in their article, 'the darker side of an international academic career'. The overarching theme of this paper is the issue of 'transience and risk' associated with academic expatriation. Academic migration they claim has occurred mainly due to the rapid demand for education in many countries, and hence a global demand for academics; the use of English as an international language; and the wish to escape the perceived deteriorating working conditions in their home countries.

Richardson and Zikic (2007) and Richardson and McKenna (2001) explain that defining what an expatriate academic is is a complex process involving many variables and should be approached with caution. They define expatriate academics as “professors and non-professional staff, the latter only as [they are] part of the research and teaching profession” (p.42). They define the ‘academic expatriate as individuals who are living outside their country of domicile in a ‘host’ country for a period longer than one year but less than ten years. This is a useful definition, although in countries such as the UAE and other Gulf countries the time frame for the expatriate definition is not applicable due to the legal-political issues of not granting ‘visitors’ citizenship status or even indefinite permits to stay. All foreign workers in the UAE are granted temporary ‘work visas’ renewable every 3 years.

Richardson and Zikic’s (2007) study concluded that being an expatriate academic had both negative and positive dimensions. The negative aspect of being an academic expatriate included two main factors: the transient nature of the position in the host institution, and the element of risk associated with taking an overseas appointment. The inherent transience of the expatriate academics had the following implications: difficulty of forming new social network in the host country (with both fellow expatriates and host nationals) and the combined loss of familiar social relationships from their home countries.

In Richardson and McKenna’s (2001) study, a number of academics described their experience as ‘outsiders’. This was especially more pronounced for expatriate academics in non-western countries such as Turkey, Singapore and the UAE. It created a tendency for some expatriates to ‘stick together’. This feeling of ‘outsiderness’ is even more pronounced for participants from another culture who were on temporary work visas and had virtually no prospect of becoming a citizen. Mercer (2005) claims that this system of sponsorship can be subject to exploitation by unscrupulous employers with the power to “terminate their services foreign workers) at any time, for any reason, with virtually no legal redress” (p.275). According to the UAE labour law, trade unions are not permitted, and thus “academics working in the public sector, despite their high salaries, have no job security” (Mercer, 2005, p.275).

Analysis suggested that for participants in Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Singapore, the combined effects of outsiderness and transience had a detrimental effect on their willingness or ability to form friendships with locals” (Richardson and Zikic, 2007, p.174).

The issue of risk was connected to the fear of the academics' value of their experience not being recognised and rewarded in the academic marketplace, once back in their own home countries (this was especially more pertinent in the young and mid-career group), and an important one which is very relevant in the UAE expatriate academics is the issue of insecure employment. A number of my participants claimed that they feared that they were in a precarious environment where losing their job would force them to leave the country altogether and uproot their entire family. One participant compared this fear to a 'dark cloud hanging over their head'. Richardson and McKenna (2001) used the metaphor of the 'tight-rope walker' to describe the expatriates who perceived themselves as being in a precarious position; that is, any mistake (inside or outside their work) would see them 'plummet' to the ground, marking the end of their careers in the host country and their departure. Many of my expatriate academic respondents mentioned this fear, and felt that they did not want to 'rock the boat' for fear of being told to 'get the first flight back home'

Nationalisation of the academic workforce is also a problem in the UAE HE sector. The planning, establishment of human resource development, of the higher education systems and indigenisation of the workforce for the country have been placed firmly in the hands of expatriates brought in as advisors and consultants. The paradoxical result of this approach is that it has brought with it a myriad of challenges. Al-Dosary (2004), in his article about human resource development in the context of Saudi Arabia, describes similar dilemmas as in the UAE regarding the paradox of relying on a foreign labour force:

Of course there is always the option of buying in the needed manpower skills but that option is not conducive to developing the national human resources. In fact, there is no need for training or development of the national human resources as long as one is able to 'buy in' expertise at the right level; however, that leaves the country and its development plans vulnerable to mistakes in the purchasing. (p. 124)

Academic development, as Knapper (2000) comments, exists within a social, political and cultural context, and hence is subject to the politics of power, influence and resources. Power in HEIs lies with three major players: management, academic staff, and the government agencies who fund them. Within the UAE HE sector, the 'power struggle' between the various stakeholders, the government, expatriate experienced academics, minority Emarati academics and institutional goals and mandates, will greatly impact and influence any academic development initiatives.

UAE HEIs, like other universities elsewhere, have a management structure with senior administrators such as vice-chancellors and deans setting institutional priorities and allotting budgets. In the UAE, however, senior management are not normally drawn from the ranks of faculty for a limited term of office, but appointed for specific management posts for a prescribed contractual term. That is, HE management processes and systems in the UAE are more similar to a business model.. Mercer (2007), criticizes the UAE HE system as ‘managerial’ (p.20), with little or no power accorded to academic staff, who are insecurely employed.

3.6.4 Teaching in a cross-cultural environment

There has been tremendous growth in the literature of teaching and learning in higher education in the last decade. Work on effective teaching in higher education, student learning and the scholarship of teaching have significantly influenced the research, practice and policies of academic development. Research has also indicated the link between teachers’ pedagogical conceptions and student approaches to learning. Consequently, the academic literature emphasizes the need for training to lead to conceptual change in lecturers since such change has been linked to valuable changes in learning approaches in students. (Biggs, 1979; Ramsden, 1996; Gibbs, 1996, 19998; Entwistle 19998; Prosser and Trigwell, 2001)

A lot of this work has its origins from the phenomenology work of Marton and Sajlo concepts of deep and surface learning. The deep approach is generally associated with higher cognitive learning and motivation to understand and apply information, while the ‘surface’ approach tends to involve memorization of facts and regurgitation of information with little or no understanding. A deep approach to learning is linked to higher quality learning outcomes such as better conceptual knowledge, development of problem solving skills and greater understanding of content. Therefore, both theory and research clearly suggest a clear relationship between teaching and learning. It is the behaviour of lecturers and course design that can either enhance or impede ‘deep’ learning rather than inherent student characteristics. Academics’ conception of or approach towards teaching can lead to a corresponding behaviour in their students. Teachers who adopt transmission-oriented approaches have students who adopt surface approaches to their learning, while teachers who adopt conceptual-changes approaches have students who report deep approaches to their learning.

Regarding UAE HE, the question remains whether these conceptions of teaching and learning are directly applicable to non-western cultures, or rather 'western'. In UAE education, Islamic influences are evident in several important ways, all of which may lead to conceptions of teaching and learning different from those prevalent in Western universities and colleges, thereby implying different educational values and practices. This obviously must affect the goals and methods of teaching and learning and teaching development initiatives.

Western tertiary educators in the UAE often emerge with what Biggs (2003) calls a 'misperception' of the Emarati learner as an extrinsically motivated, passive, surface rote-learner. A common comment amongst my research participants was that *Emirati* students are not the sophisticated learners as you would encounter in colleges and universities in the West. The lack of reliable current literature on the Arab learners, particularly *Emirati* HE students makes it harder to challenge this Western conception. Rugh (2002), in his analysis of Arab education, expresses a similar view, again without the benefit of research evidence, that pedagogy in most Arab schools and universities is typically based more on rote-learning than it is on critical thinking, problem solving skills, analysis and synthesis of information. Richardson (2004) claims that due to the influence of Arab-Islamic culture, reflective practice is inappropriate for such students.

The literature on student approaches to learning and teachers' conceptions of teaching has formed the basis for educational development initiatives. As Ho (2000) succinctly put it.

Recent studies into lecturers' conceptions of teaching have raised staff developers' awareness of the role conception of teaching plays in the quality of teaching and learning. More and more educationalists begin to advocate that staff development activities should embrace designs for bringing about conceptual change. (p.35)

This literature on teaching and learning is commonly based on Western conceptions of teaching. Gosling (2003), notes that, at first glance, the literature on academic development appears to be noncommittal and neutral, but that on closer examination it is laden with values, ethics and cultural empiricism. The deep/surface metaphor has "become a canon for educational development" (Webb, 1997, p.195). He laments that it is as if the deep/surface learning metaphor has provided staff developers with "a theory to support their deepest prejudices and common-sense

opinions, and thus seek to cherish and protect it” (p. 86). However, I would partly disagree with this opinion, in that this is primarily caused by lack of theorizing and relevant research into non-Western cultures.

This lack of theorizing, available research and funding government lack of intervention has resulted in the current practice of academics in the UAE HE sector. There is an emphasis on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in favour of the discourse of teaching and learning in HE in general.

3.6.5 EFL & ICT

Teaching support/development programmes in local tertiary institutions in the UAE typically take the form of short workshops on particular skills, discrete PD sessions on specific topics, and IT training, and PD on second language acquisition, normally within the institution. For example in the case institutions all ‘new’ faculty were required to take CLASS (Course in Language Awareness for Subject Specialists), an in-house developed induction program, where teachers are made aware of learning in a second language and the challenges that this brings. Knight et al. (2006) explain that event delivery kind of educational professional development (such as conferences, workshops, short courses etc.) may result in learning, but the long term changes associated with this kind of learning are tenuous due to its decontextualized and piecemeal nature.

Higher education systems in the Arab-Gulf countries “were set up in imitation of foreign models and with expatriate staff and were, and still are largely led by academics and administrators educated abroad.” (Shaw, 1993, p.36). Findlow (2006) cites a number of positive advantages of bilingual education. Among these are culture tolerance and increased meta-cognition. However, she claims these benefits do not necessarily outweigh the challenges for students: “not only do non-native speakers have an additional workload, but the assessment playing field is hardly equal either” (p.21). Although not publicly acknowledged, the attrition rate is very high in the newer UAE English language HEIs, and in most of these cases language difficulty is cited as the main cause. In addition to this, in the newer HEIs, English as the medium of instruction has also played a huge role in sluggish Emiritization of the academic

workforce. However, UAE HE policy makers claim that English as a medium of instruction is crucial if the HE graduates are to participate in the knowledge economy. Findow (2006) poses an interesting question:

How far should the requirement for native Arabic speakers to pursue their higher studies in the English language be seen as an inevitable response to market needs, and how far a symptom of neo-colonialist power politics in which Arabic is relegated as non-useful, and Arab culture is cast as 'other' (p.22)

This pragmatic linguistic decision, imposed by economic forces, has major implications for nationalizing the academic workforce and the resulting power-imbalance. One of the most important reasons for nationalization of staffing in HE is that local culture and identity can be supported. Shaw (1993) cautions about the need to have a balanced indigenisation of the HE curriculum to discontinue what he terms the 'recolonising of the mind' .

IT professional development features heavily in UAE HE sector, although Webb and Murphy (2000) warn institutions against an emphasis on technology for academic development.

Those that take a purely technological route, transforming themselves into educational multi-media development units, run the risk of harnessing themselves to transient technologies and losing their key skills and worth, including the ability to help staff in the analysis, design and development of effective learning environments. (Webb and Murphy, 2000, p.25)

Webb and Murphy (2000) highlight the following inappropriate strategic staff development. First, heavily investing in infrastructure without the appropriate discourse of university teaching. Institutions commonly over-invest in expensive infrastructure at the expense of staff development. One of the reasons for this is that "staff development is ... less expensive but also less tangible and observable" (p.25). This temptation to invest in things that can be seen rather than people, overlooks a crucial link, which is that it is the staff who will ultimately directly impact the learning experience of the students. Second, it is inappropriate to over-emphasise IT training for academics in such things as software usage and over-invest in multimedia centres. This can lead to "technology driven solutions not suited to the needs of universities" (Webb and Murphy, 2000, p.27). Instead, academic development should be about combining teaching support and flexible learning with the appropriate use of media.

At the same time, it seems clear that the impact of technology in teaching and learning is likely to grow. Students of the 21st century require and expect their courses to integrate appropriate educational media. Teachers whose teaching conception is teacher-centered with an emphasis on acquisition of facts by students are likely to use educational media inappropriately; for example, recording lectures and using knowledge-based assessment. Educational media will only facilitate learning when there is a changed conception of teaching from teacher-centred to student-centred.

3.7 Summary

The discipline of teaching and learning in higher education was under-recognized just a few decades ago, and academics taught with meagre formal professional development in the area of teaching and learning in higher education and without formal qualifications in this area. Due to the changing context of higher education (massification, advent of technology, increased accountability, increased student diversity and internationalization), the quality of teaching in higher education is being increasingly placed under intense scrutiny, and HEIs are being required to improve and account for this. Increased pressure is put on tertiary institutions around the world, not just due to increased student numbers but changes in finance, structure, purpose, confines, technologies, the amount of available knowledge and the teaching by academic staff. The push for more student-centered approaches to teaching (Ramsden, 1992; Prosser and Trigwell, 1999; Biggs, 2003.); moves to value teaching as a scholarly activity (Boyer, 1990). These changing contexts and subsequent pressures has made it imperative that the sector and national governments commence the urgent task of the professionalisation of university teaching.

There are a growing number of higher education teaching qualifications, many of them accredited by the newly formed HEA. However, the current models of centralized generic professional development models are not without major criticisms, including the issues of compulsion, disciplinary recognitions, integrating professional learning within centralized provisions, and assumptions that devalue teaching in academia. These remain some of the biggest current challenges in academic development. Any professionalisation and accreditation scheme would need to take into consideration the academics' career path, the various disciplines that academics work in, and the huge diversity of PD needs of academics in different stages of their career (Blackmore and Blackwell, 2006)

The UAE HE sector has been sluggish in the need to critically evaluate the quality of teaching in its institutions and implement any systematic accredited programs for teaching, mainly due to the practice of employing experienced western academics and the urgent necessity for the country to prepare its workforce to participate in the rapid development of the country. In order to professionalise teaching the UAE HE sector is faced with some unique challenges not encountered in more mature HE systems. These include challenges such as cross-cultural teaching, nationalisation and expatriation, and national and institutional goals which might be incongruent with the concept of developing teachers for their teaching roles. Therefore, any academic development initiatives in the UAE have to recognize all these challenges and take into consideration the context in which development occurs.

D'Andrea and Gosling (2001) have likened the academic development terrain as a complex "join-the-dots puzzle, in which there are many dots representing threats and opportunities, tensions and alliance, a multiplicity of strategies and policies, interests and rivalries" (p. 65). In the UAE HE sector, the puzzle is even more 'dotted' and is as yet unconnected; that is, the picture remains obscure and confusing. Consequently, the future policies and politics of the UAE HE sector can create opportunities to reconceptualise the role of educational development in order to provide a framework to enable the 'dots in the puzzle' to be joined in a contextually appropriate and coherent manner to advance the professionalisation of teaching in the UAE HE sector.

Chapter 4: Methodological considerations

4.1 Introduction

Research into Higher education is a relatively new field of inquiry (Tight, 2003), and recently there has been an upsurge of published research on numerous aspects of higher education. This has been partly due to the changing context of HE in developed countries, where all HE institutions have to account for the quality of their educational output. This trend, claims Tight (2003), is likely to increase in the future in an effort to further understand the HE sector and feed into future policies concerning all aspects of higher education. Researching educational development specifically is an even more recent phenomenon (Macdonald, 2003). This research has predominantly been on student learning, along with a modest literature into teaching support to improve student learning.

Pedagogic research in HE, explain Stierer and Antoniou (2004), provides an opportunity for academics to combine educational research methodologies with those of their discipline, due to the fact that much pedagogic research in UK HE is carried out by practitioners with a disciplinary and research background other than educationists.

The purpose of chapter is to describe the research design, methodological consideration and subsequent analysis procedure to answer my research questions. 'Methodology' in this study is understood as a social process which involves philosophical issues, research design, data collection, theorizing as well as the ethics and trustworthiness of the research. 'Research method' refers to the instruments or tools used by the researcher to gather empirical evidence, including specific techniques such as questionnaires and interviews. Issues discussed in this chapter include the rationale for the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in this study; the issue of making the research more public; the way data was collected and analysed; and the ethics and trustworthiness of the research.

Basically, this study falls under the umbrella of ethnomethodology, in that it seeks to examine the ways in which people make sense of their everyday world. More specifically, it is directed at the mechanisms by which participants "achieve and sustain interaction in a social encounter - including the assumptions they make, the conversations they utilize and the practices they adopt" (Cohen et al. 2004 p.24).

The main purpose is to systematically study the methods, practices and perceptions of academic development in the case institution. This is to understand the mutually shared social order in which the academic faculty live, and their perceptions of these practices.

With respect to the research questions fully stated in pages 16 and 17, questions 2 and 3 try to determine the provision of professional development in the area of teaching and learning in the case institution, and the experience and interpretation of such institutional provision. Question 1 tries to determine the attitudes of the academics towards professionalizing teaching, while question 4 looks at the perceptions of academics and academics' managers about implementing a systematic teaching and learning program in the case institution. The methodological decision for this study was to use a 'hybrid approach' (Bryman, 2001), which employed both a questionnaire survey and interviews (semi-structured and focus groups). The quantitative survey aimed to identify the overall provision of specific teaching and learning development provisions and the perceived needs of the academics, while the interview data aimed to delve deeper to ascertain the underlying rationale for the current level of provision.

Another motivation for utilizing a mixed approach was that it would provide me with data to validate the study, which might have been more difficult if using only one method. Research methods, whether qualitative or quantitative, have their strengths and weaknesses. It is rather a question of 'fitness for purpose', whereby methods must be chosen to match the objectives of the research. Sometimes quantitative outcome-oriented information is more effective; and other times qualitative process-oriented outcome information is more effective.

4.2 Research Philosophy

A major omission in Tight's (2003) book 'Researching Higher Education' is a discussion of how HE research involves fundamental issues of 'research philosophy' or 'research paradigms'. A research philosophy or paradigm is a belief about the way in which data about a phenomenon should be gathered, employed and used. A paradigm is one aspect of a researcher's philosophical stance, and is defined as a cluster of beliefs which influence what should be studied, how it should be studied

and how the results are to be interpreted. It is “a way of categorizing a body of complex belief and world view” (Blaxter et al., 2001; p.60).

The philosophical stance on which my study is based concerns questions such as what kind of knowledge I am trying to get access to, and whether the knowledge objective is capable of being transmitted in tangible form (positivism), whether it is socially constructed, or based on experience and insight of an essentially personal nature (interpretive). Webb (1996) defines ‘positivism’ as “a view of the world which seeks to base knowledge on rational, logical and empirically verifiable knowledge” (p.10). If this kind of ‘positive knowledge’ is obtainable, it can aid in the search for truth. In this case, any academic/faculty development initiative can be viewed as a science for the improvement of its clients (academics) according to a recognized ‘gold standard’. In contrast, interpretivists such as Gosling (2003) argue that academic development is never in a position to deal in absolutes, to provide the final truth, or to “describe an entirely objective reality” (p.77). In any discussion of academic/educational development activities Gosling reiterates that the best that can be achieved is to stimulate a discussion in which we can attempt to relay a more-or-less convincing story about what is happening or what could happen.

D’Andrea and Gosling (2001), in attempting to conceptualize educational development, have criticised the orientation where the educational developer is seen as an expert on ‘best-practice’ due to its assumption that there is an ‘ideal’ approach to development which is “fixed and known and needs only to be broadcast, disseminated or transmitted to other less-enlightened staff” (p.69). An important question to ask is whether the role of an academic/faculty developer is to be merely a ‘trainer’ in the skills of teaching. This generic view of academic development, based on the ‘craft’ or skill of teaching, comes with its own epistemological assumptions: that ‘training in specific skills’ of teaching to reach certain competency levels characterizes ‘professionalism in teaching in HE’. On the other hand, academic development can be seen from a ‘critical interdisciplinary perspective’ (Rowland, 2003; p.17), which views learning as it relates to the wider context of disciplines and society as a whole. Its ontological perspective views academic development as multi-faceted, theoretical and practical, and subject to multiple-interpretations due to its inter-disciplinary nature. D’Allba (2005), concurs with this view. She argues that the main aim of courses in higher education teaching is more than the exposure to new ideas and strategies relating to teaching. Its ultimate goal is to transform and enhance

the ways of being a HE teacher. Therefore, for the researcher in this area, not only is epistemology (the theory of knowing) important, but also ontology (the theory of being).

Researchers need to be sure that the methodologies and procedures they use are compatible with their ontological positions, providing justifications that the procedures collect data legitimately and validly in order to answer the questions the researcher seeks to answer (Opie, 2004). One of the methods I used was a questionnaire for academics, so I need to justify the use of a questionnaire within a predominantly interpretivist/qualitative paradigm. Proponents of this paradigm would argue that quantification in the use of a structured questionnaire implies taking a stance that the very bases of knowledge are purely objective and human perceptions have no place. However, this notion of categorizing the two paradigms into two distinct camps can be quite problematic. I tend to see the research process as something more continuous. Where the researcher is on this continuum depends on the research questions. Creswell (1994) used the term ‘dominant-less dominant design’ to describe studies that operate within a single dominant paradigm but with one small component of the overall study taken from the alternative paradigm. In this way, the clear demarcation between qualitative and quantitative research becomes increasingly hazy, and method choice becomes more a question of ‘fitness for purpose’.

Being aware of the epistemological stance associated with mixed methods, this research adopts the position that research methods, whether associated with the quantitative or qualitative paradigm, are only a means of accomplishing the aim of answering the research questions. In addition, the use of a combined method may offer the advantage of methodological triangulation. By testing the same propositions through data gathered by multiple methods (methodological triangulation) I aim to address some of the ‘validation’ problems in case study designs.

4.2 Research design approach

De Vaus (2001) defines research design as “the logical structure of the data in a research project” (p. 9). Its main function is ensure the data obtained will answer the research questions. As Yin (1994) explains, “research design deals with a logical

problem not a logistical problem” (p. 29). In my research design, the study explores the academic/educational development provisions of one UAE HEI in depth over a specific period in time. This fits in with Cohen et al’s (2000) definition of case study as requiring specificity, uniqueness and the ability to bind the system under study. Bassey (1999) explains that the case study is the most preferred research strategy for developing educational theory because it “illuminates educational policy and enhances educational policy” (p.3). Yin (1998) identified three main scenarios where case studies are usually employed: when questions of ‘why’ ‘what’ and ‘how’ are being asked; when the researcher has little control over the events; and when the research is being carried out in a real life context. Hammersley and Gomm (2000) define case study as “research that investigates a few cases, often just one, in considerable depth” (p. 3). This can then allow the researcher to “reveal the multiplicity of factors which have interacted to produce the unique character of the entity that is the subject of the study” (Yin, 1994, p.82). The UAE HE sector is shrouded in this ‘multiplicity of factors’ that have interacted to produce a unique higher education sector (detailed in chapter 2) and the resulting professional development provisions for its staff. Such factors, as previously mentioned, include the contractual expatriate academic workforce, the importation of ‘western’ models of education, state funded higher education, a lack of empirical research in the area of education in the country, an increase in the number of students, and the dilemma of the ‘*emiratization*’ of academic staff.

The following advantages of the case study approach are particularly relevant to my choice of strategy:

- It is the most appropriate framework for the examination and description of faculty/academic development activities in the UAE HE sector.
- By digging narrowly but deeply, the case study approach enabled me to critically investigate and evaluate the existing academic development provision within the socio-cultural environment of the UAE HE sector
- It readily accommodated the variety of techniques and instruments which were central to my investigation, such as focus group interviews, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.
- It enabled the formulation of future recommendations for an academic development framework for the UAE HE sector.

A common criticism that has been made against the use of case studies is that working with one system, for example studying only one HE institution in my study, makes the findings too specific, and the theory generated therefore unsuitable for generalization. Yin (1994) countered this criticism with the reminder that the goal of a single case study was to generate theory or “analytical generalisation”, rather than count the number of occurrences, which would allow “statistical generalisation”. In this study, the most important aim was that the results should be theoretically generalisable, rather than statistically generalisable to the population as a whole. The knowledge derived from this particular case of a higher education institution could then be used to understand and therefore theorize about the complexity of expatriate academics operating in ‘hybrid’ or blended east-west HEIs, the socio-cultural factors involved in the ease of buying in labour and the accompanying challenges of indigenizing the workforce.

4.4 Methods of data collection

Data collection took place during the first term mid-semester, just following Ramadhan and Eid (the festive religious period for Muslims) for a period of 6 months. I believed this time was the most appropriate since the school timing had returned to normal⁴ and teachers would have more time to participate in my research. The methods used in the study are listed below and will then be further elaborated in sections 4.3.1- 4.3.3:

- An email questionnaire was sent to all teaching faculty and part-time faculty, and other staff with teaching responsibilities such as science and library technicians.
- Focus group interviews with different categories of teaching faculty: experienced academics within the institution, Emarati teachers and new academics within the institution.
- One-to-one, semi-structured interviews with academic managers, both middle and senior management (college directors, deans, the Head of PD and the Quality Assurance Department). They represented about 90% of all managers in the case institution.

⁴ The month of Ramadhan is considered a holy month for most Muslim countries, where normal working hours are reduced from 8 hours to 5 or 6 hours per day for all government and private institutions, including HEIs.

4.4.1 Questionnaire

The main aim of the questionnaire in the study was to determine the needs of the academics in terms of academic development initiatives. An essential part of any development activity is the needs analysis, which if well managed can ensure that all involved in the teaching activities are fully engaged in the ownership of the initiative. This ensures that any developmental activities are very much produced and owned by individuals involved. Needs assessment or analysis is a process used to compare current results and desired ones, to place the gaps between results and needs in priority order and select the most important ones to be addressed. Once the most important needs to be addressed are selected, the next step is to analyze their cause; that is, to do a needs analysis, see figure 4.1 (Kaufman et al. 1993).

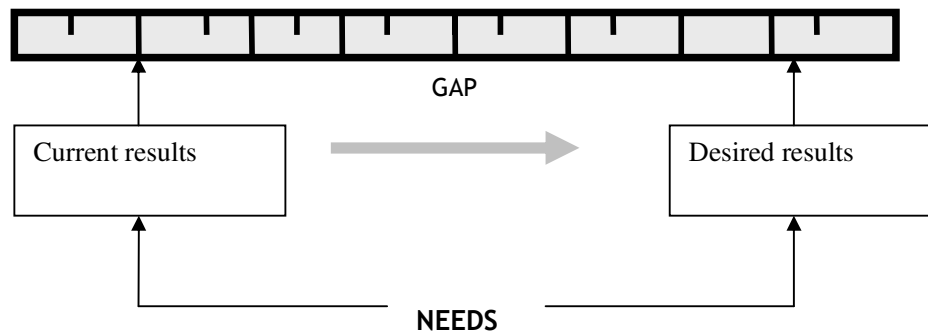


FIGURE 4.1: Means are the way to meet the needs.(Kaufman et al.1993)

However as an insider, I was very much aware of the fact that the professional development activities in the case institution were normally planned and offered by well-meaning administrators, with little or no attention to faculty assessment of their own level of competency. The questionnaire aimed to identify the current PD programs and identify programs that are perceived as important by the academics themselves. Furthermore, the survey aims to identify provision gaps about what is important and the level of competency as identified by the faculty themselves. The hope is that, in a time of tight budgets, decision makers can direct their limited resources to areas of academic development that will have the greatest impact on instruction while providing significant support to the academics.

To address these issues, the questionnaire aimed not only to gather information about needs but also the preferred ways of addressing those needs. The

questionnaire also identified performance gaps between what is provided and what is needed by the faculty themselves. This is crucial, especially in the UAE HE sector, where tight budgetary constraints for PD necessitate that provisions should have the greatest impact on instruction while providing significant support to faculty.

Another rationale for using a questionnaire was that I recognized that it was going to be unlikely within the bounds of this study to interview enough teachers face-to-face to encompass all possible variables (such as experienced and inexperienced teachers, adjunct or part-time faculty and *Emarati* (local) teachers. Instead, a questionnaire provided a cost-effective tool (in time and other resources) to collect, code and analyse data on a large scale (Robson, 1995). A questionnaire provided an opportunity to survey a larger group and gauge the range and degree of agreement in teachers' views of both current PD provision and the provision they would like to see.

In short, the advantages of the questionnaire were that it provided:

- (1) Background demographic data on individual informants, their view of both current PD provision and the provision they would like to see
- (2) A base set of themes and issues to be explored in greater depth in further interviews
- (3) An insight on commonalities and shared understandings, and also contradictions and differences, amongst the informants that might be linked to current and hoped for pedagogical provision
- (4) Impartial, anonymous responses which would not be affected by the bias that might otherwise occur in an interview situation where I was known to many of the informants.

The questionnaire was piloted with six individuals representing the different groups of teaching staff – full time 'new' and experienced expatriate faculty, teaching technicians and *Emarati* faculty. In this I followed Oppenheim's advice (1992, p.47) that "questionnaires do not emerge fully fledged: they have to be created or adopted, fashioned and developed to maturity". The piloting of the questionnaire was also used to address an inherent weakness of questionnaires, that of 'internal validity'. The piloting of the questionnaire allowed me to ensure that the questionnaire was clearly designed and could easily be understood by participants. This was achieved by having the pilot respondents complete a questionnaire feedback form about the clarity of questions, layout etc. The questionnaire was then amended to reflect the comments of

the piloting phase (see Appendix 1, for the final questionnaire). The revised questionnaire was then re-circulated to the same participants to confirm that all their earlier points had been addressed. The issue of the ‘external validity’ of the questionnaire was addressed by ensuring that the questionnaire was administered through the institution’s official communication system: the director of the college sent an e-mail to all staff requesting that they assist me with my research.

The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section of the questionnaire was designed to gather some basic demographic details about the respondents. The second section of the questionnaire contained 29 questions in five clusters: curriculum, adult learning theories, how adults learn, assessments, and virtual learning environments (VLEs). This section asked the respondents to make two assessments: first, to rate the level of the current provision (high, moderate, low and none); second, to self assess the importance of training in that particular area (very, quite, not very, not at all) (see Table 4.1). Asking the staff to identify their own developmental needs in this part enabled the comparison of the needs of the staff with the institutional provision and thereby identify any gaps. This also allowed some description of staff perceptions of their institution’s support for PD in teaching and learning, and the extent to which they perceived these were important. An open-ended question was included in each cluster for further comment.

	The current Professional Development provision by your institution				Degree to which you believe each item ought to be provided as part of your PD as a teacher			
	High	Moderate	Low	None	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Applying language analysis and second language acquisition in pedagogy								

Table 4.1: Extract of section 2 of the questionnaire

The topics for section two were generated mainly on the criteria set out by both SEDA and HEA to accredit new teachers in UK higher education institutions and McLeod et al’s (2003) ‘ABCs of pedagogy’ - a list of key pedagogical concepts in higher education. An important addition, however, was the concept of language awareness and second language acquisition, which is a specific issue relevant to my

case institution, or any English medium HEI operating where English is not the first language. As mentioned previously, “In the second language context, teachers need to anticipate learners’ needs for additional assistance in understanding both the instructional processes and the linguistic medium that convey them” (Chaudron 1990, p.5).

4.4.2 Focus group interviews

Kitzinger (1994, p.103) defines focus groups as “group discussions organized to explore a specific set of issues”. Considering my research topic – academic development provision for tertiary teachers – it was appropriate to consider focus groups as a means of gathering data, since academic staff normally attended the PD (professional development) sessions collectively. Thus, interviewing in a group situation seemed particularly suitable. My intention was to explore the kinds of PD activities provided to the faculty and their perceptions of the appropriateness of these activities, so as to begin to understand how faculty collectively conceptualise the professionalization of teaching and learning, and how that occurs within their current institution provision. The downside of this method, however, is that there is always a danger of certain people dominating or, worse still, people being unwilling to state their opinions in public.

The focus group interviews with staff were conducted using a slightly different protocol to the one with the managers. While both groups were used to explore issues identified in the questionnaire survey, the focus group with staff were also expected to examine the faculty/academic experience and perception of existing institutional PD provisions. The interview plan focused on the following three areas:

- Institutional provision for academic staff development in the area of teaching and learning (induction and CPD)
- Professionalization of teaching and learning in HE
- Emiratization of the teaching force through development of teaching and learning.

It has been suggested that the ideal number for a focus group is around six to twelve depending on the aim of the research and what is feasible. For issues of public policies the numbers should be smaller (6-8 people), (Krueger, 1998). The logistics of getting teachers with heavy teaching loads together was more challenging than I had anticipated, hence the varied number of teachers in my focus groups (see table 4.2

for focus group composition), ranging from 3 to 4. I anticipated that the number of participants in the ‘*Emarati*’ group would be less than eight because very few ‘*Emarati*’ faculty are employed in the case institution. However, during the study, the number of national staff decreased further and I was able to conduct only one FG interview with national staff instead of the intended two groups (one for those new to teaching and one for those with more than three years teaching experience). The *Emarati* FG interview was conducted in Arabic, following Krueger’s (1988,1998) advice to conduct focus group in the first language of the participants.

Focus groups (FG)	‘Emarati’ teachers	Experienced teachers	‘New’ Teachers	Others
Size of group	4	4	4	3
Description of group	UAE national teachers with varying teaching experience (some completely new to teaching)	Mainly ‘Western’ experienced teachers with more than 3 years experience in the case institution	New to the case institution but not necessarily new to teaching	Adjunct faculty and other admin/library staff with some teaching responsibilities
Details of the group provided in	Table 4.3	Table 4.4	Table 4.5	Table 4.6

Table 4.2 Focus group composition

The number of focus groups needed depends on the required amount of diversity among participants (Oates, 2000). Knowing the amount of distrust and competition that exists between the national and the expatriate faculty, I felt it would be more informative and less threatening to conduct focus groups with expatriate faculty and national (*Emarati*) faculty with varying tertiary teaching experience separately. This also allowed the *Emarati* FG interviews to be done in Arabic. The tables (4.3–4.6) below provide more details of the composition of the focus group interviewees, and provide identifiers, such as pseudo names for each of the participants, their nationality, position in the institution, number of years working in the institution and other relevant information.

Focus group interviewees - Description (Emarati Faculty- varying experience)				
Name* (Pseudo names)	Samar	Salha	Aisha	Reem
Designation	Faculty	Trainee Teacher	Faculty	Support staff (teaches part-time)
Terminal Qualifications	PhD in Physical Chemistry	MSc in Mathematics	BSc in IT	MSc in Informatics
Subject teaching	Foundation Mathematics	Diploma year 1 Mathematics	Information Technology	Preparatory program
Years in institution	7	1	4.5	3
Other information	BSc, MSc and PhD from USA. Previously TA in the US for 4 years	MSc from USA Still on probation, taking courses such as CLASS, ICDL with new faculty	BSc from UAEU and other professional qualifications Was a TA at U.of Sharjah previously	BSc from UAEU and MSc from UK

Table 4.3: Composition of *Emarati* faculty focus group

Focus Group Interviewees- Description (Experienced more than 3 years in current institution)				
Name* (Pseudo names)	Shaima	Basam	Batool	Kate
Terminal Qualifications	MSc in Molecular Biology	Completing an MSc in IT (distance learning)	MSc in Clinical Chemistry	Completing a doctorate in public health
Nationality	British	Palestinian	Australian	Australian
Subject teaching	Health Sciences	IT and Library skills	Chemistry	Health Education
Years in institution	7	8	7	4
Other information	Worked in industry before, no previous teaching experience	One of the few people promoted from support staff status to faculty	Worked in industry before, no previous teaching experience	Worked in an Australian university previously

Table 4.4: Composition of experienced faculty focus group

Focus Group Interviewees- Description (New to the institution- all in probationary year)				
Name* (Pseudo names)	Gwendolyn	Hareb	John	Salah
Terminal Qualifications	MBA	Masters in Information Technology	MSc in Engineering	MBA and IT professional qualifications
Nationality	British	Canadian	American	Lebanese
Subject teaching	Business and management	Management and Information Technology	Engineering	IT
Other information	Has previously taken short course in teacher preparation in UK.	Was teaching at AUS previously	Taught at various US vocational institutes	No previous teaching experience

Table 4.5: Composition of ‘new’ probationary faculty focus group

Focus Group Interviewees- Description (Support staff- teaching technician with varying experience)			
Name* (Pseudo names)	Sara	Rajesh	Reema
Terminal Qualifications	MSc in management	MEng	BSc and completing a Masters
Nationality	Sudanese	Indian	Lebanese
Subject teaching	Foundation courses - introduction to IT	Teaching assistant for practical components in Engineering courses	Foundation courses - Computers 1
Years in institution	Over 7	6	3
Other information	Educational qualifications from local institutions	Completed the RSA CELTA qualification in a bid for his promotion to faculty	- -

Table 4.6: Composition of part-time faculty focus group

The aim of the focus group was to uncover the views of a wide range of teachers with different characteristics. Incorporating the ‘years of teaching experience’ in the focus group composition was necessary to provide me with contrasting views between the subgroups, as well as to ascertain any common views. Before the beginning of the interview (semi-structured and focus group), participants were asked to introduce themselves, to state their position in the institutions, subject

specialization, qualifications and number of years in the current institution and the total number of experience in higher education.

The focus group interview schedule had four main questions, included as a guideline with a list of pre-specified probes, as a way of following up a question to get a fuller response. As Fielding and Thomas (2001, p.128) put it, “probing is a key interviewing skill. It is all about encouraging the respondent to give an answer and as full response as possible”. The complete focus group interview schedule is presented in Appendix 2.

4.4.3 Semi-structured interviews with senior managers

Arksey and Knight (1999, p.5) claim that “interviews are one method by which the human world may be explored, although it is a world of beliefs and meanings, not actions that is clarified by interview research”. That is, what people claim to think, feel or do does not necessarily translate into their actions. With senior managers, there was an added dimension that they are the perceived ‘role model’ and they can’t be seen ‘trashing’ the organization they work in. The danger here was to reveal only the ‘politically correct’ version of events. However, in this case, my fears were unfounded, and I found that most of the interviews with both the senior and middle managers were quite candid and open. Ryen (2001), points out the importance of establishing rapport, especially in cross-cultural interviews, so that participants have enough confidence in the researcher to pass on information. Some of the key ‘complex ingredients’ in the case institution are strict contractual employment laws, the presence of faculty and academic leaders from more than 25 different countries, the absence of unions, and formal summative faculty and management appraisal systems that may lead to severe disciplinary measures such as termination of services for poor evaluations.

The purpose of the interviews with management was two-fold. On the one hand, it was intended to find out to what extent the institution provided teaching and learning development to support staff in their teaching. On the other hand, it was also expected to provide data that could be compared with those generated from the questionnaire survey and focus group of the teaching faculty. As a result, the interviews focused on issues such as recruitment policies, resource commitment, the existence or lack of teaching and learning programs and educational development units, and the basis on which policies and practices were formed. The table below (table 4.7) provides brief

descriptions of the interviewees. The identifiers such as the pseudo-names will be used in the next analysis chapter in order to give context to the data and the excerpts. The shaded boxes, just serve to highlight the names and to facilitate reference to this section for the following chapters.

Name* of academic manager (*All names given are pseudo names)	Brief description
Dr. Ayesha Dean of programs	Dr.Ayesha is an Emarati woman in her late thirties, with a doctorate in higher education. Has spent many years (over 10 years) working and studying in North America. Completed a teaching certificate in HE. Was recently employed as a dean.
Dr. Joshua College Director	Dr.Joshua is the college director, has worked in Canada for over 20 years in various colleges. Was the dean of his college in Canada before being employed in the case institution as the director. Has been in this role for over 7 years.
Robert Associate Director	Robert is the associate director. Has been in the UAE HE sector for over 15 years. His speciality is in TESOL. He started the CLASS program in the institution 3 years ago.
Jane Chair of Health Sciences	Jane is the chair of Health Sciences in the case institution, and hails from Canada. She moved up the ranks from faculty to chair. Has a certificate in teaching.
Glenda Chair of IT	Glenda is the IT chair, and has been in the position for over 2 years. During the period I interviewed her, she informed me that she has resigned and is going back to Canada.
Dr.Ibrahim Chair of Engineering	Dr. Ibrahim, a UK graduate has a PhD in engineering. The engineering department has been having problems recruiting faculty. Dr.Ibrahim informed me, he was teaching almost a full load of 20 hours and doing management work.
Rodney Chair of EFL	Rodney is from Australia the dean of EFL programs. Has been in the current institution for over 5 years. Claimed he has done the most faculty hires interviews for the college.
Michael Chair of Educational Technology	Michael is from Australia and the dean of Educational Technology, part of the new BEd program. Has been in the current institution for over 6 years.

Table 4.7: Academic managers' description

4.5 Making the research public

As a novice qualitative researcher, I consulted the relevant literature in order to understand the qualitative analytical approach and the justifications of the trustworthiness of it. What I found was that although terminology such as ‘themes emerging’, ‘triangulation’ and ‘validity’ were used, rarely was there evidence on how these were achieved. Therefore, I decided that it was imperative for my study to provide a detailed explanation of how research questions were related to data sources, how themes and categories were developed, and how triangulation was accomplished. This public disclosure aimed to provide adequate and clear justifications for the methods, findings and conclusions of the research.

Yin (1994) comments that an important consideration in any research design is “the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusion to be drawn) to the initial question of the study”(p.18). Following from this, the research questions in my study were used as a framework for developing the research instruments such as the interview protocols. Accordingly, table 4.8 below depicts how the interview questions and survey were cross-referenced to the study research questions. The matrix in the table presents the research questions that served as a foundation for the subsequent interview questions (see appendix 2 and 3 for the detailed interview protocols).

To the right of each research question are codes referring to specific interview questions. M1, for example, refers to the first interview question from the interview protocol developed for the academic managers, while FG2 (ExA) indicates the second question from the focus group interview protocol developed for the expatriate academics. EmA refers to *Emarati* academics, and NA refers to new academics.

Research questions	Interview questions	Questionnaire survey
<i>1) How do academics, senior managers and policy makers conceptualize the ‘professionalisation’ of teaching in higher education in the UAE?</i>	M1, M2, M7, M13 FG1, FG4	S2, S3, S1
<i>2) What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare both ‘new’ and experienced expatriate faculty to enable them to deal with issues of socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the ‘Emirati’ tertiary learner?</i>	M5, M6, M11 FG2, FG(NA), FG2(ExA), FG3	S2
<i>3) What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority new and experienced indigenous local faculty in order to support the government ‘Emiratization’ strategy within the higher education sector?</i>	M8, M9, M10, M12 FG2(EmA), FG3	S2
<i>4) What are the perceptions of academics and senior managers in the implementation of a systematic formal training programme of learning and teaching in HE in the UAE?</i>	M1, M2, M3, M4 FG1, FG2, FG3, FG4	S5 , S2,S1
Guidance Notes: M: Academic Manager (semi-structured interview) FG: Focus Group FG(Ex): Focus Group with Expatriates academics FG (Em): Focus Group with Emirati academics FG (NA): Focus group with ‘New Academics’ S: Sections on the questionnaire		
Table 4.8: Research Questions in Relation to Interview Questions and Questionnaire survey		

4.6 Ethical Issues

“Research ethics are about being clear about the nature of the agreement you have entered into with your research subjects or contacts” (Blaxter et al. 2002, p.158).

What is more crucial is to regularly reflect on one’s own research at every stage, from its inception to the writing up stage and dissemination. In the current study, information with regard to individual academics and the case institution needed to be treated with sufficient sensitivity. This was because identification of the participants, especially the expatriate faculty referred to earlier might, in various ways affect their employment and could even result in immediate deportation from the host country. Hence, I do not disclose the location of the case institution nor identify its name.

Important ethical issues to be considered in any research are those of informed consent and confidentiality. Informed consent means providing all relevant information to participants and informing them about their role in the research prior to their decision to participate in the research. This stems from “the subject’s right to freedom and self-determination” (Cohen et al. 2000, p.51). My questionnaire cover page, focus group interview guidelines and interview introductions aimed to inform the participants about the research and possible outcomes of the research, assuring them of complete confidentiality. Accordingly, my initial proposal letter to the director of the concerned institution to acquire permission to conduct the research stressed the following points:

- All participants would be anonymous.
- All information obtained from participants and documents would be treated with the strictest confidentiality.
- All participants would have the opportunity to verify their statements when the research was still in draft form.
- The research would be only a part of my doctorate and the institution would bear no responsibility for the research project.
- This research would attempt to explore issues of academic development provisions and it was hoped to provide a future framework for developing academics in their teaching role.

Even after having completed all the pre-requisite steps regarding the ethical considerations of the research, the researcher still needs to regularly consider and

respect the participants who are letting us be a part of their world and to ensure that their best interests are being served, not only the interests of the research project. Thus, if my research was to be considered as academically rigorous, I had to ensure the research was performed with honesty and integrity.

4.7 Data Analysis

4.7.1: Analysing the questionnaire data

One of the main purposes of the questionnaire interview survey was to generate quantitative data to describe the provision of teaching and learning development opportunities in the case institution. The closed and open questions generated relatively straightforward data to analyze and the information acquired was subjected to quantification and categorised by the provision and perceived need by the concerned faculty.

The responses to section 1 of the questionnaire were counted and summarized by frequency and distribution in percentage form. Percentages gave a clearer representation and a sense of comparison than raw scores. The responses to the other sections were analysed by using means and difference of means (section 2) and means for the remaining sections. Table 4.9, below shows the results of the means of the survey items of section 2 (Pedagogical knowledge).

In section 2 of the survey, participants were invited to add additional comments concerning the specific provision of teaching and learning PD. Only five out of 63 responded. The main issues raised concerned the lack of resources, lack of PD commitment by the institution, and emphasis on IT and EFL (English as a foreign language). A lot of these issues surfaced frequently in the interview data as well.

	Current	Aspirant	Difference of means
Designing the curriculum	1.1	2.5	1.4
Designing courses	1.3	2.4	1.1
Curriculum delivery methods	1.1	2.4	1.3
Area of curriculum	1.2	2.4	1.3
Adult learning theories	1.1	2.2	1.1
Transfer of learning	0.9	2.2	1.4
PBL	1.0	2.2	1.2
Teacher Centered and Learner Centered approaches	1.2	2.4	1.2
Learner differences	1.0	2.4	1.5
Group work	1.2	2.4	1.2
Learning relevant	1.1	2.5	1.4
Language analysis	1.4	2.4	0.9
Reflective learning	1.2	2.4	1.2
Diversity	0.6	2.2	1.6
Area of adult learning	1.1	2.3	1.3
Assessment purpose and principles	1.3	2.4	1.0
Assessment Methods	1.4	2.4	1.1
Assessment Instruments	1.1	2.4	1.3
Assessment to reinforce learning	1.1	2.4	1.3
Criterion and Norm-Referenced Assessment	0.7	2.2	1.5
Peer and self-assessment	0.9	2.2	1.3
Assessing Lab, Studio and project work	1.1	2.4	1.2
Competency and Work-based assessment	1.2	2.4	1.2
Area of Assessment	1.1	2.3	1.2
Theory, Practice and Pedagogy of on-line learning	1.6	2.4	0.8
Using on-line learning resources	2.0	2.5	0.5
Developing on-line resources	1.6	2.4	0.8
Applying ICT in Assessment	1.5	2.2	0.8
Area of VLE	1.7	2.4	0.7

KEY: 3=High 2= Moderate 1= Low 0=None

Table 4.9: Results of the means of the survey items of section 2 (Pedagogical knowledge)

4.7.2 Analyzing the interview data

It seems that there are as many suggestions concerning qualitative data analysis as there are texts. Faced with mountains of interview transcripts, field notes and questionnaire data, the first task was to try and bring meaning, structure and order to this data. This “practice and politics of interpretation”, explain Denzin and Lincoln (1994), is eclectic and varied, depending on the researcher. A total of four focus groups (16 faculty) and eight semi-structured interviews were conducted during the study over a period of about six months. One manager was revisited about a year after the initial interview in order to identify if there had been any significant changes in experience or perception. Unfortunately, I was unable to approach the focus groups again due to time constraints, and the difficulty of getting faculty together again. All the interviews with faculty and academic managers were tape-recorded and lasted between one to two hours for some focus group interviews. No one refused to be tape-recorded despite the fact that some participants often discussed issues which might have been detrimental to their position in the institution, for example, openly criticizing some of the institutional policies and processes, and management style. All the interviews were transcribed verbatim.

For the analysis of the interview transcripts, both semi-structured and focus interviews, a combination of the “constant comparative” (Strauss and Cobin, 1990) and “thematic coding” (Flick, 2002) seemed to be appropriate for this study. A CAQDAS (Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) called NVivo was used as a tool to facilitate the coding. The aim of the coding process is “to breakdown and understand a text and attach and develop categories and put them into an order in the course of time” (Flick, 2002, p.178). Coding here is understood as breaking down or splicing data: the new data is conceptualized and put together in new ways in order to build theories. “Concepts or codes are attached to the empirical material” (Flick, 2002, p.177). Labels for codes were either ‘constructed codes’ – that is, concepts borrowed from the literature – or ‘in vivo codes’ – that is, labels derived from the interviewees’ own expressions (Flick, 2002). Analysis involved coding data from each interview into ‘nodes’ or codes. Where appropriate, ‘parallel coding’ was used, which allowed me to place the same piece of text on more than one ‘node’. For example, comments about mandatory PD were coded in both the “institutional mandate” and “top-down PD” node. As analysis progressed, ‘trees’ of nodes were created reflecting dominant and subthemes.

Creating trees of dominant and subthemes required intense engagement with the data, including naming, and renaming and splitting or merging of themes. For example, initially the subtheme ‘induction PD’ was created. However, later analysis suggested that it could be split into further subthemes such as ‘English as a foreign language (EFL)’, ‘ICT’ and ‘Program Quality assurance (PQA)’. This refining of larger nodes enabled a deeper understanding of the data. It was especially valuable in ensuring that the final set of nodes was driven by the data.

The first phase of the analysis was open coding, borrowed from the grounded theory approach (Strauss and Cobin, 1990). In this phase, the text (transcribed verbatim from the interviewees) was coded sentence by sentence, and in some cases paragraph by paragraph. This resulted in a list of codes and categories attached to the text. At the same time, the codes were attached to ‘codes notes’ (notes elucidating what the codes meant) and ‘memos’ that highlighted striking observations on the materials and thoughts that were relevant to the development of theory. The memos also served to add observation notes during the focus group interviews, where group dynamics played an important role in understanding what was happening. The following excerpt from an interview shows how this process was executed.

Researcher: *What do you think of the idea that academics should be trained teachers?*

Interviewee: *When we interview them (faculty) we check to see if they have received the training formally or informally, because it is very possible and very common in HE one could become a trained teacher through experience and through professional development.*
[Dr. Joshua, Director]

In the open coding phase for this extract I discerned three different open codes. First, “when we interview....” suggests two different codes: ‘recruitment policies’ and ‘experiential learning’. These codes were then compared with the codes generated in all the other interviews. A constellation of codes that were common to most interviewees was selected for further analysis.

This kind of thematic analysis allowed the groups that were studied to be derived from the research questions and aims and thus defined a priori. This modification of Strauss’s procedure, allowed advance sampling; the assumption being only those groups whose perspective on the issue seemed to be instructive are

sampled. This removes the ‘iterative’ process, which is usually associated with the original grounded theory approach, where sampling is derived from the state of interpretation. The next section describes in detail this process.

Academic development initiatives in a case institution in the UAE			
RQ1	RQ2	RQ3	RQ4
Third level of analysis			
Emerging higher education systems: tensions surrounding academic developing			
Second level of analysis			
National and institutional aims for HE	Academic identity	PD provisions	
Initial themes			
Recruitment policies Workload and resentment Expatriation & nationalization	Academics to be trained teachers Content vs teaching expert Experiential learning	Induction programs PQA EFL and ICT	
DATA	DATA	DATA	DATA
Key: RQ1-4 refers to the 4 research questions stated in full on pages 16 &17 DATA: refers to the raw data from the verbatim interview transcripts			

Table 4.10: Stages in the analysis and themes emerging from the qualitative data

Table 4.10 outlines six major themes from the data analysis of my study. The tabular form provides the reader with the larger consolidated picture that emerged from the process of bringing meaning, structure and order to my raw data. The analysis presented in table 4.10 highlights the national and institutional structures and mandate, PD strategies, expatriation and nationalization, teachers' identity within their discipline and the paradox of being a disciplinary expert but a novice teacher.

Using the constant comparative analysis recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967), as data were being coded (first iteration), the responses were compared both within and between categories, which yielded the second level analysis. The first level of analysis (first iteration) is the first phase of the analysis process, where the mass of data is categorised into manageable chunks. This level yielded six major themes subdivided into A and B. The second iteration is where the chunks were grouped together to provide fewer broader themes, to grant meanings and insights to the words of the participants (interview and questionnaire data). More detailed discussion of these themes will be discussed in the next two chapters (chapters 5 and 6). The final iteration is the final level of analysis, which led to the theoretical development.

The constant comparative analysis takes place as the data are compared, and categories and their properties emerge or are integrated together. Utilizing this approach led to the generation of the theoretical properties of the categories and generated the findings of the study. This process also aided in identifying patterns, coding data and categorizing findings. By making this entire analysis process open to public inspection, I hoped that the chain of evidence created and the 'audit trail' constructed would strengthen the credibility of the research.

4.8 Addressing trustworthiness and credibility issues

One of the goals of this research was for my study to be accessible and acceptable to both the multi-disciplinary academic faculty mainly from engineering, sciences and business administration and to academic leaders.

” Guba and Lincoln (1994) warn against using ‘validity’ and ‘reliability’ to assess the quality of qualitative research. They provide four criteria for assessing qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Their equivalent criterion for credibility is internal validity; for transferability, external validity; for dependability, reliability; and for confirmability, objectivity.

a) Credibility

The issue of credibility is analogous to the concept of internal validity in quantitative research. Credibility implies an attempt to represent the ‘multiple realities’ and the degree of confidence in the ‘truth’ of qualitative research data as adequately as possible (Cohen et al. 2004). A reliable interpretation of the participants’ lived experience was assisted by my prolonged engagement with the site and personal relationship with the participants in the case study institution. This allowed for ongoing feedback and discussion to clarify and verify interpretations.

To enhance the dependability of the research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest using an “inquiry audit” in which the researcher constantly reflects on both the process and the product of the research. I used member respondent validation and member validation at various points during the data collection and analysis. For example, I provided a number of my participants with the verbatim interview transcript for validation. During a ‘brown bag lunch’ session, I also presented to the group my interpretation of the findings of the research. This exercise was useful in seeking confirmation of the research findings, but more useful was gaining an insight in the areas of incongruence between my interpretation and the impression of the participants. In contrast, sending draft copies of the research findings to my participants failed to give me useful feedback, where many apologized due to their heavy teaching load and resulting lack of time to comment on the findings.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) also propose triangulation as a form of checking for credibility of the study. Data triangulation was used in the study by using different sources of data or information and utilizing different methods. For example, the semi-structured interview mentioned earlier was used with various policy makers such as academic managers, PD co-ordinators, and the director of the college to gain insight into their perception of the ‘professionalization’ of teaching in HE and the their institution’s role in facilitating this. I triangulated this data by looking for agreement or disagreement on these issues amongst these stakeholders. Another method I employed to ‘validate’ my data was methodological triangulation (Table 4.11). Three different methods were used in my research: semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and questionnaires. If the findings from all the methods came to the same or similar conclusions, then I could claim ‘credibility’ for my findings.

Major constructs / categories?	Method of data collection	
	Interviews	Questionnaire
<u>Category 1: National and Institutional contexts</u>		
1) National factors	X	
2) Institutional mandate	X	X
<u>Category 2: Academic identity</u>		
1) Prior experience	X	X
2) Academic allegiance	X	X
<u>Category 3: Approaches to teaching</u>		
1) Conceptualization of teaching	X	
2) PD strategy and provision	X	

Table 4.11: Data triangulation: methods of verification

b) Transferability

Transferability or external validity is considered as the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations. Merriam (1998, p.173) warns against using the case study approach to generalize from one case to other cases, when the aim of the case study is to understand in depth the particular issues. Therefore, my aim was not to generalize the unique culture of this institution to other institutions in the UAE or other HEIs. Rather my aim was to provide an in-depth analysis of the academic development culture at the case institution from which I could define the academic development dimension and the interaction of the expatriate academics, indigenous academics and academic leaders within that institutional culture. The transferability of this research lies in my development of a model for a holistic academic development that has the potential to enable other institutions to similarly examine their own unique academic development culture in their institution.

c) Confirmability

Guba and Lincoln (1994) suggest that confirmability or objectivity is the extent to which findings are the product of the inquiry and not the biases of the researcher. According to interpretivists, a researcher can only try to be compassionate

and neutral; that is, strive to be non-judgmental and report whatever is found in as balanced way as possible. As an insider researcher, I had to stop my natural desire to become a part of the conversation. This was especially difficult during the focus group interviews, since I had to ensure I was the facilitator and not a contributor. In this chapter, I have endeavoured to provide a clear description of the chain of evidence that not only linked data to the sources, but also provided the logic used at each step to assemble my interpretation into a coherent model.

To ensure consistency of the narratives, and in order to minimize distortions, fabrications, and omissions, I had to ask the same question in different ways and at times had to ask for clarifications about inconsistencies. For example, in one of my interviews with a manager, I encountered a number of inconsistencies. I broached the subject by asking: “I noticed that you mentioned earlier that you had difficulties hiring engineering faculty with both current industrial experience and teaching experience, so in the end you prioritised the engineering technical skills. However, now you are saying that you always hire people with both subject expertise and teaching experience and that it is the institutional requirement. This sounds a bit contradictory...” At this point, I allowed the interviewee to explain the apparent contradiction. Unfortunately, I did not get a resolution in this case and I did not want to force him into an unrealistic level of consistency or embarrass him. Later on, I was to find out that his department was experiencing difficulties with a high turnover of academic staff and poor quality assurance reports and that his job was quite precarious at that point.

d) Dependability

Dependability of the research study, according to Guba and Lincoln (1994), is to be judged by whether an outsider would concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense; that is, they are consistent and dependable. They recommend adopting an ‘auditing’ approach. During the entire research process, I kept detailed field notes and a research diary which provided a comprehensive audit trail of my study. The research diary tracked the processes, logic and literature that directed my research design, data collection and analysis. I also included the participants’ reactions and rapport between each other in the focus group interviews, and recorded the ongoing development of codes for interview analysis.

Generally, the following techniques were utilized to ensure credibility, confirmability and dependability:

- The research took place in the natural setting, that is, in the case institution.
- I used purposive sampling rather than statistically random sampling.
- Data was triangulated from various sources.
- I maintained a journal of notes and memos (to provide new insights and a tool for taking extra notes during interviews).
- Member checks- asked respondents to comment on transcripts of their interviews.
- I used negative case analysis; that is, asking questions designed to find exceptions to a rule that therefore invalidate the 'rule'. For example, several managers mentioned the requirement of having teaching experience to be hired in the case institution. When I asked if they had ever hired a person without teaching experience, it turned out that the rule is present but the reality is this practice is not always feasible.

4.9 Summary

This chapter has outlined my use of an interpretive paradigm using a case study approach to collect data directly related to my research questions. It provides a full account of methods used for data collection and analysis, together with a detailed discussion relating to the quality of the research (trustworthiness) and ethical issues. Having explained the methods used in this study, this chapter does not suggest that a combined approach of both quantitative and qualitative methods which employs a series of techniques described above can avoid all the methodological pitfalls. What is suggested is that, by using various methods, I have endeavored to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, which are based on a rich pool of data that can be triangulated. We can thus become more confident in the claims that will be made.

This chapter also provides a detailed account of the analysis of the data using grounded theory approach. With this methodological platform, the next chapter will focus on the examination of perceptions of 'professionalisation' of the academics in the case institution.

Chapter 5: Professionalising teaching - voices from the field

5.1 Introduction

The next two chapters deal with the analysis and interpretation of data obtained from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews analysed by themes. Chapter five begins with a detailed section on the demographics of the case institutions, this provides a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the case institution. In addition to the analysis of the interview transcripts, it also specifically presents the analysis from the questionnaire survey, mainly in the form of tables and graphs. This chapter aims to answer two main research questions, the first and the fourth question. The first question regarding the perception of professionalization of teaching and learning amongst both academics and academic managers and the fourth research question looks at the academics' perceptions of implementation of a systematic formal training program of learning and teaching. The analysis is presented in light of the literature review whenever possible. Tying up the analysis with the theoretical underpinnings reveals to what extent there is accord or deviation from the literature, the degree of agreement or disagreement, and whether the practices and perceptions, expressed in this research are congruent with the literature.

To reiterate the aims of the study presented in chapter one, the different research methods were used to provide insight into the following key issues:

- 1) *How do academics, senior managers and policy makers conceptualize the 'professionalization' of teaching in higher education in the UAE?*
- 2) *What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare both 'new' and experienced expatriate faculty to enable them to deal with issues arising from the socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the Emarati tertiary learner?*
- 3) *What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority of new and experienced indigenous faculty in order to support the government's Emiratization strategy?*
- 4) *What are the perceptions of academics and senior managers about the implementation of a systematic formal training programme of learning and teaching in HE in the UAE?*

It is expected that the collated responses from academic leaders, expatriate teaching faculty and minority indigenous faculty will provide a basis to investigate the above issues and provide answers to the research questions.

Due to the copious amount of data collected, the analysis in this chapter will be selective. My focus will be on themes, areas and issues that potentially contribute to answering the key questions of the research study. I am conscious that other readings are possible, but claim that these themes are (a) based on the literature review and understanding of the context of the case institution, and (b) a plausible reading of the text. The quotes used to illustrate the themes are representative of the comments made by the interviews, focus group or semi-structured or both. The quotations are formatted to highlight the relevant areas, but otherwise they remain as they were in the verbatim transcripts.

This chapter is sub-divided into three main sections. The first section provides the demographic characteristics of the case institution. The second part explores the views of key stakeholders such as academic faculty, academic managers and deans on the issue of professionalisation. The final part aims to explore perceptions regarding implanting a systematic formal training program for teaching and learning. Table 5.1 below highlights the two research questions and their associated themes that this chapter will address.

Research questions	Key themes
RQ1 <i>How do academics, senior managers and policy makers conceptualize the 'professionalization' of teaching in higher education in the UAE?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academics need to be trained teachers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content expert versus teaching expert
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Wisdom of practice'
RQ4 <i>What are the perceptions of academics and senior managers about the implementation of a systematic formal training programme of learning and teaching in HE in the UAE?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment policies and funding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resentment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workload

Table 5.1 Research questions 1 and 4 linked to the main themes identified

Chapter 6 will specifically address the issue of academic development provision for both the majority contractual expatriate academics and the minority indigenous *Emarati* academics.

5.2 Characteristics of the sample in the case institution.

This section presents demographic data for the staff of the case institution. The total number of staff (including support staff) is 313. Of these, only 28 are UAE nationals, a number representing less than one tenth of the total staff, while the majority of staff members are expatriate ‘guest workers’. As mentioned in chapter 2, in most Arab-gulf countries, the rapid development of higher education and expectations regarding their contribution to economic and social development has necessitated a reliance on imported academic labour recruited from many countries. Consequently, “a major feature of Gulf universities is the high percentage of ‘non-national’ (non-citizen) faculty members. Non-nationals constitute between one-third of all faculty in Saudi Arabia and about four-fifths in Bahrain” (Mazawi, 2003, p.93). The demographic difference is much more acute in the UAE HE sector as demonstrated in the case institution.

In the case institution (similar to all federal funded HEIs in the UAE) all the students are *Emaratis* while the academic staff and academic managers are mainly Westerners. I have used the broad term ‘Westerner’ to indicate nationals from UK, USA, Canada, Australia, Ireland and New Zealand. As Figure 5.1 shows, in the case institution, 33% of all teaching faculty are from the UK, followed by Australia, Canada and the USA. ‘Others’ represents faculty from New Zealand, South Africa, Lebanon, etc.

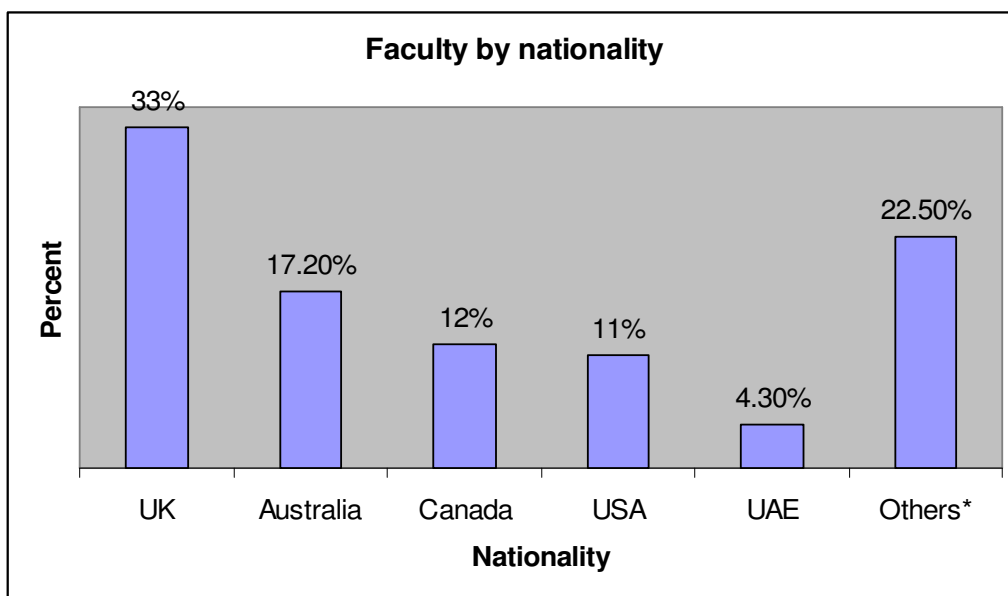


Figure 5.1: Percent of full-time faculty by nationality

These and all other expatriate workers in the UAE must obtain work and residence permits which are usually valid for the duration of the contract term for a specific occupation with a particular organization or employer. Expatriate faculty/academics are normally employed on a fixed-three year renewable contract. To add to this complexity, foreign workers in the UAE are not eligible for permanent residency or naturalization (except by marriage), regardless of their length of stay, and cannot move freely between employers without the consent of their employer or sponsor. As elaborated by Richardson and McKenna (2001) and Mercer (2005) in chapter 2, the transient nature of these academics' positions in the host institution can remove the necessity for professional development but also exacerbate feelings of outsidership.

5.2.1 Institution staff and positions

The information that follows was obtained from the case institution's human resource department. Information concerning staff qualifications and credentials, however, was not accessible despite my numerous requests from the case institution administrators. Table 5.2 shows the percentage of staff members in the case institution according to their position. Full-time teaching faculty represent the majority at about half of all staff members; only 1.6% of the staff are adjunct (part-time) faculty.

Staff position	Percent
Senior manager e.g. Director	0.3
Head Department	1.6
Supervisor (Academic and Non-Academic)	5.4
Teaching Faculty	52.6
Non-Teaching Faculty	5.8
Technicians	2.6
Support Staff e.g. Administrative staff	19.5
Adjunct Faculty (Part-time faculty)	1.6
Part-time support staff	8.3

Table 5.2 : Percentage of staff by position in case institution

Part-time academic workers, or ‘adjunct faculty’ as they are called in the UAE, make up a small minority in the UAE HE sector, unlike in most Western higher education institutions. These, as highlighted in chapter 2, have seen an increase in part-time academics ranging from one-third up to half of all full-time academics (Husbands, 1998; Watters and Weeks, 1999; Husbands and Davies, 2000). The main reason for the lack of a flexible work environment in the UAE is the strict labour laws previously mentioned concerning employment terms being closely linked to the employer/sponsor. That is, expatriates are only allowed to work for one sponsoring organization. This lack of adjunct or sessional staff has serious implications in terms of denying institutions the flexibility to allow full-time academics some ‘down-time’ or reduced workload to undertake any professional development. Only *Emaratis* are permitted to work part-time in the UAE, since they do not require this kind of sponsorship. However, the HE institutions as will be later revealed have not been very proactive in employing the Emarati workforce, which would allow them greater flexibility in their manpower planning. Having said this, the UK and other

developed countries' reliance on part-time academics has been a pragmatic, mainly financial, decision to cope with the massification of student number, reduced government funding, and allowing academic time for research (and not necessarily academic development). The Dearing report as mentioned in chapter 2, criticized HEIs for a lack of development of their part-time academics

In the UAE, adjunct faculty are marginalised both numerically and regarding the developmental opportunities provided to them by their HEIs. Due to their insignificant numbers, adjunct faculty are overlooked in both the policies and systems of the HEIs, resulting in little or no access to career development processes. As one of the academic managers revealed in the interview, "we give them little commitment and they give us even less in return". Table 5.1 also shows that support staff, such as administrative assistants and other clerical positions, are relatively numerous in the case institution. Almost a quarter of these staff positions are occupied by UAE nationals, mainly due to a government requirement to nationalize 'clerical' jobs. This requirement does not include academic positions, where UAE nationals are not perceived to have sufficient knowledge and experience yet to take over these positions.

Management comprise about 7.3% of all staff. Directors and heads are most senior while supervisors are considered as middle managers. The academic supervisors are involved in the day-to-day running of their respective department. In addition to these academic supervisors, there are the non-academic supervisors such as academic services (equivalent to a senior registrar in the UK system) and student services supervisors. All supervisors report directly to their respective heads of department (HoDs). Out of the 23 senior managers, only 2 are nationals, representing an overwhelming majority of expatriate academic managers in the case institution. The paradox of this is that these expatriate administrators (mainly from the West) are "subject to quite different employment laws and practices" (Mercer, 2007, p.17) than those of their home countries, and are operating in a 'hybrid' western educational model. The expatriate academic managers, advisors and consultants brought into the UAE have been given full control over the implementation of their programs. As mentioned in chapter 2, Al-Dosary (2004) sarcastically states that "there is always an option of buying in the needed manpower skills" (p.124). Planning for the UAE HE did not factor in a time when the UAE nationals would have developed their own capacity to take over some of these positions. The questions then remains: Are the

academic managers in the UAE HE sectors acting as gate-keepers against Emarati academic faculty, or is there a deeper underlying reason?

5.3 Survey Results - Demographics

The questionnaire was sent out to all the teachers in the case institution. Sixty-three responded, representing a return rate of about 40%, if I deduct the number of faculty in my pilot stage, to whom I did not send the final questionnaire. Initially I was very optimistic that I could get a higher return rate, especially after I sent an appeal e-mail reminding the teachers about the survey and the confidential nature of it. However, only one part-time adjunct faculty responded and not all faculty returning the questionnaire completed all questions. Incomplete responses were coded as missing data for analytical purposes.

As shown in table 5.3, the respondents came from five different departments. The largest number of teachers came from the English department, which is very typical in most UAE federal HEIs (especially the newer ones, due to the English language needs of the students). As previously mentioned, the language of instruction is English in the newer public HEIs, while students normally would have come from Arabic speaking schools and thus would need considerable EFL (English as a foreign language) support to cope with the all English university curriculum.

Department	Frequency	Percent
English	15	23.8
IT	7	11.1
Health Science	11	17.5
Business	13	20.6
Engineering	5	7.9
Other	12	19.0
Total	63	100.0

Table 5.3 Number of respondents by department

5.4 Professionalizing teaching in the UAE HEIs

As elaborated in chapter 3, most higher education institutions in developed countries have recognised the need to put in place some form of formal training programs for academics, especially those new to teaching. However, these academic development programs are not without their challenges (highlighted in chapter 3). Irrespective of the merits of the argument about the importance of university teaching and the need to provide staff with effective support, nothing will happen unless any proposals are congruent with academic environmental culture. It is therefore important to explore the attitudes of academic staff to teaching development and the way teaching development can be successfully embedded in the UAE higher education institutions.

5.4.1 Academics need to be trained teachers

The question asked to both the academics and the academic managers was: What do you think of the idea that academics should be trained teachers? The views of the academic staff interviewed as part of this study revealed a surprising level of recognition for the need to professionalize teaching, although there was a high degree of variation as to how any process of professionalizing teaching should be formalized within the current constraints.

Some of the academic managers interviewed revealed a surprising level of recognition for the importance and need for faculty to have pedagogical training. This was seen as especially crucial in an environment that wants industry expertise and teaching expertise concurrently. For detailed descriptions of the individuals (pseudo names) referred to below see chapter 4 .

What do you think of the idea that academics should be 'trained teachers'?

I think it's a great idea, I think it's really important too. I think it's really important to have academics being trained teachers especially in specialty areas where people frequently move from industry to teaching directly. (Dr. Ayesha*Academic Manager)

I think it is always a good idea because sometimes you are an expert in your area then that does not mean that you are automatically qualified as a teacher (Gwendolyn*Focus group new teachers)

Absolutely, obviously necessary, because one of the things that I am doing now is interviewing people for different positions and what I am noticing is there are people with incredible skills for e.g. lab bench skills experience but there is a little concern that they are not going to be able to translate that into the classroom. So I appreciate now more than ever before, the marriage that is necessary between the teaching and the skill and experience in a particular content area... (Kate* Health Science Faculty, Experienced Focus group)

Like for me, coming from a banking background – I don't know even how to prepare a lesson plan – I am teaching myself right now and trying to seek help from other teachers, like asking ...is this the right way? I would appreciate some professional help, and this is our country, we are entitled to it... our students are entitled to be taught properly. (Salha* Emarati Focus group).

They (*meaning the academic managers*) check all our assessment that we give students ... what are they checking for spelling .. grammar... We are not sure... there's too much assumptions that we know what we are doing... you know that questionnaire that you sent to us, we were asking each other what half of the items meant ...*laugh*... So I think academics should be trained teachers but would I want to go through a stringent teacher training program? I am not sure (Shaima* Focus group Experienced Faculty)

Analysis of staff's tertiary teaching qualifications in the survey revealed quite surprising results (Table 5.4). To the question 'Do you hold tertiary teaching qualifications?', all 63 people responded, with almost a 50-50 split between those who do and do not possess tertiary teaching qualifications.

	Do you hold tertiary teaching qualifications			Would you be interested in obtaining a tertiary teaching qualification?		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Frequency	30	32	63	24	27	51
Percent	47.6	50.8	98.4	38.1	42.9	81

Table 5.4: Tertiary teaching qualifications and interest in tertiary teaching qualifications

Respondents holding an HE teaching qualification were also asked to specify the kind of qualification. To reduce the ambiguity of this question, an example of a tertiary teaching qualification was given (PGCHE or the Australian equivalent

Postgraduate certificate in Tertiary teaching). Of the respondents who answered 'yes' only 5 (15%) of them specified their qualifications; the majority of these mentioned an MA, PGCE or City and Guilds Certificate. Only one respondent specifically mentioned a PGCHE from a UK university.

Those who said they did not hold a HE teaching qualification were also asked whether they would be interested in obtaining one, and 38% of the respondents said 'yes'. This number is rather higher than expected considering the experience of the UK and Australia. There (Dearn et al. 2000) the GCHE (graduate certificate in HE) has not met overwhelming acceptance. Similarly in the UK, *The Times Higher Education Supplement* reported that "compulsory licences for lecturers, enabling them to teach in higher education, have been dropped following fierce opposition from elite universities" (Utley, 1998, p1). Rowland (1998), in a provocative piece on "*Turning academics into teachers*", also reveals the divide amongst academics on the development of teaching. However, the high percentage of academics who claim to be interested in tertiary qualifications in the case institution has to be approached with caution. It might not be generalizable to all HEIs in the UAE, primarily because the case institution is a mainly teaching institution with little or no research and the academics there are aware of their positioning as teachers.

However, there was also a high degree of reservation raised about the need to train academics. Some of the faculty expressed disinterest in any form of formal qualifications for teaching in higher education. The comments that follow highlight the unease about the need to professionalize teaching in higher education.

I think there won't be as much of a need for this here as it would be in the West. In the West many times the person you are employing is teaching for the first time. They are new teachers so they obviously need teaching qualifications or whatever. Here, because we get them with experienced, ... (*inaudible...*) ..and the interview is supposed to explore whether or not these people are actually accomplished teachers or not. So, the fact that we require people to have teaching experience obviates the need to a certain extent for formal academic qualification... (Dr. Joshua* College Director)

5.4.2 Content experts versus teaching experts

There seems to be even more resistance and negativity to the concept of professionalisation amongst the academic faculty themselves. Two particular issues were raised by both the academic faculty and the academic managers. The first concerned the tension inherent in higher education between teaching and the academic substantive discipline; in other words, the tension (or apparent tension) between pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. This clearly resonates with the literature on academic identity highlighted in chapter 3.

I am an Engineer, I train engineers, I don't consider myself a teacher more a trainer. When students come to us, they should know how to learn. I don't expect to be teaching pre-schoolers here. (John* Focus group new academics)

It is apparent that development in their disciplinary areas takes precedence over teacher development. Part of academic development is to expose these academics to the breadth of research and practice in higher education. The biggest challenge with this is that as both the above quotes illustrate, and as other research has demonstrated, disciplinary allegiance is paramount in most academics' lives. Therefore, any academic development initiatives serving the whole institution and hence transcending any particular subject area are regarded with suspicion. This concurs with the literature on academic development about the dominance of the disciplines and alliance to the 'academic tribe' (Becher, 1989). It is this dominance that has caused many educational developers to suggest devolving a large part of teacher development to individual academic departments .

The second major issue was the perceived unproblematic nature of teaching in higher education. Academics in the case institution frequently lamented the lack of opportunities for professional development in their content areas, but no such sentiments existed as far as educational development was concerned. Not surprisingly, disciplinary knowledge was deemed to have priority over teaching for the majority of academics interviewed.

I think my emphasis would be mostly on PD sessions that cover content – because specially with IT we have to stay ahead – keep up the pace with the current technology so I would be looking for me personally I would given the time spend more effort and energy in the technological skills for content to improve and enhance, rather than teaching. (Hareb* Focus group 'New Academic').

Teaching was commonly perceived as unproblematic amongst the academics and managers interviewed, which is very congruent with the western literature reviewed (Weimer, 1997). The priority accorded to keeping up with the discipline over teaching implicitly devalues teaching in academia. The assumption here is that disciplinary expertise is synonymous with teaching prowess: 'if you know it, you can teach it'.

It's not that I am devaluing teaching per se. What I am saying is that I was hired because of my laboratory sciences experience and knowledge. I wouldn't mind some light training on teaching skills and tips. (Shaima* Focus Group Experienced academics)

I mean it's great to get tips, but as far as university level was concerned I still don't see any need for it. (Salah* Focus group 'new academic')

I think ya, I mean for me personally I don't need a formal thing at the end like a certificate that would say 'yes' I am qualified or not as a teacher. I think what I need more than that is tips and hints and how to... (Gwendolyn* Focus group 'new academic')

Again this is congruent with Weimer's (1997) "assumptions that devalue teaching". Teaching excellence is synonymous with tips and techniques. However, a techniques and skills conception of teaching can cause a kind of 'instructional myopia', warns Weimer (1997). The literature, as highlighted in chapter 3, concurs about the importance of teaching skills and tips, especially to a beginning faculty. This surface level teaching is however insufficient for more 'matured' faculty, where the aim should be for deeper epistemological and ontological reflection on their subject, and more consideration of the aims of higher education and knowledge about the nature of teaching and learning (McKeachie, 1997; Blackmore and Blackwell, 2006). The quote from an academic faculty represented the minority who seem to have a clear understanding that skills and tips alone are insufficient.

... we have teachers here who think as long as I use PowerPoint, and speak slowly students will learn (Kate* Focus group, Experienced academic)

It follows then that the majority of the faculty are more likely to accept a pedagogical intervention if it can be shown to work for a colleague in the same disciplinary area, and, second, that it is important not to separate pedagogic developments from the disciplinary contexts in which they are to be implemented (Jenkins, 1996; Healey, 2003). Educational development initiatives often fail to take

into consideration the extent to which academic staff identify with their discipline when planning and developing teaching and learning enhancement programs for academic faculty. As Jenkins (1996) puts it, “failing to recognize this will limit the effectiveness of any curricular or educational development project”. This resonates with Shulman's work on ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ which conceives teacher’s knowledge as comprising both content knowledge (theories, principles, and concepts of the discipline) and pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, pedagogical content knowledge “goes beyond knowledge of subject matter per se to the dimension of subject matter knowledge for teaching” (Shulman 1986, p.9 quoted in Major and Palmer, 2006). Acquiring pedagogical content knowledge and developing methods different from what the teachers experienced themselves as students requires “learning opportunities from teachers that are more powerful than simply reading and talking about new pedagogical ideas” (p. 621), explain Major and Palmer (2006).

This importance of disciplines has been recognized recently in the UK with the establishment of LTSN (Learning and Teaching Support Network’s) specific subject centers and the establishment of the HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England). The importance of the discipline is also emphasized in the core knowledge and values for membership of the Higher Education Academy.

Much recent research has recognized the importance of integrating educational development with disciplinary concerns (Jenkins, 1996; Gibbs, 1996; Boud, 1999; Hick, 1999). This body of research points to the importance of providing a balance between generic versus subject specific orientation in academic development initiatives.

5.4.3 ‘Wisdom of practice’

The literature on professional learning highlighted in chapter 3, clearly states that professional learning includes both experiential learning and reflective learning. Weimer (2001) calls the knowledge gained from experience the “wisdom of practice”.

Our institution unlike many HEI in the West is of course different, in that here we are interested in people who are good teachers. When we interview them we check to see if they have received the training formally or informally because you could become a trained teacher through experience and through professional development. That is, they have the equivalent of a qualification but it’s experiential (Dr.Joshua* College Director)

This particular excerpt illustrates a common tacit assumption about teaching amongst individuals and groups regarding what can be learnt about teaching, and how it can be learnt and from whom, and what relationship there might be between professional practice and theory.

The biggest controversy in this debate is that most academics have at least two degrees, if not more, and are thus skilled at life long learning (learning from life, learning for life and learning throughout life). If this is the case, why would they need to acquire yet another credential for teaching? The argument is that through their learning from experience their teaching skills will improve.

In the West many times the person you are employing is teaching for the first time. They are new teachers so they obviously need teaching qualifications or whatever. Here, because we get them with experience and *–(inaudible)–* and the interview is supposed to explore whether or not these people are accomplished teachers or not. So, the fact that we require people to have teaching experience obviates the need to a certain extent formal academic qualification (Robert*, Associate Director)

This particular excerpt illustrates the assumption that if you know something and have some experience in teaching or training that translates into teaching competency. My reaction is that these views that competency in teaching is based solely on work experience are taking a simplistic view about teaching. Experience cannot be a sole strategy for higher educators' professional growth as a teacher. This unsystematic, unplanned 'training' for teaching is insufficient for generating appropriate pedagogical knowledge and for its beneficial application in actual classroom practice. This intuitive knowledge, the 'wisdom of practice', was elaborated in chapter 3. Weimer (1997) explained that one of the main assumptions of HE that explicitly or implicitly devalues teaching is that teaching in HE requires no initial training or CPD. The reticence of HE instructors to base their teaching on relevant research and scholarship, specifically educational research clearly indicates this. There is burgeoning research about how students learn and what are conducive learning environments, both in formal education and higher education contexts, yet many in HE proceed oblivious to the existence of this. "The very concept of a scholarship of pedagogy is still very unfamiliar to many university teachers" (Baume, 1997, p.4). The excerpt below from a junior faculty clearly highlights this challenge of experience and teaching.

...I don't believe that having experience makes you a good teacher. I mean, I've seen some goon here who claims to have 20 years experience in Australia, went to observe him once as part of my training... I am no education specialist, but his teaching was terrible, he was totally unaware of his environment, the girls were all chatting on their computers... *laugh...* (Salha* Focus interview, Emarati Faculty)

The survey results on teaching experience demonstrated a wide variation of experience amongst the respondents. Figure 5.2 below shows that the total length of experience in tertiary/higher education, with the majority of the academics surveyed having more than 10 years experience. Only five teachers in the group of 63 (about 7%), have less than 4 years of experience in teaching in HE. This could represent UAE citizens, for whom the pre-requisite teaching experience is sometimes waived, or individuals who entered direct from industry. The subdivisions within the bars represent the number of years of experience within the case institution.

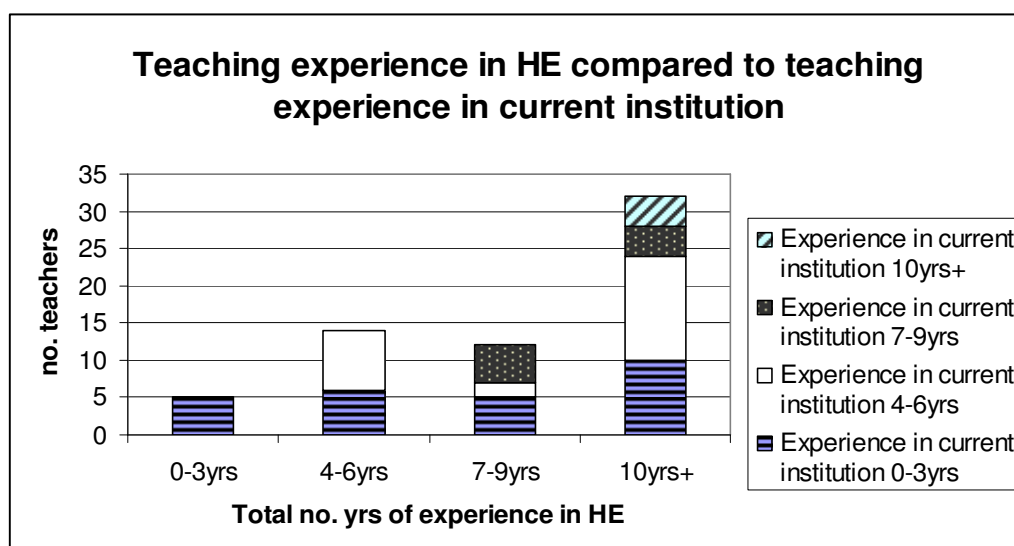


Figure 5.2: Total teaching experience in HE compared to teaching experience in the case institution

The high percentage of highly experienced teachers was not surprising considering the institution purposefully set out to employ such people.

5.5 Implementing a systematic teaching program

Although there were contradicting perceptions about the importance of professionalizing teaching and learning in higher education, there was almost a unanimous response to the non-viability of implementing a systematic teaching and learning program in the case institution.

Respondents highlighted a range of challenges with the UAE HE sector if academic would be required to attain teaching qualifications. These issues largely related to time pressures and the associated topics of heavy teaching load, funding, recruitment and the tensions of industry specialists (e.g. engineers) investing time in teaching. The questionnaire asked respondents to select the main barriers to their undertaking CPD for teaching (Table 5.5). Lack of time and heavy workload was the main barrier cited.

Barrier in order of frequency	No. of responses	
Lack of time	58	(92%)
Teaching load too heavy	52	(83%)
Lack of support from supervisor/institution	12	(19%)
I don't think CPD in teaching is important for my work	40	(63%)
Others: please specify	5	(3.15)

Table 5.5: Barriers to undertaking CPD for teaching

5.5.1 Recruitment and funding policies

A major concern raised was how a requirement for teaching would impact on the ability to attract and retain teaching staff if teaching certification became mandatory.

Even with these liberal policies of recruitment, many academic managers mentioned the difficulty of getting the people with right skill mix.

It would be a recruitment nightmare, since we can't obviously provide such training due to the costing of it. (Dr.Ayesha*, Dean of programs)

If we say compulsory, then the institution has an obligation to offer it free of cost to all teaching staff, we are running in a deficit budget for the past 5 years (Dr. Joshua*, College Director)

Partly because there is a little bit of mentality in that we have spent a lot of money hiring faculty to come here they should be able to do the job. We shouldn't have to develop them anymore. So there are those issues (Robert* Academic manager, associate director)

Another manager reiterated similar thoughts and explained that the institution invests heavily in the hiring process, ensuring the best candidates. In an already stretched sector, highlighted in chapter 2, the government fully funds all federal HEIs in the UAE. This costs skyrockets when you take into consideration the cost of bringing in expatriate academics. As one of the academic managers lamented, “we pay them big fat expatriate packages, we don't need to pay for any more development – it's just not financially viable”. However, the few who are not successful are just ‘written off’ explained another academic manager. Mercer's (2005) research highlights this paradox in the UAE HE sector's continuing professional development. The practice of employing the perceived best removes the necessity of any developmental work.

5.5.2 Resentments

Another concern mentioned by academic managers was that of resentment. A number of the academic managers used the ‘resistance’ to CLASS (a semester long in-house EFL awareness program for content specialist) as an example of faculty not being willing to undertake any longitudinal courses in learning and teaching. A major concern amongst the managers was how a requirement to undertake teacher training would impact on the ability to attract and retain teaching staff, if teaching certification became mandatory.

...it would upset a lot of people you know, requiring such a thing you know, just the short course like CLASS, required of teachers during their probation year causes such a stir... and it's not intensive and it's not demanding, but it's almost like they feel we are insulting them (Robert* Associate Director)

CLASS was a complete waste of time and a professional insult. The material presented was survival English appropriate for first learners, not the level of students I teach. I have taught more advanced material myself. If (name of institution) goes to great lengths to recruit teachers with ESL/EFL experience, why do they require us to attend these sessions? (Hareb* Focus group 'new' academic)

...there is always going to be resistance, there is always going to be a backlash, there will always be those who grudgingly go along with it but not take it on board, there would be those who do it and find it enhances their teaching (Glenda* Chair of IT)

Trowler and Bamber (2005) used the Norwegian experience to highlight the importance of institutional policies and practices in implementing compulsory teacher training programs. They concluded that unless a training policy is synergistically embedded within the current existing academic and institutional culture it is unlikely to have the desired effect .

5.5.3 Workload

While there seem to be an issue of funding and recruitment challenges connected to compulsory programs, there is also an issue of workload and time, refer to table 5.6. A number of ‘new’ academics interviewed for this study complained that they were not provided with ring-fenced time nor reduced workload to support their probationary program requirements (CLASS and ICDL- explained in more detail in the next chapter).

Workload and a lack of resources were seen as key impediments to the academics in the case institution devoting time to the development of their teaching. The issue of the workload was mentioned specifically in connection with formal courses if they were to be implemented. Academic faculty in the case institution have an average of 22 teaching hours a week and a myriad of other administrative tasks, and they generally did not support adding teaching development on top of their already heavy teaching load.

I think it's just quite challenging in terms of time to do your teaching and do the admin that goes with that and the preparation and to do a course on top of it. It's quite challenging and draining I mean... (Batool* Focus group Experienced Faculty)

You are right, especially in an environment like here, where there is a lot of class student contact, which takes a lot of our time, it's paradoxical really, they want us to train students to be independent learners, yet the (name of institution) expects us to be in class more than 20 hours a week. (Kate* Focus group, Experienced Faculty)

How much more time do we have? Really keeping up to date – even getting a chance to meet together and talk to each other on an informal basis is not easy

here. And that we need both formal and informal structures to really keep people going at top speed all the time and expect to rejuvenate themselves. I think people get burned out here. (John* Focus Group, New Faculty*)

Numerous studies have documented this problem of academics and huge workload: “It is not unusual for veteran faculty members to experience boredom, burnout, and apathy when they teach large classes, repetitive subject matter, and students who are often less than adequately prepared” (Wallin and Smith, 2005 p.87). However, teaching large classes is not an issue in the UAE HE sector (policy makers have ensured that classes remain small, in order to enhance more individualised attention to the students), but the other two factors - repetitive subject matter and ill-prepared students - could be contributing factors to teacher burn out in the UAE HE sector. Ideally, appropriate PD opportunities could be an antidote to stagnation and burnout, by providing faculty with innovative and challenging ways to keep their teaching fresh.

5.6 Summary of findings

Most of the findings are congruent with the western literature on the challenges of and resistance to professional teaching developments in HE. Both within and across the focus group and interviews with academic managers, individuals expressed contradictory beliefs. Some clearly saw training to teach in higher education as necessary and much needed, for both introductory and continuing professional development. However, numerous academic interviewees did not perceive their roles as teachers, instead having strong affinities for their disciplines, and many questioned the necessity for teaching competency at the tertiary level. Most of the academics in the focus group expressed concerns about the heavy teaching and administrative load in the case institution. While the academic managers lamented the cost of hiring expatriate academics and the difficulties associated with recruitment, they also explicitly expressed concerns about the ability to attract and retain staff if teaching development became compulsory.

Chapter 6: Institutional academic development provisions and structures

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on academic faculty experience and conceptions of the institution's educational development practice. It draws substantially on the interview data collected, both the semi-structured interviews (managers and policy makers) and focus group interviews (faculty with different levels of experience). Whenever possible the qualitative data in this chapter are supported with the survey data. While chapter 5 concentrated on the first and the fourth research question - the issue of professionalizing teaching in the UAE higher education sector and challenges of implanting a systemic program of teaching and learning, this chapter will focus on answering the remaining two questions, which explore the specific issue of provision and perceptions of the current institutional professional development for both new, experienced and *Emarati* academic faculty. The research questions are stated in full on pages 16 and 17 and repeated on page 112 in the previous chapter.

The analysis will be anchored around the following key themes which emerged from the analysis of both the questionnaire survey and the interview transcripts. Table 6.1 below highlights the main themes and the corresponding research question that the rest of this chapter will address in detail.

As a faculty member for a number of years in the case institution, I possessed an insider perspective, which enabled me to understand the context and nuances of the data. The procedure adopted here is intended to describe the educational development situation in the case institution, as well as its interpretation in line with the research questions in chapter 1. To generate categories and themes of data gathered from the various methods used, I had to interrogate the data and reflect on the conceptual framework in order to identify key issues, concepts and themes. Reference to the literature review helped me form an appropriate thematic framework.

Research question	Key themes
<p>RQ2 (first part) – initial programs for expatriate ‘new’ to the institution faculty</p> <p><i>What initial programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare ‘new’ expatriate faculty to enable them to deal with issues arising from the socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the Emarati tertiary learner?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction programs • EFL and ICT • Expatriation
<p>RQ3 (first part) – initial programs for Emarati new faculty</p> <p><i>What initial programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority of new indigenous faculty in order to support the government’s Emiratization strategy?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationalization • Marginalization and non-committal
<p>RQ2 and RQ3 (second parts)- CPD programs for experienced faculty (Expatriates and Emarati)</p> <p><i>What CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare experienced expatriate faculty to enable them to deal with issues arising from the socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the Emarati tertiary learner?</i></p> <p><i>What CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority experienced indigenous faculty in order to support the government’s Emiratization strategy?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs provisions • Teaching experience and PD needs • Program Quality Assurance (PQA)

Table 6.1: Research questions 2 and 3 with key associated themes

Each of the themes listed in table 6.1 is described in more detail in the rest of the chapter with a brief illustration of key aspects of the theme through verbatim quotation from relevant interview transcript and/or survey results. As will become apparent, these themes do not just represent different views about the current provisions of professional development, but more complex views of the perceptions of the academics about their role in the institution and the academic culture in which they are embedded.

6.2 Initial programs for new faculty members

Teaching support/development programmes in local tertiary institutions in the UAE typically take the form of short workshops on particular skills, discrete PD sessions on specific topics, and IT training, normally within the institution. In their first year of joining the institution (known as the probationary year), faculty normally have to undertake more intensive training in English as a foreign language (EFL) and ICT training. This section will explore in detail the key themes that emerged under academic development provisions in the case institutions

6.2.1 Induction programs

A major theme that emerged from the analysis was that of support for new academic appointees in the case institution is that titled ‘enculturation’. As mentioned in chapter 2, the case institution, like most federal HEIs, employs almost exclusively hires experienced higher educators from the west, so most of the ‘new’ faculty are new to teaching in the UAE, but not new in tertiary education, per se. However, due to necessity at times, a small proportion of these expatriate faculty are actually true novices to teaching.

In the case institution, programs for new the ‘new teachers’ were vital, according to the academic managers interviewed. The major program provision was as follows:

- 1) Induction sessions: a short program lasting 2-3 days. These sessions concentrate on institutional processes, logistics of class allocation, and cultural awareness sessions.
- 2) CLASS (Course in Language Awareness for Subject Specialists): a semester-long program concentrating on second language acquisition.

- 3) ICDL (International Computer Driving licence): a year-long program of face-to-face classes once a week.

Both the CLASS program and ICDL were compulsory probationary requirements, which indicates the institutions' clear signal about its commitment to development in English as a foreign language and information technology, in the hope that the academic staff they employ will take the requirement seriously. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the CLASS course, the only structured semester long professional development program offered in the case institution, caused quite an uproar amongst the new academic hires. One of the academic managers interviewed commented, "individuals who fail to complete the CLASS program requirement will not be allowed to continue employment".

....you know we want to make sure that the person who has teaching experience elsewhere is now 'inducted' as it were in the culture of the (name of the institution) – which focuses on student centred learning – the use of education technology, student operating in a second language and of course the whole issue of cultural adaptation – because this is a new culture for them.. So we put them through a process of culture induction - you know, adapting to a new culture (Dr. Joshua*, College Director)

The above individual as the leader of the institution carried on to explain about the importance of cultural adaptation to the institution. The induction sessions delivered prior to the commencement of the academic year were supposed to do this. As the following excerpts from the focus group of new faculty reveal, their perceptions of the induction sessions were less than ideal

Researcher: Tell me more about the induction program you had at the beginning of this year.

Gwenyth*: We had a little bit of orientation in the beginning on teaching in different cultures with (name of co-ordinator). She would provide us different scenarios and culture and we would discuss how to deal with them.

John*: (Name of the director) delivered that when we came in – don't interrupt the student – if they are praying don't touch the students, no man student should touch a female student, don't discuss any political issues, clear dos and don'ts.

Salah* Forget all the dos and don'ts – just be yourself – just remember to be Considerate - it is all about that professional as a human being. And treat your students as individuals.

- Hareb* I hated this session I am of Arab origin, and it was all stereotypical, here it's like any HEI, you get the motivated student and the not so motivated student..
- Salah* I would recommend to re-organise the whole induction thing..... so staff are relaxed and they don't have this picture in their mind –'oh! What is this? This is like a bogey man – but it's really not – they are really nice students and really nice bunch.

6.2.2 EFL and ICT provisions

The negative perception of the professional development provisions continued beyond induction program for the new academic staff. CLASS and ICDL are the key programs provided and mandated for new academics in the case institutions.

The CLASS program, a much more rigorous semester long program is designed to consciously contribute to the development of the new academics' awareness of second language acquisition, and specific skills and tips to simplify content for second language learners. However, as much as academic managers supported the CLASS program, so there was resistance amongst the academics themselves. The issue of resistance to CLASS was also mentioned earlier in chapter 5.

Lots of emphasis is placed on the supposedly lack of knowledge and skills about language awareness that content teachers have. While this may actually be true, however, (name of institution) doesn't realize the fundamental problem is most people here don't have firm grounding on teaching and learning period. (Kate* Focus group, Experienced academic)

Another interesting aspect to this whole CLASS program debate was that the academics lamented that it lacked alignment with their subject areas, being solely administered by the English department.

Interesting – the whole CLASS setup was 'bitter' to say the least. It had many sessions with different trainers, all of whom English teachers. The whole concept I think was to be able to deliver the appropriate level of English in our classrooms. And a lot of points were very debateable. I mean we had a lot of discussions in some of these sessions and even though we thought all of us thought they were debateable, the trainer standing in front of us didn't think so. So, that I didn't like... (Gwendolyn*, 'new' faculty, focus group).

...sometimes you cannot do that in IT, in Business, in Math, you just cannot do it. I mean given the course guides and the huge load of content and the timeframe it's just not feasible. The way they were prescribing 'how things are done in English' (Hareb*, 'New' Faculty, Focus group)

In having EFL experts facilitate the program, academic managers viewed this as positive, but the academics clearly felt that it required more interdisciplinary collaborative mentors to make the program more relevant for the multidisciplinary group involved. The faculty interviewed highly valued the 'communities of practice' in which they functioned and perceived that this would be a valuable site of development.

They assigned us English teachers as mentors and some of the people on the course didn't like this and requested to observe content teachers instead, which they thought would be more valuable to them. (John* Focus group, New Faculty)

I feel also that they should take a more whole system-wide approach to it – not just concentrate about the Language issue. For example, we should have a mentoring system within our own department. Ya, I just feel it's a much bigger issue than just delivering CLASS. All we saw were English teachers in the CLASS course, no content teachers at all. (Hareb* Focus Group, New Faculty)

As one of the new '*Emarati*' academics succinctly put it, "if I hadn't made a conscious effort in asking one of the math faculty to mentor me, I would not have made it until now". She went on to explain how she didn't find CLASS useful at all: "I don't see why I can't explain some complex idea in Arabic if I have to. We have an advantage.

Another major emphasis in the case institution professional development programs is Information and Communication Technology (ICT). As highlighted in chapter 3, the advent of technology and its impact on teaching and learning is unlikely to reverse in higher education institutions. Students of the 21st century require and expect their courses to integrate appropriate educational media. Information technology has been embraced with fervour in most UAE HE institutions, with some institutions being labelled 'laptop universities'. The case institution seem to be

incredibly aware of this factor and made great efforts to ensure that all academics had basic IT competencies - hence its insistence on completion of the ICDL⁵.

The emphasis on IT training was also frequently mentioned during the interviews with faculty. The majority of the faculty mentioned training in IT skills such as Photoshop, ICLD (International Computer Driving License) and WebCT (a commercial, online learning platform).

Most of the PD undertaken is about the use of IT to teach, rather than the use of IT for constructivist learning. Institution spends far too much time on the 'frills' and appearance of good teaching and learning and not giving teachers good basic grounding in appropriate learning and assessment theory to realize learning (except in specialist area of ESL). Therefore, no PD in teaching and learning has been undertaken. (Kate*, Focus group, Experienced faculty)

There are no professional academically trained teachers/trainers, no proper system. It is all superficial skills (mainly computers). ('Gwendolyn*', Focus group, New* faculty)

As mentioned, the use of IT was heavily emphasized in the case institution as seen in the PQA documents. The interview data indicated that faculty dissatisfaction was caused by a number of factors, including the emphasis on IT training and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) sessions. Some of the issues were found to be associated with a particular group of faculty, while others were more common to most of the faculty interviewed. For example, the issue of the institution requiring all 'new' faculty to the institution to take CLASS was more commonly discussed amongst the new joiners than the experienced faculty in the institution, as discussed in detail earlier.

However, beyond mastering new teaching strategies and new technologies, it seems that the academic managers and policy makers overlooked the fact that their academic faculty must first and foremost adopt new views of teaching and learning to be successful users of educational technologies. One academic manager in the interview revealed how the case institution purchased a virtual learning software which was in effect 'worthless' because the institution focused on the implementation

⁵ICDL is a global computer literacy program, which ensures basic knowledge of IT, and competency in using basic applications.

issue while neglecting the fact that a lot of academics did not have the pre-requisite knowledge for facilitating learning to use the software.

As discussed in chapter 3, Webb and Murphy (2000), clearly warn HEIs against taking a “purely technological route” (p.25) and heavily investing in the more tangible infrastructure without the appropriate discourse of university teaching. The case institution is a prime example. In their fervour for embracing technology, they have negated the importance of not merely using technology, but using technology to facilitate teaching and learning. Nobody can dispute the value and importance of ICT in recent times in all areas of education. Any successful PD strategy is expected to offer teachers the opportunity to integrate technology in the classroom, but this must not be focused on exclusively. The Western HEIs’ emphasis on ICT, I suspect, has fuelled this IT focused development. Unfortunately, as Webb and Murphy (2000) warn, these ‘quick solutions’ are in danger of failing and being abandoned for the next new fad or trend. Therefore, limiting or focusing teacher PD to just improving IT skills and knowledge is a narrow view and a setback in teachers’ professional development to improving teaching.

6.2.3 Expatriation

Although the institution endeavoured to provide support in the first year of the expatriate academics’ term, there seem to be a number of challenges surrounding expatriation. As mentioned in chapter 3, there are now a number of published studies on the increasingly common phenomenon of academic expatriates (Richardson and Zikic, 2007; Richardson and McKenna, 2001). Although expatriate academics are highly sought after and remunerated generously in the UAE HE sector, many have the perception of the ‘tight rope walker’ as elaborated by the Richardson and McKenna’s (2001) study.

A number of my expatriate academics respondents in the interview mentioned a fear of their precarious position in the institution, and felt that they did not want to ‘rock the boat’ for fear of being told to ‘get the first flight back home’. Mercer (2005) claims that CPD is paradoxical in the UAE HE environment which has the funds to employ the ‘best’ teachers, and the “legal right to dismiss any of them for any reason” (p.273). As one of the experienced academic faculty members explains in the following extract, most things are enforced and the choice is either to do as told or repatriate to one’s home country. A number of my participants in the study claimed

that they feared that they were in a precarious environment where losing their job would force them to leave the country altogether and uproot their entire family. One participant compared this fear to a “dark cloud hanging over their head”

what I am trying to say is if you make it a choice they will take it and they will enforce it so we might not have a choice of having a choice do you know what I mean? This is my 6th year here, there are no choices: you either do something or you are in the next plane home. (Batool* Experienced academic, focus group)

In the interview with the expatriate faculty (new and experienced), there was an overwhelming sense of PD being imposed on them and the fear associated with the perceived ‘top-down’ management-led professional development.

I think courses in teaching and learning would in principle be a good idea, since most of us as you know come from the industry, with little knowledge on education, but like everything here, if it happens it will probably be jammed down our throats. like CLASS and ICDL, and that will just defeat the purpose. (Shaima* Experienced Academic, focus group).

The interview with the ‘new’ academic staff revealed similar sentiments of being a ‘tight rope walker’.

It’s nothing said officially but colleagues having been saying this - don’t make problems, don’t tell them if you have a problem, they don’t want problems – problems with teaching, problems with assessments, just make sure the students are doing the course and everything runs smoothly and you will be ok here. (Gwendolyn*, New faculty*, focus group)

I think it is in any environment where you have hierarchies of management (John* New faculty*, focus group)

A number of the academic managers interviewed clearly articulated that the environment was not intended to provide high cost development programs, since the interview process and frequent classroom observation are supposed to ‘weed out’ the poor teachers.

I realise this is not the ideal situation, but the reality is we interview quite intensively to ensure people have the right skills mix, and when here we provide some few sessions, but definitely no heavy investments. For a few people who don’t make it past probation we just ‘write them off’ (Rodney*Chair or EFL)

The assumption here is that this ‘hire-fire’ policy removes the necessity for staff development. As one academic manger commented,

Partly because there is a little bit of mentality in that we have spent a lot of money hiring faculty to come here, they should be able to do the job. We shouldn’t have to develop them anymore. (Jane* Chair of Health Sciences)

6.3 Initial programs for new *Emarati* faculty members

With regard to the UAE, there was no clear and specific policy in respect to nationalising the academic staff during the formulation and implementation of the case institution. As figure 5.1 indicates, UAE nationals represent only about 4% of all teaching staff, albeit more than the national average seen in Table 2.1 in chapter 2. Table 6.2 below shows the distribution of UAE nationals in different job categories in the case institution. The highest percentage of UAE nationals are in support staff positions (clerical, administrative jobs). Nationals holding teaching faculty positions represent less than 5% of all faculty.

Position	Percent held by nationals
Head of Dept	0.32%
Supervisor	0.32%
Teaching faculty	4.20%
Non-teaching faculty	0.96%
Support staff	5.13%
Temporary support staff	3.21%

Table 6.2: Distribution of National staff according to position

One of the reasons for the low numbers of Emarati academics and academic managers is the stringent criteria for selecting academic staff in many HEIs in the UAE. Many universities and colleges (at least the federally funded ones) stipulate that teaching staff must possess a minimum of 3-5 years tertiary experience, in addition to the relevant qualifications. According to Mercer (2005), policies such as recruitment and appraisals in Gulf HEIs were set up to ensure that the students get the very best of teachers, mainly to counteract the ‘abysmal’ formal education they have had. However, these stringent recruitment policies have in effect ‘backfired’ when HEIs attempt to recruit *Emaratis* for faculty positions, because they are unlikely to have had the pre-requisite five years teaching experience. However as some of the academic

managers admitted in their interviews, to strictly follow recruitment policy regarding teaching experience is not always feasible. Most of the managers interviewed admitted to recruiting faculty at times directly from industry without any teaching experience, mainly due to the specific technical nature of the subject.

It was quite clear from the interview that there was no real commitment on the part of the institution's policy makers to hire and train *Emarati* faculty. The Emarati faculty themselves on the other hand felt marginalized and 'unwanted' as one of the faculty member commented.

6.3.1 Nationalisation

With regard to the UAE HE sector during the formulation and implementation of the higher education institutions, there was no clear and specific policy in respect to nationalising the academic staff and hence providing for the sustainability of higher education in the country. Interestingly, the *Emarati* faculty interviewed felt equally insecure as expatriates in the case institution, although not for the same reasons as their expatriate counterparts. Most perceived that they were marginalized and not adequately supported for.

Although the institution's main mandate was to prepare *Emarati* youths to take positions in their country, this mandate did not unfortunately extend to positions within the higher education institutions, particularly the newer ones. As indicated earlier in table 6.2, in the case institution, the majority of the faculty are from the West and UAE nationals comprise less than 5% of academic faculty. The highest percentage of UAE nationals are in support staff positions (clerical, administrative jobs).

The main issues as perceived by the *Emarati* faculty were access to faculty positions in the case institution, as well as developmental activities provided for nationals for career development. The management I interviewed, however, claimed that Emarati are encouraged to join the institution and are provided special support, and funded for their professional development needs.

....so we would probably do something like that for our national teachers – who may be hired – they don't have any teaching experience. So, we either not hire them or hire them and put them through a formal teaching training programme. (Robert* Associate Director)

Another academic manager commented that nationals are given special arrangement and support :

...for example uh this year we hired someone a – national who was working in financial services industry and she didn't have any teaching experience but – she was interested in teaching – we wanted someone from that sector so we brought her in – we put her under reduced teaching mode and we started her mentoring and shadowing. So we have a programme for her... (Dr. Joshua*, College Director)

There was obviously a compromise made when this national was hired, and some sort of ad hoc initiative was provided to assist her with her teaching and integrate her into her faculty role. Later on, he clearly admitted there were inadequate resources for *Emiritization* initiatives.

These are local initiatives, we don't have anything in the system but we should. It should be – resourced and it isn't - but we don't have enough money to do what needs to be done. (Dr. Joshua*, College Director)

Although the majority of the academic managers interviewed mentioned the importance of Emirating the faculty, there seems to be a lot of rhetoric associated with this as well.

Robert* When I joined the (name of the institution) 10 -11 years ago, I was one of a part of a team in Abu Dhabi looking at training schemes for young nationals who want to join us. It died a death. I never heard of it after the first 2 or 3 years.

Researcher: Do you know why that happened?

Robert* I think – you know this expression – they pay lip service to it. We say one thing and do another.

6.3.2 Marginalization and non-committal

The *Emirati* faculty interviewed, perceived that the academic managers and policy makers were purposefully excluding them from meaningful participation in the case institution.

Similarly, the *Emirati* faculty felt that the institution was not committed to them.

Aisha* It's like the chicken or the egg conundrum. You can't get a job without the experience but you can't get the experience without the job.

Researcher: Why do you think that way?

Reem* There is a conspiracy theory here. Everybody is looking out for their job. Although I have voiced my interest in going into teaching ... ehm and in fact after a lot of noise, was given a few classes to teach last year. (Her manager's name) observed my teaching and gave me feedback and so on. A year later, I haven't been given the opportunity to teach again. (inaudible) I have a Masters in Information Systems from the University of Leeds you know. I think that is part of the ploy for us to quit, like (names of national teachers who had left the institution).

Reem*, a support staff member, has worked for the case institution for over three years. She lamented that her manager did not want to provide her the opportunity to teach despite having UK qualifications (as mentioned previously, in the newer federal institutions the preference for western credentials is an unspoken requirement).

The above discussion reflects the distrust that is present between the *Emarati* faculty and their expatriate managers. Because expatriates are involved in planning higher education and manpower development, several differing approaches are imposed on the hiring of staff for higher education in the country. However, it is not clearly articulated in these policies how the national workforce should be integrated.

On the issue of their development as teachers, numerous *Emarati* faculty mentioned the lack of mentorship, systematic support and financial commitment on the part of the institution.

Like for me, coming from a banking background – I don't know even how to prepare a lesson plan – I am teaching myself right now and trying to seek help from other teachers, like asking ... is this the right way – Like how do you write what you are going to teach? – we need lots of help (Salha* New Emirati faculty, focus group)

6.4 Continuing Professional development (CPD)

The issue of CPD relates to the second parts of the research questions 2 and 3. Institutionally centralized academic development initiatives provided discrete piece-meal workshops, which mainly served management functions such as ensuring the faculty were aware of EFL challenges, and data collection procedures for the PQA. Both the interview data and open question data from the questionnaires revealed that teachers' institutional PD sessions were conducted as a type of 'crisis management' response by the administration. This was seen clearly in the training sessions dominated by a training model for teachers' PD with a heavy bias in favour of

computer skills at the expense of other PD initiatives. During the interviews, all the faculty interviewed (experienced and inexperienced) were asked to comment on the specific institution's provision and their experiences.

An examination of the staff responses to the questions about their current provisions indicated that the provision was quite limited. The general impression gained was that faculty expected more educational development opportunities than the case institution was providing. This is reflected in Table 6.1 below. In the meantime, the faculty appeared to be both discouraged by the limited provision and critical of what was in existence. In fact, some of the academic managers reflected similar sentiments about the lack of meaningful educational professional development initiatives.

In the case institution provision for continuing professional development for teaching and learning is not only patchy and scarce but it is very non-committal as well.

Experienced teachers are required to take ICDL training (for the those who did not complete it in their first year) and attend a few in house PD sessions. Other than this, nothing systematic except our weekly PD session. (Shaima*, Experienced Faculty, Focus group)

Why should we be spending – we bring people because they have the expertise, we pay them wellI don't think we should invest in much. (Dr. Johua, College Director)

We wanted things on psychology of learners, disruptive students, management issues, students' learning styles. Quite funny that's essentially never been taken on board. Instead we get the same IT competency rubbish shoved down our throat as Kate* mentioned. (Batool* Experienced faculty, focus group)

A number of the academics interviewed were more concerned about professional development funds for their disciplines

I tried to apply for some funding to attend an IT conference - but I did not get approval, got some lame excuse of ... no funds available...”
(Hareb* New academic, focus group)

I am assuming it is this lack of interest and awareness in continuing professional development in teaching and learning that caused the following survey results.

Although the academics reported that, in the case institution, provision for professional development (PD) was less than they would have preferred, there was no great difference between what was provided and their aspirations.

6.4.1 Programs provisions

Section 2 of the questionnaire lists 25 educational professional development activities, divided into four clusters: Curriculum (three items); Adult Learning (ten items); Assessment (eight items); and VLE - Virtual Learning Environment (four items). After every cluster there was an open-ended question for further comments. The way the questionnaire was designed allowed analysis of the extent to which separate aspects of PD are viewed (current provision) and the extent to which 'more of the same' (aspiration) is perceived as being important. The difference between 'aspiration' and 'current' provision offers a measure of satisfaction with the development. Table 6.3 shows the difference of the means of the four clusters (Curriculum, adult learning, assessment and VLE), with a graphical representation of this in figure 6.1. Not surprisingly, considering the academics 'disinterest' in pedagogy as highlighted in the themes above, the difference between the means (current and aspirant provisions) were quite low, averaging about 1, which indicates a small difference.

	Current level of provision	Aspirant level of provision	Difference of means
Area of curriculum	1.2	2.4	1.3
Area of adult learning	1.1	2.3	1.3
Area of Assessment	1.1	2.3	1.2
Area of VLE	1.7	2.4	0.7

Table 6.3: Differences of the means of the 4 clusters

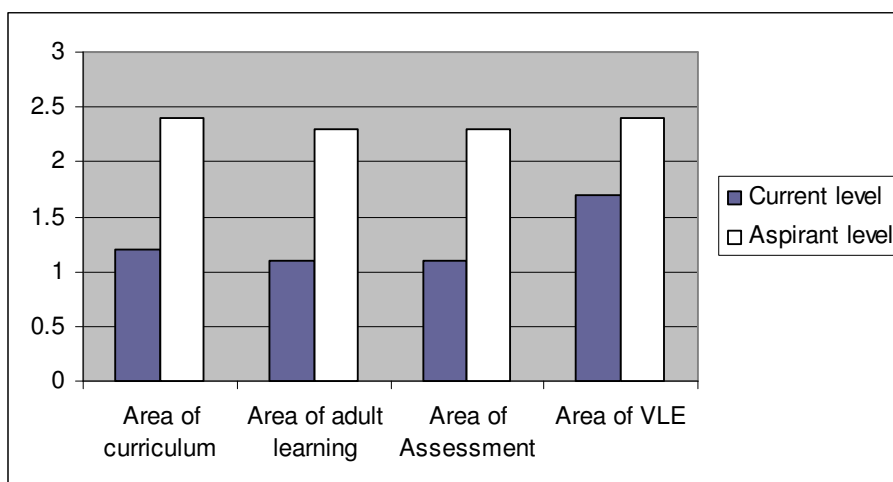


Figure 6.1: Means for current levels and aspirant levels of provision in four areas of teaching development

As highlighted in chapter 4, the questionnaire aimed to find the gap between the current provision and the aspirant provisions. Within the limited provision, it was possible to categorize the activities into two broad groups: programs to boost faculty use of information technology (such as ICDL, WebCT and Photoshop), English as a Foreign Language (EFL) training organized for new faculty in the institution (such as the semester long CLASS); and, for experienced faculty, more stand-alone sessions on aspects of teaching content to second language learners.

Comparing this data with figures from the case institution's professional development documents revealed that the use of ICT featured very strongly in the provisions, and that there had been an increase in the number of teaching and learning workshops as well (see figure 6.2 below). Unfortunately, the PD documents I received from the office of quality assurance provided very little information beyond the numbers and title of the sessions, so I was not able to ascertain what the actual focus of the sessions provided were. The titles included sessions on assessments, curriculum planning, and critical thinking. There was no clear rationale of why these particular topics were provided. The PD provision documents also revealed that a large number of sessions were dedicated to quality assurance

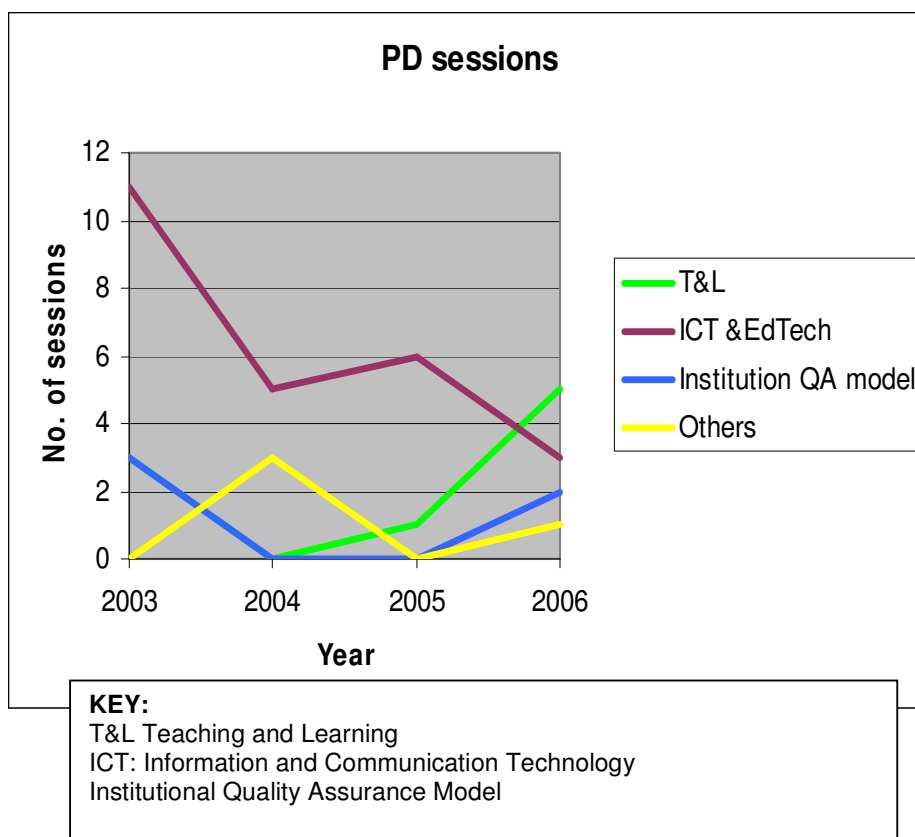


Figure 6.2: Case institution PD sessions provision by year.

CPD for teaching and learning in the case institution is normally perceived as going through another ‘hoop’, where CPD activities are restricted and driven by the parameters of the review process, whereby all CPD activities are related to short time planning in order to ‘pass the PQA review’. The result of this superficial ‘passing the test’ approach is that CPD gets focused on discrete non-lasting changes eg:

- 1) Academic supervisors are coached on ‘snapshot’ observation sessions- the do’s and don’ts of this
- 2) Uses of outdated appraisal systems
- 3) Initiating limited ad hoc sessions on assessments
- 4) Providing to the reviews lists of courses attended by the staff

Ironically these review oriented kinds of CPD are quickly recognized for their superficiality and short term approach, and scepticism amongst academics interviewed as illustrated in some of their quotes was rife.

6.4.2 Teaching experience and PD needs

The data from section 2 of the survey was further analysed to provide more detailed information. First, I looked at the mean differences between current and aspirant levels of PD according to the respondents' total HE experience (see figure 6.3). Those individuals new to the teaching (0-3 years), had high mean differences in all areas except VLE, while the 7-9 years total HE experience group had only low mean differences. Interestingly the 10+ year group had the highest mean differences in all the four areas.

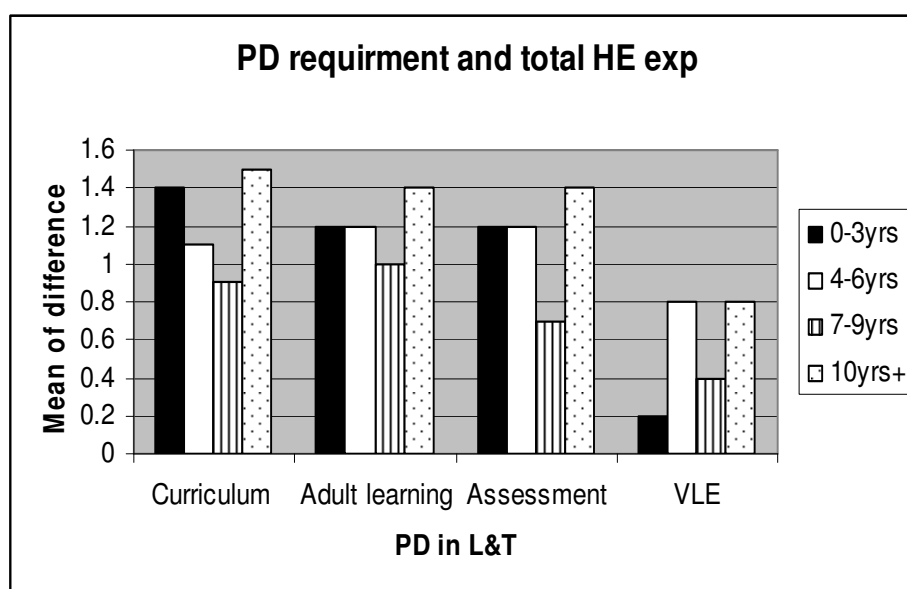


Figure 6.3: Means of difference between current and aspirant PD in the four areas in relation to experience in current institution.

This data is congruent with Lueddeke's (2003) study, which concluded that academics in their early careers and those in late careers are more likely to be interested in academic development. Lueddeke' (2003) explanation for the mid-career group's disinterest in academic development was their fear of confronting old patterns of behaviour, and their fear of change.

6.4.3 Program Quality Assurance (PQA)

As mentioned in chapter 2, in the UAE, there is a history of little state intervention in federally funded higher education. There are no external national quality systems and no serious financial pressures requiring higher education institutions to demonstrate value for money or the quality of their education

processes. This is probably because the country is still in the capacity-building stage, and thus the quality requirement for most institutions is to produce employable *Emaratis*. There seems to be less of a requirement to ensure that the expensive expatriate academic staff they employ are actually competent teachers and that development processes are in place to ensure teaching excellence.

The case institution has in place a system of program quality assurance (PQA), that states that the primary emphasis of the quality system is the “quality of student learning outcomes and experience” (Case institution, PQA document). The institution’s PQA program is implemented at the level of academic program teams, which are required to demonstrate the quality of their work through keeping evidence of teaching, learning, employer satisfaction etc. The teams’ activities are then reported annually to a quality assurance committee through a written report.

As mentioned in section 6.2.3 (see figure 6.2), a large number of sessions are provided to faculty to ensure that they understand the requirement of the PQA system and the data that they need to collect for this exercise. There was quite a variation of responses to questions about the quality of teaching issue. The academic managers seem divided concerning the teaching quality processes of the institutions.

We have in place, I think, one of the best quality assurance processes in the system. It has something to do with all the way from the hiring process, through the probationary year, through the evaluation by supervisors of teachers, through the support that we give them even individually or collectively, through professional development programme. So, I think we have all the markers of quality assurance and that we do this very well.
(Dr. Joshua, College Director)

The QA system in this institution does not formally address the quality of teaching. The way quality of teaching is assessed is normally through the assessment of students of the individual teachers ... So if a faculty has problem with students then we go back and look why students are having problems, example they might complain about the speed of the lectures, the clarity of the information etc. Only then does the intervention begin based on the feedback. So it’s not a *proactive approach*, it’s a very *retroactive approach* I must say. If it ain’t broke don’t fix it kind of attitude” (Dr.Ayesha* Dean of programs)

However, in the focus group for academics, I enquired about the kinds of things they learned in the quality assurance sessions. Most of the academics interviewed agreed that the sessions focused mainly on data collection (student performance, progression and attrition etc.) along with ensuring that the information was formatted to suit the

reporting requirements. The academic faculty seem to have a more unanimous view of the PQA process as a “futile exercise of data collection”, as one experienced faculty commented. Other general comments about the PQA processes refer to it as “judgmental” rather than “developmental”, linked to contract renewals and a “mechanical processes” rather than reflective. As Newton (2000) suggests, frontline academics frequently perceive the quality assurance processes as “feeding the beast” (p.155) rather than actual continuous quality enhancement.

The comment above from Dr.Ayesha* is very much in agreement with Biggs’ (2001) argument about the need for quality assurance to be both retrospective and prospective. It seems that the PQA process of the institution needs to be more prospective; that is, concerned with the present and the future quality of teaching, and this fits in with the purpose of the institution.

6.5 Summary of findings

As outlined in this chapter, there is limited PD provision for academic faculty in the case institution. PD was mainly in the area of EFL and ICT, without the underlying discourse of teaching and learning. It was indicated in chapter 3 that educational development units (EDU) are commonplace in most western higher education institutions. There was no such unit in the case institution and there was clear indication from the management interviewed that this was neither necessary nor desired. Professional development provision and selection was left firmly in the hands of a few departmental volunteers to come up with recommendations for optional programs. Induction programs, however, were more controlled and centralized: the quality assurance department planned, delivered and managed these.

The academic faculty themselves did not perceive PD in teaching and learning as being as essential as their disciplinary development. The faculty lamented their lack of autonomy in some respects, and disciplinary affiliation remains strong. The high number of expatriate academics and their precarious employment status, pose special challenges in the case institution. While the minority national faculty members lack systematic developmental programs in teaching and learning, the institution does provide them with ad hoc apprenticeship style programs.

The analysis in this chapter illustrates that academic development in the UAE lacks wide acceptance, funding provision and status. Irrespective of the merits of the

arguments about the importance of university teaching, and the need to provide staff with effective support, nothing will happen unless national and institutional policies and structures are modified (to improving teaching) and the proposals are congruent with academic culture.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

This chapter draws conclusions from my study. In particular, it serves three purposes:

- to summarize the overall findings in relation to the research questions proposed in chapter 1
- to highlight some of the cultural and institutional challenges in academic development facing federal higher education institutions in the UAE
- to outline an integrated holistic model and provide suggestions and recommendations for more effective academic/educational development as a way forward
- to briefly highlight the limitations of the study

In considering the limitations of the dissertation and its themes, some further related issues are outlined for research.

7.2 Summary of the research findings

It was pointed out in chapter 1 that this study had two focal points. The first was attitudes and perceptions amongst academics and academic leaders about the issue of professionalizing teaching in UAE higher education. The second concerned the specific academic development provision in the case institution, in terms of approaches, rationale and staff perception of this provision. The key research questions asked were:

- 1) *How do academics, senior managers and policy makers conceptualize the 'professionalization' of teaching in higher education in the UAE?*
- 2) *What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare both 'new' and experienced expatriate faculty to enable them to deal with issues arising from the socio-cultural, and linguistic characteristics of the Emarati tertiary learner?*
- 3) *What initial and CPD programs are currently provided by the case institution to prepare the minority of new and experienced indigenous faculty in order to support the government's Emiratization strategy?*

4) *What are the perceptions of academics and senior managers about the implementation of a systematic formal training programme of learning and teaching in HE in the UAE?*

Although in the case institution there are numerous formal and very stringent processes in place to appraise academic staff in a bid to monitor teaching effectiveness, little has been done to promote teaching development through necessary training and continuing development. As Chan (1998) states, “teaching development has traditionally been considered an individual matter and academics are assumed to develop into their teaching roles through practice” (p.1). This statement applies well to the UAE HE sector. This laissez-faire attitude appears inadequate in comparison with the hundreds of training programs around the world provided to academics to support them in their teaching roles. Teaching in higher education is not anymore mere passive lecturing; academics are required to be learner facilitators, assessment experts, curriculum innovators and course evaluators amongst other roles. Hence, more systematic and structured approaches are necessary to meet the increasing demands and complexity of teaching in universities and colleges. Numerous studies of teacher development programmes have supported this view. An accreditation scheme that is accepted internationally can help in the UAE; not so much by standardizing practice, but in identifying the principles and values that underpin higher education, and setting parameters that practitioners can use to formulate and evaluate their work as well as appreciate that of others.

The main issues surrounding academic development provisions in the UAE HE sector can be explained as three main tensions. The three tensions are as follows:

1. National and institutional aims of higher education
2. Academic identity
3. Professional development provisions

These are diagrammatically represented below in figure 7.1. The three tensions are presented as 3 inter-related circles. The boxes surrounding the three tensions are the key themes identified in chapter 5 and 6 (Refer to tables 5.1 and 6.1). These key themes or factors that surround the three tensions might fit into one, two or three of the key tensions. For example the theme entitled ‘content expert versus teaching’ touches upon the issue of academic identity and institutional aims. This is due to the fact that the way faculty/academics orient themselves depends on their identities, the

department and institutional culture in which they find themselves. The remaining section will detail some of these tensions.

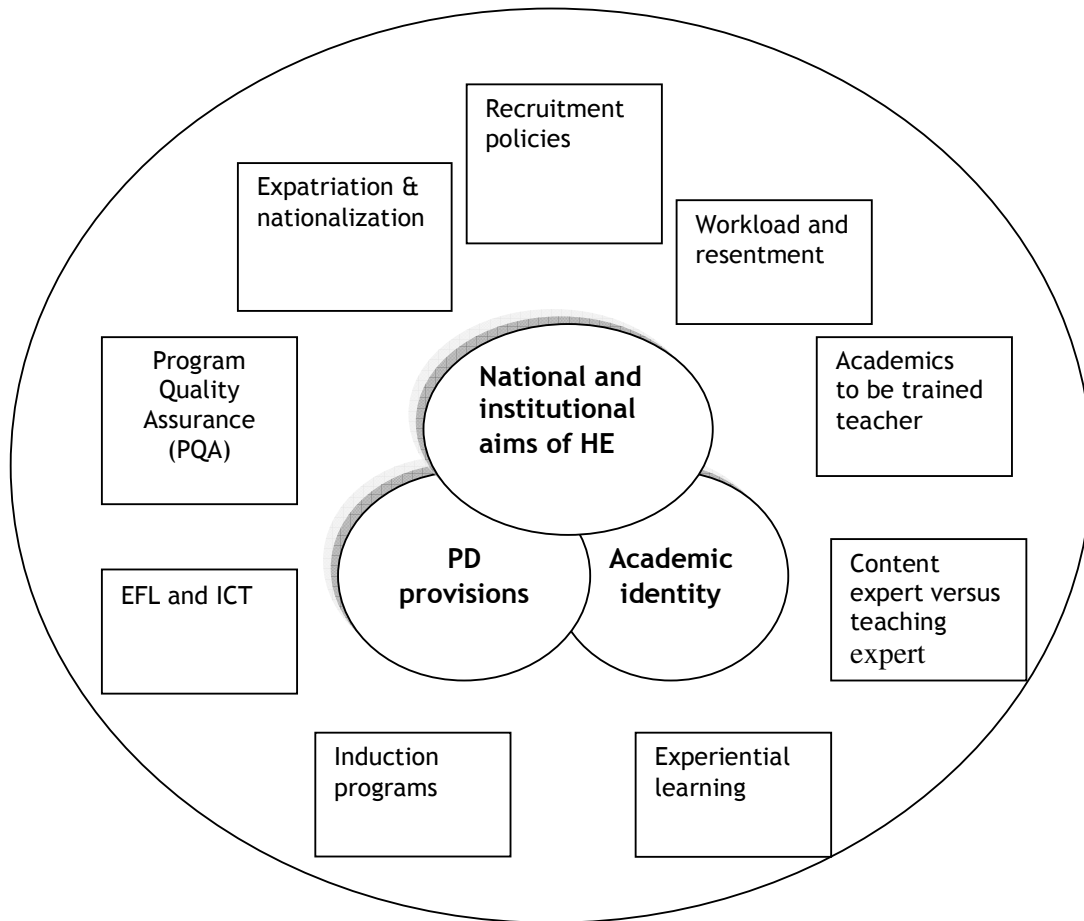


Figure 7.1: Key findings linked to the research themes

7.2.1 National and institutional aims of UAE HE

As mentioned in chapter 3, Land (2001) in his research revealed that academic development approaches are influenced to great extent by institutional culture. Institutional cultures include factors such as: type of institution, leadership and management style, mission of institution, history of institution, source of income and staff and student profile and institutional structures.

The national and institutional aims of higher education in the UAE impacts and hence touches upon the issue of the recruitment policies of HEIs, developing the expatriate and national workforce and the issue of workload and resentment amongst academics.

Therefore this key finding is related to the 3 main themes identified in chapters 5 and 6, which are:

- a) recruitment policies
- b) expatriation and nationalization
- c) workload and resentment

a) Recruitment policies:

As highlighted in chapters 1 and 2, higher education in the UAE has a central role in the preparation of *Emaratis* to contribute to and lead the development of the country. To fulfil this role, national higher education must pursue three important strategic goals: enrol all *Emaratis*, assure quality, and sustain the UAE economy. The rapidly growing economy has forced HEI to churn out employable graduates. In a relatively young country, the UAE HE sector has had to look to the west to provide them with academics to staff their universities and colleges. As Mercer (2005) claims, there is a seeming paradox in the UAE when it comes to professional development. They employ the best teachers on limited renewable contracts with the assumption that this removes the need for providing professional development. As new appointees in the UAE HE sector, these academics are required to prove their teaching competency in the interview process and later on through referees. During the probation year, teachers are frequently observed in their classroom, albeit through what I would call merely ‘snap-shot’ sessions. Any that do not make it through in their first year are “written off” as one academic manager casually put it. This new form of casualization of the academic workforce was clearly evident in the discussions of both the academic staff themselves and their managers.

b) Expatriation and nationalization

The issue of expatriation and nationalization is the another key tension regarding professionalizing teaching in UAE higher education sector. Expatriate academics, as highlighted in chapter1 and 5, form the majority of all academics in the newer higher education institutions. Expatriate academic faculty perceived themselves as marginalized in their professional development, due to their positions as expatriate academics under contractual agreements. The case institution’s policies and practices

were conceived as being imposed rather than participatory. Staff participation in policy-making and professional development emerged as inadequate, if not non-existent.

Richardson and McKenna (2001) and Richardson and Zikic's (2007) work on challenges of expatriate academics strongly reverberated in the case institution. The feelings of 'outsiderness' and 'tight rope walker' were common amongst the academics interviewed. Institutionally provided professional development was commonly criticised as 'top-down', or "jammed down our throats", as one academic lamented. An accredited course in teaching and learning, if it were to be introduced, would be made compulsory. A perception of their precariousness in the institution was a real eye opener for me, and I suspect the uneasiness in their host institution caused the 'cultural distance' between themselves and their minority *Emarati* counterparts.

Interestingly, the *Emarati* staff also perceived themselves as marginalised and un-catered for, not unlike the unsecured positions of their expatriate fellow academics. *Emirati* academics (majority of whom are women in the case institution) perceived themselves as lacking career growth in the case institution and marginalized as the local minority. As Abdulla (20006) succinctly put it, "the dearth of women in positions of power has undermined their ability to exert influence over economic and social decision-making structures"(p.2).

Although the majority of the academic managers mentioned that 'more should be done for UAE national staff', there seemed to be no commitment or financial investment in this regard. Case institution professional development provision was lacking both in quantity, form, scope and resources. Yet, it appeared that there was a considerable demand for attention to and investment in academic development for both expatriate and national academics.

The institution should harness the strength of the academics' communities of practice, bring together our more experienced Western academics and younger novice *Emarati* academics, and create an intercultural learning community of practice in order to create a culturally sensitive and responsive higher education environment.

c) Workload and resentment

This issue of workload has to be addressed if academic faculty are to undertake any meaningful professional development in UAE HEIs. Caffarella and Zinn (1999) elaborated on a conceptual model that looked at factors that impede or support faculty pursuing PD. A key one identified was institutional factors. This domain focuses on institutional structures and mechanisms that impede or support faculty professional development. These include on the one hand supporting mechanisms such as appropriate PD provisions, opportunities and funds and hindering factors such as insufficient time provided for PD due to workload assigned.

Prior to 1996, academic development in the UK HEIs was perceived as voluntary, piecemeal and perhaps even atheoretical (Candy, 1996). We are currently at this cross-road in the UAE HE sector. Within this era of increased accountability, academics in the UAE will have to get out of their 'ivory towers' and accept that academic development is inevitable.

7.2.2 Academic identity

Within this tension, 'academic identity' - importance of disciplinary expertise - versus teaching, academics and training to be teachers and the issue of experiential learning were the main issues identified.

Turning academics or subject specialists into teachers was perceived with the same disdain as Rowland et al. (1998) found in the interviews with academics for their controversial paper. There was consensus that academics aligned themselves within their disciplines, and educational development was seen as 'tips and skills' of teaching and thus received scant support. The case institution emphasis on ICT skills and EFL issues more than teaching and learning and disciplinary PD for academics perpetuated this perception. The mandatory CLASS induction program for recently appointed 'content teachers' was criticized for being highly skewed towards language learning, hence not meeting the needs of the academics' disciplinary professional development.

Becher's (1989) concept of the 'academic tribe' rang true in the UAE HE sector like many other western HE systems. There was strong disciplinary affiliation amongst the academic interviewed. Like the works of Jenkins (1996), Healey (2003), McGettrick (2005), Blackmore and Blackwell (2006) and Lueddeke (2003) highlighted in chapter 3, disciplinary development was perceived to take precedent

over teaching prowess amongst academics in the UAE HE sector. Without government intervention, as was the case of the recommendation of the UK Dearing report (1997) to set up an institute to accredit higher education teachers, it seems unlikely the status of teaching in the UAE HE sector is likely to see rapid change.

a) Experiential learning

Learning to teach through experience was perceived to be sufficient amongst the academics interviewed. Weimer's (2001) "wisdom of practice" highlighted in chapter 3, was one of the assumptions that devalue teaching in higher education. In the case institution, this unsystematic, unplanned 'training' for teaching was deemed to be sufficient for generating appropriate pedagogical knowledge and for its beneficial application in actual classroom practice. The issue to experience in teaching was taken a notch higher in the UAE federal institutions, in that, as highlighted in chapter 5, the case institution required job applicants to have at least 3 years experience in tertiary teaching.

The experience in teaching gained from their own home country (normally Western HE institutions) was deemed to be sufficient to teach in the UAE HE sectors. The academic managers interviewed emphasized that the interview was supposed to gauge applicants' teaching ability before they are employed, and any professional development thereafter was just for the purpose of acculturation (getting a brief understanding of the challenges of students operating in a second language).

The problems associated with this kind of experiential 'wisdom of practice' knowledge are that "experiential knowledge influences pedagogical thought and action in some less-than-desirable ways" (Wiemer, 2001, p.45). With time, teachers learn from their mistakes and adjust, but this kind of experiential learning is quite intuitive: "feelings in our guts dictate what we do and don't do in the classroom" (p.46). The result is that most teachers are unable to be explicit about their theoretical frameworks or articulate their instructional choices in terms of empirical educational research: 'I've tried this and I know it works' seems to be the premise underlying most academics' educational frameworks

Higher education experts ascertain that those who view that competency in teaching can be based solely on work experience is that they are taking a simplistic view about teaching. Experience cannot be a sole strategy for higher educators' professional growth as teachers.

A possible framework (detailed in chapter 3) might be to adopt Viskovic's (2006) community of practice framework for supporting tertiary teachers' workplace learning. Utilizing this framework enables a more holistic approach to harness teachers' informal learning within their communities and their institution.

7.2.3 PD provisions

PD provisions in the case institution are the result of the other two tensions mentioned earlier, institutional factors and academic identity. As a result of the other two tensions, PD provisions in the case institution are focused on:

- a) Program quality assurance of the institution
- b) EFL and ICT
- c) Induction programs

a) Program Quality Assurance (PQA)

An important institutional goal as mentioned in chapter 6, is to ensure that a quality education is provided to the students. The program quality assurance process in the case institution is supposed to provide this. The institution's QA process was more 'retrospective' (Biggs, 2001) ensuring value for money by measuring the number of employed graduates rather the prospective - ensuring fitness for purpose and quality enhancement. Academic development, although perceived to be important by academic managers because the majority of their academics come from industry, received neither the necessary intervention nor appropriate funding due to the recruitment policy of the institution. Although professional development was embedded in the quality development unit, it was not linked to the quality assurance processes of the institution in any systematic way.

b) Information Communication Technology (ICT) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

In the case institution, there was a predominance of IT training and a huge emphasis placed on obtaining competency in IT through the ICDL certification. There is no contention that the impact of technology in teaching and learning is likely to grow. Students of the 21st century require and expect their courses to integrate appropriate educational media. However, teachers whose teaching conception was teacher centred with an emphasis of acquisition of facts by students are likely to use educational media inappropriately; recording lectures and producing knowledge based

questions. Educational media will only facilitate learning when there is a changed conception of teaching from teacher centred to student centred (Webb and Murphy, 2000). Therefore in the case institution, the predominance of IT training and obtaining competency certificate in IT through ICDL is unlikely to change the faculty's conception of teaching and learning. Webb and Murphy (2000) warn that institutions that take a 'purely technological route' (p.25) normally invest heavily in the IT infrastructure without the appropriate discourse of teaching and learning.

Similarly investing in second language awareness courses as was revealed in the case institution, with the hope that western academics might be able to adopt their teaching to the students' language competency is yet to be tested. Student centred teaching requires the teacher to be aware of their students' prior learning experience, socio-economic background, language competency among other things, this so as to provide meaningful learning experiences. Students comment Webb and Murphy (2000) are more than 'cognitive receptacles' they are socio-cultural beings, with responsibilities and obligations (especially in the case of increasing number of mature students). All these imperatives require a different teacher from that of a traditional "teacher centred, didactic, content –driven, 'sink or swim' curriculum" (p.19)

c) Induction programs

The induction programs for new academics in the case institution again focused on second language awareness courses rather than cross-cultural issues of teaching and learning. Due to their international connections, affiliations, values and goals, and predominance of 'western' academics, some would argue that UAE HEIs do not differ significantly from their counterparts in Western countries. However, I would argue the contrary. The influence of a different culture, the economic situation and political pressures produce a unique cross-cultural teaching and learning environment, rather than a perceived minor alteration of current Western practice, which in turn produces a different conception of teaching and learning. The academic culture in the UAE strongly reflects the traditional Arab-Islamic culture, and this in turn influences not only the culture of teaching and learning, but also the possibilities for effective faculty development initiatives. It is by recognizing and valuing, rather than denying local characteristics, that the universities and colleges in the UAE can achieve the kind of excellence that the UAE HE policy makers so clearly value. In considering any faculty development initiatives to enhance teaching effectiveness

there is a need to consider those special aspects of Arab culture which appear to underlie the approaches to teaching and learning of the student body at large.

For example, it is essential for Western academics to use the students' own cultural learning approaches to achieving learning outcomes, such as small-group and collaborative tasks. Therefore, any developmental work needs to look closely at the research on culture, learning and group dynamics. Kennedy (2002) explains that it is important to build what he calls a "consciousness bridge" between students' previous learning experience and new approaches. The literature on student learning in higher education (Prosser and Trigwell, 2001; Biggs 2003) highlight the way that students approach their learning based not only on their previous experience but also on their current context (see section 3.2). The current approach to academic development does not seem to address this, concentrating almost exclusively on the issue of second language learners.

7.2.4 Reconceptualising academic development in the UAE HE sector

The UAE sector spends a considerable amount of money on its public federally funded HE system. This is further exacerbated by the policy of recruiting vast numbers of expatriate educators, who are remunerated generously. Therefore, it is in the best interest of universities and other HEIs to not only have well-developed recruitment policies but also effective and efficient staff development policies. In many Western HE sectors, the development of systematic systems of initial training and CPD are closely linked to quality assurance systems and accountability agenda for those countries (Schmidt, 1998). If the UAE higher education sector were to adopt a tertiary teacher accreditation system, initially it would require setting up a professional body to oversee the accreditation requirements by linking this to the some sort of external quality assurance agency.

Educational development in the UAE unarguably must be underpinned by a good understanding of what constitutes good teaching and learning from the Western research perspective. However, any sustainable teacher development initiative needs to develop a parallel knowledge base concerning Arab-Islamic influences on teaching and learning, and what constitutes a good learning environment in the Arabic sense. An understanding of Arabic-Islamic culture and values in the UAE is also essential

for developing a broad framework for understanding the behaviors of students and for planning effective teaching development strategies, which go beyond the dos and don'ts and EFL awareness courses normally propagated during induction periods for new academics in the UAE. The inherent argument in all of this is that it is not whether it's a move towards flexible learning, student-centredness, lifelong learning or the use of educational technology; learning will only be facilitated through a conception of teaching as more than transfer of information (Leuddeke, 2003). Learning should be conceived of as the construction of knowledge by the learners, and this construction process occurs best in a culturally appropriate learning environment.

An awareness of the environment is more likely to stimulate 'grass-roots' initiatives in educational development in the UAE, rather than on communicating educational research from a purely Western perspective. The analysis in chapter six, represents a stepping stone in highlighting some of the tensions surrounding academic/educational development initiatives in the UAE HE sector. This will ultimately give a boost to research on educational development in the UAE, a neglected, under-researched and under-theorized area. In light of the foregoing discussion, it is possible to envisage an alternative model for teaching development initiatives in the UAE HE sector. The UAE is a developing cosmopolitan country, and its universities and colleges reflect this, both in terms of staffing and curricula. Yet, Arab-Islamic culture prevails in at least the public higher education sector, which I have argued is part of the context of the universities and colleges as well as the wider society.

7.3 Contribution to knowledge

Unlike more mature HE systems such as the UK, where academic development has had a 'long and winding road' (Brand, 2007), the UAE HE system is still in its infancy. As a result, academic development is under-theorised and under-researched in the UAE. This study is the first to address this issue and therefore makes an important contribution to knowledge. Therefore not only are the findings in this research, in so far as they relate to UAE are, an original contribution but the research focus is very relatively unusual. It is apparent it has given a beginning of a clear

national picture of the issue of academic staff development in emerging higher education institutions

In terms of basic findings, this study has shown that the institutional academic development provisions identified in this study were playing only a limited role in professionalizing teaching and learning. The study identified two important causes of this limited role: first, expatriates have short-term contracts; second, institutions perceive academic development as unnecessary for these expatriate academics, who are seen as 'finished products'. This had a number of effects. First, no specified resources were allocated for staff development. Second, there was a clear lack of educational development centers and specialist academic developers to provide support in teaching and learning to both novice academics and more experienced teachers. This ad-hoc unstructured un-resourced model of academic development constituted a clear contrast to what was described in the literature review on academic development in the West. This is original and of great interest to UAE in both policy and practice terms, but it is also of interest to a wider academic audience as a structural problem that has not been widely explored before. In the UAE HE sector the western academics are perceived as a solution rather than a problem in this regards. Therefore these findings have huge significance to their contribution to policy, practice and theory of academic development in emerging HE systems that relies on imported academics.

This study makes two additional original contributions to knowledge. First, it adds an important new focus to the literature about academic development and expatriation. As pointed out in chapter 1, academic development in emerging higher education system such as the UAE which employs experienced expatriate higher educators is a seriously under-researched area. The literature search conducted for this study further indicated that research on expatriate academics and their conceptualization of development in their host countries is equally limited. Existing work such as that of Richardson and McKenna (2002) and Richardson and Zikic (2007) generally focused on the experience of expatriation in general and their perceptions of the positions in their institutions (see chapter three). Few have looked specifically into the academic development of expatriate academics in institutions, the provisions of these development and the academics' perceptions. Its findings about the rudimentary institutional academic development structure and limited provisions not only enriched our understanding of this under-researched area, but also offered

basis for useful principles that might help us to reconceptualise academic development for UAE academics in the context of emerging higher education system.

Another major contribution of this study is the implications it has for HE policy makers in new higher education systems. First, according to literature, university education in many emerging higher education institutions is seen more in terms of its role as a key to socio-economic growth than as contributing the outcomes of inquiry to the intellectual growth of society. This is clearly the case in the UAE HE sector, whose institutions are perceived by the government as ‘production houses’, churning out employable graduates for the rapidly growing economy. One response to these pressures has been to focus on importing expatriate academics, normally from industry, to ensure that the young country rapidly develops its workforce. It is not surprising within this policy environment that, within HEIs, the focus at the institutional level has been on maximising the employability of graduates, leading to the current prevailing practice of employing expatriate academics and hence meagre top-down ad-hoc uncritical academic development provisions. This is very significant in that, since expatriates are often seen as a quick way towards building an effective infrastructure. They have an effect been hindering the development of important aspects of an internal infrastructure. Again, this is significant finding that will of interest to both UAE and the wider academic leadership.

7.4 Recommendations

In this section, on the basis of the findings of this study, two key recommendations are elaborated. The first recommendation looks at the overarching strategic level of the UAE higher education sector. The second key recommendation highlights the institutional role of academic development within a more coherent integrated higher education sector. The parenthesis at the end of each recommendation refers to the relevant page numbers in the findings chapters 5 and 6.

Recommendation 1:

Develop an overarching strategic direction for the UAE HE sector through a coherent higher education regulatory and governance structure that will position the sector at the vanguard of student learning. This is clearly linked to the main research findings highlighted in section 7.2.1. This key recommendation is linked to one the key themes of this study- the issue of institutional funding and recruitment policies, which resulted in very tight restrictive budgets based solely on student enrolment numbers.

In the proposed conceptual model, figure (7.2) below, a new body ‘the Emirates Higher Education Authority’ would need to be formed in order to eliminate the current higher education fragmentation and funding issues in the UAE HE sector, detailed in the analysis chapter 5 and 6. The main challenge currently for this sector is the lack of a coherent governance, regulatory structure and funding structure.

This new body would set the long-term strategic directions for higher education, including funding models, research budgets, accreditation, and academic development among others. This model would

- a) optimize the governance, regulation and funding of higher education in the UAE and most importantly allow the UAE HE sector to set long term sustainable goals for all of higher education in the UAE. This new body, would force the federal HEIs to come under regulation and control similarly to their private HEIs counterparts, and prevent the current enrolment funding model. (This recommendation is linked to the key issue of funding policy, p.125).
- b) allow investment in educational development units in HEIs including resources and recognition for faculty and departments. As Webb and Murphy (2000) succinctly put it, “the final aspect of the reward system that can be employed to effect a positive institutional climate for teaching is that of funding. It is necessary to ‘unfreeze’ traditional funding formulas that reward contact hours (rather than learning opportunities” (p.24). Candy (1996) similarly urges institutions to allocate significant resources to continuous development of its staff. Otherwise, it will be “destined to become progressively more irrelevant to contemporary society and accordingly less attractive to potential students, benefactors, research partners and indeed to staff themselves” (p.17). (This recommendation is linked to the

findings on funding policies (p.125) and the current limited CPD provisions (p.141.)

- c) provide seed grants to fund pedagogic research, innovation in teaching in higher education projects, support teaching and learning programs for academics for both private and federal HEIs which would catalyze higher education excellence (teaching and research), encouraging transformative and integrative forces in the scholarship of teaching (this recommendation is linked to the identified issues of funding, and rewarding teaching p.125,120).
- d) include representatives from all key stakeholders in the proposed 'Emirates Higher Education Academy' and be responsible for drawing up well-documented policies on academic/educational development, by establishing a national academic development council. The 'Academy' would ensure that, minimum standards are established and mandated for professional practice as a tertiary teacher. This national body would be responsible for ensuring quality of provision of academic development initiatives including graduate certificates in higher education (GCHE) based on international benchmark standards. This would be linked to a system for recognizing that individuals have met the agreed standards for professional practice. The GCHE teaching certificate would act as a proxy for teaching expertise, just as possession of a Masters/PhD is taken to reflect disciplinary expertise. (This recommendation is linked to the findings of the challenges of implementing a systematic teaching program and all their associated issues such as funding, recruitment, resentment and workload; p.125).

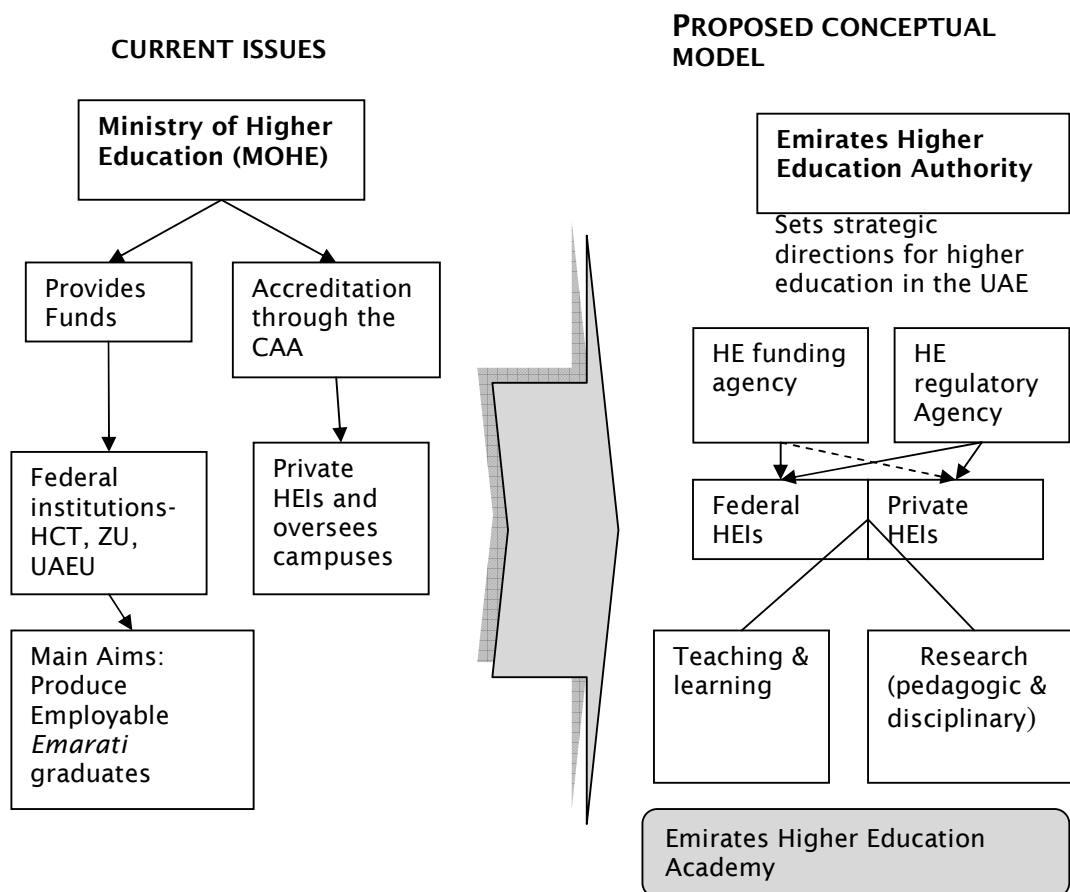


Figure 7.2 : Proposed conceptual model

Recommendation 2:

At the institutional level:

Teaching should be supported and rewarded as a valued career path, so that excellent teachers will choose to be involved in academic development initiatives and engage meaningfully with students. This recommendation is linked to the following key themes which emerged from chapter 5 and 6: funding and recruitment policies, induction programs in the case institution, challenges associated with nationalization and expatriation, the issue of academic identity and CPD program provisions.

This following are some key recommendations at the institutional level.

- a) Institutions should receive grants from the ‘Higher education Funding agencies’ proposed in the conceptual model (figure 7.2), to establish educational development units in institutions and appoint academic developers. (This is linked to recommendation 1c, at the institutional level)
- b) A support system should be established for newly arrived expatriate faculty which goes beyond induction (Richardson and Zikic, 2007). Some sort of partnering between new faculty expatriate faculty and local faculty members would facilitate enculturation. Mentoring schemes of Emarati junior faculty with a senior faculty member should also occur. Higher education policy makers must also be made more aware of the cultural influences on teaching and learning (refer to section 3.5.1) , so that teachers are not just ‘indoctrinated’ about the cultural dos and don’ts, but about the more complex issues of curriculum that are culturally grounded and more relevant to students’ understanding. (This recommendation is linked to the findings on induction programs (p.131); expatriation (p.136) and nationalization (p.139)
- c) Institutions should encourage faculty engagement through the literature on learning and teaching in HE (including cross-cultural teaching) and offer a range of educational development support to meet the diverse needs of staff. This can include the following:
 - a graduate certificate in higher education (GCHE) that includes disciplinary teaching modules and disciplinary mentors. (This recommendation is linked to the findings on overcoming the challenges of academics as content experts versus teachers, p.120)
 - workshops and seminars on key issues of EFL and VLE (ongoing and longitudinal) and how they can facilitate student centred teaching. (This is linked to the current patchy EFL and ICT provisions p.133)
 - mentoring for new academics (nationals and expatriates new to teaching. (This recommendation is linked to findings on induction programs for new academics in the case institution-p.131)

- establish teaching fellowship schemes for experienced academics in order to celebrate excellent teaching. (This recommendation is linked to the findings on the current CPD provisions for experienced teachers, p.141).
- d) Due to the transient nature of most academic careers in the UAE HE sector, institutions should initiate systematic and portable programs of induction and ongoing professional learning for all staff involved with teaching, including those employed on an adjunct basis. For example, this can be done by providing all new teachers to higher education (expatriates or nationals) a high quality internationally recognized graduate course in teaching and learning, typically lasting at least a year part-time. Experienced academics should be required to demonstrate their teaching competence through a teaching portfolio as part of their probation requirements. (This recommendation is linked to the findings on the challenges of implementing a systematic training program for teaching p.125)
- e) Following advice that academic development needs to recognize the strong disciplinary identity of the academics (Jenkins, 1996; Gibbs, 1996; Boud, 1999; Hick, 1999; Healey, 2003), institutions should ensure that any initial training course has a significant disciplinary specific component, and that there are also disciplinary-based activities and resources for continuing professional development. This can be done, for example, by ensuring the structure of a GCHE is flexible enough to cater for the needs and characteristics of different institutions and disciplinary fields, both in terms of mode of delivery and of curriculum. (This recommendation is linked to the key findings on the issue of academic identity-p.120)
- f) Institutions should promote academic development as a wider concept practiced on a continuing basis, rather than a largely one-off or sporadic activity. This can be achieved by allowing higher education faculty to undertake regular continuing professional development activities concerned with keeping up to date with pedagogical developments, and sharing good teaching and learning practices. This can be achieved through providing access to further qualifications in higher education, building on the graduate certificate as part of an institution's overall strategy of ongoing staff development and quality enhancement. (This recommendation is linked to the issue of the current CPD program provisions p.141)

- g) Institutions should align themselves with both national and institution-wide policies and practices related to teaching, learning and research. This means embedding such values in the recognition and reward systems, career paths and opportunities for professional learning offered within universities.
- h) Institutions should ensure that development is anchored within organizational development and the organization's quality framework. In that way, academic development is not only perceived as benefiting the academic in the short term, but more importantly drives the institutional agenda forward. Prosser and Barrie (2003) provide an example of the university of Sydney to illustrate how the literature of student learning approach may underpin a quality assurance framework. This kind of alignment is key to effective quality improvement in higher education. The focus of academic development here is moved from the individual member of staff to a more strategic focus on the institution's strategic plans, objectives and mission. In the case institution this might mean working on an outcome basis (for example, improving the first- year experience of student, improving institution's retention rates, etc...). This model uses Bigg's concept of constructive alignment, in this case to align institutional academic development processes and outcomes to institutional goals and priorities. (This recommendation is linked to the findings on the institutional emphasis on the PQA process, p.146)
- i) Academics should be fully involved in the academic development provision process in order to produce desired outcomes. This implies a combination of 'top-down' management-led initiatives and 'bottom up' academic-led objectives in order to facilitate successful change. This can be achieved by involving teachers as one of the stakeholder groups in institutional policies, encouraging action research projects, and by providing 'down-time' such as short sabbatical leave for certain key teaching projects. (This recommendation is linked to the current challenge of heavy workload-p.127)
- j) Within and between institutions, distinct subject networks should be established that participate and contribute to international initiatives in educational development practices. (This recommendation would ensure that teaching and learning are embedded within the subject specialism- p.124, the issue of content expert versus teaching).

The table below outlines a possible framework for the educational professional development of higher educators in the UAE, whether they be graduate teaching assistants, teacher trainees, new teachers into the UAE HE system, or experienced expatriate academics. It makes a distinction between generic, disciplinary and inter/multidisciplinary activities. The table does not aim to imply a rigid system, but rather a more fluid process. Hence, new teachers may be involved in the same activities and events as experienced teachers and teacher trainees and vice versa; while generic GCHEs may contain discipline-based modules.

Examples	Nature	Participants
Institutionally based course mainly concentrating on basic 'tips and skills of HE teaching'	Generic issues of teaching and learning	Emarati teacher trainees, graduate teachers, other academics from industry new to teaching.
Seminars on cultural issues run by national organizations eg: HH Sheikh Mohammad organization for cultural understanding	Cultural understanding	New Expatriate teachers in the UAE HEIs
Institutional based GCHE – internationally accredited	Generic	All new HE academics and optional for experienced academics on completion of teaching portfolio
Workshops for specific disciplines (eg: teaching and learning in the health sciences) through blended learning format	Inter/ multidisciplinary	All academic faculty
Workshop about teaching about diversity and teaching to EFL students in higher education	Inter/ multidisciplinary	All academic faculty from various disciplines
Small groups projects- for disciplinary based research into teaching and learning.	Disciplinary	All academic faculty, academic managers, researchers

Table 7.1 Framework for the professional development of higher educators in the UAE

7.5 Limitations of the study

The limitations of this study are as follows:

1) Although it is accepted that the findings of the research may not be generalisable in the usual sense of the word, the study can claim ‘transferability’, which, according to Yin (2003), enables analytical and theoretical generalisation. That is, while the study does not set out to claim generalisability, it does aim to produce insight into pertinent, contemporary issues of professionalisation of teaching and learning in higher education, expatriate academics, indigenisation and continuous professional development in emerging higher education sectors.

2) Due to time constraints, the study was not able to collect detailed data from the academic faculty in terms of their initial preparation for teaching roles in their own countries.

3) There was also the limitation concerning the dilemma of preserving the integrity of the inquiry versus the integrity of the person. This was especially crucial amongst those academics who were the ‘tight ropers’. Consequently, many decisions were made in favour of protecting the individual, which lessens the degree of objectivity of the findings to some extent. Example some of the academics’ involved in the focus interviews and even academic managers’ details (subject teaching, department etc...) were changed in order to protect the individual.

4) Given that this study is based solely on the experiences of the case institution’s faculty and managers, the findings represented here may not apply to other institutions in the UAE, especially the ever increasing number of private institutions and overseas campuses. This research attempted to portray a fair description, including contradictions and anomalies, when discussing the findings. However, it could be that faculty and managers working in other types of institutions have very different experiences than reported here. Thus, exploration of other institutions will be an important next step in order to determine the extent to which the findings reported here apply to other institutional contexts.

7.6 Recommendations for future research:

As highlighted above, this study does not claim to provide a model of ‘ideal academic development’ practice in the UAE HE sector. It provides only an initial step towards this goal, and future research needs to build on this work as follows:

- Utilize different data collection methods, such as documentary analysis, policy documents, classroom observation etc. in order to gain a fuller insight of academic development climate in the entire region.
- Use more fine-grained statistical methods rather than just descriptive statistics to provide a more complete analysis of the available data.
- Conduct larger scale comparative studies in academic development practices in different countries, e.g. to compare the UAE and other developing countries such as Jordan (who have a longer history of higher education and greater indigenous population).
- Use a different sample population: this study only looked at academics and academic leaders. Future research could look into student learning and teacher conceptions of their teaching.
- Investigate the division of academic development into mandatory and voluntary streams, induction and CPD. In the case institution, PD was divided into induction programs and CPD, involving IT skills and EFL issues. It would be interesting to investigate the effectiveness of the EFL emphasis training in the case institution.

Echoing Shaw’s (1997) call, it is hoped that this research has opened doors to further research in this under-researched area, as many questions still remained unanswered. The data made available through this research, and the questions raised about academic development may be of great use to other countries in the Gulf regions, which face similar challenges in formulating academic development policies and programs and training for their academic workforce.

7.7 Conclusions

The way academic staff are supported for their teaching role within the UAE HE/tertiary sector remains largely *ad hoc* and unsystematic. Professionalizing teaching in the UAE HE sector will require key policy makers to:

- re-evaluate their policies on ways to reward and encourage scholarly approaches to teaching.
- clearly articulate a practical and appropriate teaching standards framework for the UAE HE sector.
- invest in infrastructure that will encourage and reward scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching.

As pointed out in chapter 1 and 2, academic development is a seriously under-researched area in the UAE HE sector, and this study is the first of its kind concerning the UAE HE sector. Therefore, despite the above weaknesses, the current study has contributed to an understanding of the academic development practices and provisions in federal HEIs in the context of an emerging higher education sector. It is hoped that it will provide the beginning of a clear national agenda and policies surrounding academic development issues. It is also hoped that this study can provide institutions, academic managers and PD coordinators an initial framework to underpin educational development in their individual institutions.

Encouraging (not enforcing) academic staff to obtain teaching qualifications and to pursue higher degrees in their field seems to boost confidence in their teaching and provide opportunities to pursue pedagogical content research (Lueddeke, 2003). If teaching in higher education is to be considered a true profession, then academics need to commit to engage in pedagogical practices beyond acquiring a few skills in teaching picked up from a workshop.

The demands on higher education in the UAE to produce employable, lifelong learners is increasing and institutions will in the foreseeable future be expected to meet increasing expectations of the funding government to deliver high quality learning. There will undoubtedly be increased attention given to the way university staff teach and, in particular, the preparation they undergo for their teaching role. This study has outlined the features of the current educational development provision

practices, and has highlighted current trends in academic/educational development in more matured higher education sector such as the UK. The findings covered areas such as the dilemma of developing the transient academic workforce, developing the minority *Emirati* workforce for their teaching role, and problems related to funding and educational provisions, policies and strategies.

In conclusion, this study has argued that the key to developing higher educators in teaching and learning is to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning. In sum, “teaching is valued and improved when practice is informed, when it is predicated on assumptions for which there is awareness, when it questions and seeks answers, and when its practitioners grow, change and move to more sophisticated levels of skill” (Weimer, 1997, p.55). Though this process clearly involves many challenges, especially in the emerging HE sector of the UAE, the potential benefits of professionalizing teaching in HE in the UAE are high. If attention is paid to developing the scholarship of teaching and learning, I am confident that, before too long, the benefits will be seen: the status of teaching will rise; the quality of the institutionally led workshops will be more strategic; resources for faculty/academic development will be justifiably increased; there will be more systematic nationalisation of the academic workforce; and most importantly, the quality of the learning that our students receive will be enhanced.

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APPENDIX A

Professional development provisions for teaching and learning survey

Dear Colleagues,

This short questionnaire has been designed to determine the kinds of PD in the area of teaching and learning that you have received as members of the teaching faculty and teaching technicians, and other colleagues with teaching responsibilities. The information gathered will be used as part of a PhD studies and hopefully be used in the identification of an appropriate PD framework in the area for teaching and learning for teaching staff. Please complete all the questions as best as you can, your honest response is very important in order to get accurate data for my study. I assure you that all data obtained from this study will be treated confidentially-at all times data will presented in such a way that your identity cannot be connected with specific published data.

You can complete this questionnaire **on-screen** and once completed return it as an attachment to zsb3@le.ac.uk. If you wish to be **anonymous**, please print the questionnaire, and once completed send through internal mail to [REDACTED]

The questionnaire should not take more than **10 minutes** to complete. **Thank you very much for your time.** Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries concerning this matter.

Kind regards,
Zahra Saeed Baalawi
zsb3@le.ac.uk
zsbaalawi@yahoo.com

PLEASE RETURN BY 25th January 2006

SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is your job title? **Please indicate with an (x)**

Teaching faculty	Non-teaching faculty	Teaching technician	Technician	Part-time faculty

2. If you teach, how many years have you taught in higher/tertiary education? **Please indicate which category with an (x)**

Less than 1	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	22-25	More than 25 years

3. Do you hold a tertiary teaching qualification? **Please indicate with an (x).** If 'YES' go to question 4, if 'NO' go to question 5

1.1. YES	1.2. NO
1.3.	1.4.

4. If 'YES'. Please specify in the grey area space provided.

Title of award	
Awarding institution	
Date of award	

5. Would you be interested in obtaining a teaching qualification in tertiary education? Please indicate with an (x)

1.5. YES	1.6. NO
1.7.	1.8.

6. If 'NO', please briefly indicate in the grey area below, your reasons

--

7. Would you be willing to pay for a course leading to a qualification in 'learning and teaching in tertiary education'? Please indicate with an (x)

1.9. YES	1.10. NO
1.11.	1.12.

SECTION 2: PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND CONCEPTS

This section is to gather information about your basic pedagogical knowledge such as curriculum, adult learning, and assessment and your need for training in this area.

Please indicate with an (x) in the appropriate box, *your general level of current skill* and another (x) in *the degree to which you think training is or would be important in your work.*

(N.B If unclear about completing this section, refer to the guidance note.)

1. Curriculum	Your general level of current skill				Degree to which you believe training is or would be important			
	High	Moderate	Low	None	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Applying models of curriculum designs								
Designing courses (aims, objectives, learning outcomes and progression)								
Applying a wide repertoire of curriculum delivery methods								
Please indicate at least one further comment in the area of curriculum and course design								
2. How adults learn	Your general level of current skill				<i>Degree to which you believe training is or would be important</i>			
	High	Moderate	Low	None	Very	Quite	Not Very	Not at all
Applying adult learning theories in your teaching								
Applying how adults transfer their learning from one domain to another								
Applying knowledge of theories of self-regulated learning								

Applying case-based learning eg. Problem Based Learning									
Applying teacher centred and learner centred approaches appropriately									

Please indicate at least one further comment/concern in the area of adult learning

3.Helping adults learn	High	Moderate	Low	None	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Applying knowledge of learner differences in your teaching								
The use of peer and near-peer tutoring to facilitate teaching								
Formulating appropriate lesson structure and planning								
Utilizing students' need for their learning to be relevant to their personal and/or professional situations								
Applying language analysis and second language acquisition in pedagogy								
Encouraging reflective learning								
Teaching in a diverse classroom eg: dealing with dyslexic students, students with special needs								

Please indicate at least one further comment/concern in the area of helping adults to learn

4.Assessment	Your general level of current skill				Degree to which you believe training is or would be important			
	High	Moderate	Low	None	Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Aligning assessment purpose and principles								
Applying assessment methods, criteria and learning outcomes								

Using summative and formative assessment appropriately									
Understanding characteristics of assessment instruments									
Use of assessment to reinforce learning									
Differentiation between criterion and norm-referenced assessment									
Use of peer and self-assessment with the use of group work and oral presentation									
Applying performance based assessment									
Assessing laboratory, studio, project and fieldwork									
Assessing competence and work based experience									
Please indicate at least one further comment/concern in the area of assessing learners									
5.Virtual learning environment (VLE)	High	Moderate	Low	None		Very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Applying theory, practice and pedagogy of on-line learning									
How to use on-line learning resources									
Developed, tested and evaluated on-line learning									
Applying ICT in assessment									
Please indicate at least one further comment/concern in the area VLE									

SECTION 3: OBSTACLES TO LEARNING

What do you think are your obstacles to CPD in teaching? For each statement, decide how true it is for you and **place an (x)** in the appropriate box

	Very true	Quite true	Not very true	Not at all true
Lack of time				
Teaching load too heavy				
Lack of support from supervisor/institution				
I don't think CPD in teaching is important for my work				
Others: please specify				

SECTION 4: PREFERRED METHOD OF LEARNING

Which method of learning do you feel most comfortable with? Please rank all from 1-6. **1 for most liked to 6 for least liked.**

Face to face training sessions delivered by a trainer	
One-to-one training from a colleague	
Drop-in workshops to get help on specific topics	
Support and advice via e-mail or discussion list	
Open and flexible delivered and supported on-line	
Other (please specify)	

SECTION 5: PREFERRED PROGRAM OF LEARNING

If your institution were to offer teacher training for faculty, which of the following would you be interested in: **Please rank from 1-3. 1 for most interested and 3 for least interested.**

An externally accredited course on teaching and learning in tertiary education leading to a qualification	
---	--

A series of workshop on teaching and learning in tertiary education	
A one-off workshop session on basic concepts in learning and teaching	

OPTIONAL:

Please provide your name and e-mail address in the space provided below if you would like to participate further in the research.

NAME

COLLEGE

THANK YOU FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR SECTION 2:**Level of general skill:** You are asked to indicate your general skill with a given application as High, moderate, low or non-existent. It is appreciated that these are rather crude distinctions. Generally High would indicate excellent level of competence in the given area, while none would indicate those areas you have very little or no knowledge.

Level of importance: This will indicate the levels of needs. For example if you are not knowledgeable about ‘assessing laboratory work’ but you are not involved or likely to be involved in this area, then developing skills in this area would be something of very low importance.

2. FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PART 1: General Issues- Professionalisation of teaching in HE

Question 1: What do you think of the idea that academics should be trained teachers?

Probing questions

COMPULSION?

What about the issue of compulsion? Do you think that teacher education should be compulsory for all teaching staff in higher/tertiary education?

VALIDATION?

Who should accredit or validate these courses? Should some form of nationally/internationally recognised validation and revalidation be required for teaching staff in higher/tertiary education as is found in other profession?

Which organization (nationally or internationally) would have the status or credibility to provide such a validation?

PART 2: To access issues of current Provisions of PD to support learning and teaching

Question 2: What types of induction programs and CPD is provided at your institution? What is your opinion of it?

Probing questions

*What does the your institution provide in the way of teaching support for new academic staff? (**new academics**)*

Or

*What does the HCT provide in the way of teaching support for experienced academic staff? (**experienced academics**)*

Or

*What specific support is given to Emarati teacher trainee and what kind of continuous teaching development is provided hereafter?
(**Emarati faculty**).*

Or

*What specific support teaching development support is for non-academic staff who are increasingly involved in teaching – eg. ILC technicians, Health Science technicians, IT staff etc.. ? If so, what form does this take?
(**Other Staff**)*

PART 3: Institutional Support for PD

Question 3: What types of incentives- such as funding, time release, teaching excellence awards are provided by your institution in order to encourage you to undertake teaching development activities?

Probing questions

Do you think the support is sufficient or insufficient?

What other institutional support would you like to be in place to support you for your teaching role?

PART 4: Concluding Remarks:

Question 4: What do you think would be the challenges for staff in undertaking a course in learning and teaching in HE

Probing questions

Would you be prepared to undertake a systemic course in learning and teaching in HE? Why or why not?

Would you prefer an externally accredited course or one that is entirely geared to the needs of UAE higher educators?

What about funding? Who should fund the course?

What form should the course take? Emphasizing local needs or the more 'Western' models of HE teacher development

QUESTION 5: Any other issues or comment we might have missed in our discussion on PD activities to enhance learning and teaching?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC MANAGERS

PART A: General issues: Professionalisation of teaching in HE

Question 1: What do you think of idea that academics should be trained teachers?

Question 2: Do you think that teacher education should be compulsory for all teaching staff in higher education institutions? Please give a brief reason to your answer

Question 3: Should some form of nationally/internationally recognised validation and revalidation be required for teaching staff in higher/tertiary education as is found in other profession? Please give a brief reason to your answer

PART B: Provision of teaching development by case institution

Question 4: How does Quality Assurance system of your institution address the quality of teaching and continuous improvement of teaching?

Question 5: What does your institution provide in the way of teaching support for new academic staff, experienced academic staff? What is the normal duration for these programs? Are there incentives eg; time release, salary increase for staff to undertake programs to improve their teaching?

Question 6: What specific support is given to Emarati teacher trainees and what kind of continuous teaching development is provided thereafter?

PART C: Institutional support for improvement of teaching

Question 11: Does your institution provide the following? Teaching development grant, teaching excellence awards? What type of funding is available for teaching improvement initiatives?

Question 12: Are you aware of any other teaching development programs planned for the teaching staff in your institution in the near future?

Question 13: Would your institution consider introducing a formal course on tertiary teaching leading to an award eg. Post-Graduate Certificate in

learning and Teaching in HE? If so who would fund the program and how would teachers be encouraged to undertake this course.

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK: PILOT STUDY

1) How long did it take you to complete the questionnaire? _____

2) Were the instructions clear? YES ☐ NO ☐

If NOT, which ones were unclear?

4) Did you object to answering any of the questions?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, which ones?

6) Do you think any major issue was omitted in the questionnaire?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, which ones?

4) Any other comment?

Thank you again, for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete this.