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The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy  
Department of Public Policy and Administration

**Teachers' Development programs: Qualitative/SWOC Analysis of  
"Education First" Initiative**

**A Thesis Submitted to the**

**Public Policy and Administration Department**

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Global Affairs/Master of Public Administration**

**By**

**Rehane Samir Sarhan**

**Supervised by Dr. Ghada Barsoum**

**Spring 2018**

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May God bless you All.

The American University in Cairo  
School of Global Affairs and Public Policy  
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**Teachers' Development programs: Qualitative/SWOC Analysis of  
"Education First" Initiative**

Rehane Sarhan

**Supervised by: Dr. Ghada Barsoum**

**ABSTRACT**

This study focuses on the "Education First" program, a private-sector initiative supported by the Ministry of Education in Egypt for the professional development of teachers. The study undertakes a SWOC analysis of this initiative, building on qualitative research through structured and semi-structured in-depth interviews. Study participants included teachers, schools' headmasters, and Ministry of Education officials who attended the program training sessions. The analysis shows that the most important program strength lies in its national outreach throughout the country, targeting all 721 public Tajrebeya schools' teachers for English, Math and Sciences in the 27 governorates. It also recognized that the program weaknesses were mainly in its reliance on sustainable funding sources. As for opportunities, the study revealed that the program actually benefited from its good reputation to launch new initiatives targeting senior students in the graduation year at the Faculty of Education Ain Shams University. Challenges were mainly found in sustaining the political support for the program. The study recommends developing a time-bound strategic plan that helps detecting the operational and strategic issues and the development of training hubs in all regions of Egypt to reduce teachers' time and effort in commuting during training sessions. At the level of government policies, there are essential success factors to ensure sustainable education improvement, such as political commitment, public accountability and partnership among main stakeholders. All of the above mentioned is essential to ensure that the program achieves its goals leading to improvement of student's learning.

Keywords: Education, Professional Development, Training programs, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MOE	Ministry of Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDS	Sustainable Development Strategy: Egypt Vision 2030
SWOC	Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Challenges
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEF	World Economic Forum

## Chapter ONE: Introduction

“Obtaining quality education is the foundation to improving people’s lives and sustainable development,” is the fourth goal of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2030). Major progress has been made globally towards increasing access to education at all levels. Basic literacy skills have extremely improved, yet stronger efforts are needed to accomplish even greater steps for achieving universal education goals. The UN SDGs indicator states the following: “By 2030, substantial increase in the supply of qualified teachers, through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small islands developing States”.<sup>1</sup>

The above mentioned SDGs’ indicator also coincide with Egypt Sustainable Development Strategy (SDS) 2030 where Education and Training are the first pillar with a KPI that Egypt becomes “One of the top 30 countries in the quality of basic education index”. The objectives related to Education in the Sustainable Development Strategy, Egypt vision 2030, are as follows:

- Improving the Educational System’s Quality to Conform with International Systems
- Availing Education for all without discrimination
- Enhancing competitiveness of the educational systems and its outputs

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>



The current key performance indicators (KPIs) include indicators at the level of inputs, outputs, and strategic results. There is a set of new indicators that help measuring the impact of teachers' development on student learning by 2030. The following KPI is about Egypt's rank in primary education and the expected change by 2030 are as follows:

Egypt's rank in primary education quality index:

Currently at 141/144 Result: 2.1 (2) with a target of  $\leq 30$  by 2030.

The suggested new indicator that measures teachers' efficiency and outcomes of educational system through a random sample of students, is the percentage of students passing national examinations in Science, Mathematics, Arabic Language, and English as a Second Language. This mechanism of evaluating examination results and analyzing them will help determine the required developments in teaching and learning systems (SDS, 2016).

Great teachers help create great students, much research shows that a motivating and knowledgeable teacher is the most important school-related factor influencing student's achievement, so it is crucial to pay close attention to how we train and support both new and experienced teachers (Calgary French & International School, 2016). Positive results for students will come from changes in the knowledge, skills, and behavior of their teachers and parents (Walberg, 2010). Professional development must provide teachers with methods to directly apply what they learn to their teaching practices (Brophy, 1986). Teachers are one of the most influential and powerful forces for equity, access and quality in education and are the key to sustainable global development. However, their training, status and working conditions remain a preoccupying issue (Stronge, 2005).

This study will focus on "Education First" initiative, a private sector initiative

supported by the Ministry of Education, as a model in Professional Teachers' development. The study relies on qualitative research methods through structured and semi-structured in-depth interviews with teachers who attended the training sessions, as well as ministry of education officials who work as program coordinators. The researcher performed a SWOC analysis to assess the Initiative's strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and challenges.

## **1.1 Background**

Egypt has an extensive education system that is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa and it has grown rapidly since the early 1990s. At the pre-university level, the system enrolls over 16 million students and employs over 1.2 million workers of who around 800,000 are categorized as teachers (World Bank, 2014). Education is made compulsory for 9 school years between the ages of 6 and 14. Moreover, all levels of education are free within any government run schools. In recent years, the government of Egypt has accorded great priority to the education system improvement (World Bank, 2007). The World Economic Forum issued the Global Competitiveness Report for 2013-2014 where it placed Egypt at the bottom of its ranking in regards to quality of primary education. According to the report, the local economy dropped from the 94<sup>th</sup> rank in the 2011-2012 report to the 118<sup>th</sup> rank (2014). Egyptian education institutions ranked 109<sup>th</sup> with regards to Higher Education and training efficiency enhancers (WEF, 2014), and for the 2017 report, Egypt education system ranked 135 out of 138 countries (WEF, 2017).

Quality of teachers is a great challenge, no education system in the world has excelled without making a significant investment in building a cadre of quality teachers (Vakil,

2016). The attractiveness of teaching as a career is declining in long-term, leading to difficulties in recruitment due to the migration of teachers (UNESCO , 2015). There are major efficiency issues facing teachers, such as their low pay, the few performance incentives offered that are necessary to improve accountability, and difficulties in implementing innovative pedagogy methods (Egypt Education Sector Policy Note, 2007). Despite the fact that teacher training is a key component of effective teaching and learning, it still cannot alone, address the challenges that Education faces (ibid). The most important resource of the educational system, the teacher, is neither motivated nor properly positioned so that instruction can improve in the classroom (Welmond, 1996). Furthermore, skilled labor is not attracted to become teachers due to the low remuneration packages of the teacher's profession (OECD, 2005). Among Egypt's education numerous challenges, researchers focused on poor quality of education due to poor quality of teaching in primary public schools. As teachers' development is a critical pillar in the Education matrix and teachers are widely considered as a key factor of education quality, this study will highlight the government, private sector, and civil society organizations' role in supporting teachers' development, in terms of short and long term plans, and teachers' perceptions about what they will benefit from the development programs.

## **1.2 Education System in Egypt**

The quality of education remains a major challenge, precluding children from developing to their full potential and leading to low completion rates. Teaching styles are not flexible; students' participation is not encouraged and physical penalties are a common practice. According to the international knowledge assessment test, 53% of grade 8 primary school students do not have basic mathematical knowledge and 45% do not recognize some basic facts from life and physical sciences. Until 2012, less than 10% of governmental schools met national standards for quality education. There are two types of public schools in Egypt. Public Arabic schools that teach the Egyptian national curriculum in the Arabic language, while Experimental Language schools teach primarily in English with a second language added in preparatory school. According to the 2015-2016 Global Competitiveness Report, published by the World Economic Forum for the quality of its primary education, Egypt was ranked 116 out of 140 countries, this rank is falling behind many Arab, African, Asian and Western nations (UNICEF report 2015).

### **-Pre-School (Kindergarten)**

This phase is managed mainly by non-governmental organizations or private organizations. Preschool main goal is to help children with their first acquaintance with school culture. It is intended to aid mental, physical, social, moral, and emotional development; it helps them develop language skills and numerical and technical abilities, especially creativity and imagination. In the pre-school phase children are

raised in a better environment, which helps them develop good personalities, and gradually accept formal school life and discipline (Education System in Egypt, 2012).

### **-Primary Education**

This phase starts at the age of 6 and lasts for 6 years. During this introductory phase pupils may enroll at state, religious or private schools by choice. (Education System in Egypt, 2012). Public schools are divided into two categories of schools: public regular schools, and public language schools or Tajrebeya where they teach English as a language, and Math and Sciences are also taught in English Language. (ibid).

### **-Secondary Education**

There are three streams in secondary education, namely general (3 years), technical (5 years) and vocational. Technical secondary schools are organized around industrial, commercial or agricultural themes. Both technical and general schooling are conduits to tertiary education (Education System in Egypt, 2012).

### **-Technical and Vocational Education**

Technical education comprises of technical and commercial courses for 3 or 2 years depending on the field. Vocational education includes preparatory vocational certificates and secondary vocational certificates.

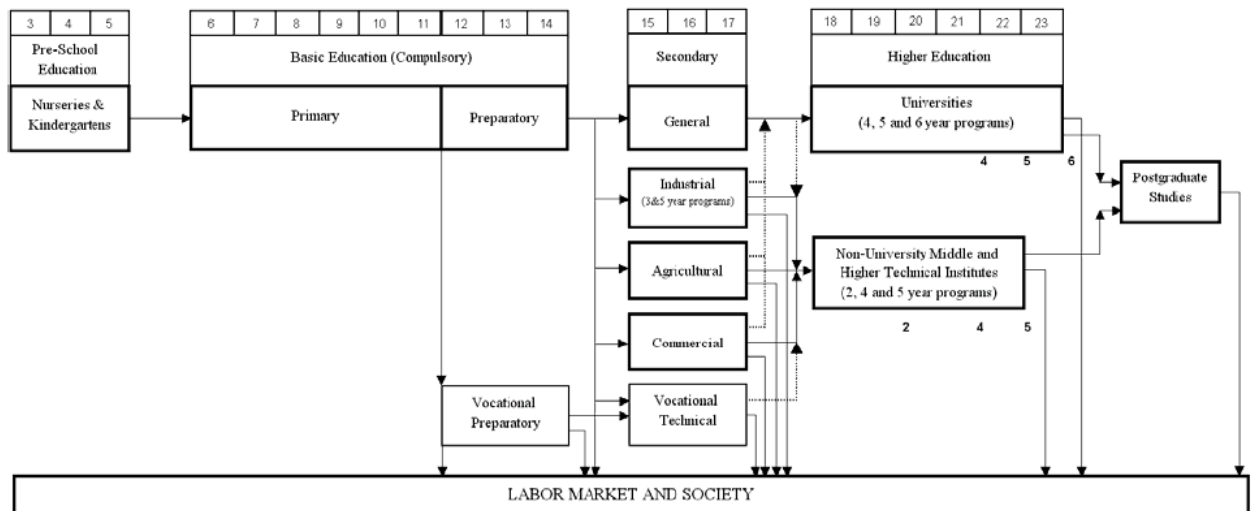
Initial vocational education is provided at separate schools, depending on which students may move to vocational centers or enter the job market immediately.

It offers many programs in different specialties and through different types of institutions. Vocational training is a top government priority since business identifies

a lack of skills, which poses a problem to youth in entering new markets (Education System in Egypt, 2012).

### -Tertiary Education

Egypt has a well-developed and wide tertiary education system attracting approximately 30% of Egyptian students after completion of primary education. There are 17 public universities, 16 private universities, 89 private higher education institutions and 51 public non-university facilities (Ministry of Education Statistical yearbook 2014-2015).



Source: Ministry of Higher Education, 2001.

**Total number of teachers in the public and private schools**

<b>Description</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>			<b>Teachers</b>
	<b>Schools</b>	<b>Classes</b>	<b>Students</b>	
Public Schools	45,279.00	419,961.00	18,608,730.00	918,216.00
Public language schools/Tajrebeya	2,397.00	18,135.00	749,275.00	
Private Schools	7,385.00	62,755.00	2,032,679.00	74,781.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	55,061.00	500,851.00	21,390,684.00	992,997.00

*Source: Ministry of Education Statistical workbook Report 2016-2017*

**Some aspects of the Education system deterioration problems:**

The challenges facing Egypt's education system are numerous and pressing. Some problems are related to the Ministry of Education centralized control over the education system, other problems are due to socio-economic factors and school infrastructure.

Following are some of the key challenges the Education system is facing:

**A focus on memorization learning for examinations:**

Pedagogical methods and approaches to teaching are a serious problem. They don't encourage students to critically engage with the subject matter they are studying, students are generally directed towards memorization and rote-learning, in addition to a lack of learning materials, library books, facilities and equipment (OECD, 2015). The system of grading by memorization has proven to be ineffective in teaching. Students memorize and rarely use their sense of understanding; and with the absence of active learning techniques, they lose their interest in learning (Kamel, 2013). The continuous change of the curriculum makes teachers unable to continuously study new topics, and no longer up to speed on what they are teaching (ibid).

**Poor teaching quality and dependence on private tutors:**

The poor quality of state-provided education has led to the development of an educational 'informal sector' where private tutoring is used to fill the educational gaps left by the formal schooling system (Hartmann, 2008)

**Problems of infrastructure:**

Investment in school facilities is not proportional to the rapid increase in the numbers of students resulting from the high rates of population growth and excessive enrolment rates. The number of students per class may reach forty to fifty children; it is needless to mention that poor facilities do not create an environment conducive to learning (OECD, 2015).



**Socio-Economic challenges:**

Poor teachers are willing to accept bribes in order to give good grades to students (Kamel, 2013). On the other hand, the socio economic conditions of disadvantaged and poor communities, force children to leave schools and start work to support their families, which makes them leave school at an early age (ibid).

**Quality of Faculty of Education caliber:**

Professional development programs for FOE members have been weak or non-existent and funding for them is hopelessly inadequate. Such capacity building for faculty is an essential prerequisite if teacher preparation in the universities and teaching in the schools is to be reformed (OECD, 2015)

**1.3 The Ministry of Education steps for Education Reform**

There are several development programs and initiatives helping Egypt in its path in Education Reform. In the National Education Strategy for 2007-2011 that MOE developed with the United States Agency for International development (USAID) technical assistance, the Ministry of Education (MOE) works to align its education system and tailor it to the needs of a modern economy. In this sense, the program includes improving the quality of teachers and supporting Egyptian government efforts to implement education programs that develop critical thinking and practical skills of primary and secondary school students (USAID, 2016)

- Encouraging pioneering experiences in implementing decentralization (MOE 2008).
- Managing and financing education as well as training teachers (ibid).

- Involving the governorates in the strategic planning for education within the framework of the national strategic plan (ibid).
- Introducing new concepts such as partnership, accreditation and flexible curriculum in the national standards as a step towards decentralization.

Following are some responsibilities carried out by the Ministry:

- Expanding the construction of schools to include the students at all educational levels.
- Recruiting teachers and informing them of the rules governing their promotion and their incentives' system.
- Identifying and developing curricula in addition to developing school plans.
- Planning and designing professional development programs for all MOE staff and officials.
- Setting education goals and objectives for different levels of education, as well as setting the objectives of school curriculum and syllabus (MOE, 2008).

## **1.4 Other Initiatives in Egypt for the past 15 years**

### **1.4.1- “Education for All – Egypt 2000-2015”**

Egypt participated in the Dakar world Conference on “Education for All” in 2000 and made the following commitments to achieve the EFA goals as follows:

- Expanding and improving comprehensive care and education in Early Childhood.
- Enabling all children to attend free compulsory primary education by 2015.

- Meeting all the needs of education for all young people and adults.
- Removing gender disparities in basic education.

In 2015 a report was issued to assess the progress achieved by the Ministry of Education in achieving the above goals.

The Ministry of Education National Strategic Plan for Pre-University Education Reform by 2014/2030 was issued describing the future vision and the goals it seeks to achieve in order to improve the quality of education as follows:

- 1- School Based Reform
- 2- Professional development and human resources
- 3- The development of curricula
- 4- Support the use of technology in schools
- 5- Monitoring and evaluation

#### **1.4.2. Teachers First Initiative “Al Moalemon Awalan”**

The following initiative was still under preparation at the time of data collection for our study and results not yet tested.

In 2016 Teachers’ First initiative was launched by Egypt’s Minister of Education.

Teachers’ first is a Continuous Professional Development program for teachers.

The approach relies on school based innovation teams that will build a culture of innovation and develop teachers’ capacity to change.

- Change should reach every classroom and impact every student.
- Teams will work with other teachers to shape a new understanding of how professional behaviors and modern pedagogies are impacting the education system.
- Integrating new technology in the day-to-day learning programs.

The “Teachers First“ framework has been developed for Egypt by the Open University and is based on the UNESCO Competency Framework for Teachers.

Following are actions to be taken and expected outcome:

1. At the teachers’ level:

- Schools will create digitally well-educated teacher and student for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Identify teachers who need professional development (before and during service)
- Help teachers use new teaching practices in their daily work.
- Use peers support systems to bring change at the classroom level.
- Teachers to be experts in their subjects and in learning as well.

2. At the students’ level:

- Fostering technology driven learning techniques, inquiry based and collaboration among students.
- Students to become active learners, having skills to adapt to change.

3. A new shape of the classroom:

- Transform classroom to a learning environment.
- Teachers to be able to assess what methods are best to achieve the learning objectives.

Teachers First (Al Moalemon Awalan) Initiative uses a unique platform called Point of Learning, to enable teachers, their peers and others to assess the progress of teachers through the program. The program is not a course; teachers will take part in a series of online webinars, and discussions to share practices, successes and failures with their colleagues.

Learning devices are designed to deliver a rapid prototype of the system for 10,000 teachers. These teachers have been selected, and it is expected that within a year, impact changes to teaching and learning will reach 1,000,000 learners.

### **1.5 Research Problem**

Teachers' development is an important pillar to education quality. This study will focus on Teacher's development as an important tool for students to achieve the learning objectives. There is an implementation gap in teachers' professional development; they may learn, understand, and agree with a new idea or technique presented in a workshop, but it's hard for them to implement that idea without ongoing support (CPE, 2005). Primary education is considered as the basis of the entire education system in any country as it is compulsory in most countries, which makes it important to focus on primary education more than other levels. Primary Education often has the highest enrolment rates (Numano, 2012).

This is seen as the rationale behind investing in primary education system more than higher education levels. Furthermore, education is being increasingly viewed as a major factor in achieving sustainable human development in any country (UNESCO, 2005). Education reform is a concern for the government, the civil society and many international development organizations. The ministry of Education seeks to achieve a qualitative shift in education, to raise and improve the quality of the educational process. Some of its goals that are directly related to teachers' development are represented as follows:

- Achieving teachers' professional development and improving teaching techniques through self-assessment and learning through practice.

- Developing students' thinking skills, encouraging scientific research, and learning through technology.
- The above goal cannot be achieved without skilled teachers as mentors.

(MOE National Report, NCERD 2008).

Given the importance of public education development and reform, an educational development strategy was introduced in 2014 with the aim of implementing a comprehensive reform that covers all educational levels (Shohdy, 2016).

For teachers to become effective learners, they need specific attitudes and skills, therefore the development programs should be well designed so that teachers are able to acquire these skills and fulfill education improvement goals (Showers, 2002).

### **1.6 Purpose of the Study**

This Study will focus on Teachers' training and development, and will document Education First Initiative as a model of Teachers' development private sector and civil society efforts to improve teachers' quality. The research is based on in-depth interviews and will conduct a SWOC analysis on "Education First" Initiative to highlight its strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and challenges it is facing and extract useful recommendations that would benefit future Teachers' development programs.

## **1.7 Main Research Questions and Specific research questions**

### **1.7.1 Main Research Question**

What are the Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges of the “Education First Initiative” and what is the program’s perceived impact on Teachers Development in Public Language Schools (Tajrebeya), and how does it impact education quality in primary schools?

### **1.7.2 Sub Research Questions**

- What are the types of training development conducted for Teachers in primary schools, through “Education First” Initiative, whether subject matter based or focusing on teaching methods.
- What are teachers’ perceptions about “Education First” Initiative development program/sessions?
- How are the training programs of “Education First” initiative affecting teaching quality and student learning?
- Points of commonality between “Education First” initiative and the international models.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

The researcher hereby elected to conduct a qualitative study by organizing in-depth interviews with the targeted groups, and secondary data collected by researching up-

to-date international reports and recent studies. The researcher conducted interviews with sixteen participants, asked them open-ended questions and ensured they understood the questions. Also, both genders have been represented in the sample, and different hierarchal positions with various professional experience have also been considered.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The first Chapter is an introduction about pre-university education system in Egypt and Teachers' development initiatives from the Egyptian government, then statement of the research problem followed by the purpose and the significance of the study. Also, the research questions are stated in this chapter as well.

The second is about the literature review of previous studies related to the research topic.

The third describes the research methodology used in this study with an explanation of why qualitative analysis is used to analyze data, data collection and sample design. Ethical considerations for the study were also mentioned.

The fourth presents the SWOC analysis and study of the findings and analysis of the collected data. It also includes discussion of the study findings, and answers to the research questions. The fifth chapter explains the study conclusions and policy recommendations.



## Chapter TWO: Literature Review

It has been widely recognized that well educated people can access better jobs and achieve higher life standard than less educated people. Training is recognized as the means to add new knowledge to the teacher's professional background. Professional training should allow people to learn how to be more active learners. While there is no doubt that students' success depends on teachers' quality, there are continuous debates about the quality of those who teach and what are the best ways to develop an effective teaching force (Wenglinsky, 2000).

Monk (1994) maintained that both content and professional knowledge are important. He suggests that good teacher preparation requires courses in both areas: subject matter knowledge and professional knowledge. He argued that subject matter knowledge without professional knowledge generates teachers who cannot convey what they know about the subject, and professional knowledge without subject matter knowledge produces teachers who have nothing to convey.

Following are the various themes of teachers' development as discussed by the various authors.

### **2.1. Various Themes of Teachers' Development**

We will hereby discuss the various themes for Teachers' Development. These include the following:

- The importance of teachers' development
- The impact of teachers' quality on education outcome
- Types of training programs necessary to enhance teachers' quality

### **2.1.1. The Importance of Teachers' development**

The Importance of Teachers' development is highlighted in the literature, for example, Brophy and Good (1986) noted that good teachers are the essence of forming good schools, and improving teachers' skills and knowledge is one of the most important investments of time and money that local, state, and national leaders make in education. Yet with the wide variety of professional development options available, which methods have the most impact on student learning?

The main pillar of quality education is Teacher: Since the main objective of school improvement planning is to improve the level of student achievement, the person who has the greatest impact on students during the school day is the teacher; he plays several critical roles in the school improvement planning process. Teacher engagement in the development and implementation of educational reform is crucial and school reform will not work unless it is supported from the bottom up (OECD, 2011). Another idea in alignment with the above was stated in the GMR report the "Education For All" (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (GMR) (2005), that "in a rigorous study of twenty eight such factors, the two most prominent factors were found directly related to the teacher" (Hammond, 2009).

Professional development is an essential component in nearly every modern proposal for educational improvement (Guskey et al, 1995).

### **2.1.2. The Impact of Teachers' Quality on Education Outcome**

The second theme is the impact of teacher quality on education outcome; the only factor that can create student achievement is a knowledgeable, skillful teacher (NCTAF 1997). In developing countries, teacher quality can matter even more than in wealthier countries. Teacher training needs to be individually targeted and repeated. Training should be associated with coaching, often around a specific instructional technique. Teacher training programs are most effective when they teach pedagogy specific to a subject area (for example: how to teach a mathematics class) (Briggs, 2012). Walter and Briggs studies showed that the professional development that makes the most difference to teachers, should be concrete and classroom-based, it should bring in expertise from outside the school, involve teachers in the choice of areas to develop, and activities to undertake. Professional development allows teachers to work collaboratively with peers and provides opportunities for mentoring and coaching, supported by effective school leadership (ibid).

The importance of good teachers is no secret. Schools and their communities have always been seeking out the best teachers they could get, as they are convinced that their students' success depends on it. Skilled teachers produce better results (CPE, 2005). A research review study about teacher quality and student achievement revealed that there were positive correlations between years of teaching experience and higher student achievement. Teachers with more than five years in the classroom seem to be the most effective. Equally, inexperienced teachers have a strong negative effect on student performance (ibid). Recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers is the central strategy for improving our schools (ibid). Young Teachers should be given the time to develop; to share and to train in order to meet the needs

of an evolving generation (McGill, 2004). This is what McGill described about staff training: “regular and sustained staff training is part of our daily diet”. Professional development must promote teachers' continuous learning, integrating new knowledge about teaching and learning within the social settings in which teaching takes place (Dilworth et al 1995).

### **2.1.3. Types of Training Programs necessary to enhance Teachers’ quality**

Training associated with a specific pedagogical technique is usually more effective. (World development report 2018, Bau and Das 2017).

Garret (2011) argued that the successful training program should focus on the following:

- (a) focus on content knowledge; (b) opportunities for active learning; and (c) coherence with other learning activities. (Garrett et al 2011)<sup>2</sup>

According to Cox (2016), there are 15 professional development skills for modern teachers. Cox (2016) thinks that the following fifteen professional development skills are essential for teachers to be competent in basic and modern skills. Teachers should be able to quickly acquire new skills to cope with new technology and be able to keep their jobs. Moreover, they should be able to adapt to the way students learn, the behavior their classroom presents; adaptability is a must-have skill. Another important skill is confidence; teachers should have confidence in their students and colleagues; confidence inspires others to be better performers. Communication is

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<sup>2</sup> In fact, I personally had an observation confirming the above concept, through attending training sessions for Education first initiative; active learning was a method widely applied during the three days training sessions of “Education First” training program. Teachers actively participated to the activities and showed enthusiasm

another essential skill that teachers should have to be able to deal with students, colleagues and parents too. Moreover, good teachers should be continuous learners and good team players; they should work with their students in teams and convey the information in an innovative way. Furthermore, teachers should be creative and keep their students engaged by creating imaginative ways to make learning fun. Another vital trait of a good teacher is leadership, a good teacher leads by example; he should be a role model to his students. Additionally, modern teachers should be able to engage in the world of technology and adapt themselves to any new applications in teaching methods, which stimulate their students' interest. Last but not least, modern teachers have to empower their students to be creative and think critically, be innovative, creative, adaptable, passionate, and flexible (Cox, 2016).

## **2.2. Other Teachers' development Initiatives around the world**

Following are models of initiatives focusing on Teachers Development in other countries:

### **2.2.1 TTISSA initiative (2006-2015)**

The Teacher Training Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa, TTISSA is one of the three high-level UNESCO Education for All (EFA) initiatives, for the Sub-Saharan Africa region, along with the Global Initiative on Education and HIV and AIDS (EDUCAIDS) and the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). TTISSA is a ten-year initiative, from 2006 to 2015, aiming to increase the quantity and quality of the teaching force in Sub-Saharan Africa. The total number of countries in the initiative

is 46 countries; they are supposed to progressively participate in the initiative by year 2015. TTISSA partners are: the African Development Bank (ADB), Association for Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Commonwealth Secretariat, International Labor Organization (ILO), New partnership for African Development (NEPAD), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), World Bank, development partners, universities, NGOs and foundations. During its ten years period, TTISSA initiative supports the region's Member States in addressing teacher-related challenges.

The Teaching profession faces several challenges. The attractiveness of teaching as a career is declining over time. Their migration also leads to difficulties in recruitment. Despite the resulting need for an increased number of teachers, current teaching force models are unable to cover this demand. The initiative works in collaboration with other stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive, strategic approach to teacher problems. TTISSA Goal reflects the overall goals of "Education for All" (EFA), with a focus on Sub-Saharan African Countries.

TTISSA strategy is built around four main areas of support:

- Improvement of the **status and working conditions for teachers**
- Improvement of teacher **management and administration structures**
- Development of appropriate **teachers policies**
- Enhancement of the quality and coherence of **teacher professional development.**

## **2.2.2 Professional Development initiative in the Eastern Cape since 1994:**

### **A Case Study of IMBEWU Project**

In 1997 the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDE) introduced a school improvement and professional development intervention called Imbewu Project (IP) aiming at enhancing Education system in the schools. The goals of the project were as follows:

- Transform department of education's capacity by developing its policy, planning, budgeting, monitoring, community involvement, evaluation and management.
- Enhance management capacity and performance of 500 primary school principals.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in 500 primary schools.
- Improve the quality and availability of appropriate teaching and learning books.
- Enhance community involvement in the development, support and security of primary schools (Imbewu, 1998).

The Imbewu Project (IP) was the first school-focused form of school improvement and professional development intervention in the Eastern Cape (EC) province initiated by the government since 1994 after the transition to a democratic regime. A critical analysis of the initiative was undertaken to assess its strengths and weaknesses.

The applied type of professional development was designed in the form of series of courses and workshops conducted outside the school. The subject workshops offered theory that is sometimes, unrelated to practice and are therefore insufficiently related to the specific needs and concerns of the participants. There was an excessive use of lecturing methods and discussions.

- Workshop activities focused on the individual only.

- No adequate resources available for appropriate feedback and follow-up mechanisms were put in place.
- It was hard to practice the newly acquired ideas or skills.
- Very limited chances to learn from and with colleagues inside the school
- It ended up by being a 'single-loop learning' (Day 1994).
- Learned solutions were not exposed for study or assessment by colleagues.
- It therefore lacks integration with the day-to-day life of teachers.

Most of the challenges faced by the Eastern Cape were due to the lack of financial resources, poor school-community relationships, weak learner performance, poor professional attitudes, vandalism and abuse of rights and responsibilities (Imbewu Project, 1999; Muller & Robberts, 2000).

The Department of Education (2000:51) also noted that because of shortage of classroom space, effective teaching and learning in many schools will start when the basic infrastructure is in place.

Poor educational facilities and resources in general, may result in limited use of student-centred teaching strategies and poor student learning. Poor school-community relationships are linked to the poor educational background of the majority of the population and to the poverty of the region. Most parents in Black schools, particularly in rural areas, are either illiterate or have limited schooling which prevented them from giving academic support to their children and made the work of teachers in such schools more difficult than in other schools. As a result, it is needless to say that for any school improvement initiative to be effective, it should also focus on improving the school-community relationship.



## **2. Problems Faced in the IP program:**

- Chronic shortage of classroom accommodation in the 5 schools where the program was implemented.
- The poor infrastructure in some schools forms an obstacle to appropriate learning opportunities and exposes learners to health threats.
- Due to poor infrastructure, retention of good teachers is also difficult and leads to low morale among staff, learners and the community.

### Successful feedback was manifested in the following:

- Increased collaboration among teachers, school principals and the community
- Working together in teams as teachers at the instructional level.
- Collaboration among the stakeholders; mainly the school principal, the teachers and the SGBs (School Governing body) were practiced.
- Improvement in financial management and control by the school principal and the Schools Governing bodies (SGBs).

### **Summary:**

There is a need for professional development that focuses not only on management of structures and processes around instruction, but on managing instruction itself. The conclusion drawn on this study was that significant changes were occurring more outside the classroom. Professional development should not try to protect teachers from outside interventions; it should reduce isolation, practice direct observation, and encourage analysis and constructive criticism. Professional Development should focus on teachers as groups as well as the school and encourage collaboration

between them. It should make an intensive effort to integrate professional development with the day-to-day lives of teachers (Imbewu, 1998).

### **2.2.3. Bangladesh Teachers' Development Initiative: English in Action for English teachers "EIA"**

English in Action (EiA) project reviews the prevailing professional development opportunities for the English teachers in Bangladesh which demands the emergence need of change in teacher development approach that EiA addressed. The project was based on the integration of mobile technology to enhance teachers' pedagogical and language skill, it was an effective approach to achieve success, it was based on using technology to support teachers along with other effective supportive teacher development approaches.

There are different dimensions of teachers' professional development.

#### **- Teachers' collaboration:**

It is an effective way where teachers engage in dialogue and learn from each other by reflecting on their own practices.

#### **- In-service education and training:**

It includes professional courses, training on different issues, workshops, and conferences for teachers.

#### **- Teachers' engagement in action research:**

The subject engagement is either individually or in groups, coaching or mentoring

are also important dimensions of teachers' professional development in the educational environment.

Bangladesh has over 17 million students in primary schools learning English as their second language. Since 1992, English has been included in both national primary and secondary curriculum of Bangladesh as an obligatory subject from grade one to grade twelve.

Traditionally, teachers followed mainly the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) for teaching English by giving more importance to writing and reading (Kirkwood and Ray, 2011).

The National Curriculum and Text Book Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh made a huge shift in English teaching approaches by introducing new books for English named as English for Today which put stress on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method to guarantee that the English language is frequently used in communication in class.

The Communicative Language teaching (CLT) based English for Today faced many difficulties as most of the teachers including teacher trainers learned English using the Grammar translation method (GTM) but they are now being expected to teach or train in CLT mode; in order to overcome that problem government and non-government organizations led a number of initiatives for in-service teacher training programs to support English teachers to get them acquainted with the CLT based teaching method. On the other hand, UNICEF funded an English subject based training for primary English teachers through Primary Education Development Project-II (PEDP-II), to overcome that problem.

Despite all of the above initiatives, studies reported that classroom practice in English

language teaching is still very much traditional Grammar-Translation method based.

## **2. English in Action project:**

English in Action (EiA) project brought change in teacher development approaches, (EiA) is a nine year (2008-2017) education project initiated at the request of Bangladesh government and funded by UK government's Department for International Development (DFID).

This project aims to support 25 million school children to achieve communicative skill of English language so that they would be able to contribute in the national economic activities. The project partnered with The Open University, UK and BBC World Service Trust

EiA initiated school-based interventions that included supported open learning (SOL) and use of media technologies interactive materials to increase teachers' motivation and access to resources to achieve the communicative aspects of the National English Curriculum. The Open University was responsible for providing materials for teachers' professional development initiatives. The training team prepared audio tracks along with printed materials for usage in English lessons.

EiA aimed to develop English teaching and learning by introducing mobile technology. Teachers are given a digital media player- Apple iPod Touch preloaded with audio-visual materials. Individual teachers also receive support from a range of other support sources such as other EiA participant teachers in the locality, a local mentor and an EiA Teacher Development Coordinator (TDC).

The audio materials were very useful as they are linked to the school textbooks and other supplementary learning materials such as posters and flash cards.

### **3. Success and challenges of EiA model in Bangladesh context:**

EiA project successfully integrated technology in classroom teaching. It also has a strong supervision system: teachers get support from the EiA's strong supervision system when they finish their training and go back to school. EiA team of trained staff, regularly attend classes of EiA trained teachers to observe them while teaching and give them positive feedback to help improve their classroom teaching.

EiA's model of professional development creates opportunities for teachers to work in collaboration and benefit from peer support. The regular group meetings held among teachers make them share their experiences and difficulties for using new technology based materials. They also share their success stories to inspire others with practical experiences.

Although, integrating technology in teachers' professional development is often challenging when teachers are not very familiar to use technology-based devices. Participant teachers in EiA project need to develop their technological skill to be able to use the different iPods' functions in class.

#### **Summary:**

Using mobile technology in teacher training and classroom activities brought remarkable changes in English language teaching and learning.

Sustainability of financial resources is considered a great challenge due to the poor infrastructural condition at schools. Despite these challenges, no doubt that EiA has been able to create a big shift in the field of teachers' professional development in Bangladesh.

## Chapter THREE: Research Methodology

### 3.1 Qualitative Research Methodology

The researcher hereby elected to conduct a qualitative study by organizing in-depth interviews with the targeted groups, and collecting secondary through up-to-date international reports and recent studies. Qualitative methods are intended to achieve depth of understanding (Patton, 2002).

An Important advantage of qualitative methods in exploratory research is the use of open-ended questions and probing that give participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from fixed responses, such as in quantitative methods. Open-ended questions have the ability to suggest responses that are:

- Significant and culturally relevant to the participant
- Unexpected by the researcher
- Generating more data
- Rich and explanatory in nature

(Macks et al., 2005)

There is also another important advantage of qualitative methods: they allow the researcher the flexibility to investigate initial participant responses by asking why or how. The researcher should listen carefully to what participants say, interact with

them according to their individual personalities and styles, and use “probes” to encourage them to give more information and elaborate on their answers (ibid).

In-depth interviews with teachers from “Education First” initiative were conducted to learn about their perspective of development programs offered to them at the beginning of their professional career, and whether they are able to effectively apply skills they acquired (Kvale, 1996). Interviews often depend on trust (Rossman, 2008).

### **3.2. Data Analysis**

In Qualitative Research, the researcher uses triangulation, which consists of addressing same questions to different teachers. Triangulation of qualitative data allows for different perspectives, it allows capturing personal interpretation and experience (Patton, 1999).

The Initial task in analyzing data is to generate some concepts that help the researcher make sense of what is going on in the scenes documented in the data (Becker 1993). In this research, concepts emerged from the data and helped the researcher make sense of the data and perform the Program SWOC analysis to determine areas of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and challenges which help in simulating similar development programs while avoiding its weaknesses and building on their opportunities. The researcher also classified the concepts into themes by analysis words during interviews and detected repetition of same concepts to classify them under the same theme.

### 3.3. Data Collection and Sample Design

The sample is purposive; it was selected for the purpose of this research. Purposive sampling is a technique used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases and for the best use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling is one of the most common sampling strategies. This method groups participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question. It is therefore most successful when data review and analysis are done in conjunction with data collection (ibid).

In this study, the researcher approached eighteen participants attending the training sessions, explained the type of research to them, and assured them the confidentiality of their answers. The participants profile consisted on teachers, school principals, and ministry of education officials (in the governorates' Idarat).

#### Interviewees profile:

Age Group	School Location	Gender	Teachers	MOE Official	School Principal	Instructor	TOTAL
25-30	Mansoura	Female	2				2
	Sharkeya		1				3
30-45	Mansoura	Male	1		1		2
	Cairo	Female				1	1
	Mansoura		4				2
	Aswan			1			1
35-40	Qena	Male		1			1
	Domiat	Female	1		1		1
	Sharkeya	Male	2				3
45-50	Aswan	Female		1			1
45-55	Cairo	Female		1			1
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>

Profile of interviewed participants (Source: the researcher)



The above profile shows the age group of the participants, varying from young teachers who are novice teachers, and more experienced ones who fall in the age bracket of 35-45 year old. For the young teachers, this was the first interaction with the training program. The more experienced teachers have already attended the training sessions in previous rounds.

### **3.3.1 Establishing Rapport**

Building rapport with participants is crucial for researchers to gather good data. It is highly recommended to have a good relationship with the participants. Building good interpersonal relations between researcher and participant is an important aspect that needs to be considered especially when a researcher engages in interviews and observations in order to acquire rich data (Heggen, 2009).

In our context, the participants were all from Delta region mainly from Mansoura, Sharkiya, and Domiat. The researcher's parental roots are also from Mansoura, the fact that built intimacy and trust with the participants; they felt comfortable before starting the interview. Then the researcher briefly explained the research topic, and also answered all the participants' questions beforehand to ensure that they understand the topic.

The researcher explained that participation in this study was voluntary and there will not be any risks or discomforts associated with this research. Also, the researcher clarified that there will be no direct benefits to the participants, but the benefit will be for the good of the whole Teachers' development process.

### **3.4 Advantages and Limitations of in-depth interviews**

The sample consists of a relatively limited number of informants; therefore, the results cannot be generalized. Despite the fact that the researcher assured the respondents that results are totally confidential, some of the teachers stressed on the advantages of the Initiative only and were hesitant to reveal the disadvantages they may see in the training program.

### **3.5. Ethical consideration**

The researcher established rapport and trust with participants. She assured confidentiality and data anonymity of all the respondents, and their names will not be revealed or associated with their responses in any way (Babbie, 2010).

## **Chapter FOUR: SWOC ANALYSIS of “Education First” Program**

The main objective of the education reform efforts is to improve the level of students’ achievement; the person who has the greatest impact on students during the school day is the teacher (Belvanshi, 2015). Teachers training should be strengthened in formalized experiences such as courses and workshops that introduce peer coaching or support collaboration and joint projects (Avalos, 2011).

In this chapter, the researcher will use the data to conduct a SWOC analysis of Education First Initiative, which is being seen as a successful model that represents collaborative efforts of the MOE, private section and civil society.

The analysis will reveal its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and also challenges that it may be facing.

#### **4.1 Education First Initiative**

##### **4.1.1 Background about the organization**

Education First Initiative is established by a Civil Society organization created according to Law# of 84 year 2002 for the Ministry of Social Solidarity. The activities started in 2013 (Education First, 2018).

Education First project is a social initiative aiming at improving the quality of Education in Egyptian public schools, and also acknowledging merit and high achieving students and granting them academic scholarships with the objective of building a better future for Egypt.

Education First project is based on 3 main pillars; training programs for teachers and administrators, extracurricular activities, and initiatives to extend scholarships to high achieving students (ibid).

##### **4.1.2 Organization Vision and Slogan**

The organization vision is enhancing public sector education, through Capacity Building of Human Resources and sponsoring High Achieving students, and establishing a partnership between the Government and the Civil Society organizations to support and lead the improvement of Education in Egypt. It's slogan is "When Education becomes a Nation's priority".

### **4.1.3. Organization Achievements**

The organization formed a monitoring and evaluation team consisting of 154 trained officials, social specialists and English language instructors.

The monitoring and evaluation team performed around 3000 visits to approximately 721 schools to assess the impact of the program.

In 2016 the organization signed an MOA with the Ministry of Education to train twenty thousand teachers from all governmental language schools.

The increase in training activities necessitated the inclusion of new partners such as Vodafone, Al Alfi Foundation for Human Resources, in addition to signing a protocol of academic support with “Balanced Education Company” through a partnership with Florida Atlantic University, Department of Educational Leadership & Research Methodology.

Training programs topics are tailored to serve teachers, school officials and social specialists, and designed by the Department of Educational Leadership & Research Methodology at Florida Atlantic University. The training program covers the following topics:

- Leadership and management
- Strategic planning for educational organizations
- Role of the Teacher in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Assessment of Students’ results
- Application of technology in Education Methods
- Schools assessment methods

The project is dealing with approximately 1 million students, which is the total number of students in the public language schools “Tajrebeya” in Egypt.

The partners are:

- Ministry of Social Solidarity
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Youth
- VODAFONE Egypt
- ISCE: International Schools Committee in Egypt
- The International Schools of Choueifat Cairo
- New Generation International School
- QUEST
- IACC Holdings
- El Sawi Culture wheel
- B-Tech
- Al Alfi Foundation
- Bank Misr

Between 2014 and 2016, the organization trained a total number of 7350 trainees ranging from School Principals, Teachers, Teachers' Supervisors, Psychiatry Specialists, Social Specialists, English Language Supervisors and Nursery Supervisors. As for the Merit Achievements to Achieving students, the organization honored 84 students for their academic achievements, across the country, and 84 talented students in the field of music, singing and arts. All of the above was performed under the auspice of the Ministry of Youth.

The training program implemented from 2014 to 2016 consisted of two phases:

#### 4.1.4. Training topics

Phase I: Training topics designed to focus on academic aspects, administrative aspects, school culture etc...

Targeted Groups	School Managers and Principals	Teachers	Social and Psychiatric Specialists	Pre-school Teachers	English Language Supervisors
Topics	Positive Attitude Evaluation				Assessment of Learning
	Teacher's role in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century	Learning Difficulties (for students)		Learning through playing and having fun	Successful tools for teaching comprehension skills
	Diferent phases of student evolution and its impact on Education		Psychiatric tests		
	Evaluation of students and analysis of results		Students life	Daily schedule	Steps for the right writing
	Difference between management and leadership	Active learning	Preventive programs		
	School Evaluation Methods	Effective Methods for English Language Teaching		Learning through playing and listening music	Grammar Matters
	Strategic Planning for Educational Institutions	Role of School Activities in shaping students personalities	School and Society		
	Use of new Technologies	Time Management			
	Multi-education methods	Class Management		Successful steps for vocabulary skills	
	School Culture				

Source: Education First website (2018)

Phase II: 3 days training conducted by Florida Atlantic University FAU, on subject Matter (English, Math and Sciences).

#### PHASE II

Targeted Groups	Teaching Methods	Special Matters
Sciences Teachers	Management of Active Learning Differentiated Instruction Assessment Strategies	5E Model
Maths		- Mathematical mindset
		- Analyzing Mathematic Tasks
English		- Mathematical Activities
	TESOL	

Source: Education First website (2018)

Training Results: The number of teachers trained reached 10,000.00 consisting of 500 Sciences Teachers in all governorates: Cairo, Upper Egypt, Alex, Kalyoubia, Giza and canal Cities, 4000 math teachers in of the above governorates except Cairo and 4,500 English Teachers in all governorates except Cairo (Education First, 2018) For the purpose of evaluation and follow up, an evaluation team was formed from all governorates. It consisted of the following members:

721 School Managers

154 Evaluation committee members.

54 Head of Department of Public Language Schools

36 members for the TOT team

## **4.2. SWOC Analysis of the Training Program**

Interviews were conducted with Teachers and Education Officials who attended Education First Initiative training sessions conducted for teachers of 3 Delta governorates: Domiat, Sharkia and Dakahlia, during the period from Jan 25 to Jan 27, 2018 at 6<sup>th</sup> of October Educational City. We will also perform a SWOC analysis for the Organization to study its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities or challenges it is facing.

### **4.2.1 Definition of SWOC Analysis**

A SWOC analysis is the assessment of the internal and external environment of an organization to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and Challenges (Bryson 2011).

Three major categories are to be assessed internally:

- Resources
- Present Strategy (Process)
- Performance (Outcome) (Bryson, 2011)

Following is the SWOC analysis performed on Education First Initiative, findings that emerged from studying the Perceptions of Teachers who attended the training sessions.

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
Clear & organized goals	Vision is not time bound (no specific dates)
National Impact program (covering 721 Public schools in 27 Governorates)	Strategic plan not time bound
Decentralized & transparent Teachers' Selection process	Training Location in Cairo only (difficult commute for Teachers in governorates)
Targeting teachers in all governorates of Egypt	Lack of resources and absence of technology tools at schools prevent easy implementation of new teaching methods
Diversified stakeholders: MOE, NGO, Corporate Entities ensures a strong donor support	Need to create de-centralized training hubs for easy access to Governorates' teachers
Accredited Training Materials- provided by Balanced Education Company and University of Florida	Teachers face different environment: Curriculum deadlines/ large class size prevent direct implementation of new teaching methods
Presence of evaluation tools	
Powerful means of Media dissemination: Web site and Facebook page	
Good reputation of Training among Tajrebya Schools	
Relevance of development program to subject matter	
Encourage high achieving students	
Usage of active learning techniques	
High Level of Accountability	



<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>CHALLENGES</b>
Build on success model to Create training Hubs in other locations in Egypt	Funding : donor interest might wane
A good chance to upgrade Public Schools curricula to comply with new teaching techniques	Political Support
Improve class management techniques and students' skills	
<b>Creation of 2 new activities:</b> Training of School of Education fresh graduates Staff Training of Fresh Graduates from School of Education: The 100 teachers' program	

#### **4.2.2. STRENGTHS**

In A SWOC analysis, strengths are characteristics related to the international environment, on which the organization can depend on, to build on opportunities and achieve its goals (Bryson, 2011).

##### **Clear and Organized Goal**

The program goal is to organize Teachers' development training for 721 public schools in 27 Governorates. Education First project is performing training programs for teachers and administrators, extracurricular activities, and initiatives to extend scholarships to high achieving students.

##### **National Impact Program**

Between 2014 and 2016, the program covered the development of approximately 7350 teachers in 721 public schools in the 27 Governorates. The targeted group consisted of English, Math and Sciences teachers.

### **Diversified Stakeholders**

The program's stakeholders consist of a variety of parties, the Ministry of Education, Education First organization, corporate entities and Banks.

The Ministry of Education assumes a strong role, as it is the coordinator between schools and "Education First" organization. Corporate entities and banks play the role of sponsors to the various training and extra-curricular activities. The diversity of sponsors ensures sustainability of funding (Education First, 2018).

### **Decentralized and transparent Teachers' selection process**

The Ministry of Education (MOE) coordinates with the Educational districts of the various governorates who in turn communicate with public schools and ask them to nominate teachers for the training, the subject teachers are then asked to perform an evaluation entry test before being officially nominated for the training. The rationale behind this selection process is to ensure transparency and high quality of selected teachers, as they will be responsible for disseminating their learning experience among their peers.

### **Accredited Training Materials**

The training materials are provided by Balanced Education company in partnership with Florida Atlantic University (FAU).

### **Good reputation of Training among Public "Tajrebeya" Schools**

The Good reputation that "Education First" initiative acquired over the past years, and spread among teachers made them eager to attend the sessions with enthusiasm.

As per an English Language Instructor:

*“Due to its well-known reputation among public schools, most of the teachers are interested in benefiting from the training, for their own benefit, especially the rural areas teachers believe in investing in human objects, they don’t have any resources other than their skills.”*

The above quote confirms the good reputation the program has among public “tajrebeya” schools. Most of the teachers look forward to attending any of the offered training sessions to develop their language skills.

Following is the feedback from a Ministry of Education Official, responsible for the coordination of training programs between Governmental schools and “Education First” organization.

The Ministry of Education official was involved in the program since its launch in 2013. She started by comparing it to “Teachers first - Al Mo3alemon Awalan” the recent training program launched by the Ministry of Education.

*“Education First” program is a well-organized program, the institution is extending a lot of support to teachers and it is a civil society effort, supported by funds from private organizations and banks, with the aim of developing education in Egypt. I think that the selection of Schools’ managers is crucial as he is the key success player at schools”. As per the MOE official (Jan 2018)*

The MOE Official explained that there is a strong support to the “Education First” program due to its accountability and the seriousness of the stakeholders. The Program is part of the current Ministry of Education strategic plan, and supported by the political regime. She thinks that in order for public schools to succeed in its mission, a good manager should be selected to supervise schools performance. She thinks that the school’s headmaster is the key player to a successful performance. He is the one who selects the teachers and makes sure that Education goals are attained. She also stated that the number of students in Tajrebeya schools’ classes should be limited to a maximum of 35 per class, as it used to be in the past. With a reasonable number of students in class, teachers will be able to fully implement their innovative teaching techniques.

Teachers and Schools Headmasters view it as a success model:

*The initiative is a successful model of teachers’ development, a joint effort between the organization and the ministry of education. It is an energetic initiative and we conduct evaluation visits to attend classes and observe teachers performance.*

As per an interview with a headmaster of public Tajrebeya schools in Qena governorate (Jan 2018)

The above quote also confirms the good reputation of the program, prevailing in governorates all over the country.

## **Active Learning techniques**

Active learning techniques are widely applied in the training sessions. Ice-breaks to attract attendants' attention are a good tool for active learning. Teachers are encouraged to apply these new teaching methods when they return back to their schools.

An Educational Official from Aswan governorate stated the following:

*“Education First” Initiative training sessions target teachers in public language schools “Tajrebeya”, they are subject matter sessions for the English, Math, and Sciences Teachers. Teachers benefit a lot from the sessions, they think that the sessions enhance their knowledge about the subject and teach them new teaching methods. (Jan 2018)*

The above quote explains how the application of new teaching techniques stimulates students' interest in the topic, which leads to the development of the learning skills among students, and increase the ability to express their own opinion with freedom, critical thinking, problem solving and strategic planning skills, etc...

*It is a good step forward, we hope to have advanced education and good relation between the teacher and the student. (ibid)*

The above quote confirms the good relation established between students and their teacher due to the application of active learning techniques, as such techniques stimulate their critical thinking and increase their self-esteem

### **Enthusiasm of teachers about the sessions**

Teachers are very enthusiastic about attending the training sessions to the extent that some of them suggest they financially contribute to fund the sessions to ensure its sustainability.

*“Some of the teachers also suggest they contribute to the funding of the sessions in order to make it more frequent”.* The MOE official stated.

*“Really, it is a great work and effort. AS soon as we learn that we are nominated, we do our best to attend the sessions. We wish to achieve the goals”* as per a teacher’s comment from Mansoura (Jan 2018)

Despite the fact that training sessions are held in Cairo, hundreds of miles away from their home locations, teachers exert all efforts in order not to miss the opportunity to attend the sessions, and even suggest they financially contribute in the funding of the program to ensure it achieves its goals.

*“I managed to arrange with my husband and mother, this opportunity is important and I would have never missed it.”* as per a teacher’s comment from Sharkeya. (Jan 2018)

The above quote confirms the efforts exerted by teachers to attend the training, and make their own household arrangements in order not to miss the chance.

## **Evaluation Techniques**

Evaluation and follow up techniques are in place and are applied to verify the impact of the training on teachers:

*“We conduct frequent visits to schools, meet with teachers, attend classes and evaluate them during teaching. I personally maintain a log sheet for every teacher and write down what new techniques were applied and publish the log sheet on my Facebook page, for them to see my comments”* As per an interview of MOE Schools’ Department Official, Aswan governorate.

“Education First” organization, in cooperation with the ministry of education, has formed an evaluation team of 88 members to visit schools, to assess the program impact by watching teachers’ performance in class.

## **Relevance of Training topics to subject matter**

The training course offered, are for Math Sciences and English teachers of public schools, each teacher is getting training in his subject matter. For example, Math’ teachers are given a training related to the following topics:

- Mathematical activities
- Differentiated Instruction
- Analyzing Mathematical tasks,
- Mathematical mindset
- Assessment strategies
- Management of active learning

English language teachers program covers linguistics, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc. It is a type of TEFL Course (teaching English as a Foreign language).

*The information we received is a sort of refreshment to what we studied at college, and we apply what we learn at the training sessions, as we soon as we return to our classes.* As per An English Teacher from Mansoura (Jan 2018)

The above quote confirms the fact that teachers benefit from the course and find it as a sort of refresher to what they studied in the Faculty of Education.

#### **Good means of Media dissemination: Web Page and FB page**

Education First has a good website that includes all information about the program, in addition to a Facebook page, where all teachers view the events and put their comments, whether negative or positive comments. At the time of training, the FB page is an online quick tool that everybody has access to, and gets information about the lists of names selected to attend the upcoming training sessions. (The researcher).

#### **Extending Awards/Scholarships to High achieving students**

“Education First” also award honors to high achieving students in official language schools in Egypt, with the aim of discovering and encouraging high achieving students and sponsoring their skills’ development. In Jan 2018, 156 students were honored by the Organization as high achievers for Academic year 2016-2017. The event was a 15 days leisure and activities program in Cairo where students from governorates stayed at the 6<sup>th</sup> of October educational city. The event was sponsored by Vodafone & Microsoft Egypt.



## **Accountability**

Education First Initiative is sponsored by an NGO that has various stakeholders, who play a leading role in supporting the various organization's activities.

*“The fact that this initiative is supported or sponsored by an NGO or several NGOs ensures a degree of accountability, hence performance improvement”... Per the MOE Official.*

The above quote confirms that support provided by various stakeholders help in funding the various program activities, teachers training and students' capacity building.

### **4.2.3. WEAKNESSES**

#### **Training program Topics**

Training program topics are focusing on English language, Math and Sciences teachers only”. Below is a comment from an Arabic teacher on “Education First” face Book page, requesting that Arabic teachers be included of the program.

*“It is a pity that the training program is not targeting Arabic teachers. Knowing that Arabic teachers are the backbone of primary education, for the fact of being present in class for a long period of time, they inspire students and shape their acquired knowledge and affect their culture”. As per an Arabic teacher comment (2017)*

The above quote is an objection that Arabic teacher is not included in the program. Arabic teachers feel they are singled out from the initiative.

### **Schools involved in training only, get the benefit**

There is a general opinion that only schools involved in training sessions take the benefit and that experience is not spread to other schools who did not take part in it.

*“No members from our school were selected in the program, there is no mechanism to exchange knowledge between schools. Only those attending benefit from the training”*. As per a teacher’s comment on Facebook.

### **Slow expansion pace to reach high-achieving students in remote areas**

Some parents of students in remote areas complain that their children are left out and that the ministry of education does not include them in the nominated children for high achievements

*“Our students are also high-achievers, but nobody cares about the remote areas”* As per a teacher’s comment on Facebook page (2017)

The above quote confirms the fact that high-achieving students in remote areas are not necessarily reached while nominating the awarded students.

### **Lack of Strategic plan for the organization**

There is no strategic plan with defined dates for each deliverables. The financial resources depend on fund raising, there is no specific budget for the program; the funding process starts by submitting a request for funding to the sponsors with details of upcoming training sessions; which means that for each activity, the organization starts by preparing a request for funding along with their proposal for the upcoming activity. This makes it difficult to do a long term planning for the activities. After the proposal is approved by a sponsor, the organization starts to finalize the logistics of the training as follows:

- Defining number of teachers to be enrolled
- Fixing dates
- Sending announcements to the various educational authorities through the ministry of education so that they start nominating the teachers, in the twenty seven governorates of Egypt.

### **Resources problem at schools**

Resources problem is a prevailing and persisting problem in most of public schools. Shortage of funds is a challenging problem that needs to be addressed. Even with Parents' association contributions to support schools, bureaucracy still delays the process, according to an interview with a teacher as follows:

*“We receive funds from parents under the social corporate responsibility initiative, but the routine is the main hindrance behind using these funds, school management has to direct the resources towards the needed spending, which takes time”.*

Another interview with two female teachers on from a Mansoura's governmental school, the second from a village in Sharkeya revealed the following:

The first one answered that she really liked the sessions, they were beneficiary but the problem is that number of students in class would not allow her to implement and apply all newly learned teaching techniques, they have time limit to finish the curriculum during the year, the number of students range from 50 to 60 in each school.

The second teacher claimed that there were not enough advanced tools in class. For example for the smart boards, they have 4 only in the whole school for which they have to make a reservation in advance to be able to use it.

*“Training sessions are very useful but we lack resources at school for example the smart board tool: we have 4 only at school and 40-50 students by class. We have to reserve the smart board class in order to benefit from it”*

The above quote confirms that shortage of resources is the main reason for lack of technology materials at schools, and it prevents teachers from applying new teaching techniques learned during training sessions.

### **Curriculum deadlines**

There is always a problem of time constraint to finish the program curriculum. Teachers hardly have time to apply active learning techniques that they learned during their development sessions:

*Sometimes we cannot apply all what we learned in training session because of time constraint” curriculum etc...*

*“The curriculum is so charged and we barely have time to finish all topics in the courses, this makes us a bit reluctant to apply new techniques, that consume time and is not in our curriculum program.*

As per a teacher from Sharkeya.(Jan 2018)

In this same context, a teacher from Mansoura stated the following:

*This is my second time attending training sessions in “Education First” program, there is no doubt that they are very well organized sessions and I gained knowledge but the question is: Would I be able to apply what I learned? We have limited time to finish the set curriculum, it will be very fruitful if we go back to our schools and immediately apply and implement the new teaching techniques we learned”.*

#### **Researcher’s observation during training sessions**

- Nice interactive methods of presentation
- Teachers were very excited to participate in the session
- Teachers were keen to show their acquired technical skills
- Conducted a game about what their understanding of some concepts
- Debate session was very interesting.
- Females interaction level was very low at the beginning, but after half way of the session, they became more relaxed and their level of interaction increased.

### **4.2.3. OPPORTUNITIES**

In SWOC analysis, opportunities are factors that exist in the external environment and help the organization take advantage of to enhance its position (Colbert, 2004).

In this program, the Opportunities are as follows:

#### **Build on success model to expand in Egypt's remote areas**

The success of the training program will encourage sponsors to invest in new expansion hubs in remote areas.

Quote taken from a Face Book comment by a teacher in a remote area:

*I hope this experience reach our students, we have brilliant ones that nobody knows about.*

The above quote supports the idea of possible expansion opportunities in remote areas, which would also allow the detection of skilled and brilliant students that await a chance to excel and develop their skills when they are offered the opportunity.

#### **Create training hubs in other locations in Egypt specially the remote areas Schools (Halayeb Shalateen, Siwa, Sinai, etc...)**

Many teachers recommended the creation of training centers close to the cities where they leave in order to minimize the disturbance and inconvenience caused by leaving

their families for several days to attend the training sessions. This will allow a higher number of teachers to attend and benefit from the program.

*If there was a center in Mansoura, It would have been much easier for me, as I would have attended the training during the day and went home in the evening, which would have been more convenient for my family too". Per and interview with a lady teacher from Domiat (Jan 2018).*

The above quote confirms the fact that teachers strongly encourage the creation of training centers that are close to their residence cities.

### **Upgrade Curriculum and Students skills**

There is a good chance to upgrade curriculum so that it copes with new teaching techniques. New teaching techniques will lead to development of students' autonomy.

*The current curriculum is so charged that it prevents us from fully applying our new acquired skills , we think that the new management in the ministry of education is currently in the process of revising the curriculum to include more practical topics and avoid memorization and rote“ as per a teacher from Mansoura (Jan 2018)*

The curriculum is so charged to the extent that time is tight and teachers are unable to fully apply the new techniques. The government should seriously revise the courses included in the curricula to allow application of new teaching techniques that stimulates students' critical thinking and interaction.

### **Improve class management techniques**

- Teachers need to set rules for students, use the power of group dynamics to effectively lead the class, and use counselling skills when required.

**(Shiaau-Rurung, 2007)**

- Creating a classroom community conducive to everyone's learning
- Reinstating equity: everyone has an opportunity to learn.
- Problem solving
- Respect for Self and others
- Cooperation
- Teachers need to set rules for students, use the power of group dynamics to effectively lead the class, and use counselling skills when required

(Florida Atlantic University – Management of Active Learning)

### **Sponsoring new programs**

The success of Education First Initiative programs for teachers' development led to the creation of new training programs for teachers from a different perspective.

After the success of "Education First" training programs, the organizations launched two new programs in 2017 as follows:



- Conducting development and capacity building of fresh graduate students from the Faculty of Education: the “100 graduates program”
  - Training Teaching Assistants in the Faculty of Education (those who graduated with highest honors and appointed as Faculty members)
- (Education First Face Book Page, 2018)

#### **4.2.4. CHALLENGES**

In SWOC analysis, challenges are factors imposed by the external environment. They are the external force that could prevent the achievement of a competitive advantage, such as any unfavorable situation in the external environment that is potentially damaging now or in the future (Bryson, 2004).

Challenges in our context are manifested in problems that teachers may face and could prevent them from applying their learned techniques during training. They are as follows:

##### **Sustaining the Policy**

The current Ministry of Education (MOE) policy is supporting the program, which is a source of its strength; while if not present would negatively affect the program sustainability. The MOE plays the role of coordinator between the public schools and Education First Organization, to provide them with data about number and categories of teachers in public schools in the different governorates.

As per the MOE coordinator official:

*“Education first” Initiative program has been included in the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, we are closely working*

*with Education first organization to monitor the program results and evaluate its impact on teachers. (Jan 2018)*

The above quote explains the source of strength the initiative acquired by the support of the Ministry of Education, because it was included in the Ministry's current strategic plan.

### **Funding sustainability, Sponsors' interest in the program**

Funding is not secured in advance of putting the training schedule. The organization prepares all information about upcoming training session and submits a proposal to the funding sponsors for fund raising. As soon as funds are secured, a confirmation is sent to the various partners, MOE and schools' headmasters to confirm teachers' lists, dates and location of training.

### **4.3. Points of commonalities between "Education First" program and international models:**

The key difference between Education First initiative and the studied international initiatives is that the international models are initiated, funded monitored by the government, while Education first initiative is initiated by a non-profit organization and funded by the private sector and other funding foundations.

<b>Description</b>	<b>IBEWU Project - South Cape, South Africa</b>	<b>Education First - Egypt</b>	<b>Bangladesh English in Action Project "EiA"</b>
<b>Target Group</b>	Teachers' development	Teachers' development	English Teachers development
<b>Training topics</b>	Math science and language	Math, sciences and english language	English Language communicative skills and pronunciation
<b>FUNDING sources</b>	Government	Diversified sources of funding due to various partners and stakeholders	Government
<b>Strengths</b>	Good relationship between community and school thanks to SGB (Schools governing bodies)	Teachers' collaboration, peer mentoring and supported supervision	Teachers' collaboration, peer mentoring and supported supervision
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<p>Insufficient financial resources, poor school-community relationships, poor learner performance, poor professional attitudes,</p> <p>Shortage of classroom accomodation due to Poor educational facilities</p>	Funding sustainability	Funding sustainability
<b>School/Parents relationship</b>	Poor community/ school relationship due to poor Educational background of parents, which affects support given to their children	strong relationship with schools' parents associations	N/A
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	Tutorial school support visits by the facilitators of the training consortia	Evaluation team perform regular visits to schools	Regular clusters meetings between trained teachers and trainers, for continuous observation and feedback
<b>Level of Head of Departments (HOD)</b>	Head of Departments and School principals are not specialised in any subjects of departments they are leading	Heads of departments are experts in subjects they are supervising: for Example:	Training Instructors are English language teachers

		English HOD should be an English teacher	
<b>Success factors</b>	Involving schools and communities (SGBs) to ensure success in the future	Continuous Evaluation, supervision and good reputation strongly contributed to the Initiative success	Technology based project- use of Ipod and media player . Using mobile technology in teacher training and classroom activities brought huge change to teaching methods.

*Author:* the researcher

The researcher compared the 3 programs based on the key differences, common factors, whether success factors or weaknesses, in addition to categorizing them into strategic and operational themes. The comparison showed that a common success factor in all three programs was the teachers' collaboration and peer mentoring. On the other hand shortage of financial resources is a point of weakness that could lead to the program unsustainability, it is actually a strategic factor that should be studied carefully. School/Parents relationship is another common point between the IBEWU organization and Education first program, and is considered as a positive point. Good communication and maintaining good relations positively contribute to the program's success. Continuous interaction between parents and schools establish a transparent system and allows parents to actively assume their roles at school, which motivates their children and raise their self-esteem.

Following is a comparison between success factors and challenges of development programs managed by the government and those managed by Non-Governmental Organizations:

<b>Development Programs Led By</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>NGOs</b>
<b>Factors of success</b>	Ownership of programs of national interest, alignment with national priorities & strategies, national plan	Clear Vision, Defined objectives, good leadership, clear deadlines
<b>Expected challenges</b>	Ambiguous Goals, lack of funding, bureaucracy, decision making centralization	for small NGOs: Lack of expertise due to voluntary work, absence of suitable technology
<b>Sustainability</b>	Needs reinforcement: lack of financial plans and sustainable funding	Depends on its capacity to address real problems of a community and existence of funding
<b>Outcomes</b>	Measuring instruments are sometimes unavailable	Achievement of programs of added values to communities

*Author:* the researcher

The above table is a comparison between the state and NGOs in implementing development programs. By studying the strengths and weaknesses of the two parties, a mutual collaboration could result in a successful program. Voluntary sector can influence state development in the following ways (Clark 1991):

- Encouraging government ministries to adopt successful approaches developed within the voluntary sector;
- Educating and alerting the public to their rights and entitlements under state programs;
- Adjusting official programs to public needs by acting as a conduit for public opinion and local experience;
- Operational collaboration with official bodies;
- Influencing local development policies of national institutions; and helping government and donors prepare a more effective development strategy through strengthening institutions, staff training and improving management

capacity. A healthy relationship is only achievable when both parties, state and non-profit, share common objectives (Clark 1991).

## **Chapter FIVE: Conclusion and Recommendations:**

Teachers' quality is an important factor in improving student's learning. This research has performed a SWOC Analysis for "Education First" initiative as a model for teachers' professional development. The researcher attempted to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges it is facing.

This analysis helped the researcher evaluate the outcome of the efforts deployed by the civil society with the support of the Ministry of Education and private sector represented in some corporate entities, for teachers' development. Interviews conducted with schools' teachers and pedagogy Officials revealed that training programs are beneficial but in order to maximize its effect and for teacher to be able to fully implement what they learned, there are various factors to be taken into consideration such as:

- Improve Schools infrastructure
- Classes should be upgraded with new technology
- Decrease Number of students per class
- Extra Training hubs should be created in remote locations
- Active learning techniques to be applied to allow effective student/teacher interaction.
- Revision of Curricula to comply with new Learning techniques
- Sustainability of funding for public private initiatives.

The SWOC Analysis revealed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of Education First Initiative, reached a conclusion that a successful program is realized when public sector and non-profit share common objectives. A healthy relationship is only achievable when both parties, state and non-profit, work towards achieving a shared goal.

**Strengths:** As for strengths, the initiative has numerous strengths, such as its clear goal, its national impact, which are among the important success factors. Education first is targeting all public “Tajrebeya” schools in the 27 governorates. It is also worth mentioning that the transparent selection process is also an important success factor. Teachers are nominated by school principals, and their final acceptance depend on passing a special evaluation test in English language.

**Weaknesses:** As for the weaknesses, lack of resources and absence of technology tools at schools are the main factors that prevent direct implementation of new teaching methods. We can also add that having the training location in Cairo only, represents a problem to teachers of other governorates, due to the difficult commute they may face.

**Opportunities:** The program has many opportunities, it should build on its success in Cairo, and establish training hubs in other governorates, and this will solve the commuting problem that teachers face to attend training sessions.

The program has also started launching two new initiatives; training of Faculty of Education senior students during their graduation year, and the second initiative is training of fresh graduates from School of Education, to improve their capacity and

allow them to face the new working environment.

**Challenges:** The main challenges that program is facing is the funding sustainability as donors interest might wane. The political support is also a great challenge, in case any ministerial change, which is likely to happen at any point of time, the program may lose its support if the Ministry of Education changes its strategy.

**Recommendations:**

After illustrating the weaknesses and challenges of the program, the following recommendations represent the view of the researcher on how the program should address these weaknesses and challenges in order to ensure more success and sustainability. There are two sets of recommendations:

- Recommendations at the level of the program
- Recommendations at the level of the government policies

**1. Recommendations at the level of the program:**

The NGO should focus on the organizational capacity, which could be addressed in six fundamental areas that are all essential in building and maintaining a strong, healthy nonprofit organization:

- Mission and Vision: Focus on value and link strategy to mission and organizational capacity.
- Governance and Leadership: Effective leaders positively contribute to the success of organizations. Engaged and supportive board is capable of efficiently use resources to achieve organization's goals.
- Program delivery and impact: It is important to measure program impact and



evaluate its' results, effective programs are those that serve community needs.

- Strategic relationships: these represent strong relations with the community, consisting of building and maintaining alliances, collaboration and strategic restructuring.
- Resource development: creating a diverse, stable revenue flow such as fund development and business planning for revenue generating activities. Change the organization's fundraising techniques to focus more on strengthening their relationships with corporations, local businesses, and large investors who believe in education cause. Publish results and prepare market campaigns to inform investors on the outcome of their contributions.
- Internal operations and management: strong management support systems are necessary to achieve organizations' sustainability. Strong accounting principles should be crucial.
- In order to deal with operational problems, the program should resort to new methods to face the obstacles encountered during the application.
- For example, the delay in applying the new teaching methods due to the difficulty in dealing with classroom large size was a common comment in almost all feedback received from interviewed participants. In order to effectively deal with large classes and charged curricula, training programs should include tailored courses for tips on how to deal with large classes, and get the teachers to put them into practice. There are special practices that help them control large classes and have students benefit from the instruction as follows:
  - Motivate children through their participation in extra-curricular activities to allow them to discover their special skills.
  - Agree on class management rules to reduce stress and noise during group work.

Class rules also help to avoid wasting class time in arranging materials, handing out papers and books, etc.

- Pair work may also be a good way to practice conversations, exercises and other language activities.
- Assign active roles to students in groups, to avoid confusion and waste of time.
- Delegate some of the work to more able students and have them play the role of teachers' assistants.
- Use technology: technology ensures that everyone has time to connect with the teacher, this can be done by email after school day, and every student will get answers to his uncertain topics.
- Another recommendation to ensure compliance with teachers' needs, is continuous monitoring and follow-up on media comments about training program to come up with ways to improve the program and satisfy teachers' needs.

## **2. Recommendations at the level of government policies:**

The Ministry of Education should place selection procedures designed to test teachers' skills and attributes and select the applicants who possess them, in order to reach an education oriented society (teachers and non-teachers).

Recommended steps are as follows:

- Establishing a teacher-centered reform program
- Design dynamic professional development programs.
- Promoting educational institutions capacities to improve their self-administration, accountability and transparency within a balanced centralized/decentralized framework.
- Introducing strong follow up and evaluation mechanisms

- Teachers' incentive and promotion system to be based on performance evaluation and learning outcomes not on years of experience only.

To summarize the above, in this research, the researcher started by a deductive analysis where the analytic categories are stipulated beforehand, (Patton, 2002); but as more data emerged, during the course of the interviews, the process is then transformed into an inductive analysis where more patterns, categories and themes are discovered. Training of teachers is not the only key factor for Egypt's school system to succeed. There should be measures and key performance indicators to test the effectiveness of the training programs, and whether teachers benefited from the subject programs or not. The study highlighted that development programs and initiatives exerted are the basis for a sustainable education improvement, as long as they are supported by the political commitment, public accountability and partnership among main stakeholders in the process of education reform. Education First Organization should regularly conduct a program SWOC analysis to define where it stands in terms of achieving its goals to assess the program impact on student's learning. We suggest the above mentioned recommendations be implemented and a monitoring and evaluation system be put in place to verify their application. Moreover more research should be conducted to assess teachers' development programs contribution to the improvement of students' learning.

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