

**The roles of Subject Leaders in Enhancing
The Implementation of the Lebanese National Curriculum**

A thesis submitted for the doctoral degree in educational management, submitted in November 2002 by Nahida El Assi.

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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Title: The roles of subject leaders in enhancing the implementation of the Lebanese National Curriculum.

The focus of this study was the roles of subject leaders in enhancing the implementation of the Lebanese New Curriculum, the implementation that started before the public schools were equipped to reflect its spirit and without the proper recognition of subject leadership as a role model. The study identifies and assesses problems of public schools, and attempts to present a conceptual framework for a possible solution where subject leaders become more involved in the implementation process and better solution providers. The research was conducted by utilizing a blend of research tools (FGI, individual interviews, observations, diary analysis, and a survey questionnaire). The focus group interview was the main research tool used to collect the data, while the others were used mainly for triangulation purposes. The whole sample was three principals, 82 teachers (29 from outside the researcher's school and 23 from her school), 13 SLs (5 vs. 8), 377 parents (17 vs. 365 –350 of whom received the survey questionnaire), and 34 students (25 in Grade 9, and 9 in Grade 12) selected from 13 schools.

The initial findings were presented thus outlining general information about how subject leadership has been perceived and how subject leaders were expected to behave for a better implementation of the Lebanese national Curriculum. In Lebanese public schools, the sustained conditions of assigning and allocating SLs to schools, and lack of proper training made the existing SLs perform their tasks in a traditional manner. To be good catalysts for proper implementation of the LNC, SLs claimed that a full-time job and the authority to impose sanctions were two major factors for their empowerment. Empowerment, to them, was essential and should come from (an) external agent(s) (the ministry, the inspectorate or the GCD); or else, it would be difficult to implement change. In general, all the participants (teachers, students and parents) selected from the public schools proved to lack a complete

notion about what subject leadership entails. They perceived the existing role model for subject leadership as an outdated model that would not fit in the period of implementing change, and consequently were dissatisfied with the situation unless SLs performed some additional tasks. Whereas, the sample selected from the PCSS proved to have a clearer notion about subject leadership the thing that can be referred to their own varying experiences with SLs. Consequently, their demands were related to how private schools can raise their achievement standards.

The importance of promoting the role of subject leaders was clear if all the participants' demands were to be satisfied for the sake of meeting the needs of all students enrolled in public schools. The specific responsibilities of the role were described, the implications of the research were summarized and reflected upon, and recommendations for policy and practice were stated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many of the ideas in this thesis have evolved from meetings with school principals, subject leaders, teachers, students and parents. Many other ideas evolved from informal meetings with supervisors, inspectors, guides from the Ministry of Education and many others who volunteered for piloting my research tools thus authenticating and shaping the research findings. Thanks go to all of these whose discussions helped me draw a good image of the Lebanese educational situation from different perspectives. Thanks go to my advisor, Doctor Hugh Busher, whose insights into theory and practice have so often influenced my own thinking, whose tolerance and sustained feedback helped me sharpen my focus without exceeding the limits of word count, and whose psychological support and high expectations helped greatly in improving the quality of the whole thesis. Special thanks also go for Professor Ken Fogelman, the Dean of the School of Education, Roy Kirk and his team at the Library of Education, to Hadiyya Sabaa A'yon, Sai'd Joma'a, Mohamad Mroweh and Hasan Farhat for their great help and to all who participated directly or indirectly in leading this piece of research to success by responding to my writing and offering many helpful suggestions. I owe special thanks to those who suffered with me through the drafts, and the revisions of this thesis, my family: Chawki, Mohammad, Hiba and Daniel; and my parents especially my mother and my sister Enaya. Their unfailing support helped me make time for writing and reminded me of times when I should stop and do some other important things.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CH.		PAGE
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	2
	IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY	3
	SCOPE OF THE STUDY	6
	The Structure of the Thesis	8
2	THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM SUBJECT LEADERS' ROLES IN LEBANESE SCHOOLS	10
	THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM	11
	<i>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN LEBANON BEFORE 1943</i>	11
	Linguistic and Religious Divisions of Schools 1900 - 1943	13
	EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN LEBANON 1943 - 1994	13
	Aims of Education in Lebanon (1946 - 1993) and the Status of Private Schooling	15
	<i>Language of Instruction</i>	16
	<i>Distribution of schools in Lebanon</i>	17
	THE RESEARCH CONTENT	20
	The Researcher and The Case Study School	20
	THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 1994	23
	The Guidance and Counseling Department	26
	Compulsory Education	27
	The Comprehensive School Project and the School Consolidation Plan	27
	CONDITIONS OF TEACHERS' AND SUBJECT LEADERS' ASSIGNMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS	29
	CONDITIONS OF ASSIGNING SUBJECT LEADERS IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	34
	STATUS OF SUBJECT LEADERS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM	35
	Subject Leaders' Relationships with Parents	36
	Subject leaders' Relationship with External agents of Controls	37
	Subject Leaders and the Guidance and Counseling Department	39
	Subject Leaders and Special Educational Needs	40
	CONDITIONS OF SUBJECT LEADER ASSIGNMENT IN THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL	42
3	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	46
	CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS	47
	Change and Change Processes	48
	Subject Leaders as Managers of Change	49
	Leadership Styles and Approaches	50
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND COMMUNICATIONS	52
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND PLANNING	53
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND SHAPING THE CULTURE OF A DEPARTMENT	56
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT	58
	Teacher Training	59
	Coaching and Reflection	62
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND ACTION RESEARCH	65
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND MONITORING DEPARTMENT WORK	67
	Performance Evaluation (Appraisal)	68
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING	71
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND ASSESSMENT	73
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS	75
	Subject Leaders, Special Educational Needs and Home-School Practices	78
	Intervention/Remediation	82

	SUBJECT LEADERS AND RESOURCES	85
	Material Resources	85
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIPS	86
4	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	90
	Establishing the Purpose	91
	Research Paradigm	92
	RESEARCH DESIGN	94
	Sampling	97
	<i>Sampling from outside the researcher's school</i>	98
	<i>Sampling from Inside the Researcher's School/ the Case Study School</i>	100
	Validity and Triangulation	102
	Ethical Issues in Recruiting the Participants	104
	DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION	106
	QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:	106
	Focus Group Interview as a Qualitative Method	106
	<i>Advantages of Focus Groups</i>	107
	<i>Challenges to Focus Groups</i>	109
	<i>Designing and Testing the Interview Guide</i>	110
	<i>Types, Wording and Phrasing of Focus Group Questions</i>	111
	<i>Number, Time, Size and Setting of Focus Groups</i>	113
	<i>Focus group implementation</i>	114
	<i>The Researcher as Moderator</i>	115
	<i>Note taking</i>	116
	Individual Interviews	117
	Principles of analyzing focus group interview, individual interview and diary data.	119
	Data Analysis	119
	QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	120
	The Survey Questionnaire	120
	Classroom observations	122
	Data Analysis of the Observations and the Survey Questionnaire	123
5	RESEARCH FINDINGS	123
	SUBJECT LEADERS AND THEIR EXTERNAL CONTEXTS:	
	AS PERCEIVED BY PRINCIPALS; AS THEY PERCEIVE	
	NATIONAL POLICY AND TRAINING; AND AS THE	
	INSPECTORATE SUPPORTS THEM	125
	The Sample	126
	Subject Leadership as Perceived by Principals of Public Schools	127
	The Relationship between Subject Leaders and the Guidance	
	and Counseling department as Viewed by Public Schools Principals	130
	The Relationship between Subject Leaders and the Inspectorate	
	As Viewed by Public School Principals	131
	Public School Subject Leaders' Views on the Effect	
	of the External Context on their Performance as Curriculum Leaders	134
	Public School Subject Leaders' views of their Performance During	
	The Implementation of the Lebanese National Curriculum	137
	<i>Subject Leaders and Staff Development</i>	138
	<i>Subject Leaders and Students</i>	141
	<i>Subject Leaders and Parents</i>	143
	Public School Subject Leaders' Views of	
	Conditions for Better Implementation Process	143
	Private Case Study School Subject Leaders and Their External Context	146
	Principals' Views of Subject Leaders in the Private Case Study School	146
	Subject Leaders' and the Internal Conditions Affecting their Performance	
	in the Private Case Study School	147
	Subject Leaders' Views of Their Performance During the	
	Implementation Process	152
	<i>Subject Leaders and Students and Parents</i>	152
	Comparison between Subject Leaders in Public Schools	
	and the Private Case Study School	154

6	INTERNAL PROCESSES OF SUBJECT LEADERS IN PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	156
	What Public Elementary Teachers Expect of Subject Leaders	158
	Subject Leaders' External Communications Sought by Public Elementary Teachers	160
	Subject Leaders' External Sources of Support as Viewed by Public Elementary Teachers	161
	Subject Leaders' Roles as Viewed by the Private Case Study Elementary School	163
	Subject Leaders' Flaws as Viewed by Elementary Teachers in the Private Case Study School	163
	Subject Leaders' Successful Practices in the English Department	165
	The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of Good Achievers in the Case Study School	167
	<i>The Effectiveness of Subject Leaders' Observations as Viewed by Parents</i>	169
	<i>The Role of Subject Leaders in Assessment as Viewed by Parents of Good Achievers</i>	170
	Subject Leaders and Enhancement of the Teaching/Learning Situation	170
	The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of the Reputation Group	172
	The Subject Leader's Multi-purpose Delegation of Classroom Observations to Teachers	179
	Comparison of Public and the Private Case Study School Teachers' Current Situation	180
7	VIEWS OF TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS ABOUT SUBJECT LEADERS' INTERNAL PROCESSES IN THE INTERMEDIATE AND SECONDARY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL	182
	THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED BY TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS	183
	Subject leaders and Department Meetings as Viewed by Public Intermediate Teachers	184
	Public Intermediate Teachers: Problems with Subject Leaders and Proposed Solutions	185
	THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED BY TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS	187
	Public Secondary Teachers' Views about External Conditions Affecting Subject Leaders in The Implementation of the Lebanese National Curriculum	187
	Classroom Observations	189
	THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED BY TEACHERS OF THE DIFFERENT SUBJECT AREAS IN THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL	191
	The Roles of the Subject Leader as Viewed by the Teachers in the English Department	191
	<i>Subject leaders as curriculum leaders as viewed by teachers in the English Department</i>	192
	<i>Subject Leaders and Students' needs as viewed by the English Department Team</i>	193
	<i>Subject leaders and newly qualified teachers and assistants as viewed by the English department teachers</i>	194
	<i>Subject leaders and financing as viewed by the English department teachers</i>	195
	<i>Subject leaders and parents as viewed by the English department teachers</i>	196
	<i>Subject leaders and school excellence as viewed by the English department teachers</i>	197
	<i>Successful Subject Leaders as viewed by Sciences Teachers</i>	198
	<i>Subject leaders' success with students and parents</i>	200
	<i>Comparison between Teachers in the English Department and Teachers in the Other Departments</i>	201
	The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Intermediate and Secondary Students	202
	The Survey Questionnaire: Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of Students in the Intermediate School	205

	The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of Students in Public Secondary Schools	209
	Subject Leaders' Weaknesses and Strengths as Viewed by Public Secondary Parents	210
8	DISCUSSION	213
	The Impact of the Macro-Level Policy on Subject Leaders	213
	Principals of the Public Secondary Schools	216
	Subject Leaders in the Public Secondary Schools	218
	Subject Leaders in the Private Case Study School	222
	Teachers in the Public Elementary Schools	225
	Teachers in the Private Elementary School	227
	Teachers the in Intermediate and Secondary Public Schools	228
	Parents in the Public and Private Secondary Schools	230
	Conclusion	232
9	CONCLUSIONS	235
	Importance of This Study and its Contribution to the Field	242
	Recommendations for Further Research	244
	Recommendations for Subject Leaders' Practice	244
	Strengths, Weaknesses, and limitations	250
	Appendices	253
	REFERENCES	261

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Foreign Schools in Lebanon	12
2	The structure of public education in Lebanon till 1994	14
3	Language of instruction 1924-1994	17
4	public schools, non-profit making private, and profit making private schools (1973-1994)	17
5	Schools, teachers and students in the public sector.	18
6	Grade Point Average calculation for Grade 7 in public and private schools in the Lebanese Old Curriculum.	19
7	Grade Point Average calculation for Grade 7 in public and private schools in the Lebanese New Curriculum.	24
8	Percentages of enrollment in public schools per age group	27
9	The estimated number of students in each region (Muhafaza) in the year 2005	28
10	Conditions of teacher assignment in the public sector	30
11	Conditions for and calculation of coordination hours for subject leaders.	31
12	General educational inspection: evaluation of a lesson in one subject	38
13	Leadership styles and approaches	52
14	Roles of subject leaders and staff development measures taken in meetings	53
15	Founding principles of curriculum planning	54
16	Features of school focused INSET	60
17	The ten distinguishing characteristics of action research	66
18	Strengths of action research	66
19	Characteristics of effective curriculum delivery	67
20	Staff appraisal in the balance	70
21	Framework for analyzing classroom practice	73
22	Classification of uses of assessment	74
23	Home-school practices	77
24	Mainstreaming range of responsibilities and favorable conditions	80
25	Characteristics of teaching/learning within effective departments	83
26	Characteristics of remediation	
27	The research tools used and the timetable for their implementation	90
28	Summary of sampling purposes	99
29	Summary of sampling and research tools used for data collection	104
30	Ethical issues considered by the researcher in recruitment	105
31	Strengths, weaknesses and shortcomings of focus groups	109
32	Probing in the focus group interviews	111
33	Types of focus group questions	112
34	Arrangements for scheduling sessions	114
35	Guidelines for conducting the focus group interviews	115
36	The moderator traits, moderator guide, and moderator job (pre, id, and post FGI)	116
37	The systematic steps followed in data gathering and verification	119
38	The research tools used and the timetable for their implementation	
39	Sampling and research tools used to collect data from principals and subject leaders	126
40	Sampling subject leaders in the public and the private case study school	134
41	Public school subject leaders' proposed solution to their status	145
42	Sampling and research tools used to collect data from teachers, parents and students in the elementary schools	157
43	Elementary School teachers' views about Subject leader's focal roles	159

44	The subject leader's roles that would solve the existing gaps	160
45	Suggestions to be proposed by subject leaders in the evaluation of the LNC	161
46	Elementary teachers' views about Ineffective and effective behaviors of Subject Leaders	164
47	Good features that distinguished the subject leader of the English department	166
48	Behaviors that the subject leader should show for more effectiveness	166
49	Elementary School Parents' suggestions for subject leaders to upgrade school success	172
50	Parents' notion about subject leadership and treatment of the reputation group	173
51	Parents' suggestions for subject leaders to cause improvement in the elementary school	178
52	Summary of sampling and research tools used for data collection	182
53	Teachers' views about problems of public school subject leaders	186
54	The roles that the subject leader played with newly qualified teachers	195
55	Conditions for the school to stay a leading school	198
56	Teachers' views about traits and behaviors of a successful subject leader	199
57	Parents' suggestions for the subject leader in the intermediate school	208
58	The roles of subject leaders that parents view important	212

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	General roles of the subject leader.	174
2	Assessment.	174
3	Measures taken for weak students.	175
4	Follow-up.	175
5	Extra-curricular tasks.	175
6	General roles of the subject leader.	206
7	Assessment.	207
8	Measures taken for weak students.	207
9	Follow-up.	207
10	Extra-curricular tasks.	208

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AV	Audio visual aids
FGI	Focus Group Interview
GCD	Guidance and Counseling Department
GPA	Grade Point Average
INSET	In-Service Training
LNC	Lebanese New Curriculum
LOC	Lebanese Old Curriculum
M	Mother
MNEFA	Ministry of National Education and Fine Arts
NCERD	National Center for Educational Research and Development
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
PCSS	Private Case Study School
PS	Principal of School
PTA	Parent Teacher Association Meetings
S	Student
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinators
SCP	School Consolidation Plan
SL	Subject Leader
T	Teacher
TTI	Teacher Training Institutes
TVE	Technical and Vocational Education

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the British and American literature, there is enough evidence that subject leadership is an important role set which when performed successfully leads to successful implementation of change. In the Lebanese context, subject leadership was acknowledged only in 1982, in the period of the Lebanese civil war, to stay a role as defined by Law 1982/22 and subject leaders (henceforth SL) to be assigned only in public secondary schools. During the period between 1982 and 1994, four factors determined SLs' performance to a great extent:

- Lack of clear job specifications.
- Lack of formal accountability measures.
- Lack of training.
- Informal procedures and conditions of assignment.
- School conditions: staffing and school set up and facilities.

Consequently, variance in SLs' performance was noted neither by school principals nor the ministry. That is, quality of performance was expected to affect SLs' status neither positively nor negatively.

In 1994, the Lebanese National Curriculum (henceforth LNC) was set but was not based on solid research ground. The existing research indicated that there had been many gaps in the Lebanese educational system; yet, it was not enough for successful planning of change. In the period of setting the LNC (1994 - 1997) and preparing for its implementation, no change was brought in the area of subject leadership. In this period, the training programs that the ministry launched were addressed to teachers. SLs who were assumed to receive training on how to lead their department teams for the sake of proper implementation of the LNC were marginalized, apparently because of austerity budgets. Consequently, the LNC has been implemented since 1997 without due consideration for this role in making change a successful experience and

without serious attempts to address the pre-existing gaps in the Lebanese educational system. The persisting problems after five years of implementation necessitate taking some new measures; namely, recognition of subject leadership as a role necessary for more successful future implementation of the LNC.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research study stems from the researcher's belief that upon assessing the LNC after having implemented it for five years, the ministries of education should reconsider subject leadership as a major role that will contribute to more successful implementation of the LNC in the future. In this sense, the researcher's aim in this study was to find out the real conditions under which SLs were functioning in order to assess the possibilities to help them become effective agents of change. The following objectives reflect the researcher's attempts to

- Explore SLs' views about their role set and what they consider obstruction to proper implementation of their role.
- Find out problems public elementary school teachers (Grades 1 – 9) were suffering from as a result of the absence of subject leaders.
- Explore public elementary teachers' views about subject leadership and conditions of assigning SLs in their schools.
- Spotlight problems teachers of the intermediate cycle in both the public and the private case study school (henceforth PCSS) were facing; conflicts they had with their SLs; and the roles they expected their SLs to perform for the sake of proper implementation of the LNC.
- Explore the views that public secondary school teachers hold about successful subject leadership.
- Explore views that parents of public secondary school students as well as parents of students in the PCSS hold about subject leadership as a good role model.

- Investigate the extent to which the difference between the public schools' and the PCSS's achievement level can be referred to allocating SLs.
- Investigate the gaps the participants view as most important for practitioners, from inside as well outside schools, to address.
- Find out roles of schools in general and public schools in particular toward students with special educational needs (henceforth SEN) especially that SEN is part and parcel of the LNC; yet, neither training in this area was provided, nor was the set program implemented.
- Detect the possibility for public schools to learn from private schools' experience with SEN as a means to limit the high rate of dropping out.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Planning for educational change need not exclude teachers in the creation and implementation of legislation (Hargreaves and Evans, 1997: 10). Positive educational change is one that must involve as many teachers as possible, where policy is established and realized by communities and across schools (Ibid. pp. 110-111); and its significance is understood at the classroom level. The importance of this study lies in the fact that educational research is scanty, and subject leadership has never been an area of research to the Ministry of Education. Research in this area will probably lead to developing a clearer image about how subject leadership can be made as an essential post representing qualified internal agents of change within schools.

This research study is timely since the ministry has been assessing the whole experience with the LNC since 2000. The procedures of assessment are not clear to all practitioners. All they know is that the ministry is surveying public school teachers' views about their experiences with the LNC in general and the new textbooks in particular. Yet, the diary data indicate that not all schools were involved in the process, and that the feedback the ministry has been seeking is limited to (a) the amount of material covered, (b) the mistakes encountered in the

textbooks, (c) suggestions for additions and/or deletions, and (d) what teachers view as good solutions to problems they have been facing during the implementation. It is important in this stage to utilize SLs' expertise in reflecting collective experiences for two main reasons. The first is that a survey questionnaire is not enough to find answers to issues related to experience with educational reform. The second is that some teachers do not take this step seriously for their belief that the ministry would not give value to their views similarly to what happened before setting the LNC. It is essential that the ministry reconsider the state of SLs in public schools not only for instant feedback but for better implementation of future development plans as well.

This proposition is feasible since, though educational research is scanty, there had been enough evidence that proper learning was not taking place as it should in public schools before and during the implementation of the LNC. Findings of six comprehensive research studies [El Amine et al. (in Khashan, 1996); NCERD et al., Ghanem and Abu Asali (in Anon, 1996); Anon (1997); Sarkis (in Khashan, 1996); El Assi (1998); and the Education Development Institute (in Khashan, 1996)] reflected the problematic classroom situation in the different schooling stages.

Findings of El Amine's et al. Study (1996) indicated that fourth graders suffered from lack of learning skills, the thing that was reflected clearly in the failure rates. Some of them carried negative attitudes toward teachers. In general, profit-making schools did better than non-profit-making schools who in turn did better than public schools. The NCERD et al., Ghanem's and Abu Asali's findings (in Anon, 1996) indicated that fifth graders suffered from a number of problems in each subject area. Students struggled in reading comprehension first, and self-expression second. Results recurring the third time indicated that there was a general weakness that kept students' general achievement below average. In general, the efficiency and the quality of the educational system were found to be degrading. Both public and private schools reflected the old Lebanese educational system as a result of their focus on memorization and spoon feeding at the expense of analytical and practical skills. Research findings also indicated

that ninth graders' problems were mainly in math and languages (Anon, 1997). Students faced some difficulties at the skills level. In general, foreign languages were considered as the first factor leading to achievement gaps, and a major factor leading to educational segregation. Findings also indicated that there were serious problems that led to 44% of students being students with SEN, and 40% dropping out. Students' common mistakes overlapped with results presented in the previous studies the thing that might be an indicator of how problems were carried on from lower grade levels to higher ones.

Sarkis' research findings on "characteristics of constructive classes" (in Khashan, 1996) and El Assi's findings about "characteristics of the teaching/learning situation" (1998) indicated that teachers were teacher-centered in their teaching behaviors. See Appendix A for differences between teacher-centered and student-centered classroom instruction. In The Education Development Institute's survey on teacher behaviors in constructive classrooms (in Khashan, 1996), subject leaders were mentioned in the sample. Yet, upon statement of results, it was not clear whether subject leaders were considered in the management post, or just ignored, since only the words 'principals' and 'teachers' were mentioned. Results of this study also indicated that when principals and teachers agreed on a certain preferred classroom behavior, observation of teachers indicated that what they believed to be good practice was not practiced. Their repertoire of daily practices in the area of student-centered classrooms was deficient.

Based on the above findings, it is evident that problems existed in different stages of schooling and affected student achievement directly. Of major concern to this study were the recurring findings of the above studies that teachers' higher degrees, teachers' experience, teacher training, clarity of school objectives and student enrollment in the normal age proved to correlate with student achievement (El Amine; in Khashan, 1996). Some other factors found affecting students' achievement were (a) principals and teachers not having a university degree and (b) parental educational background. These issues were not addressed properly in the planning stage for the LNC and in the training. Training was insufficient and incomplete;

consequently, it puts teachers' feedback under a big question mark, and makes recognition of SLs an essential step

If subject leaders' feedback is not taken into consideration, and their role further marginalized in the short and long run, successful implementation of all changes will be risked. This research study focuses on projecting this role that few people know what it entails. Findings of this study will be the stepping stone for further research in the field to investigate the extent to which they are generalizable, and find evidence for taking specific measures in favor of firmly fixing this post.

In the school context, findings of this study are aimed to raise school practitioners' awareness of the need for this role, of its effectiveness in bringing about school improvement and its potential for sustaining proper communication channels not only within school confines but with the community at large. That is, enforcing SLs would help them build successful communication channels that facilitate within- and inter-department cooperation. This in turn will help them link the department work not only to the school management but to external agents of control as well.

In the national context, this study spotlights the historical problems that had their persisting divisive effect on Lebanese territory and sense of citizenship and were solved neither before nor after setting the LNC. Drawing the attention to persisting historical problems like assigning principals, SLs and teachers; language of instruction; the transfer between academic learning and technical and vocational education (henceforth TVE), is not but a call for the ministry's addressing problems seriously.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was designed and conducted as both a qualitative and quantitative research study to investigate current practices in implementing change in 13 schools, 12 public and one PCSS. It

was conducted in the Sidon area, South Lebanon, where the PCSS is and where the researcher is a SL and an object of research. The sample was drawn from 13 schools, within reasonable traveling distance for the researcher (about 25 km). They were all teachers who had experienced the implementation of the LNC and who had 3 to 26 years of experience in teaching the Lebanese old curriculum (henceforth LOC). The whole sample was three principals, 52 teachers (29 from outside the researcher's school and 23 from her school), 13 SLs (5 from outside, 8 from inside), 375 parents (10 from outside and 365 from inside, 350 of whom received the survey questionnaire), and 34 students (25 from Grade 9 and nine from Grade 12). In this research study, the researcher's aim behind selection of participants was seeking views of diverse groups of participants in the same schools, rather than raise the number of schools. Though the purpose was not generalization of findings, the research being done rigorously makes transferability possible.

From the research findings, the researcher tried to draw the distinction between what participants experienced as effective department leadership, and what roles they assumed should be performed by SLs to create rich environments conducive to successful implementation of change. More specifically, the researcher tried to focus the interview guides and schedules on areas of strengths and weaknesses in SLs' planning for change, monitoring department work, addressing students' needs, developing team capabilities, and making appropriate resource allocations. In addition, she tried to investigate the extent to which participants viewed SLs succeed in sustaining good relationships with external environments: parents and government agents.

The first main source of information was teachers because they were directly involved with SLs and were expected to reflect on the effectiveness of SLs' work on their classroom teaching/learning situations and consequently school achievement level. The second main source of information was SLs themselves because they could best reflect the conditions of their work and the constraints to their functioning effectively. All the other participants were

selected for triangulation purposes. Interviews with the principals were aimed at reflecting the external conditions affecting SLs' performance; whereas, the interviews with parents and students were aimed at reflecting the internal conditions affecting SLs' performance.

Focus group interviews (henceforth FGI), individual interviews, the survey questionnaires, and documentary analysis were utilized to investigate the participants' views about questions under study – the roles of successful SLs within and outside their departments- and to triangulate the findings instead of relying exclusively on one research tool. Like most FGI, there was the use of the moderator, the researcher herself, and small groups of five people, homogeneous with respect to the research questions, in each. Special Educational Needs (henceforth SEN) was one of the topics discussed within two FGI. The researcher tried to foster high level of interaction that explores the participants' feelings in some depth. She took into account the personal context that participants use in generating their responses to the topic. The participants' responses were the guiding principles for analyzing the data. FGI were followed by in-depth interviews with some participants.

The comparison of findings gained from both public and the PCSS helped the researcher spotlight (a) differences between the two schooling systems and (b) the extended effects of the historical educational problems on fostering these differences and on the implementation process when subject leadership is not a recognized role in public schools.

For educational change to be planned successfully, the extent to which it succeeds or fails to be detected, and for it to be fully understood, it is necessary to locate it in a longer-term socio-historical framework. The following chapter presents the historical socio-political context for the development of education in Lebanon, the multi-confessional plural society. It spotlights the major tensions (political, social, religious and economic) that had long-lasting effects on the educational system. First, it focuses on how these tensions in totality led to the need for setting the LNC, a period during which subject leadership was recognized but not given big value. It

then shifts to the processes of setting, preparing for and implementing the LNC, during which subject leadership was marginalized and its roles devalued as a result of not familiarizing SLs with its novelty level. The historical background to the study explains the indirect effects on the current status of SLs that can be detected from their undertaken duties.

The Structure of This Thesis

Chapter two presents the socio-political context of the LNC and a brief summary of change attempts brought about with the initiation of the LNC and an account of SLs' conditions of service and of their roles in Lebanese public schools as reflected in the functions they currently undertake. Chapter three presents the conceptual framework for SLs as in-school agents of change who can create conditions for improved implementation of curricula. Chapter four presents the research methodology utilized to investigate the participants' views about the roles of successful leaders in enhancing the implementation of the LNC, consequently, school achievement. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are the findings chapters. Chapter five presents data on SLs and their external contexts as perceived by principals; as SLs perceive national policy; as they perceive their training and as the GCD and the inspectorate supported them. Chapter six presents a summary of participants' views about successful subject leadership in the elementary cycles in the public and the PCSSs. Chapter seven presents findings achieved from secondary public and the PCSS principals, teachers, parents as well as students. Chapters eight and nine are the discussion and recommendation chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL

CURRICULUM AND SUBJECT LEADERS' ROLES IN LEBANESE SCHOOLS

This chapter presents the socio-political context of the LNC and the government's and the ministry's attempts to find solutions to existing educational problems. It also presents a detailed account of SLs' conditions of service and of their roles in Lebanese public schools as functions currently undertaken. It presents a discussion of SLs' work conditions and how they fit in the school organizational structure in the absence of formal recognition for their role. The researcher relies on documentation from both, the public and the PCSS, the school where she is currently working, in an attempt to present a partial view of the role of the SL. In brief, allocating a SL in a public school means giving a selected experienced teacher a specific number of hours to handle the subject leadership job. Yet, whenever need arises, it is the quota for subject leadership that is reduced in favor of more teaching hours, rather than the opposite. Whereas, in most private schools, a SL is appointed this post from beginning even if s/he is assigned a number of teaching hours.

Comparing both schools will help spotlight how the conditions of assignment in public schools that lacked accountability measures were reflected in performance of practitioners at school level, thus leading to incomplete implementation of the LNC. While accountability measures imposed on SLs in the PCSS, though coupled with lack of detailed job specifications, led to better performance and consequently achievement level. In general, this chapter reflects how attempts of the ministry failed in addressing the existing problems; consequently, led to no real change in implementing the LNC.

THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

Lebanon can be considered the most educated state in the Arab world. It has the highest literacy rate, the greatest per capita rate of people who have received higher education, and the greatest number of schools per capita (Qubain, 1966: 398). The Lebanese educational system has been chiefly the function of private institutions (Qubain, 1966: 345) developed by foreign missionaries. These schools produced a generation foreign in aims, aspirations, loyalties, and outlook to others (Antippa, 1954: 60). This diversity reflected the same instability and intolerance that characterized life in the nation in general, and "guaranteed the maintenance of the status quo in Lebanon, and the reproduction of the existing social structure" (Wehbe and El Amin, 1980: 140).

Since its beginnings, one feature of the divisive Lebanese educational system was emphasizing foreign languages at the expense of Arabic, the thing that led people to identify with the foreign language and be more fluent in it (Hares, 1985: 81) and consequently feel removed from the original environment (Ibid. p. 76). As such, education in Lebanon "... has only served to further split and perpetuate the traditionally existing social divisions" (Dajani, 1976: 45).

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN LEBANON BEFORE 1943

The history of the Lebanese educational system indicates that "... the Lebanese ... who could easily accept the west, with no... religious or political reservations" (Salibi, 1965: 142) made it easy for the west to find in Lebanon a country that could easily serve as a foothold in the Middle East (See Table 1).

Table 1. Foreign Schools in Lebanon

French and Maronite Schools	
Year	School
Late 12 th C.	Maronite Church became formally attached to the Roman Catholic Church (Hares, 1985: 121).
16 th C.	Seminary for the training of Maronite priests was opened in Rome (Hitti, 1967: 402).
1584	Collegium Maronitarum was opened by Pope Gregory the XIII (Ibid.).
-----	Graduates of the college opened village schools in the Maronite areas introducing new curriculum and foreign language instruction (Hares, 1985: 85).
1734	Butrus Mubarak established the first modern European-style high school (Ibid.).
19 th C.	Catholic missions began advanced educational work (Ibid.).
1834	Ayn Turah College was reopened (Matthews and Akrawi, 1949: 459).
1875	Founding of Saint Joseph's University in Beirut (Hitti, 1967: 453).
1976	Saint Joseph's University opened branches in Tripoli and Sidon (Hares, 1985: 86).
-----	Saint Joseph's University built some elementary schools in remote villages (Matthews and Akrawi, 1949: 459).
American Schools	
1822	Arrival of two Protestant missionaries in Beirut (Ibid.).
1834	Establishing a school for girls in Beirut by Dr. Eli Smith, a missionary (Hares, 1985: 134).
1835	A small school was started in the mountains for Druze girls (Ibid. p. 87).
1839	American missionaries began their educational work (Ibid.).
1842	The American mission founded a school at Abaya, in the mountains (Salibi, 1965: 137).
Mid. 19 th C.	A seminary in Abay and several other schools were founded in the mountain (Ibid.).
1861	The American school for boys was turned into a boarding school (Hares, 1985: 87).
1862	Another modern school for girls and a junior college for women were opened (Ibid.).
1920	Americans founded the Syrian Protestant College known as AUB (Salibi, 1965: 137).
Protestants from England	
1860	The British-Syrian training College for girls was established (Matthews and Akrawi, 1949: 499).
1897	By this date 52 British-sponsored schools were open (Hares, 1985: 90).

As shown in Table 1, missionary schools were first to be established in Lebanon. It was only in the latter part of the 19th century that traditional religious schools began to draw inspiration from western sources and expand their curricula to include French and English (Hares, 1985: 91). The Shi'ites and the Druze (two Muslim sects) were the only two communities in Lebanon who took no part in the educational movement of the time (Salibi, 1965: 140). The situation brought

religious and cultural division to the Lebanese with a long-term effect on their ability to unify. As Antonius (1968: 37) said, “[Educational development] became an instrument of political penetration as well as a vehicle of culture; and more reprehensibly still, it facilitated and sometimes deliberately encouraged, the acquisition of political power by the clergy”. Regland (1968: 162-163) also explained saying, “ Private schools have helped create Christian community which is more advanced than the Muslim community and in doing so, have sharpened the differences which already separated the two communities”.

Linguistic and Religious Divisions of Schools 1900 – 1943

Educational institutions in Lebanon are not only private and public. A major organizational characteristic is the three-way division of schools that had its impact on the curriculum. Both public and private schools are divided into English medium schools, French medium schools and Arabic medium schools. English and French schools use their language as a medium of instruction in all subjects except the Arabic subject, religious studies and physical education. Only Arabic medium schools use Arabic as a medium of instruction in all subject areas. In these schools, textbooks for all subject area in the elementary stage (kindergarten to Grade 5) are written in Arabic, while textbooks in the intermediate and secondary stages (Grades 6 to 12) are written in English, and teachers use Arabic along with English or French as a medium of instruction. This explains what Antippa (1954) and Dajani (1976) meant by people learning to identify with the foreign language and being more fluent in it.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN LEBANON 1943 – 1994

The system of public and private education in Lebanon is highly centralized. The Ministry of National Education and Fine Arts (henceforth MNEFA) controls, directly or indirectly, all the important aspects of the educational program (Hares, 1985: 95). Table 2 shows the structure of

the Lebanese educational system before the LNC. An official public examination for the Lebanese Baccalaureate Part I was taken upon completion of the second secondary year (Grade 11). The Baccalaureate part II was awarded upon successful completion of an exam given at the end of the third secondary year (Grade 12), and was required for all programs of higher education (Ibid. p. 96).

Table 2. The structure of public education in Lebanon till 1994

Structure	* elementary	* intermediate	Secondary
Grades	1 - 5	6 - 9	10 -12
Age level	6 - 11	12 - 16	17 - 19
Subjects	<p>Main subjects: Arabic, history, and geography.</p> <p>The rest of the program: English or French, arithmetic, science, singing, drawing, religious morals and civics, reading, penmanship, and writing.</p>	<p>The same subjects as the primary but with addition of instruction in the basic science and advanced mathematics. It is climaxed by an external examination.</p>	<p>The First year: literary studies branch, classical or ancient languages branch, and scientific courses branch.</p> <p>Courses in the literary studies section: religion Arabic, a foreign language (English or French), history, geography, mathematics, physics, chemistry, translation, physical education, and military training or home economics.</p> <p>Courses in the classical or ancient languages section: courses in an ancient language are added and instruction in physics and chemistry are omitted.</p> <p>Courses in the scientific section: more training in math, physics and chemistry, no translation training is provided; while the other areas of the curriculum are identical.</p> <p>The third year: mathematics curriculum experimental sciences curriculum, and philosophy curriculum.</p> <p>The first section: provides training in mathematics, physics, chemistry, general philosophy, history of Arab science, history, geography, physical education, and military training or home economics.</p> <p>The second section: more natural science is provided and less math than the math section.</p> <p>The third section: Arab science, math and chemistry are replaced with Arabic philosophy, general philosophy, and natural science.</p>

Hares (1985) * Hares calls these Primary and Higher Primary schools, respectively.

In 1926, regulations governing the appointment, dismissal and promotions were promulgated, and a financial policy was set. In 1942/3, new positions in the MNEFA were opened (Habboub, 1971). These laws established by the French were modeled after the French system. After the

time of independence (1943), the Lebanese government tried to create curricula that would unify, to a certain extent, all the schools found on Lebanese territory for each of the teaching cycles: elementary, intermediate and secondary. Hares (1985: 99) believed that its only outstanding achievement had been the rapid increase in the number of public schools. However, the MNEFA failed to create an educational system that was suitable for the needs of the complex society of Lebanon.

Aims of Education in Lebanon (1946 – 1993) and the Status of Private Schooling

The Lebanese educational system was "traditional, theoretical and highly academic," (Najjar, 1957: 2) because "those who set the curriculum have copied it from the west without due consideration of whether it is suitable to our life" (Antippa, 1954: 205-206). And as Hajj (in Antippa, 1954) commented,

True education has, as an ultimate goal, the awakening of the citizen and of the person in the student. We have neither the education of the citizen, nor that of the man. The reason for this cloudiness in thought lies in the fact that the curriculum is more concerned with stuffing the memory with information only, rather than with training the reasoning power in man which sets him free.

The expansion of public schools in Lebanon was accompanied by an increase in the number of schools in the private sector (Ministry of National Education, 1969-70: 23). Despite the MNEFA's efforts to promote public schools, education in Lebanon was still mainly a private affair. Three main factors pertained to this situation. The first was the tradition of government sustained non-interference in religious schools, and state school inspectors restricting their operations to government schools (Regland, 1968: 83). As a result, many private schools did not follow the curriculum, substituting French or European history for Middle Eastern history, or teaching in French when they were supposed to be teaching in Arabic (Kurani, 1949: 453). The second was that private schools had longer history than public schools. That is, it was only in the early 1970s that public schools were taken care of by the government. This led to public schools

students suffering from weakness in foreign languages and consequently being unable to continue their university studies. The third was that private schools had a great effect on the social and political life of the Lebanese. Private schools had served to widen the gap between religious and economic groups as well.

In Lebanon the intellectuals are graduates of various universities in the country. Yet we find that the social structure recruits mainly graduates of the French educational system for high status positions. While graduates of the American University, for example, instructed in a different medium ... English ... and in fields other than law, do not participate directly in the political system but are employed in public services such as business, journalism, teaching (Hares, 1985: 101).

This indicates that the language of instruction persisted as a problem causing the split between public and private schools, and in turn affected the graduates' job opportunities where mastery of one or more foreign language was essential (Hawari, 1995c).

Language of Instruction

The debate about language of instruction dates back to 1946, and has always had its impact on school distribution: private profit making, private non-profit making, and public schools. As Table 3 indicates, the issue of language instruction had never been taken seriously, and the debate was not settled even after setting the LNC. According to Abu Mrad (1995), nothing would stop the different cultural groups from learning to identify themselves as four different ethnic groups over and above the distribution of the people into 17 religious, ethnic and sectarian groups. And as Murad (in Hawari, 1994b) the then minister of education claimed, "Using foreign languages as languages of instruction in teaching math and sciences would lead to segregating the society not unifying it. It would lead to generations with different cultures and without a common language. This was reflected in the distribution of schools in Lebanon.

Table 3. Language of instruction 1924 - 1994

Year	Decree #	Language of instruction
1924 & 1927		Math and Sciences were taught in French. French was the administrative language alongside the Arabic. Arabic was optional for teaching social sciences.
1946	Decrees ## 6998, 6999, and 7001 (the teaching curriculum) were issued.	The Arabic language became obligatory for teaching all subjects except foreign languages. French and English were temporarily accepted as languages of teaching math and sciences.
1951		The Lebanese University was established. Arabic was the obligatory language of instruction for all cycles.
1968	Decree # 5589 related to the amendment of Decree # 9099 (organization of teaching cycles)	Curricula were to be taught in the four school stages in Arabic except for the foreign languages and literature. One of the languages (French, English or German) may be used to teach math and old languages.
1971		The NCERD prepared the Arabic version of the science and math books. The Lebanese civil war (1975 – 1990) impeded printing.
1990		Resumption of Arabization of teaching in the intermediate cycle was expected after peace returned to the country.
1994	Decree # 5589/94 denounced Decree # 9099	The nation was divided into four different cultural groups.

Abu Mrad (1995)

Distribution of schools in Lebanon

As tables 4 and 5 show, statistics indicated that distribution of schools, and the number of students in all three kinds of schools differed between 1973 and 1991. The civil war and consequently, the deteriorating economic situation in addition to the religious background led to a new different distribution of schools. In the 1990s, the number of public schools dropped in favor of profit-making private schools.

Table 4. Public schools, non-profit making private, and profit making private schools (1973-1994)

Year	School type	Number of schools	Number of students	Number of teachers
1973/4	Non-profit	672	190814	No statistics
1981/2	Non-profit	476	152330	No statistics
1994	Non-profit	415	123674	No statistics
1975	Public	1347	320825	21244
1992	Public	1262	236253	28903
1973/4	Private	616	279715	15115
1991/2	Private	673	269566	23341

Hawari (1995c)

Table 5. Schools, teachers and students in the public sector.

Year	Schools		Teachers		Students		Ratio of student/teacher
	Number	Dev.av.	Number	Dev.av.	Number	Dev.av.	
1977/78	1322	128.7	2234	585.3	327780	376.5	16.2
1979/80	1430	139.2	28145	814.1	317431	364.6	11.3
1980/81	1448	141	29105	841.9	314986	361.8	10.8
1981/82	1419	138.2	28840	834.2	294257	338	10.2
1982/83	1236	120.4	26188	757.5	251740	321.6	9.6
1986/87	1344	130.9	25841	747.5	292463	335.9	11.3
1988/89	1271	123.8	26895	778	237054	272.3	8.8
1991/92	1262	122.9	28903	836.1	236253	271.4	8.2

The Arabic Information Center (Al Safir, 1994) dev: development; av: average.

The rise in the number of public school teachers (33%) was not related to productivity in teaching; rather, it resulted from evacuation and political pressures. Consequently, the surplus in the teaching cadre in public schools accompanied by deteriorating student enrollment rate paved the way for private profit-making schools to raise their tuition fees without improving the quality of students' qualifications (Hawari, 1995c). Schools in totality did not represent a homogeneous educational philosophy. This was further witnessed in the different subject areas in the period before the LNC (ibid.). It was only in 1982 that subject leadership was recognized as a new post. Yet, ambiguity of this role set was not clarified because the civil war suspended all the activities of the ministry. Conditions of SL assignment (Appendix B) will be discussed in details in this chapter.

During the same period, the Grade Point Average (henceforth GPA) calculation in public schools was said to be ineffective and led to (a) high rate of dropping out and (b) public school students failing to continue their university studies because of weakness in languages. Table 6 presents the GPA calculation for Grade 7 (the first grade in the third cycle in the LNC) in the LOC and the LNC. It indicates that languages (Arabic and English/French) were taught equal numbers of hours per week but the coefficient for foreign languages was one third that given to Arabic. Math was taught 6 hours a week and given the same coefficient as Arabic.

Table 6. Grade Point Average calculation for Grade 7 in public and private schools in the Lebanese Old Curriculum.

Grade 7	Public school distribution		Private school distribution	
Subject area	# of Hours	Coefficient	# of Hours	Coefficient
Arabic language	7	27.7 %	7	45.75 %
First foreign language	7	9 %	7	
Second foreign language	-	-	2	
Civics and ethics	1	4.5 %	1	11.4 %
History	1	4.5 %	1	
Geography	2	9 %	2	
Mathematics	6	27.2 %	6	34.3 %
Science (phys. Chem. *Bio.)	2 x 2	18 %	6 (2x3)	
Technology	-	-	-	
Information technology	-	-	-	
Arts and activities	-	-	1	8.55 %
Physical education	2	-	2	
Total number of hours	30		35	
GPA		100 %		100 %

Decree 10227. phys. = physics; chem. = chemistry; bio. = biology; * given only in the LNC

Since student promotion from one grade to the other was based on the cumulative average (50% as a passing average), problems of language instruction were (a) not detected, and consequently, (b) were not addressed. A big percentage of students who used to fail major subject areas were promoted from one grade to the other carrying their weaknesses from early schooling stages to graduation from school.

Private schools in this period had a different distribution of teaching hours. They taught 35 hours (seven per day) instead of 30 (six per day). As a result, they provided for physical education and arts, and assigned more hours for math and foreign languages. They followed a differed scheme for GPA calculation. The coefficient for each subject area was proportional to the number of teaching hours. In addition, the passing average was 65% in condition that the student did not fail three main subjects (Arabic, English, math, or sciences). So if a seventh grader failed two main subjects, for example, s/he would have to take a delinquent test. If s/he passed the two, s/he would be promoted to Grade 8. If s/he failed one, s/he would carry delinquency to Grade 8. If s/he then failed the delinquency test, s/he would repeat Grade 8.

THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

The Researcher and The Case Study School

The researcher is a full-timer in a private school, the case study school in Sidon, South Lebanon, in the area where the study was conducted. The principal of the school has got a university degree in education. All the SLs have got Masters degrees in their subject areas. Very few teachers are BA holders, while the majority have got teaching diplomas, MA or MBA degrees. As the bylaws dictate, the researcher has six teaching hours and 14 hours assigned to control the work of the whole English Department across the school (from Kindergarten to Grade 12, with a student body of 1300 students).

The case study school is a secondary school that has two separate campuses located in the same area. The first campus is for the preschool (three years) and the elementary cycles (Grades 1 to 5) except for Grade 6 because of space allocation, and is labeled the Elementary School. The second campus is for the intermediate and secondary cycles starting with Grade 6 instead of Grade 7 to Grade 12, and is labeled the Secondary School (See Appendix A for definition of main terms).

The researcher's school is the case study school itself against which the situation in the public schools in the sample is compared. Within this same school, the researcher conducted a FGI with 7 parents of students with SEN, called the reputation group. It is utilized for the purpose of highlighting how the school deals with students with SEN to keep them in the mainstream. The researcher chose her school as the case study school for two main reasons. The first was aimed at spotlighting the different duties undertaken by SLs in both school systems, and detecting which duties are indicators of effective implementation of change. The second is that the researcher, being a SL and an object of research as well, found it easier to be herself the FGI

moderator thus establishing more validity into the study. Also being a SL made it easier for the researcher to contact more interviewees, and to retain and refocus group discussions.

The PCSS, similarly to many schools in the area of the study, can be a good example about what private schools hold as the essence of subject leadership. The history of education in Lebanon indicates that private schools not only have longer history than public schools, but are known to provide better quality education as well. In general, this results not only from conditions of establishment of each school, but from conditions of assignment of principals, SLs and teachers, as well as criteria for student enrollment as well.

In addition, private schools are known as self-contained, self-organized, self-sufficient, self-assessed, self-improved and self-driven. To state clearly, private schools (profit and non-profit making schools) are schools that take care of their own staffing, and select their own curricula, and set their own scope and sequence. They are supported financially by the government without any commitment in return. They follow their own procedures of assessment and their own improvement policies and approaches.

In theory, private schools' connection with the ministry is through adopting the national curriculum, the control over which is through the inspectorate. Yet, since the inspectorate can barely do its job in public schools (Anon, 1997), they never visit private schools. Consequently, the control over the school's selection of curriculum content matter and school's aims and objectives is through the official examinations where success/failure rates have a direct bearing on the school name and its enrollment rate.

In other words, private schools are not linked to the inspectorate or the GCD by any means. Nor do the ministry's plans for public schools note private schools. For this, the name the private school makes for itself is totally reliant on internal measures of assignment and the bylaws for organizing all the work. As diary data indicate, private schools have principals

carrying university degrees in education, teachers and SLs carrying university degrees in their subject areas; and student enrolled is on the basis of a screening test. And the best private school is the best in utilizing its staff for the best of its students.

The best private schools are those where principals carry post-graduate degrees in education, SLs and teachers carrying teaching diplomas or above and *elite* students enrolled after taking a screening test. The success rate of their students in the official examinations is always between 87 and 100% in the different cycles. While private schools closest to public schools in terms of quality of education provided are those where principals have got university degrees but teachers are a mix of university graduates and university students. Students are enrolled on the basis of a screening test but fewer strict criteria for selection. Most of these schools were established during the Lebanese civil war, and these are the schools that drop the success rate in private schools.

In return for the quality of education provided, the two major discriminating criteria between private schools are the tuition fees and the number of SLs assigned in the school. Historically, school fees have been the first indicators of the quality education the school provides. That is, the higher the school fees are, the more facilities are provided, the more qualified teachers are assigned and the more caring the school is about following-up school improvement. And since parents are paying fees, the higher fees parents are to pay, the more they demand for better quality education and the more the school assigns SLs.

Until the initiation of the Education Reform Act (1994), the political performance indicated the existence of diphasic educational policy. The first was based on people's perception that the private sector was a place that will receive children of specific sociopolitical statuses. The second was that the public sector was a place for the poor or those who could not join the private institutions, and a big room for running the business of mutual services, in the area of assigning employees and buying equipment as well (El Amine, in Hawari, 1994a).

The document of the National Accord set the framework for the LNC (Hawari, 1997b). The ministry set a priority scale for addressing the existing problems (Younis, 1998; Burda and Moawwad, 1998) yet the National Center for Educational Research and Development was exclusively the administrator,” (El Amine, 1994a). Fraiha (in Burda and Moawwad, 1998) found that the LNC, like the Lebanese Old Curriculum, was set but was not built on solid facts and research studies. There was a sort of improvisation in adding the eight new subjects.

THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM 1994

By 1994, all attempts to initiate change did not stem from changes in the educational policy or re-planning processes; rather, were only instant solutions for emerging problems. The content of the curriculum was fairly adequate, but “the methodology used was totally inappropriate for the Lebanese school. It emphasized memorization of facts at the expense of analysis” (Hares, 1985: 107).

Civics texts universally avoid controversy by failing to discuss the confessional nature of the political system. Descriptions of a particular political office do not mention the sect affiliation of its holder ... none of the books even hint that Lebanon has a multi-confessional plural society which has given rise to a political system of a special character (Smock, 1975: 186).

Unfortunately, “history [teaching that] was [supposed] ... to be dynamic, open-minded, concerned with the critical thinking, active, and inspirational” (Hertzberg, 1981:14) suffered from a lack of such ideals (Hares, 1985: 113). In history education, each sect distorted history to suit itself and to justify its actions and ideologies, thus leading the youth to see history not from one point of view. To counter this, El Amine (in Hawari, 1994a) believed that people in charge of the curriculum should set strict *national and educational* conditions for writing school textbooks in the area of social studies (history, geography, civics and ethics). To him, textbook writers would compete under these conditions, and books that would be accepted should be those that reflect these conditions.

Change was witnessed at the level of (a) the content matter in school textbooks, (b) division of schooling cycles (Appendix A) and (c) division of Grade 12 into four strands instead of two to satisfy those needs. Along with these changes, the grading system changed. As table 7 indicates, the introduction of the new subjects imposed a different distribution of weekly hours accompanied by changes in the coefficient assigned for each subject (GPA calculation).

Though the passing average stayed 50%, the coefficient that became proportional to the number of hours assigned for each subject area made it more difficult for a student to pass if s/he failed in languages. The problems that public schools suffered from as a result were:

- Reducing the number of hours for the first foreign language instruction in favor of the second, made students who had weaknesses in language more vulnerable.
- Many schools could not teach the new subjects because of (a) lack of qualified teachers, (b) unavailability of teachers for most of the new subjects (c) schools' inability to pay for part-time teachers from school budgets, or (d) lack of facilities (Hawari, 2001b).

Table 7. Grade Point Average calculation for Grade 7 in public and private schools in the Lebanese New Curriculum.

Grade 7		Public school distribution		Private school distribution	
Subject area	# hours	coefficient	# of Hours	Coefficient	
Arabic language	6	40 %	6	45.75 %	
First foreign language	6		7		
Second foreign language	2		2		
Civics and ethics	1	11.4 %	1	11.4 %	
History	1		1		
Geography	2		2		
Mathematics	5	34.3 %	6	34.3 %	
Science (phys. Chem. Bio.)	2 x 3		6 (2x3)		
Technology	1		-		
Information technology	1		1		
Arts and activities	2	14.3 %	1	8.55 %	
Physical education	2		2		
Total number of hours	35		35		
GPA		100 %		100 %	

Decree 10227. phys. = physics; chem. = chemistry; bio. = biology

Most of the public schools' lacked facilities and equipment. On the other hand, private schools kept the old distribution almost unchanged. As diary data indicate, instead of reducing the hours assigned for language instruction, they reduced the number of hours for sciences and gave either technology or information technology. Their passing average stayed as it was. They did not have any problems with teacher assignment for the new subjects because they had the necessary budgets. They could hire qualified degree holders who in turn were seeking better payment than that offered by public schools.

For the LNC to be implemented successfully, the Ministry of Education launched a training program for teachers prior to the implementation period. The program was prepared for practicing teachers, excluding principals, SLs and newly assigned teachers. The NCERD provided training for 25000 teachers mainly because the LNC included eight new subjects (El Rahi, 1998 and 1998a). Trainers were selected randomly; SLs were excluded from the training thus their role devaluated (Anon., in Hawari, 1998b). In general, training was deficient and improvisation was a clear characteristic of the activity the trainers did (Bayan; in Shalha, 1998; El Assi, 1999). In return, Yaghi (in Burda and Moawwad, 1998) promised teachers to receive 50 hours of training during the following academic year. Yet, the promise was not fulfilled.

Subject leadership was not recognized as an important role for proper implementation; rather, the status of SLs stayed as it had always been. SLs who joined in the training did so as teachers. Consequently, they were deprived of the chance to exert good control over teaching in general, and teaching the new subjects in particular (Anon; in Hawari, 1998a). By the time of implementing the LNC, the ministry had four different plans set in an attempt to address all the above problems that were not resolved yet. The ministry created the Guidance and Counseling Department (henceforth GCD). Guides and counselors were expected to visit schools more frequently than inspectors, provide teachers with sustained external support and guidance by addressing emerging problems directly to make the implementation process easier. The ministry

also studied the possibility for implementing compulsory education, the comprehensive school project and the school consolidation plan.

The Guidance and Counseling Department

For better controls over the implementation process of the LNC, the ministry created the GCD. As its name suggests, the nature of the department work is guiding schools to improve their achievement. At the same time, the GCD will be the link between the four ministries: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of TVE, the Ministry of Higher Education and Culture, and the Ministry of Works and the means to reaching better educational decisions and outcomes. The main goal of the GCD was making clear the channels through which students can transfer from the academic stream to TVE and vice versa.

Yet three main problems emerged as a result. First, the competition through which guides and counselors were to be selected did not take place (Makkeh, 2001); assignment was done on the basis of (a) years of experience, and (b) the external support some got; and training was very short. Second, since guides and counselors were experienced secondary teachers, many were SLs whose schools lost in the process of transferring them to the GCD; others were teachers whose existing SLs lost from among their teams. The third major problem was that though the GCD was established in 1995 and a head was assigned, a decree that would establish the organizational procedures for the department has not been issued yet (summer 2001). The fact that the GCD was not established on clear grounds, and that it was given privileges that were exclusively the inspectorate's created clashes between the two. The result was suspending the work of the GCD, and some schools losing their experienced teachers or SLs without having them returning to their schools as guides.

Compulsory Education

Compulsory education that should aim at improving human life (Moghaizel-Nasr, 1998) and people's common understanding of what nationalism is was perceived as a means to dividing people into two categories, one receiving a different education than the other especially in the area of foreign languages thus unwilling to unite under any circumstances (Moussa, 1996). The ministry's attempt to accommodate the big percentage of dropping out (Table 8) failed. Legislative decree 134/59, article 49 that states, "Education is free and compulsory in the first elementary cycle..." (Anon, 1998) was still not feasible (Smaha; in Haddad, 1997). To the ministry, this was because of the deteriorating economic situation; to schools because of space allocation (Smaha, 1997); and to parents a big percentage of children were the only source of income to their families (Ekval, 1997: 8). The concern about the growing numbers of students made the ministry work on the comprehensive school project and the school consolidation plan. The implementation of this plan will impose new criteria for the allocation of SLs and teachers and more flexible quota distribution. In a comprehensive school, elementary cycles will have SLs; and in consolidated schools there will be better utilization of qualifications of both SLs and teachers.

Table 8. Percentages of enrollment in public schools per age group

Student age	Percentage in 1970	Percentage in 1997
5 – 20 years	38.5 %	30.90 %
6 – 9 years	95.4 %	
10 – 14 years	94.8 %	
15 – 19 years	67.6% females 61.2% males	Drop outs
20 – 25 years	28.1% females 25.6% males	
Above 25 years	12% females 15.9% males	13.2% females 11.4% males

Lahham (1998)

The Comprehensive School Project and the School Consolidation Plan

The comprehensive school project stemmed from a number of factors:

- Study conditions in the public sector were unsuitable (El Rahi, 1998).
- Most school building were *rented* by the government (Tohme', 1994).
- The deteriorating economic situation raised the enrollment rate in public schools.

- The capacity of public schools was far behind the required capacity (Table 9).
- A concern about taking up all those students who could not afford high tuition fees of private schools, and in the long run keep only the schools owned by the government and the syndicate open.

Sponsors of the project were criticized for lacking knowledge about the plan (Tohme, 1994) which was not based on statistical studies; lacked clarity of directing procedures, did not mention assessment measures and did not state any measures regarding SEN (El Amine, 1994b). Saadeh (in Shams, 1994) found little hope in implementing it without (a) real human resources (SLs and trained teachers) and (b) improving permanent staff's economic condition.

Meanwhile, as a first step in this direction, the ministry started the school consolidation plan in an attempt to cut down budgets assigned for renting schools. In theory, the plan aimed at closing schools rented by the government through transferring students from small schools in one area to closest big schools in the same area. However, the plan was opposed by the civil community because it put more commutation expenses on parents who could barely afford tuition fees (Anon., 2000). As a result, because the research done cost the ministry a lot, and because of austerity budgets, the Comprehensive School Project and the School Consolidation Plan were not expected to see light. Consequently, the prevailing conditions in each school were sustained.

Table 9. The estimated number of students in each region (Muhafaza) in the year 2005

Cycle	Beirut	Mount Lebanon	The North	The South	Al Biqaa'	Total
KG	44000	111000	75000	67000	45000	342000
Elementary	74000	184000	125000	111000	74000	568000
Intermediate	50000	124000	85000	75000	50000	384000
Secondary	24000	60000	41000	36000	24000	185000
CC PS	25770	73690	79190	75150	50000	303800
RAC	44520	229110	171430	122570	105210	672840
RAS/KG/el.	29	258	199	128	124	738
RAS/int.	16	186	124	128	89	543
RAS/ sec.	10	80	53	58	21	242

Tohme (1994); CCPS: current capacity of public schools; RAC: required additional capacity; RAS: required additional schools; KG: Kinder Garden; el: elementary; int: intermediate; sec.: secondary.

In conclusion, though Decree 10227 addressed a big number of issues, all practical attempts were deadlocked because of austerity budgets, and seemingly the ministry's confused prioritization. Within this context, subject leadership that was recognized only in 1982, and in very general terms, was not given any consideration in the new plan. The unclear and ambiguous job description and lack of training made it difficult for SLs to function properly in the prevailing situation. And talking about educational change, the real question remains "who are the internal agents of change who can help make the difference?"

The Ministry of Education announced that the curricula would be assessed after three years of implementation (starting summer 2000) for (a) further needs assessment and (b) any possible changes in the content matter in the new textbooks to take place. That is, the curricula would be assessed objectively at two levels only before providing further training. It is namely this period that the researcher is interested in focusing on for better recognition of subject leadership as a role needed for current assessment of the LNC and future successful implementation of change. It is a critical period when the training program prepared for principals, managers of change, is still frozen (Yaghi, 1998 and Anon; in El Assi, 1998) and the problem still lies in the method of assigning them (Abu Asali; in Hawari, 1997a).

CONDITIONS OF TEACHERS' AND SUBJECT LEADERS'

ASSIGNMENT IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

By definition, a teacher is considered a full-timer when s/he is assigned 28 teaching hours in the elementary school (Grades 1 to 6), 24 hours in the intermediate school (Grades 7, 8, & 9), and 20 hours in the secondary school (Grades 10, 11, & 12). Conditions of teacher assignment are stated in Table 10. Of major concern to this study is the second category of teachers: secondary teachers. The first twelve years of teaching experience do not lead to any changes in the secondary teacher's teaching quota or status. Yet, each teacher can be considered a potential SL after this period.

Table 10. Conditions of teacher assignment in the public sector

Level of teaching	Teachers' educational Background	Degree/Certificate	Number of teaching hours per week
Elementary / Intermediate	2 years of university study in a subject area	Graduates of Teacher Training Institutes	24 hours
Secondary	4 years of university study	Graduates of the Faculty of Education	20 hours
University	3-4 years of study after the BA		7 to 10 hours

Al Bawwab-Al Eid (1995)

By law, during the second twelve years, the teaching quota is reduced one hour each two years after which no more reduction is allowed. That is, after 24 years of teaching experience, the teacher's quota becomes 14 hours per week, and the teacher has a big chance to become a SL if the need arises. Yet, s/he may stay in the profession for 24 years without being recognized as a SL. And when assigned this job, the conditions and terms of assignment are usually informal and not contractual as the diary data indicate.

The process of assignment is initiated when the school principal finds that the existing teaching cadre within the department can cover more than the teaching hours needed for the opened classes. To select a teacher and assign him/her as a SL, the principal has to take the years of experience into consideration. In this sense, the teacher with the longest experience will be given priority unless the principal sees otherwise (See Appendix B). If there is more than one potential teacher, it is left for the principal to decide according to whom he sees best convenient. In this sense, the bylaws of Law 1982/22 (organization of teaching in public schools) say: 50% of the new job (subject leadership) load is to be taken from the reduced hours (6 teaching hours), and 50% of the current job (14 teaching hours). At best, a teacher with the longest experience ends up with the minimum of nine teaching hours and the maximum of 10 hours for subject leadership (See Table 11).

SLs are assigned this post when principals recommend them. And as the diary data indicate, apparently this recommendation stems from principals' satisfaction with those SLs'

achievements as teachers first, and their communication skills second - that is, convenience selection - rather than from undertaking any training courses or any assessment tests for promotion. This satisfaction results in principals' accepting department achievement as 'the-best-possible' and 'the-best-available' since they are not involved in department work by any means at all, and are fully aware of their schools' conditions (teachers' conditions of assignment, teachers' qualifications, school facilities, students' socio-economic background, etc.). They find themselves totally reliant on SLs whom they trusted for their respective department achievements. Without further clarification of duties, and without training, SLs cannot be held accountable for their work especially that the accountability measures are not mentioned in Law 1982/22.

Table 11. Conditions for and calculation of coordination hours for subject leaders.

Original secondary teaching quota	20 hours
The first 12 years of experience	No teaching reduction
Deductions after another 12 years	6 hours (one hour each two years of experience)
The minimum number of teaching hours	14 hours (after gaining 12 years of experience)
Assigned the job of a SL for a maximum of 10 hours.	5 hours are taken from the 14 teaching 5 hours are taken from the 6 (deduction)

Law 1982/22

When assigned the new post, the SL's pay is calculated as the total sum of three parts. The first is a fixed payment for being a secondary teacher. The second part is the difference the government pays to secondary teachers for the years of experience following the teaching spine. The third is calculated annually and varies according to the hours assigned for subject leadership, the part-time job. That is, at the beginning of each academic year, if the principal finds a need for more teaching hours from the SL, s/he may redistribute the quota in favor of more teaching hours. Or s/he may keep the distribution as it is, and assign an extra part-time teaching job to that SL. In this case, the SL is by contract a full-time secondary teacher, but in practice a part-time teacher, a part-time SL and has an extra part-time teaching job subject to change according to the school's needs.

As diary data indicate, the tensions that emerge in secondary schools result from the discrepancy between the terms of teachers' contracts, the classes they really teach and their payment. A secondary teacher may feel misplaced when asked to teach intermediate classes because of lacking enough teachers at school though still paid as secondary teacher. An intermediate teacher may also feel dissatisfied when asked to teach secondary classes, yet is still paid as an intermediate teacher. Most problems emerge when in a secondary school two teachers, one appointed as intermediate and the other as secondary, teach two sections of the same grade level, and may have the same qualifications, are paid differently (Al Bawwab Al Eid, 1995).

As Appendix B (conditions of assignment of SLs in public secondary schools) indicates, all the tasks that the SL is to perform are presented in a very general sense, without further measurable specifications. When dealing with the content matter, the SL is expected to ensure whole material coverage, rather than discuss scope and sequence with his/her teachers. Goals and objectives are to be taken from teachers' guides as set by the ministry even if they are viewed as unsuitable or unorganized by SLs and teachers.

With respect to the teaching/learning situation, Law 1982/22 does not set any specific criteria for (a) selection of best teaching approaches, (b) assigning homework, or (c) testing. Though SLs are assigned their job without receiving any specific training, they, the experienced teachers, are expected to set those criteria. In this sense, the notion of an experienced teacher is confused with that of a trained SL. Even when the SL observes and/or invites teachers to observe him/her, observation criteria are absent, so are the related accountability measures as the diary data indicate.

In general, the traditional hierarchical model of school management is sustained. According to Law 1982/22, the principal is the sole person who assigns SLs, selects tests and keeps the records of minutes of department meetings, though might not be practically the case. This

shows how limited and unclear the roles of SLs are and at the same time how very broad for the experienced knowledgeable one. As such, the problem seems to lie from beginning in making principals assign SLs, the thing that results in two tensions. The first is the principal's lacking criteria and procedures for selection that would rule out all possible confrontations between principals and potential teachers who are seeking this post. The second is the instability of the status of SLs as long as the teaching cadre is not distributed properly on schools. The state of disorganized teacher transfer and evacuation that emerged as a result of the Lebanese civil war and the absence of a law that would re-distribute the teaching cadre has always led to assigning less qualified SLs in schools by virtue of their being the only full-time experienced teachers.

Lack of clear job description also makes subject leadership sound as a prestigious post offered as an appreciation for the teacher's long years of experience. Consequently, all teachers look up to it, as one principal said. For this, the existence of a law that allows experienced secondary teachers to sign a part-time contract with other schools has always been the outlet for teachers aspiring to promotion and better economic condition, as the diary data indicate. Although the law limits those contracts to the maximum of 10 hours, teachers may not abide by it especially in the absence of the ministry's control.

Dealing with different schools' principals, these teachers are given the chance not only to improve their income but to negotiate the possibility for them to transfer from schools where they only teach to schools where they will become SLs. As diary data indicate, since there is no law that organizes the process of transfer (Makkeh, 2001), this results in an unexpected redistribution of the teaching cadre and qualifications, and a higher probability for the existing SLs to return to teaching.

In general, the unclear job specification makes functions currently undertaken by SLs in their schools the norm for non-promoted teachers as long as principals show their satisfaction with

the tasks SLs' perform. That is, they become the implied job specifications by colleagues in their departments. An advantage of signing part-time contracts with different schools is that SLs as well as secondary teachers are exposed to different school environments, conditions of work, be they in private or public schools, and possibly witness some other SLs' performance of some new tasks. Consequently, they develop different visions about subject leadership in the absence of training.

Neither school principals nor government external agents can claim that SLs should reflect a different image within their schools or hold them accountable for anything that is not clearly stated in their conditions of assignment. This is what is happening, and will be clarified later in this chapter when discussing SLs' relationship with external agents of control. This leads to the conclusion that the split of public schools, coupled with different numbers of teaching hours, and the scarcity of chances for elementary teachers to promote their knowledge leaves subject leadership to those in secondary schools who will stay in their posts to an age when they would resist change. The situation is even worse in public elementary schools.

CONDITIONS OF ASSIGNING SUBJECT LEADERS

IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

As mentioned earlier, SLs are selected from among secondary teachers to be functioning in their same schools. That is, public elementary schools by law are not assumed to have SLs. Yet, this is not always the case. Two conditions might lead to having a SL:

- The problem of teacher transfer during the civil war led to presence of secondary teachers in elementary schools. Coupled with the problem of surplus, some elementary schools had more teachers than needed to cover the teaching hours. In that case, some teachers had to complete their quota through subject leadership. Yet, they were never recognized as SLs. Their pay stayed as that for elementary teachers and

the pay raise was based only on years of experience. By law, they gained one degree on the pay scale every four years.

- The other group of SLs were those permanent elementary teachers who got university degrees while practicing teaching. Like the previous group, and under the same conditions some have the chance to lead their departments. Yet, unlike the previous group, they plan for transfer to secondary schools for the sake of getting higher salaries, as the diary data indicate.

Like the secondary teachers, these two groups did not receive any training to perform the subject leadership job. Consequently, they were performing up to their best knowledge. The situation in both elementary and secondary schools leads to the conclusion that subject leadership had never been planned to be a middle management post.

STATUS OF SUBJECT LEADERS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LEBANESE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

The introduction of the LNC did not bring any change in the status of SLs; rather it created new tensions to SLs. In addition to their problems with inexperienced teachers - teachers who do not have university degrees and teachers resisting all sorts of control - SLs were struggling to satisfy teachers' needs in their respective departments without receiving proper training that would enable them to do so. Teachers expected them to help with the new lengthy content matter and the proposed teaching methods, two areas that were new to SLs, about which they could provide little or no help, as informal conversations with two SLs indicated. The sustenance of unclear job description coupled with lack of training led to role ambiguity and possibly vulnerable relationships between SLs on one hand and all practitioners on the other.

Both internal and external control agents did not seem to value subject leadership as an essential role for the improvement of school achievement. Within schools, principals and SLs themselves did not try to define what ‘controlling the department work’ exactly meant. Consequently, it was more difficult for principals, who were also assigned their jobs without training, to dictate any accountability measures, or impose any quality control criteria on SLs. Similarly to principals, and for the same reasons, SLs could not hold teachers accountable for their work. Under time constraints and the little contact with teachers in their departments, SLs find it impossible to have any direct relationship with parents or students. After all, this is not stated or hinted at in the bylaws, as one SL said, and would not make any difference to their payment if performed.

Since subject leadership is not a permanent post, SLs’ major concern becomes staying in their post by sustaining good relationships with their principals first and teachers second, both of whom are more important than parents, students or any external agents of control in this case, as diary data indicate. Under such conditions, student success and failure rates had never been considered the responsibility of any specific party whatsoever. Rather, they were the result of big gaps in the educational system, some of which were the civil war and the nature of student transfer from one school to another- from elementary to secondary, for example – without portfolio assessment.

Subject Leaders’ Relationships with Parents

In their terms of assignment, there is no mentioning of any relationship between SLs and parents. In the absence of any form of local educational authorities, the possible link between school on one hand and parents on the other is parents’ committees. Since by law, the civil community and municipalities are to support schools financially, and since the economic situation has been deteriorating, the communication between parents’ committees and schools has always been restricted to the latter’s seeking financial support, as informal conversations

with public school supervisors indicated. Whenever possible, schools invited parents to discuss school's needs for equipment that the ministry did not provide before the implementation of the LNC; consequently, raised money. In this case, they disregarded student achievement and absented school achievement from some meetings. SLs on their part did not have any obligations toward parents.

Subject leaders' Relationship with External agents of Controls

With respect to external controls over schools performance, two parties are involved: the existing inspecotrate and the GCD that the ministry created for this purpose. With respect to inspectors, they are expected to visit schools and observe classes. They are not expected to go over an in-depth analysis of what should take place in classrooms or to propose any alternative teaching approaches to those they observe. Rather, their feedback is focused on three areas: teachers' classroom management skills, planning the session, and how successfully the observed approaches will lead to material coverage (El Assi, 2000). Inspectors' major task is reporting their observations to the ministry; and through those reports, assessing schools' needs and drawing recommendations for further training. Meanwhile, if SLs are to play a role, it is taking those recommendations a step further in order to improve teachers' performance. If this is what can be implied from the evaluation form that inspectors use, it gives SLs credibility that is to be legitimized, or else the inspectorate's work will be less effective.

Table 12 is an abridgement of the original evaluation form that includes a description of each aspect in more details. In general, the evaluation form indicates that SLs are not viewed as agents of change. This can be explained by analyzing three of the objectives carried out by inspectors: evaluating textbooks, evaluating the teacher and giving recommendations. With respect to the first objective, inspectors evaluate the textbooks through the observed sessions and expect the observed teacher to do the same, without considering that a SL is more

knowledgeable about the scope and sequence of the content matter. That is, if the teacher is the best judge about the length of the content matter, the SL is the best person to know how the content is planned and integrated across the curriculum. Two questions are brought forward: How much can inspectors rely on teachers' evaluation if the latter lack teaching proficiency or have no teaching experience? And if such evaluation is used as a research tool for assessing successes of the implementation process of the LNC, how reliable can results be if only 80 inspectors are to inspect 2026 public schools, not to mention their other duties? (Ibid.)

Table 12. General educational inspection: evaluation of a lesson in one subject

Aspect of the teaching process	Overall evaluation
1. organization of the teacher preparation book	1. factors affecting the educational process positively
2. Lesson preparation	2. directions for the teacher
3. introducing the lesson	3. the teacher's evaluation of his/her own work
4. sequencing of the lesson	*4. the teachers' evaluation of the book
5. classroom activities	*5. the principal's evaluation of the teacher's performance
6. teacher's performance	*6. Suggestions - follow-up training needed - follow-up through coordination - follow-up through the subject committee
7. students' performance	
8. lesson closure	
9. Achievement of objectives	7. the inspector's overall evaluation
10. evaluation of the book through the observed session	

EI Assi (2000); adapted from the inspectorate's evaluation form.

* Objectives of evaluation.

The second objective is evaluating the observed teacher. To do this, the inspector seeks the principal's rather than the SL's evaluation. Though in principle this is not wrong, seeking the SL's evaluation is more feasible especially that s/he is usually more involved in the teaching/learning situation than the principal. The SL can pass fairer evaluation and at the same time learn what the inspectors want in order to follow-up teachers' work more properly and reinforce likely behaviors in teachers' performances.

The third objective is the inspector's propositions for improved teaching/learning practices. It is normal for the inspector to suggest further training. Yet, suggesting follow-up of teacher's

work through coordination leads to considering two assumptions. A SL cannot support, follow-up or guide teachers unless s/he is proficient and trained. In addition, s/he should be able to evaluate teachers' performance in terms of teaching the content matter in the textbooks; consequently, evaluate the textbooks. Yet, SLs' proficiency has never been evaluated, neither have they received any relevant training, as the diary data indicate. All of this feeds into the fact that SLs are important to play a number of roles to supplement the inspectors' work. Yet, minimizing their roles has always been the case before and after implementing the LNC and will lead to further complications if not addressed seriously.

Subject Leaders and the Guidance and Counseling Department

The GCD was established in 1995. In theory, guides and counselors were assumed to supplement the work of SLs. For this applicants were either (a) experienced secondary teachers who were degree holders, or (b) fresh university graduates. The final selection of guides and counselors was to be done on the basis of a competition after which training courses would be given. Consequently, they would be involved in the evaluation process of the LNC. That is, they visit schools, observe classes more frequently than inspectors and provide sustained training to teachers as well as SLs and supervisors. This was based on the assumption that they would become (a) full-time guides and counselors, (b) more familiar than SLs with all educational developments and all renovations that SLs could not follow-up, and (c) trained to advise and assist teachers in practice. Yet, the competition did not take place. Guides and counselors were assigned by convenience, and the training was partial (Alwa, 2000).

A number of problems emerged as a result. Some schools lost some of their SLs whose place of work and title only changed in the process. While the remaining SLs lost some of their experienced colleagues. Another problem was that guides and counselors visited schools more frequently than inspectors, but still insufficiently and gave inconsistent feedback. Those

who could provide some practical guidance to teachers the same day of the visit did it, while those who could not provide any guidance left schools without return leaving teachers without any feedback. And since clashes between the inspectorate and the GCD still existed, the latter's work remained undocumented, and of very little help. As a result, SLs remaining in their schools stayed out of the process. In this period, guides and counselors gained the status of external agents of control, but were considered unofficial. While SLs were marginalized.

After four years of implementing the LNC, all the measures taken by the ministry proved insufficient (Al Sabeh, 2001). The training was not enough for teachers to cope with the demands of the LNC, especially that they did not receive any follow-up training. The inspectors' visits to schools were effective but minimal, and their recommendations regarding measures for school improvement were suspended because of austerity budgets. In this case, the high percentage of students dropping out, and the high percentage of students with learning difficulties and SEN was expected to stay the same under the unchanging economic conditions in the country.

Subject Leaders and Special Educational Needs

The importance of focusing on SLs as in-school supporters of SEN stems from a number of facts:

- After the long years of civil war, and lacking enough research, it has been mentioned by word of mouth that at least six percent of the Lebanese children have serious learning problems. The Lebanese who label but hate labeling their children as students with SEN would not accept putting their children in special schools; rather, they prefer to have them mainstreamed. But actually the existing special schools are very few and not controlled by the ministry. The ministry makes the process of accrediting those private schools very difficult; yet, once this is done, they become separate from the government schools – that is, not inspected, as diary data indicate.

- The LNC noted SEN for the sole purpose that it was a persisting need, but the ministry has not taken any measure in this direction yet.
- There is not enough research that determines the underlying reasons for the problem of dropping out (students' poor economic status, weaknesses in languages, learning difficulties, or lack of orientation to TVE). Consequently, identifying SEN will probably minimize the rate of dropping out and will limit the variables that mislead research.
- The presence of trained teachers does not necessarily mean their being able to address needs of students with learning difficulties like specialists do. That is, trained teachers may not be able to substitute for specialists in addressing SEN.

Ignoring these facts means accepting the idea that the LNC was not written for all the Lebanese students, which in turn means defeating the purposes of its setting. And to address these issues means recognizing SLs as internal agents of change who are able to perform a variety of tasks. The researcher has actually researched the status of SLs in the Sidon area and found only anecdotal evidence about what subject leadership constitutes in terms of duties undertaken.

Since the roles of SLs in public schools are not recognized, the researcher had to rely on documentation from her private school to construct a partial view of their roles. Interestingly enough, she found that the way subject leadership was envisioned in private schools was totally different than that in public schools. In fact, both complement each other to give a partial image of what subject leadership constitutes. Though the job specification and accountability measures may not be clearly stated in the contract of the private school SL, the ambiguity is cleared out when duties and responsibilities are tied directly to student achievement level. According to the researcher, a subject leader is accountable for students'

pass rate in his/her subject area regardless of whether or not their GPA entitles them to be promoted from one grade level to another.

CONDITIONS OF SUBJECT LEADER ASSIGNMENT IN THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

Subject leaders in private schools are the key link between the school administration and teachers and students on one hand, and the school and parents on the other. They may communicate directly with students whenever need arises, usually when students have behavioral or academic problems. They are the ones who communicate with parents whenever the latter have complaints or seek advice. Parents have the right to seek a meeting with the SL alone, or a conference with the SL, his/her subject teacher and/or their child.

The researcher's school is one of the best schools in South Lebanon, and is located in the Sidon area. Its students pay the highest fees in the area, and they are enrolled on the basis of a screening test with priority given to students who have got sisters or brothers enrolled in the school. Each year, new students coming from different schools are enrolled in the different grade levels. This requires some extra effort from SLs in their department areas to help those students adapt to the school system and to the assessment measures especially in languages.

The situation in private elementary schools is totally different than that in public elementary schools. The case study school has got SLs for all the schooling cycles. Subject leadership is considered as important for the elementary cycles to guarantee students' acquisition of proper learning skills as it is important for the secondary cycle to guarantee high percentage of pass rate in the official examinations. For this, SLs are treated equally since the school considers them all equally qualified.

As indicated before, in the Lebanese educational system, subject leadership is never considered a post to be applied for, or a job assigned from beginning of the profession. The SL has to have teaching experience in the secondary school, and this is what private schools consider as important prerequisite for allocating SLs in the secondary school, regardless of whether these SLs are from within or outside the school. On the other hand, they prefer that the SL have experience in the intermediate school if s/he is to work in the elementary school.

In all cases, as Appendix C indicates, the first term of assignment is that the SL is considered as a full-time secondary teacher. This is for the sake of (a) imposing some teaching hours and (b) avoiding problems with the financial terms. Private schools do not have their own bylaws for SLs and would not like to create one. Rather, they prefer to have the SL as a secondary teacher, similarly to public schools, and raise the salary according to the government pay spine in addition to some extra payment as an appreciation for his/her performance level.

The SL is assigned as a full-time secondary teacher (quota of 20 hours) with the minimum number of teaching hours in the secondary cycle (Grades 10, 11, or 12). The teaching hours are assigned according to how the bylaw dictates, usually not less than six hours and not more than eight. Yet, the so-called bylaw is not documented; consequently, such measure is used as a key for principals to impose the teaching hours on SLs. This entitles school principals to impose some teaching hours on part-time SLs who sign contracts for 10 hours as well. In the case of full-time SLs, if the school needs more teaching hours, they are considered as another part-time job and the hourly rate is negotiated between the school principal and the SL himself/herself, and is usually related to the degree the SL holds. Unlike the situation in public schools, the SL has more hours assigned for subject leadership, and is consequently labeled and addressed as a full-time SL though literally s/he is not. In addition, this SL is held accountable for his/her department achievement level.

As term three in Appendix C indicates, there are no clear job specifications. The term ‘duties and responsibilities’ becomes a very elastic expression that unfolds all that the SL can do to avoid ‘student failure’. To be held responsible for student failure, the SL utilizes his/her knowledge and expertise in developing his/her department work. In the case of the researcher’s school, the nature of SLs’ assignment and student enrollment leaves little or no room for the department team to have border line students. Consequently, vulnerable students are those who transfer from other schools to the researcher’s school. And when failure occurs, it is either these students or those who are diagnosed as SEN students. In this case, SLs within their respective departments follow-up the development of student’s achievement and report it to the principal during the deliberation meetings that precede grade records distribution. At the end of the year, the principal will decide whether (a) to keep them in school in condition that private tutors or specialists will follow-up their work outside schools, or (b) fail them, or (c) recommend their transfer to another school on the grounds that the school level is above the student’s intellectual abilities.

For this, the relationship between the SL and the school administration is noted in term three. In fact the SL is to report regularly to the administration the situation in his/her department, and discuss possible solutions for emerging problems on the spot. And whatever the situation requires, the SL has to be on the lead. The administration, on their part, involve SLs as well as teachers in workshops and seminars inside and outside the school for the purpose of exposing them to latest innovations in the field. Expenses are paid either by the school alone or the school and teachers. In return, teachers in their departments are to help students academically whenever need arises, and as suggested by their SLs.

To conclude, SLs in private schools are treated differently than those in public schools. Their terms of assignment, training, follow-up of student achievement and relationship with the school administration, parents and students are different, more tiring, yet more fruitful. As mentioned earlier, the only commonality between both is the missing clear job description.

For this, without a clear job description, discrepancy will not only persist between public and private schools, but between private schools themselves as well.

Public school SLs' conditions under the prevailing educational situation with all its problems of teacher assignment, surplus, the deteriorating economic situation and lack of training do not allow SLs to function properly in the LNC. This condition impedes the proper implementation of the LNC unless the above problems are addressed. This can be done through preparing SLs to become middle managers of change. It is only then that public schools will have taken a step toward enabling them to control good quality education and to compete with private schools. For this, a conceptual framework for subject leadership is needed. Chapter three presents this conceptual framework for subject leadership. It presents an outline of all the possible roles that a SL can play to enhance proper implementation of change and to upgrade the general school achievement level. It delineates the roles that SLs play within and outside their school confines for this purpose.

CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter sets the conceptual framework for SLs as in-school agents of change. It outlines SLs' roles in creating conditions for improved implementation of curricula. It draws on the expertise and motivation of SLs in performing their job, attempting to address problems existing at the school level, as well as coping with external pressures through building a collectively owned culture, addressing teachers' needs as professionals and building learning-enriched departments for teachers as well as pupils. The researcher believes that this is the stepping stone for SLs to reinforce and reshape their relationship with parents, the external agents.

“Educational planning is still a developing art in the developing countries where data limitations are often severe, and developmental goals in general and educational goals in particular are not clearly defined. In addition, social and political pressures everywhere make difficult a rational approach to educational development” (Public Services Laboratory; 1992: 142). To compensate for deficiency in statistics (Anon., 94), the existing literature in England and Wales and in America has been considered the backbone for delineating subject leadership for many reasons. First, their educational systems have established a wider and clearer range of roles in the hierarchy of their different schooling systems. Second, there is clear job description that delineates how the different roles are interwoven though distinct. And of main concern to this research study, this literature provides evidence that SLs in the subject areas can solve a number of problems in the educational system if schools, as educational organizations, are granted autonomy. The researcher updated her readings in this area by surfing the ERIC documents and the internet and could have done more had there been more resources available in the Lebanese context. The French literature might have

brought the reader to a wider range of information sources; yet, the language barrier disabled the researcher from doing such readings.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS

Any change initiative cannot be decontextualized from the different external pressures, the quality of government training, the internal school structures as well as management and leadership styles that have their great impact on its implementation. As McMahon (2001; in Harris and Bennett, 2001:136) argues, the power of macro-cultural pressures makes it very difficult to build the kind of learning culture which leads to school improvement, leaving less room for flexibility at school level. And as Bottery (2001; in Harris and Bennett, 2001: 157) argues, the macro-political context exerts its influence on teacher professionalism; and the government legislation, through in-service training, drives the teaching profession to neglect the wider conception of their role. Moreover, as Cowan's and Wright's (1990; in Busher and Saran, 1995: 112) research findings indicate, lack of training coherence and continuity, and lack of follow through, lead to frustration and dissatisfaction among teachers and an expressed feeling of cynicism. In this sense, According to Moore (2001), lack of congruence between the proposed educational reform and its application in the classroom results from four miscommunication factors. The first is the top-down management styles exhibited by administrators. The second is the work environment where non-participatory and non-collaborative work is the norm. The third is having teachers given direction in the view of administrators. And the fourth is the state where teachers do not take the initiative; rather they allow policies to come from above. And in this case, subject leadership becomes a necessary role set to redress the relationship between the different parties involved in the education process.

Subject leaders are part of the realm of the middle management in educational organizations (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: vii-viii). They are key channels of communication

within their areas and with external environments of their areas. Within their areas they have to plan and sustain curriculum development, transmit the school policy to their team colleagues, monitor and develop staff and student performance and make appropriate resource allocations. With respect to external environments, SLs have to engage with the policies of school life and represent their areas to the wider community.

Change and Change Processes

There are two different types of change: changes that one would like to affect, or changes forced on the school by outside circumstances (Hopkins, 1987: 67). With reference to Cogan and Derricott (1996: 623), when change happens for socio-political reasons, the content and structure are imposed upon teachers with little consultation. Shortening the time scale needed to implement change affects the degree of clarity, the amount of effort persuading people to support the project, and consequently the quality of the result (Huberman and Miles, 1994; in Wright, 1999: 30). It also creates a climate of resistance in many schools (Wood, 1993: 7). And this makes it difficult for SLs to guide the teachers' professional development (Kemp and Nathan, 1995: 187).

Innovation becomes a stressful experience (Mills, 1995). And as Nightingale Teaching Consultancy's findings (1992: 4) indicate, causes of stress are the additional work associated with the national curriculum, lack of material resources, personality conflicts among staff in schools, inequitable distribution of work and dealing with [uncooperative] parents. Stress management is still necessary (Mills, 1995; Brown and Ralph, 1994: 8) since teachers not wanting change that would bring threats and anxiety would reflect their rejection in different behaviors (Bastiani, 1998: 24).

One way forward is for managers of change to take an active, participative, democratic approach to the management of that change (Sikes: 1992; in Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992)

and to help people involved in the process understand the 'dynamics of change' (Fullan, 1991: 213). In a change environment, it is important that SLs be supported by their heads who would mentor and coach school reform (Trail, 2000), and their potential for more active involvement be recognized (Kitson, 2000: 89). Such leadership of enablement puts SLs in their proper place where the leadership process is not presumably 'conducted' by any single person (Falk, 2000). Interactive processes that foster leadership enablement include the following qualities: building internal networks, building links between internal and external networks, ... and building each other's self-confidence (ibid.).

Subject Leaders as Managers of Change

Management, according to Daft (1999: 53), is concerned with the five functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling. Managers are involved in the areas of informational, interpersonal and decisional activities, and they strive to maintain stability and improve efficiency. While leadership is about (a) creating a vision for the future designed social architecture that shapes culture and values, (b) inspiring and motivating followers, (c) developing personal qualities and (d) creating change to improve organizational effectiveness. Though management and leadership overlap to a certain extent, leadership has an almost spiritual dimension, paying more attention to beliefs and values (Hsieh and Shen, 1998: 118).

Leadership can be combined with management to achieve the greatest possible outcomes. According to Hamlin (1990), SLs need to possess the characteristics of the 'universally effective manager' as well as a range of competencies that are determined by the context and culture of the educational setting. The challenge for leaders is growing into 'soft' leadership skills that 'supplement' the 'hard' skills of management (Daft, 1999: 25), and consequently, have some non-contact time, and support from the head or deputy who would recognize their potential for more active involvement (Kitson, 2000: 89).

To meet the challenges of their responsibilities and to bring about change within their departments, SLs need to manage change through monitoring and evaluating the impact of the policies, plans and actions. They should also show their knowledge and understanding of how they can improve teaching and learning, work with colleagues and make the most of the resources (Bell and Richie, 1999: 23). As leaders, they can choose along a continuum ranging from making a decision and announcing it, being 'task' oriented to 'results' oriented, being 'people' oriented or 'relationship' oriented (Coleman, 1993; in Bush and West-Burnham, 1993:56).

Leadership Styles and Approaches

The leadership style demonstrated by an individual determines the outcome of the leadership endeavor. Leadership style is an innate, relatively enduring attribute to a personality that provides general orientation when exercising leadership. Leadership behavior, on the other hand, refers to particular acts that a SL can perform or not perform if s/he has the knowledge and skills, and if s/he judges the appropriateness at the time (Beare, Coldwill, and Millikan, 1989: 105). In this sense, there is no best way to lead in all situations, but in any particular situation, one approach to leadership may be more effective than another. Still the two dimensions required for successful leadership become (a) a concern for accomplishing the tasks of the organization and (b) concern for relationships among people in the organization (ibid.); consequently, it is important to note that often a combination of styles is most effective.

As Table 13 shows, the components of leadership style, subordinate characteristics and situational elements impact one another, and this calls for different styles of leadership behavior (Daft, 1999: 113). Although the SL who prefers the trait approach has intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability, it is important to note that this

approach is not particularly useful for training and development because individuals' personal attributes are relatively considered stable and fixed (Northouse, 1997: 29-30). While, the transformational leader exhibits personal traits like sense of responsibility, concern for task completion, energy, persistence, risk-taking, self-confidence; and capacity to handle stress, to influence, and to coordinate the efforts of others in the achievement of purpose (Beare, Coldwill, and Millikan, 1989). With their followers, transformational leaders exhibit behaviors like inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire. These behaviors are indicative of strong transformational leadership. SLs also (a) emphasize the importance of followers in leadership processes, (b) go beyond transactional models, and (c) broaden leadership to include growth of followers (p. 157). They can facilitate the development of the underlying values of collaboration, ownership, teacher efficacy, collegial relationships built on honesty, trust, compatibility and mentoring (Leonard, 1999; in Begley and Leonard, 1999: 103). Along this line, Daft (1999: 173) explains that charismatic leaders use their minds and hearts to have 'significant impact on followers'. They are independent open-minded thinkers; they reflect systems' thinking, mental models and personal mastery. They are at the same time self-aware; they manage emotions, are empathetic and have social skills. All of this helps their followers grow, learn, develop, have team spirit and build relationships on trust and respect.

Whichever style they judge suitable, SLs need to be aware that education takes place not only in schools, but homes and the community where the three elements overlap with each other (McBeth, 1989: 2-3). For this, it is not only important for schools to become more consistent environments for pupils and teachers (Jamieson and Wikely, 2001: 173) but work with school communities and respond to external demands as well (Kaplan, 2000). This requires that the organization and structure of the school, and teaching strategies be adapted to clients of the schools, young learners, to become committed and motivated to achieve; and SLs to create a positive work environment and information dissemination (Palmer and Dale, 2001). Meetings can be the starting point for SLs to monitor progress.

Table 13. Leadership styles and approaches

* Leadership style
Team management: members in an organization work together to accomplish tasks
Country club management: the primary emphasis is given to people rather than to work outputs.
Authority-compliance management: occurs when efficiency in operations is the dominant orientation.
Middle-of-the-road management: reflects a moderate amount of concern for both people and production.
Impoverished management: there is no leadership philosophy. Leaders exert little effort toward interpersonal relationships or work accomplishments.
+ Leadership approach
Trait approach: the 'essence' of the individual leader is critical but the context is not. A leader is a leader under any circumstances and his/her leadership traits are part of his/her genetic make up.
Contingency approach: both the essence of the individual and the context are critical. Leaders are expected to generate an awareness of their own leadership skills and of the context so that they can compute the degree of alignment between themselves and the context.
Situational approach: is when the leader shapes people's interpretation of the environment, the challenges, the goals, the competition, the strategy and the tactics.
Constitutive approach: certain contexts demand certain kinds of leadership. SLs need to be very clear where they are. The leader may be flexible enough to generate a repertoire of styles to suit the particular situation.
-Transformational approach: leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - focus on inspiring followers to accomplish things. - adapt to and understand the needs and motives of followers. - can create a clear vision for an organization, - act in a way that makes followers trust them.

* Daft (1999: 75); + Grint (2000: 2-4); - Northouse (1997: 29-30)

SUBJECT LEADERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Formal as well as informal meetings need to have a purpose. In addition to giving out information and briefing colleagues, meetings provide an excellent forum for discussing issues and making decisions (Wood, 1993: 22). If staff development that supports continuous study of teaching and learning at the school site is to be embedded into the work of the school, SLs must allocate time for all members of the department to meet weekly. Meetings are important occasions for sustained in-depth collective inquiry (Joyce, Calhoun, and Hopkins, 1999). And since the objective is to improve student achievement, a number of considerations will help. As Table 14 indicates, meetings are important for SLs and their teams; they are the stepping

stone for setting and analyzing plans, major stops for assessing the implementation of plans, and timetables for staff reflection and development.

Table 14. Roles of subject leaders and staff development measures taken in meetings

Subject leaders' roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise issues. - Give and receive information. - Ask questions inviting colleagues to contribute to the meeting. - Ensure a record of the decisions reached at the meeting, and delegate any tasks that staff agree to undertake.
Staff development measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanding curriculum and instructional repertoire. - Using research from the professional knowledge base. - Selecting a focus and involving everybody. - Designing the work place. - Reminding of decisions and identifying inaccuracies.

Wood (1993); Joyce, Calhoun and Hopkins (1999)

SUBJECT LEADERS AND PLANNING

Educational policy can contribute to effective instruction by stimulating schools to focus on effectiveness and by putting student achievement at the centre of attention (Creemers, 1994: 106). The introduction of a national curriculum and associated attainment targets will remove from teachers much of the pressure to determine curriculum content, and may lead to increased attention to pupil's welfare needs (Galloway, 1990: 9). Yet, it has been very easy for curriculum planners to lose sight of the seven founding principles of curriculum planning (Leicestershire LEA, 1989; NCC, 1990; in Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 63). SLs play a key role in controlling these principles (See Table 15).

Lawton (1996: 21) states that

The translation of broad aims into directions and structures for student learning is just what curriculum design is about. Curriculum planning is a process of breaking down general aims into a series of short-term experiences and then rebuilding them into a whole learning experience.

Nuttal and Skurnik (1977: 132) reflect that SLs will need to develop the skills required to prepare a well-constructed plan especially that an effective plan will not emerge from lengthy meetings. According to them, a plan involves eight stages. It starts with generation and definition of objectives, then identifying and sequencing actions and identifying resources. A revision and preparation of schedules follow. The last stage is monitoring and evaluating for re-planning.

Table 15. Founding principles of curriculum planning

The curriculum should be broad in content and teaching and learning style.
The curriculum should be balanced so that a SL might specify how a particular section of the curriculum is to be covered.
The curriculum should be relevant ; that is, it links to students' own experiences; the SL should encourage the subject team to look for applications for the knowledge and skills outside schools.
The curriculum should be differentiated ; that is, it matches the individual students' abilities and aptitudes.
The curriculum should have coherence between the various elements that link together.
The curriculum should show continuity and progression from the students' perspective.
The curriculum should be participative ; that is, students are actively involved for effective learning.

Leicestershire LEA (1989)

To understand how a planning model works, it is useful to consider a new initiative the SL is about to introduce. The five stages that a new initiative undergoes are identification, assessment of feasibility, implementation, development, and maintenance (Wood, 1993: 11). At first, the new initiative has to be identified through discussions at meetings. Then the feasibility of the initiative has to be assessed. If the outcome is favorable, steps are taken to implement. A period of development follows before the initiative becomes one of the routine, established tasks undertaken by the department- it is the period for some initiatives to reach the maintenance stage, or to be abandoned before this stage. The investment/return ratio is an index of efficiency of the plan. Contrary to initiatives in stages two and three, successfully implemented initiatives will provide considerable benefits to the department and pupils' education, for only a minimal input of time and resources (ibid. pp.11-12).

Similarly, Preedy (1993; in Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1993: 236), based on in-depth studies of school improvement and reviews of research, describes this process as having the three

components: initiation, implementation and institutionalization. Hopkins et al. (1994; in Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 20) suggest that these three phases are overlapping and are not mutually exclusive. The SL is to understand what each phase involves and consider how they interact.

The plan describes the current status of the 'department'; maps out future intentions and strategies; and describes the intentions, the means, and the assessment measures (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 160). It clearly documents the relationship between targets set in the short, medium and long-term stages (Harris, 1999: 36). Effective planning requires that the SL know what the department's existing commitments are and can keep track of them (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 8). S/He has a 'task analysis and planning model as his/her starting point. In this model, the SL identifies component tasks and allocates each to members of staff responsible for those particular tasks. It is for the SL and his/her colleagues to devise a coherent set of subject area lesson plans to allow students to make sufficient progress in the subject (Lawton, 1996) and for the SL to assess whether or not the workload has been shared out (Wood, 1993: 11).

In a *corporate* plan (Barbara Mac Gilchrist 1995; in Lawton, 1996: 112), there is shared ownership and involvement of all teaching staff and of some others, a shared sense of purpose to improve, and a shared leadership and management of the process by teachers. Such plan has significant impact on school-wide developments, teacher development and pupil learning. For secondary schools, school-wide improvements are likely to incorporate departmental and interdepartmental improvements (DES, 1989).

To mobilize others, part of the SL's contribution is through the specific vision that s/he has of his/her own department area (Harris, 1999:20). To secure the commitment of department members, it takes vision, communication, culture and team work (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1992: in Bell and Harrison, 1998: 11). For Pepper (1995: 31) "a focus on culture is a focus on

the routine, on the everyday sense-making that is the process of building a sense of shared reality". Cultural development depends on the determined efforts of those who lead.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND SHAPING THE CULTURE OF A DEPARTMENT

Despite the proliferation of externally mandated changes, the success of many change initiatives remains attributed to the commitment of individual teachers (Ainscow, Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1995). And the impact of any change on student outcomes is heavily affected by teachers' behaviors in classrooms. For this, the school culture and climate make an important contribution to development and change.

From anthropological perspective, culture is "the knowledge, beliefs, values, customs, morals, rituals, symbols and language of a group" (Hargreaves, 1995; in Stoll and Myers, 1998: 191). Angus (1998: 64) argues that school cultures or informal rules are a major factor influencing teachers' work. Yet, he also argues that the official rules cannot be separated from school norms, beliefs and expectations. Rather, to him, in combination they create the social reality of the school and provide the means by which teachers and officials locate themselves within it. For this, change of practice may require a different reading of the rules in so far as they contribute a cultural text that frames the relationships among practitioners. And From an interpretative art of educational administration, Smyth (1998) views that only by locating the historical social context of the present culture that the cultural milieu can be understood, and consensus built when decisions are made.

Siskin (1994: 180) states, "... Teachers bring the distinct perspectives, procedures, values and discourses of their fields into the school ... As subject specialists, they share a sense of who they are, what they do, and what they need to do". Their ideologies shape their behavior in the classroom (Smyth, 1991: 98). As a result, they live with incoherence and contradiction not of their own making; rather, because of social conditions and because they are embedded in

their teaching and are blinded to the kaleidoscope of events and issues. Siskin argues that SLs have a central role to play in shaping department culture because so much of a teacher's professional growth and development is achieved through formal and informal processes of sharing practice with colleagues.

Becoming an effective SL means understanding the culture as well as acquiring the technical skills. As such, the effective department culture becomes that which differs from formal, welfarist, and survivalist cultures (Stoll and Myers, 1998: 148) in that it places value on and enhances openness, high trust caring and sharing. It is a culture that strives for consensus but supports and values differences and that advocates human growth and development (Dunklee, 2000). And As Smyth (1991: 104) states,

Through collaboration and non-evaluative dialogue, teachers can employ clinical supervision as an educative way of uncovering the historical antecedents of action that live on in the present as contemporary contradictions that impede and frustrate change. And in order to succeed, teachers should see how particular struggles have deeper social origins, to make schooling more practical, realistic and just. Teachers need to see how existing practices reinforce and legitimate those conditions.

On the other hand, a climate for change means commitment to improvement and preparedness to change existing practices (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 18). McMeekin, Latorre, and Celedon (2001) propose that there is a positive relationship between institutional climate and school performance. For this, the institutional climate is strongly affected by (a) how the school's objectives are and how well they are understood and internalized by all stakeholders and (b) whether there are strong formal rules and effective mechanisms for enforcing those objectives. Bell and Harrison (1999: 149) found that school leaders can inspire the whole climate of a school if they can share their own positive approach to their work. By the same token, as long as teachers are committed to their task, the climate of encouragement and goodwill will greatly enhance successful learning and action. In addition, it is the responsibility of the SL to create a climate for change by inspiring and enhancing the talents,

energies and commitment of others (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 18) to accept and implement change.

In brief, if SLs, as middle managers, expect to have their decisions understood and accepted by students, parents and teachers, they have to understand the underlying values early on (Stoll and Fink, 1998; in Stoll and Myers, 1998: 194). They have to create an open climate to pave the way for more opportunities to communicate with followers and to use rich channels and more channels to repeat the leader's vision through information communication and symbolic action (Daft, 1999: 173) where young people and adults can do their best (Ribbins, 1997: 97). Teachers' diaries, a basis for analysis and discussion with colleagues, are a step towards school improvement (Stoll and Myers, 1998: 60) and different forms of performance prelude to development. Narratives, teachers' journals and local data collection are good means to staff development and a way of uncovering "theories in use" (Schon, 1974) or "operational theories" (Hirst, 1983; in Smyth, 1991: 114).

When SLs cultivate a collaborative culture in their departments, they will have set the stage for staff development. Thomas (1991; in Bell and Day, 1991: 125) argues that development of individual teachers has to be considered in relation with the changing role of the staff as a team, and also allow for the career changes a teacher may seek. Effective development requires analyzing what the school is doing and deciding what changes are necessary to meet internal and external demands.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In-service training programs exist to encourage development and change (Day, 1999) through the provision of specialist training and staff development opportunities that focus on effective teaching and learning (Stoll and Myers, 1998: 61). Experts' domain-specific knowledge can be used to provide the scaffolding for the instruction of novices to help them attain a greater

degree of competence (Oser, Dick and Patry, 1992); learning about experts helps in designing programs of teacher education.

Teacher Training

In-service training (henceforth INSET) is important to develop the expertise and professional skills of teachers (Waters, 1999: 37). INSET should include all those who contribute to pupils' learning: new teachers, returners to the profession as well as existing teachers (DES, 1991: 29). Training and assistance should be research based to provide the ultimate help to teachers to be able to internalize and assimilate the change in a way that makes sense to them (Garrett, 1997: in Davis and Ellison, 1997: 99). Training should also emphasize human relations in educational settings through direct experience rather than in an abstract propositional form (Hall and Hall, 1988: 16). Humanities education incorporates experiential learning and takes account of the emotional component of learning about the staff and how one relates to other people. Within their departments, SLs can effectively carry teacher development through peer training, peer development and peer observations (Tenjoh-Okwen, 1996).

Workshops, one form of INSET courses, are occasions when teachers gain understanding, see demonstrations of the teaching strategy they wish to acquire and have the opportunity to practice in a non-threatening environment. This requires (a) changes to the work place and the way in which staff development is organized in schools and (b) involvement of the whole institution. And as Davis (1994) states, unless there is reform of teaching styles within teacher training itself, the 'cycle of authoritarianism' will not be broken.

Unstructured small-group training provides another real-life opportunity for teachers to practice new ways of behaving and to extend their repertoire of practices in the way they relate to colleagues and students in a highly memorable experience. Small-group training

involves listening, reflecting content and feeling, confronting and giving feedback skillfully, initiating interactions, inquiring about feelings, tolerating silence and self disclosure thus contributing to more effective classroom climate (Hall and Hall, 1988: 243).

With respect to newly qualified teachers (henceforth NQTs), INSET follows in time their initial certification and employment (Interim Report, 1978; in Hopkins, 1986: 15). Hopkins (1986: 70-2) describes features of school focused INSET as shown in Table 16. The SL is required to select new members in case of resignation of an existing department member or the expansion of staff because of student numbers. These circumstances bring some sensitivities that will need to be carefully managed by the SL (Harris, 1999: 80). Sensitivities are brought when assessing NQTs' in relation to common standards, or when developing NQTs' sense of belonging to their schools to be able to contribute (Spindler and Biott, 2000: 283). In both cases, the SL, as a professional, is to make student-teachers' first steps in teaching a positive experience by giving help, encouragement, and constructive advice (Wood, 1993: 25).

Table 16. Features of school focused INSET

It covers a larger scheme of continuing development.
It gives due consideration to the interaction between the teacher as a person, as a learner, and as a teacher at school.
The interaction between organizational change, curriculum change and INSET is incorporated into planning.
There is involvement of teachers.
The needs and interests of parents are of special importance.
Attention is given not only to individual teachers but to entire faculties.
Individual differences of teachers are recommended.
Administrations provide material and psychological support for teachers.
INSET goes beyond sharing of ideas to include demonstrations, experimentation, supervised trials and feedback.
It provides opportunities for reflection and consideration of alternatives.
It focuses on teacher changes in resolving across school problems.
It involves embeddedness in experimentation as integral to the daily instructional tasks.
It focuses on quality education of the teacher.
There is continuity.

Hopkins (1986: 70-2)

As Table 16 shows, INSET should be part of the department planning. It should focus on differentiating between teachers, being on a process of demonstration – explication – supervision – feedback, and providing opportunities for reflection. Mentoring is a process associated with the induction of new teachers. The process of induction includes practical elements of information giving, but may go beyond ‘introduction’, and encompass support for development (Coleman, 1996; in Bush and Middlewood, 1996: 156). Selecting effective mentors, SLs should consider teachers who have good interpersonal skills, good communication skills, sound professional knowledge, sound professional practice and good time management (Moyles, Suschitzky and Chapman, 1997: 6). As Bush and Middlewood (1997: 156) state, “mentoring offers support by providing individuals with someone who can give feedback, question, share, discuss, challenge, comfort and guide...”

Battersby (1982: 23) recommends that the SL work on an induction program covering topics such as institutions and community, organization of institution, classroom society, content, evaluation, self-analysis and development’ (Department of Education, 1979: 43; in Battersby, 1982: 26). The SL may promote an increase in opportunities for beginners to consult with colleagues, advisors and other first year teachers, to visit and observe in other classrooms, as well as to plan and to prepare work. This enables them to discuss with their peers problems which often seem more personal and intractable when faced alone (Taylor and Dale, 1973: 298; in Battersby, 1982).

To detect whether teachers can transfer the INSET sessions to classroom settings, the SL must provide team members with sufficient opportunity to practice the learnt skills in classroom settings, and follow-up work within the subject area to see if changes in teaching behavior are to occur (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 140). Though research evidence available on the effectiveness of staff development initiatives is far from encouraging, research evidence from successful schools demonstrates how they build infrastructures for staff development

within their day-to-day arrangements. Portions of the week are devoted to discussion of teaching approaches, regular observation sessions, and on-sight coaching all for the purpose of assisting teachers to expand their range of teaching repertoire (Hopkins and Harris with Singleton and Watts, 2000: 77). Otherwise, communication in educational settings would be ineffective when no attempt is made to explore the nature of differences in how individuals make sense of their experiences (Hall and Hall, 1988: 6).

Coaching and Reflection

Coaching can be considered as a training device to detect well-learned skills that tend to dissipate in classroom situation (Hopkins and Wideen, 1984: 85). One main principle of coaching is that teachers who are themselves self-reliant are more willing and able to help others become the same. Yet, the limits of the comprehensiveness of coaching are to be defined through mutual consent of the coach and the teacher (Kay, 1994).

Coaching is characterized by an observation-and-feedback cycle in an ongoing instructional situation. It involves a collegial approach to the analysis of teaching for the purpose of integrating mastered skills and strategies into a personal teaching style (Joyce and Showers, 1984; in Hopkins, 1984: 84). Collegiality results from organizational arrangements that force people to work together, from external sources, and are from within (Sergiovanny, 1994: 9). SLs' essential role is taking account of the shift in the teacher's role from being knowledgeable or content-expert to that of pedagogic expert, responsible for promoting effective learning processes (Day, 1993: 91). Hargreaves (1998: 5) proposes a knowledge creation model, the basic element of which is the interactions between explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. This model is summarized in four modes of conversations. The first is *socialization* where shared experiences through on-the-job training generate tacit knowledge. *Externalization* is a process of articulating tacit knowledge into implicit knowledge through collective reflection. *Internalization* is the process of stimulating learning by doing, where

explicit knowledge becomes tacit knowledge. And *combination* is the process of networking the different bodies of knowledge, thus systematizing explicit knowledge.

Day (1993: 91) found out that professional development depends on management support along with teachers' attitudes, levels of reflection, quality of provision of opportunities, each of which interacts upon individuals themselves and individuals within the system. A necessary management style, according to Woodward (in Bell and Day, 1991), needs to be more democratic if staff development deems the needs and views of staff as crucial importance, and the concept is defined as developmental, on-going process aimed at personal and professional growth. Leadership skills and abilities are required to encourage staff participation, and work with them towards shared goals each acknowledging the expertise of the other.

Dewey (in Smyth, 1991:90) considers that "for a teacher to be reflective [is] to look back over past experiences, extract their net meanings, and in the process acquire a guide for future encounters of a similar kind". Implicit in his view is acceptance of facts from multiple perspectives, willingness to consider alternative realities, and the realization that cherished beliefs and practices may have to be challenged. In this process, teachers move their teaching out of the realm of the mystical to a situation in which they are able to begin to see, through discussion with others, the nature of the forces that cause them to operate in the way they do, and how they can move beyond intellectualizing the issues to concrete action for change (Smyth, 1991: 115).

The moment-to-moment choices for action which characterize teaching are managed by teachers making non-conscious, practical judgements in pursuit of consciously conceived ends (Schon, 1983, 1987; in Silcock, 1994: 278). United in this are two components of good teaching: behavioral skill and conceptually based expertise (Silcock, 1994: 287). Reflective

practice is defined as continuous conscious and systematic review of the purposes, plans, action and evaluation of teaching in order to reinforce effectiveness and where appropriate prompt change (Day, 1995; in Busher and Saran, 1995: 112).

Reflection, the articulation of personal knowledge through metaphor, story, analogy, or cooperative discourse is a conscious choice to communicate. It is a way of converting ready-structured experience into the newly structured action, called professional practice. It enables the SL to direct attention to specific ideas, define parameters or organizational values and have longer lasting effects on followers (Daft, 1999: 173). For this, the best policy for a teacher development might be for the SL to encourage the proper integration of professional action and analysis, remembering that different sorts of reflection are governed by purpose. It is also his/her role to ensure opportunities for regular professional dialogue about teaching that goes beyond anecdotal exchange and the trading of techniques. SLs can provide the opportunities and time for teachers to work collaboratively together to increase professional learning and decrease feelings of isolation (Begley and Leonard, 1999: 103).

As such, reflection becomes the vehicle for learning transfer, and conclusions reached analytically in one context can be used to transform skills engaged in another (Schon, 1987; in Silcock, 1994: 280). Also by encouraging reflection on the processes of assessment, SLs play a major part in raising the expectations that teachers have of each child and the perceptions that children have of themselves (Bell and Richie, 1999: 85). As Anderson (1987; in Smyth, 1991: 113) states,

If teachers are denied the opportunity to articulate, critique and culturally locate principles about their own (or one another's teaching), then ... such teachers are being treated no differently to disenfranchised workers who have historically been oppressed and denied access to power over their work.

Another means to detecting change and to developing teacher expertise is action research. It gives considerable value to teachers reflecting on, criticizing and validating their experience when involved in writing about it (Gregory and Woolard, 1984: 1).

SUBJECT LEADERS AND ACTION RESEARCH

The SL's success rests in his/her ability to transmit his/her own values and negotiate with teachers that his/her position is sound and to the benefit of the children; consequently, gain their informed consent (Burgess, 1989: 111). Though most SLs manage well without action research, it stays a means of democratizing change processes especially in a context where there are lots of tensions and related confusions. SLs encouraging action research means engaging team members in a form of participatory research carried into their own practice (Kemmis, 1980; in Holly and Whitehead, 1984: 41) to solve the immediate and pressing day-to-day problems. This is for their own development as well as the development of the subject area (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 143). Action research seeks improvement by intervention, is participatory, and is a disciplined form of inquiry (Edwards and Rideout, 1991: 23-27), and continues to depend on trust among individuals in voluntary activities targeted to the achievement of collective purposes (Henkin, 2000).

Classroom research involves four stages: data collection, validation, interpretation, and action. The use of case study in classroom research provides a relatively formal and fairly definitive analysis of a specific aspect of teaching behavior (Hopkins, 1985: 81). As indicated in Table 17, action research requires the identification of a problem, and the utilization of a number of research tools in order to find a practical solution.

Table 17. The ten distinguishing characteristics of action research

It examines problems which are deemed problematic by practitioners.
These problems are deemed solvable.
Such problems require a practical response.
Action research suspends a full definition of the situation until exploratory research is undertaken.
The goal is to deepen the researcher's understanding of the problem.
It uses case study methodology to tell what is going on and how events hang together.
The case study is reported in terms of the perceptions and beliefs of those in the setting.
It uses the language of everyday discourse employed by the participants.
It can only be validated by unconstrained dialogue by the participants.
There must be a free flow of information within support groups and between actors in the project.

Elliot (1978a)

A research stance by practitioners will provide a 'reflection-in-action' (Schon, 1983; in McKernan, 1991: 34). And when it becomes as part of the teachers' routine professional activity, it has a positive effect upon the quality of teaching and learning (Harris and Hopkins, 1999). Macintyre (2000: 7 – 8) states that action research in classrooms can be creative, contextualized, realistic, flexible, rigorous and illuminating (Table 18). Classroom observations that are part of the coaching, can be utilized in action research and are means to detecting teaching/learning weaknesses, thus affecting the depth and range of children's learning positively (Bell and Day, 1991: 133). And to judge the quality of the department against the plan, the SL and his/her colleagues have to undertake the audit phase (DfEE, 1997: 156).

Table 18. Strengths of action research

Creative: teachers themselves can choose a topic that is intriguing and challenging as well as appropriate for the pupils who are involved.
Contextualized: the topic can be meaningful, and be absorbed into the daily routine without disrupting the curriculum.
Realistic: the teachers' intimate knowledge of the text allows them to gauge what needs to be done, and what can be done amidst the other pressures of the classroom day.
Flexible: action research can respond to unforeseen circumstances. It can be moved if certain contingencies arise.
Rigorous: all the stages have to be carried out according to the principles of action research so that the research is to stand scrutiny; that is, to be valid and reliable.
Illuminating: if the principles are adhered to, the researchers can go beyond describing what occurred and explain why things are as they are.

Macintyre (2000: 7-8)

The identification of priorities for development is called the ‘audit’ stage (DES, 1989). SLs need to ensure that the audit includes the following aspect:

- Evidence about the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and the levels of achievement of the pupils, including differential levels of achievement across subjects and the schools as a whole. These need to be gathered to enable future priorities for development to be identified and agreed by all (McGilchrist, Mortimore, Savage, and Beresford, 1998; in Bell and Harrison, 1998: 238).
- A review of the extent to which there is a shared sense of understanding about improvements in pupil progress and achievement.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND MONITORING DEPARTMENT WORK

The process of monitoring provides the basis for evaluating practice, and provides insight into strengths and weaknesses in the departments and assists SLs in the planning for staff development. The overall aim is to empower the individual teacher to ‘do the job better’ (Leask and Terrell, 1997: 138). The effective SL monitors staff performance and takes whatever action is necessary to ensure those standards while supporting and giving help when necessary (Hopkins, 1990: 6). One characteristic of effective curriculum delivery (Table 19) entails SLs’ utilization of the suitable assessment measures. One assessment measure for performance evaluation is appraisal.

Table 19. Characteristics of effective curriculum delivery

Fulfills the requirements of the National Curriculum and school curriculum policies
Covers every class and every year group
Is structured around clearly defined time scales
Shows progression, ensuring that themes are covered in a logical sequence
provides some flexibility and allows for revision should the best-laid plans come unstuck
Refers to the resources to be used
Has detailed assessment and recording procedures
Accommodates elements of appropriate cross curricular themes
shows differentiation, including alternatives for less able pupils and further work for the most able

Busher and Harris with Wise (2000)

Performance Evaluation (Appraisal)

The performance plan, part of the planning phase, impacts both the coaching and evaluating phases (Jerome, 1997: 4-5). Performance evaluation is a process that aims at controlling teachers' work and at improving teachers' as well as students' performance. At a minimum, the real purpose of performance evaluation is providing an opportunity for the SL and his/her team members to talk about how things are going on the job, to describe how the team can improve their performance in the future and mutually develop work objectives and ways to achieve them. It also provides documentation to support all personnel decisions (Jerome, 1997: 7; and Bell, 1992: 125). Yet, if not approached properly by SLs, its targets will not be reached (Bartlett, 2000: 24).

Bartlett (2000: 34) argues that if there is an assumed agreement over what constitutes 'good' teaching, such agreement enables greater prescription over what and how to teach, thus setting measures and targets concerning teacher performance. Then targets can be written into the appraisal process. This approach for target measurement, according to Bartlett, promotes the technicist model of teaching where teachers reflect their ability to mould themselves according to this model, thus giving little space for appeal against the ideal type. Such approach feeds into keeping the appraisal statements confidential to enable teachers to maintain higher control over the process and thus preserve a level of autonomy within the classroom.

According to Gunter (1996: 99), appraisal is restricted to three assumptions. The first is that the installation of appraisal will be followed by people, systems and structures. The second is that the design of appraisal is based on a rational model of change. And the third is that the creation of formal appraisal tasks demands huge resources. For this, appraisal can be used alongside other existing indicators for assessment of performance. Though more research is needed to prove it, the concept of appraisal as a learning process, which enables schools to become learning organizations, is a powerful one (ibid.).

William's and Mullen's (1990: 8) research findings on this issue - when it was of wide debate in the professional press in England and Wales during the 1988/ 9 - indicated that many factors affected teachers' awareness and orientation toward appraisal. These factors were teachers' lacking clear job description, teachers' concern about the possible misuse of appraisal, their fear of personality clashes thus considering the choice of appraiser as crucial, and their general feeling of being undervalued and overworked.

When used as an accountability measure, appraisal is characterized by power imbalance that does not promote a collegial interpersonal setting that is conducive to self-disclosure and exploration of beliefs and practice (Bush and Kogan, 1982). See Table 20 for advantages and difficulties of staff appraisal. For this, Fidler (1995: 4; in Bush and Middlewood, 1997: 180) presents the argument that the appraiser should

- be accountable for the appraised teacher's performance and hence have a direct interest in its improvement;
- have a responsibility to ensure the appraised teacher's development; and have a wider view of school needs and possibilities and be able to help the appraised prioritize conflicting demands on his/her time;
- control resources which support and improve the teacher's performance; and
- be able to facilitate a change of job both within and between sections of the school.

SLs, on their part, need to encourage team members to see appraisal as a development process, rather than an accountability mechanism (Harris, 1999: 82); that is, answerability to a body or individual with the power to impose sanctions for noncompliance (Bush and Kogan, 1982: 87). And as Gunter (1996: 99) illustrates, schools that make appraisal a positive process, perceive it to have some impact on professional practice. Performance evaluation can be used effectively to recognize, reward, develop, redirect, and document the performance of people

who work with a SL. It can also be done painlessly, through good planning and involvement of team members (Jerome, 1997: 1 - 2).

Table 20. Staff appraisal in the balance: difficulties, disadvantages, advantages and rewards

<p>Difficulties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suspicion • concern • lack of experience (in staff appraising and appraising others) • training may be required • opposition of significant groups <p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appraisal requires time and commitment, especially from senior staff, • honesty from all involved, • the need for discipline, and • it can provoke conflict 	<p>Advantages and rewards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leads to the identification of clear aims and objectives • improves relationships • provides opportunity for honest communication, understanding, training and development • displays concern and commitment • generates motivation • it is open and seen to be open • reduces subjectivity from assessment • provides permanent (and available) records • provides opportunity to praise • person being reviewed has an ownership in the process which leads to clear understanding of expectations, responsibilities and aspirations
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Bell (1988: 171)

An aspect of appraisal, observation of practice, can be agreed on in advance between teacher and observer concerning what to observe, what counts as evidence, and how the observer separates opinion from evidence of what happens (Busher, 1996: 197; in Ribbins, 1997). In addition, for appraisal to be effective, it should involve self-assessment; must be open, comprehensive, consistent and planned; it should also be free from interruptions, and be done in private (Warwick, 1983; in Bell, 1988: 165). Its success depends to a large extent on the willingness of all members of the organization to give their commitment to that process (Bell, 1988: 167). Bell also states that “Only formative staff appraisal can be concerned with the professional development of teachers”. As such, it leads the person being appraised to have as much ownership of the process and its outcomes as the person carrying it out (p. 170).

To achieve a climate of discussion, negotiation, trust, respect and ownership of collaborative processes, the current stage of development of the school should be taken into account in deciding the time scale of the appraisal (Warwick, 1983 and Nuttal, 1986; in Bell, 1988:176). In parallel with the introduction of staff appraisal, a full consideration of the needs of the school should take place so that discussions in one area can inform those in another.

SLs can monitor the progress and outcomes of the department and to discover the worth of a development plan by evaluating teachers' performance against quality of teaching provided to students. Qualitative targets that need to be addressed are quality of student thinking, teachers' presentational skills, and interpersonal relationships between staff in a subject area (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 162). Based on performance appraisal, a systematic plan of action can then be drawn up to address the needs. Courses and INSET days are two of the most obvious forms of professional development. Appraisal is not the only means to teacher assessment. Teacher assessment can be done through the student records of assessment and through observing in-class teaching/learning situations.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Effective teaching is that leading to specific learning outcomes, that can be adjusted to the learning styles of students and to the requirements of different subject areas (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 77), and spans both the primary and secondary schools (Hopkins et al., 1997). In more specific terms, how children think and how their thinking changes with age should affect how they are taught. In this sense, Vygotsky (1978: 124) states that cognitive development should be enhanced when children work cooperatively or collaboratively with adults and other children. In Vygotsky's view, the adult should determine two things: the child's real developmental level (the independent level) and the child's actual developmental level (with guidance of a competent, nurturing mediator) (p. 125). The implication is for teachers under the supervision of SLs to vary the forms of instruction, use concrete materials in teaching children, sequence instruction, introduce new experiences, and set the pace of learning to play a role in the development of the child, cognitively as well as socially (p. 141). One of the individual differences which teachers ought to be aware of is that pupils have at least seven intelligences through which they make sense of the world (Gardner, 1993: 11-15). Children according to Gardner differ in their relative strengths and weaknesses in each

intelligence and how they use them to learn. To accommodate these differences, the teachers' preparation, monitored by SLs, should match the level of cognitive development of students.

Adey and Shayer (1994: 75) suggest that schools should promote higher order thinking. That is, start with concrete preparation for setting a problem, and proceed to a cognitive conflict, construction zone activity, metacognition through reflection and ends with transfer. Galloway (1990) also suggests that schools prepare social development programs. That is, ensure that the major areas contributing to personal and social education are covered; and that there is an age appropriate development from year to year.

Learning can be guided and assisted successfully by SLs in the light of understanding that part of effective teaching is the extent to which learners feel that that they are expected to learn, and how this expectation of learning is reinforced (Harris, 1999: 54). Hall and Hall (1988: 92) provide the evidence that a good self-concept is an important variable related to academic achievement and general adjustment to education. There is also evidence that teachers with a positive self-concept also encourage a positive concept in their pupils. Consequently, SLs need to encourage colleagues to reward, praise and respect pupils as a means to improving their self-esteem and improving their achievement (Harris, 1999: 54). Holly and Whitehead (1986: 240) also suggest that teachers need to work and learn with pupils to disclose themselves in much the same way as they are asking students to disclose themselves to teachers. Alexander (1987: 17) provides a two-dimension framework for classroom practice. The two dimensions interact, and 'each aspect of practice is to a greater or lesser extent informed by one, two or all of the areas of ideas, values and beliefs' (See Table 21).

With this framework as a reference, Alexander (1987: 21), believes that "[Educationists] can try to become clearer about what it is they aspire and why; and in confronting the various considerations which bear upon classroom practice. [They] can inject a greater degree of honesty and realism into professional discourse and make the gap between achievement and

aspiration a diminishing one". Assessment is an important aspect of school-based curriculum planning for two reasons. It is the link between curriculum and teaching, and it could place more power and responsibility in the hands of the teachers (Lawton, 1996: 78). Examinations and assessment are integral parts of the educational structure. They are conducted both formally and informally at practically all levels of education and serve a variety of different functions (Kempa, 1986: 1).

Table 21. Framework for analyzing classroom practice

Dimensions	Aspects		Central educational questions
Observable practice	Content	*Whole curriculum *Subjects/areas	What should children learn?
	Context	*Physical *Interpersonal	How should children learn and teachers teach?
	Pedagogy	*Teaching methods *Pupil organization	Why should children be educated in this way?
	Management	*Planning *Assessment of learning *Operation *Evaluation of teaching	What is an educated person?
Ideas, values, beliefs	Children	*Development *Needs *Learning	Why should children be educated in this way?
	Society	*Needs of society/ *of individual	
	Knowledge	*Children's way of knowing *Culturally evolved ways of knowing	What is an educated person?

Alexander (1987)

SUBJECT LEADERS AND ASSESSMENT

The responsibility of the students' learning remains with the SLs. As part of their monitoring of learning, they need to be aware of what assessment is taking place and its results (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 69). Formative, diagnostic and summative forms of assessment are used for different purposes (See Table 22). Formative assessment looks to the future in light of past attainments (McBeth, 1989: 29). Testing for feedback is the most common. It is important for the pupils themselves, for motivation and for specific information, and for the parents of those pupils in some cases. While diagnostic assessment aims at ascertaining the nature of particular difficulties to decide whether remedial help is needed for instance.

Diagnostic assessment becomes a specialist means of fulfilling formative aims. In all cases, as stated by the DES (1987a; in Taverner, 1990: 88), “the assessment process... should not determine what is taught and learned. It should be the servant, not the master of the curriculum...It should be an integral part of the educational process, constantly providing both *feedback* and *feed forward*”.

Table 22. Classification of uses of assessment

Screening :testing to detect special needs
Diagnosis: identifying strengths and weaknesses
Record-keeping: often based on standardized tests
Feedback: the most professional tests that report performance (to teachers, head teachers and LEAs)
Certification: providing a qualification
Selection: for entry to secondary school, further education, or higher education.

Gipps and Stobart (1993; in Lawton, 1996).

Again, observation skills are important when they are done along with assessment. Yet, to be effective, observations have to be done objectively; that is, recording what can actually be seen without interpretation (Phillips, Goodwin, and Heron, 1999: 119). Armstrong’s research (1980: 5) on close and disciplined scientific observation of the learning behavior of young children led to one important finding. That is, if two teachers were to assume joint responsibility for a single class of children, it might be possible between the two of them to find enough time and space both for sustained observations and sustained teaching where the two are inextricable. They are good practices in sharing ideas for the purpose of establishing department collaboration (Mathematical Association, 1988: 73). Campbell (1985; in Wolfendale, 1987: 84) discusses the notion of collaborative work and collective responsibility as follows:

If teachers participate in some explicitly collaborative action to recreate the curriculum in their school, instead of acting as individuals to receive it, they may move closer to accepting collective responsibility for the curriculum overall in the school, as well as for its application in their own classrooms (p. 3).

Galloway (1990: 127) also points out that teacher self-evaluation is a good starting point. But finding time to observe colleagues teaching and expecting others to observe not only opens

doors to supportive relationships between colleagues, but to discussing and looking constructively for more effective ways to work with particular pupils or classes. As such, observations create an environment based on continuing professional growth and development, and at the same time conducive to addressing pupil's welfare. This will also lead to better enactment of the differentiated curriculum if it exists. That is, instead of differentiating students by outcome and risking their self-esteem (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 65), student assessment should be based on the reduced content.

And as the National Union of Teachers (1981: 7) states "assessment should be seen as a partnership between teachers, other professionals, and parents, in a joint endeavor to discover and understand the nature of the difficulties and needs of individual children". In this sense, according to McBeth (1989: 40), the school should encourage parental comments in the record rather than convey the message that they consider it interference. It should also allow for consultation with parents directly after the exchange of reports (p. 45).

According to Davies and Ellison (1997: 222), any long-term improvement cannot be achieved in a school's marketing strategy unless the internal culture of the school lives up to the expectations of the external stakeholders. A central responsibility for promoting a positive message about the aims and achievements of the school may be the teachers' reporting a child's account of his/her experiences to parents.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

Chapman (in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 47) considers that most home-school activity appears to be carried out over the heads of pupils as if they really did not exist. Schools are reluctant to share their collective responsibility with untrained people, [parents] (BBC, 1978: 10). Teachers find interactions with parents to be a major source of stress in their jobs

(Turnbull and Turnbull, 1986: 10). Parents are also reported to find communications with professionals such as teachers to be equally stressful (Hornby, 1995: 4).

In this sense, Rutter et al. (in McBeth, 1989: 7) emphasize that ‘what home learning is doing is affecting the difference of attainment between pupils’. Bastiani (in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 58) also finds that active support actually benefits pupil achievement in tangible and lasting ways. In this context, McBeth (1989: 10) believes that it is important to shift the emphasis away from what parents should learn from professionals towards what professionals can learn from studying parents and children at home. And as Cunningham and Davis (1985: 87) state “professionals should have two major areas of competence. The first is their own professional discipline. The second is the ability to communicate this competency”.

McBeth et al. (1995: 9) state that an important phase of progression of home-school partnership, the most important phase, is characterized by an emphasis on obligation, the attempt to involve all families, and a recognition that home learning is part of education. This phase is determined by teachers and by their attitudes especially those of the head teacher. Bennet and Downes (1998: 13) suggest that SLs, with their colleagues, can communicate clearly with parents, provide practical advice on how to support students, exchange information about the curriculum and children’s progress and create structures that enable less confident parents to contribute. And according to Bastiani, (1988: 13) collective experience has yielded an impressively varied and extensive repertoire of home-school practices: normal routine assemblies and special occasions (Table 23).

The opportunity to review the progress of individual children both on a regular basis and when either party feels that a problem is developing also leads to a number of other occasions. These practices become important when dealing with students with SEN as a subgroup of the student body in the mainstream. Dealing with Special Educational Needs

Coordinators (henceforth SENCOs) means dealing with a wide range of outside professionals who may be involved in some way or another with the work of the school. Yet contacts between professionals from different disciplines (social workers and educational psychologists as opposed to teachers, for example) are difficult because of (a) type of client contact, (b) cultural differences between professions and (c) structural differences between professional organizations. In this case, SLs need to ensure that agreements are set up with the key professional groups that they need to have contact with and to encourage staff to value the contribution that those professionals can make (Gold and Evans, 1998: 106-7).

Table 23. Home-school practices

The involvement of students in home-school program
Curriculum evenings with focus upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - areas of parental anxiety and concern - introduction of new subject matter - opportunities to see, discuss and take part
Family sessions through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - parent/teacher social and recreational events and activities - the identification of 'special needs' amongst parents - the development of appropriate responses and provision

Bastiani (1988)

It is important for the SL to work with parents to understand the social contexts in which their students learn. This helps SLs to tailor the teaching and learning processes to meet student's needs and help students achieve the best academic performances possible (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 89) and to prevent unnecessary difficulties for the child and the family from developing (Cunningham and Davis, 1988: 4). In the absence of SENCOs, SLs are to give due consideration to criticisms about professionals' lack of warmth, lack of coordination, and lack of continuity of services with children with SEN (ibid.). In addition, they need to persuade teachers who do not want the responsibility for children with SEN that they can do it and that they must record what they do (Dempster, 1995). They also need to support their teams in carrying out their professional role according to their professional judgement of best practice (Gold and Evans, 1998: 108), and manage resources properly to

enhance the learning opportunities for students with learning and behavioral difficulties (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 47).

In this sense, 'professional' assessment serves two purposes. The first is to improve teaching/learning. The second is to determine the needs of learning difficulties thus leading to more occasions to meet with parents. The role of the SENCOs in this context does not emphasize assessment at the expense of meeting children's SEN; rather, assessment becomes a means to an end and should be used cautiously (Phillips, Goodwin and Heron, 1999: 108). And when dealing with SEN, the home-school link becomes more important and less a matter of convenience to parents. That is, parents become active participants when the school is addressing their children's learning difficulties.

Subject Leaders, Special Educational Needs and Home-School Practices

Attempts have been made internationally, nationally and locally to develop policies and structures that will lead to an inclusivity of education which meets the needs of all students. However, unless teachers are able to help their students access the curriculum, these policies and structures become of little value. Significant contribution can be made when teachers recognize the barriers to learning that these children face, and have the skills to help their pupils overcome these difficulties (Bell, 1999). Research findings stress the effectiveness of early intervention for children with SEN (Shackelford, 1994).

'Mainstream' is used as a broad term to distinguish between things that are general and typical of wider populations and circumstances and those that are the product of special needs provision and treatments (Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 65). Special needs are defined in terms of 'what the child requires beyond those normally required by all children (Cunningham and Davis, 1988: 1). Many pupils' special needs can be met through adjustments to the curriculum or the environment (Dyson and Gains, 1995: 62). Effective

working partnerships with parents require that teachers (a) have adequate knowledge of the special needs they are likely to encounter, (b) communicate with parents the attitudes of genuineness and empathy, (c) be open and honest but at the same time do it with sensitivity, and (d) show that nothing is hopeless (Hornby, 1995: 7-9). And since parents know more than school about their children (BBC; 1978; Harding, 1986: 28), teachers must obtain information from parents as much as possible, develop contingency plans, facilitate peer acceptance, design individual education plans, and ensure availability of sources of practical and emotional support. The supportive relationships that SLs help create make this process a continuous process of discussion and negotiation between colleagues away from esoteric activities conducted by outside experts (Galloway: 1990: 126).

Table 24 is a summary of Bastiani's mainstreaming conditions (1988: 65), and Bloom's favorable conditions for high standard learning. Mainstreaming focuses on inviting parents and specialists. It also focuses on adoption of new ideas, and practices. The classroom environment stresses the importance of cognitive entries to new experiences, time-on-task, and formative testing. Bloom's alterable variables (in Wolfendale, 1987) are based on the premise that it is possible to describe the favorable learning conditions that can enable virtually all pupils to learn to a high standard.

On the other hand, there are other needs that are intractable and will need the expertise and experience of different professionals (Dyson and Gains, 1995: 62). In England and Wales, the concept of integration was a major aspect of the recommendations proposed within the Warnock Report (1980). Before it, children with needs had been viewed by society as 'handicapped', 'delinquent', or 'retarded'; consequently, they suffered segregation. The report views "educational handicaps as a continuum ranging from severe to mild" (Stratford, 1981: 12) and early diagnosis is important for remediation. The National Union of Teachers

(1981:2) supported the Warnock committee's conception of SEN as a continuum and their focus was on the value of individual assessment.

Table 24. Mainstreaming range of responsibilities and favorable conditions for learning

Favorable conditions for high standard learning	mainstreaming range of responsibilities
Time-on-task is stressed by teachers paying more attention to time spent as 'active learning time'.	Bringing a school's work with parents and families to the life and work of the school as a whole.
Utilizing cognitive entry characterized by its relevance to present and future learning.	
Formative testing is preferred to summative tests that are blunt, insensible measures of progress as well as of task difficulty.	Incorporating specialist involvement in relevant areas.
Teachers' traditional practice is avoided since it does not bring out the best of children.	The adoption of new ideas and practices in ways that enable parents to become part of the school's way of going about its work.
Ensuring that home and school have congruence learning emphasis and shared aspiration.	

Bloom (in Wolfendale, 1987: 52-3); Bastiani and Wolfendale (1988: 65)

The Education Act in England and Wales (1981) treated all pupils with SEN as having 'learning difficulties'. The Act also made provision for most pupils within this new classification to be integrated into mainstream education. Later, the 1986 House of Commons Select Committee Report entitled 'Achievement in Primary Schools' clarifies that the word coordinator would imply that the person carrying out the role would have a positive role to play and 'not wait to be asked as a consultant might'. Coordinators in primary schools often advise, monitor and maintain an overview of provision, and at the same time fulfil a full time teaching commitment. When involved, SENCOs should explain to senior staff in schools and other colleagues how inclusive education can be implemented. Inclusive education (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 50) will support students with special learning needs, involve parents in supporting their children's learning, create staff development, and optimize staff development.

Parental formal consultation sessions should be planned in advance and based on reports, and should be allowed time and privacy (McBeth, 1989: 48). Behavior modification methods become solutions to learning difficulties when seen within the total picture of counseling

(Cunningham and Davis, 1985). In counseling, the counselor works with the client to clarify the nature of some problems, or experiences presented by the client to explore possible solutions (Galloway, 1990: 4). It happens numerously when a teacher interviews pupils and parents in order to clarify the nature of a problem and to consider possible courses of action (p. 4) and to enhance the self esteem of families living in an area recognized to have particularly difficult circumstances (Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1996). Some principles of operation (Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 98) are:

- Change must be a gradual process achieved through changing attitudes.
- As far as possible, all group work would take place on a collaborative basis enabling the sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise.
- Staff development and training would be a high priority.

At secondary level, parental involvement should not primarily be focused on the physical presence of parents in schools. Rather, on using a range of strategies to develop accessible two-way communication; and to recognize, encourage and support parents in feeling that they can make a difference to their child's progress (Bastiani and Doyle, 1994; Wlfendale, 1992; in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 58). Plowden Report (para. 112; in McBeth, 1989: 19) states that what should be included in any minimum program are at least two private consultations a year, open days, information booklets, clearly written reports and some home visiting. For SLs to create more effective and responsive departments, they should balance responding to parents' views while ensuring that the educational process is not undermined and that equity is maintained. They should know how to work with other professional groups in an effective and mutually supportive ways, and how to make best use of other resources of expertise as a resource (Gold and Evans, 1998: 98).

In an attempt to describe a specific initiative in parental involvement, wolfendale (1988; in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 83) planned to identify key developments that relate parental

partnership to the issue of raising children's educational achievement, and discuss some associated concepts such as empowerment and equal opportunities. The two writers spell out the effects of poverty upon educational performance and upon access to educational opportunities. They describe a number of requisites that can redress the balance to some extent. Requisites are (a) high quality pre-school provision, (b) special reading schemes, (c) reductions in class size for young children and (d) parental involvement. If all these were combined together into a comprehensive program, the educational chances 'would be dramatically improved (Smith and Noble, 1995: 139) thus providing elements that identify a 'successful' school.

Individualized educational program for students with SEN cannot be started in a vacuum. To meet the expectations on a larger perspective than any single child, the school's 'mission is to be translated' by SLs into more specific goals and even more specific objectives which the children are to master at each level in their progress through the school. Galloway (1990:12) also argues that teachers have the responsibility to be observants, and to create a climate in which pupils feel able to approach them with personal problems.

Intervention/Remediation

The specialist remedial teacher should fulfill several roles, namely an assessment role, a prescriptive role, a supportive role and a liaison role (Nare, 1980). Chapman (1988: 68) states that to maintain a culture of professional learning and development, it is possible to try out new ideas and practices that link to home-school liaison, and to take some risks in thinking and experience that make accelerated learning possible. The role of the SL is to create a climate for effective teaching and learning, and show strong pupil centered ethos that provide every opportunity for autonomous pupil learning (Harris, 1999), taking into consideration the specific SEN students' concern: motivation, time management, procrastination, study skills and academic anxiety (Hirsch, 2001) (Table 25).

This requires the utilization of department team of researchers to do extensive observations of the child on different occasions and in various situations, as a preliminary to intervention (Cunningham and Davis: 1988: 3). For example, Dwivedi and Gupta (2000: 80), through a small scale research, found out that group work proved useful to promote emotional regulation of self-management especially when used in conjunction with other interventions used to manage difficult behavior. Wolfendale (1987: 37) also suggests teacher's adopting a problem-solving approach to learning where children's rate and pace of learning can be observed, and what they have 'learned' can be measured.

Table 25. Characteristics of teaching/learning within effective departments

Pupils are involved in the learning process through a variety of tasks in different situations.
Teachers encourage cooperative learning, team sharing experiences, and roles that develop students' self-esteem.
Pupils are involved in a review and reflection of the learning process.
Teachers develop meaningful formative and motivational forms of assessment that build confidence.

Harris (1999)

While Gage and Berliner (1988: 470-471) view that remediation involves tutoring which in turn involves three processes: diagnosis, remedial work and positive reinforcement. *Diagnostic* processes are aimed at finding out as specifically as possible what is blocking the tutee's progress. It can take the form of casual conversation with the tutee, observation of tutee on task, or administering a diagnostic test that reveals objectively the kind of errors the tutee is making and to detect where help is needed. The tutor, having formed some ideas as to the causes of the student's problems, proceeds to give the tutee opportunities to practice correctly the skills found to be deficient. Table 26 summarizes characteristics of remediation during which most tutors should furnish lots of positive reinforcement. Kochevar (1975: 94-95) also suggests some individualized remedial reading techniques. Cooper and Ideus (1995: 33) also suggest common training programs for educators on the subject of ADHD (Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders) which alert each group for the potential of genuine collaboration between different professional groups. An important issue is that parental involvement transforms the traditional teacher monologue into a dialogue (Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988:

109) without predicating upon the help of able parents for their child’s success in schools (Le Compte and Dworkin, 1991: 230). Otherwise, this mechanism, according to Eden (1997: 108), limits controls by experts and enables clients to dictate behaviors thus deprofessionalize teachers.

Table 26. Characteristics of remediation

Remediation should change in the student’s performance compared to his/her own past performance.
The tutor should positively encourage student’s progress.
The tutor should keep tutoring sessions short enough so that they don’t tire out or bore the tutee.
The tutor should use the approach of tutoring that is suitable for the age level of the tutee, using games for example.
The tutor should focus on student self-esteem: tell the tutee that the task is fairly difficult so that if s/he succeeds the reward is greater; and if s/he fails, his/her self-esteem will be saved.

Gage and Berliner (1988)

It is important then that there be good liaison between elementary school and the SENCO of the secondary school so that there can be continuity of support for pupils with SEN (Phillips, Goodwin, and Heron, 1999: 119). SENCO can play the role of reassuring the process of transfer to the secondary to both children with SEN and their parents. In this situation, portfolio – a purposeful collection of student work that tells the story of the student’s efforts, progress in (a) given area(s) – can be the means. It is important to note that there is not ‘right’ way to design a portfolio system because it depends on context, purpose and audience. For this, one of the most important beneficial effects of designing a system is the bringing together of staff to link through the issues of audience, purpose, content and criteria (Arter and Spandel, 1992). The most beneficial part of the process is for SLs to allow teachers the time and support to discuss and articulate what is valued in a performance.

To conclude, Campbell (1985) suggests that teachers holding posts of responsibility need to be able to work with and for colleagues in an advisory and supportive capacity and yet maintain the skills to take the lead when necessary. With SLs’ support, teachers can extend the definition of their role and broaden their view of the range of students who can be taught

in the mainstream (Bradley and Roaf, 1995: 98). For the SL to liaise with people from within and outside school, s/he needs additional expertise and the required resources.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND RESOURCES

The role of the SLs is to focus on how resources can be deployed to supply the learning needs of students, and how they are to be used efficiently (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 164). The availability and management of resources will have a significant bearing on the way in which the curriculum is delivered. Teachers are the most important resource in education and the way they are managed is crucial. SLs can access previously untapped resources. For example, they may adopt team teaching approaches or rotate classes thereby taking advantage of the specialisms and interests of particular colleagues. Doing so, the method should be justified by practicality and by reference to the benefits of the pupils. The school timetable provides both opportunities for and constraints on effective staff management. However, a good timetable is the one which allows staffing resources to be deployed and utilized most effectively. Added to this is SLs' responsibility for managing material resources (Harris, 1999: 83).

Material Resources

These include audio visual aids (AVA), exercise books or files, and storage facilities. Lack of attention to these results in greater loss, damage and deterioration and requires money. The SL, regardless of the budgetary approach adopted by the school, will be required to negotiate with senior management over resources for the forthcoming year (Harris, 1999: 83). With respect to decisions about resource allocation, the SL has to weigh and prioritize claims of different groups of students for support (Simkins, 1997; in Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000: 163). Time-pressed SLs may delegate the responsibility for AVAs thus contribute to the professional and career development of a colleague. With respect to books, the SL not only

decides whether to replace them, rather, can suggest ways of dealing with books, from a multidisciplinary perspective.

SUBJECT LEADERS AND INTERDISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIPS

SLs can be a positive force for change and improvement within the department. They can also take a wider management responsibility beyond their own department and across the whole school (Harris, 1999: 19). Questions concerning the range of responsibilities properly exercised by SLs and the cultures and structures within which they should be exercised are issues addressed by a number of researchers. All of them make statements about the expectations placed upon these members of staff, especially that schools cannot develop in isolation from their environments.

Davies and Ellison (1997: 114) believe that the best schools will always take account of the local and wider context in recognizing opportunities for development, but without losing sight of their fundamental beliefs and values. Witziers, Slegers, and Imants (1999: 302) make it clear that departments are relevant contexts from which teachers have collective engagement and collaboration. To them, collective engagement in interdisciplinary groups can reduce the negative consequences of the rigid structure of secondary school subject departments. Busher and Harris (1999: 314) state that confidence, expertise and skill in management are determinants of levels of involvement. Bennett (1999; in Brown, Boyle and Boyle, 1999) adds that the SL can make use of his/her micro-political skills to promote harmony with people in other subject areas.

Since textbooks cannot offer purely 'neutral' treatment of the topics they cover (Silverman, 2000) an example on how this can be done across all subjects is treating political themes in literature akin to exposing students to 'reality' (Conley, 1991: 55) through arguments about

character, dialogue and action. Geography subject can be seen as ‘a world where place matters’ for the analysis of substantial political content (Conley, 1991: 74). Science teaching and learning for a multicultural society requires whole departments to have a shared vision and a shared commitment where students are allowed to be critical learners and thinkers and teachers are critical educators (Hill and Cole, 1999: 108).

Cross-curricular work entails planned collaboration between subject teachers on activities, themes or other areas of learning that go across the curriculum so that the students receive relevant expertise from experienced teachers in each of the subjects involved (Murray with Paechter and Black, 1994: 3). Heads of departments can have a number of roles to play, some of which are deciding the extent to which teachers in the department will contribute, evaluating cross-curricular programs and gaining valuable insights into staff development needs (ibid. 11). By the same token, there is also research evidence that successful schools must be interdependent and engaged with the community. In this sense, leaders must possess the abilities required to facilitate institutional interdependence with the community (Stine, 2000). Meetings can be then the starting point for another new cycle of tasks the SL performs and shares with his/her team.

In conclusion, in this literature review, the researcher found enough evidence to answer the questions that she raised from beginning. SLs can contribute to curriculum changes and can be agents of change themselves. They can perform a number of tasks for effective staff development through planning and focusing on their department cultures that are conducive to team’s sharing their differing experiences. This is in addition to proper teacher assignment, teacher training and appraisal, and provision of the needed resources, all of which is for the purpose of creating effective teaching/learning environment.

Through proper planning, they can be involved with their teams in utilizing their formal and informal department discussions as well as school-focused research findings for the purpose of

addressing differing students' needs and using different assessment measures to detect performance standards. And for the purpose of better school achievement, SLs can move toward extended forms of collaboration with parents and SLs of the different subject areas. And as Blandford's research findings (1998) suggest, SLs can also perform management roles. In that case, they need to consider their teaching responsibilities within the context of their management role. They need to address the issue of compatibility between the two roles; that is, transfer their practitioner values and beliefs to management practice.

In comparison, the implementation of the LNC in Lebanon indicates that SLs do not differ from and are not treated differently from teachers. Lack of their recognition and training disabled them from being real change agents. The nature of their assignment, their unclear job description, and lack of training do not entitle them to play roles in the areas of teacher assignment, or even teacher assistance through provision of in-service training. Consequently, they cannot address SEN. Lacking the notion about what effective subject leadership means, SLs would find it very difficult to do good job with parents or initiate any task outside the confines of their departments. All that they do can be said to be their own unacknowledged personal efforts that will be shown in the forthcoming chapters.

A MODEL OF SUBJECT LEADERSHIP

A good model of leadership that is suitable for the current stage of implementing change in the Lebanese context is the leader who knows how to deal with power centers (the inspectorate and the GCD) and knows when to apply power in the school context instead of negotiating decisions. This is mainly when the policy is dictated from above- that is, by the school principal. For example, the SL would not be able to negotiate complete funding of regional or international workshops teachers are sent to especially if this is not included in the budgetary plan for a specific academic year. In other words, the SL has to have a repertoire of strategies to utilize in different situations. S/He is the transformational SL who can transmit his/her

educational and professional values and beliefs to members of the school's community (staff, students and parents). This SL is able to decide whether or not to create a culture of collaboration or collegiality as a means to mediate the impact of the external environment to the school and implement change. Most importantly, s/he should create a culture that enables him/her to gain the school management trust to practice his/her management skills, a culture of maximum communication between leaders and a culture of motivation to work among students with varying abilities. S/He should get everybody's consent for everybody to start change in practice.

To find out the model for subject leadership in schools in Lebanon, the researcher focused her research study on the following key questions that arise from this literature:

1. What administrative roles can the subject leader play in enhancing the implementation of the LNC?
2. What practical roles can the SL play toward teachers, parents and students to enhance the implementation of the LNC?
3. What cooperative roles can the SL play with SLs of different subject areas as a team for the purpose of enhancing the implementation of the LNC?

Chapter four is the research methodology chapter. In it, the researcher explains the sampling measures, the research tools utilized for data collection, and processes of data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design and implementation of this study were influenced by the experiences and theoretical perspectives of many investigators (Krueger, 1994; Einsiedel, Brown and Ross, 1996; Breakwell et al., 1995; Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub, 1996; Morgan, 1998; and Krueger and King, 1998). It involved the use of many research tools namely, focus group interviews (henceforth FGI), individual interviews, a survey questionnaire, and diary analysis. The main research tool was the FGI supplemented by the other tools for triangulation. In comparison, more data were gathered through FGIs than the other tools. Table 27 shows the research tools used and the timetable for their implementation.

Table 27. The research tools used and the timetable for their implementation.

Research tool	Number	Participants	School/cycle	Time of the year
Focus	1	Subject leaders	PCSS – secondary	May 1999
	2	Teachers	Public – intermediate	June 1999
Group	1	Subject leaders	PCSS – secondary	December 1999
	1	Subject leaders	PCSS – intermediate	December 1999
	1	Teachers	Public – secondary	February 2000
	1	Teachers	Public – elementary	February 2000
Interviews	2	Teachers	PCSS – elementary	End April 2000
	3	Teachers	PCSS – intermediate	Starting May 2000
	3	Parents	PCSS – elementary	June 2000
	1	Parents	Public – secondary	June 2000
	1	Subject leaders	Public – secondary	End November 2000
Individual	3	Teachers	PCSS – elementary	October 1999
	3	Principals	Public – secondary	November 1999
Interviews	5	Teachers	Public – intermediate	January 2000
	2	Subject leaders	Public – intermediate	March 2000
	2	Subject leaders	PCSS – intermediate	Mid April 2000
	1	Subject leaders	PCSS – secondary	April 2000
	5	Parents	Public – secondary	End of May 2000
Diary notes (informal talks and classroom observations)	10	--- Student-teacher interaction	Public – intermediate PCCS – elementary	March 2000 Sept. 1998 – June 2000
Survey questionnaire	350	Parents	PCSS – Elementary Intermediate	Mid. October 2000 Returned: end October

Establishing the Purpose

The nature of SLs' job requires that they perform a number of roles. To be able to cope with the demands of any educational change, SLs, like teachers, need to be involved in the change process. The researcher found out that the problems that SLs were facing in implementing the LNC were not resultant from lack of training only; rather, they resulted from the nature of assigning them their job, and the lack of clear job description (El Assi, 1999).

The purpose of the study was to explore what the different participants view as tasks performed by SLs, how successfully the LNC is being implemented as a result, and how SLs should function for its proper implementation. The purpose assisted the researcher in determining the sampling plan, the number of focus groups needed, the questions and probes, and a means for evaluating whether adequate information had been obtained (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub, 1996: 38).

The focus group interviews helped the researcher to:

- Develop a general understanding of target groups' perceptions of the roles of a SL, and how these roles help in the enhancement of the implementation of the LNC.
- Generate research hypotheses that can be further developed and tested using other research approaches, namely the individual interview, and
- Interpret or validate quantitative data that had been previously obtained (ibid.).

As a result of the FGI, the researcher developed the following specific research questions:

- What are the management roles that SLs can play for enhancing the implementation of the LNC?
- What practical roles can SLs play toward teachers, parents, and students for this purpose?

- What collaborative roles can department SLs play with SLs of the different subject areas within the same school as a team for the purpose of enhancing the implementation of the LNC?

Outcomes included the identification of key ideas that relate to SLs, and how strongly the participants felt about these key ideas. Information from participants was used to verify hypotheses. Knowing the problems that were confronting the implementation process of the LNC, the researcher concluded with needs assessment of practicing SLs to inform and guide future decisions relating to the unmet needs of SLs, and consequently teachers in implementing the LNC (Krueger and King, 1998: 23).

Research Paradigm

The ontology and epistemology of interpretive research fit this project more appropriately than the positivist method for the former lends itself to dealing with meanings and the social phenomena that can only be understood in terms of meanings people invest in them (Dey, 1993: 1). Interpretive research is important in this study because it gives 'voice' to groups that are marginalized, modifies top-down programs and contributes to greater balance between the professionals and the community (Schensul, 1999). The ontological assumptions which concern the nature of the phenomenon being investigated (SLs' job, the conditions of their work and the problems they face in implementing the LNC) were considered by the researcher as the participants' social realities apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions. They are socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions. Those constructions are relative and alterable (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 110). The epistemological assumptions which concern the nature and form of knowledge, how it is acquired and communicated to others are considered by the researcher as more subjective, spiritual and even transcendental, based on experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 6). The investigator and

the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the 'findings' are literally created as the investigator proceeds (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 110).

The study is ethnographic since it refers to forms of social research having the following features:

- A strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena.
- A tendency to work primarily with unstructured data.
- Investigation of a small number of cases.
- Analysis of data that involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions taking the form of verbal descriptions and explanations (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994; in Denzin and Lincoln, 1994: 248).

It is ethnographic since it enters strange and unfamiliar situations that connect critical biographical experiences with culture, history and social structure to make sense of the participants' meanings they attach to their experiences (Denzin, 1997: 92). The researcher, using the FGI as the main research tool, did not enter the interview with a list of questions she wanted to ask, but with a list of issues to be covered. The interviews were structured by both the researcher and informants (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983: 112-113). Questions were non-directive and relatively open-ended, rather than requiring the interviewer to provide a specific piece of information (Spradley, 1979; in Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983: 79).

A rule of thumb for the researcher was looking for points of conflict, tensions and contradictions (Janesick, 1998: 69) and reaching a particular orientation to reality and the prosperity to a social analytical mode of thought (Spindler, 1987: 62). The gained accounts were significant for they pertained to all features of action which most clearly distinguish it from inanimate processes (Collin, 1985: 1). The three ethical principles that guided the research were (a) maximum benefit to science and research participants, (b) respect and

protecting autonomy of individuals, and (c) justice involving non-exploitative procedures, the things that brought strong validity to the research (Sieber, 1992).

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was designed and conducted as both a qualitative and quantitative research study, making use of the most valuable features of each (Merton and Kendall, 1946; in Cohen and Manion, 1994: 40). The researcher tried to address the research objectives she identified by utilizing different research tools and diverse groups of participants. This helped the researcher to achieve a clear image about SLs' performance in both school systems, public and private; find out what roles are overlooked by SLs and why and gain insight into the difference that the presence of SLs can make in school achievement. The FGI was the main research tool used, while the other tools served as a means of validating the FGIs data (Schuster and Rozalski, 2000). FGIs were conducted with SLs, teachers, parents of both, SEN students and high achievers, as well as students. Individual interviews were conducted for the purpose of obtaining more diverse reactions to issues raised in the FGIs. They helped the researcher make sure that the data she was seeking became redundant. FGIs preceded individual interviews to avoid order effects which would distort the interpretation of the results (Breakwell, Hammond, and Fife-Schaw, 1995: 63). SLs were interviewed before teachers to avoid the problem of teachers' reporting the group discussion content thus giving SLs the chance to be more prepared.

To find out the external contexts affecting the performance of SLs in public schools, the researcher conducted three individual interviews with public secondary schools principals. And to find out how SLs perceived their role set, how they perceived national policy and training and how the inspectorate and the GCD supported them, she conducted one FGI with three SLs and two individual interviews with SLs in public schools. In addition, she conducted one FGI with SLs in the PCSS, two individual interviews with SLs in the

intermediate cycle and one in the secondary cycle. Findings gained from the PCSS were compared to those gained from the public schools, and were found congruent. The comparison was aimed to spotlight the origins of the gaps in public schools. It was important since it spotlighted how the interviewed SLs in the PCSS who were public secondary schools teachers were aware of those gaps, but could see greater hope in sustaining or upgrading private school achievement and performed accordingly.

With respect to teachers, to find out the public elementary teachers' view about subject leadership, the problems they faced in the absence of SLs, and their expectations from them, the researcher conducted one FGI with teachers in one public elementary school. The researcher was also interested in knowing how teachers perceived the roles played by the government guides, and whether or not these roles could be considered enough to substitute for SLs at school. On the other hand, to compare the situation between the public and the PCSS, the researcher conducted two FGIs and three individual interviews with teachers in the English department. Both groups' expectations from SLs were matched to spotlight the importance of SLs' presence in public elementary schools.

And to obtain stronger evidence for the importance of SLs in elementary and intermediate public schools, as well as the importance of the presence of specialists in schools, the researcher conducted one FGI with seven mothers of the reputation group in the PCSS and two FGIs with mothers of good and high achievers in the same school. The reputation group was used for the purposes of (a) examining what roles are being performed by the SL of the English department, (b) structuring the survey questionnaire and (c) cross-validating findings achieved through interviews with teachers in the same department and parents of good achievers. While the purposes of comparing findings gained from the two diverse groups were spotlighting:

- the importance of building proper communication channels with parents
- the importance of addressing SEN

- transferring successful experiences to other departments
- the importance of SLs in the elementary public schools as a means to minimizing the rate of dropping out.

The survey questionnaire that the researcher passed to parents of students in Grades 3 to 8 in the PCSS was aimed at triangulating findings gained through interviews with both groups of parents. Another secondary purpose was to show that SLs can play a big role, though possibly a very limited one, with SEN students in an attempt to minimize the rate of dropping out.

To find out how differently intermediate and secondary teachers perceived subject leadership on the basis of their own experience, what conflicts they had with their SLs and what roles they considered essential for proper implementation of the LNC, the researcher conducted two FGIs and five individual interviews with public intermediate teachers and one FGI with public secondary teachers. In addition, she conducted two FGIs with teachers in the intermediate cycle in the PCSS and one FGI with teachers from the other departments. Findings about public intermediate teachers' views were compared with findings from (a) public elementary teachers, (b) public secondary teachers and (c) private intermediate teachers. Also findings from the English department were compared with findings from the other departments. The purposes were to find out (a) if public intermediate teachers view any gaps in the system and (b) the importance of interdisciplinary communication.

To triangulate findings gained from SLs in the public schools, the researcher conducted one FGI and five individual interviews with parents of students in the public secondary schools. While the two FGIs conducted with whole-classes in the PCSS were aimed at triangulating information gained from parents and teachers in the PCSS. Diary data that included notes about *informal conversations* with practitioners and *observation notes* (from the public and PCSS) were used to (a) bring evidence about schools' cultures and practices that are congruent with the information obtained through the other research tools. Also diary data about classroom observations in public schools were used to bring strong evidence that, as

Hawari (2001b) stated, all the studies that have been conducted indicated that the public school has not changed since the introduction of the LNC in 1994. Having chosen the above research tools to tackle the research objectives, the researcher relied heavily on FGIs to yield information that would bring forward answers from the different participants to the three main questions of this study.

Sampling

The researcher had three main concerns for the sampling process. The first was sampling from as many schools as possible in this study, but not without considering costs. The second was ensuring the use of two research tools in each school the researcher had access to. The third was selecting participants who were not new to the profession and at the same time had experienced the LOC and the LNC; consequently, could draw the comparison between the two and pinpoint changes in the educational situation if they occurred.

The researcher was methodologically eclectic in the sense that she made use of a range of options (Hammersley; in Richardson, 1996: 174). Sampling for the different research tools was theoretically driven. That is, the choice of informants, episodes, and interactions were being driven by the conceptual question, not by concern for "representativeness" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 29). For this the *conditions* under which the construct operates, different instances of the construct, at different moments, in different places with different people were prime concerns, rather than the generalizations of the findings to other settings (Krueger, 1994: 33).

All the sample was selected first from reasonable traveling distance for the researcher (about 25 km) in South Lebanon. And second they were teachers who had experienced the implementation of the LNC and who had an experience of 3 to 26 years of teaching the old curriculum. The whole sample was three principals, 52 teachers (29 from outside the

researcher's school and 23 from her school), 13 SLs (5 from outside and 8 from inside), 365 parents (10 from outside and 355 from inside – 350 of whom received the survey questionnaire), and 34 students (25 in Grade 9 and nine in Grade 12).

The sample comprised 50 females and 33 males whose ages ranged between 30 and 55 years, with the majority of the teachers being 35 years or younger. Fifty-five of the teachers were university graduates, with an average of 13 years of experience; the others were graduates from the Teacher Training Institute (TTI). Teachers were appointed to 13 schools five of which were in the city of Sidon, South Lebanon, while the others were in villages.

Selection criteria were the interviewee's post, presence or absence of a SL at school, school type, gender and place of residence. Little screening was used in the recruitment process. Participants' profile was framed in broader terms for the purpose of getting fairly diverse groups of participants to allow for a greater array of ideas and possible outcomes (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 35-6). In general, sampling was purposive since the researcher selected the participants on the basis of their typicality to the study (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 89).

Within this framework, the sample was divided into two groups of participants: the first was selected from outside the researcher's PCSS, namely elementary and secondary public schools; and the second from inside it. The purpose was to highlight a wider range of roles that a SL may perform to enhance the implementation of the LNC and to draw the attention to the problems that public schools were facing, partly because of the current status of SLs.

Sampling from outside the researcher's school

Six group interviews (5 participants in each) were conducted in public schools: one with SLs, four with teachers, and one with parents. Those that were conducted with teachers, were one in the elementary cycle, two in the intermediate, and one in the secondary. One of the

elementary schools does not have a SL at school, while the other three do. Sampling from this school was confirmatory-disconfirmatory (See Table 28 for sampling purposes), for this school exceptionally did not have a SL as opposed to the other three schools that had SLs.

With respect to interviews with SLs, the researcher conducted only one FGI with three SLs only in addition to conducting three individual interviews. The sample size in the FGI was small (a) because there were not many secondary schools in the area under study, and (b) in response to and respect for SLs preference to be interviewed individually especially because they considered that they came from different schools with different reputations. In addition, the researcher's intention was to have a chance to conduct both FGIs and individual interviews with each party involved in the implementation of the LNC. As a result, convenience sampling (Cohen and Manion, 1994: 88) was used.

Table 28. Summary of sampling types and purposes

Type of sampling	Purpose
Homogeneous	Focuses, reduces, simplifies, facilitates group interviewing
Critical case	Permits logical generalizations and maximum application of information to other cases.
Theory bases	Finding examples of a theoretical construct and thereby elaborate and examine it.
Confirming and disconfirming cases	Elaborating initial analysis, seeking exceptions, looking for variation.
Random purposeful	Adds credibility to sample when potential purposeful sample is too large.
Criterion	All cases that meet some criterion; useful for qualitative assurance.
Combination or mixed	Triangulation; flexibility, meets multiple interests and needs.
Convenience	Saves time, money, and effort, but at the expense of information and credibility.

Kuzel. 1992 and Patton, 1990 (in Miles and Huberman (1994: 28)

Sampling was random purposeful in the sense that whenever there was a possibility for having more than 6 participants in the same FGI, only 5 of those who volunteered were selected randomly while the others were interviewed individually. That is, when contacting participants in public schools, and upon introducing the research topic, the researcher made it clear that she was interested in conducting FGIs, consequently forming them first; and that if

more people were willing to participate, they might be interviewed individually or their classes observed. This way it was easier for the researcher to unify the number of participants across all FGIs to a great extent especially that she did not have any previous experience in conducting FGIs.

Sampling from Inside the Researcher's School/ the Case Study School.

The situation in private schools is different than that in public schools. Private school students live different experiences as a result of having more facilities (A/V aids, computer labs, science labs, etc.) and more teachers with higher university degrees. In the PCSS, the researcher used the same research tools as in the public schools in addition to a survey questionnaire, and diary analysis including observation notes and informal discussions. The participants were SLs of the different departments, teachers, students and parents as reflecting the community. The distinguished group was the SLs of the different subject areas since they had experience in both private and public schools, and who could help the researcher draw the differences between the two types of schools.

Insider research can lead to two sources of bias (a) the effect of the researcher on participants, and (b) the effect of the participants on the researcher. Biases influence the analysis both during and after data collection (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 265). When doing research, the researcher threatens on going social and institutional relationships. For example, informants may boycott the researcher, or assume that s/he knows too much because they are uncertain about what s/he found out. The researcher must assume that insiders do not want outsiders, and that they will try to be misleading; consequently, s/he should shift into a more investigative mode. Taking this into consideration, the researcher took some measures that reduce these effects:

- Informing participants about the research, its focus and what methods of data collection were being used, etc.

- Doing some interviewing off-site in a social environment.
- Not inflating the potential problem.
- Spreading out informants (SLs, teachers, students, etc.).
- Including people with different points of view.
- Triangulating.
- Not showing how much the researcher knew.
- Keeping research questions focused (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 266).

Snowball sampling was used to select two groups of parents. One group was randomly selected from the school record; a list of names, picking up every tenth name of the list.

Once the first focus group was identified, the members from that group could assist the researcher to identify other possible participants (Vaughn et al., 1996: 66).

The reputation group was 7 mothers. The reputation group was that of parents of 'case' students who were observed by the researcher, whose cases were discussed in details with their teachers, screened, and then sent to a specialist to diagnose their learning difficulties. Four were found dyslexic; one of whom is a severe case. Another had very high test-anxiety, and two proved to be ADHD students. This group proved to be very helpful in the sense that their responses summed up all the possible roles that are relevant to subject leadership (Einsiedel et al., 1995: 36).

Grades 8 and 11 classes were the naturally existing groups selected for a focus group discussion. Children in whole-class FGIs were encouraged to disclose their own opinions and assured by the researcher that there were no right or wrong answers; rather, she was interested in what they thought. Children's "don't know" responses were treated cautiously by rephrasing the question to detect whether or not they really did not understand the question or they were shy, lacked interest, or were unable to explain what they knew. To

avoid distractions, students were interviewed in the conference room which was a quiet location, not overlooked, and free of strong emotional connotations. The interview was timed to take no more than 20 minutes to guarantee good answers to clearly stated questions devoid of any metaphors, similes or analogies (Breakwell; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 236-7). The survey questionnaire was addressed to 350 parents (See Appendix D). Through it, the researcher benefited from combining qualitative and quantitative procedures, resulting in greater methodological mixes that strengthen the research design (Krueger, 1994: 29).

Validity and Triangulation

The comparison of subject leadership as a role model between public schools on one hand and the researcher's PCSS on the other made the risks of bias relatively high in this study. The first main source of risk was that the researcher's school was taken as the only sample of private schools in the area, the thing that might lead to drawing faulty generalizations about private schools or considering her school as representative of private schools in the area of the study. The second was that the researcher was an object of research, and her work in the department was taken as a basis for drawing the comparison of roles of SLs between the different schools. The risk in this case was in presenting findings as skewed in favor of her school.

For this, the researcher had to triangulate the findings by varying the method of data collection. That is, increasing the value of FGI as the main research tool, by explicitly linking it to existing methods (semi-structured individual interviews, diary analysis, observations and a survey questionnaire) (Hammersley; in Richardson, 1996: 174; Vaughn et al., 1996: 38; and Cohen and Manion, 1994). In addition, she compared findings gained through the use of the same research tool across the different departments in her school, and across the different schools in the study whenever possible and across the different groups of participants.

Triangulation was cross-sectional; that is, collecting data from different people concerned about a topic at one point of time.

The information gained through FGIs was considered enough content for devising semi-structured interviews, the purpose of which was gaining more specific examples about central roles of SLs. The individual interviews were conducted with SLs, teachers and parents (See Table 29). Individual interviews conducted with teachers in public schools were used to triangulate information gained through FGIs with SLs in those schools. While information gained through individual interviews with teachers in the PCSS were used to triangulate information gained through FGIs with the teachers in the same department. In general, careful attention was paid to non-verbal language to avoid bias (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 20). In addition, to avoid the uncertainty about which to begin with, the FGI or the individual interview, the researcher began cross-validating by applying the two modes of interviewing to the same topic (Vaughn et al., 1996) after conducting the first three FGIs.

The survey questionnaire was another source of triangulation. The survey method was not designed to investigate phenomena in any great depth; rather, its design was built on some assumptions about the meaning of certain tasks for a particular population of people, parents of children in Grades 3 to 8 (Millward; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 278). Starting with Grade 3 because it is the proper age for early diagnosis of problems, and ending with Grade 8 because special support measures will be withheld then.

The questionnaire was structured on the basis of the tasks the researcher performed as a SL. And it was based on the assumption that if parents were made aware of the tasks the SL performed, it would be easier for both of them to communicate properly for early detection of children's learning or behavioral problems, thus addressing them and upgrading the students' achievement level. It was passed to all parents (Grade 3 – Grade 8) including parents of the reputation group as well as parents of the high achievers whom the researcher

interviewed in focus groups. It was used for two reasons: (a) to triangulate findings gained through FGIs with parents of the reputation group, and (b) to investigate other parents' awareness of specific roles played by the SL in the English Department thus triangulating information gained through individual interviews and FGIs the researcher conducted with teachers in her department. A secondary reason was to build some common ground for home-school connection and to follow-up the work of the private tutors with students.

Table 29. Summary of sampling and research tools used for data collection

School type	Participant	Focus group interview		Individual interview		Diary notes (observations and info. Discussions)	Survey questionnaire
		No.	cycle	No.	cycle		
Public	principal			3	Sec.		
Public	SL	1	Sec.	2	Int.		
Private	SL	1	Sec.	2	Int.		
				1	Sec.		
Public	T	1 2 1	elem. int. sec.	5	Int.		
Private	T	2 Eng. 2 Eng. 1 Other	Elem. Int. Int.	3	Elem.		
Public	St	-				Int.	
Private	St	1 1	Int. Sec.			Elem.	
Public	Parent	1	Sec.	5	Sec.		
Private	parent	3	Elem.				350

SL= subject leader; T= teacher; St = student; sec. = secondary; int. = intermediate; elem. = elementary; Eng. = English; Other = Arabic or Math Departments; info. = informal

Ethical Issues in Recruiting the Participants

The researcher proceeded in her research ethically without threatening the validity of the research. Having gained entry to conduct small scale research in most of the schools previously, and having had experience with all the schools' principals, SLs and teachers, made it easier for her to obtain approval to the schools in the sample. Yet, she explained the nature and scope of what the research entailed before recruiting participants. This allowed participants from public schools 'the chance to release their tensions and worries by telling someone about all they wanted to say to people in authority, in the hope that their voice would reach those people,' as one SL said. The researcher took into consideration the ethical

issues discussed in Cohen and Manion (1994: 347) presented in Table 30. At the same time, she gave enough information for participants to be able to decide whether or not to join in. she also informed group participants about who was joining in the same group and that information would be unrevealing of particular identity.

Table 30. Ethical issues considered by the researcher in recruitment

She chose the two contexts for the research that were very similar and stress-free.
She informed all the participants about the procedures she adopted for the sake of informed consent.
She stressed competence, voluntarism, and full comprehension of the subject in selecting the participants.
Groups were homogeneous in terms of break characteristics (post and sex), and the researcher made this point clear to participants in each group.
All the participants were promised privacy of the setting and dissemination of information anonymity, and confidentiality.

Cohen and Manion (1994); Diener and Crandall (1978); and Frankfort and Nachmias. (1992; in Cohen and Manion: 1994).

Only one group of participants refrained from responding to the invitation. The reluctant group was seven teachers of one of the public schools in the Sidon area. The school has been known for its highest success rate in the official examinations compared to other schools till after the Lebanese civil war was over. The interviewed SL from this school reflected the notion that these teachers' reluctance resulted from their fear of being unable to discuss the topic fully in English. This made the researcher explain that they could do it in Arabic, and that she would translate the interview. Yet they also refrained. It is important to indicate here that the interviewees who could not express themselves in English were given the chance to speak in Arabic, some of whom were switching codes as a result. The researcher translated their statements later. The purpose was to ensure that they said all they wanted to say; consequently, the desired interaction level was achieved. This brings forward a feasible reason for their reluctance. Yet, it might have been the SL's own fear of their reflecting an unlikely image of him that led him to discourage them from participating.

All the participants were thanked for their participation after the interview was over. They were asked about whether or not they enjoyed the interview, and if they wanted to add

something they felt like telling. Very little was added. The researcher also promised to inform them about the results when the research was over. The researcher being the only person conducting research in her school required some important explanations. First, teachers in the researcher's department would be dealt with similarly to teachers from outside the school. For this, (a) they were not obliged to show consent to what the different participants considered important information; (b) they were informed that the researcher's job is not related by any means to her formal role in the school's management, and that it would influence the teachers' statuses neither positively nor negatively. Rather, their comments on her practice would be utilized as a feed forward for better department practices. Similarly, the interviewed teachers in the other departments were informed that the information they would give would not influence their SLs' attitudes toward them.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA COLLECTION

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:

Focus Group Interview as a Qualitative Method

The primary source of data collection was the FGI. Strengths of qualitative data (Miles and Huberman, 1994:9) lie in their potential for revealing complexity, and their being best strategies for discovering and exploring a new area, and developing hypotheses (Van Manen, 1977: in Miles and Huberman, 1994: 9), and exploring the participants' feelings in some depth (Janesick, 1998). They also emphasize on people's 'lived experiences' that are well suited for locating the meanings people place on events, processes, and structures of their lives, and for connecting these meanings to the *social* world around them and revealing consensus views (Wilson, 1997: 211). They combine elements of both individual interviews and observations, and possess a distinctive identity of their own. They provide access to forms of data that are not obtained easily with either of the other two methods if they are not done well (Morgan, 1998: 15).

The FGI is a discussion-based interview. It is ‘an informal discussion among selected individuals about specific topics relevant to the situation at hand’ (Trombetta and Share, 1986: 73; in Vaughn et al., 1996: 4), ‘focused’ and relatively staged. It allows the researcher/moderator a chance to deviate from the interview guide if the dynamics of a particular group justify such an adjustment (Einsiedel, Brown, and Ross, 1996: 7). The major assumption of FGIs is that a ‘permissive atmosphere fosters a range of opinions, and a more complete and revealing understanding of the issues discussed will be obtained’ rather than focus on consensus building (Krueger, 1986; in Vaughn et al., 1996: 5). The participants are not necessarily experts on the topic, nor are they expected to arrive at consensus or decisions (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 7). In this study, the first step in the design and planning process was to define and clarify the issues to be investigated in terms of the exact nature of the evidence required. The FGI guide provided the broad definition of subject leadership. While the probes comprised hints at the different specific roles that SLs would perform to enhance the implementation of the LNC.

Advantages of Focus Groups

Focus group interviews can provide information to assist in interpreting unexpected effects, verification in interpreting data that might otherwise only be conjecture, and alternative interpretations of findings that may not be obtainable using traditional quantitative methods. They can be set in a fairly short time (Einsiedel et al., 1996:10) since the same number of participants can be interviewed in much less time in a group format and with further savings in analysis time because fewer transcripts are required. This also produces proportionately less data than interviews with the same number of individuals (p. 19).

Morgan (1986) provides a description of the cognitive processes that are observable in focus groups. The basic idea is that an emerging discussion in a focus group is in many ways analogous to the process of schema or perspective formation in an individual. The group

begins with relative uncertainty about the extent to which participants share a common set of perceptions on the discussion topic. As more members of the group present their experiences and perspectives on the topic, they typically find some common means for representing areas in which they both agree and disagree (See Table 31).

As Table 31 indicates, FGIs have a lot of advantages, and planning and conducting them play a key role in their success. However, without proper handling of participants' interaction, the most challenging FGIs can 'become chaotic and frustrating exercises' (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 9). They have high face validity due to the participants' sharing insights that may not be available from individual interviews, questionnaires or other data sources. They also have greater predictive validity when compared to mail-out surveys (Reynolds and Johnson, 1978; in Krueger, 1994: 32). This is because the moderator can challenge and probe for the most truthful responses, thus gaining a more in-depth analysis than that produced by formal quantitative methods (Mariampolski, 1984: 21; in Krueger, 1994: 30).

Challenges to Focus Groups

To overcome the challenges of FGIs, the researcher did not conduct self-manage focus groups -where there is no pre-constructed interview guideline or questionnaire- because effectively removing the researcher's perspective from the interaction could lead to more massive but less controlled data. In addition, if the researcher deviates from the established procedures of FGI, the issue of validity should be raised (Krueger, 1994: 31). During the FGI, the researcher focused her observation on the difference between what participants found interesting and what they found important. She also paid attention to how participants attempted to resolve differences and build consensus and thus discover when perspectives were shared (Vaughn et al., 1996: 29). The value of observing these aspects of the group

discussion was important for triangulation, and to strengthen the total research project, regardless of which method is the primary means of data collection (p. 31).

Table 31. Strengths, weaknesses and shortcomings of focus groups

Strengths of focus groups	Uses of focus groups	Distinguishing features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A FGI is a socially oriented research procedure. - FGIs place people in natural, real-life situations. -They are comparatively easy to conduct. - They are done relatively cheaply and quickly. -They are able to explore topics and generate hypotheses. -They uncover factors relating to complex behavior or motivation. -They exhibit a synergy that individuals alone can not achieve. -They produce an opportunity to collect data from groups discussing topics of interest to the researcher. -They are more controlled than participant observation. -The setting is less controlled than individual interviewing. -They capture the dynamic nature of the group interaction. -They allow access to the attitudes and experiences of informants. -their format allows the moderator to probe, and to explore unanticipated issues. - They have high face validity. - They can provide speedy results. -They require less preparation with little comparability from group to group. - They inhibit people from providing misleading information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -when the researcher needs additional information to prepare for a large-scale study, -To explore new research areas or to examine well-known research questions from the research participants' own perspective, -To get closer to participants' understanding of the researcher's topic of interest, -To learn about participants' experiences. <p>FGIs are not to be used when</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The environment is emotionally charged and more information of any type is likely to intensify the conflict. -The researcher has lost control over critical aspects of the study. -Statistical projections are needed. -Other methodologies can produce either better quality information or more economical information of the same quality. <p>The researcher cannot ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can produce data with relatively little direct input from the researcher -They contribute to triangulation. -Part of their analysis builds around the comparison of attitudes. <p>Cognitive advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gaining in-depth information, - the respondent can provide additional background information about the circumstances of the answer, -the researcher is in a better position to know if the respondent really understood the question. <p>Challenges & Shortcomings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the researcher has less control over environment, participation and data gathering. - the environment should be conducive to conversation. - interaction in groups does not indicate whether or not FGIs mirror individual behavior. - groups are difficult to assemble -data should not be generalized to larger population. - data are challenging to analyze. - comments must be interpreted within the social context that the interaction provides. -enough groups are recommended to balance the idiosyncrasies of individual sessions.

Reynolds and Johnson (1978; in Krueger, 1994: 32); Morgan and Spanish (1984; in Krueger, 1994: 34); Morgan (1986; in Morgan and Spanish, 1984, 1985: 22-26); Jarrett (1993; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 277); Krueger (1994: 34-45); Vaughn, Schumm and Sinagub (1996: 20-21); and Einsiedel et al. (1996: 8).

Designing and Testing the Interview Guide

In public schools, the nature of assigning SLs, the conditions under which their quota might change and the unclear job description impose the notion that SLs are to perform tasks related to the teaching/learning situation within their departments only. Therefore, the notions about interdisciplinary communication and SLs' performance of administrative roles were expected to emerge during the FGI discussions and individual interviews, if such notions existed. As such varying the FGI participants was the only means to tackle this research objective. The topic guide was necessary only to the extent that it prompted the moderator to recall the key issues to be discussed. It afforded the moderator considerable latitude to improvise fruitful questions and pursue unanticipated lines of inquiry as the discussion progressed. The moderator did not use the guide in the form of an interview questionnaire since reliance on fixed questions may undermine the ability of the moderator to listen analytically to content of the discussion, thus overlook the implications of what was said (Millward; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 284). The guide included many research questions, along with pauses required for reflection, points of clarification and a set of probes to help the moderator focus the discussion if required.

The process of generating questions was done as suggested by Einsiedel, Borwn, and Ross (1996: 27) by discussing the topic with three colleagues not included in any of the samples. Then the questions were limited to six major questions according to their appropriateness and usefulness. Some questions were split, others combined, and some others were discarded when they were piloted (p. 25). Since there was no chance to do a formal pilot session to debug the procedure, the first FGI was the test group, and on its basis adjustments were made for the subsequent groups: rewording, ordering of and allotting time for each of the questions. Probes were found to be sufficient and effective. A short written questionnaire (including information about the teacher's background knowledge and experience) was administered at the start of the FGI session. It helped focus the participants' attention on the

topic and start thinking about the general nature of the problem. Probes were used in response to cues originating from the respondents to revisit a side-stepped issue, superficially discussed issue, or an issue not mentioned at all. These cues helped maintain the flow of the discussion (Millward, in Breakwell et al., 1995: 286). Probes that were used to request for additional information were limited to the statements presented in Table 32.

Table 32. Probing in the focus group interviews

Would you explain further?
Would you give me an example of what you mean?
Would you say more?
Is there anything else?
Please describe what you mean.
I do not understand.

Krueger (1994: 116)

Member check was aimed to provide an opportunity to verify how members felt about selected issues. The 5-second pause was most often used after a participant comment. It prompted additional point of view or agreement with the previously mentioned position especially when coupled with eye contact from the moderator (Krueger, 1994: 116). With teachers whose SLs were interviewed, the researcher drew the attention of the participants that the topic was sensitive and that some people might find it somewhat uncomfortable to discuss (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 58). At the end, participants were also given the chance to write down any additional comments in the event they did not get a chance to communicate all they had wanted to say (Einsiedel, Borwn, and Ross, 1996: 28; Breakwell et al., 1995: 233-4). Yet very little was added.

Types, Wording and Phrasing of Focus Group Questions

Asking the right question in the most effective way was key to a good focus group session. According to Merton and Kendall (1946; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 285) there are three questioning styles that differ in their degree of structure. The unstructured questions

(stimulus and response are free), The semi-structured question (stimulus is structured and the response is free, or the stimulus is free and the response is structured) and the structured question (the stimulus and response components are rigidly specified). The researcher used three kinds of questions ordered as: opening question, introductory questions, transition questions, key questions, and ending questions (Krueger, 1994: 54-55) (See Table 33 for the summary of question types).

Table 33. Types of focus group questions

Question type	Reasons for 'using' or 'not using'
Yes/no questions were avoided	-They do not evoke the desired group discussion. -They elicit ambiguous responses. -They can restrict the clarity of the discussion (Krueger, 1994: 58).
Why questions were avoided	-Answers might not be reliable -Avoidance of putting people on the defensive. -Avoidance of making people feel they were being interrogated or judged (Merton and Kendall. 1946; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 285).
Easy-to-ask questions	-These were asked first to build an atmosphere of trust.
Think-back questions (introductory)	-Focuses on the past; increases the reliability of the responses.
Open-ended questions	-The allow participants to determine the direction of the response. -They give the interviewees the chance to reveal what was on their minds.
Closed-ended questions	Came later in the interview to narrow the range of inquiry, and help the moderator regain control of the discussion.
The final question	To ensure that critical aspects had not been overlooked. To bring closure to the discussion. To enable participants to reflect on previous comments. Were critical to analysis (Vaughn et al., 1996: 26-7).
All-things considered questions	Allowed individuals who share inconsistent points of view to clarify their position at the conclusion of the discussion. Helped the researcher to avoid a serious mistake of assuming that frequency reflected importance.
The summary question	Is tied closely to the purpose (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 58). Is based on notes taken during the group discussion (Vaughn et al., 1996: 27). Includes the most important findings.

In general, sufficient background information for questions was provided, namely the definition of terms. Questions that were specific to the kind of information needed were asked, and probes were used to compensate for the more specific and detailed information. Questions were also kept simple for multiple interpretation questions are killer questions that involve the researcher in answering for the respondents (Einsiedel, Brown, and Ross, 1996: 26-7). Also as suggested by Vaughn et al. (1996: 32-5), the researcher was cautious about giving examples for they give clues to the type of response that might be offered. In the

closing statements, the researcher requested that the participants keep the information stated as anonymous as possible. Then she answered their questions and thanked the participants for their assistance.

Number, Time, Size and Setting of Focus Groups

The researcher considered 17 FGIs sufficient especially that some researchers have noted that the data generated after about 10 sessions is largely redundant (Llewellyn, 1991; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 280) taking into consideration the cost in terms of time and resources. FGIs lasted about 1:10 to 1:30 hour. The participants were informed about the allotted time in advance and told that those time limits should be honored (Vaughn et al., 1996: 50-1).

Figures quoted in focus group literature suggest an average of nine participants per session as conventional with a range of six to twelve. While some would advocate between six and eight participants as ideal (Albrecht et al., 1993; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 281; Einsiedel et al., 1999:38; Krueger and King, 1998: 43). The latter is based on evidence showing that group size is inversely related to the degree of participation fostered. Large groups are unwieldy to manage; they afford free-riding and can be apt to fragment as subgroups form. Also it may be hard to obtain a clear recording of the session. In this study, since the researcher had no previous experience in moderating FGIs, preferred to have five participants in each group with 20 per cent over recruitment (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 36).

The focus group participants that were selected were contacted by telephone for confirmation. Six were contacted for each group to guarantee that not less than five would turn up, and not more than 6 if all do. As a result, groups consisted of 5 except for the reputation group that had seven interviewees, the thing that provided sufficient number for a stimulating dialogue. This range provided enough members in the group to ensure ongoing conversation and interaction, as well as provided an opportunity for each individual member

of the group to express unique perceptions. The researcher had several homogeneous groups, each representing one level in the organizational hierarchy (Einsiedel et al., 1996: 48) since it is not a good idea to mix supervisors with staff who report to them. Another reason was that high-status individuals in the group may tend to dominate the discussion (Krueger, 1994: 87).

Einsiedel et al.'s (1996) suggestions for scheduling sessions were taken into consideration (See Table 34). FGIs were conducted in two different places. Attendees from the Sidon area were invited to the researcher's house. While those living in the South were invited to a house in the same area where they lived and worked and which had the same facilities as the first, and at the same time did not have any psychological impact on them.

Table 34. Arrangements for scheduling sessions

suitability of location for most participants
convenience of time for most participants
accessibility of location
parking availability
arranging for refreshments
The room where the audio-tape was run was big enough for every attendee to feel comfortable in a cozy atmosphere.
The room appeared professional with comfortable seats with a large table enough for the entire group to sit around.
Members were not too far from each other. They could communicate with others who were seated across from them.
Chair arrangements allowed all group members equal access to each other.
The room was free of props and distracting items. Equipment was available and could be used in the room adequately.

Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub (1996: 53)

Focus group implementation

Millward's guidelines for conducting the research (in Breakwell et al., 1995: 291) were followed (See Table 35). It was important for the researcher to follow this procedure to avoid all sorts of biases. Specificity, range and depth were maintained by seeking details in people's responses and reactions to the stimulus. The moderator facilitated the transitions from one area of discussion to another; and elicited and shifted the discussion towards a

‘deeper’ level. In each FGI, the goal was clearly stated to hold the team together. The group was given the chance to get acquainted, relate to each other, listen to each other and learn from each other. The researcher made it clear that creating a climate of learning would lead participants to learn together about how the topic under study was seen by groups of people. As a result, shared leadership and explicitness and differing opinions were encouraged (Kreuger and King, 1998:23).

Table 35. Guidelines for conducting the focus group interviews

The sample composition was determined.
The focus group composition was determined.
The recruitment strategy was planned.
A topic guide was produced.
A real focus group was conducted.
The data were transcribed and analyzed.
The various lines of supplementary or follow-up research were identified.

Millward (in Breakwell et al. (1995: 291)

The Researcher as Moderator

The researcher decided to take on the moderator role. This is mainly because the subject matter of the focus group would be difficult for an outsider to speed on the issues, details or nuances of the project. The researcher herself was the only interviewer who emphasized consistency in question presentation, ordered the questions appropriately, and explained jumps from one topic to another (Breakwell; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 232). Table 36 is a summary of the moderator traits, moderator guide, and moderator job. The moderator tried to maximize self-disclosure by being objective and detached (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990:69; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 282) in a permissive and non-critical climate, and showing ‘incomplete understanding’ but not ignorance. She took active steps only to defuse the situation, refocus the group and balance out the discussion process.

Table 36. The moderator traits, moderator guide, and moderator job (pre, mid, and post FGD)

		* Post focus group
+ The moderator traits - was a group facilitator - understood the content and issues being discussed - listened attentively - recorded non-verbal signals -maintained control of the process without being too directive -could motivate shy participants to contribute to the discussion (rounds) -could sensitively get dominant participants to be less talkative - improvised and adjusted the questions as needed - summarized and synthesized the ideas that had been shared + The moderator guide organization -Welcoming participants -Introducing herself, as interviewer and observer -Doing participant warm-up exercise and introductions -Explaining objectives -Explaining the research methodology and how participants were selected -Explaining how the information will be used -Going over housekeeping details -Talking about confidentiality issues -Posting and discussing ground rules -Facilitating discussion using the focus group interviewing guide -Asking for final comments -Handing out short questionnaires -Closing with final comments -Thanking participants	* Before the focus group -Coordinated recruitment - Prepared the place - Practiced the introduction to be comfortable with the questions *During the focus group - Determined seating around the table - Welcomed people - Began the group close to the designated time -Took notes throughout the discussion -Monitored time to be sure that all questions were discussed -Held back own opinions -Avoided answering questions -Used pauses and probes to obtain information -Controlled her verbal and non-verbal reactions to participants -Used group facilitation skills -Asked the ending question.	 -Conducted a debriefing -Listened to the tape, and prepared the written report -Added own comments and discussions about: * what the high points were *what were the most important concepts discussed *what quotes should be remembered *what was said that was not expected *how this group was different from or similar to other groups

+Einsiedel, Borwn and Ross (1996: 20 & 55), *Krueger and King (1998)

Note taking

FGIs were not video-taped; and since non-verbal clues cannot be detected through tape-recording, the researcher had to take some important notes. Notes were taken mainly when group participants were debating an issue before reaching consensus, and when signs of agreement were done non-verbally. During the FGI, when capturing notable quotes, the researcher listened for those that were particularly well said. She captured word for word phrases that were particularly enlightening or that eloquently expressed a specific point of view. She placed the name or initial of the speaker after the quotations. She paid attention to

the key phrases that expressed the main ideas. Asterisks were placed on those quotes on which there was agreement among several people. Non-verbal activities that indicated the level of agreement, support or interest were noted (Krueger and King, 1998: 48). On her part, the researcher tried her best to overcome habits such as head nodding and short verbal responses (Krueger, 1994: 116). The interviewees' request for immediate analysis of what their answers revealed about them was anticipated by stating that findings would take a long time to produce, and that at the end the researcher would give the results as soon as the data analysis was over. In this sense, there was consistency across respondents (Breakwell; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 233).

Individual Interviews

In this study, the number of individual interviews was 19: 13 in public schools and six in the PCSS. Those conducted in public schools were three with SLs, five with teachers, and five with parents. Those conducted in the PCSS were six interviews: three with SLs and three with teachers. Interviewees were selected from the same schools where FGI participants were selected. Approaches to contacting the interviewees, and the timing of the interviews were similar to those used in FGIs. Interview biases that may result from the interview schedule, the interviewer, the interviewee, the place, the use of inconsistent probes, or selective recording of responses (Bynner, Oppenheim and Hammersley, 1979: 51-52) were all taken into consideration before conducting the interviews.

The interview schedule was structured on the basis of findings gained through the first three FGIs. The research question was operationalised in a series of questions posed to the study sample (Breakwell; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 231). To avoid missing salient issues, the researcher used **semi-structured interviews**. This was because open-ended answers allow the interviewee to say as little or as much as s/he chooses (ibid.). As Appendix E indicates,

the probes used in the FGI were the same questions used in the interview schedule since they proved to be the best questions to elicit enough information to address the research questions. In the interview schedule, the researcher's questions were not double-barreled, did not introduce an assumption before going on to pose the question, did not include complex or jargon words, were not leading, did not include double negatives, and were not intended to act as catch-alls. The interview schedule was piloted and questions were reordered. Findings were sufficient for providing enough material for triangulation. These interviews proved to be a source of additional quotations rather than new idea generators.

The interview data were collected over a period of time allowing the interviewees the chance to determine the time and place they preferred so as not to risk their participation. Most of the interviews were conducted in the schools where teachers taught, and more time was allowed when interviewees showed interest in adding information they considered important when the interview was over. The general processes of data analysis of the individual interviews were similar to those used to analyze FGIs.

Diary data were mainly quotes from informal conversations with practitioners in the different schools that the researcher had access to and were collected during the period of conducting the study. They included observation notes that the researcher did in her school and in public intermediate schools. In the former case, most of the observation notes were written by (a) teachers of the reputation groups (case students), and (b) the researcher, in addition to notes about discussions between the researcher and these teachers. In the latter case, structured observation notes and notes from informal discussions with the observed teachers were written by the researcher. Notes were dealt with in terms of how they fit into the structure of analyzing FGI and individual interview data to provide a further clearer structure of findings.

Principles of analyzing focus group interview, individual interview and diary data.

A number of assumptions exerted considerable influence on the process of analysis. Among these principles was that the analyst followed a prescribed, sequential process. This helped ensure that results will be as error-free as possible (Krueger, 1994: 128-9). See Table 37 for the systematic steps in data gathering. Verification in analysis was a critical safeguard. In order for analysis to be verifiable, there were sufficient data to constitute a trail of evidence (Krueger, 1995: 130). In this sense, not all questions were analyzed at the same level. Questions that were designed to help set the stage of discussion for participants were neglected with most FGIs. The researcher placed primary attention on questions that were at the foundation of the study (ibid.)

Table 37. The systematic steps followed in data gathering and verification

sequencing questions to allow maximum insight
coding data
participant verification through
a. individual summary statement on critical questions, and
b. post-focus group verification of the written report analysis.
The data were ordered in categories that were of concern to the client.
Responses were placed in categories by participant characteristics (private vs. public schools, and relationship to program).
Illuminating quotes were provided to simplify the descriptive style of responses to the reader.
The interpretative side of the data was built on the descriptive process by presenting the meaning of data.

Krueger (1994: 128-132)

Data Analysis

Content analysis comprises both a mechanical and an interpretive component (Krippendorff, 1980; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 288). The former comprises physically organizing and subdividing the data into categories, while the latter involves determining which categories are meaningful in terms of the questions being asked. Content analysis may take three main forms: qualitative, quantitative, and structural. Qualitative content analysis tends to be more subjective and less explicit about the process of interpretation. The emphasis is on meaning rather than on quantification (Millward; in Breakwell et al., 1995: 288). And when viewing

quantitative data through qualitative eyes, it was for the sake of guiding inquiry and expanding rather than confining understanding (Parker, 2000).

In this study, long exchanges, phrases, or sentences from FGI transcripts and individual interviews were coded, cut and then sorted. They were then tabulated to provide a descriptive overview of the data to be able to find quotations to illustrate particular themes of meaning within the transcript, rather than put numbers to the data. Content analysis was supplemented with systematic quotations from the interviews to illustrate conclusions. Some of the conclusions and interpretations were taken back to interviewees for authentication. A summary followed the format of key question, key points, and notable quotes.

A review of what the researcher has learned and what others have learned as well was done including the impact of the focus group on the researcher, and the participants (coordinators, teachers, parents, and students). What went well, what needed improvement, and what was learned were discussed with the FGI participants in the researcher's department. The experience was evaluated at the level of the information, how much time was really needed by volunteers, what was the cost per focus group, and how that would have compared with alternatives. This is in addition to the lasting effects of the experiences (Krueger and King, 1998: 85).

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS:

The Survey Questionnaire

Survey questionnaires, though cheap and have no interviewer bias, have designer bias. For this, the researcher chose to include only the tasks she performed for the sake of SENs and were mentioned by the reputation group when interviewed. The purpose was to detect (a) the

respondents' general notion about the roles that the SL performed for the sake of SENs and (b) how important it was for them to see such tasks performed, which is one of the research objectives. Harlen's and Wake's (1995) guidelines for designing, using and analyzing results of the questionnaire were utilized. In this research study, the questionnaire was divided into five parts with an explanation in the opening page and a personal data question stated in the end (Bynner, Oppenheim, and Hammersley, 1979: 56).

In the survey questionnaire (Appendix D), statements in the five parts reflected how the researcher controlled work within her department, followed-up teachers work, dealt with tests, and dealt with weak or SEN students. Statements were put on a three-point, two-level scale, one reflecting preference for the role to be seen performed, the other reflecting a real performance of the role by the SL. The last category of the questionnaire included six questions where parents were asked to reflect their level of satisfaction with activities of concern to them. Parents were also given the chance to write their own suggestions. The questionnaire was passed to three colleagues for piloting, and no changes were suggested.

The parents' meetings (henceforth PTA; that is, one task that links the Parent Teacher Association with the school), at the beginning of the year was used as an occasion for collecting the survey questionnaire that was addressed to the parents. This questionnaire was passed to parents of students from Grade 3 to Grade 8. Parents of students below grade 3 were not sent a questionnaire since in those grades, students' achievements are reflected on a 4-point scale rather than in figures in their record. Students above grade 8 were not selected for the sole purpose that by then they would have acquired most if not all the study skills, and the content matter they study becomes more focused on what they are interested in, be they literary or scientific. The advantages are low cost associated with gathering the data, generally quite high response rate (Bynner, Oppenheim and Hammersley, 1979) and getting the results in fairly short period (Breakwell et al., 1995: 100).

Classroom observations

Notes about observations done in both schools were the two major sources of the diary data. In the PCSS, the researcher's diary data also included notes from meetings with parents of students who had behavioral and/or learning problems (including the reputation group). Classroom observations that were included in the diary notes were done in one public school and in the PCSS. In the public school, the researcher did 20 hours of formal observation where she counted and rated events that related to classroom teaching approaches. They were focused on the type of classroom interaction (student-student, teacher-student, or student-teacher) and the quality of discussions. Before undertaking the observations, the researcher planned with the observed teachers:

- What aspects of teaching were to be observed.
- Length and timing of each observation.
- Where the observation would be in relation to the action.
- What to tell inquisitive students about the observation.
- When the feedback discussion would take place (Kemp and Nathan, 1995).

Frequency count was used and criteria of observations were matched against definitions of student-centered as opposed to teacher centered classroom behaviors (Further Education Unit, 1993), and conclusions were drawn. The advantages of these observations were gathering a considerable amount of information and gaining strong visual evidence (Macintyre, 2000: 74) that would indicate whether or not the student-centered teaching methods that were considered essential for successful implementation of the LNC were observed. Objectivity in the generation and interpretation of the observation data (Bynner, Oppenheim and Hammersley, 1979:13) helped the researcher to spotlight whether or not SLs were controlling the teaching/learning situation by reinforcing the suggested teaching methods.

Formal observations were also used in another occasions, in the PCSS, for different purposes. In this school, the researcher's classroom observations are always aimed at screening students who have behavioral and/or academic problems. The observation criteria were always set ahead of time. Those observations were done in two different subjects: English and Math, either during the first or the last two sessions of the school day. This was for two reasons: to detect changes in the student's performance in two different times of the day, and to try to find out if the student's problems resulted from language deficiency or lack of prerequisite skills for the comprehension of the taught lesson. Since it would be impossible to observe everything, the researcher and three other delegated teachers were selective in their observations that followed the teachers' reports of problem students. Observations were focused on students' pronunciation, reading speed, classroom interaction, comprehension level, level of participation in classroom discussions and the quality of their spoken and written response.

Data Analysis of the Observations and the Survey Questionnaire

Quantitative content analysis was used to generate numerical values from observations in both the public and private schools and from the questionnaire. The excel program was used for data entry and for chi-square analysis of data by category. A 2x3 numeric format was used. The two factors were the SL's actual performance of certain tasks as opposed to performance the participants find likely to be performed. The three levels were 'yes', 'no', and 'do not know'. All the material to be analyzed was selected first. Then some units of analysis were selected and assigned to categories that could be easily computerized. Then themes were identified from the existing categories. Later, analysis was done on the resulting information. It was focused on using frequency descriptions and matching them against information gained through interviews with the reputation group and the other two groups. The last category of the survey questionnaire was analyzed numerically at first. Then interpretive content analysis was done by relating the results to findings gained through

interviews with parents of case students and interviews with teachers in the English department.

Findings gained through using these research tools are presented in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Chapter five presents an overview of subject leadership as viewed by public school administrators as well as by subject leaders themselves in the public and the PCSS as managers of the implementation process of the LNC. Chapter six presents an overview of the situation in public elementary schools in the absence of subject leadership as opposed to its presence in the PCSS and the difference SLs could make in their department achievements. Chapter seven presents all the other findings gained from all the other participants from the public and the PCSS, indicating where findings were triangulated.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH FINDINGS

SUBJECT LEADERS AND THEIR EXTERNAL CONTEXTS: AS PERCEIVED BY PRINCIPALS; AS THEY PERCEIVE NATIONAL POLICY AND TRAINING; AND AS THE INSPECTORATE SUPPORTS THEM

It is important to draw the readers' attention to the fact that the researcher decided to present research findings in three chapters (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) instead of one to avoid confusing readers with a big bulk of content if done otherwise. Each chapter reflected findings achieved from two or more groups of participants representing the school hierarchy. Chapter 5 presents data gained from public school principals as managers of change and how these perceived the national policy and the effect of the external agents of control (the GCD and the inspectorate) on the implementation process of the LNC. It also presents data gained from SLs as middle managers of change about how they perceived national policy, as they perceived their training and as they perceived how the external agents of control supported them.

Chapter 6 presents an overview of the situation in public elementary schools in the absence of subject leadership as a role set. It spotlights the importance of this role set without which elementary teachers would find a number of problems would persist; consequently, the implementation process would be a failing one. On the other hand, it spotlights the effectiveness of this role set as viewed by the different participants in the PCSS, namely teachers and parents in general and parents of high achievers as well as parents of the reputation group in particular.

Chapter 7 presents findings achieved from participants in the public intermediate and secondary schools (teachers and parents) as well as participants (teachers, students and parents) in the PCSS intermediate and secondary cycles. Findings gained through the survey questionnaire and diary notes about classroom observations in both schooling systems were used to triangulate findings

gained from the different participants in the study.

The Sample

Educational change in Lebanon did not bring with it any changes in the school structure. During the preparation for the LNC, neither public school principals nor SLs received any special training to cope with its demands. Consequently, the way each envisioned the implementation process was transmitted to teachers upon their involvement during the implementation process. This chapter presents data on SLs and their external contexts: as perceived by principals; as SLs perceived national policy; as they perceived their training and as the GCD and the inspectorate supported them.

As shown in Table 38, the researcher conducted three individual interviews with public schools principals to investigate their views about SLs and their external contexts during the implementation of the LNC. in addition, she conducted two FGIs, one with public school SLs and one with the PCSS and five individual interviews to investigate how SLs themselves perceived the effect of these external contexts on their status and performance during the first four years of the implementation of the LNC. By comparing public school SLs' views to those in the PCSS, the researcher spotlighted the overlap.

Table 38. Sampling and research tools used to collect data from principals and subject leaders

School type	participants	Focus group interview		Individual interview	
		Number	Cycle	Number	Cycle
Public	Principals			3	secondary
Public	Subject leaders	1	secondary	2	intermediate
private	Subject leaders	1	secondary	2	intermediate
				1	secondary

Subject Leadership as Perceived by Principals of Public Schools

Though interviewed individually, the three principals showed consensus on the status of public schools and the barriers to complete implementation of the LNC. They agreed that the internal physical conditions, facilities and material resources that would lead to proper implementation were lacking. That is “The public school set up, classroom size, and lack of the needed equipment do not match with the basic requirements for its implementation. In addition, the incomplete teacher preparation, and the problem of having more than 60% of teachers as part-timers, most of whom did not receive training make the implementation an unachievable dream,” as the principal of school 1 (henceforth PS1) said. This made the process difficult for both SLs and teachers, but more for the former because of the nature of their job.

Lacking government documents about bylaws that would explain educational processes in details, principals followed what Article 3, Law 1982/22 as stated (See Appendix B). Principals had three concerns in the process of selecting SLs: experience, the load for handling the leadership job, and the directorate’s approval of selection. As PS1 said, “the school administration used to select the best among teachers, and report their decision to the directorate, the regional office of the Ministry of Education that provides the link between the schools in the same region and the Ministry of Education, to get their proposal confirmed. The principal’s criteria for selection were experience, the efforts that the selected person had made while a teacher, his/her cooperation with the administration at school, and his/her good relationship with colleagues”. Yet, they still believed that subject leadership should be assigned as a full-time job “in schools where the number of teaching hours for the one subject exceeds the 150, as the law states,” as PS1 added.

The interviewed principals consented that SLs were not treated as a different group of people from teachers during the preparation for the LNC. That is, those who received training were

selected because the school recommended them, as PS1 and PS2 said. “Since there had not been any training program especially prepared for SLs, the process of selecting them in each school became a matter of convenience to the principal,” as PS1 said. Principals being given the first and at times last word in assigning SLs was creating tensions within schools, either between the principal and teachers or between teachers themselves. As PS3 said, “Teachers consider subject leadership a prestigious post. Consequently, some of them might feel underestimated when not assigned such a job. Some others might reject it because they prefer to be SLs for different grade levels than they are assigned, usually higher ones”.

In the first school, for example, since the principal was not allowed to assign a SL who was not a full-timer, the problem was solved. This principal, by virtue of having the majority of teachers as part-timers, assigned a SL who had no competitors. The SL had the longest experience among those at school. In the second, the interviewed principal recommended one SL. Yet, because another teacher had almost the same experience and had his own connections with external agents, a politician, he got the post. As a result, the last word in assigning the SL was not the principal's; consequently, neither the directorate nor the principal had a hand in the process. In the third school, the principal avoided tensions by rotating this job among teachers and across the different grade levels. In this sense, “[the principal] had to have sociopolitical skills to keep everybody satisfied,” as PS1 said. This principal took into consideration the fact that secondary teachers preferred teaching Grades 10, 11, and 12 (the secondary cycle, ages 16 - 18). When he allocated a teacher as a SL for one of these grades, he allocated his teaching hours in lower grades (Grades 7, 8, and 9; that is, the intermediate cycle, ages 11 - 15). At the same time, he gave all the teaching hours in Grades 10, 11 and 12 to those who were not given any coordination hours. This way he believed that he satisfied all the teachers without losing any of them. That is, he would not be threatened by one of the dissatisfied teachers to leave the school and ask for transfer to another school especially that “there is no law that sets strict conditions for transfer,” as he said.

According to PS3, a teacher who views himself/herself a potential SL might ask for transfer from one school to another in the hope that s/he will be assigned this post. Basically that teacher would lose the privilege of being a coordinator in his/her previous school after having gained long experience. S/he would be transferred as a teacher. Yet what was happening was that those teachers “would have already arranged for their new post in the other school,” as PS1 said. They moved to other schools and principals there recommended them to be SLs. Yet, “the question whether they would stay in their new post could not be answered,” as he added.

Regardless of the situation in each school, the three interviewed principals did not demand that the SL perform all the expected jobs mentioned in the bylaws. They found themselves obliged to take into consideration the need for teaching hours as a first priority. As a result, the number of coordination hours was assigned after ensuring the teaching quota, as they expressed. They “did not want the coordination job to be at the expense of teaching especially in some key classes although the coordination was very important,” as PS1 said. The situation got worse “when there was no substitute for the SL to teach those classes. In that case, no SL would be assigned, and teachers were deprived of coordination hours for the sake of benefiting students from that person’s good teaching skills,” as PS3 said.

The interviewed principals agreed that the job of a SL was not a prestigious job; rather, a tiresome one like the administration. To them, SLs have to be very sensitive in dealing with teachers especially “in some subject areas where each teacher considers himself/herself the best potential SL ever,” as PS1 said. According to them, the government did not spare them the hassle of assigning SLs, nor did it provide a good alternative. As a result, principals considered that the tensions that existed before setting and implementing the LNC remained thus sustaining the implementation process uncontrolled from within. That is, it was difficult for SLs to function properly in an environment where part-time teachers, who may move to other schools whenever

they decide, are the majority, and where the evacuated teachers may return to their previous schools. The unstable state of having or not having teachers made principals see SLs as teachers who would fill in gaps. Coupled with tensions that emerged whenever a SL was to be allocated made principals believe that the more full-time teachers there were in a public school, the higher the chances for SLs to exist and to stay in their posts was and the fewer teaching problems there were. And for better performance of their job, “guides and counselors were assumed to follow-up the implementation process of the LNC,” as PS3 said.

The Relationship between Subject Leaders and the Guidance and Counseling Department as Viewed by Public Schools Principals

The GCD was established in 1995: guides and counselors were trained to follow-up the implementation process within schools. Guides and counselors should observe teachers then sit with them to discuss the observation feedback, discuss with them the teaching/learning problems the latter were facing and propose practical solutions. Yet, they are to coordinate their work with SLs in schools where the latter exist. Regardless of the interplay of socio-political factors in assigning guides and counselors to the GCD; and regardless of whether or not they were ex-teachers, or ex-subject leaders, “they were expected to be the external, more knowledgeable and trained agents who would support schools, indirectly through SLs, in implementing the LNC,” as PS1 and PS3 expressed. Yet, since its establishment in 1995, the GCD has not had any decrees that would state its organizational procedures, the absence of which made the GCD “stay a name without content,” as PS1 said.

A number of factors led to inflating the image of guides and counselors, and at the same time diminishing the status of SLs. First, Personal relationships and acquaintanceship between principals and their teachers were main factors in recommending and consequently transferring

teachers and SLs to the GCD, as the three principals agreed. Second, “The selection process deprived public schools of some qualified teachers and potential SLs as well as of external support. This is because the big number of guides was not allowed to function or perform their jobs because of clashes with the inspectorate [who considered the GCD as not yet legitimate],” as PS3 said. As a result, what was expected to be a positive step turned out to be creating some drawbacks. “Many schools [from where teachers were transferred to the GCD] suffered from bringing [part-time] teachers [as substitutes] who did not have the experience, and at times were beginners in teaching, and who could not handle classroom situations,” as PS2 said. The inspectorate that was expected to be the external agent of control besides the GCD did not maximize their efforts during the implementation period in compensation.

The Relationship between Subject Leaders and the Inspectorate As Viewed by Public School Principals

Diary data indicate that when the inspectorate forbade guides from visiting schools, the inspectorate did not compensate by raising the number of their visits to schools, as one possible solution during the period of change. As PS1 said, “the mathematics inspector visited only twice during the whole year each time attending five classes”. As PS2 said, “the inspectorate visited only once and attended different subject area classes”. And since their job was reporting their visits to the ministry, they were not expected to perform any other specific tasks in schools. While with respect to PS3, “they visited only once and attended four classes only”. According to the three interviewed principals, this was not enough, though effective. To them, this situation proved to be in favor of improving the status of SLs.

The three interviewed principals viewed the inspectors’ visits, though rare, as effective because they reflected the image of the government authority that might affect teachers’ statuses if the

latter would not alter their actions, contrary to SLs' image inside schools. The inspectors' visits were effective because they "created a shock to teachers," as PS1 commented. The inspectors attended classes, checked preparation, etc., and "their authority was there and very important. All of the teachers, without exception, felt as if there was a sword above their heads in their presence," as PS1 added. As a result, teachers worked harder, the thing that meant the active role of the inspectorate was necessary. In other words, a SL's performance in his/her department was basically to follow up teachers' work; whereas, the inspector was the motivator and stimulator for harder work.

Interview findings indicated that there was an underlying comparison based on two assumptions. The first was that control had always been external to schools. The second was that inspectors should be professionals. As PS2 said, "the most effective inspectors were those that had a degree and were professionals in the subject area they were to inspect". To him, professionalism was important and essential for the sake of implementing the LNC and "to help teachers view their work as a means conducive to successful whole-class work". According to PS1 and PS3, professionalism was a key distinctive feature between inspectors and SLs, and consequently, the key effect on teachers' future behaviors. These principals compared between the different visiting inspectors at the level of quality of feedback they gave to teachers. They viewed that all inspectors spotlighted the good aspects as well as the weaknesses of the observed teachers. Yet those who lacked professionalism "did not give in-depth analysis of their observations," as PS1 said. In other words, "they checked only the teacher's preparation, scheduling of sessions, usage of AV aids, and suggested that the teacher vary the teaching methods according to students' learning styles". During the inspectors' visits, SLs were those teachers not observed for many considerations, one of which was their being SLs and were assumed to be accompanying the inspectors during their visits. Consequently, SLs did not benefit from the inspector's feedback, as PS1 and PS2 concluded.

On the other hand, the interviewed principals never mentioned SLs' professionalism as an important trait for internal control. They viewed the GCD, the inspectorate and subject leadership as different parties. They concluded that neither the GCD nor the inspectorate could substitute for SLs. Rather, they should supplement the work of SLs and help them develop their skills because "the SL who could help implement the LNC perfectly was farfetched," as PS3 said. In brief, PS1 described the current state of SLs as those who "do not have a degree in their subject, and do not even have enough experience". To him, experienced SLs were those who had knowledge base in the subject they had been teaching, and could implement the LNC without any complications. While what schools had were "teachers who had had problems in teaching the content matter they used to teach. The gaps in their teaching the old curriculum were filled after 15 years of repetitive teaching of the same content matter; they were not professionals, and could not help teachers in implementing the LNC". And as long as these "SLs feel it is shame to seek knowledge, public schools will not witness any proper implementation of the LNC".

Principals viewed the problems facing SLs as stemming from how they were assigned to their posts. "The very short training period that some SLs received and that was basically set for teachers, and the very few hours given for coordination do not allow the SL to perform tasks like teacher observation or evaluation of any teaching," as PS3 said. "Even when the maximum number of hours is assigned for coordination (that is, eight hours), then the number of teachers/classes to observe and work with becomes bigger, thus require more time," as PS2 said. This does not allow them to meet the expectations of their principals. Rather, they were obliged to set priorities under the prevailing circumstances. PS1's intention for change to take place made him "follow all the training possibilities because [he] liked to develop and be able to follow-up [his] teachers' work in implementing the LNC". This principal could not have sent any of the SLs at school to attend any of the training sessions had not he had "a direct relationship with people in the National Center for Educational Research and Development (NCERD) who could help him".

Public School Subject Leaders' Views on the Effect of the

External Context on their Performance as Curriculum Leaders

In this study, the researcher conducted two FGIs with SLs from both public and the PCSS *and* six individual interviews. Those SLs represented the different subject areas in their schools (See Table 39).

Table 39. Sampling subject leaders in the public and the private case study school.

School type	Focus group interviews			Individual interviews		
	Number	number of participants	Subject area	Number	Schooling cycle	Subject area
Public	1	3	English	2	Intermediate	English
Private	1	5	Math, Arabic and Sciences	2 1	Intermediate Secondary	Math and physics

There was a consensus among the interviewed SLs that the Ministry of Education should have addressed the existing problems (the surplus in the teaching cadre, dropping out, language of instruction, the unconditioned student enrollment in schools, etc.) and solved them before setting the LNC. They believed that for change to be successful, changes should have been witnessed at all levels: school set up, staff preparation and school's needs for human as well as material resources. SLs should have also been involved in all the changes in the content matter in the new textbooks, teaching methods and assessment measures. The unsuitable context for the implementation of big change made their job more difficult; and consequently, the ability to control work in their department.

The first source of difficulty, as the interviewed SLs consented, was that the implementation started before the LNC was made clear to all people involved. With respect to assessment of student achievement, not only was the GPA calculation and the number of hours per subject area

in the LOC (Lebanese Old Curriculum) not suitable, but confusing as well when a student is transferred from one school to another. As SL1 stated, “some schools adjusted the distribution of grades according to how they viewed it suitable. For example, they gave a higher coefficient for mathematics in Grade 6. And doing this meant unauthentic and unbalanced assessment of the other subject areas, namely languages”. Whereas “in the LNC, the redistribution of teaching hours per subject and the coefficient given for each subject became more balanced but at the expense of foreign language instruction,” as SL1 added (See Tables 7, page 19). Yet still the student could pass on the basis of the cumulative GPA without due consideration to the number of main subjects failed. And as SL2 said, “The new distribution of the teaching hours made it more difficult for the student to pass if s/he failed more than two subjects, but more probable that there would be higher rate of repeaters”. Repeaters are those who stay in the same grade level for two or more consecutive years.

With respect to foreign languages, the Ministry of Education reduced the number of hours of foreign language instruction and did not take into consideration public school students' language proficiency level before setting the content matter. “This made it difficult for SLs to impose on teachers the amount of content to be covered, knowing their students' backgrounds and the level of exposure to foreign languages,” as SL2 said. And as SL1, SL2 and SL3 agreed, “The content matter suits private school students who have been exposed to the different teaching approaches proposed by the LNC, and have been exposed to a different teaching environment, not to mention their socio-economic background,” as SL1 said.

With respect to the proposed teaching approaches, SL3 commented that, “Sponsors of the LNC are sponsors of private institutions: universities and schools; and reflected their backgrounds through the selection of content and teaching methods. Yet, when everything is new to public school teachers, nine days of training are not enough for them to be able to implement the LNC

properly, not even for degree holders". The novelty of content matter in the new textbooks, its length and students' weakness in languages drew material coverage to a minimum, as all the interviewed SLs consented. Without proper INSET, SLs would not be able to help teachers cover more material, as SL1, SL2 and SL4 expressed, especially because students' problems start from Grade 1 and end in Grade 12, and for sure would extrapolate to the university level," as SL1, and SL2 explained. "How can SLs make teachers follow the proposed methods for implementing the LNC if there is no hope in solving the problems of material size and students' weaknesses? [They] would leave teaching," as SL5 said. "How much is the ministry paying [SLs] after all? If they do not train [SLs] and do not pay [them] as much as [they] deserve, how can [they] work on developing [teachers]?" And "How can the Ministry of Education hold [a SL] accountable for student failure if they have not trained him/her?" SL4 inquired.

In brief, the "SLs who received training, received it as teachers and found that it was very short and inefficient," as SL5 said. There was not any follow-up from the ministry to detect the emerging problems. Meetings with representatives from the ministry were rare. "There was only one meeting held for Grades 9 and 12 just to talk about the possible question formats that would come in the mock test and that would prepare students for the official examinations," as SL3 said. "Even the inspectorate role was not efficient," as SL4 said, "They were playing the authoritarian role not the guidance and counseling role." And as SL5 said, "The guidance and counseling department was absent from the elementary school although the latter were in bad need for it".

Under the prevailing circumstances, the SL was performing his/her job as s/he traditionally did. SL1 viewed that SLs should not be held accountable for failures first "because of problems emerging from classifying schools as elementary and intermediate". The system of naming schools secondary, intermediate and elementary did not reflect what classes were in each (See Appendix C for definitions). A second reason was that "students were enrolled in public schools

only because they had the right to have a seat at school,” as he said. This led SL1, SL2 and SL3 to suggest that comprehensive schools were the best solution for this problem.

In comprehensive schools, “Teachers will be able to see the scope and sequence of the content matter more clearly. Even the assessment measures will be unified; consequently, accountability measures will be clearer and detection of teaching gaps will be easier,” as SL1 said. In comprehensive schools, “teachers in the elementary cycles can no more blame others for students’ low achievement because there will be one school structure and system of grading. Secondary schools can no more put all the blame on elementary schools especially when the principal is the same person in both,” as SL2 said.

The interviewed SLs considered that this was one major distinction between private and public schools. “Private schools have the student from the Kinder Garden to Grade 12, the thing that makes the school accountable for the student achievement. Consequently, they bring qualified teachers for the sake of giving good results, and at the same time hold the SL accountable for the work of his department,” as SL3 said. By transfer, “[SLs] in public schools are willing to accept this responsibility if [they] are treated the way private school teachers are,” as SL1 said. According to four interviewees, this would feedback into the difficulties SLs were facing while implementing the LNC for lacking qualified teachers.

Public School Subject Leaders’ views of their Performance

During The Implementation of the Lebanese National Curriculum

The interviewed public school SLs reflected on the effect of the external conditions on their performance within their departments, and outside them. They reflected on how their status

affected their image among their colleagues, and how any change in their status would lead to better relationships with students as well as parents.

Subject Leaders and Staff Development

According to one SL, “In private schools the SL is held accountable for the work of his/her department especially that s/he plays a big role in assigning new teachers, and assigning all teachers to classes. However, SLs do not play this role in public schools”. “It is said that public schools bring *qualified* teachers as part-timers. This is not true. Most of the time qualifications come last,” as SL3 said. SL2 explained that “The big percentage of part-time teachers (60% or more of the teaching cadre) in the Lebanese territory is not necessarily degree holders. Most of those teachers were imposed from without to cover a number of hours; there was not any reliable prerequisite test that they took on the basis of which they were assigned”. As a result, “SLs can do nothing when those teachers do whatever they like, even if they cut teaching without any reason knowing that no one can penalize them,” as SL4 said.

According to two of the interviewed SLs, part-time contracts are signed with BA holders, but “[everybody] knows how those graduates got their degrees”. SL4 explained that doctors at the Lebanese University used to pass students who failed a subject more than five times, and this happened for a period extending between the 1980s and late 1990s. For this, the interviewed SLs strongly believed that those teachers should have been selected on the basis of a long training that was assumed to be fruitful had it been given before setting the LNC. There had been some hope that the ministry would rehabilitate university graduates before assigning them to teach the LNC. “The ministry has been announcing that it will change its policy, open the Faculty of Education to provide sustained training. This stays ink on paper,” as SL1 summarized.

In brief, the interviewed SLs considered that the history was repeating itself. The Lebanese University is still giving the same courses by the same instructors, using the same old methods of teaching, and following the same evaluation criteria as before - giving only one test per year, as SL1, SL3 and SL4 expressed. "Students are still not obliged to attend classes; they are resorting to cheating just to pass. They are not evaluated properly and they come to schools [where SLs are] as part-timers who make structural mistakes in language usage the thing that an elementary student in a private school does not make," as SL4 said.

The questions that the interviewed SLs raised were, "how can these graduates implement the LNC properly if they were lacking most of the basics? How can a SL deal with them if they consider themselves as equal to him/her? How can such a graduate teach the LNC in an age where teaching becomes an art, while s/he could not grasp the content matter of his/her major; rather, used his/her memory for four years to regurgitate the instructor's notes?"

SL1, SL2, and SL3 believed that if they were assigned this job as a full-time job, they would act differently. First of all, they would provide in-service training to all their teachers. They believed that the SL should transmit his experience to teachers and follow-up through seminars and training sessions. The content of their training, as SL1 and SL2 expressed, would be proposing some research projects related to the content matter of the subjects they taught, proposing some teaching strategies, preparing AV aids, and creating extra activities. But they were unwilling to do it for their dissatisfaction with the whole prevailing situation.

SL1, SL2, SL3 and SL5 believed that for them to be accountable for training teachers, they should be given the role of appraising teachers. And based on that a decision will be taken as to whether to suspend the teacher, minimize the teacher's number of teaching hours, transfer him/her to a lower grade, change the hourly rate or suspend a pay raise. Otherwise, "teachers

would not care about it, and would not change,” as SL3 said. To do this, SL1 suggested that teachers should be classified into categories on a three-point scale rating of effectiveness with decimals where the lowest reflects the least performance. Those who would stay in the lowest category for two years would be terminated. To him, this measure would be “an incentive for good teachers to maximize their efforts, improve their performance, and consequently be promoted”.

In the prevailing educational situation, SLs agreed that the success of their relationship with teachers was built on mutual respect. “[They] never imposed [their] ideas. [They] tried to use [their] own skills to reach every single teacher; otherwise, [they themselves] would leave [their] job after having clashes with everybody,” as SL1 said and SL5 agreed. The charged atmosphere because of the above problems was brought forward by SLs to justify why they stood cross-handed and unable to perform their job to the level they aspired to. They also believed that the roles played by the Department of Guidance and Counseling could not be the alternative. As SL2, SL3 and SL4 expressed, unless they are assigned subject leadership as a full time job, and unless their roles are spotlighted and made clear to all people involved in implementing the LNC, they would not be able to coordinate with external agents of control or help students.

For this, within the number of hours assigned for coordination, they could only follow-up tests, plan the content matter coverage within the academic year, and advise teachers about what to focus on. With respect to tests, the SLs’ consensus was that they saw tests after they were corrected, and if the grades were good, [they] did not interfere. If grades were deteriorating, [they] tried to find out the reasons. Usually the reasons proved to be “either something wrong in teaching, or the structure of the test questions was difficult for the students to understand, or questions demanded some analysis to answer,” as three SLs summed up. To detect the real reason, SL4 “ talks with the students about the test before passing the grades”. For whichever

reason, “rarely was [the SL] able to take a decision like deleting, changing, or repeating a test,” as SL1 said, since everybody knew that ‘the content matter is long and does not allow the teachers to evaluate students as many times as they wish’, as SL3 summarized.

To them, it was useless to observe classes. One reason was that “if observations were not frequent, they would lead to nothing,” as SL4 said. Another reason was that “when teachers are imposed on the school, the SL can affect the teacher neither positively nor negatively,” as SL1 said. That is, it would be difficult for the SL to feel underestimated by a teacher. Yet, whenever their principals asked them, they sometimes observed classes to prepare themselves to answer the guides’ and counselors’ or the inspector’s questions. In other words, SLs had the notion that appraising teachers was under the controls of the inspectorate and the GCD.

Subject Leaders and Students

All the interviewed SLs expressed that students in public schools come from low-income families. “Parents are either illiterate; that is, they cannot support their children academically, or parents themselves have problems,” as SL1 said. “Children are living with one parent or suffering from parental problems that are inflicted upon them,” as SL5 said. For this, SL5 believed that “the only rare exceptional students are those whose parents transfer from private schools because they cannot afford their tuition fees anymore”. In all cases, all the interviewed SLs stressed on solving students’ academic problems independently from their parents for fear that parents would not respond as expected. SL2, SL4 and SL5 sent for the parents only when a child had both behavioral as well as academic problems that would cause a threat to teacher’s ability to control his/her class. For this, when SLs become full-timers, by virtue of the time they spend at school, it would then be possible for them to deal with problem students, and play the role of guides to them. Not only will they be able to solve academic problems, but behavioral problems as well, as

they all expressed. Yet to SL1 and SL5, it would be impossible to solve all problems without a specialist even if they were full time SLs because sometimes “problems emerge as a result of learning difficulties that neither the teacher nor the SL can help solve”.

With respect to the role of the SL toward students with SEN, all the interviewed SLs found themselves not responsible for them. Being assigned the job of subject leadership as a part-time job, SL1, SL2 and SL5 believed that the teacher herself/himself, not the SL is to deal with mixed ability groups and students with SEN. As SL1 and SL4 said, The teacher should report to the SL what the students’ problems are, in which skills they find difficulty, and what they need. According to them if the teacher could not propose a solution “the SL *might* suggest some remedial work to upgrade students’ achievement”. SL1 proposed that he and the teacher would sit together to prepare remedial work which would basically be on grammar. While SL2 suggested that the remedial material should take the form of a supplementary material that the SL “would follow-up to find out if the student’s problem were solved”. On the other hand, SL5 expressed that the SL and the teacher can show their ‘love’ to the student so that s/he would have the courage to tell about his/her own problems, thus make it easier for the SL to propose a solution.

There was a consensus among SLs that even if they were aware of whom the students with SEN were, they would not work with those students unless SLs were assigned a full-time job. “Even then, their work will be useless if it were not followed-up by someone from the ministry of education,” as SL2 said. For this, SL1 and SL5 suggested that inspectors, guides and counselors be trained to explain to SLs as well as to teachers what it meant to deal with students with SEN. And as SL2 said, “On the long run, after being provided with proper training, and after having had some experience in this area, those students with SEN would become the “means to establishing the right communication channels with parents”. Yet, till now unfortunately, “these parents are last to come to school”.

Subject Leaders and Parents

Public schools usually invite parents to the PTA twice a year: once before the midyear tests, and another time before the finals. "Parents that came were those who [SLs] did not need to come," as all the interviewed SLs agreed. Parents whose children were enrolled in public schools did not care but about grades, and "As long as the child's grades are passing, [one] never sees parents," as SL4 said. On the first hand, "if parents were invited by the principal, they would not show up; how could anybody expect them to respond to a SL?" as SL1 inquired. He explained that they came only if their child were threatened of suspension which meant to them that there was a behavioral problem which might make him stay home. "Cheating to parents was a means to passing rather than something the child was to be reprimanded for," as SL3 said.

Taking into consideration all the factors that would affect students' achievement level in public schools, the interviewed SLs consented that parents would become part of the educational process only after SLs become full-timers and a number of interdependent conditions satisfied. According to SL1, "involving parents now is like involving 'too many cooks' that would spoil the educational process". While according to SL3 "[SLs] cannot handle parents' demands if the latter do not know how to communicate with the school. The Ministry of Education promised to broadcast TV programs for parents on how the LNC is best implemented. Till now they have not fulfilled their promises: how can [SLs]?" And according to SL2, "If parents are to be involved, it is not SLs who are to rehabilitate parents. It is the Ministry of Education who is to rehabilitate SLs and teachers for both of them to cope with the demands of the LNC, the thing that was ignored from the beginning".

Public School Subject Leaders' Views of Conditions for Better Implementation Process

The interviewed SLs found that some necessary measures should be taken to solve all the problems before attempting to involve parents. To them the solution should not be partial simply

because missing one of the measures would lead to fewer chances for proper implementation of the LNC. As Table 40 indicates, the first and most important measure for SLs was that they become full-timers and be given more privileges. To them, teacher training, entrance tests, student portfolios and teacher selection were all measures that would facilitate their work within school. It is then that inter-school communication would lead to better diagnosis of SEN and school facilities would make addressing their needs easier.

With respect to student enrollment, SL1 stated that “everybody knows how uncontrolled and unreliable the official examinations are”. SL3 added that school entrance exams were important for the sake of having a profile of student previous achievement, and detecting his/her weaknesses from the beginning. To him, portfolios were important “especially because *teachers* and *parents* were not cooperating”. Some parents even believed that “[the SL or the teacher] can beat the student to solve his/her problem”. SL5 considered inter-school seminars as a solution to this problem. He considered that the content of these seminars “may be focused on how to raise teachers’ and students’ motivation level, how parents can create the good atmosphere conducive to good study habits at home, and how parents can control themselves so that they do not inflict their social problems on their children”.

What was mentioned only by one of the individual interviewee, SL4, was that the Ministry of Education should set criteria, similar to those in private schools, for promoting students from one grade to another. Otherwise, all students who reach Grade 12, carrying weaknesses in two subject areas, would insist on continuing in the academic stream, would not go for TVE and will be automatically accepted in the Lebanese University (the government public university). Promotion criteria should be the first step toward establishing clearer link between TVE and academics and to alleviate students’ sense of inferiority stemming from everyone’s belief that “going for TVE is a taboo”.

Table 40. Public school subject leaders' proposed solution to their status

SLs should be full-timers to be able to perform all the jobs assigned to them (consensus).
SLs should be given the suitable training so that there will be an atmosphere of trust between them and the inspectorate (consensus).
Schools should set entrance exams for students from the different public schools even if they pass the official examinations (SL1, SL2, SL4 and SL5).
The different public schools (elementary, intermediate and secondary) should create student portfolios (a record of achievement compiled and passed on from one school to another) for the sake of following up students in general and students with SEN in particular (SL1, SL3 and SL5).
SLs should be given the privilege of selecting teachers who are qualified and are devoted and committed to their job (SL1, SL3 and SL5).
There should be sustained communication between the different schools at the level of carrying meetings and seminars (SL1 and SL5).
The ministry of education should strengthen the Faculty of Education and make it play a bigger role at least in training principals to be more cooperative with SLs and teachers to be able to implement the LNC (SL2 and SL3).
The inspectorate should work on making inspectors change their image from detectors of gaps and inflictors of punishment to catalysts for gap detection and solution provision (SL1 and SL5).
Schools should be supplied with the supplementary material to textbooks, namely the AV aids, computers, rich libraries and laboratories (SL3 and SL5).

The situation was explained more clearly by the SLs that the researcher interviewed in the PCSS.

This was because all of them were public secondary school teachers who had got long experiences. They had experience in both schools, thus could reflect the real situation. The SL of the Arabic department summarized the situation as follows:

“[We] live in a country where the last word and the decision is made by the people on the top of the hierarchy, and schools are no exception. [We] are an ‘underdeveloped’ nation, and jumping over this fact is wrong. People like authority, and the weak always respect the strong and fear him. For example, a doctor in education can not make people stand for him, while the same people stand for an army officer because he represents authority although s/he has a high school degree only. That is, the knowledge that an educated person has does not represent authority, and people are not looking for knowledge; people are looking for how they can control each other. The strong feels happy and satisfied when s/he practices his/her power over those who are weaker and so on so forth. This creates a chain of authorities. By transfer, the principal is above the SL in authority although not necessarily having the same knowledge. So, SLs do not try to impose their philosophies on their heads. They only advise if they are given the chance. And if principals do not respond, it will be their responsibility. [SLs] have not reached a stage when they can say, ‘if this does not happen, [we] are not responsible’. The principal might find the solution in assigning another SL. In principle, *the SL can not stand up to his views in public schools, but to a certain extent in private schools*”.

Private Case Study School Subject Leaders and Their External Context

In the Lebanese context, private schools are self-satisfied independent educational institutions, though, by law, the inspectorate has the right to control their work. The inspectorate with the very few inspectors compared to the number of schools in the Lebanese territory, prefer to limit their job to inspecting public schools only. A main reason is that public schools are supported financially by the ministry. And since private schools have not had any experience with the inspectorate since the first ignition of the Lebanese civil war, they regard the relationship between them and the inspectorate, and even the GCD non-existing. They also consider the school's success and name totally tied to the internal conditions of the school itself.

Principals' Views of Subject Leaders in the Private Case Study School

Similarly to most if not all private schools, the accountability system is clearly delineated in the PCSS. The principal is accountable for the school success, two indicators of which are the success rate in the official examinations and the stable or even rising rate of student enrollment. Diary data indicate that the school principal holds SLs, each in his/her respective department, accountable for students' success. To ensure success, SLs are expected to report weekly and monthly test results to the principal, justify flaws if they existed, and make proper decisions to fill gaps. Students who have learning or behavioral problems are considered by the principal the responsibility of the SLs who are given the privilege of taking whatever measures they find suitable to upgrade those students' achievement level. Department meetings, scheduled parents' meetings and conferencing, and the weekly hour assigned for parents conferencing in each subject area are occasions for SLs to discuss issues of failure and remediation with teachers

and/or parents. It is the SLs' role to decide *how much, when* and *for what* to hold teachers and parents accountable for.

As such, nobody is absent from the educational situation. And generally speaking, the more the work is running smoothly without any problems, the fewer the occasions are for SLs to report their department work to the principal and vice versa. In other words, the more efforts SLs make, and the more management skills they show, the less likely they will have problems with the principal and the more likely to get whatever resources they seek for their departments.

The interviewed SLs viewed that it is the SL himself/herself that makes the big difference. While the sciences SLs viewed scope and sequence as the keys to success; the Arabic SL viewed the department vision and culture the keys to success. In general, all of them considered the internal conditions, laboratories and material resources, as facilitators to teachers' work rather than their first priority.

Subject Leaders' and the Internal Conditions Affecting their

Performance in the Private Case Study School

Teaching languages is an art; and the SL of the Arabic department defined his role in an artistic manner. He compared the SL to a grindstone, the potential and qualified teacher to steel, and the failing teacher to wood. He said, "a grindstone grinds steel. The SL has to have steel to grind it and make it sharp. To give him wood, and say 'you are an educated and experienced SL and you can make this teacher an excellent teacher,' he will say, 'Yes! Yet how can I transform wood to a sharp knife by my grindstone?' a grindstone does not cut anything, but it can make anything it grinds cut".

A SL can help a teacher excel, but in condition that s/he has the potential. Yet if a teacher is assigned because of a certain push, or for any interplay between political intentions and education, what can a SL do? The SL should be given the privilege of choosing teachers, substituting teachers, assigning the grade levels to teachers, the number of hours, and the number of classes, or else the SL should not be held responsible for all his work.

To the Arabic SL, subject leadership is a process of controlling and directing the teaching of a subject area. The material is not tough or static; the grade level, the age group and students' comprehension levels are variables that the SL is to watch out. In this sense, the role of the SL is a "supervisory role". According to the mathematics and science SLs, unlike language teaching, the scope and sequence should be kept in mind. It would be easier for them to control teachers' work. As SL2 said, "Although in mathematics some concepts are interwoven, It is easier for the teacher and the SL to detect students' problems than in languages".

The language SL stressed the idea that he should supervise the teachers' approach to passing on the material to students, its suitability not only to students' age, individual differences, interests and abilities, but to their readiness as well. He should also supervise the suitability of the material in terms of its variety, comprehensiveness, richness, and coverage of specific language structures (grammar and rhetoric). All of these should be "in the mind of the SL so that he knows whether or not they are being taken care of and achieved by teachers". In addition, the SL should advise, train, and at times replace the teacher in teaching a certain lesson to induce whether or not students have acquired a certain fact or structure. To him, the SL is "the higher sun who can see everything from above. The one who is down the valley cannot see but what is there, while who is on top can see what is on top and what is down to see and create the link between the lowest and highest grade-levels". Yet, to him, a SL will not succeed in his job unless he has a general educational vision, and has his own philosophy that might not meet all the time with others' philosophies at all levels.

The vision should be comprehensive and should be clarified to all teachers. The SL should convince teachers about the totality of his/her vision, rather than impose it on them. In other words, s/he should be able to transfer his/her vision into observable means so that the teachers will be involved in implementing it.

According to the other SLs, the situation was different in sciences. "The moment the school or the SL decides to adopt a certain series of textbooks, the scope and sequence are there, and the teacher does not have to or maybe cannot violate it," as one SL said. All that the teacher can do is "change the order of whole themes rather than lessons within the one theme," as another said. A consensus among the sciences SLs was that the whole responsibility rests on the shoulders of the SL and teachers. But when "facilities (laboratories, resources, and AV aids) are available, the teacher finds it easier to address students with different learning styles [auditory as opposed to visual]". As a result, these SLs found their role limited to scheduling, and supervising tests with their colleagues in the department. They were not even willing to replace a teacher because the number of coordination hours does not give enough room for this, as two expressed.

Although all the interviewed SLs agreed that controlling tests should be their first priority, the Arabic SL considered that controlling teacher preparation a very essential prerequisite. Preparation to him was an indication of how much the teacher could reflect the philosophy of the department in a way that would make students active learners. It was through preparation that he would take further measures like training teachers and providing a model to them. These measures might lead the SL to take the decision of "rotating teachers," as he said.

This was not the case according to the sciences SLs. According to them, preparation was only a means to detecting how much the scope and sequence were taken care of against the department yearly plan. Controlling tests was more important than seeing the preparation. "Analyzing test results is even more time consuming and maybe more important than setting the test," as the math SL said. Yet, since the SLs did not have time to do it, nor did they have time to observe classes,

they preferred that teachers re-teach difficult parts of a test, and give students another chance in a quiz or as part of a new test, as they all agreed to be the solution for high failure rate in a specific test, if it happened. When it came to controlling tests, the Arabic SL found it a rather difficult job. He expressed that the SL

Should not be intrigued by the test format, should not look at test questions superficially, or set rigid criteria for test formats. To solve this riddle, "a discussion between the SL and the teacher should take place. If the latter can justify the test, the SL should accept it.

One more difficulty might emerge when the same grade level is taught by three different teachers, each teaching one section. In this sense, there was a consensus that when tests are written, the SL has to be careful about unifying the test among the different sections where mixed ability groups are. The Arabic SL found it more difficult to take into consideration "the different tastes and abilities as viewed by three teachers; consequently, relating the content and the objectives of three different sets of tests to make one".

Because controlling tests was a time consuming job, and because the interviewed SLs were part-timers, and because they cared about the quality and success, all the interviewed SLs were spending less time with the higher grades they coordinated in favor of giving more time to teachers in lower grades. They consented that the higher the grade was, the more proficient teachers were selected to teach those grades. And the lower the grade was, the more effort from the SL was needed to control the work. Implied from this was that the SLs were authorized to rotate teachers according to how they viewed best for student success. In general, all the interviewed SLs agreed that the time they spent at school was enough only to carry department meetings and control tests.

Since the SL of the Arabic department coordinated the work of all teachers in the whole school, he found himself in a situation similar to the other SLs. He said, "it might be even more difficult

because I deal with arts". For this, he spent an average of three hours per day at school, "one paid and two as volunteer". This was because "[he] hated failure, and was willing to give for free because of the economic situation," as he said, even the SLs of math and sciences spend their free time in the PCSS although they were full-timers in public schools.

The extra time they spent at school was not enough for them to be involved in solving the problems of weak students, as they agreed. But they proposed solutions because they thought that "weak students are not interested in working, and their parents cannot assist them along with the school. Their parents think that education is like driving (a mechanical skill) that is the responsibility of the school," as SL3 said. "The parents consider that education is the role of the school solely," as SL1 said. For this, to solve this problem, the SLs believed that remedial work was a necessity. They agreed that if the school were to have 100% success rate excluding those who have biological and psychological problems, "there should be specialists at school who are professionals at setting remedial work".

There was a consensus among the interviewed SLs that the way remedial work could be given was as follows: one teacher should be assigned as an assistant for each subject in each cycle. The nature of her work would be limited to correction of tests and homework. This assistant would feel comfortable to assist teachers in their preparation of materials and provide remedial work including extra readings and homework. Assistants would help students in the areas of weakness and focus on skills. SL2 raised the question whether or not those *specialists* would accept being labeled as *assistants* in a culture where an assistant was considered as belonging to the minority group. This is especially that teachers in private schools are degree holders only, while assistants are to-be-degree holders. For this, the interviewed SLs viewed that remedial work could not be implemented perfectly in schools, and as the Arabic SL said, "nor is solving problems of weak students through building a very good relationship with them".

Subject Leaders' Views of Their Performance During the Implementation Process

Diary data indicate that SLs in the PCSS viewed that the LNC did not bring big changes to them. All private schools that could make good names shared some common characteristics. These schools have always been selecting textbooks the content of which is more difficult than that of public schools textbooks. Teachers have always been degree holders whose assignment to the different schooling grades had been related to their experience. Most of the teachers are graduates of the private universities that worked on setting the LNC and always attend workshops in those universities as part of the school teacher-development programs – one of the terms of their contracts.

For this, the interviewed SLs considered that the LNC did not bring changes in as much as it created a concern for private schools to draw the comparison between their textbooks and the government textbooks at the level of objectives and competencies. They had to make sure that the objectives and competencies to be covered in each subject area in each grade level in the LNC match with those in the textbooks they adopted. In addition, they had to be given and reinforced especially in grades 9 and 12 so that the students would not have problems in the official examinations. In conclusion, the interviewed SLs, considering the conditions of assigning teachers and assigning them as part-timers, held themselves accountable for controlling teachers' work rather than teacher development.

Subject Leaders and Students and Parents

Students do like to have a good relationship with SLs, yet "it is very risky," as SL3 said. The other SLs explained that they should not be close to students to the extent that affects the image of the teacher negatively. The Arabic SL corrected saying that "the SL must be in a somehow

shaded place between darkness and light. That is, neither in complete darkness where s/he cannot be seen, nor in bright light where s/he dominates the teacher or puts her behind". After all, they agreed that the situation and the nature of communication between the teacher and students would determine the extent to which the SL should draw closer to students. In all cases, the SL "should be intelligent, sociable, and sensitive when showing students that the teacher is a decision maker, a very important person, and that the SL is there to hold discussions with and give opinion to him/her rather than teach him/her," as the Arabic SL said and the Mathematics SL agreed.

The interviewed SLs expressed a preference for avoiding not only any direct intervention between the teacher and students, but direct contact with parents as well. To avoid the misconception that "teachers are there to pick on students," SL2 said, "SLs should carry meetings between the school administration and parents to clarify that the teacher is selected as an educator carrying a message, and would never attack anybody". When made clear to the parents, "they will tell their children to solve their problems with the teacher directly," as SL3 completed. Even if parents discuss their children's problems with teachers, the student will be away from the scene, and the problem will be solved by the administration, the teachers and parents. "The SL is the judge who is the final resort after a number of failing trials," as the Arabic SL said. And when involved, s/he would be coordinating the subject with the administration "leaving the class as a place for peace, and moving the battle to outside the camps," as he described. To him "a good 'commander' moves the battle outside his arena to save the innocent souls from witnessing any clashes whatsoever". After all, the SL "cannot be involved in students' problems if s/he has only six hours for coordination," as the other SLs agreed.

In general, the easiest way to avoid most of the problems that might emerge, the SLs believed that they should be "given the authority to appraise teachers". Implied was the concept of "reward and punishment". Reward because "a human is spirit and matter. The financial side is very important,

and if a person is not rewarded, s/he will slacken. And a person who is not punished will be a negative source of disruption and disturbance,” as the science SL said. “Reward and punishment are means to shaping the educational process that helps educationists use the breaks when sliding down, and pulling when moving up,” as the Arabic SL said. One SL copied Ghandi’s saying: “If hungry, one sees God in the picture of a loaf of bread”. He explained that “a hungry person cannot put forward educational excellence”. When SLs are given the privilege of appraising teachers and rewarding them, both of them will be satisfied and there will be no need for guidance and counseling, as two SLs expressed because a satisfied teacher would be more committed to his/her job.

Comparison between Subject Leaders in Public Schools and the Private Case Study School

To conclude, part-time SLs, in both, the public and the PCSS, shared almost the same experiences in terms of their quota. Both faced difficulties, and both viewed that within time limitations they could not perform all the tasks they perceived theirs. They believed that controlling tests was their first priority over any other tasks. Observations to them would not serve any purpose if they were not twinned with teacher performance appraisal, and a full-time contract. The difference between the two groups was that grade coefficient per subject area and the division of schools led to problems that SLs in public schools were facing, problems that did not exist in the PCSS. Another difference is the nature of teacher assignment and its reflection on quality of teaching. A third difference was that the material and human resources essential for a successful implementation process were more abundant in the PCSS. These differences made staff development more difficult in public schools than in the PCSS.

Interestingly enough, when it came to their practices, each group showed a different perception of their own role. In public schools, SLs viewed principals and external contexts affecting their

performance. While in the PCSS, SLs focused on the internal context, shaped by principals first and SLs second, as a decisive factor in successful attempts at change. The amazing truth is that SLs who were part-time contractors in the PCSS were full-timers in public schools. Yet, the overlap of roles did not rule out the fact that they could belong to the two schools showing two different practices without letting one interfere with the other. This brings forward a number of questions about how such notions overlap without SLs being able to cause effective change in their original schools and without the ministry's recognizing them.

This chapter presented an overview of subject leadership as a role model as viewed by public school administrations as well as by subject leaders themselves in the public and the PCSS. The effects of the problems they faced and the restrictions to the roles they performed will be further elaborated through the research findings that were yielded through the different research tools used with the different participants in the other schooling cycles. In chapter 6, findings gained from teachers, parents and students in the public elementary schools are focused on the different participants' views about internal contexts of SLs' performance. It shows how the gaps that existed in the first two cycles in the public elementary schools were extended to affect public schools' achievement in the intermediate cycle (Grades 7 – 9). While, on the other hand, the absence of real gaps in the PCSS led to better achievement and more cohesive educational environment. Chapter 7 presents the views of public and private intermediate and secondary teachers' views about subject leadership. Parents' views and PCSS students' views were also explored for triangulation and to find out where findings overlap across the different participants as well as the different schools.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERNAL PROCESSES OF SUBJECT LEADERS IN PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Knowing SLs' conditions of assignment to the different schools (Chapter 2, page 35 and Appendixes B and C) and the external conditions affecting their performance in general, this chapter presents an overview of the situation in public elementary schools in the absence of subject leadership as a role model. It presents an account of what teachers expected to be roles that SLs should perform for the sake of enhanced implementation of the LNC in general, and improved department work in particular. That is, the schemata teachers had about the important tasks SLs should perform for the sake of proper implementation of the LNC, and indirectly shed light on problems that might emerge because of the lack of this post in their schools. On the other hand, it spotlights the importance given to this role by teachers and parents in the PCSS for the sake of developing students' abilities and skills to be more prepared for independent learning in the intermediate and secondary cycles. By drawing the comparison between findings gained from the different participants, the researcher could spotlight the strengths of SLs in improving school achievement and school effectiveness.

As indicated in Appendix A, both public elementary schools (Cycles 1 and 2 in the LNC) and intermediate schools (Cycles 1, 2, and 3 in the LNC) are considered as Elementary in terms of teacher assignment, status and salary. By law, subject leadership in both schools is not a recognized post. Therefore, if it happens, it is because the teaching cadre within the school is bigger than that needed to cover the teaching hours for the number of classes opened. It is then the principal's decision as to which teacher will complete his/her teaching quota with some coordination hours, of course not exceeding the six hours.

As Table 41 indicates, three FGIs were conducted in public Elementary schools, one in elementary and two in intermediate schools. In addition, five FGIs were conducted in the PCSS, two in the elementary cycles and three in the intermediate cycles. Moreover, one FGI was conducted with students in the intermediate cycle and three with parents in the elementary cycles. In this chapter, only the data collected from the elementary public schools and the elementary cycles in the PCSS are presented, while data collected from the public intermediate schools and the intermediate cycle in the PCSS will be presented in Chapter 7. The researcher did not address parents of children in the elementary school because they lacked the notion about what subject leadership entailed.

Table 41. Sampling and research tools used to collect data from teachers, parents and students in the elementary schools

Type of school	participant	FGI	Individual Interview	Survey questionnaire	Diary data	Observations
public	Teachers	1 elem. 2 int.	5 int.			
private	Teachers	2 Eng. elem 2 Eng. int. 1 other int.	3			
private	Students	1 int.				10 classes
private	parents	3 elem.		197	1	

Elem. = elementary; int. = intermediate; Eng. Elem. = English Department in the elementary school

It is important to note that in the public elementary school only one teacher had got a BA; only two teachers were graduates of a TTI, while the others were part-timers who were neither degree holders nor graduates of TTIs. The conditions of assignment of the latter group were those of teachers assigned during the civil war to cover for lack of teachers. It was obvious that their language proficiency was below average. On the other hand, all the teachers in the PCSS were BA or TD holders except one whose certified courses were equivalent to a BA degree. All of these had attended the minimum of three certified workshops, some more than ten, outside their school. All the FGI had five participants except for that conducted with parents of the reputation group that had seven.

In the PCSS, the sample was bigger than that in the public school because SLs were assigned to all subject areas. In addition, the researcher assumed that the bigger sample would help her gain enough data to project SLs' performance clearly, and the sample diversity would make triangulation more feasible. In this school, two FGIs and three individual interviews were conducted with teachers to spotlight areas of strengths and weaknesses of SLs and, consequently, the extent to which the department succeeds in implementing the LNC. In addition, three FGIs were conducted with parents: two with parents of good achievers, and one with the reputation group. Moreover, a survey questionnaire was passed to 197 parents of students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 in the same school to (a) examine parents' awareness of the roles played by the SL of the English Department and (b) triangulate data yielded through the interviews with the reputation group and data yielded through FGIs with teachers in the English Department.

Focus group interviews yielded more ideas than individual interviews. The group dynamics during the FGIs encouraged all teachers to be more open and more actively involved in the discussions thus providing all possible responses. This led to better insights into how subject leadership was viewed by groups of teachers. Yet, individual interviews provided the researcher with some specific examples that enriched the study and validated findings gained through FGIs.

What Public Elementary Teachers Expect of Subject Leaders

Lacking real experience with SLs and at the same time relating to their new experience gained through implementing the LNC, the interviewees in the public elementary school reflected what subject leadership meant to them. Findings yielded through the FGI indicated that a SL's presence was important to perform a number of tasks summarized in Table 42. The teachers considered department meetings as very important, during which the SL should review the

program with teachers for two main reasons. The first was to avoid falling into the traps of explaining what students had already taken before; the second was to avoid taking for granted that some material had been taught and consequently reviewing it quickly instead of explaining it,” as the first teacher (henceforth T1) expressed. As T3 explained, “ The programs are very long, and there is no real coordination. There are nine units in the book, and I have covered only six. Had there been a SL, the teacher of the higher grade would have known exactly where the previous teacher reached, and would continue from there”.

Table 42. Elementary School teachers’ views about Subject leader’s focal roles

draw a whole-year program from the beginning of the year
<p>The SL should carry meetings at the beginning of the year to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organize the content matter and specify the objectives. - draw a focus on the most important content matter. - take a decision about what content matter to postpone till the end of the year to be explained if time allows, and - explain to teachers why some lessons are secondary in importance, how to deal with them, and how to integrate them into the syllabus.

The five FGI teachers believed that in the process of performing the above tasks, a SL should be knowledgeable about the material required in each grade level and across all grades [scope and sequence]. As T3 said, “Without a SL, no one can provide a link between the different grade levels; no one can ensure that what is to be given will be given, and no one will be able to fill the gap”. As T4 said, “The SL should also focus more on practice than theory”. The teachers’ first consensus was that meetings were the stepping stone to other tasks that should be given at least five hours of coordination to solve a number of existing problems that would impede the implementation of the LNC (See Table 43). “The SL should be there to evaluate teachers’ work, pinpoint pitfalls of the current academic year and focus on the means to avoiding them before starting another year,” as T1 said. As table 43 indicates, teachers expected from the SL to be able to control department work and enable teachers to address all students’ needs. The interviewees showed awareness of the need for SLs to perform not only internal practical tasks within, but external tasks to their departments as well; that is, to orient

teaching, control testing, train teachers and link the department to the administration and parents.

Table 43. Subject leaders' roles that would solve the existing gaps in public elementary schools

Controlling tests and quizzes
Proposing some teaching approaches and activities for teachers to reach students with varying learning abilities
Trying to help teachers solve the problem of language weaknesses at school
Providing in-service training and presenting a model to teachers
Reporting students' and teachers' needs to the administration
Carrying meetings with parents

Subject Leaders' External Communications Sought by Public Elementary Teachers

In addition to their work within the confines of their departments, SLs were expected to be able to build relationships with parents and the ministry. As three teachers expressed, without the SL's controlling the department work, providing INSET and providing the link with the school administration and parents, they will keep living the frustrating experience at school. For this the teachers consented that the SL should not be a teacher from the same school. To them, if a SL were present, "his/her presence might help in reporting the real situation to the Ministry of Education, the thing that might in turn help the ministry in the revision of the LNC and re-planning for improvement," as T3 said. If the SL were given this role, "though he does not have the magician's stick," as T5 said, "s/he would focus on aspects that the ministry had planned (See Table 44) but could not do for budgeting purposes". One teacher related the SL's role to material writing; another to changing the school environment; a third to seeking the parents' help; and a fourth to negotiating teacher autonomy in classroom. To them, all of these would help to solve the problem of language of instruction and students' weaknesses. In other words, they sought more chances for practitioners to be involved in the reviewing process of the LNC. The interviewed teachers believed that successful implementation of the LNC involved more than performing these tasks. As T1 stated, "What [teachers] are seeking cannot be observed without the ministry's interference and the government's support".

Table 44. Suggestions to be proposed by subject leaders in the evaluation of the LNC

changing the content matter that is written for native speakers
Seeking enough room of freedom for the teacher to teach the way s/he finds suitable; that is, adjust the material to her students' needs regardless of how it is suggested in the books
changing the school environment that is affecting teachers psychologically
Communicating with parents and convincing them about the importance of foreign languages and engagement in foreign language instruction
seeking more training for teachers
dropping the number of students from 37 to 25 in each class

Subject Leaders' External Sources of Support Viewed by Public Elementary Teachers

Of the five interviewed teachers, only T2 considered the training she received as very good. T2 learned a lot from trainers because the length of the content matter was not a problem. Rather, the nature of the material and the children's age were to be taken into consideration and that required a lot of effort. "[The teacher] was lucky to have trainers who focused on varying the teaching approach and on using a lot of AV aids," as she said. While the other teachers described the training they received as theoretical, inefficient and disorganized.

A consensus was on the need for training both SLs and teachers. "Both need training. A trained SL will find it difficult to reach untrained teachers. And an untrained SL will not understand or be able to assess teachers' needs," as T1 said. And since students in public schools suffer from socio-economic and academic problems, for SLs to be able to perform all the above tasks. "they should be assigned a full-time job, and should be accompanied by specialists to solve problems of students with learning difficulties," as T4 said. T2 found that "it would be great if the SL is at the same time a psychoanalyst". The interviewees concluded that the Ministry of Education should provide better plans for training; and the NCERD should train teachers differently than SLs, each according to the nature of the roles they perform. According to them, this would compensate in a situation when the principal is not qualified, can not propose solutions, is not cooperative in times of stress, and can not help, as T2, T3, and T4 expressed. Implied from what they said was that whether or not the SL was

efficient, s/he would be the one to take action with respect to teachers' needs. They did not even mention any need for training principals.

To these teachers, guides from the ministry were also not the good solution. To them, the guide that visited their school had no idea about what was involved in subject leadership, at least in the sense they themselves perceived it. For this, they believed that if a guide were to substitute for SLs, s/he should be qualified and have certain personality traits that would enable him/her to solve the problems teachers were facing. In this sense, the guides that visited the school were qualified but not well trained to reflect their qualifications in practical terms. For this, teachers could not blame them since the school did not have any job description that would set criteria based on which teachers and guides would communicate, as T1 and T4 expressed. To them if a guide were to be the only visitor who would follow-up the implementation process of the LNC, his/her visits should be more frequent. And if s/he should observe classes, s/he should take notes only without interference during the session. A later stage would be the discussion of the notes and the debate about who was right and who was wrong.

Whoever the observer was, a SL or a guide, teachers insisted that the observer can become a participant-observer only when s/he writes the lesson plan with the teacher, and both agree on what parts the SL or guide will do in class, as all agreed. Otherwise, they would be destroying the teacher's image in front of students. In fact, the very few contacts between teachers and guides left teachers frustrated and feeling deprived of someone who would be their only opportunity and means to seeking equipment and AV aids for school, and who will be the instant supervisor of their tests and quizzes, as T1, T2 and T3 expressed. Implied from this was that teachers viewed the SL, rather than the principal, as their link with the Ministry of Education. For this they claimed that the Ministry of Education should either ensure that SLs be trained to perform the expected roles or guides and counselors be the external substitutes whose roles should be made clearer to all and performed more frequently.

Based on their experience with guides who had visited the school only twice during the academic year 2000-2001 and who sat with each teacher only a half-hour, teachers were attempting to solve their problems by forming subject committees. Their description of subject committees indicated that they were similar to subject departments in form, but without a SL. The teachers of the one subject area were the committee members headed by Grade 6 teacher (the highest grade at school). These committees met whenever possible, mainly during recesses and free hours to exchange conversations about what happened in their classrooms and to seek one another's opinion. The situation in the PCSS where SLs were available was different.

Subject Leaders' Roles as Viewed by the Private Case Study Elementary School

The condition in the PCSS is different from that in public schools. there are SLs in all subject departments. Evidence from two FGIs and three individual interviews indicated how teachers perceived successful subject leadership and successful implementation of the LNC. Based on comparing their past experiences in different schools with their experiences in the PCSS, they explained what roles SLs can perform for the sake of school improvement.

Subject Leaders' Flaws as Viewed by Elementary Teachers in the Private Case Study School

From their past experiences, teachers in the two FGIs provided detailed accounts some of which were essential to explain what a frustrating behavior of a SL meant to them. These teachers, each with reference to her own experience, reached the consensus that there were certain tasks they should not assume as the subject leader's. All agreed that the SL should be there to perform a number of roles without being autocratic or underestimating teachers' abilities. Table 45 is a summary of the teachers' views about ineffective behaviors of SLs and the roles that they should and should not play.

Table 45. Elementary teachers' views about ineffective and effective behaviors of Subject Leaders

Subject leaders' ineffective behaviors
Imposing textbooks without considering their applicability; suggesting tasks without considering students' interest level; and discouraging debates with teachers (T1).
Preparing detailed lesson plans; setting rigid schedules and strict deadlines for material coverage; and disregarding students' abilities (T2).
The SL was not strong enough to push hard for any change she felt needed; did not know how to make change or push people to do it; and encouraged memorization at the expense of self-expression (T3).
The SL did not know her teachers' abilities and where to fit them in (T4).
Tasks the subject leader should not do
Do the big bulk of the work
Prepare all the lesson plans for teachers
Keep the teacher where she is without appreciating her efforts
Maximize memory work instead of hitting on students' abilities and potential to develop
Consider an active class as a chaotic class; rather, consider any acceptable movement observed in class as a good sign of active learning
Criticize the teacher's work after observations
Tasks that the subject leader should do
Consult with and give advice to teachers
Settle all sorts of disagreement for the teachers to go to class relaxed
Trust and motivate students
Discuss tests with each individual teacher: the type of questions, the comprehensiveness of the test, suggest additions, or deletions, etc.
Avoid using jargon or technical language that teachers do not understand; rather, translate them into practical examples
Help teachers visualize how the theories the SL adopts can be translated into practice
Make teachers feel there are no barriers between them, and that she is not a different person
Build a model relationship with teachers, so that they transfer it to a similar relationship with their students

In their current situation, the 10 interviewed teachers' satisfaction resulted from their SL always taking into consideration the fact that "each year the expected achievement level of students is surprisingly changing to the lower in all subject areas," as T5 said, "and has been adapting to this fact," as T7 said. For this, "as long as expectations are down to earth, and as long as teachers as well as SLs do not expect the same achievement from students all the time, they will be on the right track," as T3 said. As T1 and T2 suggested, students should be the starting point, rather than the degrees or experience of the teacher or the SL. There was a consensus among the 10 teachers that the department work and the resulting 97.3 % success rate was because of the environment the SL could create. The teachers interviewed individually and within groups believed that the collaborative department culture that their SL created would facilitate and speed up any change process and would make teachers accept

change willingly”. As T5 and T8 expressed, “Her practices were enough for the department to be successful, and the effects were beyond the realm of the department”.

Subject Leaders’ Successful Practices in the English Department

After two years of experience with their current SL, the interviewed teachers believed that what distinguished their SL from other SLs were her social, educational and practical skills. As Table 46 indicates, the SL of the English Department could create an atmosphere of change and improvement at many levels: teaching practices, school achievement, teacher development, and parental involvement. She could reflect the good image of the department to other departments, the school administration and parents. All of this made the teachers feel that there were no barriers between them and the SL. consequently, they showed interest in seeing the SL perform some other roles they believed would lead to a better image of the department.

And as Table 47 indicates, demands of the teachers in the English department were focused on making clearer the relationship between the SL and students on one hand and parents on the other. They considered demands like using incentives and giving bonus grades something that the SL could do and would surely get the support from the administration to do it. At the same time, they believed that they should not be asking for things beyond the SL’s limits. Demands like minimizing the number of students in the one class, providing special education program at school, and assigning new assistants (support teachers) for each grade level are beyond the SL’s limits. Yet they believed that this would facilitate the teachers’ work and help them speed up the education process, as all agreed. In other words, if assistants were available, they would carry the technical work leaving more room for teachers to work for their classes. And if social workers or specialists were available, students with SEN will be in separate classes, the thing that would lead to the desired results, and teachers’ work would be more focused. However, they commented that such decisions should be taken by the owners of the school.

Table 46. Good features that distinguished the subject leader of the English department

She could make sure that teachers live in harmony and complement each other at all levels (consensus).
She had a vision about the scope and sequence of the content matter (consensus).
She sent teachers to workshops and provided in-service training (consensus).
She was tolerant, nice but not bossy (T5).
She gave time to support teachers within and outside school to make sure they live in harmony and complement each other (T3).
She removed the knots, and made change easier by praising the smallest extra effort or good deed (T2).
She approached teachers nicely for them to try new things (T4).
She solved the teacher's personal problems, and had time for it (T8).
She understood the situation and worked without pushing beyond limits (T1).
She was the teachers' excellent motivator (T7).
She could predict outcomes. So she checked the teachers' work, possibly modified but not changed it. She still gave teachers the chance to discover things for themselves (T3).
She created a powerful environment that encouraged teachers' self-disclosure and discussions to start change (T5).
She created organizers for teachers and parents to facilitate the communication process between school and parents (T5, T6 and T7).
She was lenient with parents of the reputation students, and prepared remedial work to those students thus led to a better relationship with parents (T5).
She had a big hand in diagnosing and screening reputation students and could reach the most difficult parents (T10).
She taught teachers how to do test item analysis and evaluate test fairness by detecting flaws (structural and content) (T9).
She succeeded in making teachers give more writing to students and correct papers quickly and willingly (T4).
She was a good model to teachers who worked nonstop (T5 and T7)
she encouraged teachers, within and outside the department, to resume their graduate studies, and many did (T3, T5 and T7).
She provided teachers with all resources they needed and was involved in every new thing brought to the department.
She reflected the good image of the department to the administration, thus could seek a pay raise to a number of teachers.

Table 47. Behaviors that the subject leader should show for more effectiveness

The department should carry meetings focused on content that parents decide on (consensus).
The SL should show-up more in classrooms for students to know what she does (T3, T4 and T5).
She should communicate clearly with parents. For example, she should make it clear that 'not to interfere' means parents should leave their children alone to do their academic work, but check on them (T5).
The department should stress "neat work" and give it at least 2% of the grade (T3).
The department should stress building personalities with a focus on moral education (T8).
The department should use more incentives as a means to improving student achievement (T2).

To sum up, the teachers in the private elementary school found that the program that they were using, compared to those in other schools, was advanced. It was one of the best, as they all agreed. They also believed that they were enthusiastic and like to put much more into the program, as T4 and T5 said. However, the teaching load (27 hours per week), the number of

hours needed for preparation of organizers, quizzes and tests, in addition to the time needed for correction leave no room for the teacher to do this, as T2, T3 and T7 expressed. These teachers also liked to prepare extra activities for all students, and more focused activities for weak students to raise their achievement level. But they could not when they had four to five teaching hours a day in addition to two to four hours of preparation and correction, not to mention the time consuming GPA calculations four times a year. They believed under such circumstances, they were doing their best to prepare activities that satisfy a big number of students in each class, something that they considered a limitation. Their satisfaction came from the fact that “everybody in the department works within a team, and all have the same team spirit” the thing that they lacked before. Though based on a few contacts with the school, parents’ views about the roles of SLs were congruent with the view of teachers in many respects.

The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by

Parents of Good Achievers in the Case Study School

The first two focus group interviews with parents of good and high achievers were aimed at detecting their views about the roles of SLs in the whole school (Elementary and secondary school). Yet, the fact that these parents had children in both the elementary and secondary schools made the research results more comprehensive in terms of uncovering how these two schools were perceived as two different educational institutions. The main reason for this was that in the first two elementary cycles, the school tried to bring homework to the minimum by keeping the student books at school, and sending them home only when students had tests. While this was not done in the intermediate cycle the thing that made parents view that students were treated more leniently till Grade 6, and that all sorts of student support in tests were eliminated in higher grades.

One example given by two parents was that teachers in lower grades gave students the chance to ask questions during tests. "They even discuss the test with their students," as one mother said. The researcher had to clarify after the interview was over how the department dealt with criterion-referenced tests, and how some warm-up before the test would lead to better test validity. The SL also had to tell parents that this was brought to a minimum in higher grades since students by then would have outgrown these problems.

Two of the parents also pointed out another difference in teachers' behaviors between the two schools. They believed that in the elementary school, the teacher required that all students give very specific answers to questions raised in tests. While in the secondary school, students were given the freedom to give different responses the thing that teachers accepted. An example was what the first mothers (henceforth M1) said, "What is wrong if [a student] says 'the story took place when a certain event happened' if s/he is asked to state the setting of the story? Do you penalize [the student] if s/he overanalyzes a question? The SL had to explain again the difference between questions that required rote learning as opposed to cognitively demanding questions like argumentative questions. These clarifications made the interviewed parents demand that the content of the first PTA at the beginning of the year be about testing and addressing these issues. To them, this should stay a first priority when dealing with the external educational partners. Yet, to them, this comes after teacher observation, controlling tests and enhancing the teaching/learning situation.

Apart from this split view about the two schools, the interviewed parents showed awareness that English was a discriminating subject that put private schools in the front. For this, they believed that whatever they demanded, they should address the subject leader, not the school administration. A consensus was that the SL should play a number of roles, namely

- Control the work of all teachers in the department,

- “Make sure that teachers and even supervisors do not insult students in a way or another,” as M2 said,
- Let students know that s/he is there not only to work with teachers, but to help students solve their problems as well. This is because “when this happens, students will not complain to their parents anymore,” as M2 said.
- meet with students to discuss topics of concern to them even during sports sessions, as M1 and M3 said,
- Play an active role in assigning new teachers and work hard with them. And this task meant to parents that the SL was there to take further measures whenever problems of assignment emerge and that can be detected through observations.

The Effectiveness of Subject Leaders’ Observations as Viewed by Parents

The interviewed parents stressed the importance of observations to control the teachers’ work and to detect whether or not any unlikely classroom behavior was occurring. According to M2, M7 and M9, The SL should observe teachers and take notes about students’ comprehension level during the observation. S/He can detect whether or not the language structures the teacher is using are relative to the students’ age level, as M1 and M6 expressed. Consequently, s/he should draw the teacher’s attention to this for two main reasons. The first was that ‘not all parents use the language with their children’, and the second was that the ‘English language is used as a medium of instruction in all other subject areas [except for the Arabic]. A secondary aim for M1 and M7 was rotating teachers according to what abilities and skills they would show.

According to them, the case is different with respect to newly assigned teachers. The SL’s observations “should be more focused on the quality of teaching, the teacher’s ability to handle a classroom, and her ability to motivate students,” as M7 said. Classroom observations

would help the SL detect whether the teacher was to be blamed for students' low achievement or if (a) (some) student(s) has/have some learning problems, as M3 and M8 said. In other words, observations help the SL see if the "teacher was biased to excellent students" or try to "find out what a student's problem is by talking directly to him/her," as M8 explained. Assessment to parents is a second means to controlling teachers' work.

The Role of Subject Leaders in Assessment as Viewed by Parents of Good Achievers

All the interviewees also agreed that a second stage of control was tests. The SL should make sure that the size of the test, its comprehensiveness, instructions and questioning structure, all be reviewed so that the students would not feel the teacher was unfair, as M3, M4 and M9 expressed. If many students fail a test, the SL should take a decision about canceling a test and considering it a diagnostic test, as M1 and M3 suggested. In this sense, parents did not mind raising or lowering the number of tests as long as they equip students with study skills, as M1, M2 and M3 expressed. Yet, all of them complained about the school sending only quiz papers home, not test papers. They complained about having to come to school whenever they wanted to check their child's mistakes, usually when the grade was lower than they expected, as M1, M3 and M7 said. They also admitted that they cared a lot about test grades, and hated it when teachers during the PTA told them that they should not focus on grades all the time. The researcher also had to tell them after the interview was over that the school considered tests the key to reach parents in general, and parents of weak students in particular.

Subject Leaders and Enhancement of the Teaching/Learning Situation

With respect to the SL's role toward teachers, parents believed that the SL should make sure that teachers do two important things. First, they should maximize the use of incentives so that the students would be encouraged to make more efforts to improve their achievement. "Incentives like praise, a stamp, or a bonus point on a quiz, make a difference when given to a

student who improves his/her work, even if improvement were in his/her hand-writing, as M2 and M7 expressed. Second, they believed that the SL should be there because at times teachers ignore excellent students for the sake of working on weak students, as M1 and M3 said. In this sense, they demanded that the SL make sure that teachers do not exaggerate so that excellent students would not lose interest and become careless, as M2 and M8 said.

According to these parents, the SL must also meet with students at least once on monthly basis to discuss their problems with their teachers. They believed that this would give students the pleasure to be closer to the SL, and encourage their self-expression especially if they had problems. For this, the parents made it clear that their demand from school was working on their children's social and cultural skills besides education. They did not even mind if less content matter were covered for the sake of developing well-rounded students, as M4 and M9 expressed, the thing that 'they were paying for'.

To conclude, parents reported that their children's complaints were limited to "wearing costumes," the thing that every student hated. For this, their suggestions for better school success were all related to providing more facilities, the thing that was beyond the realm of subject leadership as they expressed. One suggestion was moving to a bigger campus especially that the owners are making good money, as M1 and M2 said. Another was providing more extra curricular activities, especially that trips are part and parcel of the LNC, as M2 and M6 said. A third was reinforcing inter-school communication through joining in competitions and the like "especially between schools that hold different and sometimes conflicting political stances," as M1 said (See Table 48). Parents felt that all of their demands could be achieved if the school is concerned about its name, as they all agreed. Parents of the reputation group reflected a more specific vision about school success. They viewed success through the inter-department communication, and the micro-political skills of successful subject leaders in enhancing the communication channels.

Table 48. Elementary school parents' suggestions for subject leaders to upgrade school success

The school campus should be changed to a bigger one.
The school should take responsibility of students' extra curricular activities, and provide more chances for successful activities.
The school should add more trips, sightseeing for example but without making parents pay extra money.
Teachers should be sent to attend more workshops to update their information.
The school should share in inter-school activities to reinforce inter-school communication, rather than boycott some of those activities on political grounds.
The school should invite the old graduates whenever there is a graduation party to keep contact with them.

The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of the Reputation Group

The reputation group is parents of students with SEN who would fail their classes if not provided with remedial work and special treatment during tests. With respect to tests, test questions are explained twice to these students. After correcting the test, and before giving it back to students, they are given another chance to solve some parts of the test that the SL and the teacher decide on. And most of the time, they are given part of the test orally.

Having experienced special treatment with their children, the reputation group (seven parents in one FGI) viewed the school success in its openness to parents, and the enthusiasm that the English department, the SL and the teachers, showed as care providers. All the interviewed parents had previous experiences with previous SLs, the thing that made them hesitant to respond to the current SL's first invitations for conferencing, as they expressed. From their previous experiences, they were always afraid that the school would ask them to transfer their children to another school because they had achievement problems, as M3 and M5 said. This was the main factor that delayed the process of screening their children although they could do nothing themselves in this respect, as M1 and M4 said.

What M1 said, and others agreed on summarized the situation. Parents knew that their children had problems, but could not find a solution. They made use of all the weekly hours assigned for parents just to follow-up their children's improvement and to *beg* teachers to be

more tolerant with them. In return, the teachers promised that they would do their best to a certain extent. That did not lead to any difference, and parents reached a stage when they needed someone to tell them what to do and where to go, not more, so that they would help their children, as M1 and M4 expressed. They needed someone who would tell them “how to get the best from [their children] especially that they were playing [their] role as parents,” as M3 said. For this, their view about subject leadership changed after their and their children’s experience (See table 49).

Table 49. Parents’ notion about subject leadership and treatment of the reputation group

Parents’ notion before treating their children
SLs <i>might</i> observe teachers and focus on students’ reaction.
SLs have their own knowledge background that they <i>may</i> pass on to teachers.
SLs see tests and the way they are corrected.
SLs should be available when parents come to see the teachers in their weekly hours, so that s/he would answer the parents’ questions if the teachers could not.
SLs should be there to face ‘problem parents’ who accuse teachers of being careless about their children and to defend teachers.
Parents’ notion after treating their children
SLs are there to observe teachers to check whether or not they are implementing what SLs suggest.
SLs are there to observe students for certain preset objectives.
SLs are there to hold sustained discussions with the teachers about the problems of their weak students, and to pass on their knowledge to teachers.
SLs not only see tests before and after correction, but analyze them as well. And based on the results, they suggest re-teaching, change the distribution of the grade on the different parts of the test, transfer a test grade into a quiz, etc.
SLs follow-up all weak students’ records and create portfolios for diagnostic and follow-up purposes
In their departments, SLs supervise teachers’ preparation of extra materials for weak students.
SLs can take decisions concerning how to deal with weak students.
SLs can play an administrative role when making the principal accept their suggestions.

As Table 49 indicates, after screening their children, all the interviewed parents knew a lot about what subject leadership meant. Their notion about subject leadership that was similar to other parents’ notion changed. They got to know the *why, when where and what for* the SL performed each task and what follow-up measures might follow. They were convinced that the roles that one subject leader plays should be played by all other SLs; that is, “the reputation students’ problems should be solved in partnership between SLs of the different departments at first,” as M5 demanded. This made parents suggest that SLs stay open with students and let parents and students know that both SLs and parents could and should help,

as M1 and M4 said. In addition, “SLs of the different subject areas should meet and share ideas about how to speed up the process of diagnosing the reputation students,” as M3 said. For this, there was a consensus that the school should schedule more educational field trips that help teachers implement the LNC in a way that students in general like, and weak students, in particular, find motivating. To them, such trips lead to adding more variety to the teaching approaches that weak students in particular are in bad need of.

The roles that the researcher performed for the sake of SENs students, in addition to the data yielded through the FGI with the reputation group were two sources used to devise the survey questionnaire. It was passed to parents for the purpose of investigating their awareness of the tasks the SL performed and whether or not they viewed them essential (figures 1 – 5).

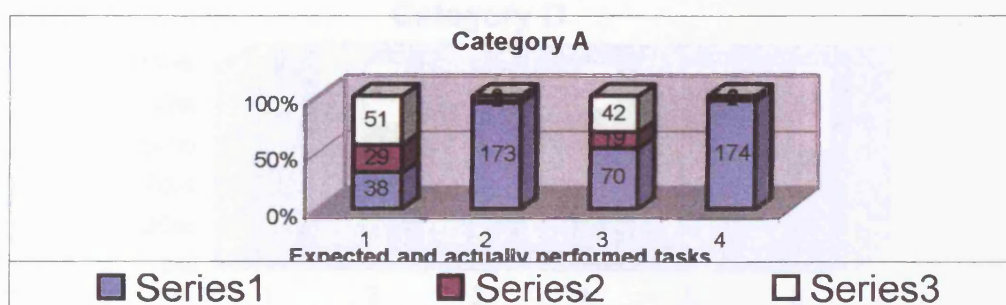


Figure 1: General roles of the subject leader

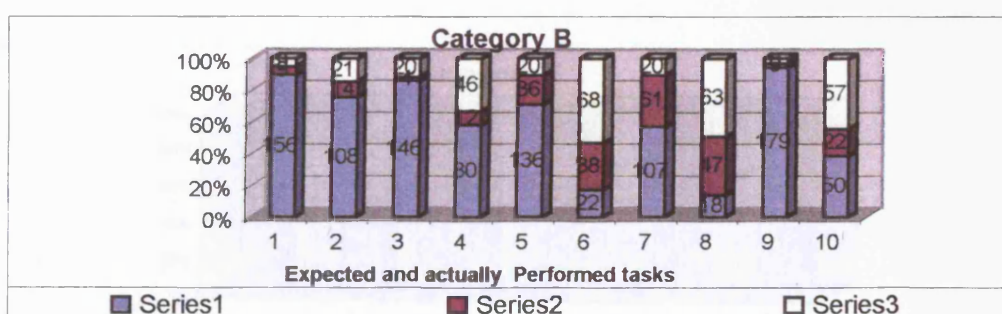


Figure 2: Assessment

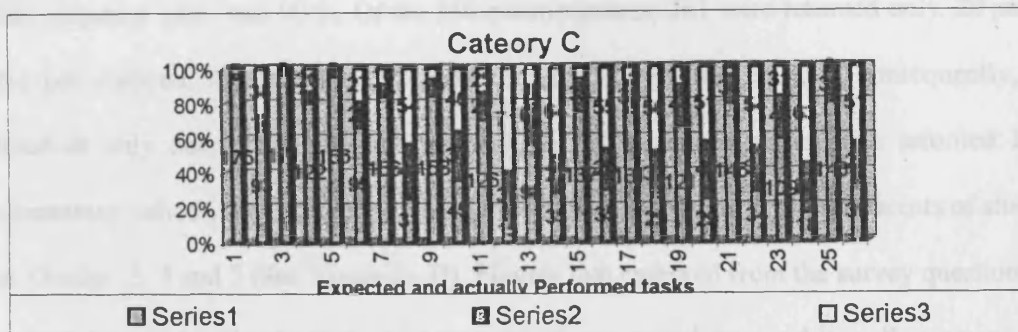


Figure 3: Measures taken for weak students

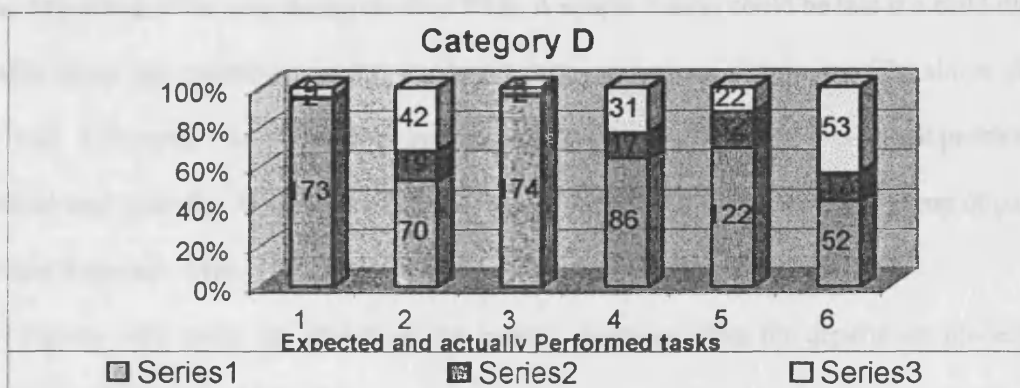


Figure 4: Follow-up

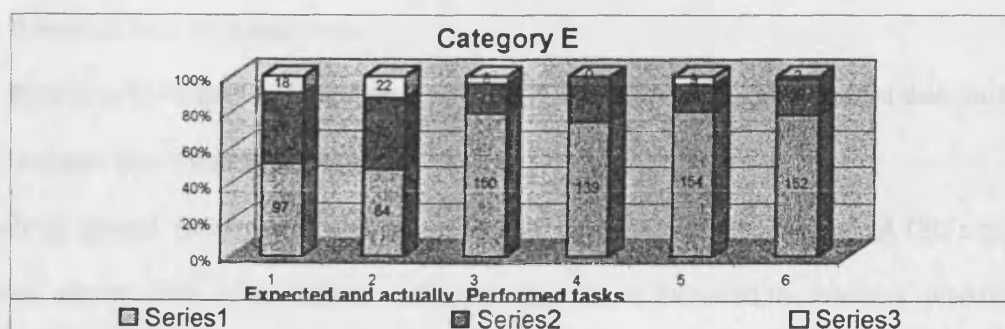


Figure 5: Extra-curricular tasks

The response rate was 90 %. Of the 350 questionnaires, 261 were returned only. 20 parents did not respond. 35 of them had two children; and 17 had three children; consequently, they filled in only one, leading to a fewer number of survey questionnaires returned. In the elementary school, the researcher passed the survey questionnaire to all parents of students in Grades 3, 4 and 5 (See Appendix D). Figures that emerged from the survey questionnaire indicated how far the English department had succeeded in reaching all parents. They brought another evidence of triangulation for interviews with both groups of parents.

The above figures (1 – 5) indicate that most of the parents agreed that each task mentioned in Appendix D was a necessary task to be performed. Yet, not all of them were aware that those tasks were really performed by the department team though they were made clear to parents at the beginning of the year during the first PTA. A simple reason could be that if a child did not suffer from any problems, parents would not notice any specific measures. The above charts, if read differently, may be used as indicators of the number of students who had problems at school and that the English department had a hand in solving them. The group of parents whose responses were ‘don’t know’ belonged to one of the following categories:

- Parents who were not attending the school meetings when the department procedures were explained.
- Parents whose children did not have any academic or behavioral problems that would necessitate parental involvement.
- Parents of very high achievers.
- Parents who considered that they did not have any role to play toward their children because they trusted the school.

Findings gained from the survey questionnaire indicated that in Category A (SL’s general roles), almost 98% of the parents were aware that the SL followed the teachers’ preparation. Yet fewer knew that the SL’s real intention was focusing the observations more on classes where very weak students were. This justified the difference in response rate between parents’ likelihood for this task to be performed and their viewing it actually performed. This also

justified why the interviewed parents of high achieving children, whose classes had been less frequently visited by the SL, demanded more observations. This also brought evidence that justified why parents of reputation students (who were aware of the effect of classroom observations on diagnosing children's problems) insisted that observations be maximized.

In Category B (SL's assessment measures), in general, the assessment measures were found "likely to be performed" by SLs. Only 20% of the parents did not like the SL to cancel difficult tests, and 40% did not like the SL to redistribute test grades on test questions. These parents were those of high achieving children who seemed to like difficult tests for their discriminating effects on student's GPA. Among these parents were those interviewed and who claimed for SL's observing classes to ensure that high achieving students were not being ignored for the sake of helping weak students. They were the same parents who showed great concern about their children's grades.

In Category C (SL's measures taken for weak students), the response rate to the specific measures taken with weak students indicated that, in general, parents liked all roles to be played. An average of 15% of the parents did not like the school to have a hand in assigning and working with private tutors, yet liked to have portfolios for their children and a direct contact with the school if their children's grades deteriorated. They were parents of very high achievers at school among whom were the interviewed parents. In Category D (SL's follow-up measures), the response rate indicated that parents in general were aware of and satisfied with the department follow up procedures taken in the area of social and behavioral development of their children. Also Category E indicated that parents in general were satisfied with the amount of time assigned for home-school connection.

As table 50 indicates, there was no serious problem that students suffered from; or else, parents would have demanded for a solution. The three main suggestions that the parents stressed in the last part of the questionnaire were (a) carrying more meetings with and

involving parents, (b) giving more extra-curricular activities, and (c) more parental participation in the program and in activities. With respect to carrying meetings, the suggestion stemmed from the fact that the timing of the school meetings and the weekly meeting hour assigned for each subject area were always in conflict with those parents' commitment to their jobs. The absence of all sorts of complaint not only brought authenticity to what the interviewed teachers in the elementary school said, but what the interviewed teachers in the intermediate school suggested as well.

Table 50. Parents' suggestions for subject leaders to cause improvement in the elementary school

Suggestions	Number per grade level		
	Gr. 3	Gr. 4	Gr. 5
More yearly meetings	6	8	2
Encouragement of students to ask questions if they do not understand	3		
Contacting parents if needed	2		
Special seminars for parents on how to follow-up their children	1	1	
More communication with parents/more involvement of parents in the English program	9	4	2
Parental participation in recreational activities	6	1	1
More extra curricular activities, field trips, and movies with less costs	3	10	2
More sports competitions and activities	3		
Giving more attention to French as a third language	1		
Encouraging students to use English in the playground	1		
Simplifying tests	1		
Sending test papers home with students	4	3	1
A wider variety in the book fair, more participation of publishers, and less prices	1	3	2
Paying more attention to student behavior in the playground	1		
Taking good care of the library			1
Giving all students in the one class equal attention	1		
Teachers should make good relations with students	2		1
Giving more time for weekly meetings (for working mothers)	2	1	4
Giving more speaking activities	1		
Paying more attention to weak students	1	1	
Paying more attention to handwriting	1		1

In conclusion, the survey questionnaire findings indicated that parents, in general, were satisfied with and aware of roles performed by the English department. The major demand of all the interviewees was classroom observation. In fact, the frequency of observation done by the SL differed from one classroom to the other according to the purpose first, and the time

available for the SL second. The SL's multipurpose observations were those delegated to teachers in her department.

The Subject Leader's Multi-purpose Delegation of Classroom Observations to Teachers

As mentioned earlier, the researcher keeps diary notes from different sources, one of which is classroom observations that are focused on the reputation students. To show teachers what they can do to students with SEN to keep them in the main stream, the SL involves them in action research. She explains to her colleagues in the department that the process of diagnosing SEN will fail without their help and their willingness to use diaries. For this, the SL and her colleagues agreed that each teacher would assign two free hours weekly to observe two other teachers in the department: one hour in a higher grade, and one hour in a lower grade. The purposes were to:

- Expose teachers to different teaching styles, thus allow them to learn from each other.
- Raise teachers' awareness to the scope and sequence of the content matter of the textbooks.
- Help teachers assess their own teaching when matched against others'.
- Help teachers have some content matter for their discussion of specific classroom events during meetings for coordination.
- Seek the observing teachers' observation notes about a specific student's behavior in class.

In this situation, the observation objective and duration would be set before hand and agreed on by the SL, the class teacher and the observing teacher.

In this study, six teachers were involved in this process, three of them working with their students with SEN and were interviewed in FGIs, and the other three were assisting those teachers by observing the reputation students and were the interviewed individually. At the beginning, the observing teachers considered that "the SL assigning each teacher two hours of

observation per week was a new load on them”. However, after a very short period, they realized what the SL meant by having a clearer image of the scope and sequence of the material taught, as T1 and T2 said, and “how to vary the teaching approaches to reach mixed ability groups,” as T3 said.

There was a consensus among teachers that observations were important for them at three levels. The first was discussing things together and learning from each other. The second was to be prepared if the SL would rotate them. This was important for the Grade 5 teacher who was aspiring to teach 6th Graders. As she said, in the beginning, to move from one building to another just to observe bothered her. Yet, looking forward to teaching Grade 6 she was happy she did it”. The third was “creating better cohesive relationships between teachers in the same department, the thing that everybody envies the department for,” as Grade 4 teacher said.

It is clear from this that delegating teachers the job of classroom observation benefited everybody and most importantly helped speed up the process of diagnosing the reputation group. Diary notes indicate that the SL, along with her colleagues in the department, the principal, and the parents were involved in the process of diagnosing reputation students and trying to find solutions for their problems. In addition, it involved teachers in the new cycle of development. As a whole, the teachers’ involvement in classroom observations and the different tasks they performed were what parents demanded from the SL only. They had no idea about it for the researcher’s fear that it would lead to some misunderstanding.

Comparison of Public and the Private Case Study School Teachers’ Current Situation

Comparing the public schools to the PCSS, findings indicated that the private school was in a much better position to develop a department culture and even school environment conducive to good communication with parents and consequently leading to better student achievement. In the public school, teachers faced a lot of problems. They suffered from their management

system, from lack of SLs, from uncooperative parents and from students whose social problems affected their behavior at school. In addition, (a) having no hope in becoming SLs themselves, (b) having teaching experience only in elementary school, and (c) lacking sustained external controls that would reshape and orient their teaching behaviors to become more productive affected their views. Teachers viewed that the presence of a SL might provide all kinds of solutions if s/he were acknowledged as an external agent, an agent of change representing the Ministry of Education. Yet, the real situation indicated that no change occurred during the implementation of the LNC.

On the other hand, the private school teachers were satisfied with the tasks the SL performed. Their demands were focused on the possibility of improving the department work. Findings yielded from interviews with parents were a source of triangulation that authenticated the teachers' notion of subject leadership and how it was reflected in the department work. Results achieved from the survey questionnaire were another source of triangulation that indicated parents' awareness of specific tasks that the SL performed. Parents' suggestions in the last part of the survey questionnaire were a third source of triangulation. All in all, the utilization of the different research tools and the congruence of research findings not only provided a source of triangulation but reflected the real image about how successful relationships were between the school and the external environment as well.

Chapter seven is an extension of this chapter. It provides an account of public and private intermediate and secondary school teachers' views about subject leadership as a role model. It focuses on what teachers, parents and students viewed as important tasks that should be played internal as well as external to school confines. It also focuses on addressing problem areas that should be addressed by the SL for the purpose of successful schooling in general and successful implementation of the LNC in particular.

CHAPTER SEVEN

VIEWS OF TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS ABOUT SUBJECT LEADERS' INTERNAL PROCESSES IN THE INTERMEDIATE AND SECONDARY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

This chapter presents the views of public and private intermediate and secondary school teachers' views about subject leadership as a role model in enhancing the implementation of the LNC. A number of research tools was utilized besides FGIs (See Table 51). Diary notes about classroom observations were done to triangulate findings gained from the *public* intermediate-school teachers. Interviews with parents were conducted to triangulate findings achieved from *public* secondary school teachers. Interviews with students of Grades 9 and 12 and the survey questionnaire were used to triangulate findings achieved from interviews with *private* intermediate and secondary teachers. Findings achieved from teachers in the English department were also compared to findings achieved from teachers in the other departments in the PCSS.

Table 51. Summary of sampling and research tools used for data collection

School type	Participants	FGI	Ind. Interview	Diary notes (observ.)	Survey Q.
Public	Teacher	2 intermediate 1 secondary	5 intermediate		
Private	Teacher	2 Eng. Int.+ sec. 1 Others int.			
Public	Teacher/student			Intermediate	
Private	Student	1 intermediate 1 secondary			
Private	Parents	Intermediate			64/97
Public	parents	1 secondary	5 secondary		

Ind. = individual; observ. = observation; Q = questionnaire; Eng. = English; int. = intermediate; sec. = secondary

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 6, findings achieved from participants in the public intermediate school are included in this chapter for the sole reason that these participants had SLs in their schools. The general findings from the private and public intermediate and

secondary schools overlapped to a good extent. Two commonalities affected the interviewed teachers' views about subject leadership. The first was that all the SLs in the PCSS were public secondary school teachers who had got long teaching experience that ranged between 20 and 28 years. The second was that SLs in both private and public schools were part-timers except for the researcher. In general, findings indicated that teachers in the intermediate stage (cycle 3: ages 13 to 15) in both the public and the PCSS appreciated the roles of SLs. They considered them essential for the success of their respective departments more than teachers in the secondary stage (cycle 4: ages 16 to 18) did. Yet, the public school teachers considered that solutions to the current problems could not be achieved unless the ministry interferes; whereas, the PCSS teachers considered that they were close to achieving excellence.

THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED

BY TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS

Two FGIs and five individual interviews were conducted with public intermediate teachers, distinguished from elementary teachers by being allocated in the third schooling cycle which is closer to the secondary cycle. Yet unlike secondary teachers, they cannot see themselves as potential SLs no matter how long their teaching experience is. And unlike elementary teachers, they have the privilege of gaining support from SLs to become more productive. As a result, these interviewees proved to value the existing form of support, but looked forward to more effective ones thus sounded more down to earth than elementary teachers.

Teachers in the intermediate cycle (Grades 7, 8, and 9; ages 13 to 15) considered themselves lucky to have part-time SLs who followed up their work in the secondary schools. They believed that SLs were there to perform the following jobs:

- facilitate teachers' teaching by providing extra activities related to the competencies focused on in the LNC,
- discuss each teacher's problems and suggest solutions,

- help teachers in preparing their tests when they needed, and control the tests they wrote,
- observe them teaching then give them feedback, and
- raise their self-confidence when SLs like their teaching.

As one teacher in one FGI said and the others agreed, “Subject leaders were there before the LNC. However, with all the changes introduced in the LNC, “[I] assume that [SLs] should help us focus on competencies and provide [us] with the needed activities”. Another teacher in another FGI said, “With this novelty [I] think the SL should maximize observations and provide detailed feedback so that problems can be solved before [we] lose control”. Seeking SLs’ feedback would give teachers some relief. And as another said and the others agreed, “Praising [our] work is a sign that [we] are implementing the LNC properly, and encourages [us] to continue without hard feelings”. In fact, the interviewees consented that SLs, within time limitations, focused more on department meetings than on observations.

Subject leaders and Department Meetings as Viewed by Public Intermediate Teachers

The interviewees reported that during the department meetings, the SL discussed material coverage with them, checked a given test grades, allowed teachers of the different grade sections to sit together and prepare a test, and sometimes proposed some activities. An important note was that if test grades were not satisfactory, there would be no chance to repeat it because of time limitations and the students’ weaknesses, as 60% of the interviewee said. The class has to proceed even if half of it failed the test because there is big material to cover, as 50% said.

With respect to observations, 80% of the interviewees were observed by their SLs. He observed them once at the beginning of the year, as 50% said, or twice, as another 30% said. Teachers were not clear enough about what sort of feedback the SL gave them after the

observations. Implied from their group discussion was that the SL made the rare observations occasions “to praise those whose teaching was good during the meetings,” as 30% expressed. A routine part of their meetings became presenting some activities for teachers, as 20% said. More importantly the meetings were utilized for group discussions about a test a group of teachers needed to prepare with the SL. The help that SLs provided took the form of controlling the size of the test and restructuring some questions, as 60% of the teachers said. The meetings were also considered a time-out for 20% of the intermediate teachers if they had something urgent to do outside the school.

Public Intermediate Teachers: Problems with Subject Leaders and Proposed Solutions

These teachers were not satisfied with the status of the SL. There was a consensus among teachers that the SL should perform more tasks, and referred the SL’s ‘unintentional negligence’ to many reasons (See Table 52). The first was the SL’s educational background. That is, as T1 said, “[Teachers] should not expect more from a SL who has got only a BA degree”. And as T2 completed, “Experience is not enough. A SL must have higher degrees and be more knowledgeable to be able to lead others”. The second was the time allotted to coordination. As T1 said, “One cannot demand from a part-time SL with a BA degree more than s/he can give in terms of quantity and quality”. The third was the interrupted communication channels with parents and students. As T3 said, “A SL cannot have proper communication with parents if he were to do his job perfectly inside school. How can he act if he is a part-timer and is to deal with *parents* of students in *public* schools?” (meaning that parents are uneducated, come from very low socio-economic backgrounds, and are uncooperative). The fourth was the teachers’ inability to benefit from the SL because of the unsuitable scheduling of their free hours. As T4 said, “The SL has his teaching and coordination quota. Like us, teachers, he finishes his work very tired; and we cannot demand that he give extra work even if he is available at school”. According to the interviewees, a major issue that should be taken into consideration in assigning SLs a full-time job was the

degree the SL had. “A degree and a full-time job would allow SLs to perform a number of tasks,” as 80% of the teachers expressed.

Table 52. Teachers’ views about problems of public school subject leaders

% of teachers	Problem
50%	not having a degree in <i>education</i>
50%	giving only 5 hours for coordination per week; that is, not being available all the time
90%	Being unable to solve problems of weak students which makes teaching more difficult
100%	Being unable to communicate with parents
80%	Being unable to control students who misbehave in classes
70%	Having the same free hours as teachers, thus not allowing the teachers to observe the SL teaching; that is, to observe a model and have their discussions based on authentic observations

There was a consensus among the teachers that the SL is not to be blamed for his degree, and that the Ministry of Education should be blamed for not training SLs, as 50% of them said. As a result, 20% of the interviewed teachers considered that SLs should be assigned subject leadership as a full-time job if they had a degree in education, and 80% if they were trained. Their second priority became assigning the existing SLs as full-timers rather than part-timers.

Those who considered training SLs more important than the degree considered that a full-time job for a SL would give more room for discussions between him/her and the teachers. “Discussions may be about tests, the content matter, failure rate, raising the number of tests, and problem students,” as T1 said. While the teachers who considered the degree more important viewed that “assigning full-time SLs would allow them the chance to deal with some of the students who have learning difficulties, those who are not hopeless cases,” as T3 said. Consequently, “the SL would be able to communicate with more than 50% of the parents in an attempt to solve their children’s problems,” as T1 said.

Finally, 20% of the interviewees who thought the situation in public schools was miserable believed that, a down-to-earth solution for problems of public schools cannot be reached unless by assigning specialists (sociologists and psychiatrists) to assist the SL in performing

his/her jobs". While the other 80% found the solution in working seriously on TVE. By this, "intermediate schools would not enroll that big number of cases who do not belong to any age group or class level," as T5 said, "or distort the whole class because they lack interest," as T6 said. T7 added that, "This will automatically lead to smaller classes with more homogeneous groups that would be better for teachers and students to implement the LNC". SLs in the secondary school showed a different view.

THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED

BY TEACHERS IN THE PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Interviewees in the public secondary school are distinguished from interviewees in the intermediate school by having good chances and great hope to become SLs themselves. By virtue of their long teaching experience, they view that they are potential SLs who do not need any internal or even external support. Some of them are part-time SLs in private schools, the thing that affected their attitudes toward subject leadership and the notion of being led by people 'not better than themselves'. As such, findings led to projecting them as a really different group than the intermediate teachers, a group that has its own perception about subject leadership. The five FGI teachers viewed subject leadership as a role that could not be seen as separate from the whole educational policy, and that "starting the implementation of the LNC means schools are independent from the Ministry of Education in many respects," as T1 said. "Subject leaders will then become the facilitators of the implementation process," as T2 said.

Public Secondary Teachers' Views about External Conditions Affecting Subject Leaders in The implementation of the Lebanese New Curriculum

The interviewed secondary teachers believed that the ministry of Education did not address all the problems that were expected to impede the implementation of the LNC. 60% of them

found the solution to their problems stemming from student enrollment. For this, they expressed that before seeking assistance from SLs, the ministry should acknowledge subject leadership as an important role and to give the SL the privilege of screening students for selection, rather than accepting them because there was an “empty seat for each”.

They consented that the idea of accepting students who pass the official examination in Grade 9 was rejected because “everybody knows what happens in the official exams,” as one expressed. T1 commented saying that “they say the spirit of the LNC. How can we teach 39 students in one classroom without killing the spirit of the LNC?” T2 added that, “it is impossible to carry discussions and group work as suggested in the LNC in such classes”. In this sense, the most important issues that the interviewed teachers stressed were the ministry’s addressing the problem of schools set-up and controlling the official examinations. The teachers expressed that this would make the SL’s work more fruitful.

Whatever the situation was, these teachers agreed that elementary and intermediate schools were more in need of SLs than secondary schools, and that “the needs of elementary schools should be addressed by the Ministry of Education before those of secondary schools,” as T4 said. T3 explained that “[teachers in secondary schools] are all part-time teachers in other schools. [They] meet with the SL only to discuss the material to be included in unified tests, to decide who would write the test, or to show grades to the SL”. T2 added that “although [he is] a teacher in that school, [he] is a SL in another school. Consequently, [he] does not need to explain how independent [he] is from the SL”. T5 added that, “meetings at the beginning of the year are important for new teachers to become familiar with the system and to know which material is to be covered and how it is scheduled. They need to sit more with the SL to discuss everything in details, unlike [us] experienced teachers”. A conclusion T1 drew and the others agreed on was that “[they] and the SL are on good terms. Whenever one needs the other, s/he knows how to reach him/her”. And T3 added, “The Ministry of Education is aware of this fact; that is why they gave very few hours for SLs to do their job”.

The teachers' argument was that experienced secondary teachers could do without a SL; consequently, this would give him/her the chance to screen students. As T3, T4 and T5 expressed, if screening takes place, classroom size will be enough for the number of students to have group activities. Maybe it will be easier to deal with weak students. According to these teachers, SLs would have more chances to deal with problems of students and parents "in condition that the latter show up," as T2 said. Yet T1 interrupted and said, "Let us bring ourselves down to earth. Nothing would change as long as the government does not take different measures, if the economic situation stays miserable, and as long as people's view about public schools does not change". T5 added, "we are happy and satisfied with the change in the content matter in the new textbooks; there is no more 'rotten material'; and we are doing our best to pass information to students by using all the available resources". They concluded that *if* the ministry finds the solution in the comprehensive schools, and *if* they succeed in implementing it, SLs will then have a different role. By then, "there should be serious measures to take in this respect; or else, all we say is *words flying in the air*," as one teacher said.

As a general conclusion, the presence of part-time SLs in public intermediate and secondary schools without any change in their status and without training did not lead to any changes in the teaching/learning situation. Though change was an aspiration for good implementation of the LNC, diary data about classroom observations the researcher did in both public schools were an indicator of the dormant state of education in public schools.

Classroom Observations

The LNC focuses on student-centered teaching approaches as means to developing the open-minded sociable citizen, and the pre-implementation training was no exception. In this study, notes about the 20 observation hours in 10 classes in public schools indicated that the SLs did

not cause a big change in the teaching/learning situation (See Appendix F for the summary of classroom observations). The observed teachers were mostly traditional and teacher-centered. They had the teacher's edition in front of them, and followed it step by step. They raised questions, but when the classroom interaction was slow, they stopped the activity and gave the answers to the students orally or in writing.

In general, classroom interaction was unidirectional: teacher-student or student-teacher. Yet, students were given the chance to ask all kinds of questions, and that proved to be mostly about meanings. It was evident that students had problem comprehending new vocabulary items from context; and their teachers did not try to explain any reading strategy to train them how to find the meanings. On the other hand, diary data about informal conversations indicate that teachers complained about the level of difficulty of the reading selections in the textbooks. They considered that they were written for native speakers. For this, they found themselves obliged to take one of three decisions. The first was to explain the many vocabulary items that impeded comprehension; consequently, move in slower pace than planned in the teacher's guide but guarantee that they would be able to move to some nice reading activities after that, as one teacher said. The second was to equip students with reading comprehension strategies and consequently risk material coverage in grade levels where it was too late to build such competencies, as another teacher said. The third was to proceed as planned in the teachers' guide and fail 99% of their students, as a third teacher said. All the observed teachers chose the first possibility in an attempt to strike a balance without culminating students' frustration level, as they all expressed. This brings forward what SLs said about the content of the new textbooks and the expected problems in public schools because of its difficulty level. The three teachers expressed openly that their teaching during the observation was different from the normal teaching. Generally speaking, teachers spent more time on explaining vocabulary items in the introductory session when they were observed.

Because of time limitations compared to the length of the content matter, teachers had to assign more homework than suggested in the teachers' guides. No group work was witnessed. Only in the warm up were students asked to work in pairs to answer the question(s) raised by the teacher. Implied from this situation was that the teaching/learning situation was not that reflected in the document of the LNC. It is important to note here that these findings did not emerge because public schools SLs did not observe teachers. Rather, because of lacking enough preparation. Yet, still observations could be SLs' starting point to investigate teaching/learning problems. On the other hand, classroom observations were perceived by the interviewees in the PCSS as essential for improving school achievement. Yet, without them the school condition would not deteriorate.

THE ROLES OF SUBJECT LEADERS AS VIEWED BY TEACHERS OF THE DIFFERENT SUBJECT AREAS IN THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

The Roles of the Subject Leader as Viewed by the Teachers in the English Department

In this school, three FGIs (five participants in each) were conducted with teachers: two in the English department and one with teachers from the different departments (Math, Physics, Biology and Chemistry). Three teachers indicated that the school was distinguished for two features: its being the leading school in terms of teaching languages, and the students' access to more technological devices and AV aids that would keep teachers motivated to look forward to new materials. Yet, the availability of these means added to 'leniency on the part of the administration' at school as well as at home are a double-edged weapon. They create an environment conducive to students' carelessness, misbehavior, lack of concern, and lack of interest, as T1 and T3 expressed. This would always put a "much bigger load on the SL as well as teachers in their attempt to avoid negative results," as T1 said.

The Subject leader as curriculum leader as viewed by teachers in the English Department

50 % of the teachers believed that to handle the ever-changing situation, the SL was playing an important role in choosing textbooks that cover the same themes and objectives as those in the LNC. However, to them, those books were more interesting to students, and at the same time could be manipulated by teachers to keep students under control. These teachers considered that selecting textbooks written for native speakers is a challenging job. Yet the wide variety of texts and topics in those textbooks gives the teacher the freedom to choose the ones that appeal to his/her students' interest level, as T1 and T6 said.

The interviewed teachers agreed that it was the SL's knowledge about the LNC and her selection of textbooks that match with the LNC objectives that helped teachers meet students' needs and interests and avoided limiting teachers to de-motivating material that is in the government textbooks, as 30% of the teachers expressed. As a result, "students can cope with the demands of the LNC regardless of the texts, the thing that does not push the teacher to teach to the official examinations," as Grade 9 teacher said. When it came to material selection, the SL was there to "discuss it with teachers," as T3 said. She also "helped teachers when they needed her to select the suitable activities from the teacher's guide, to adapt them to suit the classroom situation, and scheduled them so that teachers would cover all the assigned material within the year," as T8 said. In addition, she gave enough room for conversations and debates during the weekly department meetings allowing teachers to propose any new ideas that were of concern to them, as 80% of the teachers said. Moreover, she was always available to give insight into the updated curriculum because teachers, according to T1 and T3, needed to be enlightened and updated on the latest news that the Ministry of Education announced and the articles that came out, for example. What 90% of the teachers liked most was that the SL helped them create new activities and make use of all the resources available to enhance students' thinking skills.

With respect to the available resources, teachers were accustomed to using all facilities to the extent that they complained about some technical problems. As one teacher expressed, “[the school] has computer rooms, but [teachers] need to schedule [their] sessions before hand. It becomes time consuming to take students from one class to another for an activity. What if any technical problem emerges?” T6 complained saying that “Sometimes [the teacher] plans to use the OHP, and [s/he] discovers that it does not work the last minute. This creates an environment for students to show unlikely behaviors, and plans become a waste of time”. Though these teachers knew that provision of extra resources was to be planned and budgeted once per year, they expressed interest in the SL’s seeking more accessible facilities. They considered that it would make the teaching/learning situation more practical thus addressing more student needs and learning styles.

Subject Leaders and Students’ needs as viewed by the English Department Team

Teachers in this school did like their students to be satisfied. From this angle, they believed that choosing the selections that would satisfy the students’ needs and interests was at times at the expense of providing some extra group activities. In other words, having to cover the selected content through which certain themes, skills, and sub-skills were to be focused on, the teacher is put under time constraints. T7 explained saying, “My experience with group work proved to be successful, but when it comes to time limitations I find myself bringing group work, my students’ joyful activity, into a minimum”. However, 60% of the teachers admitted that they were exerting more pressure on the SL when it came to adjusting the plans in a way to satisfy the students’ needs. This was because addressing each issue required more time and re-planning of resource usage the thing that is “beyond any SL’s capacity to do very frequently,” as T7 said; and would lead to spoiling students, as T1 and T3 explained.

As a result, the SL’s cooperation according to these teachers was reflected in her provision of extra materials she prepared for teachers. She was also flexible and adjusted the department

plans according to the needs of students; for example, she did not mind reducing the writing at times when other skills were to be reinforced, as T1 and T2 said. This, to them, led to better results. The SL also did some text adaptation. She changed a reading session to a listening one for the purpose of giving more chances for classroom discussion followed by a group activity. The good thing about this, as 70% of the teachers viewed, was that teachers would be encouraged to try text adaptation themselves in the future with little reference to the SL. Yet, this cannot be achieved without having a clear vision about how changes do not affect the set plans for coverage of specific objectives, and not without having more assistants. Without assistants (support teachers), teachers believed they would not be able to create their own materials, as they expressed.

There was a consensus that the presence of assistants, at least one for each two grade levels (six sections) would facilitate the department work. They considered that the assistant would be assigned the correction of objective tests and quizzes and the preparation of some audio-visual aids. "This will help [teachers] prepare more tests and quizzes for the purpose of fairer evaluation of students and preparing more activities". In this sense, T1 and T8 found that it was enough for them to correct a writing assignment for 90 students each fortnight plus the subjective questions in weekly and monthly quizzes and tests. And that if new teachers are assigned, they have to be involved in departmental cooperative team-work so that existing teachers would be able to take part in better screening of students' needs in general, and screening weak students in particular, as T3 and T8 said.

Subject leaders and newly qualified teachers and assistants as viewed by the English department teachers

There was a consensus among all the interviewed teachers that having support teachers in the department would maximize teachers' efforts and students' benefits. T4 and T9 expressed that it would be more tiresome for the SL to involve NQT and support teachers in the department

work at the beginning. Yet, to them, the whole department will show better quality of work on the long run. On their part, NQT viewed that the roles played by the SL did help them gain more self-confidence and expertise very quickly (See Table 53). The two NQTs expressed that the SL was available to carry in-depth discussions about the teacher's work when the latter needed it. "She never left the teacher unsettled or confused," as one said, "Discussions were sustained until the teacher became *saturated* with ideas," as T5 said. They were happy with the instant solutions that the SL provided for simple problems, like misbehavior in class or slackening in doing homework. As T4 said, "she sent for the student for a conferencing session which led to very positive effect directly". Overall, the SL tried to create the best teaching/learning environment for the new teacher, as they both agreed.

Table 53. The roles that the subject leader played with newly qualified teachers

Spent more time with them
Helped them in the preparation and organization of material and showed them how these fit into the department structure
Scheduled their work
Provided them with the needed extra materials and references
Provided solutions for problems that emerged in their classrooms
Encouraged them to observe other teachers in upper and lower grades
Did more observations at the beginning of the year and withheld it later to give enough room for teachers to prove their willingness, and to show responsibility for handling classroom situations without direct interference
Encouraged their independence and raised their self-esteem by praising good work
Was available to support the teacher whenever she needed it

Subject leaders and financing as viewed by the English department teachers

In return to all the jobs the teachers performed, some believed that if they sought a pay raise, it had to be directly from the principal," as T1 and T8 expressed. This was because they were sure that the SL was doing her job by reporting her appraisal to the principal. The three teachers who got an extra pay raise above the pay scale refrained from mentioning it for fear that it was an issue that might bring about some sensitivity among colleagues. While the others who had not received a pay raise believed that "getting it requires that a whole body of teachers and the SLs to ask for it as long as the school administration is seeking the best performance and best quality teaching," as T1 said. Implied from this was that the

interviewed teachers considered the SL's administrative roles limited to ensuring academic productivity by "allocating more material resources, but not seeking more human resources or a pay raise," as T5 said.

Teacher's suggestions for better performance at the intermediate and secondary school level varied. First, consensus was on the necessity for "establishing a library for students to gain access to more readers, a library similar to that in the elementary school," as T1 said. The second was that teachers should "either take more weekly hours for teaching English, or take fewer sections to be able to attend more workshops outside Lebanon, if possible," as T1 said. To him, this was "because content and form of the workshops offered at the local level can be easily predicted, while [teachers] are looking for more cross-cultural communication". Another explained that "teaching is becoming a more difficult job with the rapid invasion of advanced technology; and to be able to cope with the educational demands of this generation, teachers need to be prepared quickly. For this, regional and international workshops are the teachers' demand "to achieve all this, the SL's role is to discuss the issue with the administration whenever possible," as T5 said. In general, the interviewed teachers believed that the current status of the school was conducive to good communication among the school, the different departments, teachers, students and parents.

Subject leaders and parents as viewed by the English department teachers

With respect to parents' participation, 90% of the teachers in the department believed that the yearly meetings, weekly hours assigned for parents, in addition to the organizers that the school sent for them were enough. The organizers that the SL helped teachers devise made it easier for the department to draw on parents' willingness and readiness to help their children reinforce the taught skills.

The organizers are circulars sent to parents whenever a new theme is given in each grade level. They are sent to parents in two languages: English and Arabic. The purpose of the organizers is to help parents as well as tutors, if they existed, to draw a focus on the theme under study when teaching their children. The content of the organizer is limited to the theme being stressed, the traits of the genre, and the possible set of questions parents might raise to their children about (a) the material being taught, or (b) any similar outside material they brought. This helps parents to detect their children's ability to transfer the taught skills, and to avoid over teaching their children.

According to the interviewed teachers, still the content and the kind of communication between parents and the school during the yearly meeting should be dealt with differently, as T1, T4 and T7 said. T1 explained that the school, for example, "can hold the regular seminars, but instead of teachers being the speakers giving feedback to parents, the department should allow parents to tell teachers what their children are doing at home and share their experiences with the school". He continued that in those meetings or seminars "parents should be allowed to propose any ideas that might sound feasible and that would improve the school performance. Discussions about homework, peer pressure, problems at school, parents' expectations and all sorts of issues can be the content matter of such meetings". Two other teachers added that parents should also be aware of changes that their children turn into especially in higher levels of schooling; and [teachers] are to join in as a body leading the information exchange *but not* without the school financial commitment to this extra work.

Subject leaders and school excellence as viewed by the English department teachers

For the school to stay as a leading school, there was a consensus that it had to keep doing a number of things under the controls of SLs of all departments in general, and the English department in particular (see Table 54). Talent shows, trips, the school magazine, all faculty meetings, and bigger size of campus all pave the way for the school to achieve future

successes and to establish even a better name. According to T3, one of the impediments was that “if the school were to establish a school magazine, there should be a full-time teacher assigned this job, the thing that would put more financial commitment on the part of the school”. “The same thing applies to moving to a bigger campus,” as T7 said. This was how teachers in the English department viewed future successes that would be suspended until the owners of the school take a decision, as two teachers expressed.

Table 54. Conditions for the school to stay a leading school

keeping the ‘talent show’ a sustained activity for student self-esteem and one communication means with parents
organizing more educational trips
organizing poetry recitation contests, quiz games, and shows at least once a year
acknowledging the gifted and talented students
scheduling meetings where teachers of all cycles (the secondary, intermediate and elementary) meet to share experiences under the supervision of SLs as opposed to carrying those meetings for two cycles at a time
keeping bulletin boards updated with articles mostly written by students as a reaction to recent issues for example, rather than just clippings
Establishing a school magazine
not using big classes that overlook the noisy street the main distracter to students
moving to a bigger campus if possible

Findings gained through the FGI that was conducted with teachers of the other departments (Arabic, chemistry, physics, biology, and mathematics) indicated that these teachers had a very similar view about the roles of SLs. They had previous experiences with previous SLs inside the school or in some different schools where they used to work before. Knowing that their SLs were part-timers, teachers’ responses indicated that they were satisfied with what their SLs were doing under such time constraints. Yet they preferred that their SLs be full-timers so that teachers would see implemented what they viewed as essential roles of SLs.

Successful Subject Leaders as Viewed by Sciences Teachers

Teachers in the science, math and Arabic departments showed similar views to those teachers in the English department showed. One teacher considered that a successful SL “taught [her] how to be a teacher,” as she said. He could reach teachers through the easiest means, then moving to more complex matters successfully. According to T3, “the SL has to have

experience, vision, and some important personality traits”. To her, “if the SL is a genius, and the teacher can not adapt to his/her style, his/her work becomes useless”. In addition, “ s/he should not be there to count the teachers’ mistakes,” as T4 said. Table 55 is a summary of what the five FGI teachers consented to be successful SLs’ traits and behaviors.

Table 55. Sciences teachers’ views about traits and behaviors of a successful subject leader

Is knowledgeable in his/her subject area and is willing to help
Has knowledge about the scope and sequence of the content matter, and has clear vision
Has a clear sense of direction
Has experience in teaching all grade levels if possible to be able to reach all teachers
Builds good relationships with teachers, a collegial relationship that is conducive to more cooperative work among the department team
Appreciates the teachers’ work
Knows which teacher(s) require(s) more assistance from him/her
Makes newly qualified teachers feel safe by appreciating their work and dealing with them on the basis of their qualifications and abilities so that they adapt to the school situation
Knows how to communicate his thoughts in an easy manner to facilitate the teacher’s work

The teachers’ consensus was that if the SL does not have all these qualities, teachers would find it easier for them to make use of the resources available at school and to get all sorts of information they needed without reference to any specific person. These traits were there in the Arabic SL. “He is very helpful, humble, directive, and can attract the teachers’ attention to seek more from him. He can also activate [their] efforts,” as one Arabic teacher said. The two interviewed teachers in the Arabic department believed that the department weekly meeting really helped create a team spirit and team work focused on the scope and sequence of the content matter. Yet, the SL cancelled those meetings later on in favor of the elementary school and was there for individual teachers whenever they needed him, as they expressed. And as one concluded, “Now that we are one homogeneous team that has one vision, we are meeting and discussing things together; and if we need the SL, it will not be for coordination per se. It is only because we like to have more chances to sit with and learn from him”.

Though they believed that classroom observation was essential, the five interviewed teachers, because of the few chances they had to meet with their SLs, consented that classroom observations are only a routine measure, as T3 and T5 expressed. Since the SLs were part-

timers, there was a consensus that if they were to observe teachers' classes, their observations should be done frequently with a clear objective for each observation. This was because the content of the session, its difficulty level, its timing (being given in the first session or the sixth session, for example), the classroom situation, students' level of interest and readiness are factors to be considered. "The topic itself, not to mention any other variables, might make the session look more or less successful, the thing that is unfair to judge based on one observation," as T1 added.

Although their SLs discussed the observations with them, it was not clear to the teachers whether or not their SLs reported their work to the administration because observations were very few. What they strongly agreed on was that "negative reporting leads only to failing the team work, and defeats the purpose of successful subject leadership," as T4 said. Being a full-timer or a part-timer, observing classrooms more or less frequently, SLs according to four teachers, should not be the direct helpers to students or be their problem-solvers. Rather, they should be the indirect link between the teacher and students on one hand, and teachers and parents on the other. In this sense, the SL may help the student indirectly by setting good plans and acting as a model to teachers by presenting model lessons that would be discussed later in light of teaching gaps that would lead to student failure or parents' blame, as T1 and T2 expressed.

Subject leaders' success with students and parents

Also for the reason that they were part-timers, the SL's work was limited to controlling tests and quizzes and controlling teachers' preparation. Teachers agreed that their SLs were managing to their best within time limitations. For this, they suggested that a major focus in the department meetings should be on the means of dealing with students who had learning difficulties. Two science teachers recommended that SLs of the different departments carry

special meetings to speed up the process of diagnosing those students and starting the necessary measures as early as possible, as two teachers said.

With respect to parents, there was a consensus that they should be kept a little bit distant from school. They should not be involved in the details. The SL can carry a meeting with parents to explain his vision not more,” as T5 said. This is because “parents do not understand things the way teachers do,” as T4 said. Four of the teachers even believed that the parents meetings are an administrative job that SLs have nothing to do with; consequently, the latter do not need to attend. Student enrollment and new teachers assignment are also administrative jobs although the SL is the only person who can judge potential teachers and who is to follow-up all their work in the future, as three of them said.

Comparison between Teachers in the English Department and Teachers in the Other Departments

By comparison, the interviewed teachers in the English department differed from the teachers in the other departments in their view about subject leadership. The major differences were observations and teacher assignment. Teachers in the English department viewed that observations were means to improving teachers’ performance, rotation, and diagnosis of weak students regardless of their frequency. That is, the objective behind observations was a decisive factor for frequency, and the SL’s time limitation was a decisive factor for involving teachers in doing them. While the teachers in the other departments related effectiveness to the SL being a full-timer, similarly to what the intermediate public school teachers did. They viewed observations from only the angle of evaluating teachers’ performance.

With respect to teacher assignment, teachers in the English department considered that assigning more assistants or teachers for extra curricular activities were beyond the privileges of SLs. To them, the presence of assistants would lead to excellence, but their absence would

not affect the current state of the school. On the other hand, teachers in the other departments viewed that any task that related to financing as an administrative job performed by the principal, and new contracts with new teachers were no exception. Implied was the notion that the school principal was the person in charge of deciding when to seek excellence.

Interestingly, students' responses indicated that observations and teacher assignment were key roles of SLs that would lead to effective department work. Students' responses were in line with the views that the teachers in the English department and the parents of elementary students held about these two roles.

The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Intermediate and Secondary Students

In this study, the researcher conducted two whole-class FGIs with students in Grades 9 and 12 for the purpose of determining their needs from SLs, and to triangulate findings achieved from interviews with teachers in the English Department. As opposed to some teachers' view, the interviewed students' consensus was that SLs' two main priorities should be classroom observations and teacher assignment. The first priority should be observing teachers and students. As five students expressed, SLs, out of courtesy, should discuss the year plan with the teacher outside the classroom not inside it, during which they learn how to approach teachers properly. And as two others expressed, when they plan to visit a class, they should put in mind that the class is for the teacher, and that they cannot impose their ideas.

There was a consensus that the successful SL should condense the observations and vary the timing for a number of reasons. This was because students noticed that some teachers allowed students to raise questions when they were observed, unlike some other times, as 25% of the students said. Teachers also became tolerant in front of the observer, as 35% said. So if the SL wanted to evaluate teacher-student interaction, s/he should visit the class from the beginning of the session, as 10% of them said. "S/He could then ask the teacher to raise

questions to be answered by weak students especially that the role of the subject leader is to encourage more student participation,” as one said and another 10% agreed. And for more student participation, the SL should show students that s/he trusts them, and that s/he has a nice personality that encourages students to talk with him/her, as everybody agreed.

On the other hand, if the SL’s objective were evaluation of the teacher, then to evaluate properly, the SL should visit the class in the middle of the session because the teacher will have proceeded in his/her explanation by then, and will not change, as 70 % of the students agreed. For example, Grade 12 students consented that they had an ex- teacher who did not care about them. He used to accuse them of being stupid, and that he was a perfect person. For this, the whole class strongly believed that if the SL played an administrative role, s/he should have known about the teacher from his students, rather than assigned him/her simply because s/he was known in the field, and everybody said s/he was *good*’.

35% of the students of both grades expressed that a SL cannot be forgiven if s/he considers that a teacher is good, and consequently, does not observe him/her. To them, a SL can also base his/her observations on test results. That is, s/he controls tests before and after they are given, analyze them and assign the parts that require re-teaching, and somewhere during this process, s/he should decide on an observation, as twelfth graders agreed. S/He may also play a role in grade distribution on the parts of the test on the basis of students’ strengths and weaknesses. 15% of the students believed that if this happens, the SL will control the process by observing whether teachers are implementing what s/he has suggested, whether or not teachers are varying the approach when re-teaching, or whether or not weak students’ needs are addressed. And if this does not happen, there should be something wrong with the SL, as two students said.

Students of Grade 12 (whose part-time teachers were full-timers in public secondary schools) believed that their teachers were not being fair. A student added inquiring, “Why should these

teachers come from public schools and impose grading criteria they use there on us?” That is, in public schools teachers are not allowed to give a grade higher than 70% because the passing average according to the government criteria is 50%. These teachers gave their students the impression that the latter were weak, although “they should not be allowed to label students,” as two said. These students were fed up with the idea that they needed remedial work all the time, as their teacher used to tell them. For this, they believed that the SL should be involved in everything from preparation of tests to correcting them to assigning remedial work. That is, all possible problems should be solved by the SL through controlling the teachers’ work without any administrative or parental intervention, as two students expressed.

On the other hand, Grade 9 students’ consensus was on stressing the idea that the SL should unify not only tests and quizzes, but worksheets and handouts as well especially because two different teachers taught the three sections. If one teacher provided more than one worksheet on one objective, be it reading, writing or grammar objective, they felt worried about how much weight that objective will be given in the unified test. They considered that each teacher would be biased to her section(s), as 13% of them said. This was because they felt that the teachers were biased to excellent students, and they got ‘mad’ if those students got low grades. To them, teachers even tried to raise those students’ grades, at times through making a curve of grades, as 30% of them said. And this was a good reason for parental claim for transferring their children from one section to another.

The interviewed students in both grade levels expressed the view that it was their parents’ right to follow-up their children’s achievement with the teachers. Yet, they believed that the SL should be there when their parents come to complain about a teacher’s classroom behavior, to attend the meeting and consider all the possible measures, as 20% expressed. With respect to the SL’s relationship with parents, 60% of the students expressed the idea that if SLs perform the above two tasks, the relationship between parents and SLs becomes

secondary, but should not be ignored. The SL's relationship with parents would become very important when there is a problem with the child, any kind of problem especially in the elementary stage, as two students said. There was a consensus that the higher the grade level became, the fewer parents' visits to the school should be.

As a conclusion, students in Grades 9 and 12 believed that the SL should make it a point that teachers avoid being pre-judgemental, and follow-up this through observations and controlling tests and remedial work. Students' views about observation objectives and the relationship between the school and parents were congruent with the views of the interviewed parents in the same school. Though students could speak for themselves, they did not mention any further demands from SLs.

The Survey Questionnaire: Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of Students in the Intermediate School

Parents' responses to the survey questionnaire were congruent with and reflected their children's satisfaction. The analysis of the survey questionnaire that was passed to 98 parents (see figures 6 – 10) indicated that the parents in general were aware of the roles that the SL of the English department played. Their suggestions in the last part of the questionnaire and their responses in the FGI indicated that their demands were in line with those of teachers in the English department.

Of the 98 survey questionnaires, only 63 were returned. The survey findings in the intermediate school were very similar to those collected from the elementary school. Parents' response rate in Category A (Appendix D) indicated that 14% of them were aware that the SL observed classes, 17% knew that the SL did not observe and 21% did not know whether or not the SL observed classes. Though the frequency of observations was not a question, the responses reflected the real situation that observations were not done frequently, or at least the

objectives of observations were not made clear to parents. In Category B, similarly to parents in the elementary school, parents were aware of the assessment measures used at the school. 21% did not like the department to cancel tests and 15% did not like the department to redistribute test grades. These were also the parents of high achievers. This indicated that all the others -the majority- were satisfied with the assessment procedures followed in the department. In Category C, the majority of the parents showed likelihood for sustenance of the proposed measures taken with weak students. The number of parents, who showed awareness that those measures were actually performed, was bigger than that of the number of parents of weak students and reputation students altogether. And this is an indication that the English department has gone far in establishing clear communication channels with parents. In addition, in Category D, the response rate indicated that parents in general were aware of and satisfied with the department follow-up procedures taken in the area of social and behavioral development of their children. Also in Category E, the majority of the parents showed satisfaction with the quality of home-school connections.

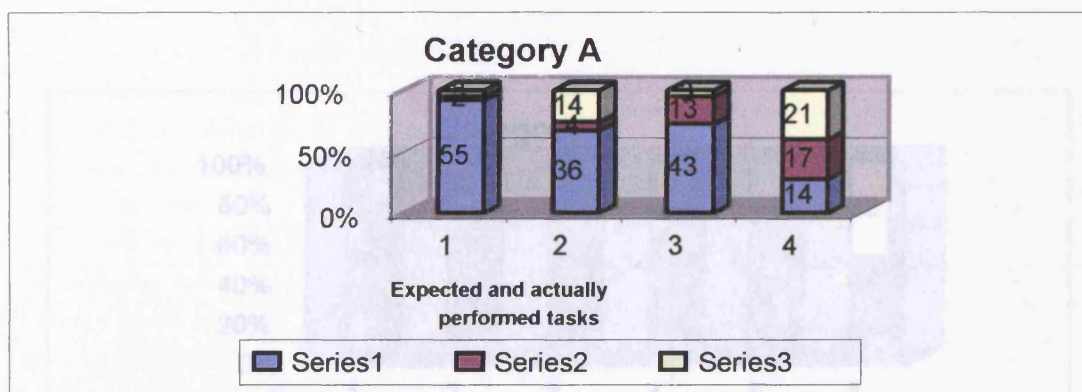


Figure 6: General roles of the subject leader.

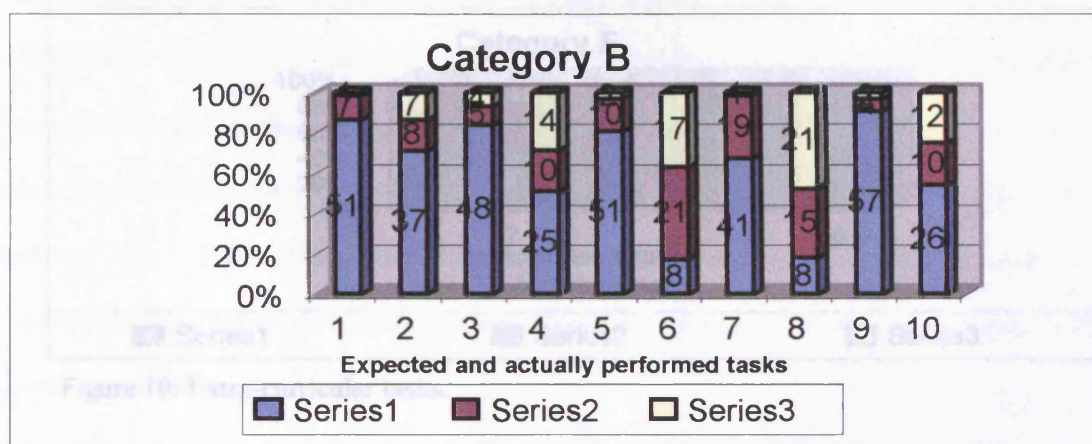


Figure 7: Assessment.

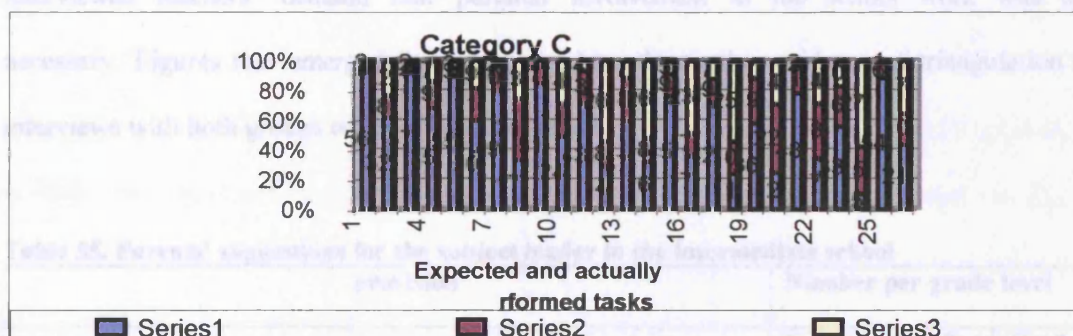


Figure 8: Measures taken for weak students.

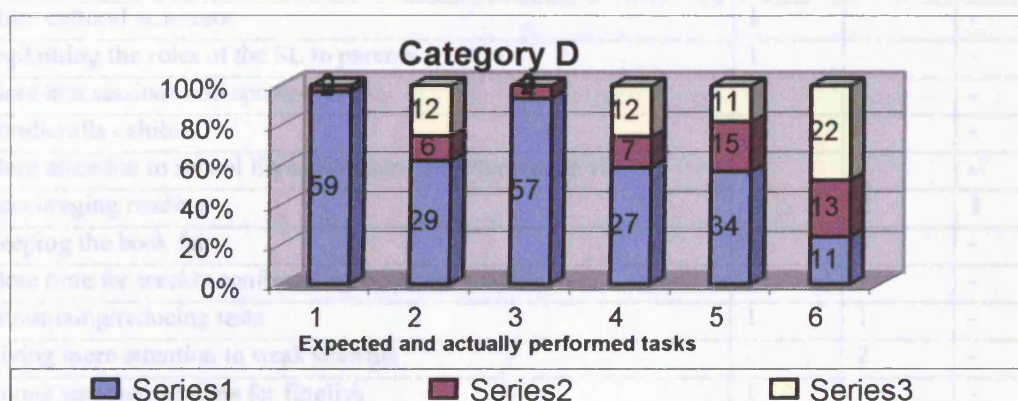


Figure 9: Follow-up.

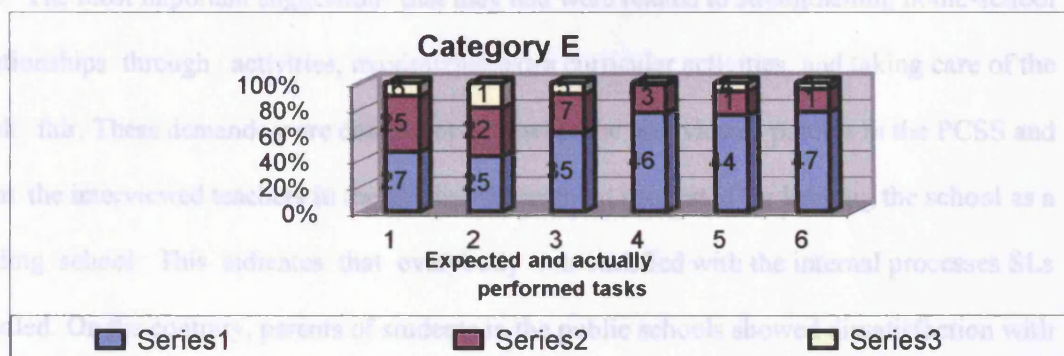


Figure 10: Extra-curricular tasks.

To sum up, parents' satisfaction with the department work might reasonably feed into the interviewed teachers' demand that parental involvement in the school work was not necessary. Figures that emerged from this part brought another evidence of triangulation of interviews with both groups of parents in the school.

Table 55. Parents' suggestions for the subject leader in the intermediate school

provision	Number per grade level		
	Gr. 6	Gr. 7	Gr. 8
More activities that parents participate in/better relationship between parents and the school	9	7	-
More communication with parents	2	3	-
More extra curricular activities and field trips	13	5	3
More cultural seminars	1	-	-
Explaining the roles of the SL to parents	1	-	-
More arts sessions and sports events	3	5	-
Handicrafts exhibit	1	-	-
More attention to school library/encouraging students to visit it	3	-	-
Encouraging reading	1	2	1
Keeping the book fair	6	3	-
More time for weekly conferencing hours for parents	1	1	-
Minimizing/reducing tests	1	1	-
Giving more attention to weak students	-	2	-
Giving summer sessions for English	1	-	-
Avoiding discrimination of students	4	1	-
Giving religious studies	-	3	-
Participation in inter school competitions	1	-	-
Encouraging student participation	1	1	-
Sending tests home	1	-	-
Paying more attention to selection of teachers	-	1	-

As table 56 indicates, parents did not complain about any problems their children might have had. The most important suggestions that they had were related to strengthening home-school relationships through activities, maximizing extra curricular activities, and taking care of the book fair. These demands were congruent with what the interviewed parents in the PCSS and what the interviewed teachers in the English department suggested for keeping the school as a leading school. This indicates that everybody was satisfied with the internal processes SLs handled. On the contrary, parents of students in the public schools showed dissatisfaction with the work of SLs.

The Roles of Subject Leaders as Viewed by Parents of Students in Public Secondary Schools

In this study, one FGI was conducted with parents of students in secondary public schools. The interview was conducted in Arabic as they chose and was translated later on. The interviewed parents were a rich source of information because all of them happened to have their younger children enrolled in private schools and their elder children in public schools. They believed that it was no wonder why their children gained more knowledge and a better command of languages than their peers in public schools. These parents' children who were enrolled in public schools, had been in private schools till Grade 6 (three children) or Grade 9 (two children) depending on the family economic status and the number of children they had. There was a consensus that if it were to them, they would never put their children in public schools. And as one parent said, "everybody knows the situation there. Putting your child in a public school means *forget all about him*". According to the interviewees, subject leadership meant meeting parents and teachers, controlling tests and observing teachers.

Subject Leaders' Weaknesses and Strengths as Viewed by Public Secondary Parents

It was clear for the researcher that the interviewed parents' notion about subject leadership was shaped partly by the image their children projected and partly by their experience with private schools. There had been a consensus among parents that SLs in public schools did nothing for their children; if they invited parents, they did it only once after the first semester to tell parents about their children's achievement. In these schools, Grade 12 students were exempted from parent-teacher meetings because the schools considered that the students had become responsible grown-ups, as the parents heard. Even when they met parents during the PTA, teachers' talk was limited to commenting on the child's general achievement level. They used some expressions like 'she needs more help', or 'Your child is very good, and has no problems,' as M4 said. M1 said that she always heard teachers saying, "Some other parents should have shown up". In general, the interviewed parents consented that the SL was always absent during parents' meetings.

With respect to tests, all that the parents knew about the SL's job was that s/he just skimmed through the test papers and checked the test grades after it was corrected to see the highest and lowest grades only. "In five minutes the SL gave the papers back to the teacher," as one daughter reported to her mother. To parents this meant that the SL did not analyze tests; consequently, did not take any further measures. Another mother inquired saying, "if there are coordination hours, why should a teacher interrupt the SL in her classes to ask her a question about a test?" This was what her daughter used to tell her. The SL sometimes answered their questions, and some other times told them that she would answer them during the coordination hours. According to the interviewees, this meant two things (a) the coordination hours were not enough, or (b) part-time teachers might leave the school before it was time for coordination simply because as M2 knew, "part-timers were not always obliged to attend the coordination sessions," as M2 said.

With respect to the SL's classroom observations, M3 said, "subject leaders observe classes with inspectors when they come to schools," and the others agreed that the SL did not observe their children's classes. These mothers described the coordination as inefficient in those schools. An example was one mother's account, "My daughter used to tell me that she was lucky to have a good teacher". The teacher that used to teach that daughter's section (one of six at least), "used to prepare extra worksheets on grammar, reading selection analyses, author biographies, and paraphrases". At the same time, she used to ask students never to give the extra material to students in other sections. "Yet my daughter's friends bombarded her with phone calls to photocopy that material. I think this resulted from mistrust between teachers themselves on the one hand, and teachers and the SL on the other," as the mother said. For all of this, if their children faced problems, parents never thought of going to the SL; rather, they went directly to the teacher herself or the principal if the teacher could not solve them. "After all, the SL is not available at school, and nobody ever thinks of referring to her," as one parent said and the others agreed.

Parents considered that the SL should perform a number of tasks without which the public school's work would not be effective, and school results would be shameful. They all agreed that if s/he does not perform all those tasks, parents will never think of visiting the school. Those tasks were inspired from their experience with private schools, and were similar to those provided by teachers and parents of the reputation group in the PCSS (see Table 57). These tasks were mainly focused on involving parents in their children's achievement through tests, meetings, and conferences. Parents reported that in the PCSS, all these roles were organized by SLs with the help of the principal. As M4 and M5 said, "to do all these, the principal should be involved". And as M2 commented, "public school principals are strong enough. Why do they not encourage this in their schools?"

Table 57. The roles of subject leaders that parents view important

sitting with teachers and planning for the material coverage
seeing tests when they are set and analyzing the test results
carrying more meetings with parents, at least once after each semester
meeting parents once at the beginning of the year to involve them with the teaching approaches
sending for parents when their children's grades deteriorate in an attempt to detect the children's problems, be they family, social, or psychological problems
preparing remedial sessions to be given during the school-days (maybe during sports sessions, and/or recesses) without letting other students notice it, and without any extra financial commitment on the part of the parents
assigning a weekly hour for the purpose of conferencing with parents individually

“The case is not the same in all private schools; not all,” as one mother said.

My children are in both, private and public schools, and both treat our kids the same way. However, we pay high tuition fees for the private school because it is safer, and teachers there help our kids become proficient in at least one foreign language.

It was clear from this that these parents had some bad experience with public schools and good experience with private schools their children were enrolled in. Of the five parents in the FGI, one had her child treated like children in public schools though enrolled in a private school. This confirms what the interviewed PCSS teachers told about their previous experiences in the different schools. On the other hand, the good experience the four mothers had with PCSSs highlighted a number of important roles that the SL should play, the thing that triangulated with the view of the interviewed PCSS teachers about subject leadership. Yet, still these findings cannot be generalized for the coincidence that all of them had children in both school.

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISCUSSION

The overall goal of this study was to examine the roles performed by SLs as key roles for the successful implementation of the LNC in the Saida area in South Lebanon. The presence or absence of a SL and the status as a full-timer or a part-timer were the guiding principles addressed in the interviews that served the researcher in examining the actual performance of SLs as opposed to how subject leadership was perceived by the interviewees as a role model.

In this study, subject leadership as perceived by the different people involved in the educational process (principals, SLs themselves, teachers, students and parents) was then addressed in the research design. The findings indicated that participants in both public and private schools were aware of the roles that SLs should perform for the sake of causing effective change and improvement. Yet, the difference between how these role were perceived and how they were performed drew the attention to the big gap between public and private schools in general, and between the elementary and the secondary public schools in particular. As a result, public and private schools were the two poles of the educational system in Lebanon, with elementary and secondary schools as the two extremes of public education.

The Impact of the Macro-Level Policy on Subject Leaders

Starting the implementation process of the LNC without enough preparation (Alwa, 2000) and guaranteeing the infrastructure (Salman, 2000) for its success created a lot of tensions. In addition, the ministry's preparing textbooks and teachers' guides that were expected to facilitate teachers' work put teachers under the pressure of covering the lengthy content matter because of the very short training they provided (Fraiha; 2000). Moreover, not

involving teachers and consequently depriving them of a shared sense of purpose to improve in the change process (Barbara Mac Gilchrist 1995; in Lawton, 1993: 112) led to improper implementation process. Furthermore, the ministry's not using the policy of positive discrimination of funds left public schools to suffer most.

To discuss the impact of the macro-level policy on the micro-context, namely SLs' performance within schools, it is important to draw the attention to some facts. Overall findings indicated that the different practitioners reflected two different cultural backgrounds about subject leadership as a role set: one held by practitioners in public schools as opposed to that held by those in the PCSS. In public schools, every principal, SL, teacher, student as well as parent sees problems everywhere as stemming from top to bottom of the hierarchy, from the ministry to people around him/her. Everybody is ready to criticize, and spotlight problems as resulting from lack of decision making on the part of people in higher position, and carelessness or lack of professionalism on the part of people below. Subject leaders are no exception. In public schools, they are described as 'helpless' by their principals, lacking time and knowledge by their colleagues, and as 'careless' by parents. The nature of accusing 'otherness' and viewing 'the-perfect-self-if' makes everybody unable to have a clear vision about what subject leadership is. Yet, reflecting on the different people's views, and putting the pieces of the jigsaw together, lead to uncovering the image of the subject leader as a planner and program developer. This implies that if these people do not change their attitudes, and unless they respect 'otherness' and believe in collective work, public schools will stay places for literacy only (Hawari, 2001b).

The situation is different in private schools. The Lebanese history of education indicates that private schools provide better quality education than public schools do (Hares, 1985). The truthfulness of this statement lies partly in the fact that these schools have good facilities (laboratories, AV aids, etc.) conducive to proper learning. And this gives no credit to schools for parents are paying high fees. Yet, when it comes to considering other factors leading to

better quality, management and leadership styles make the difference thus putting private schools on a continuum with 'private-like-public schools' and 'best-private schools' as the extremes. In the PCSS, SLs are perceived as effective partly at the departmental level and partly at interdepartmental level, but not at higher levels.

More specifically, findings of this study indicated that school management style, partly played by SLs as middle managers of change, makes the difference. In the private school, the different participants reflected the notion that SLs are program developers and managers of change (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000). Subject leaders are also good at managing external relationships. Yet, in the absence of a clear job description and the strong belief that only principals are the ones who assign teachers, teachers and parents do not accept the fact that SLs can play any management roles in financing and doing development appraisal of teachers in their departments. In fact, performance appraisal was and is never a role performed internally in schools. Appraisal in public schools leads to no change because schools follow the unified pay scale, part of which is promotion. And literally, when appraisal is done, it is done by the principal only and for the sake of promoting a teacher from elementary to secondary teaching, or a secondary teacher to subject leadership. In both cases, principals do the appraisal intuitively.

While when done in private schools, appraisal stays an extra effort on the part of the SL who believes in the change s/he can cause in the quality of work in his/her department. When performance appraisal is done, the case in the PCSS, it is perceived by the school principal as leading to more financial commitment, the thing that she prefers to take very carefully. Appraisal is also perceived as unfruitful by teachers as long as their financial status is not improved. On the other hand, development appraisal is perceived by teachers as fruitful and by the principal something to appreciate the SL for doing. For this, appraisal is not yet accredited to SLs formally, and the teacher pay raise stays confidential between the school principal, the SL and the teacher. In this sense, part-time SLs, because of their conditions of

assignment and time constraints, do believe in the benefits of appraisal but consider themselves unable to do it. This leads to the conclusion that the PCSS is not benefiting from the advantages of appraisal as suggested by Bell (1988) since it is not contractual.

Another important issue to clarify is that full-time public school teachers who are part-time SLs in the PCSS make another group who have a culture of their own about subject leadership. When performing their teaching job in public schools, they recognize subject leadership as a role set more important in the Elementary schools. But when performing their jobs as SLs in private schools, they recognize the importance of controlling the work of their respective departments even if that requires giving extra hours as volunteers. This leads to two implications. The first is that although they are aware of problems, gaps and sufferings in public schools, they are not willing to initiate any change because of the centrality of the educational system. That is, their underlying assumption is that the system that places them and does not recognize their potential is the system they are not willing to serve. The second is that the level of autonomy they are granted in private schools encourages them to utilize all their potentials for the sake of proving to themselves and others that they can make a difference. In fact, switching codes helps in widening the pre-existing gap between the two schooling systems, the gap that is to be filled when implementing the LNC. Findings about the different participants' views provide a wider spectrum about how subject leadership is viewed in private and public schools.

Principals of the Public Secondary Schools

Principals in public secondary schools were aware of the gap that the government created in implementing change without enough preparation as Hawari (2001b) suggests. Their views are in line with Stoll and Myer's (1998) discussion about the quality of the school and the learning principal, and with Barth's (1990) notion of preparation of SLs to handle the job of implementing change. Yet, to them, the conditions and the process of assigning SLs made the

job of school principals more difficult. That is, sustaining their involvement in selecting SLs and assigning them to different stages of schooling created confusions and negative attitudes on the part of potential teachers. This saved the ministry from being committed to assigning all potential teachers or getting involved in creating a new fixed post in school hierarchy, the thing that would rule out all chances for other assignments by other external agents (El Amine, in Hawari, 1994a).

In fact, the ambiguity of the role set that SLs represent was from beginning misleading. This is because big decisions that related to setting the LNC were controlled by political, religious and social entities that do not belong to the Ministry of Education. For example neglecting SLs in the LNC as important internal agents of change was in favor of creating the GCD that was said to be an area of assignment (Hawari, 1995c), assignment guided by those same entities. And the clashes that the GCD created point in the direction of the persisting effects of political interference in education. This is congruent with what Bottery (2001) argues as the effect of macro-political context on teacher professionalism.

Accepting the fact that SLs were not prepared to perform an essential controlling role, the interviewed principals' attention was drawn to external agents as alternatives. They considered the effect of the inspectors on teachers and their seriousness as great for the sole purpose that the former were external agents, or examiners, unlike SLs. This vision might have stemmed from their need for the SLs as qualified teachers to improve the school achievement which has some truth into it. Yet, in the circumstance, principals found themselves unable to take any measures to strengthen the state of SLs. They did not give due consideration to the fact that SLs should be professionals who should strike the balance between their management role and teaching role (Blandford, 1998).

This draws the attention to some important implications. The first is that school principals should be allowed the autonomy to be able to select SLs and reinforce their status in school

apart from macro-political pressures. It is then that principals will seek training for SLs and assess precisely what the latter need to be able to perform all their expected tasks. They will also seek training that will provide the school with better or more successful teachers thus minimizing the SL's teaching load and bridging the collaboration gaps between SLs and teachers. The proper training, unlike that provided during the preparation for the LNC and was described by El Amine (1994a) and Bayan (in shalha, 1998a) as failing and shocking will spontaneously lead to giving a better image of the SL among colleagues in the department; consequently, better collaborative department atmosphere. Yet, to ensure such atmosphere, a prerequisite condition is the ministry's revisiting the previously set plan for training principals as suggested by Abu Assali (in Hawari, 1997f) for them to base their choice on what is best for the school as well as assess SLs' success.

The SLs' views about their roles varied and consequently their demands. They shared the same vision about their role set. Interestingly enough, the interviewed SLs who are full-time public secondary school teachers and at the same time part-time SLs in PCSS showed a clearer vision of what subject leadership entails because of having experience in both schools.

Subject Leaders in the Public Secondary Schools

In this process of assigning SLs, many variables interact thus affecting the final decision. First, since the law allows teachers to propose for this post, and since there are not many strict conditions for selecting SLs, (Law 22/1982) many teachers may be competing for this post. Some or all of them might utilize their own connections with external authorities to influence the decision. A second variable is the principal's own evaluation of the teacher, and his personal preference which may be based on confounded personal styles. The choice may even be wrongly done because the principal is traditional and cannot adapt to change as stated by Wood (1993: 7). The principal may also utilize his/her connections with external authorities to guarantee his/her selection. SLs are also not selected directly by the Ministry of Education.

Consequently, SLs are not assigned on the basis of any criteria that should be congruent with those needed for the implementation of the LNC. This deviates from what Busher and Harris with Wise (2000) suggest as characteristics of effective SLs.

Public secondary SLs considered discussing the impact of the macro-level policy and addressing problems that existed prior to implementing the LNC more important for future success of its implementation. And based on their experiences, they viewed that effective implementation required a number of concurrent measures to be taken. They viewed comprehensive schooling as a good solution from the angle of unifying the coefficient of the grades without which they can find no one to blame for weaknesses that students carry from one stage of schooling to another. They viewed it as part and parcel of the solution without considering its drawbacks viewed by El Amine (1994b), and the community's reactions toward it. They were also blinded to alternatives like portfolio assessment as suggested by Arter and Spandel (1992). Though in principle Smith and Noble (1995) suggest that comprehensive schooling is a means to minimizing the effects of poverty upon educational performance and upon access to educational opportunities, the conditions for its success need to be studied in the Lebanese context.

Along with this, The SLs demanded more training for SLs and teachers, and stricter conditions to be set for teacher assignment; that is, aspects of professionalism that will lead to better collaborative department atmosphere as suggested by Brundrett (1998), Begley and Leonard (1999), and Campbell (1985; in Wolfendale, 1987). Without these, according to the interviewed SLs, successful implementation of the LNC and improvement would not take place as Barth (1990) and Miles and Ekholm (1985) suggest, and the quality of the school will be threatened. Based on their experiences, their sufferings with teachers in their departments, and the gaps in teacher assignment stated by Al Bawwab Al Eid (1995), the interviewed SLs detached themselves from teacher INSET. They related assigning teachers as well as INSET to educational planning, the effect of which would extrapolate to higher education. Implied

from this was that if planning were broad as Leicestershire LEA (1989) suggest, there would not be any problems in graduating students from the government university; consequently, there would not be any problems in assigning them as teachers in public schools.

Though they withdrew themselves from INSET provision, they wanted to appraise teachers' performance to impose sanctions. Their suggestion emerged from their bad experience with some teachers; yet, it does not rule out the fact that they are ignorant about the use of socio-political skills and transformational styles of leadership as a means to injecting a sense of responsibility in their team (Daft, 1999). Consequently, they can be said to ignore how effective development appraisal is.

They also viewed guidance and counseling on one hand and appraisal on the other as mutually exclusive, thus defeating the purposes of both being complementary to each other as shown in the literature (Bell, 1988). What they did not mention was equipping schools as a means to facilitating their work though they needed it badly. Although equipment comes second to training, this does not rule out the fact that school facilities are essential for any proposed change as suggested by Wolfendale (1988) and as required for the LNC.

Added to comprehensive schooling, training and assignment, the most important demand the interviewed SLs stressed was recognizing them as full timer SLs. In theory, this can be the first step toward SLs' spending more time controlling the work of their departments and getting involved in the teaching/learning situation in general, and students' problems in particular. Yet their real intention was not satisfying students' individual needs as suggested by Hawari (2001c). In fact, they showed awareness of the big percentage of students with SEN as Abu Mrad (in Hawari, 1994) stated, but what they seemed to lack was how to deal with those students (Gardner, 1993); and Bastiani and Wolfendale (1988).

Within time limitations, SLs performed two tasks, checking on tests and controlling the scope and sequence of the material. Their demand for changing their status to be involved more in the daily work of teachers, and to involve teachers in research and in resource creation reflects some aspects of curriculum delivery proposed by Alexander (1987). Yet, they are not characteristics of the roles of SLs who can implement change or improve teachers' performance as suggested by Busher and Harris with Wise (2000). More specifically, their involvement in the teachers' resource creation was not meant to address mixed ability groups. This is because their notion about remedial work was limited to providing weak students with some extra work as homework to be checked by the teacher, without any further follow up on the part of the SL. It was not clear whether or not the homework would be related to skill reinforcement as suggested by Wolfendale (1987). What confirms their lack of knowledge about how to do this was their demand for specialists to solve problems of students with SEN without their direct involvement. This also shows lack of commitment to collective responsibility for these students as suggested by Wolfendale (1987).

Although SLs admitted that most of students in their schools suffered from socio-economic problems, they did not show awareness that apart from these problems children stay their parents' first concern as Saadeh (in Shams, 1994) suggests. They did not show interest in dealing with parents; rather, considered PTAs a waste of time with low cost-effectiveness. They even considered the socio-economic problems a source of hindrance to solving problems of students with SEN. This leads to the implication that in the absence of collaborative home-school links (McBeth et al., 1995), there is not much hope in addressing SEN in public schools unless SLs as well as teachers receive training in this area. SEN is part of the LNC. However, it was not implemented, nor were teachers trained to deal with it; and in the short run, this topic does not seem to see light or to have any echo. SLs showed bias to students who transfer from private schools and expressed their dissatisfaction with the parents coming from poor socio-economic backgrounds. They still blamed parents for not attending PTAs, for example, without knowing that parents find communication with

teachers a source of stress (Hornby, 1995: 4) similarly to how they themselves view it (Turnbull and Turnbull, 1986: 10).

With respect to content matter, the SLs were concerned about the quantity of the material to be covered rather than the quality. For this they cared less about formative assessment as an aspect of curriculum design as Lawton (1993) stresses, and that different kinds of tests serve different purposes (Gipps and Stobart, 1993; in Lawton, 1996). They also overlooked the effect of home learning on student achievement (Bastiani, 1988; Rutter et al., 1989). And when they observed teachers in their classes, they did not provide feedback the thing that defeated one of the objectives of teacher appraisal that would lead to professional development as suggested by Bell (1992) and performance improvement as suggested by Jerome (1997).

As a conclusion, because the interviewed SLs viewed the solution as always coming from an external agent, they stressed the importance of inter school links and missed the inter department links for improvement in student achievement as suggested by Harris (1999) and Witziers, Slegers, and Imants (1999). Subject leaders in the private school showed a different view about subject leadership though a number of them were secondary public school teachers. Since they did not face any of the problems that public schools faced, their demands stemmed from their aspiration to improve school achievement.

Subject Leaders in the Private Case Study School

The interviewed SLs in the PCSS expressed their satisfaction with the school environment and the school achievement. Similarly to SLs in the public schools, they claimed that they could have performed more tasks had they been full-timers. Findings of this study lead to the conclusion that they cannot perform more tasks because the extra time they spent as volunteers and which makes their actual quota almost equal to a full-time job was just for

better performance of the current tasks. And this indicates that a full time job is not enough to appraise teachers' performance when they are assumed to lead between five and twelve teachers. According to them, within time limitations, they could control the scope and sequence of material coverage as well as tests. Since these two tasks took most of their time, they were unable to perform the task of teacher appraisal. Though there is some truth in this, appraisal is not a one-shot process as they believed, compared to what Bell (1992) suggests. Though the appraisal was apparently left by the school administration for the SL to do if s/he liked, rather than a school policy (Warwick, 1983), the SLs viewed it as part of the principal's job upon assigning teachers and paying for their INSET and workshops they attend later on.

Time limitations made each SL spend more time with teachers in lower grades. Implied in this is the notion that the more experienced the teacher becomes, the more autonomy s/he will be allowed. This agrees with Schon (1983); yet, Schon's notion of autonomy is more related to the teacher as the one who is involved in action research. In addition, lacking enough time, the SLs considered the relationship with parents and problem students as the teachers' job first, and an administrative job when the teacher cannot handle the situation. It is here that the researcher as a SL, a subject in this research study, and out of her experience with SEN, found herself raising a number of questions. How can a SL assess teachers' commitment if s/he does not have time to share their experiences? How can a SL build and share a vision with colleagues if they do not meet regularly? And how can SEN be addressed if they are not part of the department vision?

In fact, only the researcher and her colleagues in the department showed concern about SEN and were involved in action research for this purpose. While in the other departments, the teachers' commitment showed when they shared in providing special treatment for reputation students after they were diagnosed, and this gives the hope that they are willing to be involved in action research as described by Henkin (2000), Hopkins (1985) and Elliot, 1978a) if their SLs take this measure in the future.

The Arabic department SL considered teaching languages more demanding than sciences. For this, to cope with the demands imposed on him, he stressed the importance of vision sharing as suggested by Harris (1999) and Busher and Harris with Wise (2000). He also stressed the teaching approaches that would satisfy the demands of students with varying abilities and interests as suggested by Wolfendale (1987). Whereas, the sciences SLs stressed scope and sequence and the utilization of material resources as the only approaches to satisfying students' needs. While in fact successful subject leadership means what SLs altogether focused on. In addition, SLs correlated teacher commitment with educational excellence and forgot all about teachers' needs and the SL's induction program to teacher training that would lead to improved performance as suggested by Battersby (1982) and Hopkins (1986).

By comparison, SLs in the PCSS were not in a better position than SLs in public schools. By virtue of their long experience, they could control the work of their respective departments. Yet, they were still lacking enough knowledge about how to detect and address real problems affecting academic achievement, be they psychological, social or affective. The evidence is that once one learns something, and internalizes new knowledge, one cannot unlearn; rather, s/he (whether a SL or a teacher) will use that knowledge actively and systematize it in his/her daily practices. Allowing degree holders who have longer experience in the PCSS more autonomy than others feeds into the conditions of teacher assignment (Hawari, 1995c) in public schools; especially that the former receive proper training. It also reflects the level of confidence and trust that the school administration has in SLs as well as SLs have in teachers who are degree holders and whose teaching satisfies a big percentage of students, if not all. It is the trust that Daft (1999), Grint (2000), and Northouse (1997) consider a trait of successful SLs. Yet, at the same time, it makes the quota assigned for SLs sound feasible when school principals view subject leadership as an essential role for the sense of control it creates.

Teachers in the Public Elementary Schools

Public schools have a long history of sufferings that started with the Lebanese civil war. A lot has been said about the big gap in starting the LNC before equipping the public schools (Abu Asali; in Hawari, 1997f). The negative consequence of lacking all the equipment were inflicted mainly on elementary schools, the small schools that were last to have someone to follow-up the implementation process of the LNC. It is the lack of a SL in their school that made the interviewed teachers put all the solutions to their problems in the hand of the expected SL, thus reflecting a real image of what subject leadership entails. They viewed the SL as a deliverer of department meetings. The content and form of the meetings are congruent with what Wood (1993) suggests. They also viewed the SL as the planning head of department as described by Miles et al. (1988) and Wood (1993). To them, the SL is responsible for delivery and assessment as Alexander (1987) suggests, responsible for sustaining the relationship between the school and home as Bastiani (1988) and McBeth, (1989) suggest, and a link between the department and the school administration as Busher and Harris with Wise (2000) suggest.

In the absence of subject leadership in their school, and based on their belief that education is centralized, the interviewed teachers complained about a number of problems that resulted directly from setting the LNC; consequently, viewed the government and the Ministry of Education as the solution providers. They showed awareness that school improvement required setting a program where the government plays a more responsible role in selecting the content that would lead to more teacher's attention to students' welfare as suggested by Galloway (1990). And as opposed to what Galloway (1990) states about government setting the content, the teachers believed that this would make their lives easier especially because of foreign language instruction. They expected that their problems in dealing with the previous books would be solved in the new books. Yet, the length of the content matter in the new textbooks created the problems of deciding what to teach or what to focus on more.

The ambiguity in the situation made their complaints resonate with research findings in the Lebanese context (Sarkis; in Khashan, 1996) and the criticisms raised about material writing. In this sense, they believed that a SL should have a hand in seeking teacher's autonomy and in decision making at the school level as Schon (1983) suggests.

The teachers also showed awareness that students in public schools were suffering from learning difficulties. They considered that in their situation, lacking all kinds of support, they could do nothing but report their observations. Consequently, they were putting great hopes in the follow-up process when in turn external agents report their sufferings for the sake of the ministry's re-planning, as they expected. Their suggestions are in line with McBeth's (1989) and Bastiani and Wolfendale's (1988) concept of external agents to solve these problems.

Their concept of the roles of internal agents, if they existed, as well as external agents who would follow up the implementation process of the LNC and solve the teacher problems is congruent with Smyth's (1991), Siskin's (1994), and Schon's (1987) notion of creating a department culture built on debate. That is, they viewed the department culture as a first stage toward solving their problems if the situation stayed as it was. This brings forward El Amine's criticism (1994a) that the LNC was set from the top without involving the grassroots. To their best knowledge, the interviewed teachers' potential to change was reflected in their initiating a department culture of conversations and discussions about their own teaching experiences in a routine manner. It is in line with Dewey's (1993) concept of reflective teaching as opposed to resisting change that is fatiguing (Wood, 1993) because of the circumstances (Smyth, 1991). With all the characteristics of a good SL in mind, the teachers demanded that the presence of such a SL should not distort their image. For this, they reflected him/her as an observer to help as suggested by Busher (1996) and Warwick (1983). Finally, these teachers were the only ones who put great hopes in the process of revising the LNC for the sake of involving SLs in it. Teachers, having had a degree in

education and good experience with SLs in the PCSS, showed great awareness of the roles that SLs should perform.

Teachers in the Private Elementary School

According to the PCSS elementary teachers, within the realm of the department, a SL has to have the personality traits and the management skills. S/He has to pace change according to teachers' willingness and readiness, create a collegial atmosphere, and raise the motivation level of teachers. All of these are what Busher and Harris with Wise (2000) suggest for effective department work. Teachers believed that their SL having these traits helped sustain the success of the department. What helped more was that they also spent enough time with their SL, worked collaboratively with her, and got involved in all the work that related to the individual students' needs inside and partly outside their classes. All of these are traits of effective subject leadership style (Daft, 1999). Consequently, they viewed that communication with parents, screening SEN and providing remedial work essential roles to be played by both the SL and the department team, the notion suggested by Gage and Berliner (1988), McBeth (1989) and Wolfendale (1987). With respect to screening, they viewed that screening for selection is unfair, while screening for diagnosing problems to keep students in the mainstream, recommended by Gipps and Stobart (1993), was what they were seeking the SL's help for. It is compounded with their notion of department work that should be student centered to reach all mixed ability groups of students reflecting Harris's (1999) notion of autonomy of pupil learning.

The overall image was that teachers were ready for change as long as collaborative environment and relationships among teachers were sustained as stated by Witziers, Slegers, and Imants (1999). In addition, to them, change would be easy if the SL supports teachers, rather than interferes with their work, for the purpose of benefiting pupil

achievement in tangible and lasting ways as Bastiani (in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988: 58) states.

Teachers in the English department in the intermediate school also emphasized the importance of sustaining the collaborative environment in the department that Leonard (1999), Smyth (1991) and Brundrett (1998) consider important. They were involved in action research to a lesser extent than teachers in the elementary schools. They were interested in reaching all students as much as they lacked interest in being appraised for their belief that the financial reward that might follow was the principal's authority, who in this school, follows a fixed scale of payment.

In conclusion, findings gained from the public elementary school compared to those from the PCSS indicated that the interviewed private school teachers were satisfied. This was because their needs were limited to changing the classroom size, the thing that reflects Stoll and Myers' (1998) notion of seeking excellence and better quality. Also for the sake of improving the school achievement level, the teachers suggested setting a supplementary curriculum that would keep SEN in the mainstream but separated at times from other students. This also reflects Clark's et al., (1997) opposition to the idea of student exclusion. Teachers in the intermediate and secondary schools, similarly to those in the elementary, expressed their satisfaction with the work of their SLs.

Teachers the in Intermediate and Secondary Public Schools and PCSS

It is clear from the findings that the higher the grade was, the less teachers tended to show concern about subject leadership as a role model. The teachers in the intermediate public school showed less concern than the teachers did in the elementary school, and more concern than the secondary teachers. They even took into consideration the status of their SL when stating their demands. Their demands from the SL were mainly controlling their work and

supporting teachers. These are in fact the very general terms that explain what subject leadership is. Yet the elaboration on these terms came deficient from teachers which reflected their unfamiliarity with all the roles that successful SLs perform. This indicated how lack of recognition of this post is reflected in their demands.

These teachers were even more down to earth than the secondary teachers when they indirectly reported weaknesses of SL, namely their inability to deal with weak students and parents thus becoming unable to help as Bennet and Downes (1998: 13) suggest. For this, their suggestion that the degree the SL has and his/her status as full-timer are important for successful leadership sounded authentic. However, they could not explain how these traits could be reflected in specific behaviors. Consequently, their call for screening students for enrollment was to them an outlet from being unable to deal with weak students. This contradicts with the hypothesis that students' needs should be satisfied, and expresses the unfavorable use of screening as a process independent of curriculum design (Lawton, 1993).

The teachers' description of the roles of SLs indicated that they were far from the notion about collaborative departments as suggested by Harris (1999), or the notion about action research as a means to effective departments and school improvement as suggested by Hopkins (1985). The whole situation proved that the implementation within the classroom and across the school was left to the energy of individual teachers as Hopkins (1999) suggests. While teachers in the English department in the PCSS were satisfied with all the roles their SL performed: selecting textbooks, supporting teachers, creating teachers' sense of responsibility, and creating good culture and climate of change (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000) thus drawing stress caused by change (Mills, 1995) to the minimum.

On the other hand, secondary teachers did not try to elaborate on the topic by stating strengths or weaknesses of SLs, justifying their status or blaming them. Rather, each expressed dissatisfaction with the policy of the ministry clearly because each of them viewed

himself/herself as a potential SL. They blamed the ministry for the chaotic official examinations, student enrollment policy, and lack of school facilities, the things that SLs had nothing to do with and that date back to the history of education in Lebanon long before setting the LNC (Hares, 1985). A closer look indicates that these teachers' demands are secondary to successful performance of subject leadership as a role model and good implementation of change, and consequently development. In fact, successful SLs can utilize the available facilities and work on diagnosing SENs rather than reject students because of their low achievement level as Busher and Harris with Wise (2000) suggest.

Parents in the Public and Private Secondary Schools

In this study, the parents of students in the public secondary schools showed dissatisfaction with the work of SLs. Their dissatisfaction resulted from comparing the situation in public schools to that in private schools, where their younger children were. Yet, still their demands were reasonable and reflected a number of tasks that a SL should perform to be called a SL. In fact, these parents' comparison between the two school systems provided a clear picture about how private schools in general established 'good' names through performing tasks to reach all students. The comparison also provided a source of triangulation about how SLs in private schools are delegated some management roles that they utilize properly. It also sheds light on how SLs are marginalized in public schools thus making parents seek help directly from principals. Losing hope in witnessing any change, parents who put their elder children in public schools carry on with certain notions that Cunningham and Davis (1998) label as parents' criticisms about schools.

In fact, parents' different behaviors toward the two schools helped in sustaining the poor image of public schools and the good image of the private school. Private schools' financial independence transfers the control of quality education to the parents to a reasonable extent especially under the prevailing economic situation in the country. Consequently, parents

sought SLs' help in resolving any problem, and would not contact principals unless SLs failed. Whereas, the centrality of decision in public schools made the parents criticize classroom interruptions and teachers' extra efforts that they did not like to share with others, thus accusing SLs of lacking control. This criticism indicated that there was lack of organized meetings and good management of meetings as proposed by Wood (1993), and was against Busher and Harris with Wise's (2000) notion of department culture. They reflected Smith and Noble's (1995) notion of 'the ever existing inequalities in educational performance' which actually brought forward the historical problem in the Lebanese educational system as Antonius (1968) described.

Though these behaviors might occur in any educational institution, the image about lack of organization brings forward three questions. The first is about the truthfulness of those statements and the frequency of those behaviors. The second is whether or not parents were trying to justify their decision to withhold the communication with the public school. The third is if those parents were paying those schools high tuition fees, would they react similarly? The implication is that parents who enroll their children in public schools in the intermediate and secondary stages of schooling are not worried about their children. They consider that their children come from private schools and would achieve better than the other students in public schools. And because of their children's language proficiency, that is a major issue debated by Al Bawwab Al Eid (1995), Mousa (1996), and Fraiha (1998), parents would not be worrying about their children's achievement level in any other subject area. As a result, they do not sustain any relationship with the school.

Parents in the private secondary school, based on their experience with SLs there, showed satisfaction with the roles performed by the SLs and willingness to argue for more efforts to be made. They demanded for more observations for better control of teachers' work in the classroom (Hopkins and Harris with Singleton and Watts, 2000). They also demanded for more creativity in extra-curricular activities that would make the teaching/learning situation

highly motivating. Parents of good achievers viewed them from recreational perspective, while the reputation group from educational perspective, namely varying the teaching approach (Wolfendale, 1987; Harris, 1999). They also demanded for similar commitment of SLs of the different subject areas to that of the SL in the English department in the area of addressing mixed ability groups and SEN.

The implication is that interdisciplinary communication leads to better quality education that is congruent with what Harris (1999) and Witziers, Sleegers and Imants (1999: 302) suggest. To them, private schools are autonomous; yet, financial decisions are the responsibility of school principals only. For this, they viewed the principals assigning full-time SLs is essential. In addition, they viewed classroom observations from the angle of improving the teaching/learning situation, rather than as part of the appraisal process for promotion, pay raise, rotation or staff development.

To sum up, in this chapter the researcher discussed how the different participants in this study perceived subject leadership as a role model, what gaps they spotlighted as a result of their experiences, and what solutions they proposed for successful implementation of the LNC. Findings in general indicated that the participants were not aware of a number of tasks that a SL can and should perform for successful implementation of change. Their notion about how the SL can be involved in planning and managing change, performance evaluation, providing in-service training for existing teachers and NQTs, action research, utilizing a full range of assessment measures, intervention, interdisciplinary relationships, and resource management was almost vague.

This implies how much the ministry is absentizing this role and leaving it for each individual SL to act according to his/her knowledge about what is to be done, and commit himself/herself to his/her own values. The only exceptional participants in this respect are parents of reputation students and teachers who work with the researcher. Both of these are

the ones who take much of the researcher's time, the former for the sake of improving their children's achievement and avoiding failure, and the latter for improving performance and consequently their status. It was only coincidence that led to their recognition of these tasks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a number of factors led to the emergence of the same old department cultures. The lack of recognition and preparation of SLs to perform certain tasks inside schools led to no change in their behavior. The lack of situational actions by SLs that should match with the differing teaching approaches proposed in the LNC led to a control gap between experienced SLs and trained teachers. Also lack of equipping schools with the needed teaching cadre and facilities led to two other gaps. The first is the difficulty for teachers to implement the LNC properly within school confines in a way that leads to better quality education with minimal intervention on the part of parents. The second is schools' inability to teach a number of the new subjects, mainly technology.

Teachers could not implement the LNC as suggested with full material coverage without putting much more pressure on students. This in turn led to parents' as well as students' negative attitudes toward the LNC and the Ministry of Education for not fulfilling their promises: that the LNC is more interesting and will be made easier for students to manipulate. All of this rests in the ministry's budgeting decisions without which the gap between public and private schools will grow bigger, and the attitudes toward schooling will fall into two extremes. Without serious attempts at revising the policy framework for the LNC and without timely and proper decision making, the implementation as suggested in Decree 10227 will stay far from reach.

Under these circumstances, the model for subject leadership in schools in Lebanon had a very special identity. In Lebanese public schools, a SL reflects the image of a person waiting for

empowerment to come from (an) external agent(s) (the ministry, the inspectorate or the GCD). Once gained, empowerment would work as the magician's stick that will instigate SLs' hidden potentials to deal perfectly with teachers, parents and students who do not have any problems whatsoever. The secret word for the magician's stick is "a full-time job and power to impose sanctions". Yet, the decision to keep those potentials hidden after gaining the long teaching experience that entitled them this post might probably mean that they did not have enough potential to cope with educational change, the first sign to which was the absence of two notions: SEN and development appraisal.

Teachers, students and parents perceived this model as an outdated model that would not fit in the period of implementing change, unless SLs performed some additional tasks. And compared to the model the researcher created as a good model for implementing change, the existing SLs, in their status, would impose their traditional approach when implementing change; consequently, be one factor leading to incomplete implementation of the LNC.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS

The key questions that this study addressed were focused on what (a) administrative roles, (b) practical roles toward teachers, parents and students, and (c) collaborative roles with SLs of other subject areas SLs can perform, all for the purpose of enhancing the implementation of the LNC. The research questions were further divided into more specific questions that the researcher felt had not been addressed by previous research to gain more insight about the status of SLs in the Lebanese context and whether or not their current status was suitable for proper implementation of the LNC. The findings reported here are based on a small sample and must be interpreted with caution. Nonetheless, the mentioned external influences can be counted transferable to other contexts than that where the sample was selected, even in contexts where French is the medium of instruction for the first foreign language.

At the beginning, the researcher tried to delineate the effect of the external forces affecting the implementation process. Findings gained from school principals indicated that the Ministry of Education and the government were not at a stage to provide great help to schools, be it through training or activating the inspectorate and the GCD. There were not enough budgets for training, and clashes between the inspectorate and the GCD persisted. Yet, school principals were still found to see the solution to proper implementation of the LNC through external forces that were not functioning properly and would not be expected to in the short run. This implies that they underestimated their SLs' skills at managing change. They viewed them as highly qualified *teachers* leading less qualified teachers; consequently, missed the notion that success can be achieved through empowering SLs, as well as teachers (Leask and Terrell, 1997: 138), within their schools, and encouraging collegiality for the whole school team to benefit from each other's experiences (Joyce and Showers, 1984; in Hopkins, 1984: 84). Principals also missed the idea that powerful subject leadership can be a source of whole

school empowerment, rather than a source of threat to their post simply because the former are in the management and cannot be involved in the teaching/learning processes.

Should the ministry train teachers or SLs, they should work within a framework to utilize methodological foundations that reinforce collegiality and offer particular courses leading to competence in actual teaching situations, instead of frustration and dissatisfaction among teachers (Cowan's and Wright's, 1990; in Busher and Saran, 1995: 112). Given the constraints of campus wide budgeting in public schools, it is important for principals to investigate, on the basis of set criteria, how efficient the hired teachers are and whether or not teacher preparation is enough for them to handle successful change.

Addressing the question about external as well internal conditions affecting SLs' work, public schools showed awareness of the power of their post; yet, wanted their empowerment to come from outside, through the ministry and the government. This is because they believed that external powers imposed on them teachers who became internal threats to their proper functioning. While in fact they should be encouraged by the ministry as well as their principals to view that quality control of teacher development can be done by SLs from within (Tenjoh-Okwen, 1996) even if the quota is not satisfactory. That is, those who have the skills and the power to control will control even under time constraints, what Grint (2000: 2-4) calls situational leadership. Viewing change as stemming from within schools rather than initiated from without makes practitioners within schools do the self-critiquing and self-assessment before putting blame on others for every single flaw. And this should be the case in public schools in general and in public elementary schools in particular.

Addressing the question about the situation in public elementary schools in the absence of SLs, public elementary teachers were found to face problems everywhere. They had problems dealing with stress (Mills, 1995 and Nightingale Teaching Consultancy, 1992: 4) resulting from the novelty level of the content matter in the new textbooks, its length, scope and

sequence, and its difficulty level. They had to manage on their own where most of the school facilities were lacking. They had to deal with uncooperative parents and school administration; since the communication channels with the ministry and the GCD were blocked.

The discussion of the thesis topic made them see the solution provider to all these problems a person called 'the subject leader'. Yet, they seemed to ignore a number of facts. First, a SL should be there to support and that the big bulk of teaching stays the teachers' job that they are to be accountable for. Second, students that enroll in public schools come from the same poor backgrounds, and this will stay the case. Third, until teachers receive proper training on how to deal with their students, they should focus on quality rather than quantity of material coverage. And finally, whether or not SLs existed, school principals are never involved in the teaching/learning situation. Most importantly, public elementary teachers were not aware that under the circumstances they were managing properly by creating subject committees.

They should be aware that their first and major tension is coverage of the lengthy content matter which all public schools have been suffering from; that this tension will remain until the ministry addresses the existing problems, and that stress management is still necessary (Mills, 1995; Brown and Ralph, 1994: 8). And with respect to their problems with foreign language instruction, teachers have to provide their students with better opportunities to position themselves in other target languages to challenge and expand their notion of the standard as they are learning. Meanwhile, the ministry should investigate how much of the content can be reduced for the sake of proper development of students in the first two cycles especially that these cycles are intended to develop students socially, and to develop their sense of citizenship as Decree 10227 states. This also calls for the importance of critical assessment of the content of the curriculum relative to students' backgrounds and environment when revising the LNC.

Investigating the situation in intermediate schools, teacher in both public and private schools seemed to feel more comfortable than elementary teachers did. They considered that subject leadership was needed for staff and organizational development to reshape department work.

Yet, like the elementary teachers, teachers in the intermediate public schools did not show clear understanding about what subject leadership might entail as suggested by Busher and Harris with wise (2000). Finding a solution through the comprehensive school is suggestive that they did not understand the relationship between the LNC on one hand, and comprehensive schooling and TVE on the other. That is, instead of viewing TVE as a solution to problems of achievement and problems of dealing with weak students, they viewed problems of content solved through changing the context. This is also suggestive that the ministry should make implicit notions about the LNC, GCD, comprehensive schooling, etc. explicit for practitioners to understand the 'dynamics of change' (Fullan, 1991: 213) so that the LNC becomes an object to examine against presumed faulty notions.

While teachers in the PCSS, being exposed to different environment and experiences, showed a clearer vision about subject leadership, though not as a management post. Still teachers in the English department had a clearer view about subject leadership than teachers in the other departments because (a) their SL is a full-timer and (b) their department initiated the process of diagnosing SEN students and addressing their needs. This draws the attention to the importance of inter-department collaboration (Witziers, Sleegers, and Imants, 1999: 302) in upgrading school achievement level. It also draws the attention to the necessity for building inter-school communication between public and private schools through the syndicate, and institutional interdependence with the community (Stine, 2000). On the other hand, since it is agreed that teachers form and reform their identities in their own contexts Siskin (1994), it is necessary to address this issue by focusing on department cultures as part of teacher training courses.

Secondary teachers viewed subject leadership from the angle that whoever gets long teaching experience has the right to be a SL. They considered that the existing SLs' performance reflected and was suggestive of what each should do if they became SLs themselves. In the

absence of a law that describes this post clearly and until training is offered to SLs, it is necessary for the ministry to make it clear that teaching experience might not necessarily lead to a teacher's gaining the needed skills to lead a group. In addition, experience is not an indicator of the teacher's having proper leadership style (Daft, 1999 and Grint, 2000); it is not but gaining the proper teaching knowledge. On the contrary, it might be a sign of resistance to change (Bastiani, 1998: 24). This also calls for the ministry's taking a bigger part in assigning SLs, the thing that should be based on principal's preliminary assessment.

Since parents are the ones who pay to get their children educated, they are normally the ones who always claim for the best services. In this study, parents' views about subject leadership stemmed from their children's achievement level and were shaped and reshaped when achievement was sustained, improved or deteriorated. Their claims were always related to the level of their involvement in their children's learning activities, achievement level and needs, and which should be encouraged as McBeth (1989) suggests. For this, those who cared about student rank did not seem to care but about grades per se and extra curricular activities. They considered classroom observations a means to detecting teachers' biases to different groups of students. While those whose children were students with SEN showed better awareness about subject leadership and more willingness to get involved in the educational process for the sake of assisting their children; consequently, classroom observation was considered the means to this end. They were the only group who gained new knowledge about how to deal with SEN through building home-school links that Rutter et al. (in McBeth, 1989: 7) and Bastiani (in Bastiani and Wolfendale, 1988) emphasize, and recommended inter-department communication.

Interestingly enough, parents who had children in both schools demanded that SLs and their teams in public schools provide the same services provided in the PCSS. The truth is that had those parents been able to afford tuition fees, they would not have registered their children in public schools. These parents should know that if their economic status is the reason for their

children's enrollment in public schools, this does not mean that they can do nothing. Rather, they are the first to establish communication channels that lead both schools and parents, to learn from each other (McBeth, 1989) for further development. They are the ones who understand and experience the two schooling systems. And this calls for creating a national culture of recognition and valuing of public schools as educational places at the beginning, and successful implementers of change next when parents can be active participants in the process.

It is unwise to consider the difference in achievement between private and public schools as solely referred to the presence of SLs. Yet, they do play a role. Since private schools recruit degree holders, it is logical to infer that had SLs not been needed for purposes schools specify, the latter could have saved some of their annual expenses. This implies that since by law the inspectorate is to control private schools work, and since by law private schools are to pay for teacher-training programs set by the ministry, the ministry should explore the possibility for setting private-public school programs for the sake of public school teachers' development.

A closer look at how schools conceptualize SEN, it was clear in this study that public school students who suffered from social and economic problems were labeled as students with SEN. It is dangerous to pass value judgements like labeling 40% of public school students as SEN students. This is a serious problem because detection and treatment of SEN is a different issue though might be a result of social problems if not dealt with properly at early stages. This calls for the necessity to revisit the SEN program that was set as part of the LNC during the evaluation period. This is mainly because most of the private schools that did not have the inclusion program tried to deal with the problem their own way: they rejected the student if s/he repeated two classes in the same cycle. In this case, their parents' only choice was either suffering from having private tutors following their children's work and re-teaching them whenever needed just to compensate for the risk of failure, or putting them in SEN schools.

The case study school has had the inclusion program, initiated by the researcher in collaboration with educational psychologists and psychiatrists, for only three years. In this program, the student stays in the regular classes but is dealt with differently when given extra work and during tests and quizzes. It is clear that attempts at addressing SEN are initiated individually and have not become part of the school policy yet; that is, not similarly to what Bloom (in Wolfendale, 1987) and Bastiani and Wolfendale (1988) suggest. Yet the difference this program could make to students whose parents would not accept to put them in special schools, calls for serious attempts at addressing this issue. The ministry's serious attempt at exploring private schools' experiences in this area might lead to transferring this experience to public schools. And in that case, part of the SL's and teacher training should be focused on this area.

As mentioned earlier, most of the participants in this study did not seem to consider inter-department communication as important. Only parents of reputation group students were aware of the need for inter-department communication as a means to upgrading children's achievement in all subject areas. Though inter-school communication was suggested by one SL in a secondary public school, it was aimed at compensating for the missing link between elementary and secondary schools, namely for clarifying who was to be held accountable for student low achievement levels. Whereas, inter-department communication was not mentioned but implemented by the researcher and her department team when the inclusion program was started. Yet, still it has not become part of the teachers' repertoire about roles of SLs.

In general, the researcher notes that the dramatic differences between the public schools and the PCSS, and that are confirmed through the official examinations results, should be noted by the ministry so that new knowledge will be utilized upon revising the LNC and when providing further training. And to conclude, educational policy should closely examine the effectiveness of any educational decision and base it on research grounds. Future research that explores educational policy must closely examine the policy itself and take into account its

authors and its stated and actual purposes. All of this does not necessarily rule out the fact that SLs are internal managers of change and that they can do a lot to help all the parties involved in the educational process. In this sense, if revising the LNC continues to divorce the acknowledgement of SLs, the implementation process in public schools will stay uncontrollable from within; consequently, will be incomplete. And if subject leadership is to be acknowledged, it is essential that the role set be made clear to all practitioners, training be complete and follow-up be coordinated.

Importance of This Study and its Contribution to the Field

The discussion of the topic in this study revealed a lot of tensions everyone had as a result of starting the implementation process without enough preparation (Huberman and Miles, 1994; in Wright, 1999). Consequently, it showed how people subsumed the LNC into the prevailing culture that it was a failure. The participants' views shed light on a number of factors that led to the prevailing culture:

- During the setting of and preparation for the LNC, education was not separated from the macro-political (Bottery, 2001; in Harris and Bennett, 2001), macro-cultural (McMahon, 2001; in Harris and Bennett, 2001) and socio-economic situation. These had their great impact on shaping the educational plans. Political entities interfered in training programs and suspended the program set for training principals because the latter will lead election campaigns in their areas in the forthcoming elections. Political entities also interfered with material writers of the new textbooks, namely in history and religion, to impose certain content.
- Most people, including the participants in this study, take power from exclusion rather than inclusion.

- People outside the public sector have been shown to create a sense of alienation from public schools though the curriculum is in both schooling systems, thus creating a big gap and enough room for comparison.

The importance of this study lies in uncovering those gaps in the Lebanese educational system that require serious attempts to address them through the cooperation between the different ministries in taking all decisions and through proper budgeting. Though done on a small scale, this research study is unique. Reading its findings carefully will surely set the stage for a number of studies in the field. This study has contributed to the field by:

- Showing that everybody believes in the need for SLs in schools, so it is essential to satisfy all schools' needs in general and public elementary schools' needs in particular.
- Showing that SLs' knowledge and expertise are decisive factors in school achievement, so the ministry should consider them as the backbone for assigning educators.
- Showing that the traditional styles of subject leadership in public schools are least conducive to proper implementation of the proposed change. So transformational styles and collegiality are issues to be focused on in the training.
- Showing that no one is satisfied with the status of SLs being part-timers. Seeking full-time job might not be necessary for all subject areas. But it is essential for arts departments. This is because teaching languages in general and foreign language in particular is a difficult task for a SL to handle properly if not a full-timer.
- Showing that addressing issues like SEN, student orientation and TVE is necessary for proper future planning in the short and long run.
- Showing that Parent-Teacher Associations are not functioning as they should, so they should be encouraged to take bigger part in the educational process.

For this, and to save wastage, it is easier for the ministry to pursue subject leadership as an important post to be acknowledged as a first step when revising the LNC because SLs are far fewer than teachers. In addition, they will share in addressing existing problems within their schools later and take on the job of training teachers themselves.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research is needed and might build on findings of this study in four ways:

- To obtain more in-depth information about subject leadership through controlling more variables and in different contexts.
- To investigate the extent to which recognition of SLs would benefit educational change. Based on that, research should be focused on: how many of the existing SLs should stay, be transferred to teaching only, redistributed or retired; how many new SLs are needed and where to be placed; and what training should be provided and where.
- More comparative research is needed to investigate which elementary schools happen to have SLs, and whether or not their presence has been making a difference.
- Further research in the areas of inter-school connections and SEN is needed before the ministry sets off the implementation of the SEN program, and possibly decide whether to assign sociologists and/or psychologists within, or as regular visitors to schools.
- Since findings did not place demands on parents or teachers (only inspectors, GCD and SLs), changing the angle to investigate the role of parents and parent committees (similar to LEAs) would lead to clearer image about how successful processes can be sped up and more people get involved. Also further research needs to address more diverse students from different schools and different schooling cycles. This will let parents and students feel they are heard and their suggestions appreciated.

Recommendations for Subject Leaders' Practice

It is a sad fact that lack of training of SLs sustained the traditional forms of practice. SLs' interview findings indicated that they were not able and not willing to involve their teachers in subject-based research, nor were they able to improve the quality of outcome of teaching. Leading students to become independent learners as the LNC suggests (Decree 10227) is a

far reaching objective unless they are trained to reconceptualize the shift between their role as SLs and as teachers (Blandford, 1998). They also lack skills, knowledge, expertise and time for sustained communication channels with parents and parental involvement in implementing change.

Finding a solution for SLs to reinforce educational change requires decisions, issuing decrees and laws and stating clear organizational procedures for each through bylaws. Upon receiving proper training and being allocated into schools, all SLs in the same school should be required to coordinate their work on a routine basis. They should be able to detect teachers' as well as students' weaknesses when they analyze the tests they receive from teachers; consequently, make sure that a student is not labeled based on confused criteria. In other words, part of their training should be how to control the achievement records and avoid being pre-judgemental. Then their work with specialists, psychiatrists and social workers, be they internal or external agents, will also be specified. When trained, SLs and teachers in their departments will be held accountable for their jobs. SLs can then build proper communication channels with principals sharing common grounds about how to implement the LNC, each performing his/her tasks with or independently from the other according to how training specified.

Internal control is not enough to ensure the aspired standards of development. There stays the fact that there should be external agents of control. In this study, the researcher views that for SLs to be the internal controllers, the form and content of control can be made part of their training. That is, since inspectors use forms for their observations and assessment of teachers' work in schools, SLs should view the content of those forms as transformed to observable behaviors teachers are likely to show, and SLs to observe. Using them in their observations, SLs will have prepared some content to discuss with the inspectors whenever they visit, and compare with those done by the inspector. This will make the job easier and

more fruitful for both inspectors and SLs, and for inspectors to pass more accurate recommendations.

When trained to utilize the inspectors' assessment documents, SLs will be able to coordinate with the guides and counselors during their visits. That is, SLs will have done the preliminary assessment of teachers' performance and will consequently orient the guides' and counselors' observation to teachers the SL views in need for more assistance. After discussing the guides' and counselors' observation, both schedule future department meetings with guides and counselors, and plan future in-service training sessions within or outside school according to how they view needed. This way, SLs will not only be the link between the inspectorate and the GCD but with the TTIs, providers of teacher training as well.

Parents, according to Decree 10227, should also be involved in the implementation process. The ministry promised to broadcast TV programs to raise parents' awareness about the content and teaching methods proposed in the LNC; yet, they did not, leaving parents committees to function in their traditional manner and parent-teacher meetings to be held biannually in the same old manner. To be able to involve parents, SLs can take the lead. They should maximize contact with parents through planned sessions and open days; they schedule the activities, plan ahead what content is to be achieved from parents during those days and how to keep records of the content to establish better home-school connections. These will lead to addressing achievement, behavioral as well as psychological problems that affect students' personal and academic development; consequently, better utilization of teacher-parent conferencing (Plowden Report; in McBeth, 1989) and better screening of students and starting portfolio documentation (Arter and Spandel, 1992).

The fact that SLs are trained to implement school-based research (Bastiani, 1988; McBeth, et al., 1995) and collect more data about students with SEN during open days feeds into more

effective parent-teacher meetings. Coupled with holistic assessment of academic difficulties that students with SEN have, SLs will take on the job of compiling portfolios for those students as suggested by Phillips, Goodwin and Heron (1999: 119). Subject leaders should be aware of the bylaws that organize the process of selecting what material to include in the portfolio (number of tests and quizzes), the frequency of entries and what portfolios to transfer with the students from one school to another, as opposed to what to pass to parents. After all, portfolio assessment feeds back into teachers' performance levels and provides a key for SLs to gaps in their departments, and weaknesses in team members. They also feed forward if the SL is to take decisions like providing in-service training or seeking assistance from the ministry. Within school confines, these portfolios will be the means to determining factors affecting these students' achievement, to structuring teaching/learning environments conducive to better achievements and to addressing parents who are willing to assist their children.

Based on these assessment measures, it will be easier for trained SLs to distinguish between SEN as opposed to weaknesses in specific areas. With respect to the latter, those students who prove not to have problems that require the intervention of psychologists are to be given a pre-professional skills test administered by SLs. Test results will be the indicator about whether or not a student is to be transferred to TVE. While with respect to students with SEN, SLs can start taking preliminary measures that relate to classroom teaching/learning situations to satisfy those students' needs.

Portfolios, including all assessment measures taken, will be the stepping stone for SLs' work with sociologists and psychologists that the ministry assigns to visit schools regularly. Meetings with these external supporters will help SLs as well as teachers to assess the trustworthiness of school-based research, effectiveness of their teaching approaches, and to make the needed changes to address students' needs. Upon working with SLs, teachers and students, psychiatrists and sociologists can start preparing in-class and out-of-class activities

as suggested by Bloom (in Wolfendale, 1987) and Bastiani and Wolfendate (1988) to help other students accept reputation students and facilitate their stay in the mainstream.

Knowing that early detection of academic problems leads to early intervention and consequently better results may lead to important implications. The first is that Lebanese public elementary schools should not be considered as a different category that does not need as much attention from the ministry as other schools. Rather, they should receive the needed attention and should have trained SLs because they provide the bottom line education based on which the future of the children will be decided. The second is that if these schools have trained SLs who involve teachers in different experiences and consequently develop their abilities to assess and address students' needs (Busher and Harris with Wise, 2000), the percentage of students with learning difficulties that the ministry mentioned will drop, and TVE orientation will be done more properly. Consequently, there will be fair distribution of students in the two streams and later satisfying the local and regional market needs for different qualifications (Abu Asali).

Training SLs creates conditions conducive to the best implementation process of the LNC. They can share in assessing the length of the content matter, and help teachers cover more material of the new textbooks, most of which was written for native speakers, (Moussa, 1996; and Fraiha, 1998). When SLs prove to be able to do all their jobs properly, they will be required to coordinate interdisciplinary work as suggested by Bennett (1999; in Brown, Boyle, and Boyle, 1999), Harris (1999), and Witziers, Slegers and Imants (1999) the thing they are trained to do. Through interdisciplinary coordination, the school can make student assessment more holistic and consequently, the orientation more feasible. A major advantage of this is building not only department culture but school-culture as well, where principals, SLs, and teachers take part in the process. Under these conditions, the ministry should be able to evaluate the whole experience of implementing the LNC.

The difference that trained SLs can make is that by the time everybody is involved in the educational process and is willing to solve problems that relate to daily teaching/learning situations, everybody will feel comfortable away from any threats of external authorities. For this, the solution can be said to start with a political decision to neutralize education. When it is done, some economic independence allows schools to show their willingness and intentions to improve.

In conclusion, from this research the researcher learned that the study demonstrates the usefulness of knowing when and who to address whenever need emerges so that the goal of teaching, improving student achievement level and his/her developing socially and academically, is reached. It also contributes to growing knowledge about how practitioners inside and outside school can communicate effectively to create adequate level of support and engagement. To make change possible, practitioners should believe in change and work on it. It is important for SLs to acquire the notion that they are the catalysts of change, and should start it in their departments. That is, they need to fetch their own micro-political skills (Bennett, 1999; in Brown, Boyle and Boyle, 1999) in alluding people to accept and implement change rather than wait for someone to impose it. The cycle of development proceeds like the SL showing the department team that collectively their wealth of experience and knowledge leads to greater creativity. The success of each step taken for the development is assessed through investigating how much it feeds into further stages and how much it is fed by witnessed changes in others' performances. Creating classroom situations conducive to successful teaching/learning situations feeds into assessing needs for in-service training or SL's support, which in turn feeds into and is fed by teaching that is student-centered. This also feeds into developing students' analytical and practical skills and learning skills, and controlling the scope and sequence of the content matter; consequently controlling student failure and promoting more chances to work on slow learners, a whole cycle of successful education. For this, findings of this research show that the development of clearly defined positions leads to better performance and less tensions.

It is when SLs receive proper training that a secondary plan for further teacher training and reconstructing and equipping schools becomes more feasible. In other words, when SLs' training is reflected in better control of the implementation process and better school practices, it can be a good indicator that they can handle in-school in-service training (Hopkins, 1986). Based on this, further teacher training needs will be delineated. Reducing wastage results from the fact that not all teachers will have to receive training. Second those who need it, their training will be more focused and consequently more effective. Results of all these measures will not only lead to better decisions in the areas of TVE and comprehensive schooling, but to better quality of research and quality teaching the Lebanese University provides.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and limitations

This study has explored a neglected aspect of the Lebanese educational system. Theoretically, the importance of this thesis lies in its being a unique study in the area of subject leadership. Yet, it has not attempted to investigate to what extent SLs can participate in the process of revising the LNC thus gaining more knowledge about educational problems and complications. This is an obvious limitation of the research. Conducting this study with the variety of research tools used was a really good experience. Yet, it did not go without tensions that every researcher lives and forgets when achieving the goal. The biggest tension for the researcher was to keep reminding interviewees in the FGIs of the importance of their being punctual. And this added to the cost of the whole piece of research.

To start with strengths, since the aim of conducting focus group interviews was not representativeness, the researcher considered that they yielded enough material that started to look repetitive in all interviews. In this sense, focus group interviews, though very few, yielded more data than individual interviews. The choice of the setting was very suitable and

conducive to more lively discussions. The timing of the interviews was very suitable for the interviewee though at the expense of the researcher's schedule. Overall, the use of many research tools yielded confounding results which were congruent with the researchers' expectations. Individual interviews were more or less conducive to specific examples that the researcher was seeking.

Yet, the extensive use of FGI as a research tool has its own limitation: people might not be punctual. They might also enjoy the topic thus tend to extend the session. This necessitates either (a) the moderator's utilization of the right skills to shift the discussion thus limit it to approximately the set time; consequently, be criticized by participants or (b) leaving it for good chance to have all the process run as planned. Of course, the researcher chose the second. In addition, the interviewees switching codes (from English to Arabic) involved transcription and translation of all the original texts into English. It was a time-consuming process for the researcher who did it herself to keep the original meaning of the respondents' remarks. The analysis of interview findings was time consuming and put the researcher under pressure when she had only two days to finish transcribing one FGI or individual interview before conducting another due to the participants' preference.

The limited number of criteria set for the observations made them very successful. They indicated that no serious changes took place in the performance of the observed teachers. In addition, the use of diary provided evidence for triangulation. Weaknesses of this piece of research, although more than strengths, were to be considered reasonable for this research was conducted on a small scale. Cost could be considered one weakness. The focus group interviews could have been easier to analyze if video-taped. Another weakness is that the number of interviewees in each focus group was small.

Had the number of schools been bigger, findings would have lead to better and more precise interpretation of findings. Yet if the researcher were to make the sample bigger, it would be a

lot more costly to gain access to schools. Gaining access to more schools could lead to interviewing more people from diverse backgrounds. This again would be theoretical if we consider the interviewees' open-mindedness to the extent that they accept joining in groups with people they had never met before.

Another limitation is that interviewees, individuals and groups, could have been interviewed in more informal conditions. That is, they choose the place for meeting so that pressure to control variables would not lead to unnecessary risks – not all participants will express their opinions equally freely. Another limitation is that all the research tools could have been used with all categories of participants had there not been the language barrier. In addition, the survey questionnaire could have tested more aspects like teaching behaviors, findings of which would be compared to those about SLs.

In this research study, similarly to any other study, controlling a number of variables leads to more valid results. Regarding time limitations, cost, availability of participants especially that not all schools in the area of study are English medium schools, and accessibility, the researcher could only control variables to a certain extent. That is, had the sample been bigger and sampling been stratified, findings could have been interpreted at many different levels thus ensuring more validity. With all such limitations, it remains a fact that when taken seriously, research findings will certainly inform and even reshape practices which in turn lead to more focused research in the future. And as long as educational change is a sustained activity, research can be the key to investigating signs of success or failure of change in practice.

APPENDIX A

Definition of Main Terms

The Lebanese Old Curriculum	The Lebanese New Curriculum
<p>Public schools: schools owned or rented by the government. Their budgets comprise student fees.</p> <p>Public elementary schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten2 to Grade 5. By law, subject leadership is a post not available in these schools.</p> <p>Public intermediate schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten2 to Grade 9. By law, these schools are classified as elementary schools; consequently, do not have subject leaders.</p> <p>Public secondary schools: schools that have classes from Grade 6 to Grade 12. These schools have subject area SLs in condition that their assignment is recommended by the school administration, and at the same time does not affect their teaching quota.</p> <p>Private schools: schools owned by individuals. They are partially supported by the government. Support is relative to the number of students enrolled at the school. School budgets comprise school fees and the extra fees they demand for special classes like computer labs, stationery, and health insurance.</p> <p>Private elementary schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten to Grade 5. These schools are few, usually missionary schools.</p> <p>Private intermediate schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten to Grade 9. These are the non-profit making missionary schools and some profit-making schools.</p> <p>Private secondary schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten to Grade 12. These are non-profit making missionary schools and profit-making schools. Classes in Grade 12 were divided into three sections: Mathematics, life sciences, and humanities.</p>	<p>Public elementary schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten2 to Grade 6.</p> <p>-Grades 1, 2, and 3 became the preparatory cycle, cycle 1.</p> <p>-Grades 4, 5, and 6 became the elementary cycle, cycle 2.</p> <p>*Public intermediate schools: schools that have classes from Kindergarten to Grade 9. They have cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3.</p> <p>-Grades 7, 8, and 9 became the intermediate cycle, cycle 3.</p> <p>*Public secondary schools: schools that have classes from Grade 7 to Grade 12. They have cycle 3 and cycle 4.</p> <p>-Grades 10, 11, and 12 became the secondary cycle, cycle 4.</p> <p>Grade 12 is divided into four sections: general sciences, life sciences, humanities, and social sciences.</p> <p>Private schools: the only change that took place in private schools is the renaming of cycles.</p>

- Some subject areas in the intermediate cycle (cycle 3), for the sole reason of being in two different schools, the intermediate and secondary, are dealt with differently in terms of grading in the two different schools.
- Profit-making schools might start as elementary and open one higher grade level each year and end up private secondary schools.

Teacher centered teaching: teachers impart knowledge and information and their 'class contact time' is spent in a classroom, teaching their own subject to a whole groups of students. This practice is characterized by the separateness of the subject matter the individuality of the teacher and the collective nature of students.

Student centered teaching: there is greater integration and cohesion of subjects. Individual subjects are always combined under a topic or theme related to real-life situations so that connections are made between subjects, and to show how the subjects are applied. This practice is characterized by increasing collaboration and co-operation between teachers, and the increasing recognition of the individual learning needs of students.

APPENDIX B

BYLAWS OF ARTICLE 20 OF LAW 1982/22: SUBJECT LEADERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. The secondary school principal, after getting the secondary teaching directorate's agreement, assigns one of the teachers of each subject area as a SL to coordinate work with colleagues in the department.
2. The teaching quota for the SL are reduced one hour each 15 hours of the total teaching hours in the subject area in condition that the coordination hours do not exceed the 10.
3. The SL will perform the following tasks:
 - a. Dividing the curriculum content matter in each grade level to nine parts each to be covered in a month. This should be done at the end of each academic year in preparation for the following year and in collaboration with teachers in the department.
 - b. Agreeing with teachers on the general approach to teaching and correcting homework.
 - c. Observing teachers and taking notes to discuss with teachers after students leave school or during special department meetings. Inviting teachers to attend his/her classes whenever s/he finds needed.
 - d. Controlling homework, quizzes, and test.
 - e. Carrying monthly meetings with all department teachers. Minutes of these meetings are to be registered and passed to the principal seasonally.
 - f. Involving teachers in the department in educational innovations in the subject area and helping them implement them inside and outside classes.
 - g. Following-up the implementation of the public secondary school bylaws in the areas of homework, tests, preparation and teachers' grade records.
 - h. Setting tests and quizzes questions and the grading scale for each test after consulting with teachers, then showing the tests to the principal to select the test s/he finds suitable.
 - i. Performing all tasks that the general educational policy necessitates.
4. SLs of the two subject areas, chemistry and biology, are to be responsible for labs in addition to the above jobs in condition that their teaching hours are not less than nine per week.

APPENDIX C

CONDITIONS OF ASSIGNMENT OF ONE SUBJECT LEADER IN THE PRIVATE CASE STUDY SCHOOL: A SAMPLE CONTRACT

THE TERM OF YOUR CONTRACT WILL BE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

1. *You will be a full-time teacher in the school.
2. Your monthly salary starting (month / year) and ending (month/year) will be as follows:
salary: (amount)
3. *You are expected to abide by (name of the school) rules and regulations concerning your responsibilities and duties as assigned.
4. You will be required to attend all faculty meetings upon the request of the administration.
5. You will be required to participate in any workshops or seminars organized by the school.
6. You will be required to give freely of your time, outside the class periods for students who wish to consult with you on academic matter.
7. You are expected to take part in extra-curricular duties along lines of mutual interest.
8. Renewal of your contract will be subject to mutual agreement.
9. Should the school in its sole discretion decide, for security reasons not to open or ask you to report to duty, this contract will be cancelled forthwith further liability to (name of the school).

We earnestly hope that this appointment will be satisfying to you and in the interest of (name of the school). To indicate your acceptance of the above terms, please sign this letter and return it to us soon.

* The SL is assigned the job as a full-time teacher. Yet, the responsibilities and duties of neither the teacher nor the SL are further explained in terms of observable behaviors; that is, there is no clear job description.

APPENDIX D
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (PARENTS)

From: The English Department of Al Quala Secondary School

To: Parents of students in Grades 3 to 8.

Dear parents,

This questionnaire is aimed at gaining insight into your satisfaction with the quality of work that the English department is offering for the sake of students at Al Quala Secondary School.

We are interested in knowing how you, parents, view the work of the English department, and what you like to see us doing. Your responses and suggestions are appreciated and will be taken as the content material for our future meetings.

Please put two tick marks for each statement: one under whether you 'agree' that the statement reflects a role likely to be performed; and another under whether you see that the statement reflects a role 'actually performed' by the Subject leader.

Y= Yes, N= No, and DN= I Do not Know.

We promise that this questionnaire is going to be treated with confidentiality. For this, do not hesitate to fill in the missing information below, before you answer the questionnaire. This document will be placed in your child's portfolio.

Name of your son/daughter:

Grade level:

Does s/he have any health problems that require special attention or treatment on the part of the school?

(Explain briefly):

Describe you son's/daughter's personality and general attitude toward schooling (in not more than two sentences):

Please add your own suggestions below for the school to take into consideration:

—

—

Roles of the subject leader	Likely to be performed			Is actually performed		
	Y	N	D	Y	N	D
Follows up each teacher's preparation						
Observes classes						
Tests						
Controls tests (correct, add, or delete questions)						
Analyzes test results						
Takes decisions about when to cancel a difficult test						
Takes decisions about how to redistribute grades on test questions						
Takes decisions about what and when re-teaching should take place						
Weak students						
Follows up the low achievers' portfolio						
Seeks parents' presence to discuss their child's low achievement level						
Seeks parents' presence to discuss their child's deteriorating grades						
Sends a student to a specialist to diagnose academic problems that can not be controlled by teachers						
Gives remedial work to weak students						
Gives the remedial work a grade for better student evaluation						
Takes part in selecting the private tutor for the weak student						
Directs the private tutor as to what and how to teach/deal with the weak student						
Follows-up the weak student's development with the private tutor						
Changes the distribution of test grades/ gives a bigger coefficient to test questions where the student shows improvement						
Gives the diagnosed students more than one chance in tests						

Roles of the subject leader	Likely to be performed				Is actually performed		
	Y	N	D		Y	N	D
Corrects the diagnosed student's tests according to criteria suggested by the specialist							
Discusses the problem of the diagnosed student with the student himself/herself							
Follow ups							
Follows up students who show social and behavioral problems							
Seeks the parents' assistance in solving the student's behavioral problems							
Consider student's abilities as a major criterion in mixing students of the same grade level in the three sections							
Comment on the following	Are they Enough?				Add Your suggestion		
activities held at school and parents participate							
Extra-curricular activities							
The annual book fair that is held at school							
Chances for meetings and discussions between the school and parents							
The weekly hour assigned for parents to confer with subject area subject leaders and teachers							
The annual meetings							

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

Think back to an experience with a previous subject leader that was outstanding. Describe it.

What has been your greatest disappointment with that subject leader?

Who do you think does not participate in the school program as a whole, but should?

Introduction: Being responsible for managing the department, subject leaders are assumed to play a number of roles to satisfy the needs of teachers, students, and parents. What do you think are the roles that subject leaders should perform?

Probes:

*** Addressing the students' needs at school, and the efforts to meet those needs:**

What needs are addressed most effectively by the program?

What needs are overlooked that should be addressed?

How would you measure the success of the school?

*** Addressing the teachers' needs at school, and the efforts to meet those needs:**

What needs are addressed most effectively by the program?

What needs are overlooked that should be addressed?

*** Addressing parents' needs and the efforts to meet those needs:**

What needs are addressed most effectively by the program?

What needs are overlooked that should be addressed?

*** What will encourage active participation of teachers? Students? And parents?**

*** What do you think is most important for the school and SLs to keep doing?**

APPENDIX F

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PLANNING AND INSTRUCTION	YES	NO	COMMENTS
The teacher brings lesson plan to the class	20	-	Teacher's guide
Goals are stated in the lesson plan	20	-	
Lesson objectives stated in the lesson plan	20	-	
The teacher states lesson objectives to the class	18	2	Read from the guide
The lesson plan includes an advance organizer	20	-	
The teacher uses material other than the book and the chalk board	-	20	No tapes were available
Students are involved in pair and group work	10	-	Pair work
Group work is evaluated and/or graded in class	-	20	-
The teacher matches between student achievement and the set objectives after each group activity	-	20	None
The teacher uses the questioning strategy in class	20	-	Over used strategy
The teacher reinforces good responses	20	-	
The teacher accepts wrong answers	20	-	Corrects directly or Asks the class
The teacher gives extra exercises when needed	-	20	The book is enough
The lesson closure	-	-	Stops with the bell

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Notes * All the citations taken from *Al Nahar* newspaper were taken from page 12.

** All the citations taken from *Al Safir* newspaper were taken from page 8.

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