

# **The Adoption of UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 into Strategic Plans of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi**

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## **Abstract**

This research examines the impact of educational reforms in private schools' strategic plans in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi in alignment with the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. The primary focus is on assessing whether private schools in Abu Dhabi have integrated these visions into their strategic plans and whether this integration has led to educational performance enhancements.

The historical context of educational advancement in the United Arab Emirates is traced back to the early 1960s, with significant attention being given to education post the discovery of oil. The commitment to elevate the education system, particularly during the founder of UAE H.H Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan's tenure, paved the way for various initiatives aimed at nurturing a highly qualified generation. Accordingly, over the years, public and private schools have operated within certain structures and initiatives laid down by the government of the UAE, all of which have shaped the landscape of educational reform in the UAE.

The dynamic nature of the professional world necessitates continuous adjustments to education systems. Technological integration, practical learning, cognitive skills, and other innovations have fueled the global education landscape's evolution. To this extent, the current study centrally recognizes that examining private schools' adoption and implementation of educational reforms enshrined in UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in their strategic plans, as well as increased awareness of private school staff of the visions and the reforms thereof, from senior executives to frontline staff, is pivotal for the successful realization of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the educational sector.

Embedded in the core of UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 is the idea of continuous learning and skill development. The study argues that educational leaders, in their interactions within and beyond private schools, play a crucial role in driving these visions and implementing positive change within private schools, literature reveals instances of successful adoption of these educational visions within the private schools' sector, often tackling issues such as challenges in adoption and implementation.

The research asserts that the concepts of these visions are not new to private schools, as they have been involved in the vision policy development, decision-making processes and various initiatives related to the proclamation of the visions. Yet, to truly integrate these visions into educational culture, private schools must play an active role, led by senior executives fostering internal reforms and embracing new adjustments.

This study's significance lies in its exploration of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 within the context of private schools in emirate of Abu Dhabi, shedding light on the factors shaping their successful adoption. The subsequent sections detail the study's objectives, research questions, and methodology, emphasizing the importance of this inquiry within the broader landscape of educational transformation.

## Declaration

I hereby affirm that this work has not been previously acknowledged as a substantial component of any academic degree, nor is it currently being submitted for any other academic qualification. Furthermore, I confirm that this thesis is the outcome of my individual research and exploration, except where explicitly indicated (with a bibliography provided).

In conclusion, I grant permission for my thesis, in the event of its approval, to be accessible for photocopying and inter-library purposes. I also authorize the distribution of its title and abstract to external institutions.

Signed: Khalid Hassan

Date: 25/09/2023

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# CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Introduction

This research thesis examines the effects of the adoption of educational change reforms in Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans in line with UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 for the educational sector. Investigating whether and/or the extent to which private schools in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi have incorporated the UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 into their strategic plans and assessing improvements in their educational performance due to the educational reforms thereof, are the main goals of this study. The current research is convinced that increased awareness of private schools' staff about their pivotal role in spearheading the educational reforms envisaged in the visions, among senior executives and frontline employees alike, remains a key factor in ensuring the successful adoption and implementation of UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in the educational sector. This is confirmed by evidence of research from Hariyati et al. (2021) and Forstenlechner et al. (2012), who note that successful implementation of the education sector components of UAE's vision for 2021 and vision 2071 in UAE private schools is contingent upon the understanding of the provisions and dictates of the two visions for the education sector by all practitioners in the sector.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) vision 2021 – government's national strategy, and vision 2071 – government's centennial plan, intend to boost non-oil real GDP growth, promote high-value-adding industries, and expand innovation, research, and development. The visions have education as one of their primary focus areas among other areas – and under education, the visions have ambitious plans of transforming the UAEs education sector which will in turn significantly transform the economic basis of the country from oil-based, to knowledge-based economy. Research notes that consequently, there has been an increasing interest in creating educational visions for private schools for the years 2021 and 2071 from education sector stakeholders (von Suchodoletz et al., 2019). Preliminarily, although it is apparent that an educational vision for 2021 and 2071 is important to stakeholders, especially as far as the performance of private schools, and their contribution to the achievement of the aspirations of the UAE national agenda is concerned, there is paucity of empirical studies that support this understanding (Hijazi et al., 2008a; Lasagabaster, 2022; Olarte, 2015; Tremblay, Lalancette & Roseveare, 2012). This gives the current research impetus to examine the educational reforms towards the adoption of UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans and the impact thereof.

## **1.2 Background of the Research**

The United Arab Emirates government started showing an interest in advancing its education in 1962. The number of institutions providing education during the period was quite small, and the literacy rate was extremely low (Addison, 2019). There were not enough workers to run airports, hospitals, housing, and other facilities because the education system had not progressed much. The government focused on the advancement of education when the oil was discovered, and the education system was highly prioritized during the administration of H.H Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. In the tenure of H.H Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, numerous initiatives were launched with the goal of educating the next generation to higher levels of qualification (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy, 2017). Al-Harthi and Al-Mahdy (2017) further interpolate that a strong education system is the main tool for the development of young people, especially those who are the nation's assets and in order to strengthen the education system in the UAE, multiple initiatives were implemented at the institutional and government levels.

Further concurrent evidence of research adduces that the implementation of initiatives is an ongoing process and that currently, modifications necessary for the education system to continue to improve are under implementations in different forms (Abdalla & Ahmed, 2013). According to Abdalla and Ahmed (2013), these continuous reforms in the education sector are occasioned by the circumstances and demands of the professional world which continue to vary with time, necessitating modifications in education. Considering the afore stated dynamics of the professional world, it is established therefore, that ongoing reforms and adjustments are the fundamental conditions for any education system globally. As a result, in the instance of the UAE, the education system needs to alter in order to stay up with the demands of a changing world (Abdalla & Ahmed, 2013). Concurrent evidence agrees with the foregoing noting that, the effectiveness of the global education system has risen over the past few decades as a result of educational innovations such as the introduction of technology, practical learning, cognitive skill-based learning, and others (Arezki & Ghanem, 2018).

Currently, in the UAE educational sector, educational visions for 2021 and 2071 have been cited as a source of strategic success for both private and public schools by numerous scholars over the past few decades (Litz & Scott, 2016; Mohiuddin, 2017; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). Researchers such as Matsumoto (2019) and Sulieman (2022) have advised leaders of private schools to seriously consider exploring their private school's intangible resources and utilizing those resources in maximizing of private schools' outcomes by fostering creativity and performance in line with the dictates of visions 2021 and

2071 on educational enhancement, research and technological advancement. Typically, management ideas of both visions were tested in major private corporations before being adopted by other industries, such as the private school sector (Olarde, 2015). The educational visions for 2021 and 2071 are not just another set of mundane policy documents, as some opponents have argued (Dutot & Van Horne, 2015; Hameed et al., 2016; Jackson 2023); rather, as Fatima (2019) records, these visions represent the most concrete and resolute tangible policies for the development and advancement of the UAE educational sector considering the changing global professional space.

In order to examine the complex connections and processes at work in the implementation of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 within the framework of private schools, Niklas Luhmann, a German sociologist, put forth the Social Systems Theory. This theoretical framework offers insights into how educational institutions, stakeholders, and systems function within a larger social context, as well as how they adjust and react to outside goals and influences (Ashour & Fatima 2016). The Social Systems Theory's central claim is that societies are made up of a variety of interrelated systems that operate as separate yet interdependent entities. One such system that is closely entwined with the political, economic, and cultural systems of a society is represented by educational systems within this framework (Alsheikh et al. 2020). The government's ambitions for the UAE can be viewed as efforts that have an affect on the educational system, causing modifications and changes that are in line with the broad national goals (Alshaali 2015).

The Social Systems Theory provides numerous insights into the situation of private schools in Abu Dhabi. First off, it clarifies how the visions are not standalone projects but rather part of the greater fabric of the educational system. According to the notion, private schools are a component of a larger social system, and any modifications or improvements to the educational system should be consistent with overarching societal objectives. The visions serve as change agents, demanding private schools to make adjustments to ensure alignment with societal goals (Al-Harthi & Al-Mahdy 2017). Second, the theory emphasizes the significance of feedback loops and communication within systems. The government's expression of the visions in the case of the private schools in the UAE acts as a channel of communication that prompts a response from the educational system. This approach entails adjustments to the curriculum's structure as well as to teaching methods, teamwork tactics, and partnerships. According to the Social Systems Theory, this process is iterative and features ongoing feedback systems to guarantee alignment with the big picture goals (Ahmed & Alfaki 2013). The theory also

highlights how differentiation and specialization play a part in systems. While adhering to the visions, each private school also maintains its distinct character, advantages, and fields of specialty. While there is a common aim, Social Systems Theory acknowledges that the means of accomplishing that goal may vary depending on the unique circumstances of each educational institution. In doing so, private schools are able to contribute to the visions while utilizing their own skills and assets (Abu Dhabi Digital government 2022).

The Social Systems Theory is based on the idea of adaptability. It asserts that systems adjust to environmental changes to maintain their existence and development. Hypothetically therefore, private schools in the UAE will respond by changing their tactics, policies, and instructional methods in order to deal with the external change represented by the visions as the visions continue to influence the educational landscape, this adaptation is not a one-time effort but rather a continuous one (Aboelenein et al. 2022). The relationship between the findings from extant literature, and theoretical underpinnings creates a cogent picture of the complex processes driving the acceptance and influence of visionary goals inside Abu Dhabi's private schools. The results demonstrate the reciprocal relationships between educational culture, teacher talents, and visionary alignment, which support the theoretical precepts (Ashencaen Crabtree 2010). The educational environment is changing as schools align their ideals with the UAE's educational culture and teachers make use of their skills to carry out ambitious aims. The dynamic interaction between internal and external influences serves to confirm the application of the theoretical framework, highlighting the larger significance of social systems theory in comprehending educational transformation.

In order to overhaul its national education ecosystem, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has set out on a visionary journey, one that is characterized by the full implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. The UAE government's ambitious goals will have a significant impact on the overall educational scene, particularly in the context of Abu Dhabi's private schools. The core of the UAE's developing educational environment is formed by the interaction between these visions, educational culture, teaching capabilities, and cooperative relationships. The UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071, which act as compass points for the country's progress in a variety of fields, including education, are at the center of this ecosystem (Abu Dhabi Digital government 2022). The background evidence highlight the fact that these ambitious principles are woven into the fabric of teaching in Abu Dhabi's private schools, not as isolated objectives. Private educational institutions are making a determined effort to realign their curricula, teaching methods, and policies with these ambitions to signal this assimilation. The adoption

and integration of these bold objectives, therefore, are inextricably linked to the UAE's national educational ecosystem (Alarabi et al. 2022).

In this ecosystem, educational culture serves as a potent catalyst. The research's preliminary findings from literature show how the UAE's national visions and educational culture are compatible. The UAE's culture of innovation, excellence, and future-oriented education perfectly complements the aspirational goals of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. The adoption and implementation of the visions within private schools are accelerated by this alignment (Chaudoir 2010). Thus, a harmonic fusion of cultural values and national aspirations characterizes the UAE's educational ecology, which in turn drives the development of educational practices. In order to translate these goals into concrete educational results, teacher capacities are crucial. Extant literature emphasizes that the degree to which the UAE's aspirations are achieved within the educational ecosystem directly depends on the abilities and capabilities of teachers. High-level policy directions are effectively implemented in the classroom thanks to educators' expertise in cutting-edge teaching techniques, technology integration, and critical thinking promotion (Government of Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority 2017). The UAE's educational ecosystem thus depends on a trained and empowered teaching force that can infuse the vision into the learning process.

Researchers are in concert that in UAE private schools, educational visions for 2021 and 2071 have been quickly recognized as a driver of efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation (Ashour & Fatima, 2016; Fatima, 2019; Bock, 2014; Chaudoir, 2010). Further research evidence reveals that, on noting the improvements that the visions 2021 and 2071 are contributing to private schools across the UAE, the government has improved service delivery to the public schools and changed policy as a result of realizing the value of making knowledge explicit (Buckner, 2022). The strategy, planning, consultation, and implementation plans for private schools in the UAE currently places a strong emphasis on the educational visions for 2021 and 2071 (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). The significance of educational visions for 2021 and 2071 in developing private schools' skills, innovation, and performance drive has been examined by other studies such as PwC (2018), Spranza (2016), Tabari (2014), and Zaran et al. (2016). The underlying findings across the different research on the implementation of visions 2021 and 2071 in UAE private schools is that there is considerable benefit among private schools that implement or attempt to implement parts of the visions in their operations, as well as the overarching commitment among private schools in the UAE to explore fresh ideas for enhancing instruction. Despite this evidence, the current

research notes that most of the evidence available considers generally the case of UAE private schools wherein as Fatma (2019) indicated, the implementation of the visions 2021 and 2071 is widespread. This provides the current study the impetus to delve closely into the case of Abu Dhabi private schools and investigate it in-depth with regards to the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 and the impact thereof.

### **1.3 Statement of the Research Problem**

The research problem addressed in this study is the adoption and implementation of the UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in the educational sector – with a focus on Abu Dhabi private schools. The research is motivated by the need to know how to reduce challenges to educational reforms by understanding the educational culture of private schools as well as the skills and capabilities of teachers. This will help to improve the adoption and implementation of UAE educational visions 2021 and 2071, towards the improved performance of Abu Dhabi private schools. This study will add to earlier research on the adoption and implementation of UAE's educational vision for 2021 and 2071 that looked at pertinent notions of knowledge adoption practices in schools across the UAE.

Noteworthy, many private schools are attempting to use fresh approaches to enhance their services and performance (Thorne, 2011; von Suchodoletz et al., 2019; Zaran et al., 2016). It is suggested that private schools adopt UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in order to increase sustainability and promote efficiency (Sulieman, 2022). In addition, Pietsch and Tulowitzki (2017) emphasized the significance of maintaining the competence and effectiveness of those private schools through the implementation of educational visions for 2021 and 2071 practices, which actualize economic value through a collection of knowledge assets. Other scholars such as Litz and Scott (2016), Mohiuddin (2017), Nasir (2017) and O'Sullivan (2015) highlighted the significance of educational visions for 2021 and 2071 as useful internal motivations for increasing educational innovation potential and performance among private schools in the UAE. The foregoing evidence of research notwithstanding, contrasting evidence of research notes that, limited number of private schools' educational visions for 2021 and 2071 implementation faced some challenges and barriers leading to the need for reforms in their operational approaches (Hariyati et al., 2021; Jarrah & Alkhazaleh, 2020; Litz & Scott, 2016). In concordance, Hameed et al. (2016) indicate that to comprehend the required educational change reforms in private schools and the adoption practices for the successful implementation of educational visions 2021 and 2071, more specific empirical research is required.

Further research enlightens that, the UAE vision 2021 and 2071 policy guidelines while having been developed with the involvement of industry stakeholders, require iterative implementation in the individual sectors for purposes of refining applicability and successful implementation (von Suchodoletz et al., 2019; Lasagabaster, 2022). Concurrent evidence of research notes that private schools have environments that are special and different from those in the private sector in terms of their stakeholders and accountability (Government of the United Arab Emirates, 2016), and this implies that attempts to implement policy frameworks like the visions 2021 and 2071 of the educational sector may run into unexpected challenges that require substantive levels of reforms around the schools' operational setting. Therefore, G-Mrabet (2012), advises that private schools should consider government initiatives as potential calls for reforms of their education approaches as opposed to overlying improvements since the latter is what causes challenges in the successful implementation of government initiatives and visions, while the former, would ensure that the policies and initiatives are embedded into a new operational framework of the private school institutions.

In the current research view therefore, it is proposed that for successful implementation of governmental initiatives – in this case, visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector, into the private schools in Abu Dhabi, the schools should concentrate on altering their internal routines and cultures in order to implement the UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 for the educational sector, as opposed to just attempting an implementation that does not contextualize to the private schools' environment. The above notwithstanding, with the changing aspect of everyday life, all educational institutions offering low to high-level education are required to implement improvements in order to keep up with the changes. If the necessary reforms are not implemented, specifically in the case of private schools in Abu Dhabi - K12 educational institutions, this might negatively impact the effectiveness of education quality provided in light of the global needs. If there are no reforms in K12 education, then this indicates that this industry is not developing or does not have the required capacity to catch up with the required rates of development. In the current case, the developments required are those stipulated in the UAE visions 2021 and 2071 which, as evidence herein, continually prove a challenge for private schools to effectively and sufficiently implement.

## **1.4 Research Aim, Objective(s) and Question(s)**

### **1.4.1 Research Aim**

The aim of the current research is to examine and evaluate the adoption of UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 for the educational sector, into the strategic plans of Abu Dhabi private schools and determine the impact thereof.

The intention of the study is to provide a critical insight and provide a pathway as to how future strategic state planning can be successfully integrated into the private educational schooling in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. This requirement is based on the necessity of the UAE's private schools to meet the Emirates' visions 2021 and 2071, which encompasses the country's educational vision for 2021 and 2071 of ensuring that the new educational standards are integrated into all strategic planning to improve the educational standards in the region. To date, there has been relatively little published on this theme for instance by Chakravarti (2020), whose research does not highlight the changes which UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 will bring to the private education sector.

Further, the current research is particularly interested in understanding how educational culture and senior executives' abilities and capabilities influence the implementation of the UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 for the educational sector and shift the educational reforms of private schools towards the achievement of the provisions and dictates of the visions. The research is also keen in exploring the gaps in the implementation of visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools and highlighting the reform challenges for the private schools towards realizing successful implementation of UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector.

### **1.4.2 Research Objectives**

In pursuing the above aim of the research, the research will seek to achieve the following objectives: -

- To critically examine and identify how private schools in Abu Dhabi education sector incorporate governmental visions and initiatives into their strategic plans.
- To critically assess and analyze how strategic planning adopted by the private school sector in Emirates of Abu Dhabi, has been aligned to the UAE's vision 2021 and 2071.
- To critically investigate how the strategic planning to adopt UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 could change the educational performance of the private school sector in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi.

- To critically evaluate and determine the implications to private schools of adopting the UAE's education vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans and inform the private sector of the potential reforms.

### **1.4.3 Research Questions**

The research will seek to answer the following research questions: -

- RQ1: How do the private schools in Abu Dhabi education sector incorporate governmental visions and initiatives into their strategic plans?
- RQ2: To what extent have the strategic plans of Abu Dhabi private schools been aligned to the UAE's visions 2021 and 2071
- RQ3: To what extent could the strategic plans adopted by Abu Dhabi private schools in alignment with UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 impact the performance of the institutions?
- RQ4: What are the implications of adoption of UAE's educational visions 2021 and 2071 on Abu Dhabi private schools and reforms thereof?

### **1.5 Research Gap**

The importance of education to the growth of the nation has drawn a lot of attention from researchers on this subject. Admittedly, educational changes are the most crucial to advancing education along with the other variables. The importance of educational improvements in the education system has been the subject of numerous prior research (Arezki & Ghanem, 2018; Ashencaen, 2010; Balfaqqeh, Hassan & Berkett, 2017; Dutot & Van Horne, 2015). However, there is a need to conduct more research in the case of the UAE to update the current body of literature and discuss the significance of educational reforms in the development of education in the UAE (Arora, 2014). The general educational improvements that are necessary to bring development to the education system have also been highlighted in other studies, with most of the evidence focusing on the relationships between transformation in the education system and elements including structure flexibility, government role, leaders' perceptions, and research centers (Alshabbani, 2015; Zaran et al., 2016). Finally, past academics have examined elements influencing educational reforms in education. The weight of these elements as studied by Tremblay et al. (2012), has not, however, been thoroughly studied especially as in the case of the UAE. Considering the foregoing identified gaps in extant literature, and the informative overview of the case of the UAE and educational reform initiatives in the country thereof, the current study seeks to close the gaps above together with those identified in the background of

research study – for instance the limitation of sufficient empirical research, limited of specificity in the examination of educational reforms and the generalization of the UAE educational sector, by presenting an empirical study that highlights the impact of adoption of the reforms proposed in the UAE’s vision 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools strategic plans on the performance of the schools and the challenges of the reforms adoption and implementation thereof.

### **1.6 Main Limitations of Existing Research**

In many private schools, the idea of an educational visions for 2021 and 2071 is a novel one (Thorne 2011). There aren't many studies on the efficiency of private schools and the educational vision for 2021 and 2071 that have looked into the connections between these ideas. One such study, done by Mohiuddin (2017) shows that educational visions for 2021 and 2071 functions as a driver of performance and efficiency in the dynamic educational sector contexts in private schools. Nasir (2017) conducted a similar study in which they outline the variables that affect the implementation of the educational visions 2021 and 2071 for the UAE's private schools. The authors emphasize that the current issue facing private schools in the UAE is not the development of knowledge but also the necessity for further implementation of UAE vision 2021 and vision 2071 in the educational sector based on its common philosophical origins.

Nasir (2017) urge deeper study of the impact of the educational visions for 2021 and 2071 on the performance of private schools. Additionally, due to factors like educational reform (Alshabbani 2015; Mohiuddin 2017; O’Sullivan 2015; Zaran et al. 2016) that have impact on UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 adoption in the educational sector within private schools, private schools face a variety of challenges in driving the educational visions for 2021 and 2071 effectiveness. In this regard, it is hoped that by examining the difficulties in adopting UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in the educational sector within the purview of the private schools in Abu Dhabi, this study will significantly add to the body of knowledge already in existence. The study assist private school administrators in making decisions on how to combat change reforms and enable the private schools to gain from the adoption of the UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071. The successful implementation of educational vision for 2021 and 2071 inside private schools across the UAE has received considerable attention in empirical investigations of these topics, such as those by (Jarrah & Alkhazaleh 2020; Lasagabaster 2022).

Other scholars such as (Dutot & Van Horne 2015; Hallinger 2018; Hameed et al. 2016) have concentrated on the information technology (IT) role on educational visions for 2021 and 2071. Contrarily, a lot of research on educational visions for 2021 and 2071, as those by Chaudoir (2010), Buckner (2022) have focused on giving managers the resources they need to create an environment that fosters innovation and creativity. Thus, by separating the educational visions for 2021 and 2071 from its answers, this study offers private schools the chance to reevaluate their opinions and positions on the visions. Few empirical studies in the area of educational knowledge, like those by Balfaqeeh, Hassan & Berkett (2017) have concentrated on the impact of specific aspects of an educational vision for 2021 and 2071 for private schools on academic performance, like those by (Alsheikh et al. (2020) or on the validity of the drivers of an educational vision for 2021 and 2071 for private schools, like those by Olarte (2015). Insights on the drivers of implementation and application of educational visions 2021 and 2071 are provided by Matsumoto (2019) who identifies a number of aspects in his study by examining the causes of initiatives and projects for the educational vision for 2021 and 2071. In conclusion, the aforementioned empirical researches have shown that implementation effectiveness serves as a conduit for the development of a robust educational system in Abu Dhabi private schools in line with UAE's visions 2021 and 2071.

### **1.7 Motivation of the Researcher**

As a practitioner in the educational field in the UAE, the researcher is motivated by the need to actively contribute to bridging the gap between strategy and implementation. During the years of practice, the researcher has become privy to the gap between strategic plans by the government and effective implementation at the institution level as well as the impact of these strategic plans on aspects such as the performance of the institutions. To this extent therefore the current research is motivated by the need to examine and evaluate the implementation of national strategies in the education sector in Abu Dhabi with specific focus on the private schools in Abu Dhabi with an aim of ensuring that, a clear understanding of the implementation of the strategies is realized as well as the impact and challenges of the implementation of the strategies thereof. This motivation stems from the problems and gaps identified in the research background and are supported by the problem statement. Through this motivation, the researcher is intent to use empirical measures to come forth with solutions and proposition as to how the implementation of educational initiatives in the Abu Dhabi private educational sector contributes to performance of the institutions as well as the challenges that the

institutions face during the implementation of such programs not forgetting the gaps between the outlined strategies and their implementation at institutional level.

### **1.8 Summary of Methodology Adopted**

The current study adopted a qualitative methodological approach informed by the need to collect data from experts in the field in a descriptive and holistically informative way. The qualitative approach was supported by an inductive model wherein, the study examined a known field of knowledge in an attempt to influence theory in the field to come forth with a better refinement of the practice thereof. The field in question was that of private education in Abu Dhabi and the knowledge scope was the impact of national strategies and visions on the strategic plans of private educational bodies as far as implementation, performance and reforms in the institutions are concerned. To support the methodological approach, the research designed an interview protocol which was validated through a quantitative questionnaire. The interview protocol was used in collecting data from participants who were practitioners in the Abu Dhabi private education sector. The analysis of the data from the interviews was conducted based on thematic analysis procedure which helped the research identify prevalent themes and categorize them accordingly to inform the discussion of the findings of the research in juxtaposition to extant literature.

### **1.9 Central Discussion of the Research Project and Contribution of the Research**

To sum up the introduction of the current study, it has been reviewed that there are multiple studies examining the implementation of national strategies in the strategic plans of educational institutions globally. The research has found out that in the case of the UAE, there is paucity in literature as far as empirical studies examining the case of implementation of national educational strategies and visions in the educational sector is concerned. One aspect that has clearly come out from the background of the current research is the fact that, there are gaps and limitations as far as implementation of national strategies in the educational sector are concerned. These gaps of implementation of national strategies in the educational sector have been prevalently reflected in multiple researches that have been studied and cited above. Together with the foregoing, the research has identified and cited gaps in terms of the aspects of impact that implementation of national strategies causes in educational institutions. For instance, research has cited evidence alluding to the impact on performance that the implementation of educational strategies and visions cause, as well as impact on private schools strategic plans. To this extent, with the current study having identified the gaps in implementation of national visions and initiatives in the strategic plans of private educational

institutions in Abu Dhabi, it plans to contribute to the body of knowledge by – (i) highlighting the root causes of the gaps between implementation of national education plans and initiatives and private schools strategic plans, (ii) suggesting the reforms that may be required to ensure effective implementation of national strategies and initiatives in private schools strategic plans, and, (iii) underlining the advantages that may be realized in performance as well as other aspects with the effective implementation of national initiatives and strategies in private sector educational institutions in Abu Dhabi

By offering a qualitative empirical analysis of the relationship between two concepts – the adoption and implementation of UAE’s visions 2021 and 2071, and the impact of the same in the Abu Dhabi private schools, the current study helps in bridging the gap between the streams of literature on UAE private schools' visions 2021 and 2071 adoption practices, change reforms, and impacts thereof, through a narrowed and objective look on the case of private schools in Abu Dhabi.. Accordingly, the study's practical value comes from its advocacy of an understanding of private school decision-makers with regard to nurturing and utilizing educational knowledge resources, which should enable them to identify the strategies of the UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 adoption in the educational field that would maximize the advantages of the 2021 and 2071 educational visions while minimizing the drawbacks of change reforms. Further practical significance of the research comes from the fact that this research may be extremely helpful to government decision-makers who deal with education policy directly. They can use this information to assist them create an education reform policy in the UAE that will have the desired impact. This research may be useful to them as they implement the required changes in their institutions to enhance the efficiency of the education provided there. This research is significant because of its theoretical contributions in addition to its practical applications. It will add to the body of literature already written about enhancing education with specific focus on the UAE and Abu Dhabi in particular.

### **1.10 Outline of the Thesis**

The research’s remaining sections are organized as follows:

- Literature review – This section will involve, among other things, the overview of the literature on the key topics employed in this study. The theories and models that support successful implementation of reforms in the education sector in light of visions 2021 and 2071 in the case of private schools in Abu Dhabi for the current study. This chapter also presents the earlier knowledge management literature, including various

taxonomies and descriptions of the educational Vision for 2021 and 2071 found in academic studies and educational sector periodicals. The chapter's main goal will be to build up knowledge around the subject matter for successful further investigation.

- Research methodology - The research approach employed in the study will be presented in Chapter 3. It explains the theoretical foundations of the investigation, identifies the study population, and demonstrates how the sample size for the study was determined. The methods employed in the data analysis are also highlighted in the chapter.
- Data analysis - The methods for and outcomes of qualitative data analysis are described in detail in chapter four. The qualitative data from the study will be covered in this chapter, which also describes how the key informant questioners of the survey and interviews will be done and how the qualitative data will be processed. The outcomes of the key informant interviews will also be presented, along with the current interpretation of the interview data.
- Discussion of Findings - The outcomes of this investigation are discussed in detail in chapter five. Results from the qualitative analyses are combined and evaluated in this chapter in light of the study hypotheses put forward. The adoption and change of reflection of the planned UAE Visions 2021 and 2071 in the educational system is also covered. It summarizes the study's findings and emphasizes the impact the research has made to the fields of educational performance in private schools and educational Vision for 2021 and 2071.
- Conclusions and Recommendations - The research is concluded in Chapter 6 with a list of recommendations for academics and industry professionals, a discussion of the study's limitations, and suggestions for potential future research into the adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the educational sector.

## **CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The current chapter of the research will involve delving deeper into the subject field and coming forth with knowledge on different aspects of the subject field that will enable informed research of the subject matter herein. In order to succeed in the foregoing, the research will in this chapter present a global to local review of literature around the spheres of identification and definition of private schools, definition and importance of visions in the educational sector, and definition and importance of strategic planning in the educational sector. The aim of the current chapter is to provide an understanding of the different aspects of research as mentioned above which will then pave the way for the review of the context of the study and clarity thereof.

### **2.2 Identification and Definitions of Private Schools**

Educational schools can be broadly categorized into two, one being ‘public’ schools that managed by a public/government education authority or agency and the other being ‘private’ schools which are those whose management is not dependent on public/government funding sources. Program for International Student Assessment (PISA, 2011, p. 2) defines ‘private’ schools more elaborately as “those that are managed by a non-government organisation, such as a religious institution, a trade union or a private institution”. Private schools can be either government-dependent or independent of the government. Government-dependent private schools are managed independently but receive more than 50% of their core funding from government agencies. Private schools that are independent of the government are similarly managed, but less than 50% of their core funding comes from government agencies”. The research notes that it is necessary to clarify the definition of private schools for the current study because the term ‘private school’ is used with varying meanings in literature and in the policy debate. Concurrent evidence of research notes that, the key factor defining ‘private schools’ is their dependence on education fees to meet their operating and developing costs, as well as to attract and retain students for financial viability (Bangay, 2007). Private schools could have other defining factors of managing mostly independent of any state funding and could be owned and/or founded independently of the government (Day-Ashley, 2009). The definition of private school can be blurred as some ‘private’ schools may be partially funded and regulated by the government by operating mostly independent of the state yet interact with government authorities (Kitaev, 1999). The private schools have a mix of motivating factors to open and operate, including parameters such as: income / revenues, values, purpose,

vision/mission, profit or non-profit, philanthropy, competitiveness, corporate social responsibility, and other commitments (Srivastava et al., 2013).

The UAE education authority defines “private schools” as – ‘every non-government institution concerned with education from kindergarten to high school’ (ADEC. 2015). The UAE education system is undergoing reforms with schools making major reforms to meet certain requirements laid down by the UAE educational authorities for instance the aspirations of visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector. Although there are public and private schools in the UAE, most students attend private schools in the belief of better education (O’Sullivan, 2015). On the global education index the UAE’s rank is 39<sup>th</sup> of the 141 countries (WEF Report, 2019). In the race of modernization for global competitiveness, there is importance on ‘local knowledge through a process of critical reinterpretation, counter-discursive negotiation and imaginative application’ (Canagarajah, 2002, P 251). Implying a larger ‘national character’ in the UAE’s education system (Gopinathan, 2006, p 264), resulting in disparities in private schools taking the ‘global’ route. This imbalance over the years has led to ‘a mismatch between traditional and modern schooling,’ (Bahghat, 1999 p. 129). Over the past several decades following the discovery of oil with many expatriate families living in the Gulf, private schools were established offering a variety of international languages, and curricula across the region. So as the number of expatriates increased, the private education sector rapidly out-grew the public education sector (Moujaes et al., 2011). Although public education schools were growing as well, private education schools were growing at a faster rate to cater to increasing demand from expatriate students (Briggs, 2014). The Abu Dhabi Education Council operated the Private-Public Partnership (PPP) Project, aimed at improving provision and outcomes in school education, where most of the public state funded schools were privately managed by international educational institutes and consultancies. With partnership, ADEC took a regulatory and oversight role of the education sector in Abu Dhabi as per its mandate whereby it supports the educational process and is responsible for developing and legislating necessary policies and regulations for private schools in Abu Dhabi. It also monitors the progress of students and evaluates the efficiency of the education system in each school.

### **2.3 Vision in the Education Sector – Definition and Importance**

From the context of schools and other educational organizations, a vision is a declaration used to describe the institute’s superior level ideals, values, goals and aspirations in the present and the future with a hope of successfully achieving its purpose for its students’ long-term learning (Gurley et al., 2014). It is of interest to differentiate the terms ‘vision’ and ‘mission’ as they

are often confused in use – according to research, a vision expresses a future reality hope as an end goal, while a mission is about commitment to actions describing academic operations for benefit of the students and other stakeholders (Matalon, 2018). Vision statements are generally a result of developmental processes through collaboration and inclusion of administrators and teachers with the students, their parents/guardians, and community at large (Mulford, 2003). A well-articulated vision enables reflection on educational values, its aim/objectives/goals, and purpose as a learning organization, as well as success for students (Pont et al., 2008). A vision is a ‘call to corps’ for cooperation in shared educational values with relevance in present and future times (Nusche et al., 2014). It focuses a set of agreed goals of teaching and learning with school leaders and educators defining the vision and others aligning efficiently, effectively, purposefully, helpfully and usefully (Day and Sammons, 2014). A vision may change based on evaluation and reflection through periodic review processes to examine if desired progress is being made or not, if not, then revision may be called for to evolve its educational values of teaching and learning goals (Hennessy et al., 2010). For a vision to be accepted and taken seriously, it should contain good ideas, values, beliefs, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, authentic and timely which should be shown practically in its mission statements (Carpenter et al., 2012).

In agreement with the foregoing, Pekarsky (2007) mentioned that a vision enables school community a feeling of condition of rational and emotional state of stakeholders to perform as a guided organization of where the institute and those associated with it are headed and to know whenever they arrive there. Kose (2011) considered vision of effective schools to possess characteristics for developing an inclusive and equitable entity to influence success as a result of powerful and strategic changes in activities, efforts, evaluation, people development, and other main functions on many different levels. Vision in public schools has been seen as acute as most of them are non-profit organisations, implying they operate without any monetary benefit, this cannot be said of private schools that operate for profit but will not mention it in their vision statement (Kilpatrick & Silverman, 2005). The concept of vision in the educational sector remained unclear until a standardized accreditation of programs of schools compelled the development of shared values, purpose and direction for improvement of the students’ performance and the school effectiveness (AdvanceED, 2010). Although vision has a crucial role in education, many educational researchers appear to ignore it as an important tool for successful delivery of education and overall institutional success of educational institutions.

Stemler et al., (2011) offered criticism that schools' vision statements are filled with vacuous platitudes as they end up merely as catch-phrases or clichés in an attempt to appeal the public.

Considering the foregoing, research indicates that a school's vision is required to be viable in relation to three different dimensions namely: (a) Vision content – intrinsic values, future orientation, goals and direction; (b) Vision attributes – clarity articulated, shared goals, credible; and (c) Vision role – of schooling (Collins & Porras, 1996). The vision content, whether in business or in education is critical in determining if a leader is setting out clear, new directions and/or existing directions by maintaining high levels of performance and success (Berson et. al., 2001). Features of vision statements associated with vision content of personality and leadership styles have vision themes applicable to educational settings just as businesses as well (Barnett and McCormick, 2003). Attributes of educational vision need to be clearly articulated and coherent vision expressed in simple terms for serving as reference point by which students, parents, teachers, administrators and others make sense (Holmes, 1993). Greenfield et al. (1992) researched educational vision and noted that leaders who effectively engaged in the vision and exchanged views with others showed successful accomplishments. Another attribute of educational vision is that of appealing to shared goals depending on the leader's cordial working relationships with teachers and a shared professional concern for good teaching (Polman, 2004). Procedures for sharing educational vision can be done through collaboration with the stakeholders in the process of creating the school vision, through communication of school vision contents in visible and audio media, and through frequent referral of underpinning values of the educational institution (Blanchard & Stoner, 2004; Van Houtte, 2005; Carsten & Bligh, 2008; Kantabutra, 2008; Kurland et al., 2010; Alanezi, 2016). A final key attribute of educational vision is of credibility by being realistic, attainable and implementable. The sense of vision is that it has to be regularly debated, restated and strongly merged in the school's operations and functionalities (Holmes, 1993). Pekarsky (2007) has urged educational schools to get involved and committed in vision oriented and guided practice to be collaboratively determined in implementing the vision through available means.

#### **2.4 Strategic Planning in the Educational Sector – Definition and Importance**

The term strategy has origins in the armed forces according to Whipp (1998) with its meaning having evolved to include a set of general directed actions with a plan intended to achieve a specific goal or a set of objectives. Strategy and strategic planning are considered important in any form of management as noted by Schendel and Hofer (1979) in their study concerned with leadership and entrepreneurship for organisational renewal and growth, as they lead to the

development and utilisation of structured approaches to achieve particular end goals. Quinn (1980) defines the interconnectedness between strategy, planning and development of the organisation by integrating the organisation's goals, policies and actions cohesively and holistically. According to Puffitt et al. (1992) they considered strategic planning to be a set of ordered actions carefully analysed for internal and external factors to be performed over a definite time period to attain pre-determined objectives. Strategic planning is a process an organisation uses to establish its competitive position making it unique to survive and grow (Thomas 1993) with its activities to its environment and to its resource capabilities (Johnson et al., 2008).

In agreement with the foregoing, Preedy et al., (1997) stated that in schools, to develop strategy is a key management process, which draws together institutional values and goals and provides a framework for the quality of provision and the deployment of resources. Planning in schools has been categorised in a number of ways with Wallace (1994) considering that regional and national level have frameworks for planning have been produced based on cycles of review, planning and implementation. MacGilchrist et al. (1995) claimed four types of school plans namely: rhetorical with no real relevance; singular done by the principal solely; co-operative produced by a team with focus on finance and operations; grand plan produced together with focusing across the school's objectives and priorities. An education improvement strategy should place effective teaching practices as a key strategy for improvement (Yureva et al., 2016). An appropriate education system's image and policy are reached through analysis of strategic management success key factors to achieve a successful organization as school (Amoli & Aghashahi, 2016). Latorre and Blanco (2013) targeted educational goals or performance criteria through requirements such as resources, methods, techniques, and procedures as requisites for good strategic planning. According to Change (2008) and Chris and Moeng (2014) sector analysis plays a role in how a system works to serve the needs of the communities and the economic demand thereof of learning in the education policy system vis-à-vis the environment in which they operate. Johnson et al. (2008) in agreement with the following assertion regarded strategic planning in educational institutes as matching education policies to three-fold dimensions of: access, participation, including issues of equity; quality, internal level competence, and relevance and external effectiveness; and the success of management through governance, decentralization and resource management.

Wallace (1994) and Bell (2002) on their part, considered strategic action planning in educational organization to be about the goals and strategies related to education policies,

programming activities, timing, disclosing the resources needed, distributing institutional and administrative responsibilities, setting up budgets, and other categorisation. This was progressed further by Wittmann and Reuter (2008) who found that support for implementing strategic plan in schools has generated new focus on 'quality of education'. Specific formulated goals and objectives that improve the effectiveness of the school have an influence on the ability of the school to successfully implement the strategic plan (Le Roux 2002). Le Roux (2002) found that schools like all organizations are dependent on the funding, be it through grants, subsidy, school fees or fund-raising, these have a direct bearing on successful implementation of strategic plans of schools. Also, education policy and legislation either existing, amended or new at the national or local levels have an effect on strategic plan implementation (Elmore 2004). Complex and complicated planning processes were among challenges identified to impede successful strategizing and planning in education systems and structures. Other impediments were identified to be aspects such as decentralization, autonomy and period with loose coupling of multiple academic schools in addition to government intervention (Hardy, 1991). Despite the foregoing, further research indicates that strategic planning in educational institutions remains a potential solution for proactive positioning in situations of competitiveness and varying student enrolments, changing student demographics, uncertainty in funding, increasing costs, higher accountability, and rising quality standards (Aleong, 2007). Some educational institutions' strategic plans focused on internal issues, of organizational staffing, resourcing, and documentation describing their vision, mission, and value to society but had either limited or no goals for change (Cowburn, 2005). While other educational institutes had their strategic planning created mainly by senior leadership personnel of the institutes keen on orderly and systematic management (Dooris, 2002) done to please the internal and external stakeholders and general public (Carron, 2010; Chance, 2010).

Hinton (2012) on the other hand adduces that some educational institutes design strategic plans as a symbolic activity to serve as promotional tool having less to do with plans for the future. This is supported by concurrent evidence from de Haan (2014) who notes that the use of educational strategy and planning as rhetoric instead of a template for strategic action is a chronic ill in some profit-focused educational institutions. In contrast, Keller (1999) observed that, in environments with strong educational sector governance institutional distinctiveness in the education marketplace to attract and keep the best students, faculty, and staff is the primary critical strategy for long-term viability. Baer et al. (2008) on the other hand argued that despite more efforts and increased efficiencies through strategic planning, aided by technology, many

educational institutions have been considering the dynamism of societal changes, with most of them being reactive rather than proactive to face challenges, thus making them limited to certain level in transforming their functioning as educational institutions. Further, research finds that many schools used performance indicators in their strategic planning to enshrine their planning on objective and easily quantifiable factors rather than on qualitative factors of education experience (Soutar & McNeil, 1996). Delprino (2013) suggested that leaders, educational heads and educational administrators generally lead from afar by creating a strategic plan in collaboration with faculty, staff, and students and sometimes with parents and guardians. Despite some limitations, West (2008) observed that in recent times, the educational organizations have recognized the complex and dynamic nature of educational contexts, making strategic planners prepared to adopt and adapt as situations and circumstances change with no likelihood of short-term effects but certainly to have long term impact. Keller (1999) observed that educational institutions need to develop strategic planning processes to fit their unique needs and circumstances. Although there are shortcomings and lack of evidence to prove a standard strategic planning tool for managing educational organizations (Temple, 2003; Shah, 2013), yet there are those like Dooris (2002), Dooris et al. (2004), Aleong (2007), and Nauffal and Nasser (2012) that strongly suggest the success of strategic planning is process-related: if done badly is ineffective but if well done then is powerful.

## **2.5 Abu Dhabi Education Sector Benchmarking**

In its book Abu Dhabi Education Reform: The Road to 2030, ADEC discusses the urgent need to strengthen P-12 institutions (ADEC, 2012). The significance of enhancing the application underlines the dependency on the talents leading the transformation and the reality that some of high school graduates might require kind of guidance or support programme in order to be admitted to the university. In order to better prepare students for the labour market, Roadmap 2030 places a high premium on enhancing the outcomes of Emirati students who enroll in universities. One of the five objectives of the education system is human capital. Short-term objectives emphasise how people can engage in the work market. The long-term objectives place a strong emphasis on the necessity of defining improvements under the subject of Social and Economic Gains. The country's efforts to maintain its adherence to international educational systems by developing links with colleges abroad are informed by the impact of the global educational revolution, which is expected to be felt well into the year 2030. According to Abu Dhabi's education mission statement, education should be matched with

labour market demands in order to establish the groundwork for a creative and knowledge-producing society.

As part of Abu Dhabi's road to 2030 to build partnerships with foreign companies, in 2010 ADEC and EduCluster Finland Ltd. using Finland's top PISA curriculum in selected ADEC schools. Its aim is to train teachers and administrators using good Finnish practices (Tremblay, Lalancette & Roseveare 2012). The Educational Partnership Program (EPP) ran from 2010 to 2015. Differences in research include studies on this Emirati-Finnish relationship. One of the lessons that the UAE can learn from Finland is that the Finnish policy makers, unlike other high-performing OECD countries, do not create policies around the market and regulations of the market. economics defines GERM. According to Sulieman (2022) "A sustained emphasis on fairness and cooperation, not choice and competition, can lead to an education system where all children learn well".

The framework's creation benefited from observations made while evaluating a number of nations. As an illustration, South Korea's economy initially depended nearly entirely on exports of foreign technology. The KIST was founded by the South Korean government after it became aware of the dearth of R&D funding. The government boosted the number of large businesses and put in place a system that rewarded successful economic performance (Kwon, Lee & Shin 2015). South Korea's decision to join the OECD in 1996 was a key component of its liberalization plan. To strengthen its national innovation system, South Korea should implement a number of new policy agendas that have been suggested by the OECD.

By 2000, Korea was catching up to other nations in terms of economic growth, according to the OECD. It was determined in 2005 that South Korea's national innovation system was more effective than the Netherlands at producing patents. It still seems like South Korea is making the transition to a knowledge-based economy (Lee, Kim & Wright 2021). There are 241 initiatives in South Korea that have already been put into action or that are scheduled to do so. By easing the pressure of testing in middle and elementary schools, South Korea is also fostering an environment that fosters creativity.

The first nation to establish a university focused on research was Germany. Friedrich List, a German national, was one of the founders of the national invention system. The proponents of invention and production and the proponents of the previous authoritarian order were at odds with one another. Through government-funded learning and development programs, the early German government significantly contributed to Germany catching up in terms of technology

and creativity (Holst et al. 2020). Germany had one of the most cutting-edge educational systems by the turn of the 20th century. Beginning with the beet sugar business, Germany's industrial development quickly grew to include the pharmaceutical industry by the end of the following century. German research levels significantly increased, particularly in sectors like physics and medicine. By the start of the twentieth century, the quick industrialization that had occurring in Germany was beginning to produce economic benefits (Hoidn & Šťastný 2021). The German economy grew significantly throughout the ensuing years. But improved university-industry cooperation and higher-quality higher education were required; this is what gave rise to the current German innovation systems.

Since the start of the financial crisis in 2009, the Swiss economy has stabilized and is seeing stable growth. Despite having the best innovation and R&D systems among OECD members, there is little to no information sharing or transfer. The government may concentrate on fostering an innovative culture throughout the nation by advancing integrated education (Anderson et al. 2020). In Switzerland, R&D investment has been on the upswing. Since 2010, the nation has risen to the position of one of the top spenders on research and development. However, Switzerland has the largest gender disparity of any EU nation. Switzerland's educational system is regarded as one of the greatest in the world.

Singapore's concentration on enhancing educational capacity and its openness to the world are two factors that have contributed to the development of its innovativeness and competitiveness. In order to duplicate Silicon Valley's success in the US, the nation established two clusters. The education system in Singapore places a strong emphasis on developing abilities that are adaptable to the dynamic global economy and innovative environment (Venkatesh, Speier & Morris 2002). Singapore has one of the most sophisticated innovation infrastructures in all of Asia, and the government is constantly working to develop innovation capabilities. The purpose of this creation was to create intricate, unofficial networks for knowledge transfer that would hasten the advancement of science and technology. It is the government's largest and most comprehensive endeavor at R&D infrastructure support (Lee, Kim & Wright 2021). The nation has also set up a location where new ideas can be tested before being made available to the public. In the nation, there are many strong connections between different stakeholders and a lot of information sharing. Through the formulation and implementation of certain policies, the Singaporean government is gradually contributing significantly to the country's growth as a center for innovation.

The efficient Singaporean educational system fosters an innovative culture. The usage of streaming has been advantageous since it enables students to learn at their own pace and promotes growth and learning. The approach to schooling is becoming more individualized. The nation introduced a vision that promoted thinking and learning as crucial skills for Singaporeans. 'Thinking Schools, Learning Nation' is the movement's catchphrase. Greater time and subject area flexibility is what this trend aims to offer. Thus, the emphasis switched to capacity building and ensuring that the educational system had enough creativity, innovation, and research. The top-down method of management was abandoned, and each school cluster was given a leader (Lee, Kim & Wright 2021). In its quest to create an educational system that promotes learning, creativity, and innovation, Singapore has gone a long way. It has achieved this by continuing to work closely with academics, policymakers, and researchers. A change in one area of the education system has an impact on all areas. The nation's needs for human resources align with its needs for labor. Overall, the nation has shown significant growth and progress, particularly in the technology sector, thanks to the establishment of an open economy and a distinctive and highly effective educational system (Matnazarova 2021).

Other advanced education systems frequently lag behind the US educational system. There is a pool until it can ensure that the tests it uses to determine what students should learn, the resources available for instruction match the curriculum that instructors should be taught, and the schools of education prepare teachers to teach what the state wants students to learn (Matnazarova 2021). The US has several programs running to address many of these problems, including quality evaluation, support and training materials, recruitment of qualified candidates for teaching positions, alignment of teacher readiness with classroom needs, and alignment of student learning requirements with employer and college preferences (Aboelenein et al. 2022). To encourage successful implementation at the national and local levels, US pay close attention to the coherence of these programs as they develop. There is a dearth of information on the Netherlands' national innovation ecosystem (Addison 2019). However, the research suggests that there is a safe framework with a strong foundation for schooling. There is a need to build complex paths for knowledge sharing and information exchange, as well as to enhance the R&D collaboration between institutions and industry. The focus should switch from fresh opportunities for developing inventive solutions to development that promotes business as an industry pioneer. Last but not least, Sweden is a country that has come to represent gender equality in all facets of life. In terms of innovation, the nation appears to be a frontrunner among

the other OECD members (Al Nuaimi et al. 2015). The nation is committed to enhancing its creative competitiveness, as seen by the higher percentage of its GDP it devotes to R&D activities.

The Swedish educational system has been hailed as among the greatest in the world, distinguished by higher-quality instruction that places a strong emphasis on equipping students with practical skills. Students perform quite well despite the decentralized system. Sweden encourages connections between universities and business because the agricultural sector is crucial to the nation's economy (Arezki & Ghanem 2018). This encourages innovation in the agricultural industry. Other sectors that support innovation include those in the life sciences, electronics, and pharmaceuticals. The nation also supports university collaborations with business. With its concentration on renewable energy, the nation is setting the bar high in terms of creativity, equality, and education.

The crucial importance of collaboration and partnerships in bringing private schools into line with the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 is one of the study's key conclusions. Collaboration emerges as a potent tool for attaining the lofty goals set out by the government in a fast evolving educational environment where the aspirations of the nation are inextricably entangled with its educational aims. The results show that private schools in Abu Dhabi continuously form partnerships with a range of parties, including the government, businesses, corporations, and other educational institutions (O'Sullivan 2017). This deliberate effort to work together is grounded in the knowledge that the visions are not standalone ideas but rather essential components of a bigger national agenda for advancement and innovation. Through collaborations, private schools can access a wide range of resources, insights, and skills that enhance the educational process and help achieve the goals (Parkman, Litz & Gromik 2017).

Partnerships between private schools and governmental institutions are particularly noteworthy because they show how the public and private sectors may work together harmoniously. According to the survey, private schools actively take part in government programs, projects, and activities that support the visions. The private schools are now in a vital stakeholder position for the implementation of the national vision, which not only strengthens the legitimacy of their commitment (PwC 2021). The partnerships also include chances for professional advancement, resource sharing, and the sharing of best practices, establishing a vibrant atmosphere for learning and development. Collaborations with businesses and sectors also make it easier to incorporate practical knowledge and real-world experience into the

educational process (Tabari 2014). Private schools are becoming more and more conscious of the fact that the labor market of the future will require a specialized skill set beyond academic brilliance. These partnerships give students practical industry exposure, enabling them to build skills that are in line with the requirements of the future workforce (Soomro, T & Ahmad 2012). Such collaborations demonstrate the flexibility of private schools and place them in a position to actively support the UAE's economic diversification and sustainable development objectives. The study emphasizes the function of partnerships in creating an innovative culture in private schools. Collaboration projects promote idea sharing, methodological innovation, and the investigation of novel educational philosophies (Venkatesh, Speier & Morris 2002). The values emphasized in the visions, highlighting the value of creativity, critical thinking, and entrepreneurial spirit, clearly align with this culture of innovation. Private schools can incorporate these ideas into their curricula, pedagogies, and extracurricular activities through partnerships.

## CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH CONTEXT

### 3.1 The UAE Education Landscape

In this section, an overview of the education system and measures of ensuring better education in the UAE are highlighted. The major focus is on education systems and regulatory approaches in Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This literature serves to lay a foundation to the understanding of the importance of government initiatives in shaping educational institutions in the UAE. Over the past ten years, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has seen significant growth and progress. The sustainability of this growth and the country's transformation to a knowledge-based economy rests in large part on the availability of skilled and motivated academic leaders (Abdalla & Ahmed, 2013). Studies have demonstrated the conventional advantages and/or shortcomings of the reform model in the UAE's education system (Abdalla & Ahmed, 2013; Hijazi et al., 2008b; Mohiuddin, 2017). The current research notes that there exists few research that look at transformational leadership's effects in K–12 educational settings. A strategy plan for vision 2020-2024 has also been developed by the government of Abu Dhabi, which recognizes the importance of enhancing access to and the quality of education as a means of achieving social development objectives and sustaining economic growth (Government of the United Arab Emirates, 2017). This study examines the impact of the adoption of UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector on K–12 private education in contemporary Abu Dhabi. Since 2009, Abu Dhabi has made modifications to its educational system to take into account population growth, cultural shifts, and economic needs (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015) and this may have an impact on private education institutions as far as implementation of the required initiatives is concerned and the impact post implementation.

The current study recognises earlier contributions to the 21st century school reforms seen in the United Arab Emirates and makes comparison of the results and practices of the reforms for education in the two leading Emirates of the UAE –Abu Dhabi and Dubai, as well as various cultural contexts where applicable. The justification for doing this is so as to have a compelling picture of the state of the education system in the UAE, that will allow an informed study of the subject matter at hand while appreciating what has been done already. In 2017, the Government of Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority (2017) said that 64% of private schools were ranked as "excellent" or "outstanding" in its schools' inspection report. According to the UAE National Agenda foundation, which seeks to create a system of top-notch education to create a knowledge-based society, the remaining 36% of further

developments schools confront difficulties implementing crucial reforms (Government of the United Arab Emirates, 2016). The evaluation criteria used to determine overall school rankings included performance requirements determined from testimony acquired by the review team through classroom observations, surveys, and interviews with students, teachers, principals, board members, and parents. Six criteria that matched the evaluation criteria were used by the Dubai School Inspectorate (DSIB) to make a conclusion (Government of Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority, 2017).

The current study notes that many international schools improved their performance by strictly and strategically implementing the recommendations of KHDA over the years and adhering to the rules established by the UAE for the educational sector. These schools which had been rated "acceptable" since roughly 2009, were rated as "good" in the 2017 survey of schools in Dubai (Government of Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Authority 2017). The findings above are critical to the current research which seeks to investigate the impact of adopting and implementing the UAE visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector in Abu Dhabi's K-12 private schools, with specific focus on the performance of the schools and the reform requirements thereof. In the case of private schools in Dubai, the KHDA (2017), research was based on the educational reform process in order to pinpoint the factors that contributed to positive change and school development. The pioneers of the model change, Aboelenein et al. (2022); Addison (2019) as well as more previous authors such as Abdalla and Ahmed (2013) have demonstrated its significance in the growth of school organisations when they follow certain set out initiatives as spelled out by their regulators. Research notes that, the revolution is connected to the "new atmosphere" of the classroom since it inspires students to exert greater effort and innovation (Abdalla and Ahmed, 2013). According to Abdalla and Ahmed (2013) research, school leadership that encourages "collaboration between teachers" has a substantial impact on the development and performance of schools (Abdalla and Ahmed, 2013). Similarly, Dubai wants to highlight the expanding work of "collaboration" and innovation to establish a knowledge-based society as continually plays host to many international event ex: World Expo, which took place in 2020 and with the theme "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future" (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015). Additionally, Knowledge and Human Development (KHDA), the local government organisation in charge of private education in Dubai, places an emphasis on performance requirements that are consistent with global norms that outline crucial elements of education.

A modified model suggested by Addison (2019) described different measures linked to innovation, teacher cooperation, and effective leadership to show the effect of the UAE national curriculum on school improvement. Building solid relationships, a culture of professional learning, and addressing the problems of guaranteeing high quality for the future of education are all necessary for effective school leadership. Abdalla and Ahmed (2013) add that, leaders need to improve accountability, school performance, and standards, in order to attain institutional excellence and this is only attainable by paying close attention to the regulations set by the school regulatory bodies in the UAE. Al-Harathi and Al-Mahdy (2017) on their part, note that the implementation of the regulations set aside by school regulatory bodies is usually a case of change management in the school setting. According to Al-Harathi and Al-Mahdy (2017), an organization's environment and level of cooperation among the stakeholders can affect the rate and pace of change in educational institutions. This thought is carried over by concurrent evidence of research which focuses on implementation reforms in schools in the UAE, which indicates that, in a moderately paced situation, a group needs to manage with changing periodicals, but the globe and mobility, working together among all stakeholders involved is highly useful as far as bringing change in an educational institution is concerned (Al Nuaimi et al. 2015). This part of the literature is important to the current study which seeks to understand the impact of adopting UAE visions 2021 and 2071 into the strategic plans of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi, what reforms this adoption required and what impact it had on the performance of the schools.

Further evidence of research educates that, in the UAE schools, principals are expected to possess specific skill sets, for instance, being knowledgeable about organization culture, and deploying expertise to advise and manage a change project efficiently (Al-Taneiji, 2012). This is seconded by concurrent evidence of research from Al-Taneiji and McLeod (2008) who championed the decentralization of the management of schools in the UAE. According to Al-Taneiji and McLeod (2008), effective management of UAE schools in line with the expectation from the ministry and the government requires the latitude among school principals to manage schools operations and individually deploy their expertise towards the implementation of governmental programs and initiatives. Al-Taneiji (2012) expounded on this concentrating on the cultural factors of the successful adoption and implementation of governmental programs. Al-Taneiji (2012) interpolated that, the school leadership is critical in the successful implementation of governmental programs in the UAE, however, the school leadership has to effectively involve the parents in the process as these are key stakeholders in the education

sector whose involvement would help streamline the process of change and reforms in the schools.

In agreement, Addison (2019) demonstrated the value of employing the change method in the construction of school structure. Al-Taneiji & McLeod (2008) suggested using a Modified Transformation Model to speed up the transformation process. This model is intended to "encourage and support innovation and change while keeping in mind the organization's specific demands and cultural," while "making a national culture." The UAE education system places a strong emphasis on fostering the new leadership and attitudes required to realise vision 2021 in order to prepare students to participate in this quickly changing global environment (ADEC 2015). An overview of UAE education is given at the beginning of this chapter in order to contrast the nation's leadership objectives with its historically effective educational system. Other plans for the development of Emirati society are defined in the UAE Vision 2021 and the National Curriculum Parameter, which emphasises the development and ability to learn for oneself and calls for adaptable skills from the head teachers in order to meet the need for a modern school system that is structured in accordance with the government regulations. These changes prioritise improved leadership, cultural alignment, increased accountability, higher expectations, and better preparation (Lasagabaster 2022). With the above understanding of the state of the UAE education landscape, the role of government initiatives in fostering improved education and the role of education institutions and educational institutions' leaders, the current research can delve further to the private education sector in the UAE to highlight its status and continually build understanding of the broad body of knowledge that this research encompasses.

### **3.1.1 UAE's private education sector**

Over the past ten years, the United Arab Emirates' private school system has evolved to suit the region's growing population, cultural landscape, and economic needs. Today, the private school industry helps UAE economy expand and is crucial to enhancing community identity and social ties in the UAE (Soomro, & Ahmad, 2012). It's interesting to note that more and more Emirati families choose private schools, accepting the reality that private education results in better scores for their kids (Tremblay, Lalancette & Roseveare 2012). At all levels of education, innovative initiatives, for instance the UAE National Agenda, are also being introduced. To ensure that UAE students are prepared to enroll in institutions around the world and compete on the global market, the K–12 curriculum is one of the primary areas of attention for UAE educational regulatory bodies (Government of the United Arab Emirates, 2016).

Universities in the UAE continue to innovate and fulfil the demands of a diversified economy since they are under increasing pressure to offer training and programmes that fit the needs of the local labour market (G-Mrabet, 2012). In reality, some of the world's top universities are establishing programmes in the United Arab Emirates in order to draw bright students from the world. A case in point is that, the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins is assisting in the establishment of a doctoral programme in public health in the Emirates. Other global partnerships include the Sorbonne, which opened in Abu Dhabi in 2006; and the New York University, the top comprehensive school in Abu Dhabi, with excellent research facilities. The University of Washington, Boston University, and Rochester Institute of Technology are some additional American educational institutions that have set up operations in the UAE. Every year, the Ministry of the President Affairs (MOPA) awards 200–300 scholarships to Emiratis travelling to places including Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Hameed et al. 2016). More than 3,000 Emiratis are now enrolled in higher education programmes abroad, with 60,000 of them attending state colleges and 30,000 attending private institutions in the UAE (PwC, 2018).

Young Emirati students are faced with social research methodologies as they continue their education with other students and are encouraged to share UAE identity and its values, history and culture, and even their involvement in the educational activities (Jarrah & Alkhazaleh 2020). Majumdar and Varadarajan (2013) state that "the issue of integration and cultural integration becomes more relevant as these young people enter the labour market in the coming years" Additionally, the United Arab Emirates' technology policy has improved people's quality of life by enhancing communication and making it accessible anywhere, at any time. The civil society of the twenty-first century encourages the advancement of technology and soft skills while welcoming the new era of lifelong learning (Spranza 2016). This section has highlighted the increasing demand for higher quality education in the UAE that measures up to the global level. The section is important to the current study as it clearly highlights the need to have a strong educational system that can be able to produce young adults who can effectively transit into tertiary education. This underscores the importance of considering the implementation of UAE visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools, the impact on performance and the reform requirements thereof as it is clear that, the higher educational landscape in the UAE is relying on the K-12 system to produce properly prepared and educated individuals to benefit from tertiary training programs.

### **3.2 UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 for the education sector**

In the UAE, the UAE's vision 2021 national agenda, has a dedicated focus on the educational development of the country which was drawn to emphasize the development of a first-rate education system, that would require a complete transformation of the current education system and teaching methods. This vision was stated as "Innovative education for a knowledge, pioneering, and global society", supported by a corresponding mission to develop an innovative education system for a knowledgeable and global competitive society, that includes all age groups to meet future labour market demand, by ensuring quality education outcomes, and provision of best services for internal and external customers. The vision was developed based on values of: citizenship and responsibility to enhance national citizenship and social responsibility; the principles and values to ensure human values, tolerance, moderation, peace and volunteering are implemented; commitment and transparency to commit to professional and transparent performance; equality and justice to commit to community partnership and accountability in the education process; participation and accountability to ensure equal educational opportunities for all; science, technology and innovation to encourage a society that is driven by science, technology and innovation. Most of these values are operational and were largely taken to set the ground for the future Vision 2071.

The UAE's vision 2071 also has one of the four pillars dedicated to education as: excellent education in the UAE Centennial 2071 that highlights the importance of excellent quality of education. Certain areas of focus in education include advanced science and technology, space science, engineering, innovation and health sciences. Other educational measures include teaching students, mechanisms for discovering their individual talents early. On the institutional level, educational institutions will be encouraged to be incubators of entrepreneurship and innovation and to be international research centres. The vision implementation is set to begin right from the foundation level of schooling. Considering the above and reflecting on earlier gaps identified in the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools, the literature shared above on the importance of vision in the education sector gains credence. This is because, later on, the research will base its pursuit of understanding of the impact of implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in the strategic plans of Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools on the literature on the importance of visions in the educational sector to fortify conclusions and deductions thereof.

### **3.2.1 Strategic planning in UAE's education sector**

In the UAE, the National Agenda's goals set by the Ministry of Education (MOE-UAE, 2017) set several goals in its strategic plan of 2017-2021. The Ministry of Education launched a strategic plan for 2017-2021 to develop an innovative education system for a knowledge and global competitive society. Such education system included all age groups to meet future labour market demand. It shall ensure quality of the Education and provide best services for internal and external customers. The strategic plan is based on the following values: citizenship and responsibility; the principles and values; commitment and transparency; equality and justice; participation and accountability; science, technology and innovation. The UAE's Ministry of Education set several goals in its plan to be achieved by 2021. They include: ensure inclusive quality education including pre-school education; achieve excellent leadership and educational efficiency; ensure quality, efficiency and good governance of educational and institutional performance, including the delivery of teaching; ensure a safe, conducive and challenging learning environment; attract and prepare students to enroll in higher education internally and externally, in the light of labour market needs; strengthen the capacity for scientific research and innovation in accordance with the quality, efficiency and transparency standards; provision of quality, efficient and transparent administrative services, in accordance with the related standards; establish a culture of innovation in an institutional working environment.

In following closely, the strategic plan as laid out by the UAE Ministry of Education, the UAE education system is keen on providing the school children with the scientific and academic skills and knowledge and on placing them at the top of their priorities. Such a mind-set comes from the country's leaderships' absolute belief in that education is the foundation for building generations that can achieve the UAE's vision which aims at topping the world rankings and ensure the continuation of the passage to excellence and leadership in all areas (MOE-UAE, 2020). In the case of Abu Dhabi, strategic plans are based on the objectives of ADEK (ADEK, 2020) for the private school sector as: to establish a world-class education system that matches and exceeds international standards; to ensure the quality and efficiency of educational performance; to provide a stimulating and innovative school environment; to organise the teaching and learning processes in private schools; to assess the competency of teachers and administrative boards and develop necessary recommendations to support educational institutions; to ensure schools follow the highest standards of safety and security; and ensure full adoption and implementation from educational vision to strategic plan at schools.

### **3.2.2 Approach for the development of strategic plan for Abu Dhabi private schools**

Based on the literature reviewed for educational vision and strategic planning, an adoption process could be derived to align with the educational vision and have a strategic plan developed to ensure its application. Some of the elements of strategic planning identified from the literature are: (1) envision, (2) analyse (3) formulation, (4) implementation, (5) evaluation, and (6) sustenance (London & Morfopolos, 2010). For alignment with the grand vision an educational strategy is required to suit the environment the schools are established in for which envisioning and developing the vision, mission and values must take both a bottom-up and a top-down approach. (Janssen, Jelgerhuis, & Schuwer, 2014). Having developed the vision and mission based on the values, the next is to conduct a situational analysis with a guiding direction to examine needs and gaps, within present and future situations and conditions required for the fulfilling the desired vision, mission, and values as earlier defined. Such internal and external analysis, gaps assessment analysis tools as reviewed by Trainer (2004) including: SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats); TOWS (Turning Opportunities and Weakness into Strengths); nominal group technique; affinity diagrams; SMART (specific, measurable, achievable or attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound); responsibility matrix; flowcharting; cause-and-effect diagrams; presentation of quantitative data; and goal attainment teams.

The above are identified by research as being useful to assist institutional planners or administrators with the vision to strategic plan process for identifying, examining, collecting, analysing, and delivering the information about the present situation and condition, issues, gaps, strengths, weakness, opportunities, challenges, and competitiveness (Janssen, Jelgerhuis, & Schuwer, 2014). The next stage in the process being the strategic formulation to develop measurable goals, objectives, and implementation strategies and initiatives based on the results of the earlier situational analysis. Followed by implementation with focus on decisions, tasks and activities as strategically planned. It is here that tasks, activities, timelines, resources, accountability, and communication occur. Next is the evaluation stage that includes learning from and evaluating the outcomes. Paris (2003) prescribed evaluation of the results for each of the above steps to check if the vision through to plan has been well done and well implemented for the desired outcomes and improvements thereof. Finally, is the sustenance for periodic reviewing to enable the educational institution to adapt to short-term volatility while maintaining their long-term strategic vision (Chen et al., 2015).

### **3.3 Abu Dhabi Educational Landscape**

The establishment and growth of private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, represent a fascinating journey that has significantly impacted the education landscape in the region. This literature review highlights the historical origins of private schools in Abu Dhabi, exploring their development, key drivers, their role in providing diverse educational opportunities for students, and more. The inception of private schools in Abu Dhabi can be traced back to the mid-20th century, a period when the Emirate was still in its nascent stages of development. In 1967, St. Joseph's School, as documented by The National News (2021), emerged as the pioneer among private educational institutions in the Emirate. This establishment marked a critical turning point in the educational history of Abu Dhabi. Since then, the private school sector has burgeoned significantly, catering to a diverse student population.

To understand the origins of private schools in Abu Dhabi, one must consider the socio-economic context of the time. In the early 1960s, as the government of Abu Dhabi embarked on a journey of modernization and development, by the mid 1960s, investing in education became a top priority that led to the construction of schools according to Delgado (2016). The establishment of private schools was one of the initial steps taken to provide education to both expatriate and Emirati children, these schools quickly gained popularity among local Emirati families, highlighting the universal desire for quality education (Al Marzooqi, 2018). The proliferation of private schools in Abu Dhabi can be attributed to several key factors. First and foremost is the commitment of parents to offer their children a high-quality education. Private schools in the Emirate are known for their smaller class sizes and personalised attention, which foster a conducive learning environment (Salim, 2019). Moreover, these institutions often offer a broader spectrum of extracurricular activities compared to public schools, contributing to holistic student development (Harrison, 2017). Furthermore, private schools in Abu Dhabi provide diverse curricula, including British, American, MOE, Asian and many other educational frameworks, allowing parents to choose an educational path that aligns with their aspirations for their children (Edarabia, n.d.).

A key driving force behind the growth of private schools in Abu Dhabi is the increasing diversity of the city's population. The Emirate has evolved into a cosmopolitan hub, attracting people from various corners of the globe. Many parents, irrespective of their nationality, value the opportunity for their children to receive an education in a multicultural environment. Private schools in Abu Dhabi are uniquely positioned to fulfil this aspiration by fostering an

atmosphere where students can learn about different cultures, languages, and traditions while forming meaningful connections with peers from diverse backgrounds (Sundus & Al Zaabi, 2020). The establishment and expansion of private schools in Abu Dhabi have been a critical player in shaping the educational landscape of the Emirate. Rooted in the government's commitment to education and driven by parents' pursuit of quality education, these institutions have thrived in a culturally diverse and rapidly developing city. Hence, the history of private schools in Abu Dhabi reflects not only the evolution of education but also the Emirate's broader journey towards modernisation and global integration.

### **3.3.1 Regulation of private schools in Abu Dhabi**

The regulation of private schools in Abu Dhabi is well developed. Its primary objective is to guarantee the delivery of high-quality education that harmonises with the region's Islamic and Arab heritage, while also adhering to international educational benchmarks. Spearheading these efforts is the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), an instrumental entity within the regulatory framework. ADEK shoulders several key responsibilities, including licensing private schools, establishing rigorous educational criteria, and diligently monitoring the entire educational ecosystem. To comprehend the depth of this regulatory system, it is essential to dissect its evolution and core principles. These regulations extend across a spectrum of areas, encompassing curriculum standards, teacher qualifications, infrastructure requirements, and student well-being. Furthermore, Alhosani (2022) notes they prioritise values that are deeply rooted in Islamic and Arab traditions, emphasising cultural integration alongside academic excellence. In this respect, Abu Dhabi's private school system, education serves as the cornerstone for nurturing the skills and potential of youth, ultimately contributing to the nation's prosperity. The government demonstrates a strong commitment to education, dedicating substantial resources to empower children and prepare them for active and influential roles in the UAE's future.

#### **Regulatory principles and requirements**

The regulatory framework for private schools in Abu Dhabi, as outlined in Federal Decree Law No. 18 of 2020 on Private Education, is built on several key principles. First and foremost is the commitment to providing quality education. Private schools must adhere to international standards concerning curriculum, teaching, and assessment to ensure students receive a high-quality education. Second, these schools are expected to respect Islamic and Arab values and traditions. This entails incorporating Islamic teachings and Arab culture into the educational

process while promoting tolerance and understanding of other religions and cultures. Finally, private schools are obligated to maintain a safe and secure environment for students, which includes complying with health and safety standards and implementing effective anti-bullying and child protection policies.

### **Regulatory mechanisms**

ADEK upholds these principles by employing diverse regulatory mechanisms and methods, ensuring their effective implementation and adherence in accordance to what is required of private schools. They include:

1. **Licensing:** All private schools in Abu Dhabi must obtain a license from ADEK, and to do so, they must meet stringent regulatory requirements. Regular inspections are conducted to ensure schools maintain these standards, enhancing accountability.
2. **Curriculum:** ADEK is the central authority tasked with setting and approving curricula for private schools. These curricula are designed to guarantee that students receive a high-quality education aligned with international standards.
3. **Assessment:** Standardised assessments developed and administered by ADEK are used to measure student achievement and monitor school progress over time, ensuring educational quality.
4. **Inspections:** ADEK conducts routine inspections of private schools to assess their quality and adherence to regulatory requirements. The results of these inspections are made public on ADEK's website, enabling parents to make informed decisions about their children's education.

### **Evolution of regulation**

The regulation of private schools in Abu Dhabi has undergone a significant evolution. Prior to the establishment of ADEK, the Ministry of Education (MoE) responsible for regulation. Several key resolutions were issued under the MoE's oversight:

- **Resolution No. 1 of 1983 on the Establishment of Private Schools:** This resolution laid out the requirements for establishing and operating a private school in Abu Dhabi.
- **Resolution No. 2 of 1983 on the Licensing of Private Schools:** It established the licensing process for private schools in the Emirate.

- Resolution No. 3 of 1983 on the Curriculum of Private Schools: This resolution outlined curriculum requirements for private schools.
- Resolution No. 4 of 1983 on the Teachers and Administrators of Private Schools: It established qualifications and requirements for teachers and administrators.

These resolutions, combined with regular inspections, formed the basis of private school regulation under the MoE.

### **ADEK's Regulatory Impact**

With the establishment of ADEK in 2005 through Law No. 2 of 2005, the regulatory landscape developed further. ADEK introduced its own set of regulations and policies for private schools.

- Organising Regulations of Private Schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi: These regulations set the requirements for establishing and operating private schools and outline the licensing process (ADEK, 2020).
- Private Schools Policy and Guidance Manual: Providing detailed guidance on ADEK's policies and regulations for private schools, this manual enhances clarity for stakeholders (ADEK, 2020).
- Irtiqaa Programme: A comprehensive evaluation system, Irtiqaa assesses the quality of education in private schools in Abu Dhabi. Criteria include curriculum, teaching and learning practices, and student outcomes (ADEK, 2020).

### **Scope of regulation**

The scope of private school regulation in Abu Dhabi is extensive, encompassing various critical areas:

1. Establishing and Licensing: Ensuring that private schools meet rigorous requirements before they can operate.
2. Curriculum: Setting and approving curricula to maintain educational standards.
3. Teacher and Administrator Qualifications: Ensuring that educators and school administrators meet specified qualifications and requirements.
4. Student Admissions and Fees: Overseeing student admissions processes and fees structures to ensure fairness and transparency.

5. **Health and Safety Standards:** Establishing and enforcing health and safety standards to provide a secure learning environment.
6. **Quality Assurance:** Implementing quality assurance mechanisms, including standardised assessments and inspections, to uphold educational excellence.

In retrospect, the regulation of private schools in Abu Dhabi is a dynamic and evolving process aimed at balancing the delivery of high-quality education with the preservation of Islamic and Arab values and traditions (Al hammadi and Liu, 2016). ADEK, as the main government agency, has a central role to play in this regulatory framework, overseeing licensing, curriculum, assessments, and inspections. Over the years, the regulatory landscape has been developed towards comprehensive approach, ensuring that private schools in Abu Dhabi meet international standards while respecting the cultural and religious values of the UAE as noted by Alhosani (2022). This evolving regulatory framework reflects the UAE's commitment to providing a top-tier education for all its students.

### **3.3.2 Abu Dhabi private schools**

Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is a bustling metropolis with a diverse and growing population. Among its inhabitants are a significant number of students from various backgrounds, making education a central focus of the city's development. Abu Dhabi's educational landscape comprises a wide array of options, including public schools and private international schools. These private schools have gained substantial popularity due to their capacity to cater to the diverse needs and preferences of students. In this comprehensive exploration, it is imperative to delve into the curricula offered, the abundance of extracurricular activities, the quality of education, and the challenges faced by private schools in Abu Dhabi.

#### **Curriculum diversity**

Private schools in Abu Dhabi pride themselves on offering diverse curricula that cater to the multicultural student population. These curricular options include British, American, MOE, Asian and other curricula, among others. Some institutions even provide a blend of these curricula, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. The choice of curriculum typically depends on the ownership structure and the target student population of the school. For instance, schools owned and operated by the UAE government are usually mandated to follow the UAE national curriculum. This curriculum is thoughtfully designed to

equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge required for further education and employment.

Conversely, private schools owned and operated by foreign entities or individuals often have the autonomy to choose their curriculum. They frequently opt for curricula similar to those followed in their home countries, ensuring that students receive an education consistent with international standards. It is worth noting that this diversity in curricula not only accommodates the needs of various student groups but also contributes to the rich cultural tapestry of the city by exposing students to different educational philosophies and approaches.

### **Extracurricular enrichment**

Beyond academics, private schools in Abu Dhabi offer a wide spectrum of extracurricular activities designed to cater to the interests and passions of all students. These extracurricular pursuits span sports, arts and crafts, music, drama, and more specialised areas like robotics, coding, and entrepreneurship. Extracurricular activities hold immense significance in the holistic development of students. They provide a platform for students to nurture their talents and acquire valuable life skills. Participation in sports promotes physical fitness and teamwork, while engagement in arts and crafts fosters creativity. Musical and dramatic pursuits nurture self-expression, and specialised activities like robotics and coding prepare students for the demands of the modern technological world. Furthermore, entrepreneurship activities instil an entrepreneurial mindset, equipping students with problem-solving and innovation skills.

Participating in these activities also enables students to build strong interpersonal relationships, develop leadership skills, and enhance their communication abilities. The provision of such a broad array of extracurricular opportunities ensures that each student can find an avenue to explore and excel beyond the classroom.

### **Quality of education**

The quality of education in private schools in Abu Dhabi exhibits significant variation. While some institutions are highly esteemed and provide a world-class education, others may not meet the same rigorous standards. To make an informed decision about enrolling their child in a private school, parents should engage in thorough research. They should consider the school's curriculum, extracurricular offerings, and reputation. Moreover, visiting the school and engaging with teachers and students can provide valuable insights into the school's culture and learning environment. This firsthand experience can be necessary in determining whether a

particular school aligns with the educational aspirations of the child and family. Parents may also consider examining standardised test scores, graduation rates, and post-graduation outcomes to gauge the school's academic performance and its ability to prepare students for higher education and future career opportunities (Tamimi and Shehhi, 2016).

### **Challenges faced by private schools in Abu Dhabi**

Private schools in Abu Dhabi face a set of challenges that impact their operations and the education they offer. One of the most significant challenges is the cost of tuition (Khawaja, 2015). Most of the private schools in the city can be categorised as affordable and few are expensive, rendering them limited accessible. This financial barrier can potentially limit the diversity of students in these private schools but also they are offering additional values equivalent to the cost which made families to choose among the private schools. Another challenge lies in the high turnover of teachers. Many private schools in Abu Dhabi recruit teachers from abroad to meet the demand for qualified educators. However, these teachers often have better employment opportunities. This teacher turnover can lead to a lack of continuity in the classroom, hindering students' ability to establish meaningful and lasting relationships with their teachers. Furthermore, the transient nature of the teaching workforce can also result in fluctuations in the quality of instruction. This challenge is important to be addressed for the private schools in Abu Dhabi by implementing effective teacher retention and development strategies to ensure consistency in education delivery (Birks, 2018).

Abu Dhabi stands as a testament to the commitment to education in the United Arab Emirates, boasting a vibrant private school sector that caters to the diverse needs of its student population. The city's private schools offer a wide range of curricula and extracurricular activities, ensuring that each student can find their educational path. However, the quality of education can vary, necessitating careful consideration by parents when choosing a school for their child. Furthermore, Khawaja (2015) portends that challenges such as tuition costs and teacher turnover demand attention and strategic solutions to ensure equitable access to high-quality education for all students in the Emirate. As Abu Dhabi continues to grow and develop, its private schools will play an integral role in shaping the future of the city and its residents. Through ongoing investment in education, the Emirate can aspire to offer world-class learning opportunities that empower students to thrive in an increasingly globalised and competitive world.

### **3.3.3 Abu Dhabi private school statistics**

Understanding the statistical distribution in the primary education sector of Abu Dhabi is critical in making justification for the study of the private educational institutions in the current study. According to Tamm (n.d.), Abu Dhabi boasts a substantial network of 198 private schools, which are essential to providing education to the populace. These institutions cater to a vast student population totalling 386,722, with a teacher count of 29,094 and administrators count of 9,849 (SCAD, 2020). Edarabia (n.d.) adds that the latest assessments by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) suggest that there are 198 licensed private schools operating within the Emirate, indicating a dynamic and expanding educational landscape. Examining historical data from Statista (2022), we see a notable trend in the growth of private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The number of these institutions increased from 181 in the academic year 2012/2013 to 198 in 2018/2019, underlining the remarkable expansion of private education options. This upward trajectory is indicative of the growing demand for private schooling in the region (Kassab, 2019) which can further be justified by the fact that over 60% of students in Abu Dhabi attend private schools. SCAD (2020) official data puts the percentage number of students in private education in Abu Dhabi at 64.3% compared to those attending public schools at 35.7% for the academic year 2018-19. This justifies the decision of the current study in conducting an examination of how national strategies and initiatives in the education sector are implemented at institution levels, to focus on private schools in Abu Dhabi.

Furthermore, the distribution of private schools within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi is worth noting. These schools are dispersed across three key regions: Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, and Dhafra. This geographical distribution ensures that students across the Emirate have access to a range of educational options, contributing to the overall development of the region. When considering the student population in private schools, Statista's (2022) data reveals that, during the aforementioned period, nearly 249,000 students were enrolled in these institutions. Notably, this figure is within the estimated total capacity of these private schools, which is approximately 300,000 students. This suggests that there is still room for further growth and expansion in the private education sector in Abu Dhabi to meet the increasing demand for quality education. The academic workforce supporting these private schools is also substantial, as highlighted by the Oxford Business Group (2019). It estimates that private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi employ a total of 14,570 teachers. Additionally, there are 8,119 management staff, resulting in a combined academic staff force of 22,869. This large pool of

educational professionals contributes significantly to the delivery of quality education and the efficient administration of these institutions.

In terms of curriculum distribution, the distribution of private schools across various curricula is a significant aspect of the educational landscape in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. As the demand for private education continues to grow in the region, it is crucial to understand how private schools are distributed across different curricula to meet the diverse needs and preferences of students and parents. Therefore, this section aims to examine the patterns and trends in the distribution of private schools across curricula in Abu Dhabi.

*Curriculum Diversity in Abu Dhabi:* Abu Dhabi's education system has seen a remarkable transformation over the past few decades, driven by a commitment to providing world-class education. The diversification of curricula offered by private schools is a reflection of the multicultural expatriate population residing in the emirate. A study by Alzaabi and Al-Qubaisi (2018) found that private schools in Abu Dhabi offer a wide range of curricula, including MOE, British, American, International Baccalaureate (IB), and various national curricula. This diversity caters to the preferences of both local Emirati families and expatriates residing in the Emirate.

*Demand and Preferences:* One of the factors influencing the distribution of private schools across curricula is the demand from parents and students. Alzaabi and Al-Qubaisi (2018) noted that the popularity of British and American curricula is driven by the large expatriate population, as these curricula are more aligned with Western educational standards. On the other hand, the IB curriculum has gained popularity among Emirati families seeking a globally recognized education that emphasises critical thinking and international-mindedness (Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2017). The demand for schools offering these curricula has led to their widespread presence in Abu Dhabi.

*Regulation and Accreditation:* The Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) is responsible for accrediting curricula and ensuring compliance with educational standards (ADEK, 2020). Research by AlDhaheri and Al-Maamari (2019) highlights the government's efforts in accrediting a wide range of curricula, making it easier for private schools to offer diverse educational options while maintaining quality assurance (Mazrouei and Shamsi, 2017).

*Economic Factors:* Economic factors also play a significant role in the distribution of private schools across curricula. Research by Alzaabi and Al-Qubaisi (2018) suggests that schools

offering British and American curricula often charge higher tuition fees, attracting families with greater financial resources. In contrast, schools offering other curricula may be more affordable, appealing to a different demographic. This economic dynamic influences the distribution of private schools, as schools offering different curricula cater to varying income brackets.

### **K-12 private schools**

The landscape of private education in Abu Dhabi, particularly in the K-12 segment, has witnessed substantial growth and transformation over the years. The statement highlights the prevalence of K-12 private schools in the Emirate, their commitment to delivering rigorous academic programs, and the popularity of certain institutions. In this discussion, we will delve deeper into the significance of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi, their educational offerings, and the impact they have on the local education system. Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, has evolved into a vibrant cosmopolitan city with a diverse population, attracting expatriates from around the world. This demographic diversity has fueled the demand for international education, and K-12 private schools have emerged as key players in meeting this demand. These schools offer a comprehensive educational experience, covering the entire spectrum from early childhood education (Kindergarten) to high school (Grade 12).

One noteworthy aspect of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi is their emphasis on delivering a comprehensive academic curriculum. Many of these schools follow internationally recognized educational frameworks and curricula, such as the British curriculum (e.g., The British School Al Khubairat, Brighton College Abu Dhabi), the American curriculum (e.g., Abu Dhabi International School, GEMS Wellington Academy Abu Dhabi), or the International Baccalaureate (IB) program (e.g., Repton Abu Dhabi). This commitment to academic excellence is supported by highly qualified teaching staff and state-of-the-art facilities, ensuring that students receive a world-class education. Scholarly research has highlighted the importance of a rigorous curriculum in preparing students for success in an increasingly competitive global economy. In their study "Curriculum and Its Impact on Student Learning," Hilda Borko and Richard T. Putnam argue that a well-designed curriculum not only imparts knowledge but also fosters critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a deep understanding of concepts. This aligns with the objectives of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi, where the aim is not just to prepare students for standardised tests but to equip them with the skills necessary to thrive in an ever-evolving world.

In addition to academic excellence, K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi recognize the importance of holistic education. They offer a wide array of extracurricular activities and sports to complement the academic curriculum. For example, Cranleigh Abu Dhabi is known for its strong emphasis on the arts and sports, providing students with opportunities to explore their talents beyond the classroom. This holistic approach is supported by research that underscores the positive impact of extracurricular activities on students' social and emotional development. A study by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) titled "School Engagement: Potential of the Concept, State of the Evidence" suggests that participation in extracurricular activities can enhance students' sense of belonging, self-esteem, and motivation. The popularity of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi, as mentioned in the statement, can be attributed to several factors. First, the reputation for academic excellence and holistic development has attracted families seeking the best educational opportunities for their children. Second, the multicultural environment in these schools aligns with the diverse expatriate population in Abu Dhabi, fostering a global perspective and cultural understanding among students. Third, the commitment to providing world-class facilities and resources ensures that parents are willing to invest in their children's education.

K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi are instrumental in shaping the educational landscape of the Emirate. They offer a rigorous academic program, supplemented by a wide range of extracurricular activities and sports, to prepare students for success in a globalised world. Scholarly research underscores the importance of a well-designed curriculum and holistic education in fostering students' intellectual, social, and emotional growth. As Abu Dhabi continues to evolve as a global hub, these schools will remain integral to the city's educational fabric, contributing to the development of well-rounded, culturally aware, and academically proficient individuals.

### **Teacher statistics in Abu Dhabi private schools**

The quality of education in private schools largely hinges on the competence and qualifications of teachers. Thus, teacher statistics become a critical aspect to consider. Several studies and reports shed light on the demographics and qualifications of teachers in Abu Dhabi's private schools. According to the Statistics Center Abu Dhabi (SCAD, 2020), the private education landscape in the Emirate is marked by a substantial and diverse teaching workforce. With a staggering count of over 19,000 teachers employed in private schools in Abu Dhabi providing quality education. What's particularly striking is the international flavour of this educator

ensemble, as the majority of teachers hail from abroad. The United Kingdom, the United States, and India stand out as the primary source countries for these expatriate educators (Zorkani & Smith, 2017), symbolising the global appeal of Abu Dhabi as a destination for teaching professionals. This rich tapestry of nationalities not only fosters a multicultural learning environment but also contributes to a varied pedagogical approach, offering students exposure to different teaching philosophies and perspectives. This global perspective can be invaluable in preparing Abu Dhabi's students for an increasingly interconnected world. Moreover, it highlights the Emirate's dedication to leveraging the best talent from around the world to enhance its educational landscape, aligning with its ambitious goals of fostering innovation and knowledge-based growth and emphasising in shaping the next generation of global citizens.

In terms of demographics, publicly available statistical information from Statistics Center Abu Dhabi (SCAD, 2020) highlighted the diversity of the teaching workforce in private schools. It revealed that a substantial portion of teachers in these institutions come from various countries, making Abu Dhabi a global hub for education. This diversity can be attributed to the expatriate population, which necessitates a multicultural approach to education. Regarding qualifications, teacher qualifications are paramount in ensuring the delivery of quality education. The study also emphasised the increasing number of teachers with advanced degrees, which is a positive sign for the education sector. The prevalence of teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees has contributed to an improved standard of teaching in private schools.

On experience, the teacher statistics in Abu Dhabi private schools also reflect a blend of experienced educators and those in the early stages of their careers. A significant percentage of teachers possess years of teaching experience, which can positively impact the learning environment. As for teacher-student ratio, the teacher-student ratio is another crucial aspect of teacher statistics which is often used as an indicator of the quality of education. According to reports, Abu Dhabi private schools have made efforts to maintain reasonable teacher-student ratios, which can enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

#### **3.3.4 Growth of private schools student population**

The proliferation of private school enrolments in Abu Dhabi has been nothing short of extraordinary, marking a profound shift in the Emirate's educational dynamics. This phenomenon necessitates a comprehensive examination of the trajectory that private schools have embarked upon in this region, spanning diverse curricular offerings, surging student enrollments, and the anticipated expansion in the years ahead. The evolution of private

education in Abu Dhabi reflects the Emirate's commitment to fostering a diversified and globally competitive educational landscape. Private schools have become a vital component of this transformation, attracting students from various national and international backgrounds, fostering cultural diversity (Kaabi, 2015), and offering a wide array of curricula to cater to diverse educational needs. With increasing investments in education, continued efforts to enhance educational standards, and the Emirate's attractiveness as a hub for international talent, the growth of private schools is expected to persist in the foreseeable future. This growth not only serves as a testament to Abu Dhabi's commitment to education but also signifies the region's emergence as a prominent global education destination, poised to offer world-class opportunities for students seeking a rich and diverse learning experience.

Private education in Abu Dhabi has witnessed exponential growth in recent years, driven by various factors such as increased population, a growing preference for international education, and government initiatives to promote private education. According to statistical reports, student population growth from the academic year 2011/2012 to academic year 2018/2019 morphed from 165,623 to 253,732 students, which reflects growth and demand for private education has been steadily rising and, there has been a substantial increase in the number of private schools in Abu Dhabi. It is also predicted that that number has grown further between academic year 2019/2020 and academic year 2020/2021 to slightly over 280,000 students, even though the latter is based on unconfirmed reports. This surge can be attributed to a combination of factors, including rising demand for high-quality education, improved regulatory frameworks, and a burgeoning expatriate population seeking international curriculum options for their children.

One of the most notable aspects of the growth of private schools in Abu Dhabi is the diversity of curriculums offered. Private schools in the Emirate have adapted to cater to the diverse needs of students from various nationalities and backgrounds. International curriculums such as the British, American, Asian, and International Baccalaureate (IB) have gained immense popularity, making Abu Dhabi an enigma, in terms of global education hubs. This diversity allows parents to choose the curriculum that best aligns with their children's future educational and career aspirations, which is also considered as a reflection of the needs of the expatriate community. By the year 2012, there were around 32,174 students enrolled in the American curriculum compared to 70,829 students in 2019. Students who had enrolled for the British curriculum during the same time in 2012 were 39,198 compared to 57,989 in 2019. This was

followed by the MoE curriculum with 48,315 to 49,062 and the Indian curriculum at 35,556 and 46,376 respectively.

The student population in private schools in Abu Dhabi has witnessed a surge over the years, as evidenced by reports showcasing the exponential growth in enrollment numbers. In terms of percentage of students in Abu Dhabi private schools by curriculum, the American 28%, British 23%, the MoE 19%, and Indian 18% curricula appear to be the most preferred among student populations. This surge can be attributed to several key factors driving the shift towards private education. Firstly, the consistent enhancement of educational quality and the provision of top-notch facilities in private schools have magnetised parents. The tangible improvements in academic standards and infrastructure have swayed their choices. Secondly, the burgeoning expatriate in Abu Dhabi has significantly contributed to the heightened demand for international education, subsequently resulting in a substantial influx of students into private schools. The allure of curricula catering to diverse cultural backgrounds and globally recognised qualifications has propelled this trend. Lastly, the Emirate's unwavering commitment to fostering an enabling environment for private schools has spurred investments and expansion within the sector. Supportive policies, streamlined regulations, and incentives have encouraged educational entrepreneurs and institutions to flourish, ultimately fueling the impressive growth in the student population within Abu Dhabi's private schools. In sum, these multifaceted factors converge to paint a picture of a thriving private education landscape in the Emirate.

The private school student population in Abu Dhabi is poised for sustained growth, driven by several determining factors. Foremost among these is the government's strategic commitment to bolster the role of private schools within the Emirate's education landscape, a move that is anticipated to attract substantial investments into the sector. Furthermore, the burgeoning expatriate community, comprising skilled professionals and their families, is set to fuel the demand for top-tier international education options, ensuring a steady stream of students to private institutions. Abu Dhabi's escalating prominence as a regional epicentre for business and culture is also expected to contribute to this trend, as it draws in individuals seeking high-quality education opportunities. Finally, as the Emirate diversifies its economy, with substantial investments in burgeoning sectors like technology and innovation, the need for a highly skilled workforce will intensify, amplifying the thirst for top-notch educational offerings. In summation, a convergence of government vision, expatriate influx, cultural

cachet, and economic evolution are all aligning to propel the private school sector in Abu Dhabi on an upward trajectory, promising a bright future for education in the Emirate.

The growth of the private school student population in Abu Dhabi has been a remarkable journey, characterised by a surge in the number of schools, a diverse range of curriculums, and a substantial increase in student enrollments. This growth is underpinned by factors such as increasing expatriate population, a preference for international education, and government support. The predicted growth in the future is a testament to Abu Dhabi's commitment to education and its aspirations to become a global centre for learning. As the Emirate continues to invest in education and create an attractive environment for private schools, the growth trend is expected to persist, offering students and parents an ever-expanding array of educational opportunities.

It is thus evident that the private school student population has been on a steady curve, marked by consistent growth and diversification. Initially concentrated in urban areas, private schools have expanded their reach to suburban and even rural regions. This growth can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the increasing perception of private schools as providers of high-quality education has drawn a significant number of students away from public institutions. Moreover, the flexibility of curriculums offered by private schools, ranging from traditional programmes to specialised tracks like Montessori and STEM-focused education, has attracted a diverse range of students with varying academic interests and learning needs. As a result, student numbers in private schools have steadily increased, with enrollment rates often surpassing those of their public counterparts in certain regions. Predicting the future growth of private school student populations seems promising, given the ongoing demand for personalised and innovative educational approaches. However, the extent of this growth may be influenced by economic factors, changes in public education policy, and shifts in societal values regarding education. Nonetheless, private schools are likely to continue expanding their student populations, driven by their adaptability and ability to cater to a wide array of educational preferences.

### **3.4 Abu Dhabi Education Sector Development Plan**

The Abu Dhabi Education Sector Development Plan represents a significant and comprehensive effort to transform and elevate the education landscape in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. This ambitious plan, is anchored on key strategic priorities that serve as the bedrock for sector strategies, aiming to shape the education system to meet the present and future needs of the region. These priorities are:

- Build an attractive education environment to make Abu Dhabi a pioneer regional and International Education Hub
- Enhance the quality of education outcomes in all levels and for all learners
- Enhance alignment of education outcomes to meet Abu Dhabi labor market needs and socio- economic priorities, which would boost the prosperity of the emirate
- Provide distinctive and appropriate opportunities for all learners to access education services.
- Contribute in achieving the national agenda for sciences, technology, and innovation through developing an efficient and effective ecosystem of education research. (ADEC, 2023)

Abu Dhabi's unwavering dedication to cultivating a world-class education system is reflected in the comprehensive vision laid out within the PSQA framework. This strategic roadmap underscores the Emirate's commitment to education, extending far beyond mere academic prowess. It embraces a holistic paradigm that places equal emphasis on nurturing a strong national identity, ensuring equitable access and affordability, and fostering non-academic outcomes and values. Crucially, aligning private schools with these strategic priorities stands as a pivotal cornerstone in the pursuit of the overarching objective: the cultivation of a promising and educated generation poised to make meaningful contributions to both the nation and the broader global community. In essence, Abu Dhabi's educational commitment extends beyond the classroom, seeking to empower its youth with a well-rounded education that not only prepares them for the future but also instills in them the values and ideals that will guide them in their roles as responsible citizens and global ambassadors.

### **Strategy 1: National Agenda**

The foremost strategic imperative within the PSQA framework revolves around the establishment of a top-tier education system, a goal underpinned by a set of crucial performance metrics. Chief among these benchmarks are international assessments like PISA and TIMSS, which gauge the effectiveness of the education system by comparing the academic prowess of students on a global scale. Additionally, the proportion of students embarking on higher education journeys serves as an indicator of the system's success in preparing them for advanced learning opportunities. Furthermore, an emphasis is placed on nurturing proficiency in Arabic language skills, specifically at the higher-tier level, to ensure that students are not

only equipped with internationally competitive knowledge but also grounded in the cultural and linguistic facets of their region. This strategic priority highlighted the foundational importance of education as a catalyst for societal progress and individual development within the PSQA framework.

In order to prioritise educational excellence, private schools in Abu Dhabi must commit to implementing rigorous academic standards and curricula that align with global benchmarks. This imperative encompasses a dedicated emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education to prepare students for the demands of the modern world. Additionally, fostering strong Arabic language proficiency is equally crucial to preserve cultural identity and facilitate effective communication. To achieve these goals, forging strategic collaborations with renowned international educational institutions becomes imperative. Such partnerships serve as conduits for the exchange of best practices, innovative pedagogical approaches, and cutting-edge resources. By engaging in these global educational networks, Abu Dhabi's private schools can ensure that they not only meet but surpass international standards, propelling themselves to the forefront of global education and offering students the knowledge and skills required to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and competitive world.

Investing in teacher training and ongoing professional development is paramount to elevating the overall quality of education. Teachers play a central role in shaping students' academic journeys, and equipping them with the latest teaching methodologies and tools empowers them to deliver more effective instruction. Additionally, fostering collaboration between private schools and global education networks and competitions can serve as a powerful catalyst for academic excellence. This engagement not only motivates educators to continuously improve their skills but also inspires students to strive for higher academic achievements. Through such interactions, private schools can tap into a wealth of resources, best practices, and innovative ideas, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students alike. In this way, the combination of investing in teacher training and encouraging private school participation in global educational initiatives creates a synergy that propels educational quality to new heights, nurturing a generation of well-prepared and highly motivated learners.

### **Strategy 2: Abu Dhabi Plan Goal**

The second strategic priority underscores the paramount significance of cultivating a generation that is not only well-educated but also actively engaged in bolstering the nation and

community. This multifaceted goal is meticulously subdivided into six thematic areas, each encompassing a total of 28 specific objectives. These objectives encompass a comprehensive range of aspects, such as adherence to international standards to ensure global competitiveness, the cultivation and preservation of a strong national identity, the promotion of rigorous scientific research as a cornerstone of progress, the alignment of educational curricula with evolving societal needs, the empowerment of individuals with diverse educational choices, and, most importantly, the commitment to achieving universal education for all, thereby ensuring that every member of society has access to quality education and opportunities for personal growth. This holistic approach to education not only enriches the individual but also fortifies the very fabric of the nation and community by fostering active and responsible citizenship.

Private schools can contribute to advancing educational goals by providing a multifaceted and inclusive learning environment that honours and commemorates the UAE's rich national identity and cultural legacy. These institutions should actively integrate the nation's history, core values, and time-honoured traditions into their academic curricula, thus fostering a profound connection to Emirati heritage among students. In doing so, private schools not only contribute to the preservation of the UAE's cultural fabric but also empower Emirati youth with a deep-rooted sense of their national identity, equipping them to engage meaningfully in shaping the future of their country.

Scientific research should not remain exclusively within the confines of higher education institutions; private schools, too, are essential actors in cultivating a culture of research and innovation among their students. By actively promoting and facilitating participation in science fairs, research competitions, and STEM-related projects, these schools empower young minds to develop crucial skills (Awadhi, 2020). These experiences not only foster a profound understanding of scientific concepts but also nurture the ability to think critically and solve complex problems. Moreover, they instil in students a sense of curiosity, exploration, and a passion for inquiry that transcends traditional classroom boundaries. In doing so, private schools not only prepare their students for academic success but also equip them with the tools needed to thrive in an increasingly innovation-driven world, where the ability to question, explore, and innovate is paramount. Therefore, the integration of research and innovation into private school curricula is imperative, contributing to a more vibrant and dynamic educational landscape.

Alignment with the Abu Dhabi Plan's objectives is crucial, as it ensures that private schools are working in harmony with the broader educational vision of Abu Dhabi. This alignment can be achieved through regular collaboration and communication between private school leaders and educational policymakers to ensure that private schools' activities and initiatives are in line with the Abu Dhabi Plan's goals.

### **3.5.1 Private schools and quality assurance 2016-2020**

The PSQA (Private School Quality Assurance) initiative, spanning from 2016 to 2020, laid out a series of targeted strategies aimed at enhancing the quality of private education. These strategies, akin to foundational building blocks, were meticulously designed to bring private schools in alignment with the overarching objectives delineated in the National Agenda and the Abu Dhabi Plan. By focusing on these strategies, the initiative sought to elevate the overall educational standards in private institutions, fostering a harmonious integration of their goals with those of the nation. These efforts were not only essential in raising the bar for private school education but also had an important role to play in ensuring that the broader socio-economic and educational aspirations of Abu Dhabi and the UAE were met. The PSQA initiative, therefore, stood as a testament to the commitment to excellence in education, serving as a bridge between the distinctive mission of private schools and the national agenda of progress and development.

#### **1) Quality & Academic Outcomes**

The focus on quality and academic outcomes in the PSQA initiative is directly aligned with the first strategic priority of achieving a first-rate education system. To ensure that all schools score "Satisfactory or Above" on inspections and exhibit improvement between cycles, private schools should implement rigorous quality assurance mechanisms.

This includes regular teacher evaluations, continuous curriculum development, and monitoring of student performance. Schools should also invest in state-of-the-art educational technology and resources to support both teachers and students in achieving desired academic outcomes (Ameri and Meqbaali, 2019).

Emirati Top 20 Schools should serve as role models for other private schools, setting high standards for quality in education. Collaboration between these top-performing schools and others can facilitate the sharing of best practices, leading to overall improvement across the sector.

## **2) Access & Affordability**

The second priority of ensuring access and affordability aligns with the goal of making education accessible to all segments of the population. Private schools can contribute to this objective by expanding their capacity to accommodate more students, thereby reducing overcrowding and ensuring that all students have access to quality education.

Moreover, private schools should invest in facilities and resources to accommodate students with special needs, ensuring that these students have equitable access to education. Providing scholarships and financial aid programs can also make private education more affordable for deserving students.

Families should not face barriers to accessing quality education. Private schools should consider offering flexible fee structures and support services to make education more affordable and accessible.

## **3) Non-academic Outcomes & National Identity**

The focus on non-academic outcomes and national identity aligns with the broader goal of nurturing well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to society. Private schools contribute immensely to this by ensuring that students not only excel academically but also develop strong personal and social skills.

In order to uphold this paramount objective, it is imperative for private educational institutions to seamlessly integrate character education into their academic curricula. This integration should underscore the cultivation of values such as leadership, empathy, and social responsibility among their students. By consistently evaluating and assessing students' personal and social development, these schools can guarantee that their educational endeavours are nurturing the growth of well-rounded individuals who are not only academically proficient but also ethical and socially conscious. The emphasis on character education not only equips students with the tools necessary for success in their academic and professional lives but also instils in them the qualities needed to become exemplary citizens. Thus, by fostering a commitment to character education, private schools can be observed as lead-role players in shaping the future leaders and responsible members of society who are capable of making positive and enduring contributions to their communities and the world at large.

Further, private schools should go beyond providing a high-quality education; they should actively foster a diverse and inclusive environment to encourage understanding and

camaraderie among students from various national backgrounds. By implementing cultural exchange programmes, hosting multicultural events, and offering language courses, these institutions can facilitate a profound sense of unity and empathy within the student community. Cultural exchange programmes expose students to different perspectives and traditions, broadening their horizons and fostering tolerance. Multicultural events celebrate the richness of diversity of the culture, promoting a sense of belonging and appreciation for one another's backgrounds. Language courses not only enhance communication skills but also enable students to connect with peers from different countries on a deeper level. In creating such an environment, private schools not only prepare students academically but also equip them with the essential skills and values needed to thrive in an interconnected, globalised world where diversity is a strength (Alkutich, 2021).

### **3.6 Education Leadership in Abu Dhabi**

Evidence of research indicates that with the multicultural nature of Abu Dhabi and the larger UAE, it is crucial to promote methods that combine cultural and social aspects, cultural management, education, and training (Bock 2014). A cultural approach to leadership can support the objectives and requirements of future educational institutions by identifying crucial tactics that promote communication, collaboration, and beneficial connections (Bock 2014). According to Global Leadership Practice, multiculturalism fosters "intercultural skills, such as the capacity for understanding and approaching social problems with understanding, taking into account characteristics of culture, history, religion, language, and politics " (Hijazi et al. 2008b). Recent studies indicate the impact that school administrators' adept at multicultural leadership can have on school performance in congruence with research on educational leadership in the Middle East (Hallinger 2018). Private schools in the United Arab Emirates are among the most successful in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific region (Zaran et al. 2016). This is due to the adoption and implementation of effective educational systems (Sulieman 2022). With this in mind and reflecting on the remit of the study as detailed in the previous chapter, the current study deems it important to examine aspects of educational in Abu Dhabi..

Bock (2014) added that in Abu Dhabi schools, "there are opportunities to be involved in significant choices, even though school principals are trusted to lead change". Such opinions are agreed to by Litz & Scott (2016) who further the dimension that, Abu Dhabi private schools have the leeway to deploy their leadership expertise in pursuing sufficient implementation of educational initiatives from the regulating body. In agreement, Dutot & Van Horne (2015) also noted that collaboration with all stakeholders is necessary for change to happen and that

leadership is vital for positive transformation. As a result of their increased exposure to the world, school principals are more aware of the realistic standards for directing those involved in fostering leadership qualities and lifelong learning (Balfaqeeh, Hassan & Berkett 2017). According to the study by Arora (2014) the United Arab Emirates is carrying out components of the education reform, "such as supporting cooperation, promoting professional growth, having an encouraging vision and advancement", which have resulted in incremental transformation that incorporated positive modifications into ingrained cultural norms. It must be difficult to encourage teachers to adapt to new emerging leadership styles; however, by focusing on gradually changing the educational modernization through culture while, giving the teachers the opportunity to participate in the process and begin the anticipated changes in them in an environment with full participation and knowledge, it is easy to successfully lead change process in Abu Dhabi private schools.

The foregoing thought is expounded by Forstenlechner et al. (2012), who mention that, leaders today will create a community of learners in addition to developing excellent practices and increasing awareness of the goals and missions of education. The essential relationship between the school and the community is now one of the truths that links education and culture (PwC, 2018). The demand for more input and feedback from the institution and all stakeholders, including parents, students, leaders, shareholders, faculty, and the community, is another significant change occurring in 21st-century education. These changes are linked to the desire for quality, efficiency, and relevance (Tabari 2014). Leadership has significant impact on student achievement and school performance (Zaran et al., 2016). Teachers can work together with middle leaders and leaders who decide on the standard of the school because transformational leaders build a professional community for them to do so. They also care about positive teacher relationships and inspire them to become more motivated (von Suchodoletz et al. 2019). Also UAE has allowed local and international expertise to set up and operate in the schools. Setting goals and having the capacity to accept responsibility are two essential traits of effective leaders in the Arab Gulf area (Dutot & Van Horne 2015). Additionally, young population and young leaders are expected to contribute fresh ideas and visions that will guide the urban population in an increasingly competitive globe, according to the Arezki & Ghanem (2018). Dutot & Van Horne (2015) underlined the significance of conveying the vision and impact of change and significance of the role Abu Dhabi private school heads in sufficiently implementing and managing changes in line with the initiatives and visions of the government for the education sector.

Another aspect of educational leadership in Abu Dhabi is highlighted by Litz and Scott (2016) who mention that clear communication may be necessary to develop in a diverse environment or multicultural stakeholders. According to Litz and Scott (2016), good planning and a knowledge of efficacy may not always be perceived in the same manner everywhere, therefore, while policy statement, vision and mission statements are great, they may not suffice in the practical implementation without clear communication of the vision by educational leaders. Additionally, as previously described by Hijazi et al. (2008b), transformational leadership is centred on the leadership style, character, and capacity to effect change within a culture through emulation, inspiration, and vision. The ability to inspire and motivate followers to modify their work and adhere to a new corporate philosophy is one of the most well-known traits of transformational leaders (Kirk & Napier 2009). In capital cities like Abu Dhabi, where schools are closely scrutinized and new, internationally recognised ideas are promoted by expected leadership practises, the private sector has seen the most adjustments and advances (Arezki and Ghanem, 2018). Other evaluations noted the transformational leader's effectiveness as a model that matches the regional educational system and can be adapted to the worldwide market, as well as the fact that his leadership style follows the 21st century process as it strengthens and relies on the organisational culture (Litz & Scott 2016). Matsumoto (2019) indicates that Abu Dhabi has experienced remarkable success, as evidence from empirical research highlighted that all schools may be improved through innovation implementing organisational innovation.

An OECD (2015) report on the UAE education sector helps solidify the importance of leadership in the UAE educational sector. According to the report, key findings showed the relationship between transformational leadership and organisational structure in UAE schools were published in a report by (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015), '*The Decade of Growth 2008-2018*'. The current study submits that, based on the UAE's National Innovation Strategy, which intends to give students information and skills for the twenty-first century, "The most significant factor determining school performance and progress is leadership". The key elements of effective leadership were underlined in this study on the last ten years of school research, which opened with "the readiness of leadership to adapt and change" (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015), which is similar to Soomro, TR & Ahmad statement (2012) findings. Other principles discussed in the OECD (2015) report demonstrate how transformational leadership is applied in practise in the case of Abu Dhabi private schools. For example, leaders, and teachers feel empowered to propose, innovate, and act as members of a highly significant group. Successful leaders create a shared

culture, a belief in their goals, and a vision for the future. Leaders encourage innovation in their followers to get the most from them. This initiative has been explained in the context of Abu Dhabi private schools ongoing transformation and it is noted that the education authorities like ADEK were ready to assist with the difficulties and challenges if any.

Further evidence of research in agreement to the foregoing indicated that Abu Dhabi is a competitive market that is constantly evolving (Alsalamy, Behery & Abdullah, 2014). As a result, following recommendations was made for educational leaders and institutions: develop capable leaders who recognise the value of innovation; create an assessment system that fosters creativity in both staff and students; and set up a collaborative system that encourages the sharing of innovative ideas and professional knowledge. Concurrent evidence reports that the necessity of transformational leadership in Abu Dhabi private schools education landscape is a top organisational priority for all schools operating in the emirate (Fatima, 2019). Fatima (2019) notes that transformational leadership despite has numerous applications in both community and educational settings. In an empirical survey on the study of expanding the UAE education horizon, Fatima (2019), find that "workers want to work with transformational leaders who can inspire them to attain new levels of work, assist them in identifying their professional goals, meet their requirements, and listen to them well". The findings specifically concur with those of Alborno & Gaad (2014), who stated that "transformational leaders are able to excite and inspire subordinates and so increase their status of 'belief and performance'. Overall, the findings demonstrate that many workers express a desire to work for outstanding leaders and intellectuals who can inspire followers (Al, 2018). Additionally, Abu Dhabi (2008) advised school administrators to encourage faculty and students in order to foster organisational innovation. Leaders stress the value of empowering participants' abilities and innovation through comprehensive education, enabling them to take part in the organisational growth of the school.

### **3.7 Chapter Summary**

The adoption of UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in Abu Dhabi's K-12 private educational sector, according to the literature, has the potential to alter the region's educational system and support the growth of a knowledge-based economy. To secure a sustainable and prosperous future for the UAE, there is continuous to invest in education and the development of human capital. Private schools are expected to play a significant role in attaining these goals. Students need to be able to make decisions about concepts and take action in addition to developing abilities like argumentation, input, reasoning, and teamwork. Balfaqeeh, Hassan and Berkett

(2017) suggest that developing critical thinking abilities should be viewed at least in part as "learning the knowledge and abilities necessary for effective participation in society and social behaviour". It is crucial to stress that these talents must be acquired over time; and therefore, this process will start with schoolwork, which calls on more intentional investment on the preparation of students in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools as opposed to waiting to make effort later on in tertiary education. Andrews (2015) noted that most policy makers in the educational system overlook the criticality of sufficient and efficient preparation and lead the education of developmental. as the objective is to produce qualified creatives, innovators, and lifelong learners, reforming the education cannot be accomplished without also setting initiatives for the overall educational system from primary education.

To buttress the foregoing, considering the extensive literature reviewed and the findings thereof, it is noted that comprehensive curriculum reform must put an emphasis on empowering both instructors and students to acquire the soft skills required for lifetime learning. According to Chaudoir (2010) "today, the risks in professional education are numerous, and it can be challenging to pinpoint the forces that can actually act for the general good, to ensure the strength of students, and enhancing social mobility and equality." UAE education policy at the national and sectoral levels in continues development in order to address inequity and achieve sustainability in the future. Regulators can foster creativity and innovation in teaching assessment at the national level to raise the quality of education. It is possible to ensure cooperation between institutions on a broader scale as opposed to competition and exclusion of programmes provided by the educational sector. The approach at the national level is methodical and systematic strategy (Tabari, 2014).

Through the above, the UAE continues to acquire the status of a world/international education region due to the visionary leadership, available resources, continues development, and geographic location (Litz & Scott 2016; Olarte 2015; Tabari 2014). At the level, of K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi need to be continued developed in order to address the social and economic changes brought on by the globalization and technologies of the twenty-first century. However, research demonstrates that private schools perform best when they offer open possibilities for teachers and students to develop abilities like critical thinking, creativity, and innovation. The importance of the knowledge triangle, which equips students with the knowledge to perform the tasks as well in the environment is changing rapidly and, to some extent, unpredictable in the future, needs curriculum change to provide human resources for today's and tomorrow's labour market (Abdalla & Ahmed 2013).

In understanding and appreciating the above subject to the in-depth and breadth-wide review of literature in the context of Abu Dhabi educational landscape, the current study will seek to use the above literature evidence to examine the gaps earlier identified in the background of the study. Specifically, the research will be intent in reviewing gaps among others, the lack of empirical research on the impact of implementation of national strategies and visions in Abu Dhabi private sector institutions and their impact on the performance, strategic plans and the reform agenda in these institutions. This will support the research in pursuing its aim and objectives and in seeking to answer the research questions delineated in the initial chapter of the study. To this end, the extensive nature of the research context literature review in the current study is useful as far as fully informing the researcher as well as the reader on the contextual disposition prior to the conduct of the empirical research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The methodology chapter examines the study methodology and provides a description of the research design. The researcher explains the study's goals and the ensuing research questions in the first section of this chapter. The researcher then gives a brief summary of the theoretical underpinnings and presumptions of the current investigation. Additionally, the researcher explains why the case study approach was chosen for this study. The researcher then outlines the study's methodology. The development and management of the qualitative data collection are covered in detail in this chapter too. The research then continues with a full explanation of how the data processing was approached and done. Finally, the research invests time to explicate the study's validity and reliability. The researcher concludes by addressing the ethical issues and difficulties brought up by the study's design and methodology. The current research applied a mono-method descriptive technique in the current investigation (Castellani & Castellani 2003). The method relied on a qualitative approach to data collection and analysis anchored under the inductive paradigm of research in an effort to understand how educational instructors created their individual and collaborative learning in the Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools setting, as well as how they apply the elements of the UAE visions 2021 and 2071 in their teaching strategies. Considering the need for an elaborate individualistic experience as the type of data that would inform the current study, the use of a qualitative research method was apt, as it would best increase the chances of the research to comprehend the subject matter from educators' viewpoint.

### **4.2 Research Paradigms and Philosophy**

To be able to decide on a research paradigm, it is imperative to first explore the different paradigms in popular use, discuss their key differences, provide their requirements and make a case for the selection of one paradigm over another in research. First of all, it is important to give the definition of what a paradigm is and give some background information about the origin of the term paradigm. In the book “The Structure of Scientific Revolutions”, Kuhn (1962) mentioned and explained the term paradigm several times. Kuhn defines a paradigm as the set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed (Kuhn, 1962). According to Kuhn, paradigms make it possible to find solutions to several kinds of questions. This is done by giving a generally accepted consensus about assumptions and ideas. In scientific communities, one often uses established models to try to understand complicated phenomenon. The paradigm is the basis

for such a model which according to Kuhn (1962) is given by the following: what is studied and researched, what kind of questions are asked, the structure and nature of the questions, and how the results are analyzed.

According to the book “The Foundations of Social Research” (Crotty, 1998), it is essential for good research to answer four fundamentally important questions. First of all, the researcher should detail what methods are to be used, and secondly, how these methods are chosen, that is, the methodology behind them. Thirdly, the theoretical perspectives that can be provided by these choices should be determined. Lastly, it is important to know from what epistemology these choices were made from. The answers provided to these questions make up the paradigm that the researcher has chosen. Researchers agree that any paradigm can be seen as containing the elements ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods. Ontology is a term used to describe the view of the world that is taken. It is the starting point of any research in the social sciences, because it determines what exists and how things interact in what we consider social reality (Grix, 2010). Crotty writes “Ontology is the study of being” (Crotty, 1998, p. 10). Because everyone has a view of how the world is and which components are contained in the social world, Grix posits that the ontology of the researcher is implicitly set even before a research topic is chosen. Theoretical perspectives are contained in the question what is (ontology) as well as in the interpretation of what it means to know (epistemology). Epistemology is in a certain sense the “theory of knowledge” (Grix, 2012). Epistemological considerations are affected by one’s beliefs about the nature of knowledge. The ways in which knowledge are gained and combined are epistemological issues. “How we know what we know” is the simple description of the term epistemology provided by Crotty 1998, P.8.

The ontology and epistemology chosen are the basis for any paradigm. However, one will never be able to prove that the chosen ontology and epistemology are the correct ones and they must be taken as the assumed basis within which the research can be given meaning. When conducting research according to the chosen paradigm, it is imperative to use methodologies and methods for conducting research that fit with this paradigm. A plan of action, that is, the methodology, is the strategy that the researcher chooses for shaping how the research will be conducted and how to use the chosen methods in order to come to the desired outcome. The questions that come up when talking about such a strategy are why, what, from where, when and how the data is to be gathered. Any methodology must provide a composition of methods that complement each other in order to increase the value of the results obtained. Methods are the tools and the techniques and all the direct ways in which the researcher acquires knowledge.

The choice of methods is very dependent on the research question and this choice must be made carefully (Grix, 2010). These methods should be researched and detailed as best possible. One can distinguish between qualitative (subjective) and quantitative (objective) methods, of which one or a combination can be used, depending on the choice of paradigm. Thus it is possible to determine which ontology and epistemology are being used by examining the methodology and methods used in the research. These truly are the foundations for conducting research and different positions will lead to different approaches and different results, when trying to understand the same phenomena. In order to provide more context, the current study will discuss two very prominent research paradigms within the social sciences: positivism and interpretivism (Grix, 2010).

#### **4.2.1 Positivist paradigm**

The term positivism has many uses within the social sciences and philosophy but, in general terms, it refers to the application of the scientific method to human affairs and assumes that there are objective truths to be found within this context (Grix, 2010). The term positivism is often related to Comte's well-known work "Cours de philosophie positive", which was published around 1830. Comte was the first to use the term precisely and he set the precedent for its use in establishing the positivist paradigm (Comte, 1908). According to Grix, the positivist paradigm is based on several significant premises. The basis of Positivism is realism and foundationalist epistemology, that is the assumption that the world exists independently of our knowledge of its existence (Guba and Lincoln, 1998). The positivist believes that there are objective rules and patterns that govern the social world, similar to those that govern the natural world (Denscombe, 2002). The concept of causality is a hallmark of positivism. There are truths in the world that are not up for debate, and there is no way to around the facts. Positivists try to obtain objectivity in research (Marsh and Furlong, 2002 – Chapter 9). Hence, the epistemology of the positivist paradigm is an objective, foundationalist one.

The methodology of a positivist is to finding and ordering causal relationships in the world, and determining specific, objective outcomes. Such outcomes should be largely reproducible and follow strict patterns. The goal is to determine general laws from which accurate predictions can be made. Deductive reasoning is used to test hypotheses that are accepted or rejected. Correlations and patterns are determined through experiments with varying sets of adjustable parameters. In this way, experimentation leads to the creation of knowledge (Cohen et. al., 2013). Any knowledge gained on the basis of truly positivist assumptions is inherently non-subjective and un-biased, as these are the conditions that the positivist view is based on.

#### 4.2.2 Interpretivist Paradigm

The interpretivist view is contradictory to that of the positivist. Interpretivism envelopes a very large area of the perspectives in the human sciences. This view is often associated with phenomenology, sociology, anthropology to specify a focus for the study. In regards to the approach of the Interpretivist, the concept of subjectivity is paramount. For the interpretivists, there is a clear difference between the social and the natural world. It refutes the assumption of a non-partisan, value free world. It does not accept the positivist view that human behavior can be described or predicted by universal laws (Cohen, 2013). While positivists desire to reach complete objectivity, interpretivists accept subjectivity as a given, and seek a methodology that better fits to their subjective world view. Max Weber (1864-1920) was a key social scientist whose work can be seen to contain elements of interpretivism. According to Max Weber, we are tasked with “Verstehen” (German, to understand). Weber thought of sociology as a science of social behavior and his views are decidedly anti-positivist (Grix, 2010). The interpretivists are concerned with understanding as opposed to explaining. Their arguments are often unsatisfying from the view of the scientist searching for universal laws and certainty, and they can even contain contradictions. There are a few general guidelines that interpretivism follows. For one, researchers place emphasis on how one’s reality is shaped by their social lives and even by the language they speak. The world is built through social interaction of individuals and “facts” cannot be disconnected from “values” as clearly as in the positivist view. The social and natural sciences are distinct from one another and must be studied with the use of different methods. Interpretations of social phenomena have a direct effect on the phenomena themselves, thus research of social questions will affect reality itself (Grix, 2010).

Regarding the ontology of the interpretivist paradigm, it is accepted that the world is relative and subjective. There is no universal truth, only facts that are relevant in certain contexts (Crotty, 1998). From the perspective of epistemology, a non-foundationalist view is taken. Objects have only a subjective meaning in the context of an observer and are not defined by their existence alone. In the interpretivist paradigm, meaning is only given within a cultural setting and only participants in a certain social world are able to have an understanding of it. At the same time the participants continuously change their own social world merely by their continued participation (Crotty, 1998). The methodology of the interpretivist paradigm sets as a goal not to measure, but to understand social situations. This requires the perspectives and subjective opinions of individuals. Methodologies that are seen within this context are, for example, case studies, phenomenology, or hermeneutics (Crotty, 1998). Such methodologies

are used to determine the relationships and perspectives within a given setting and obtain knowledge based on them (Cohen et al., 2013). Methods employed within the interpretivist paradigm, for example interviews, observation of individuals, or document search, are useful for understanding behaviors and phenomena within a social setting. Because these methods aim at finding out subjective and individual opinions, they are inherently qualitative, not quantitative in nature.

The researcher at every stage makes assumptions (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) that are epistemologically acceptable, valid and legitimately based of some form of knowledge about the subject matter. Burrell and Morgan (1979) further enlighten that, research ontology is about realities during research, while research axiology is when researcher's values and ethics influence the research process. Such assumptions shape the understanding of the research problem and questions along with the methods used to interpret the findings (Crotty, 1998). Johnson and Clark (2006) noted that in research there is need to have philosophical commitments for the choice of research strategy as it impacts the understanding of the investigation. Concurrent evidence of research indicates that philosophy of research is a continuum between beliefs and assumptions which then births the preferred research design (Bristow and Saunders, 2015). A figurative expression of Bristow and Saunders (2015) explanation of the connection between the research philosophy, the beliefs and assumptions of the researcher and the research design is presented in Figure 4.1 below:-

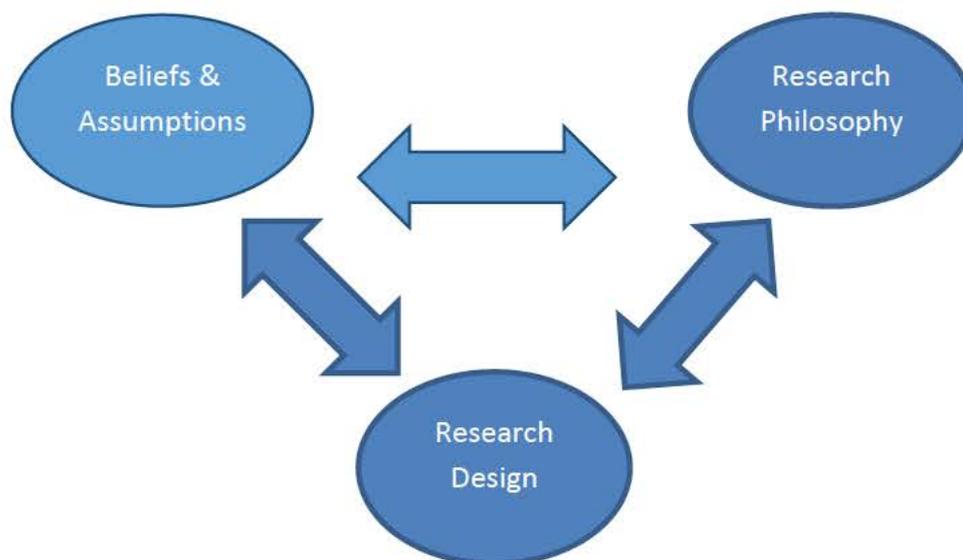


Figure 4.1 Developing a research philosophy: a reflexive process Source: Bristow and Saunders (2015)

According to Bristow and Saunders (2015) in agreement with other researchers in the field including Crotty (1998) and Johnson and Clark (2006), the next important aspect in the selection of a research philosophy is understanding the aspects of objectivism in the research, which bears assumptions based on natural sciences that are true and real; or, the aspect of subjectivism which is usually made up by the researcher that is relative and has no external or objective truth. This is seconded by Saunders and Thornhill (2009) who imply that, understanding the nature of the research – objective or subjective, is critical to identifying the appropriate philosophical direction of the research. Saunders and Thornhill (2009) agree with Bristow and Saunders (2015) that the research philosophy is multidimensional in nature and exists within a continuum of assumptions. The ideas guiding the multidimensional identification of philosophical assumptions based on the objectivism or subjectivism of the research – which are identified based on the type of questions that the researcher asks in the research are presented by Saunders and Thornhill (2009) as captured in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Multidimensional continuum of research philosophy assumptions

Assumption type	Questions	Continua with two sets of extremes	
		Objectivism ←	→ Subjectivism
<b>Ontology</b>	# What is the nature of reality?	Real ↔ Nominal	External ↔ Socially constructed
<b>Epistemology</b>	# How can we know what we know?	Natural science ↔ Arts & humanities	Facts ↔ Opinions
<b>Axiology</b>	# What is the role of values in research?	Value – free ↔ Value – bound	Detachment ↔ Integral & reflexive

Further, the research perspectives could be either within the radical change perspective or regulative perspective as an approach to problems from the viewpoint of maintaining the existing status but with some new basis. This aspect of the multidimensionality of the

philosophical assumptions of research are tabulated in Table 4.2 below adopted from Burrell and Morgan (1979).

Table 4.2 Impact assumptions dimension of research

<b>The Regulation perspective ↔ The Radical change perspective</b>
.....advocates the status quo ↔ .....advocates radical change
.....looks for order ↔ ...looks for conflict

Saunders and Thornhill (2015) report that, after clear understanding of the philosophical assumptions and their dimensionalities, a researcher can then confidently proceed to identify a research paradigm that can effectively encompass the assumptions of the research and be effectively combined to present a research philosophy suitable to the study. Saunders et al. (2009) indicate that the following major research philosophies are applicable.

A comparative presentation of the five research philosophies is presented in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 Research Philosophies

<b>Ontology</b> (nature of reality or being)	<b>Epistemology</b> (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	<b>Axiology</b> (role of values)	<b>Typical method</b>
<b>1. Positivism</b>			
Real, external, independent	Scientific method  Observable and measurable facts	Value-free research  Researcher is detached, neutral and independent of what is researched	Typically deductive, highly structured, large samples, measurement, typically quantitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be analysed
<b>2. Critical realism</b>			

Stratified/layered (the empirical, the actual and the real)	Epistemological relativism  Knowledge historically situated and transient	Value-laden research  Researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience and upbringing	Value-laden research  Researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience and upbringing
<b>3. Interpretivism</b>			
Complex, rich  Socially constructed through culture and language	Theories and concepts too simplistic  Focus on narratives, stories, perceptions and interpretations	Value-bound research  Researchers are part of what is researched, subjective	Typically inductive.  Small samples, in- depth investigations, qualitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be interpreted
<b>4. Postmodernism</b>			
Nominal  Complex, rich	What counts as 'truth' and 'knowledge' is decided by dominant ideologies	Value-constituted research  Researcher and research embedded in power relations	Typically deconstructive – reading texts and realities against themselves  In-depth investigations of

			anomalies, silences and absences
<b>5. Pragmatism</b>			
Complex, rich, external  'Reality' is the practical consequences of ideas	Practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts  'True' theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action	Value-driven research  Research initiated and sustained by researcher's doubts and beliefs	Following research problem and research question  Range of methods:, quantitative, action research

For the current study, based on the understanding of the considerations to make prior to the selection of a research philosophy, the research identifies interpretivism as the primary philosophy of the study. This is because, the research sought to collect data through the use of interviews and analyze these data in a qualitative approach with room for involvement of the research through interpretation. The social constructive role of the education leaders who participated in the research which descriptively allowed for the sharing of their stories and perspectives on the subject matter further underscored the appropriateness of interpretivism as the philosophy of the research.

### **4.3 Research Strategies**

A research strategy is about deciding the actual approach that the research is going to apply in the conduct of the study of the subject matter (Badke, 2012). According to Badke (2012), there are a number of research strategies including case studies, surveys, grounded research, archival research and ethnography. The following is a description of some of the research strategies and what they entail:-

(a) Case Studies: Case studies are descriptive research looking at individuals, a small group of people or a unit as an organisation. They are not much about cause and effect, but about exploring and describing. They usually answer 'how' and 'why' questions of contexts, with the researcher having no control over events (Austin and Sutton, 2014). "A systematic examination or long-term case through the collecting of extensive and in-depth data that

encompasses numerous sources of rich information," according to (Burgess-Allen & Owen-Smith 2010), is what a case study is. Case studies are a suitable tool for "mystical information," which is found in "real-life situations," according to Etikan (2021). These justifications are in line with the objective of the current study, which is to create a thorough understanding of private schools from the viewpoint of teachers and principals in terms of their organizational and political processes.

In order to accomplish the goals outlined in the research questions, the researcher considered a case study that combined research and interview methodologies to be appropriate. The study's design enabled the research to combine an in-depth examination of the qualitative information gleaned from the interviews which were validated using a quantitative pre-interview protocol. According to Xu & Zammit (2020), case studies may be the best research methodology if the study aims to address "how, what or why" questions, which are the kind of questions the research has listed under the research questions section of the study. The goal of the current study being to examine the implementation of national strategies in private sector schools in Abu Dhabi, developing a thorough account of the process of implementation including but not limited to the strategic challenges, reforms and overall impact, an approach that combines multi-layered textual evidence made possible by qualitative research with a broad representative representation of variations and similarities in practice and requirements for diversity in the teaching staff and executive team is critical.

(b) Surveys: Surveys are frequently used in social science research done on a sample of respondents from a representative population using questionnaire tools that are conducted online, face-to-face or on telephone. Surveys are flexible as they collect different types of data from varying numbers of people (Punch, 2003). Interviews are another form of surveys which involve discussions with one or more people to share views that are flexible. Interviews involve one or a limited group of subjects, depending on public, personal or private matters. Interviews may be face-to-face or self-administered, could be recorded on video-tape, audio-recorder or written down. (Boyce et al., 2006). Kumar & Chhapparwal (2021) distinguished six different methods strategies: integrative design, descriptive design, research design, integrated design, design transition, and multiphase structure. Descriptive analysis is the most widely used approach in educational research, according to Kumar & Chhapparwal (2021). This technique, according to Lepore (2012), is straightforward in comparison to other procedures and enables the researcher to thoroughly investigate the research question. As the researcher stated earlier, the goal of this study is to examine the adoption and implementation of UAE strategic visions

and initiatives in the educational sector with a specific focus on the Abu Dhabi private sector education landscape. . To the foregoing extent, a descriptive method design appears to be the best for this study based on the finest qualitative approaches (Raskind et al. 2019). To conduct the interviews, the research first developed a pre-interview protocol which supported the identification of respondents, the design, setup, and choice of informants to take part in the semi-structured interviews. Through inquiries and focus groups, the results of this interview were used as a springboard for an in-depth qualitative analysis of the views of teachers and leaders. Additionally, a structured interview on the self-concept and learning circumstances was used to further explore the response patterns that were discovered to be more universal from the analysis of the survey data.

c) Archival research: Sometimes referred to as desk research involves the collection of data from secondary sources, the mapping of these data based on a clearly detailed mapping framework and the deduction of findings from the data collected from archives. The data can be numerical or descriptive and therefore quantitative or qualitative approaches may be applied in the process of analysis. The distinctive point is that the data is gathered from already available sources - archives.

With the above understanding of the research strategies, the current study adopted a survey strategy wherein, it utilized interviews in the collection of data from education practitioners in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools regarding their perception on the impact of the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in the schools' strategic plans and reform requirement as well as change in performance thereof.

#### **4.4 Research Perspectives**

The research perspectives are to:

- (i) 'Explore' a lesser-known issue and wants to understand more - exploratory research.
- (ii) 'Connect' ideas to know the relationships between the different aspects of an issue by explaining the phenomenon - explanatory research.
- (iii) 'Describe' the phenomenon in detail and expand the understanding - explicatory or descriptive research.

Based on objectivity and quantitative the research perspective is about positivism. While based on subjectivity and qualitative it is about interpretivism. An examination of three specific perspectives are discussed here below.

a) Realist: Based on the idea of independence of reality from the human mind, on the assumption of a scientific approach to the development of knowledge. Realism can be divided into two types: direct and critical.

(i) Direct realism or naive realism, described as “what you see is what you get” (Saunders, 2012).

(ii) Critical realism, are humans experience of sensations and images of the real world that can be deceptive and may not portray the real world (Novikov et al., 2013). An understanding of realism for the assumptions made of ontology, epistemology and axiology with associated research methods is in the following table.

Table 4.4 Realism perspective ontology, epistemology and axiology

<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Axiology</b>	<b>Typical methods</b>
Stratified/layered  External, independent	Epistemological  Relativism	Value-laden research  Researcher acknowledges bias by world views, cultural experience and upbringing	Retroductive, in- depth historically situated analysis of pre-existing structures and emerging agency.

b) Constructivist: Is “the recognition of reality as a product of human intelligence interacting with experience in the real world. Inclusion of human activity of knowing reality is deemed to have accepted constructivism” (Elkind, 2004, p 307). Constructivism is about knowledge constructed by getting involved in positioning within the study; collecting participant-generate meanings; focusing on a single phenomenon; bringing personal values; studying the context of participants; validating the accuracy of findings; interpreting the data; creating an agenda for change; involving researcher in collaborating with participants (Andrew et al. 2011). An understanding of constructivism for the assumptions made of ontology, epistemology and axiology with associated research methodology is in the following table.

Table 4.5 Constructivism ontology, epistemology and axiology

<b>Ontology</b>	<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Axiology</b>	<b>Typical methods</b>

Multiple realities are constructed through lived ones experiences and interactions with others.	Reality is co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences.	Individual values are honored and are negotiated among individuals.	More of a literary style of writing is used. Use of an inductive method of emergent ideas (through consensus) is obtained through methods such as interviewing, observing and analyzing texts.
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c) Interventionist (Active): Interventionism as a research perspective is “an approach in which the action researcher and a client collaborate in the diagnosis of the problem and in the development of a solution based on the diagnosis” (Bryman et. al. 2011). It assumes that the world is constantly changing with both the research, the participants and the research study all being part of that change (Collis et al., 1 2003). There are three types of categories that the intervention / action research exist, namely, positivist, interpretive and critical (Dudovskiy, 2018). Following the P-A-O-R cyclical process of planning, acting, observing, reflecting will facilitate such a research approach.

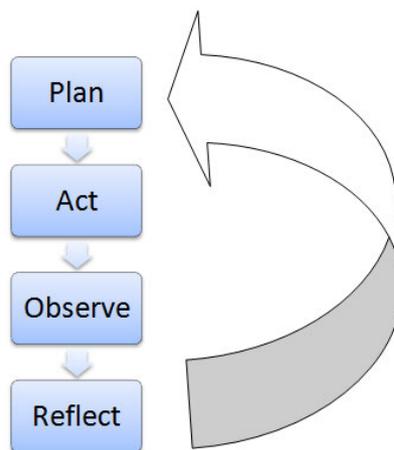


Figure 4. 2 PAOR – plan, act, observe, reflect cycle for interventionist approach

Source – Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005.

If a choice has to be made of one suitable research perspective, each from one respective research perspective, then the following can be chosen with justification.

- ‘Realist research perspective’ having ‘critical realism research approach’. It is versatile in using deduction, induction, and abduction to understand causes and effects that generate the events and situations by distinguishing from perceptions and accordingly express them (O’Mahoney, 2016). Thus applicable to the vision creators, policy makers, regulators for their views on the educational aspects, events, situations, and more of Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- ‘Constructivist research perspective’ having ‘cognitive constructivism research approach’. In this approach knowledge is said to be constructed, or actively structured, by a knower's mental processes that guide the result (Hruby et al., 2012). Thus applicable to the vision creators, policy makers, regulators for their thoughtful and mindful constructions of the education sector in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
- ‘Interventionist / action research perspective’ having ‘contemporary action research approach’. Here the cooperative or collaborative inquiry that was proposed by Heron (1971, p 28) is of major idea to "research 'with' rather than 'on' people", by emphasizing the involvement in research decisions of all active participants as co-researchers. Thus applicable to the vision creators, policy makers, regulators for their interventions, actions, to revise and refine with newness and innovativeness, over a gradual and long period of time, the education sector in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The table below summarizes the above information on research perspectives underscoring their importance to the current study.

Table 4.6 Research perspectives contextualization to the current study

<b>Research perspective/s</b>	<b>Research perspective’s type/s</b>	<b>Justification</b>
<b>Realism</b>	Critical Realism	As critical realism (CR) distinguishes between the 'real' world that cannot be observed and exists independent from human perceptions, theories, and constructions and the ‘observable’ as conceptualized from perspectives and experiences.  In the study, as it involves Visions for the future they can be understood by activities performed in the present

		to operationalize the visions by structured strategic plans and their implementation.
<b>Constructivism</b>	Cognitive Constructivism	<p>As cognitive constructivism relates to epistemological and psychological theories about the nature of knowledge and how it is formed through a knower's mental.</p> <p>In the study, as it is about gathering data and knowledge, especially new knowledge, to understand the translation of the visions into conceptual and theoretical constructs to develop design, develop and deploy the strategic plans into practical applications through implementation.</p>
<b>Interventionism (Action)</b>	Contemporary Intervention / Action	<p>As contemporary interventions explores some of the ideas and concepts having newness, hence a contemporary view of researching.</p> <p>In the study, as it is involves visions and strategic plans, hence futuristic and predictive based on current actions, there will be constant and continuous interventions required to guide the research in understanding the actions and interventions while conducting the research towards successful implementation.</p>

e) Research perspective as applicable to the central research question: As the central research question explores ‘objectives’ the “similarities” and the “differences” between the Visions of 2021 and 2071 the researcher’s perspective believes it is an ‘objective’ world out there that can be objectively known and viewed as an objective measure with regard to “adoption of the plans” being implemented. Such a perspective is true and correct independent of those involved in the research process.

## 4.5 Research Approaches

Research approaches are of three types: deductive, inductive and abductive research approaches. Each of these approaches, deductive, inductive and abductive, which are the main approaches in use in research have been explained, elaborated and distinguished below.

(a) Deductive research approach: A deductive approach is concerned with “developing a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory and designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis” (Wilson, 2010, p 7; Pelissier, 2008, p 3). Also, “deductive means reasoning from the particular to the general and test to see if a relationship is obtained on more general circumstances” (Gulati, 2009, p 42). Deduction begins with an expected pattern “that is tested against observations, whereas induction begins with observations and seeks to find a pattern within them” (Babbie, 2010, p 52). “The deductive approach follows the path of logic most closely by starting with a theory, putting it to test and leading to a new hypothesis” (Snieder et al., 2009, p 16). (). When analysing the outcome of tests, it is important to compare research findings with the literature review findings (Dudovskiy, 2018).

(b) Inductive research approach: Inductive approach has a reasoning that starts with the observations while theories or improvements to theory are proposed towards the end of the research process as a result of observations (Goddard et. al. 2004). It “involves the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations – theories – for those patterns through series of questions” (Bernard, 2011, p 7). Patterns, resemblances and regularities in experience premises are observed to reach conclusions like generating theories (Saunders et al., 2012). The application of inductive approach starts with detailed observations, which moves towards more abstract generalisations (Neuman, 2003). “Inductive reasoning is often referred to as a ‘bottom-up’ approach, in which observations are used to build abstractions or describe a phenomenon” (Lodico et al., 2010, p 10).

To distinguish the above two approaches, “the deductive approach follows the path of logic most closely. The reasoning starts with a theory and leads to a new hypothesis. This hypothesis is put to the test by confronting it with observations that either lead to a confirmation or a rejection of the hypothesis” (Neuman, 2003, p 87). Lodico et al., (2010, p 10) considers deductive reasoning as “going from the general to the particular”. Deductive approach involves formulation of hypotheses and their subjection to testing during the research process by testing the validity of assumptions or theories/hypotheses. While inductive studies do not deal with hypotheses in any ways, they contributes to the emergence of new theories and generalizations

(Bryman et al., 2015), through the use of research questions to study a particular area of knowledge, and responding to these questions after the study in an attempt to improve theory in the subject area. Dudovskiy (2018), helps understand the two research approaches better through Tables 4.7 and 3.8 below.

Table 4.7 Deductive and Inductive research approaches distinction

	<b>Deductive approach preference</b>	<b>Inductive approach preference</b>
	concerned with “developing a hypothesis (or hypotheses) based on existing theory	has a reasoning that starts with the observations while theories are proposed towards the end of the research process as a result of observations
<b>Wealth of literature</b>	Abundance of sources	Scarcity of sources
<b>Time availability</b>	Short time available to complete the study	There is no shortage of time to compete the study
<b>Risk relation</b>	To avoid risk	Risk is accepted, no theory may emerge at all

The following table provides a further classification of the two approaches based on methodological strategies.

Table 4.8 Deductive and Inductive research approaches classification

	<b>Concepts associated with quantitative methods</b>	<b>Concepts associated with qualitative methods</b>
<b>Type of reasoning</b>	Deduction  Objectivity	Induction  Subjectivity

	Causation	Meaning
<b>Type of question</b>	Pre-specified	Open-ended
	Outcome-oriented	Process-oriented
<b>Type of analysis</b>	Numerical estimation	Narrative description
	Statistical inference	Constant comparison

(c) Abductive research approach: Is a process dedicated to explanation of ‘incomplete observations’, ‘surprising facts’ or ‘puzzles’ specified at the beginning of the study (Bryman et al., 2015, p 27). The following Table 3.6 differentiates between deductive, inductive and abductive research approaches in terms of logic, generalizability, use of data and theory.

Table 4.9 Deductive, Inductive and Abductive research approaches distinction

	<b>Deduction</b>	<b>Induction</b>	<b>Abduction</b>
<b>Logic</b>	In a deductive inference, when the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	In an abductive inference, known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
<b>Generalizability</b>	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
<b>Use of data</b>	Data collection is used to evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns	Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns,

		and create a conceptual framework	locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
<b>Theory</b>	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

In the current study, the research approach that aligns with the interpretivism philosophy as can be seen from the explanations of the different research approaches, is the inductive approach. A number of reasons which are anchored on the detailed research-based distinctions conducted above to clearly understand each of the approaches can be cited. The first one is the approach to the research wherein in the current research, the study proceeds from research questions with the goal of finding deeper evidence from participants and use this evidence to derive theoretical observations that are aimed at improving theory in the subject matter of study. The other justification is the type of reasoning of the research which is subjective in nature and the researcher plays a role in the identification of meaning through interpretation. Further, the inductive approach is the appropriate approach for the current study as it seeks to use interviews which are aimed at generating descriptive type of evidence, to which the research will deploy qualitative approaches to identify themes and patterns and pursue theory generation and building based on constant comparison with extant literature. Finally, the current research approach seeks to generalize from the specific to the general population in Abu Dhabi private schools K-12 education in terms of the impact that the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans has on their performance and reforms. These reasons justify the appropriateness of the inductive approach to the current study. Table 4.10 below represents the justifications of the adoption of the inductive research approach for the current study:-

Table 4.10 Inductive research approach contextual justification

<b>Qualitative Research Approach/s</b>	<b>Justification</b>	<b>Applicability to the study and the research questions</b>	<b>Inductive elements and components</b>
<b>Inductive Realism</b>	The inductive realist model of theory generation (Hunt, 2013) proposes a process model of theory generation that links discovery and justification.	The theoretical and conceptual process model of the study's Visions 2021 and 2071 linkages to Strategic Plans for operational implementation in the education sector applicable to private schools.	<p><b><u>Data / Information:</u></b></p> <p>Scarcity of sources.</p> <p><b><u>Data intensity:</u></b></p> <p>High (individual or group).</p> <p><b><u>Time:</u></b></p> <p>Adequate to conduct the study.</p> <p><b><u>Risk:</u></b></p> <p>No theory may emerge.</p> <p><b><u>Type of reasoning:</u></b></p>
<b>Inductive Constructivism</b>	The Inductive constructivism as a method elicits the contextual factors that influence how individuals form schemas of meaning (Goode and Stroup 2015).	As education is applicable to the societal masses (citizens / nationals and residents) driving meanings from the individuals and groups to understand the implementation of the Visions Strategic Plans into practice.	<p>Induction, Subjectivity, Meaning.</p> <p><b><u>Type of question/s:</u></b></p> <p>Open-ended, Process-oriented.</p> <p><b><u>Type of analysis:</u></b></p> <p>Narrative, Comparative.</p> <p><b><u>Focus:</u></b></p> <p>Understanding dynamics, robustness, emergence,</p>

<p><b>Inductive Interventionism Action</b></p>	<p>The Inductive Interventionism Action approach describes the rationale, decision making processes, methods and findings which occur between the idea or inception of an intervention up to implementation, testing and evaluation on people, groups, entities or objects in a study. (NIHR, 2018)</p>	<p>Since the study is about Visions' Strategic Plans the processes from its philosophy, principles, policies, practices are required to be tracked and traced, hence interventions and actions are to be done whenever required. Such an approach will make corrective actions to conduct the research in a rightful manner.</p>	<p>resilience, behaviour, constructing alterative futures.</p> <p><b><u>Scales:</u></b></p> <p>Multiple landscape, resolution, stochastic, heterogeneous preferences, one or more aggregation scales. Low-High (many likely futures).</p> <p><b><u>Logic:</u></b></p> <p>In an inductive inference, known premises are used to generate untested conclusions.</p> <p><b><u>Generalizability:</u></b></p> <p>Generalising from the specific to the general.</p> <p><b><u>Use of data:</u></b></p> <p>Data collection is used to explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth.</p> <p><b><u>Theory:</u></b></p> <p>Theory generation and building.</p>
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## 4.6 Research Design

A research design is a framework that has been created to find answers to research questions (Creswell, 2014). In this section, the research will elaborate on the specific framework that this research will utilize in studying the subject matter at hand. In doing the foregoing, the current research explains some of the aspects of a research methodology that have not been explained previously below:-

a) Types of data: Types of research data can take different forms such as: documents, spreadsheets, notebooks, diaries, questionnaires, transcripts, codebooks, audiotapes, videotapes, photographs, films, test responses, slides, artefacts, specimens, samples, collections of digital outputs, data files, database contents, models, algorithms, scripts, contents of an application, methodologies and workflows standard operating procedures and protocols (University of Leeds, 2020).

b) Kinds of data: Quantitative data is in numerical form while qualitative is not as the data is qualitatively expressed not just in words or texts, but also images like photographs, videos, sound recordings. All qualitative information can be easily converted into quantitative, and there are many times when doing so would add considerable value to research (Trochim, 2020).

c) Data collection method/s: Data collection methods can be classified into two categories: secondary methods of data collection and primary methods of data collection.

(i) Secondary Data Collection Methods – Consists of data that has already been published in books, newspapers, magazines, journals, online portals etc.

(ii) Primary Data Collection Methods – Consists of data that can be grouped as: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data collection methods are numerical or mathematical calculations in various formats. Quantitative data collection method includes the tools and techniques keeping in mind the kind of data analysis to be used. The choice of quantitative or qualitative methods of data collection depends on the area of research and the nature of research aims and objectives.

d) Data collection tools/techniques: Data collection tools that are devices/instruments used for gathering data, they could be of mediums of paper or computer-aided system. Case studies, checklists, interviews, observation sometimes, and questionnaires are all tools used to collect data. The data collection techniques are the manner in which the data collection tools are used, such as:

(i) ‘Interviews’ as a conversation or discussion between individuals or groups.

(ii) ‘Questionnaires’ as instruments consisting of questions / statements and prompts for response from individuals.

(iii) ‘Reports’ through gathering, reporting and submitting data for further analysis. The tools could be charts, tables, figures, newspapers, news reports, documentaries, cases and other visualizations like photos, images, articles, web-information, data files, and other documents.

e) Sampling: The purpose of sampling being to collect or observe the characteristics, properties or measures of sampling units (Lance et. al. 2016). Sampling is facilitated within a sampling frame which has the property that can identify every single element and include as probability sample in which every unit in the population has a chance of being selected in the sample (Scheaffer et. al. 2006). In probability sampling, respondents are randomly selected to take part in a survey, where each person in a population has an equal chance of being selected for a study. While non-probability sampling is when a sample is created through a non-random process and often used during the exploratory stage, and in qualitative research. Several ways exist to determine sample size by using experience, using a target variance for an estimate, for the power of a statistical test, using a confidence level for statistically determined sample size (Sandelowski, 1995). In qualitative research the sample size determination is based on subjective judgment as the research progresses to continue to include further participants until saturation is reached (Glaser, 1965).

f) Data analysis: The quantitative data analysis methods usually include [a] ‘descriptive’ statistics to describe using measures of frequency, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion or variation, and measures of position and [b] ‘inferential’ statistics to compare using estimating parameters, hypothesis testing, correlation, cross-tabulation, regression, frequency tables, and analysis of variance. For data analysis in qualitative research the plan to work on quality data that is made up of words, descriptions, images, objects, and sometimes symbols. Getting insight from such information is a process of finding patterns in the qualitative data. The qualitative data analysis methods usually include [a] content analysis [b] narrative analysis [c] discourse analysis [d] grounded Theory.

Further reading from research reveals that, research methods and/or designs are the way in which researchers gather data, the analysis of which is often the principal way in which significant results can be obtained. The data collected must be valid and reliable and therefore it is necessary to think not only about which methods are appropriate for answering the research question but also which methods the researcher is actually able to carry out. This can depend

on the actual personality and background of the researcher. For example, before conducting an interview, one should ask if the interviewee trusts the interviewer enough to provide meaningful responses to possibly difficult questions. On the other hand there are other constraints that must be taken into account, such as whether the researcher has enough time or the financial means to adopt a certain research method.

For the current research work, the phenomenological approach has been selected as the research is seeking to study a social phenomenon in the name of the impact of implementation of UAE visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools strategic plans. There is one method that particularly lends itself to answering the particular research question, the semi-structured interview. This method, which will be an important mode of data collection, will allow the study to gain in depth information on the perceptions of individuals. It is one of a few types of interviews and in the following, the study define, compare and contrast the different other interview types, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of each and explaining why one (semi-structured) is the right choice for the current research study.

Interviews have been chosen as the primary method for collection of data because the current study believes that interviews will provide the best opportunities to gather genuine answers on perceptions of the participants owing to the fact that the research seeks to study a rather qualitative aspect of society. According to Grix (2010), interviews are an old method, but at the same time a modern one since they remain very relevant in qualitative research. The word 'interview' is of Latin and French origin and means 'to see each other for a short period of time' (Lamnek, 1995). In everyday life, the word interview is mostly associated with the field of journalism, where it typically means a conversation between a journalist and a public figure, such as a politician, businessman, scientist or artist, with the intent of publishing (Hugl, 1995). Although this definition is not extensive enough to meet the standards of the social sciences, the image that it conjures up is mostly shared by those that come to mind from the sociological meaning. An interview is, in this context, a conversational situation, that is knowingly and purposefully entered into by the participants, such that one person asks questions, to which the other person or persons gives replies. The asymmetry of the question-answer format of an interview leads to further methodological questions for instance, the nature of the interview – structured, semi-structured or unstructured and the approaches towards analyzing the data thereof. Helfferich (2005, S. 7) describes interviews as communication situations, such that important data is created in a highly complex exchange, in which the subjectivity of the participants is incorporated.

The interview as a research method within sociology, which primarily deals with interaction, has been researched extensively (Fontana & Frey, 1994). The interview is the art of interaction and thus can often be considered to be the purpose of the study, not just a method (Fontana & Frey, 1994). It is used very frequently in qualitative research, however, there are different kinds of interviews that one can engage in and it is important to have an overview of the types of interview that can be used in order to make the right choice for one's research needs. Fontana and Frey (1994) name three broad categories of interviews that are in popular use. These categories are unstructured, semi-structured, and structured interviews, each of these types of interviews is further deconstructed to enable the informed selection of a research strategy for the current study. According to Grix (2010), it is important to keep a few points in mind before choosing to use any interview type as a method in one's research. First of all, it is important that the researchers' own ability to communicate with strangers is high as this method of data collection as mentioned by Fontana and Frey (1994) is entirely reliant on social interaction and communication. If one has difficulty talking to strangers then this could of course rule out the use of the interview if it is not overcome. Concurrent evidence of research in supporting the usability of interviews in the collection of data for research highlight that, interviews can be effectively used as standalone data collection and research strategies provided there is a rigorous process to the development of the interview guide, the collection of the data and the analysis thereof (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012; Silverman, 2013).

Apart from the above, the conduct of an interview as noted earlier is a complex exchange (Helfferich, 2005) and therefore, it is imperative that in order to successfully use interviews in the collection of data, certain standard approaches are followed. Robson (2011, p. 284) recommends the division of an interview into the following five parts:

- 1- Introduction: the interviewer introduces him/herself and communicates the purpose of the interview. In addition, ethical matters such as confidentiality and the mode of record taking should be discussed.
- 2- Warm-up: simple, non-threatening questions are asked to ease any tension.
- 3- Main body: the interviewer begins to ask questions about the main topic of his/her study. This part is highly dependent on which type of interview is being conducted.
- 4- Cool-off: easy, harmless questions are again used to ease any tension that has possibly built up and also to conclude the interview.

- 5- Closure: the interview is formally closed and the interviewee thanked for their time and cooperation. Here, Robson points out the interesting phenomena of the "hand on the door syndrome", in which interviewees will open up and give the most useful information after recording has finished. It is recommended to be prepared for this and to restart the interview if appropriate.

Together with the above, the current study notes that there are a variety of ways of conducting an interview, for example, over the telephone, face-to-face (limited during the global COVID-19 phenomenon), through a video chat, or as a group interview. The length of an interview can vary greatly and an experienced interviewer should leave a buffer of time for unexpected occurrences. All in all, it is important to spend a lot of time to prepare for any interview and to be prepared for the intensive work involved in the analysis.

#### **4.6.1 Unstructured Interviews**

As the name suggests, the unstructured interview technique has little organization. The main topic and a main question or a small number of concepts can be developed by the researcher beforehand, but the interview is conducted like a normal conversation, within which the actual questions asked materialize spontaneously, depending on the direction the conversation takes. This is of course very dependent on the interviewee, who ultimately decides what he/she wants to talk about and what not (Fontana and Frey, 1994). This type of interview often involves open-ended questions, to which the interviewee are encouraged to give lengthy answers to, often providing a large breadth of information (Grix, 2010).

One of the advantages of this type of interview is that the researcher can obtain information that he/she had not set out to get, but that turns out to be relevant to the research question, opening new avenues of investigation (Grix, 2010). On the other hand, it is difficult to compare the data gained in such interviews, because the conversations can take very different turns depending on who is being interviewed. Also, it can be a very time consuming process in which one collects a lot of data that will not all be necessary and also may not get all the data that is actually needed. Grix suggests that such interviews are thus most helpful when at the very beginning of a research project.

#### **4.6.2 Structured Interviews**

Structured interviews are at the opposite end of the spectrum:-

"Structured interviewing refers to a situation in which an interviewer asks each respondent a series of pre-established questions with a limited set of response

categories... The responses are also recorded by the interviewer according to a coding scheme that has already been established..." (Fontana and Frey, 1994).

Such an interview technique, of course, limits the flexibility of the interview drastically and rarely will new information come to light the researcher had not thought to gather. However, the findings can be very easily compared across a large group of subjects and statistically analyzed (Grix, 2010). In this sense, the structured interview has many similarities to a survey questionnaire. Another advantage to this method is that one needs fewer interviewing skills due to the highly standardized nature of the technique. Mistakes and bias can be, for the most part, avoided by following a set of well defined guidelines such as those given by Fontana and Frey (1994, p. 364).

#### **4.6.3 Semi-Structured Interviews**

Also called an "in-depth" interview, the semi-structured interview lies between the unstructured and structured interview techniques. Here, the researcher has a manageable number of pre-conceived questions in mind that are to form the basis of the interview. These questions should be in line with the specific aim, but are not required to be asked in any specific order (Grix, 2010). The questions can also be open-ended and during the interview, some responses may lead to an unexpected result. This flexible kind of interview is a very popular one because it allows for the pursuit of unexpected lines of inquiry during the interview (Grix, 2010, page 128). Barriball et al. (1994) suggest the use of semi-structured interviews in tandem with surveys, as a means of counterbalancing the sometimes poor response rates of the latter. In addition, more detailed data can be gathered compared to a survey, and this may help to answer questions that could not be addressed by the rigid nature of the survey alone. In addition, the data collected is less-likely to be skewed by outside influences, such as someone helping to answer the questions of a survey and thus the validity of the data is typically much higher. The technique is well equipped to find out the opinions and perceptions of individuals even when the subject is complex and possibly difficult to talk about. These advantages, along with the typically manageable amount of work and time required, make the semi-structured interview the most common type of interview employed in academic research. This makes the semi-structured interview particularly useful for inexperienced researchers (Barribal et al. 1994).

Mason (2002, pp. 63-66) indentifies the following reasons that one might choose to conduct a semi-structured interview: Firstly, one's ontological position may prescribe that people's understandings, feelings, perceptions and other inner thoughts as well as the interactions with

other people are parts of the social reality that one would like to analyze. Second of all, one may choose the semi-structured interview if one's epistemological position allows for interactive conversation with people as a valid tool for generating data. That is, if their accounts and language are believed to provide meaningful information. Thirdly, if one views knowledge as situational and believes that something is to be gained from actual interaction with the interviewee. One may think interaction will lead to information that cannot be gained in another way. Lastly, one may wish to obtain a "depth, nuance, complexity, and roundedness" of what is to be understood, and also to avoid too much reliance on standardization. If the researcher believed these points to be true in the context of their project, then it is appropriate to use the semi-structured interview.

#### **4.6.4 Rationale for the Strategy Selected**

When choosing a viable research strategy for a research project, one should take the research question into account as well as one's own abilities. In this context, the interview is an obvious choice as a suitable research method for a few reasons. First of all, the philosophical approach of the study requires the gathering of qualitative data to go about answering the research's central question. The research is interested in how the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans has impacted the private schools as far as performance and reforms are concerned, it therefore, indubitable that conversing with experts in the field about the subject matter is the best way to gather useful data for answering this question. Additionally, the research believes that with strong communicational skills, communicating with people in general and specifically with the experts in the Abu Dhabi private schools educational sector will enable the gathering of much information through conversation with subjects who can offer their opinions and perspectives on my central theme. The researcher notes his involvement as a practitioner in the Abu Dhabi private schools landscape and the Abu Dhabi educational industry landscape in general as another strength that supports the use of interviews in the collection of data from experts in the sector regarding the subject matter and highlights the fact that due to this, it will be easier to identify target participants that can offer the best information as well as interact with them to convince them to provide their opinion on the critical subject of study.

It thus remains to consider why, from the three broad types of interview described above, the semi-structured interview makes the most sense for the current study. Of course, the structured interview, which is similar to a survey in nature, could offer valuable information. For example, by conducting many such interviews, the research may be able to determine approximately

what percentage of experts and educational leaders in Abu Dhabi private schools welcome the idea of integrating UAE visions 2021 and 2071 into the Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans and what percentage are reluctant about the same or exhibit slow uptake of the visions in their schools' strategic plans. However, the current study's research question(s) is more complex and deep a matter than cannot be described by numbers and percentages alone. Thus, it is only logical to give participants the opportunity to share their experiences and elaborate on their perceptions of the idea. To this extent therefore, structured interviews alone cannot provide the depth needed for the current study's examination and analysis of the impact of implementation of the UAE visions 2021 and 2071 in the Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans as far as performance and school reforms are concerned. On the other hand, a completely unstructured interview is not suited for the current study's research question(s) and objectives. This is primarily because, the current study is interested in the specific topic of the effect of the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in the Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans. To this extent therefore, letting the interviewee speak completely freely could quickly lead to unfocused and inefficient interview which will hardly help in answering the questions of the research.

The flexibility that the semi-structured interview allows for is also a huge advantage that will be important in the current research. For example, through the adoption of semi-structured interviews as the research strategy, the researcher would be able, during the interview, to switch between the role of researcher and a private person, and thus gather data from both angles. In addition, the sensitive and possibly confidential nature of the research and its entire remit, which is directed at private schools and probes for their strategic plans and their implementation approaches considering that these information may be privileged in business terms, means that very private and school-centric information may arise. The semi-structured format and its flexibility would allow the researcher the freedom to pursue a new line of questioning based on this context and therefore keep the entire exercise afloat. Also it is essential that the participants be softly introduced to the theme of the research and the semi-structured interview provides the flexibility to do this. Considering the above, the semi-structured interview strategy comes up as the most viable interview strategy to help in the collection of data from target respondents in the current study – this is because it offers the balance and the flexibility to pursue in-depth information while not losing track of the direction of the question or the anticipated results.

With the understanding of the above critical elements of the research methodology and specifically the research design, the current study captures the core components of the research design and strategy in Table 4.11 below covering all the integral aspects of the research design and strategy as reviewed above and captured previously from philosophy identification onwards:-

Table 4.11 Details of the research design with justifications

<b>Description</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Justification of Suitability to the study</b>
<b>Type of research study</b>	Descriptive Research	Descriptive research is a type of research that describes a population (students and education leaders), situation (private schools), or phenomenon (UAE’s vision’s implementation in K-12 schools strategic plans) that is being studied. It focuses on answering research question(s) of: how, what, when, and where questions of a research problem.
<b>Sub-type of research study</b>	Descriptive cross-Sectional Research	A cross-sectional study as a snapshot investigation of a particular phenomenon (impact of implementation of UAE’s visions 2021 and 2071 into Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools strategic plans) at a given point in time to understand perspectives and results as at that point of study.
<b>Research philosophy</b>	Interpretivism.	Interpretivism, is to interpret elements of the research study by integrating human interest (education) into the study. Involves reality through social constructions (interviews) such as learning, language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments from ‘vision’/mission/objectives/‘strategies’/‘plans’ principles to operations/‘implementation’/practices.
<b>Research paradigm</b>	Interpretive - subjective / Regulation	Interpretive paradigm is a subjective regulation that explains behavior from the individual's viewpoint.

		<p>Researchers in this paradigm try to observe "on-going processes" (implementation of UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 into Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools strategic plans) for better understanding of individual behavior (respondents/participants from the Education Sector) and the impact on the education sector (the geographical area being a country - UAE and an Emirate- Abu Dhabi).</p>
<b>Research perspective</b>	Constructivism (In education)	<p>Constructivism as a philosophy and a theory in education recognizes the learners' (school educators and school students) understanding and knowledge based on their own (school teaching – students learning) experiences prior to, during and after learning. It is associated with various philosophical positions, particularly in epistemology as well as ontology, politics, and ethics linked theory of cognitive (mental thoughts) development. (Whether the visions got adopted into the strategic plans to promote the realization of successful results of pre-determined objectives).</p>
<b>Research approach</b>	Inductive	<p>Inductive approach is based on inductive reasoning. Starting with the observations and ending mostly with theories. It involves the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations. Inductive researchers are free to alter the direction of the study during the research process. This approach aims to generate meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns and relationships to build a theory. Inductive reasoning is based on learning from experience. Patterns, resemblances and regularities in experience (premises) are observed in order to reach</p>

		conclusions (or to generate theory). The approach suits the study as it involves data collection from case studies, interviews and observation in the private schools education domain of Abu Dhabi, for the UAE's Visions 2021 and 2071.to arrive at meanings, explanation, patterns from learnings of the respondents and participants.
<b>Research method</b>	Mono qualitative method	Mono method as it applies only qualitative method as interviews to come to an understanding of the phenomenon under study.
<b>Research strategy</b>	Interviews	Interviews are a qualitative research data collection strategy mostly of open-ended and conversational communication of “what” respondents / participants think but also “why” they think so. In the proposed study there will be 25 – 29 individuals interviewed for insights and foresights.
<b>Time horizon</b>	Cross-sectional	A cross-sectional study is a snapshot investigation of a particular phenomenon (impact of implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 into Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools strategic plans) at a given point in time to understand perspectives and results as at that point of study.
<b>Localization</b>	Country – UAE Emirate – Abu Dhabi	The UAE is the focus geographical location of the research with specific focus on Abu Dhabi emirate.
<b>Data type</b>	Derived / compiled data and reference / canonical data	Compiled / Derived data is reproducible in the form of text, mined data, and compiled database.  Reference / Canonical data are a collection of smaller datasets, mostly published and curated from existing databanks and data portals.

<b>Data kind</b>	Qualitative	Qualitative data approximates and characterizes aspects which can be recorded and observed. It is non-numerical but descriptive in nature. This type of data is collected through methods of one-to-one interviews, focus groups, observation and similar methods. In the current study, interviews will be used to collect descriptive data..
<b>Data collection method</b>	Secondary and Primary.	<p>Secondary data is collected by someone other than the user. Common sources of secondary data include censuses, information collected by government departments, organizational records and data that was originally collected for other research purposes. The study use all relevant and accessible secondary data including the case studies exiting data.</p> <p>Primary data is collected by a researcher from first-hand sources, using methods like surveys, interviews, experiments or observation. It is collected with the research project in mind, directly from primary sources. The study collecting qualitative primary data from conducting interviews with respondents.</p>
<b>Data collection tool</b>	Interview	Data collection tools are devices / instruments used to collect data, eg. paper or computer-assisted, Case Studies, Interviews, Observation sometimes, and Surveys or Questionnaires are all tools used to collect data in real / differed time, actual (face-to-face / telephonic) or virtual (online) formats. In the study a single data collection tool – in the form of interviews will be used to collect data necessary for the advancement of the purposes of the research. Capturing of quality data with evidence enables

		proper data analysis for credible findings and answers to the questions thereby fulfilling the research objectives.
<b>Sample techniques</b>	Non-probability	<p>Non-probability sampling is a sampling technique where the odds of any member being selected for a sample cannot be calculated.</p> <p>In the study, qualitative research, probability sampling is not applicable, hence non-probability sampling is appropriate. This is because the research seeks to collect data from specific individuals who are leaders in educational institutions in Abu Dhabi and not all staff of the educational institutions can participate in the study.</p>
<b>Sample units</b>	Respondents / Participants – Vision analysts, Strategic planners, Educators/ Academicians/Administrators/Learning experts in Department of Education.	<p>Individual or group of persons, entities or matter in study are those that provide primary data.</p> <p>Respondent is one who answer / respond to questions (written/ oral / verbal) or other stimuli.</p> <p>Participant is one who joins willingly to be part of the study as a subject.</p> <p>As the study seeks to examine the impact of the implementation of UAE’s vision 2021 and 2071 into the strategic plans of Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools, the respondents/participants of the research are identified generally as education leaders, who would fit in one of the categories listed in the adjacent column.</p>
<b>Sample size</b>	Interviews 20-25 individual as small sample from organizations.	In qualitative research 8 to 12 is a suggested range if the interviewees are homogenous, while if heterogenous then 20 to 25. It should be noted that less than 30 is considered as small representative

		sample size for a large population. Hence 20 – 25 will be the range size of participants / respondents.
<b>Data analysis</b>	Content analysis & Narrative analysis, Thematic analysis & Comparative analysis.	<p>As the data collected is of qualitative nature, hence qualitative data analysis will be appropriate.</p> <p><u>Content analysis</u> studies documents and communication artifacts that are texts, images, audio or video to examine patterns in a replicable and systematic manner.</p> <p><u>Narrative analysis</u> is when researchers interpret stories that are told within the context of research and/or are shared in practical / real life.</p> <p><u>Thematic analysis</u> emphasizes identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning or themes within qualitative data. A software will be used in the process of thematic analysis of the research – the software name is NVIVO and it will assist in conducting a robust qualitative analysis of the data collected.</p> <p><u>Comparative analysis</u> is about analyzing the similarities and differences by comparing and contrasting various aspects between two or more entities.</p>

#### 4.7 Data Collection

As mentioned in the design of the research, the data collection approach for the current study was primarily supported by a data collection instrument which was interviews. In this section, the research will outline the data collection process, including elements such as the development of the interview tool and pilot testing of the interview tool.

#### **4.7.1 Data collection tools used**

The current study, in the process of the development of the data instrument – the interview tool, took a two-step approach which started with a pre-interview protocol in the form of a survey questionnaire that helped in the quantitative collection of feedback from experts in the field about aspects of the subject matter, which then formed the basis for the development of the semi-structured interview tool. The first part of the data instrument development supported by the pre-interview protocol was essential in validating the interview protocol, as it provided a much needed opportunity to of collaborating with experts in the field including teachers and educational leaders to come forth with an understanding of specific items and/or questions related to the subject matter; the level of awareness of the potential respondents to the subject matter, based on their educational duties and positions; as well as gauging the overall interests levels of the educational experts to participate in the in-depth interviews. Together with the foregoing, the pre-interview protocol questionnaire was critical as far as providing the participants sufficient background information of the subject field and the nature of the discussion of the research was concerned. A copy of the pre-interview protocol questionnaire used is attached in the appendix of the current study.

Consequently, from the above, a semi-structured interviews tool was developed after validation by the pre-interview protocol and was justified by the need to thoroughly examine the data provided by research participants regarding their sentiments toward private schools and how their educational experience was structured – in the first part of the data collection process (the pre-interview protocol). The goal of having a pre-interview protocol prior to the development of the interview protocol was to gain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the difficulties educational leaders face as they attempt the implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 in the Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools and how it affected how their students learn. Accordingly, the pre-interview protocol was critical as far as gathering initial brief perspectives of the educational experts on the subject matter in general. This then paved the way for the interviews whose purview was to produce more in-depth, written, and descriptive information than the pre-interview protocol did regarding the degree of behavior and belief patterns as far as the subject matter at hand is concerned.

Consequently, the interviews were used in this study to better understand, elicit, and deepen education experts' impressions and perspectives about Abu Dhabi private schools' implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 and the impacts thereof. According to research semi-structured interviews "enable the investigation of issues that may be too complex

to evaluate using quantitative approaches," (Crossan, 2003). They might "think texts that academicians do not portray (or even consider)," in addition, semi-structured interviews can be used in a variety of ways, according to Etikan (2021) including (a) gathering data pertaining to the study's research objectives and (b) identifying and analyzing interactions and factors. and (c) provide support for other research techniques or gather deeper levels of data for a comprehensive and in-depth comprehension of the study subject. A copy of the semi-structured interview tool used for the collection of data in the current study is attached in the appendix of the research.

#### **4.7.2 Interview guide development**

Silverman (2017) educates that the development of the interviews is an important stage of the qualitative research process as it holds a significant part of the reliability of the whole qualitative research process. According to Silverman (2017), it is proper to effectively develop interview questions following a standard method in order to come forth with questions that are able to facilitate robust discussions on the subject matter and by that, promote the attainment of research objectives (Charmaz and Belgrave, 2012). This notion of interview guide development being critical to the success of a qualitative research is further emphasized by the sociology faculty in Harvard university who sensitize researchers pursuing a qualitative approach on the need to understand the interview guide development process for the purpose of development of valid interview schedules (Havard, n.d). The two evidences of research provide a step by step approach to the development of interviews for qualitative research as follows:-

- 1). Outline the main areas of the study and delineate the broad questions that are related to these broad areas of the study.
- 2). Ask yourself what sort of data you are seeking to retrieve from the interviewing process – the research objectives and the research questions should act as beacons..
- 3). Narrow down to develop questions that are falling under these broad questions and tailor the questions to specific kinds of participants.
- 4). Tailor and adjust the questions depending on the respondents of the research.
- 5). Formulate the questions in a way that they are able to motivate the respondent to answer honestly and completely.

- 6). Make use of ‘how’ instead of ‘why’ questions to set the respondent free to provide process of experience and thus get you better informed.
- 7). Recede difficult or sensitive questions to the end of the interview session.
- 8). Ensure a review of the questions to logically determine how the questions should flow in a way that will ensure better gathering of information for the purposes of analysis.
- 9). Ensure that the interview questions are validated in line with steps 2 and 3 based on research evidence that informed the broad areas of knowledge thereof.

Following the guideline above as borrowed from Charmaz and Belgrave (2012), Silverman (2017) and Havard (n.d) interview development guides, the research sought to develop its own objective and research-based interview schedule to be used for the collection of data in the study of the subject matter. The following were the steps taken in the development of the semi-structured interview for the current study:-

- 1). Reviewed the broad concepts and areas of literature that had informed these concepts and outlined a general list of broad questions that could be derived from these concepts.
- 2). Interrogated the need for the interviews questions and what the research sought to answer from the questions which included the review of the research objectives and the research questions.
- 3). For each of the broad questions under the main themes, the research derived and developed pertinent questions, each time validating the pertinent questions by tying them to specific researchers cited in the literature.
- 4). In doing so, the research prepared a spreadsheet with three main columns namely – the concepts and broad questions, the derived questions from these concepts, and the researchers related to the questions derived. This step helped in validating the questions and ensuring that they had research-based backing while at the same time delimiting them to the scope of the study based on the objectives and the research questions delineated earlier on.

- 5). Tailor and formulate the questions following the ‘how’ approach instead of the ‘why’ approach and ensure that they could be asked effectively with slight variation depending on the respondents thereof.
- 6). Review of all the questions that have been prepared and validated and developing a sequential flow of the questions while ensuring that all the difficult and/or sensitive questions are relegated to the end of the interview schedule.
- 7). Review all the questions against the foundational concepts of the study, the research objectives and questions of the study to determine that all necessary questions that can be informative to the study have been identified and effectively listed as part of the interview schedule.

Through the above steps which have been borrowed from evidence of research earlier cited, the current study was able to come forth with a robust interview schedule to use in the collection of data for the research. A copy of the semi-structured interview developed following the above procedure thereof is attached as part of the appendices of the current study for reference.

#### **4.7.3 Data collection tool(s) piloting**

The purpose of this study being to investigate the implementation of UAE’s visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools’ strategic plans and the impact thereof, dictates that the data collection tools should be developed through collaboration with experts in the field so that, they can effectively serve their function. To this extent therefore, the data instruments were subject to a pilot study in order to gain the opinion of a select group of education experts regarding the appropriateness of the instruments. The efforts towards this sort of collaboration was critical as it is through this interaction that the selected education experts provided feedback, and interview questions were changed as a result. In a nutshell, the aim and purpose of the pilot study was to ensure that the data collection instrument was validated by experts in the field prior to its dissemination and use in the collection of data for the research.

A pilot test which is considered an essential stage in improving the interview data collection instrument before using it for the actual collection of data. The pilot study is defined as, “an initial practice test of a research procedure to see if it is working as expected” (Stangor 2011 p. 424). To emphasize, the pilot study assists in generating conceptual factors of interest (Stangor 2011). It is considered to be an excellent way of determining the viability of the study (Leedy and Ormrod 2010). To add on, pilot testing is conducted as a valuable strategy to curtail

any language or semantic issues in the data collection instrument (Muijs 2004). Hence, a pilot testing of the interview questions will assist in ensuring that the questions in the interview guide are clear and understandable to elicit the best possible responses from the participants. For this reason, the pilot study will be conducted on a small group of persons from the study population (Pallant 2011). In an effort to attain the above advantages of a pilot study and ascertain the validity, understandability and reliability of the interview data collection instrument designed, a pilot study will be conducted with 3 potential participants. The validity of the interview questions will be determined based on the understanding of the interview questions and the engagement of the participant (Janghorban et al., 2014). Through interviewing the participants in the pilot session, the research will benefit from gaining comments from the participants that will be instrumental in identifying any double barreled, ambiguous, or repeated questions, and to determine if the questions were understandable to respondents. Based on their comments recommendations, the questions in the interview guide will be amended and reviewed. As a result, the final interview guide will be prepared for actual administration to the sample population having certainty that the questions are valid and useful in answering the research questions and fulfilling the objectives of the research once analyzed.

The pilot study's practical opportunity to aid in the development of practical and practical abilities in conducting surveys and conducting structured interviews is another crucial feature. The pilot study specifically focused on: examining the interview tool's phrasing for grammatical problems that can cause misunderstandings amongst informants to ensure that it is clear and easy to understand, verify the suitability of the interview questions and possible answers for the teaching environment in Abu Dhabi private schools, verify the interview questions' comprehension and their applicability to the informants, examine the interview question structure and the interview tool's content validity, and verify whether the data gathering methods planned for the current study are adequate. For the interviews, which formed the primary data collection instrument of the current study, three instructors from a specific Abu Dhabi private school were questioned two weeks prior to the interview. This aided in shortening the interview process and getting rid of questions that were asked repeatedly. Pilots interviews suggested that several queries led to misconceptions and bewilderment. For instance, participants who took part in the pilot study's interviews stated that certain interview terms might be deceptive. To enhance readability and comprehension, new terms and phrases have been included. For use in the main study, this interview query has been altered or modified. Therefore, it can be stated that the pilot study process with the three experts achieved

its intended objective of ensuring that the interview protocol was validated, had proper content, face and construct validity as suggested by Janghorban et al. (2014). Essentially, the success of the pilot study led to the improvement of the interview protocol and its subsequent validation based on the responses of the experts, which then paved the way for its use in the collection of the data for the research in question.

#### **4.7.4 Sampling and participants profile**

Data about the education experts biographical information, age, country and previous experience were entered in the pre-interview protocol section under a preliminary section identified as the participant profile. The research gathered data for a total of 80 respondents who were educational experts. This profiling of the participants was critical as it enabled the understanding of the position, experience level and areas of specialty as well as initial sentiments regarding the subject matter as earlier noted in the detail of the pre-interview protocol. The research also notes that, the participants in the survey represented different languages and countries (American, Egyptian, Emirati, Irish, Jordanian, Syrian and South African). They also represented different generations and their experience varied from experienced teachers (i.e. 25 years) to new teachers (one year). Regarding gender, 58.8% of the surveyed teachers were female teachers while 41.3% were male. Following clearance from the regulating organization for the private school(s), the data was gathered.

According to Kumar & Chhapparwal (2021); Lee (2017), the caliber of the sample decision determines how strong a research study is. The targeted sample in the semi-structured interviews in this study was drawn from the same group of instructors who took part in the pre-interview protocol based on their availability and expressed interest in participating in the interview. Lee (2017) asserts that sample homogeneity must be compatible with both the sample method design: whether the objective is to enhance, directly compare, or report two perspectives of the results in the subject, researcher firmly believe that individual participation by people results in quality. Considering the fact that the sample was drawn from participants of the pre-interview protocol, understanding the sampling approach during the pre-interview protocol is essential to understanding the sampling of the interview segment of the study. In the pre-interview protocol, a random sampling was employed, and the research was intent in studying instructors and educational leaders in Abu Dhabi private education sector (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). Out of the 80 participants of the pre-interview protocol, the research targeted those that had expressed interest and availability to participate in the interview sessions.

Accordingly, the current study's targeted sample included were 20 female teachers and 19 male teachers who had expressed interest in participating in the interview process. While the research intended to study other experts and professionals in the education sphere, teachers made up the majority of the study's participants. The professional development programmes and initiatives inside the school were handled by the principals and so the research also sought to collect interview data from principals too (i.e., the school principal, two vice-principals, and the head of the department). This was intended to offer a variety of viewpoints for the triangulation process because it also aided the researcher in comprehending teacher learning from the viewpoint of school administrators. Their observations were valued because they offer insightful information that aids in understanding how teachers learn in various circumstances. Depending on availability, the following is the distribution of the final sample of the research participants for the interviews - 1. The principal and two vice principals, 2. fourteen instructors, 3. two deputy director of student services, 4. two director of studies, and 5. two head teachers for the English evaluation process. The research ended up with 23 interview respondents which is justified by research evidence that states that, in qualitative research, sample sizes shouldn't be too small or too large (Kiger & Varpio, 2020). If it is smaller, the data is not complete. On the other hand, if it is too large, detailed interpretation and in-depth study of the data are challenging.

The number was also controlled and considerate of prevailing standards for qualitative data collection especially as far as the concept of saturation is concerned. According to Bogner et al. (2018) among other scholars, the concept of saturation refers to the point at which the collection of more data reveals no new information regarding theoretical constructs under study. To this extent, having collected critical information from the participants during the pre-interview protocol as well as the piloting stage of the interview protocol, the research will be intent on examining information gathered from the interview sessions to determine whether new knowledge is being generated or whether similar information is being churned. According to evidence of research, interviews of between 9 and 25 informants usually reach saturation and it is incumbent upon the researcher to discern this and proceed from a point of seeking titbits of new information in the remaining responses as opposed to collecting the entire set of similarly representative data as the one already collected to that stage. The current study will therefore be keen on identifying saturation during the collection of the data.

In line with the distribution above, the table below, replicated also in the data analysis chapter represents the participants profile for the interview segment of the study:-

<b>Name</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Field</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>
EE27	10 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British- American -Asian
EE28	25 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE29	16 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE30	19 Years	Educational Expert	MOE
EE31	5 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British
EE32	25 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE33	15 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE34	15 Years	Educational Expert – Management	American
EE35	12 Years	Educational Expert	American
EE36	33 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE37	20 Years	Educational Expert	British
EE38	17 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE39	4 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE40	15 Years	Educational Expert	Asian
EE41	31 Years	Educational Expert – Management	American
EE42	30 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE43	28 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE44	23 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE45	8 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British
EE46	25 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE47	15 Years	Educational Expert – Management	MOE
EE48	20 Years	Educational Expert – Management	American

EE49	21 Years	Educational Expert – Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
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#### 4.7.5 Data collection

Data collection, the process by which empirical data are produced, is also an important topic. There are many types of data collection in qualitative research, for the chosen method of the interview, data collection typically means transcribing and analysing the interview. The analysis of the interviews is an important and complex process. After the interview is over, the collected data must be interpreted and the most interesting information should be found and categorized (Seidman, 2012). According to Seidman (2012), the interviewer should use the transcription to reflect carefully on what can be learned from the interview and to find the most meaningful information given by each participant in regards to the research question.

Another aspect that one must keep in mind when choosing any research method is the amount of time needed for the collection and analysis of data. This is especially true for an interview, where one must keep in mind a few factors. First of all, finding, contacting, and getting the permission of the interviewees can be very time consuming. Secondly, one must keep in mind that the processing of the collected data can take much, much longer than the interviews themselves. The transcription of the interviews, which the current research plans to record, and their analysis, will be a very time consuming process. The goal of the current study is to have at least 30 participants and due to the complicated nature of the subject and my desire to obtain a large depth of data, each interview could take well over an hour. This means that the research must be very careful to keep time constraints in mind. It is very difficult to know, considering the unique nature of the current study, exactly how much time each interview, including preparation and post-processing, will take. The research plans to monitor this closely from the very beginning, in order to get an accurate estimate of the time required. This will allow the research to make changes to the goals of the interviews and the data collection approaches as may be needed.

The current study collected data in two stages as already indicated. The first stage involved the pre-interview protocol which led to the collection of data through the use of a questionnaire with the main aim of feeding the second part of the data collection – the qualitative part, through critical background information of the participants, an understanding of the participants level of awareness to the subject matter, and their general interests and specialty areas, within the scope of the subject matter, that would help in shaping the discussion during interviews. The

second stage of data collection employed semi-structured interviews to expound on the subject matter with the participants who opted to take part. Participants in all interviews were chosen based on their representation of various groups (nationality, experience, age and gender). To get their opinions on the private school, the principal, vice-principal of education, and vice-principal of student services participated in interviews with other principals. Scheduling interviews with school principals was quite challenging because of their busy schedules and other obligations.

The participants in the interviews, being experts in the field, accurately reflect the regional context and educational system, and therefore, all of their words are knowledge-related. The researcher converted some of the interviews from English to Arabic after the completing the pilot study to cater for the Arab speaking teachers. Two Arabic-speaking coworkers examined the two interviews (i.e., the ones with teachers and principals) to make sure the interview questions were translated accurately. This was also done during the re-translation of the responses of the educational experts from Arabic to English. For the following reasons, interviews with multilingual Arab teachers were conducted in Arabic, (i) some Arab educators lacked a solid grasp of English. (ii) even English-speaking Arab educational experts felt more at ease speaking in their native dialect, (ii) the research also saves time by not having to explain, reiterate, or ask the same questions multiple times. The process of translation was validated through a blind review of the translated interviews of one translator by the other. This ensured that any mistakes in the translation could be corrected during the review to ensure that the correct meaning intended by the informant was retained and realized.

On the basis of survey questions and interview responses, an interviewing procedure was created. The use of interviews in this study was intended to (a) make sure that comparable stories are supported by numerous questions and responded to by respective informant, (b) make effective use of the interview time, and (c) maintain the emphasis of interview questions. The major programmer questions were shaped by the inquiries made with the chance to go into the pertinent explanations and specifics. The organized method the researcher employed for interviewing the respondents centered on pre-determined questions that reflected a research approach that emphasized the goals and needs of the respondents as well as their professional development. All of the respondents were informed by the researcher beforehand that the interview could go up to an hour or longer. This ensured that any disruptions were avoided and allowed them to focus on their other obligations. The researcher explained the goal of the research project to the education experts before starting the interview. Respondents received

assurances from the researcher that the data would be handled discreetly and anonymously. In addition to using a personal computer to document the interview, the researcher also used a notebook to jot down some questions and notes whenever it proved necessary.

While adhering to the formal questioning procedure, the researcher used a conversational approach in the interviews. The researcher then concentrated on the core of the interview questions created because when narrators diverge from the primary topic, researchers prefer to follow the flow of their own stories. Respondents appeared to convey their ideas more openly and clearly thanks to this method. For instance, the researcher frequently looked for justifications and clarifications when a respondent stressed particular words or phrases. Through the use of quantitative data gathering techniques, the viewpoints of educational leaders on various facets of their teaching and learning were sought and listed and therefore, the researcher could make quick comparison to this data during the process of the interview to find relationships and probe further whenever something iterative came up. According to Castleberry & Nolen (2018), qualitative approaches can "move beyond snapshots of what? or how much? how and why things happen the way they do", to deeper discussion premised on key areas of interest on the part of the participants as well as to the research. Considering the foregoing, the researcher discovered during the planned interview that some educational leaders were able to freely communicate their opinions and beliefs. Some of them also expressed a personal vision for their education and the standards set by the institution to support that education in light of the UAE visions 2021 and 2071.

The respondents were asked whether they had any opinions and/or sentiments regarding Abu Dhabi private schools in light of the subject matter after the interview was over. The goal was to provide the respondents a chance to discuss any topics that were important to them and may not have been covered in the interview. In the absence any further questions or comments, the researcher informed the interviewees that the results would be released after the data had been analyzed to verify the research and that with their permission, the researcher would relay the results of the research to them for consumption.

#### **4.8 Data Analysis**

Any research project's quality and effectiveness depend on the methodologies used for data analysis. Data management, data entry, and data presentation are the three basic phases of qualitative data analysis. The interview data was analyzed using Thematic Content Analysis with the help of the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO. Content analysis interprets textual data by categorizing it systematically to carry out the coding and identification of

patterns or themes in the data (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). Content analysis is comprised of data reduction, data display, and conclusion (Miles and Huberman 1984; in Hsieh and Shannon 2005). After the completion of qualitative data collection, the documented interviews will be transcribed with those in Arabic being translated into English through a rigorous process that involves the review of two Arab-speaking co-workers. The researcher will create summary sheets for every interview (Carson et al. 2001; in Rao and Perry 2007).

The summary will include main themes, issues, and brief answers to each question. Once the summary sheets are developed, the researcher will review the sheets analytically to develop a pattern code for the research data. Pattern coding is a set of codes that describe the phenomena. These identified codes will assist the researcher in organizing the data into categories (Miles and Huberman 1994; in Miles et al. 2014). The different categories that are identified using the pattern codes will be transformed into all-inclusive themes. The data reduction will support in sorting, refining, and organizing the results for the purpose of obtaining conclusions. Data display process will encompass the organized assemblage and grouping of information and will allow the researcher to draw conclusions (Miles et al. 2014). During this step, the researcher will develop a matrix of the identified themes and categories. Later on, the conclusion will be the final stage of Thematic Content Analysis. During this stage, the researcher will interpret the themes, patterns and causal flows in the data, to arrive at conclusions and corroborated these (Miles et al. 2014).

Data reduction is the "process of choosing, focusing, simplifying, extracting, and altering data that appears in field notes or transcripts," according to Miles and Huberman (1994). (p. ten). At first, this entailed data editing, categorization, and summarization. Coding was also used to reduce the amount of data by finding themes and patterns. At a later step, the data were analyzed and interpreted to perform the reduction. It is important to note that during the reduction process, the research paid close attention to two key issues in an attempt to ensure data validation. The initial step is to attempt data reduction without significantly reducing the amount of data from the education experts so as to retain and maintain the originality of the data. The second is to take the data out of its surroundings to make sure the reduction does not degrade its quality. The process of reduction while paying attention to the quantity of the data followed by coding while paying attention to the quality of the data was instrument in maintaining the validity of the data. Having done the process, the qualitative results that follow frequently incorporated quotes from interviews. Further, four key criteria were put forth by Bailey (2008) to enhance the caliber of qualitative data reporting. The first alternative is to

guarantee the results' integrity, which calls for the researcher's analysis, judgements, and interpretations to be based solely on the facts. The inclusion of both recurring and emergent themes in this study helped to support the second indication, diversity. The ratio of quotations to researcher's own interpretations is kept in check. Consistency is the third step, which the research attempted to achieve by reporting the data in a straightforward manner.

#### **4.8.1 Coding**

In the current study, coding simplified and arranged the data in a way that made it easier to manage, concentrate on, and organize. The three methods of coding that Miles and Huberman (1994) identified are (a) code summaries, (b) descriptive codes, and (c) summaries of major ideas or concepts of data using brief and direct formats. In this investigation, all three coding techniques were applied. Here is a description of the creation process for the codes. The research identified four major codes and fifteen smaller codes by iteratively repeating my data. As was already noted, certain codes had already been chosen and allocated to the data.

These were pre-selected based on the interview's statement and the literature review. However, inductive analysis was used to construct additional codes. In all other interviews, the initial codes and sub-codes identified were applied. New codes developed during the coding process, and NVivo 16 was used to separate the data into the old and new codes. In this instance, the data had already been reduced. Based on the qualitative analysis approach as supported by NVivo 16, this process was iterated until all data have been evaluated and analyzed. Throughout this procedure, the research learned that some of the data is multimodal and contained input in several codes. Also discovered was the fact that a number of responses from the education experts had been categorized in various ways. Because of this, the researcher allocated a single text passage to various codes. All interviews were verbatim recorded and recorded. Transcripts were uploaded to NVivo16 for qualitative data analysis to identify major themes. Using the following naming convention, interview transcripts for each teacher were transcribed separately (i.e. Salah, Amy, Christine, Ibrahim, Leila, etc). The software helped the research perform, organize and sort data classification faster than traditional content analysis methods. The software has unique features on the device that can be complicated and complete examination in different subjects. Following the import of the education experts data, the data is hidden, however, the program allows to save these nodes, and also to analyze, edit and change them later. To enhance robustness, the researcher also used NVivo16's frequency feature, such as identifying the 30 most used words. Close search queries were also used to

check if certain words are used in conjunction with other words. This is explained later in the chapter on data analysis.

#### **4.8.2 Credibility and trustworthiness of the data**

A concise report on research methodologies is provided in order to guarantee the comprehension, dependability, and credibility of the research procedure. These papers offer not only a description of the study's methodology, but also the rationale behind it as well as how the research topic was addressed. According to Bailey (2008); Jackson & Bazeley (2019); Wray, Markovic & Manderson (2007), acknowledging bias is crucial since it demonstrates the researcher's level of candor and openness. Given its design approach, which was reliable and informed by expert opinion, the interview utilized in this study had both internal and external validity as well as reliability in terms of quantitative validation (through the quantitative pre-interview data collection instrument and the piloting process). It is crucial to be aware that qualitative research has several standards for determining validity and reliability, just like with formal interviews.

Trust and support as a term utilized in quantitative research, according to Allen (2017), have no bearing on qualitative research, which needs additional suitable criteria including reliability, trustworthiness, reliability, transferability, and confirmation. Bailey (2008) proposed using dependability, which he defined as "the concept of truth in research analysis," to strengthen the case study's validity (Bailey 2008; Jackson & Bazeley 2019; Ward 2022). Response validation and triangulation were used in the current study to evaluate validity. The veracity of the information in the interviews was assessed in several ways. Asking subject-matter experts to assess the tool's significance and portrayal of what is intended is one approach to do this. As mentioned earlier, three instructors working in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools participated in the validation of the interview questions to arrive at this conclusion. One of the three was the researcher's DBA supervisor, who provided helpful advice on how to phrase interview questions correctly. Based on this input, together with the inputs of the other educational experts, the researcher changed some of the questions, removed some, and added others in response to their constructive comments.

In statistical analysis, reliability terms are equivalent to internal validity. According to Bazeley (2007), the goal of reliability is to determine "the difference between the respondents' own constructs and the respondents' own constructs". By distributing the interview scripts to the participants, the researcher employed members' checks to establish the validity of the

qualitative research. In terms of validation, it is described as the extent of objective study findings at various levels of data collection, processing, and result interpretation (Bengtsson 2016). This method was used to satisfy the Lincoln and Guba trust requirements, (i) reputation external auditing with a trusted critic, data gathering at various moments, collecting data for two minutes, a database of interviews, interview in its entirety; (ii) the use of three different approaches, peer review, and reflection. appraisal of oneself through reflection; (iii) reliable group tests to lessen the impact of researcher bias, use triangulation. peer evaluation. countless interviews. a shift in viewpoint; and (iv) transparency provides enough information about the study's background to facilitate transfer within a small area (Jameel & Majid 2018). The ability to repeat measurements is the final definition of dependability (Firmin et al. 2017). The subject analysis's inter-rater reliability was evaluated through a peer review method. Two seasoned researchers were involved in this project for this reason. Both scholars have a strong background in coding and thematic analysis and are well-known experts in their respective fields. The topics and codes were discussed and checked for agreement. All of the themes and codes, with the exception of professional identification, were agreed upon by the team and the researcher with very few exceptions.

#### **4.9 Ethical Considerations**

Due to the difficulty of gaining access educational experts, and related information, researching schools can be challenging. Therefore, it is crucial to define a few of the ethical guidelines that guided this work. Three ethical guidelines are suggested by (Burgess-Allen & Owen-Smith 2010) and should be considered in all research projects. Participants' consent is required for these methods, which also uphold confidentiality and protect study subjects' anonymity. Considering the remit of the research, there was need for the research to obtain necessary approvals in order to proceed.

It is crucial to note that since private schools began operating and the department of Education and knowledge established a research division, researchers who wish to conduct their studies in private institutions must obtain research accreditation from their end. The researcher submitted the electronic survey form in compliance with the private schools' code of conduct for conducting surveys in their schools. Along with the application form, the researcher also uploaded the interview and the consent form from the university. The form that is related to the research clearly outlines the thesis's type and subject.

In the current study, the research made the choice to make use of the Ethics Grid (Kumar & Chhapparwal 2021), which was identified as thorough in terms of ethical analysis. The grid

offers "a clear study on which ethical decisions and ideas can be conveyed," according to Kumar & Chhparwal (2021). The device has four dimensions (i.e., external or environmental, material, ethical and interpersonal). Each box includes guiding and elucidating questions about moral dilemmas that might come up in any inquiry. Lepore (2012) noted that in terms of anonymity and secrecy, researchers anticipate that the information they gather about them would be used in a private setting. According to Lepore (2012), confidentiality is "the act of not disclosing to others the opinion or information obtained through research." Anonymity is "the process of preventing the identity of a research participant or the creator of a particular opinion or opinion". The researcher assured the school and participants that only the university would have access to the data and that they were required to maintain confidentiality about the identity of the school, staff, and teachers participating in the study. This was done in accordance with the ethical standards outlined above.

Accordingly, the identity of the school or of instructors and leaders was protected by utilizing titles or codes rather than their names or other identification information if the results of this study can be utilized for teaching, research, publication, or presentation at conferences. The following ethical principles were observed during the study:

1. The aim and methodology of the research project were explained to all participants in the study.
2. It was promised to the interviewees that they would be made aware of the study's findings. They were also told that they might end the study at any time without providing a reason.
3. Before taking part in the interview, the interviewees are given an explanation of (a) the study's objectives, (b) its methodology—namely, the interview followed by the interview—and (c) its significance.
4. In order to protect their identities, the interviewees were given pseudonyms. This is in line with Lee's (2017) suggestion that participants' confidentiality and privacy be maintained.

#### **4.10 Researcher Reflection**

Reflexivity is an intentional and conscious attempt by the researcher to articulate their questions and thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and beliefs, which might have an impact on the research's quality. Since skills may be applied in different contexts, adopting a reflective practice in my own work has had a big impact on my research projects. I learnt, for instance,

to carefully consider the procedure and each phase of the study, both when gathering and analyzing data. I also consider any ethical dilemmas that might come up throughout the inquiry. There is a significant connection between the reflective researcher and the reflective teacher, according to Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2019)

In light of my participation in this research project, I can say that even though I was not employed by a private school at the time of the study, the researcher was, up to a point, familiar with the educational landscape in the area. The researcher previously spent years in education in strategic planning and policy development. However, I might not think of myself as someone else given my years of experience working with private school and my familiarity with some of the instructors and the principal. My understanding of and expertise with teacher professional development was extremely valuable. For instance, having this previous knowledge has made it easier for me to digest data and comprehend subtleties and context. Additionally, I benefited from the fact that the researcher knew just when and how to stop my researchers from posing probing inquiries.

While designing the research methodology the researcher worked to develop a research approach for investigating in a customized manner to suit the specific study. Also, the researcher could follow knowledge developed by other researchers' prescriptions that are knowledgeably adapted to suit the project under study. In investigative methodologies new experimenting ways are continually being proposed which further add as contributions to knowledge. Gray (1996, p 2) mentioned practice-led research as "Firstly research which is initiated in practice, where questions, problems, challenges are identified and formed by the needs of the practice and practitioners; and secondly, that the research strategy is carried out through practice, using predominantly methodologies and specific methods familiar to us as practitioners". This leads to open potential methodologies as contributions to the knowledge of practice-led research. It may be said that almost every step of the research methodology can be considered as contribution to knowledge in small or large measures.

Reflections are considered as an important mental activity, in personal, private and professional life. Reflection is considered "a turning back onto a self" where the inquirer is at once an observed and an active observer (Steier, 1995, p. 163). Reflections aim at understanding intelligibility for meaningfulness. The reflections here are on the methodological fundamentals in the current research.

- a) Differentiation of research approaches to research problem and research design: The definitions itself of the research perspectives of realism, constructivism and

interventionism / active will enable differences in the respective approaches that have implications on the research problem and research design.

Table 4.12 Reflection on research approaches and design to research problem

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Realism</b>	<b>Constructivism</b>	<b>Interventionism / Active</b>
<b>Definition / Meaning</b>	Ideation of reality as a scientific approach to the development of knowledge. It is independent of human thoughts.	Constructivism is when knowledge is created from human experience. It is dependent on human thoughts.	Interventionism is when knowledge is produced through thoughtful actions that result as an outcome.
<b>Influence on research problem</b>	The research problem is acknowledged as “it is in the situation”.	The research problem is considered as “it is thought to be”.	The research problem is treated as a condition requiring intervention as “it is meant to be with action as a solution”.
<b>Influence on research design</b>	As a form of theory-driven research design for evaluation developed to strengthen the explanatory power of examining studies in-depth and contribute to evidence-based policy and practice.	As a form that positions researcher within the context to generate meanings by focusing on a single concept / phenomenon.  Has interpretive approach, inductive oriented, and mainly qualitative research design.	As a form that closes the divide between theory and practice, and overcome some of the inherent barriers to change in general practice. Research must be grounded to promote both a theoretical viewpoint and sustainable practical application.

b) Role of research values for research approach: As research is scientific the values of originality, universalism, open to criticism, verifiability and methodological. Other important values being integrity, honesty, transparency, openness, quality and

accountability. All of such values influence the research approach to be adopted by the researcher while conducting the study.

c) Research skills for research approach: The key skill being ‘reflexivity’ which is questioning ones own thinking and actions. Other skills being ‘conceptual’ skill for ideas generations and ‘perceptual’ skill for better research questioning. ‘investigative’ skill to probe and gather data. ‘interpretation’ skill for better analysis. ‘implementation’ skills to utilize resources for conducting the study well and be better organized.

d) Researcher values and skills influencing choice of research approach: Based on the nature of the study, the choice of research approach is dependent on factors such as theoretical, practical and ethical. Values and skills that are related to these factors will determine the chosen research approach. Skills that are quantitative / positivism or qualitative / interpetivism or both. Values related to reliability and validity. Ethical values concerning legality, privacy, confidentiality. Practical skills of managing resources, operating and implementing projects.

#### **4.11 Chapter Summary**

In the current chapter, the research has extensively reviewed and detailed the different approaches, logics and decisions that have guided the research. In the process, the tools and methods utilized to gather and analyses the data were thoroughly described by the researcher while outlining the data gathering and analysis process. Additionally, the researcher went over the ethical standards used in the study. In the study's concluding section, the researcher discussed the difficulties and restrictions the study had, such as problems with reliability and authenticity. The study's findings are presented in the next chapter by the researcher. This report has presented a critical examination of how adopting a potential research approach from each of the three perspectives listed below influences the understanding of the research problem and to shape the creation of a research design for addressing that problem. (1) Realist perspectives on the research problem knowing its research approaches and examining one of them as potential ‘critical realism research approach’. (2) Constructionist perspectives on the research problem, knowing its research approaches and examining one of them as potential ‘cognitive constructivism research approach’. (3) Interventionist (active) perspectives on the research problem, knowing its research approaches and examining one of them as potential ‘contemporary action research approach’. The reflections on the research approaches to the research problem and research design, the role of researcher values for research approaches, the required skills needed for different research approaches, and to what extent the researcher values and skills influences and affects the choice of research approach to the proposed

research study have been appropriately taken care of. The justification for suitability and applicability has been done based on the research study's central question for the research philosophy, strategies, perspectives, approaches, and overall design.

## **CHAPTER FIVE – DATA ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The findings and analysis of the information gathered in the study on the adoption of UAE's vision 2021 and vision 2071 in the Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools strategic plans are presented in this chapter, with an emphasis on the foresights and insights of private schools. Thematic analysis, which entailed looking at both the interview transcripts and the survey replies, was used to analyze the data. Because thematic analysis enables a systematic study of the themes, patterns, and meanings within the gathered data, it was chosen as the data analysis approach. This approach provided a thorough comprehension of the opinions and experiences of the participants with reference to the implementation of the UAE's objectives for the educational sector. The important themes that emerged from the data will be highlighted in a structured presentation of the thematic analysis' conclusions. The investigation will provide insight into how private schools view the execution of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071, as well as their approaches to achieving alignment, obstacles encountered, and opportunities discovered. The investigation will also look at how technology, innovation, and cooperation might help the educational sector accomplish the goals of the visions.

### **5.2 Identification of Themes**

A qualitative research technique called thematic analysis was used to find and examine patterns and themes in the current research's dataset(s). Thematic analysis was used in this research project to examine the stakeholder interviews with the private school sector in the United Arab Emirates. As part of the study, the data were methodically arranged and interpreted to find recurrent themes and patterns connected to the research questions.

#### **5.2.1 Using Thematic Analysis**

To find and examine patterns and themes in a dataset, a qualitative research technique known as thematic analysis is performed. The interviews with stakeholders in the Abu Dhabi private school industry, in the United Arab Emirates were analyzed using thematic analysis in this research project. The research notes that the interviews and questionnaire responses had instances of recurring themes and patterns that connected to the study topics. To this extent therefore, the analysis required methodically organizing and evaluating the data.

### **Defining themes and sub-themes**

Themes and sub-themes were identified during the thematic analysis process based on the information provided in the interviews. While sub-themes are more particular features or categories that lie inside the larger themes, themes are overall notions or ideas that arose from the data. The research study uncovered themes such as instructors' skills and talents, effect on the education sector, the function of educational culture, and acceptance of the UAE's visions.

### **Abstraction process**

The abstraction process is identifying the most important information from the interview data and distilling it into clear, short summaries. The primary ideas, views, and points of view mentioned by the interviewees were reduced by the researchers through abstraction. This aided in concentrating on the data's most important features and locating the fundamental components that supported the study's conclusions.

### **Recognising Themes**

Finding and classifying patterns, concepts, and ideas that arise from the data is necessary for theme recognition (Aboelenein et al., 2022). The researchers identified the recurrent themes and ideas in this research study, including the significance of educational culture and teachers' skills and capacities, as well as the acceptance and adoption of the UAE's visions in private schools. To find links and patterns within the data, a methodical examination of the interview transcripts was used during this procedure (ADEC 2015). The following were the themes identified after the above systematic process:-

- Theme 1: Abu Dhabi Educational Sector and UAE Vision 2021 and 2071 strategic plans
- Theme 2: UAE Vision 2021 and 2071 Educational Approach
- Theme 3: Methods of the educational institutes in incorporating governmental visions and initiatives into their strategic plans
- Theme 4: How strategic planning adopted by the private school sector in Emirates of Abu Dhabi, align with UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071?
- Theme 5: How UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071 could change the educational performance
- Theme 6: Impact of Artificial Intelligence and Big Data in the successful implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning for the Education sector in Abu Dhabi?

- Theme 7: Implications to private schools of adopting the UAE’s Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans?

### 5.3 Profiling- Questionnaire

A total of 80 educational experts in Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools participated in the current study. As mentioned in the methodology, this quantitative phase of the research was critical as far as gathering critical background information of the participants was concerned. In this section, the research reviews the profile background information gathered from the quantitative data collection tool that was deployed first in the process of data collection for the research.

Table 5.1 Gender profiles of participants

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	47	58.8	58.8	58.8
Male	33	41.3	41.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

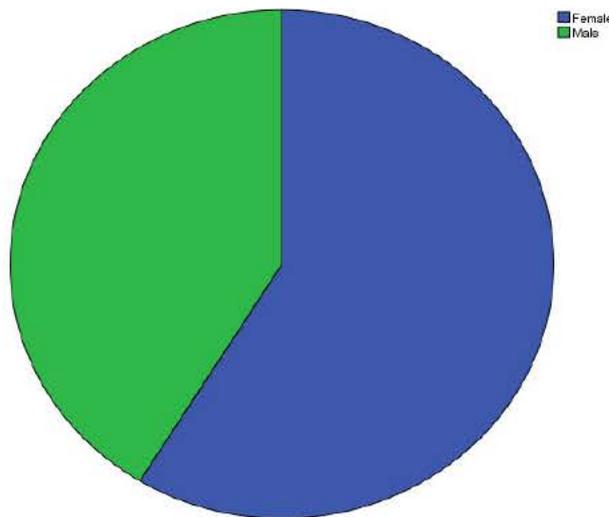


Figure 5.1 Gender profiles of participants

According to Table 5.1 and Figure 5,1 above, the study, which included 80 respondents, had a percentage total of 58.8% being female and 41.3% being male. This indicates a slightly higher representation of female participants in the study.

Another participant profile information that was collected in the process of the current study was the area of specialization or position of the educational experts who participated. As noted earlier, this information was considered critical in guiding the direction of in-depth interview discussion on the subject matter.

Table 5.2 Position

Position	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Expert in Education Sector	25	31.3	31.3	31.3
Government Sector	12	15.0	15.0	46.3
Head of department	1	1.3	1.3	47.5
Regulator in Education sector	10	12.5	12.5	60.0
School Principal / Management	25	31.3	31.3	91.3
Teacher	7	8.8	8.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

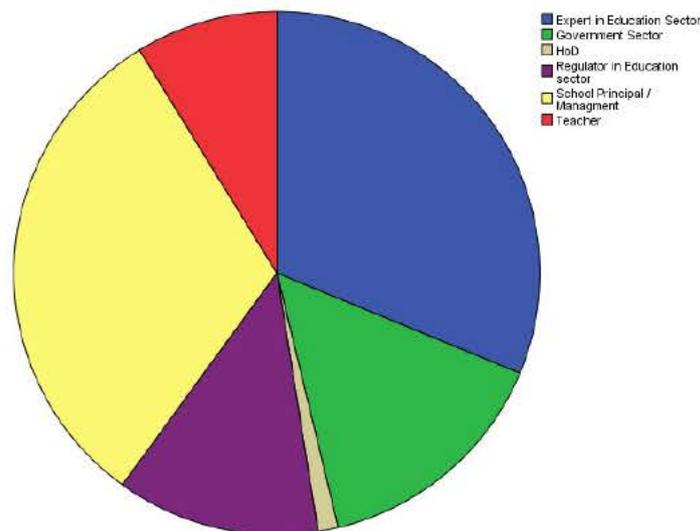


Figure 5.2 Position

According to Tables 5.2 and Figure 5.2 above, the respondents represent various positions within the education sector. The majority of respondents (31.3%) are "Experts in the Education Sector," followed by "School Principals/Management" (31.3%). Other positions include "Government Sector" (15.0%), "Regulator in Education Sector" (12.5%), "Teacher" (8.8%), and "HoD" (1.3%).

Further, the researcher was interested in the level of education of the participants and therefore collected their educational background profile. This information is represented in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3 below:-

Table 5.3 Educational level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Bachelors	25	31.3	31.3	31.3
Diploma	3	3.8	3.8	35.0
Masters	36	45.0	45.0	80.0
NPQH	1	1.3	1.3	81.3
Phd	15	18.8	18.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

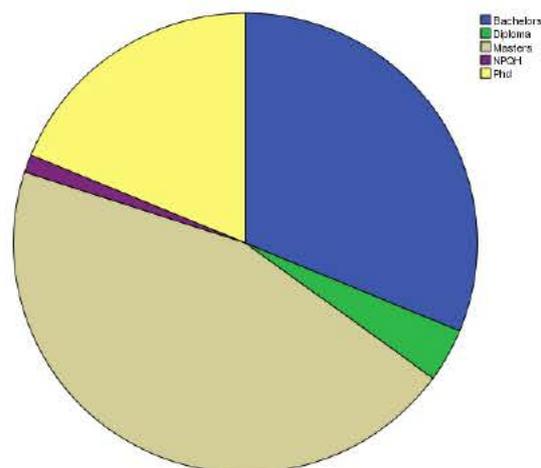


Figure 5.3 Education level

Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3 above reveal that, the educational qualifications of respondents varied, with the highest number of participants (45.0%) holding a "Masters" degree. "Bachelors" degree holders make up 31.3% of the respondents, while 18.8% have a "PhD." The remaining participants have either a "Diploma" (3.8%) or "NPQH" (1.3%).

The current study also profiled the age of the participants. This information is represented in Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4 below:-

Table 5.4 Age of the participants

Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
25-39	27	33.8	33.8	33.8
40-50	30	37.5	37.5	71.3
50+	23	28.8	28.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

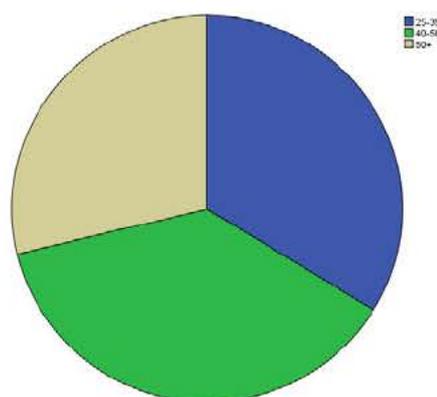


Figure 5.4 Age of the participants

According to the findings as reflected in Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4 above, the age distribution of the respondents is as follows: 33.8% are in the age group of 25-39, 37.5% in the age group of 40-50, and 28.8% are 50 or older.

Another important metric of participant profiling for the current study was the years of experience. As earlier noted, the goal of the study being to examine the impact of implementation of new visions into the strategic plans or private schools in Abu Dhabi, would be received differently by practitioners based on their years of experience in the domain. The years of experience demographics of the participants are presented in Table 5.5 and Figure 5.5 below:-

Table 5.5 Years of experience

Years of experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 5 years	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
More than 10 and less than 15 years	16	20.0	20.0	23.8
More than 15 and less than 20 years	9	11.3	11.3	35.0
More than 20 years	36	45.0	45.0	80.0
More than 5 and less than 10 years	16	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

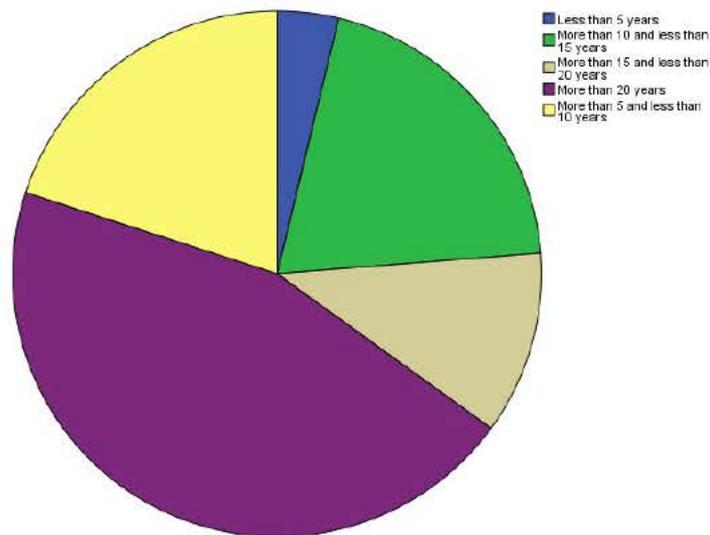


Figure 5.5 Years of experience

Regarding the years of experience among the participants in the Abu Dhabi education sector, 45.0% of respondents had "More than 20 years" of experience, indicating a substantial level of expertise. 20.0% have "More than 10 and less than 15 years" of experience, while the remaining participants have experience ranging from "Less than 5 years" to "More than 15 and less than 20 years."

The level of specialized experience with the aspects of strategic planning in the Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools education sector was an important metric that the research wanted to keep tabs on as far as its study participants was concerned. This data was therefore collected and is represented herein in Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6 below:-

Table 5.6 Strategic planning experience

Have you had experiences with Strategic Planning	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	10	12.5	12.5	12.5
Yes	70	87.5	87.5	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

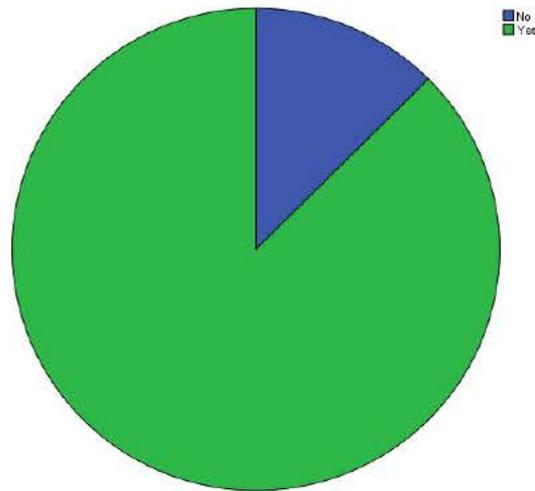


Figure 5.6 Strategic planning experience

According to Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6 above, 87.5% of the respondents have had experiences with strategic planning, suggesting that they possess relevant knowledge and understanding in this area.

The research went further to inquire of the familiarity of the participants with Abu Dhabi private education strategic plan. This metric was important as it would give the research a clear picture of how involved the participants were as far as implementation of the strategic plans in their respective institutions was concerned. Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7 below represent the information herein:-

Table 5.7 Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans familiarity

Are you familiar with Abu Dhabi private education strategic plan	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	6	7.5	7.5	7.5
Somehow Familiar	26	32.5	32.5	40.0
Yes	48	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

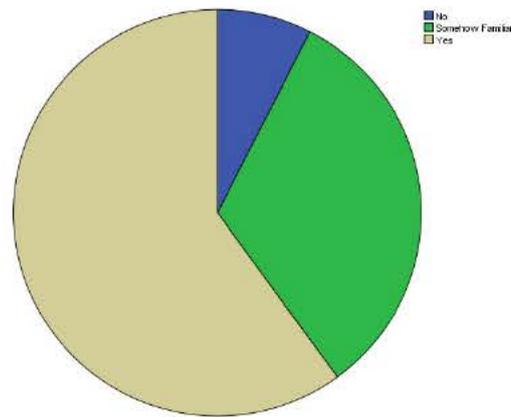


Figure 5.7 Abu Dhabi private schools' strategic plans familiarity

According to the results, 60.0% of the respondents are "Yes" familiar with the Abu Dhabi private education strategic plan, while 32.5% are "Somehow Familiar," and only 7.5% answered "No."

Apart from the background profile information, the research collected the following data from the participants with respect to a number of questions. In this instance, the participants were supposed to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement. The research will list each individual statement and follow up with the results that the statement garnered in terms of agreement or disagreement to/from the statement.

➤ **The adoption of UAE's Vision 2071 is essential for the development of the educational sector in Abu Dhabi**

This statement sought to elicit the sentiments of the educational experts on the importance of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector on the Abu Dhabi educational sector from their experience as Abu Dhabi K-12 private schools practitioners. Table 5.8 and Figure 5.8 below showcase the results of the analysis of the responses of the participants to this question:-

Table 5.8 UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 essential to education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	24	30.0	30.0	30.0
Disagree	1	1.3	1.3	31.3
Neither agree nor disagree	4	5.0	5.0	36.3
Strongly Agree	51	63.8	63.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

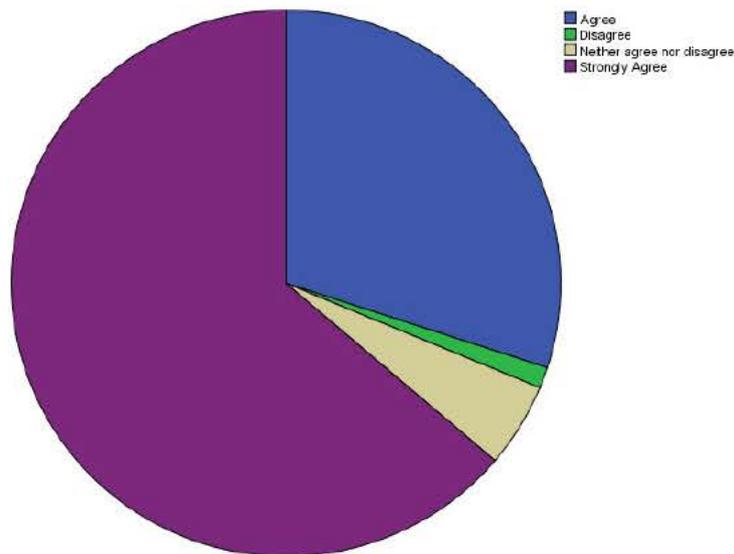


Figure 5.8 UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 essential to education

When asked to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement to the above statement, the majority of respondents (63.8%) "Strongly Agree" that the adoption of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 are essential for the development of the educational sector in Abu Dhabi. 30.0% "Agree," while 5.0% are "Neither agree nor disagree," and only 1.3% "Disagree" with the statement.

➤ **Collaboration between private schools and the government is crucial in achieving UAE's Vision.**

This statement sought to examine the perspective of the educational experts on the importance of the aspect of collaboration between government and private school entities in Abu Dhabi as far as adoption and successful implementation of the visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector was concerned. Table 5.9 and Figure 5.9 below present the results of the findings:-

Table 5.9 Importance of collaboration

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	17	21.3	21.3	21.3
Disagree	5	6.3	6.3	27.5
Neither agree nor disagree	3	3.8	3.8	31.3
Strongly agree	54	67.5	67.5	98.8
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

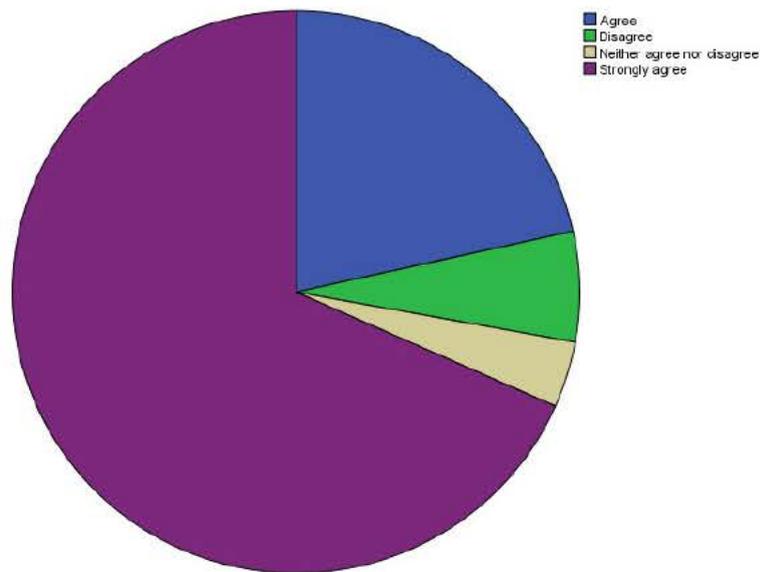


Figure 5.9 Importance of collaboration

According to the respondents, 67.5% "Strongly Agree" that collaboration between private schools and the government is crucial in achieving UAE's Vision, indicating a recognition of the importance of cooperation between both sectors. Only 6.3% "Disagree" with this statement.

➤ **To what extent do you think private schools in Abu Dhabi have aligned their educational strategies with UAE's Vision?**

This statement sought to gauge from the participants' perspective, the extent of implementation of UAE's visions 2021 and 2071 for the educational sector into the strategic plans of private schools in Abu Dhabi. Table 5.10 and Figure 5.10 below present the results of the analysis of the responses to this question:-

Table 5.10 Alignment of strategies to vision

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	2	2.5	2.5	2.5
Fully aligned	40	50.0	50.0	52.5
Not Aligned at all	2	2.5	2.5	55.0
Partially Aligned	36	45.0	45.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

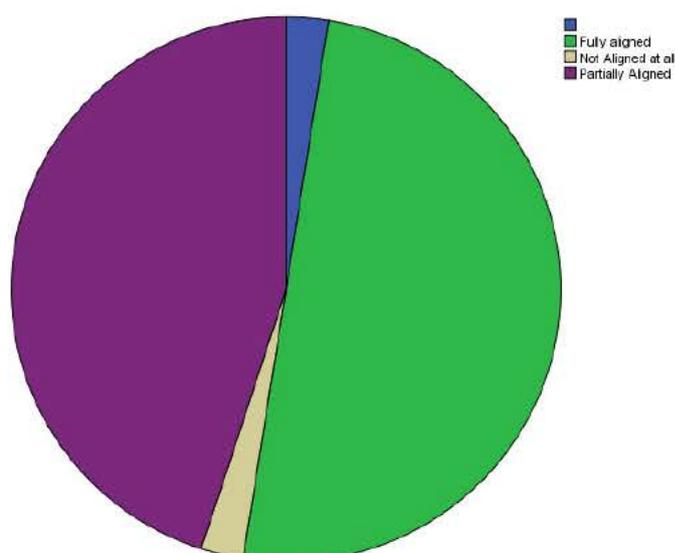


Figure 5.10 Alignment of strategies to vision

According to the results as depicted in Table 5.10 and Figure 5.10, half of the respondents (50.0%) believed that private schools in Abu Dhabi are "Fully Aligned" with UAE's Vision, while 45.0% see that they are "Partially Aligned." A small percentage (2.5%) thinks that these schools are "Not Aligned at all."

➤ **Do you have plan aligned with educational sector in Abu Dhabi to achieve long-term goals?**

The aim of this question was to gauge the robustness of strategic plans of Abu Dhabi private schools in terms of long-term achievement of goals, as far as the experts and practitioners were concerned. The results of the analysis of the responses to this statement are captured in Table 5.11 below:-

Table 5.11 Strategic plans long-term alignment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No	5	6.3	6.3	6.3
Somehow yes	30	37.5	37.5	57.5
Unclear question	1	1.3	1.3	46.3
Yes	43	53.8	53.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

The results of the analysis revealed that, 53.8% of the respondents have a plan aligned with the educational sector in Abu Dhabi to achieve long-term goals. 37.5% are "Somehow Yes," and 6.3% answered "No."

- **Private schools in Abu Dhabi should focus on integrating technology into the classroom to achieve UAE's Vision 2071.**

In acknowledgement of the importance of technology to the delivery of results in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the research inquired of the participant whether they thought technology would be a gamechanger as far as attainment of the visions 2021 and 2071 of education in Abu Dhabi private schools was concerned. The results of the analysis are captured in Table 5.12 and Figure 5.11 below:-

Table 5.12 Importance of technology to vision(s) attainment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	28	35.0	35.0	35.0
Neither agree nor disagree	4	5.0	5.0	40.0
Strongly agree	48	60.0	60.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

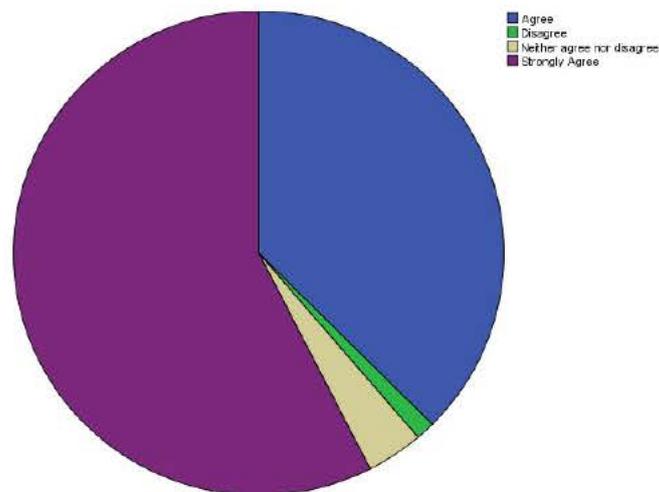


Figure 5.11 Importance of technology to vision(s) attainment

The results of the analysis showed that the majority of respondents (60.0%) "Strongly Agree" that private schools in Abu Dhabi should focus on integrating technology into the classroom to achieve UAE's Vision 2071. An additional 35.0% "Agree" with the statement.

➤ **To what extent do you think your private schools in Abu Dhabi promote innovation, creativity, and talent development in their students?**

This question directly gauged part of the implementation of recommendations of visions 2021 and 2071 in Abu Dhabi private schools. The results of the analysis are captured in Table 5.13 and Figure 5.12 below:-

Table 5.13 Innovation, creativity and talent development

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	4	5.0	5.0	12.5
Fully Collaborate	39	48.8	48.8	50.0
Partially Collaborate	39	48.5	48.5	98.8
we aren't always consulted	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

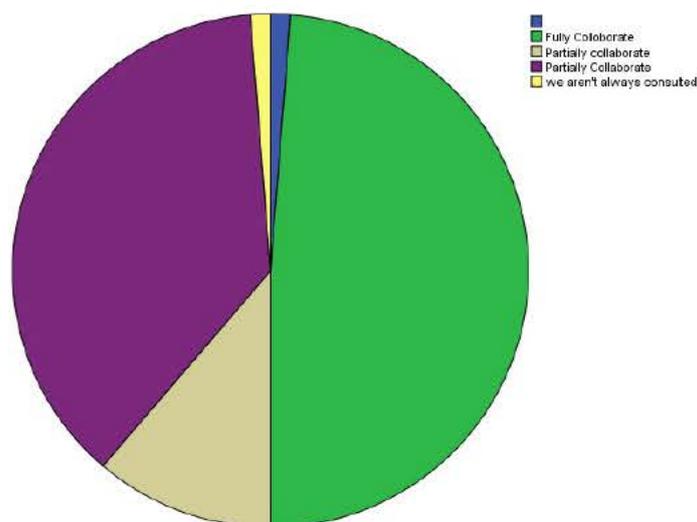


Figure 5.12 Innovation, creativity and talent development

The results revealed that, when it comes to promoting innovation, creativity, and talent development in students, 48.8% of respondents believe that private schools "Fully Collaborate"

in this regard. 48.5% see that they "Partially Collaborate," while a small percentage (1.3%) stated that "we aren't always consulted."

- **Private schools in Abu Dhabi should actively participate in the initiatives to enhance the quality of the educational sector.**

The importance of active participation on the part of private schools in Abu Dhabi was brought to test in this question and the sentiments of the participants indicated by their level of agreement or disagreement to the statement were measured. The results are depicted in Table 5.14 and Figure 5.13 below:-

Table 5.14 Active participation of private schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Excellent	40	50.0	50.0	51.3
Fair	5	6.3	6.3	57.5
Good	34	42.5	42.5	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

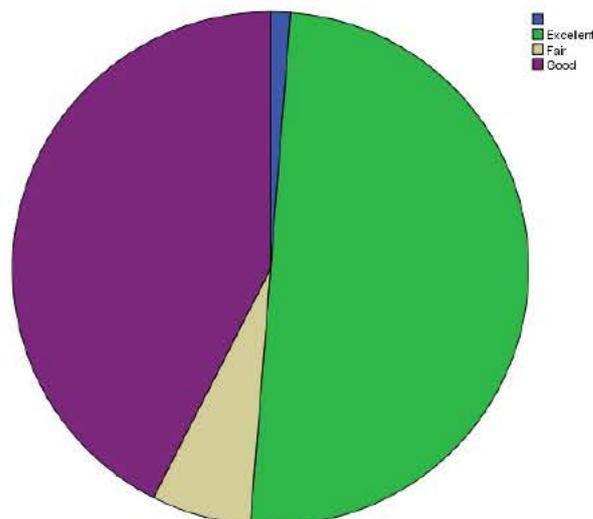


Figure 5.13 Active participation of private schools

To this statement, the majority of respondents (50.0%) rated private schools' participation in initiatives to enhance the quality of the educational sector as "Excellent." 42.5% considered it "Good," and 6.3% responded with "Fair."

➤ **Do you use any framework defined for Education strategic planning Process?**

Informed by literature on strategic planning in education and the importance of applying a structured approach by the help of a framework, the research inquired whether the private schools in Abu Dhabi, represented by the participants, applied any framework in their strategic planning. The responses to the question are captured below in Table 5.15 and Figure 5.14:-

Table 5.15 Utilisation of strategic planning framework

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	4	5.0	5.0	5.0
No	9	11.2	11.2	11.3
Yes	67	83.8	83.8	83.8
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

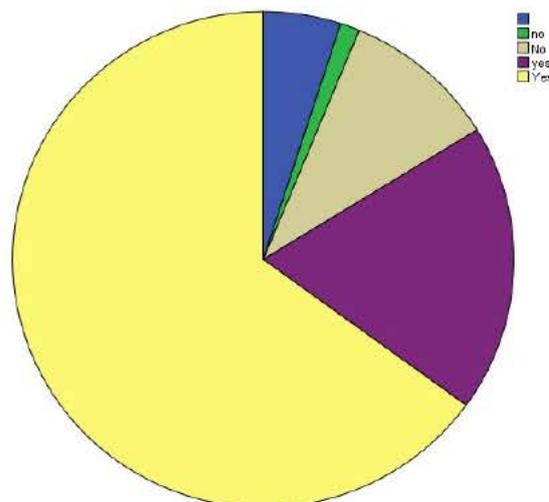


Figure 5.14 Utilisation of strategic planning framework

The majority of respondents (83.3%) answered "Yes" when asked if they use any framework defined for the education strategic planning process. Only 11.2% said "No."

➤ **Does your school Education Strategic Planning Process align with UAE Vision 2021 and Vision 2071?**

The alignment of Abu Dhabi private schools strategic plans with the UAE’s vision 2021 and 2071 for the education sector was the cornerstone of the current research’s inquiry. The question was posed to the education experts during the questionnaire data collection and the results of the analysis of the response to the question are captured in Table 5.16 and Figure 5.15 below:-

Table 5.16 Education strategic planning process alignment to vision 2021 and 2071

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	2	2.5	2.5	2.5
No	2	2.5	2.5	5.0
Yes	76	95.0	95.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

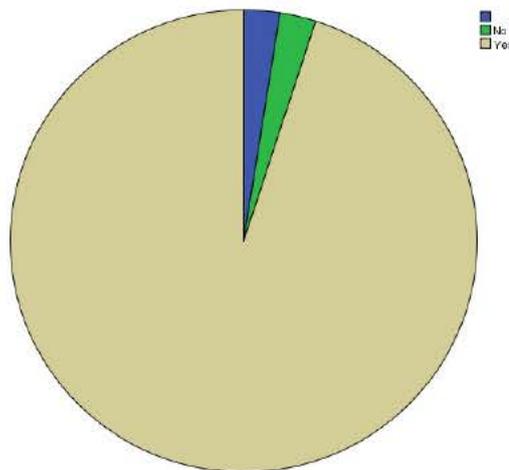


Figure 5.15 Education strategic planning process alignment to vision 2021 and 2071

The vast majority of respondents (95.0%) believe that their school's education strategic planning process aligns with UAE Vision 2021 and Vision 2071.

➤ **Do principals have a clearly defined personal vision for the schools they serve, and ways do they enact their vision?**

The importance of transformational and visionary leadership in the implementation of UAE visions 2021 and 2071 in the Abu Dhabi private schools was clearly highlighted in extant literature and the research needed to understand from the participants perspective, the extent to which school principals exhibited characteristics of transformational leadership such as holding a clear vision for the schools. The results of the analysis of the participants' responses to this question are captured in Table 5.17 and Figure 5.16 below:-

Table 5.17 Visionary leadership in schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	2	2.5	2.5	2.5
No	3	3.8	3.8	6.3
Yes	75	93.8	93.8	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

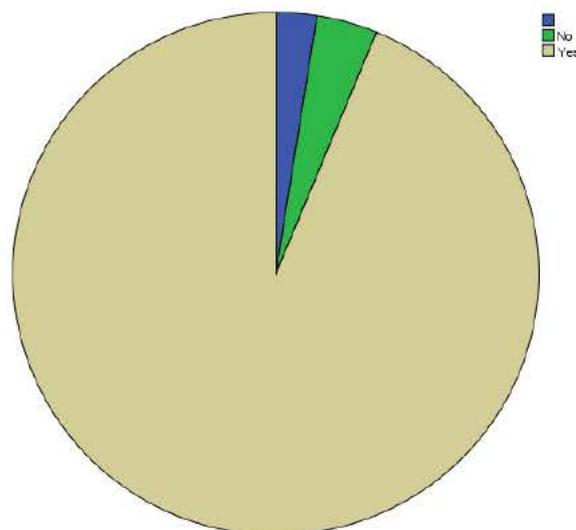


Figure 5.16 Visionary leadership in schools

The majority of respondents (93.8%) believed that principals have a clearly defined personal vision for the schools they serve, and they enact their vision.

- **Do you believe that having a facilitator to utilize the ANY Model of Strategic Planning has been an effective method?**

The aim of the current question was to gauge the perception of the participants regarding having a facilitator help in the implementation of strategic planning. The results are captured in Table 5.18 and Figure 5.17 below:-

Table 5.18 Strategic planning facilitation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Neutral	3	3.8	3.8	3.8
No	9	11.3	11.3	15.0
Yes	68	85.0	85.0	100.0
Total	80	100.0	100.0	

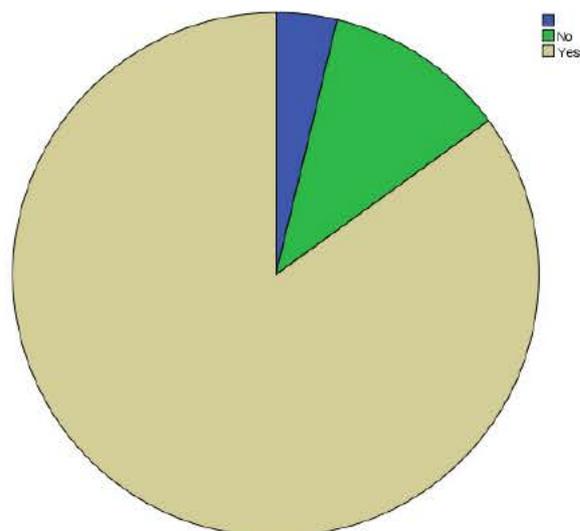


Figure 5.17 Strategic planning facilitation

The results of the analysis showed that, 85.0% believe that having a facilitator to utilize the any Model of Strategic Planning has been an effective method.

#### 4.3.1 Coding Scheme and Cluster Analysis – Questionnaire

Figure 5.18 below presents the coding scheme for the questionnaire, followed by the cluster analysis for the same at Figure 5.19.



Figure 5.18 Coding scheme of the questionnaire

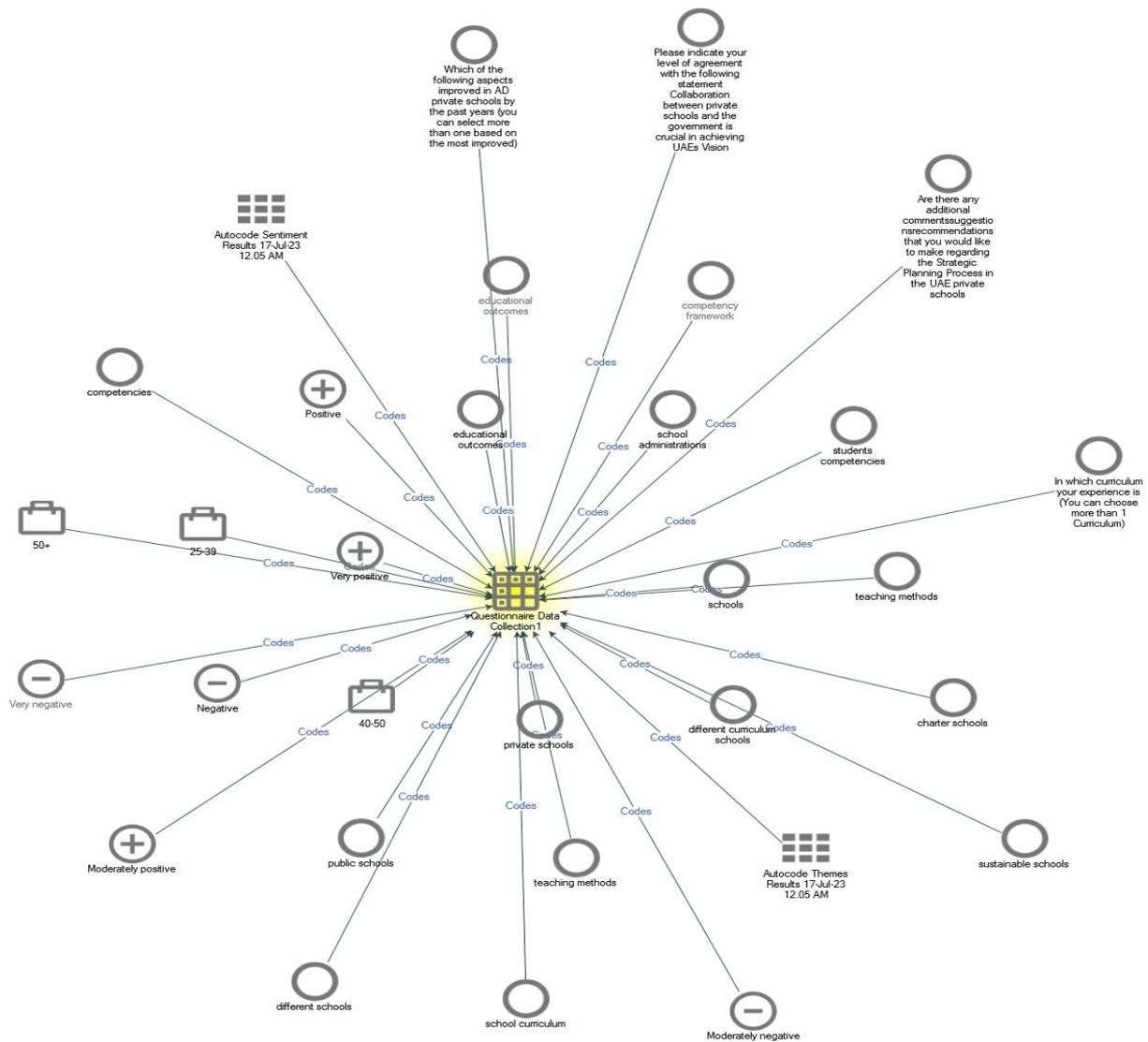


Figure 5.19 Cluster analysis of questionnaire

Eighty respondents who are experts and professionals in the field of education were given the pre-interview protocol for the Educational Industry. Prior to conducting in-depth interviews, the goal of this pre-interview protocol was to compile crucial data regarding the respondents' educational background, work history, and industry knowledge. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gain a thorough understanding of the respondents' positions and duties within the educational system. Names, years of experience, and a specific field or area of expertise are among the most important pieces of information gathered from the responses. The respondents had the choice to categorize themselves as academic experts with specific management expertise or academic experts without such experience.

The pre-interview protocol functioned as an initial stage in the interview process and gave the interviewees important background information. The interviewers were able to adjust their

questions correctly and probe into the most pertinent subjects based on each interviewee's background by taking note of the respondents' years of experience and fields. The questionnaire sought to assure a broad pool of respondents with varying degrees of experience and competence through this thorough data collection procedure, enabling the interviews to cover a wide range of ideas and opinions within the educational business. The respondents' participation in the pre-interview protocol showed that they were eager to provide their expertise to the current research or project. An in-depth and comprehensive grasp of the educational landscape, including its prospects and problems, would be achieved in the end thanks to the information acquired from this questionnaire, which would also play a crucial part in determining the structure and substance of the future interviews.

The information provided in the tables sheds light on how the Emirate of Abu Dhabi adopted UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 for its educational sector strategic plan, with an emphasis on private schools in particular – K-12 private schools in Abu Dhabi. The study aimed to comprehend the perceptions and attitudes of education industry professionals toward the alignment of educational strategies with the national visions. It is clear from the data that respondents strongly agreed on the significance of working together with the government and private schools to realize the UAE's Vision. A sizable majority of respondents who indicated "Strongly Agree", believed such cooperation is essential, demonstrating a shared understanding of the role both sectors play in furthering the nation's educational objectives. The results show that private schools in Abu Dhabi have advanced significantly in terms of aligning their educational plans with the UAE's Vision. A total of 50% of respondents think that these institutions are "Fully Aligned" with the overall goal, while another 45.0% think that they are "Partially Aligned." This implies that private schools are actively making efforts to harmonize their aims and objectives with the larger national agenda.

The study investigated how much private schools encourage their students' talent, creativity, and innovation. According to the comments, a sizeable percentage of respondents think private schools "Fully Collaborate" in helping kids develop these traits. This focus on innovation and creativity is in line with the UAE's Vision 2071, which aims to establish the nation as a global leader in a number of fields, including education. The data also shows respondents' support for private schools utilizing technology in the classroom to help the UAE realize its Vision 2071. The overwhelming majority of respondents "Strongly Agree" with this statement, demonstrating a shared awareness of the importance of technology in improving education quality and preparing students for future challenges. Interestingly, the findings show that the

majority of respondents have a plan to accomplish long-term objectives that is in line with the educational sector. This shows a proactive attitude on the part of those in the education sector in supporting the implementation of the UAE's Vision and encouraging ongoing development in their institutions of higher learning.

Overall, the study's statistics offer insightful information about how Abu Dhabi's private schools view and act upon the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 adoption. The results imply that private schools are fervently supporting the national vision and are taking practical measures to match their instructional plans with its overarching objectives. The focus on teamwork, creativity, and technological integration shows a forward-thinking attitude, which is encouraging for the growth of the educational sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The study's findings provide insight into how private schools' plans match with the national vision, and these understandings can guide policymaking and decision-making processes to further improve educational quality and fulfill the goals outlined in UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071.

#### 5.4 Profiling- Interview

Having succeeded in the first level of the data analysis, this section will delve into the qualitative part of the data analysis for the current research. To start with, Table 5.19 and 5.20 below presents that profiling of the in-depth interviews' participants.

Table 5.19 In-depth interviews participants profiles 1

Age	Position	Gender	Education Level	Years of Experience
25-39	Teacher	Female	Bachelors	5-10 years
40-50	Regulator in Education Sector	Female	Bachelors	Less than 5 years
50+	Teacher	Female	Bachelors	20+ years
25-39	Regulator in Education Sector	Male	Bachelors	5-10 years
25-39	School Principal/Management	Female	Diploma	Less than 5 years

Table 5.20 In-depth interviews participants profile 2

<b>Name</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Field</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>
EE27	10 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British- American -Asian
EE28	25 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE29	16 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE30	19 Years	Educational Expert	MOE
EE31	5 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British
EE32	25 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE33	15 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE34	15 Years	Educational Expert - Management	American
EE35	12 Years	Educational Expert	American
EE36	33 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE37	20 Years	Educational Expert	British
EE38	17 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
EE39	4 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE40	15 Years	Educational Expert	Asian
EE41	31 Years	Educational Expert - Management	American
EE42	30 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE43	28 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE44	23 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE45	8 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British
EE46	25 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE47	15 Years	Educational Expert - Management	MOE
EE48	20 Years	Educational Expert - Management	American

EE49	21 Years	Educational Expert - Management	British- American- MOE- Asian
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### 5.4.1 Coding Scheme and Cluster Analysis- Interviews

As in the case of the questionnaire, below in Figures 4.20 and 4.21 are the coding scheme followed by the cluster analysis of the interview tool.

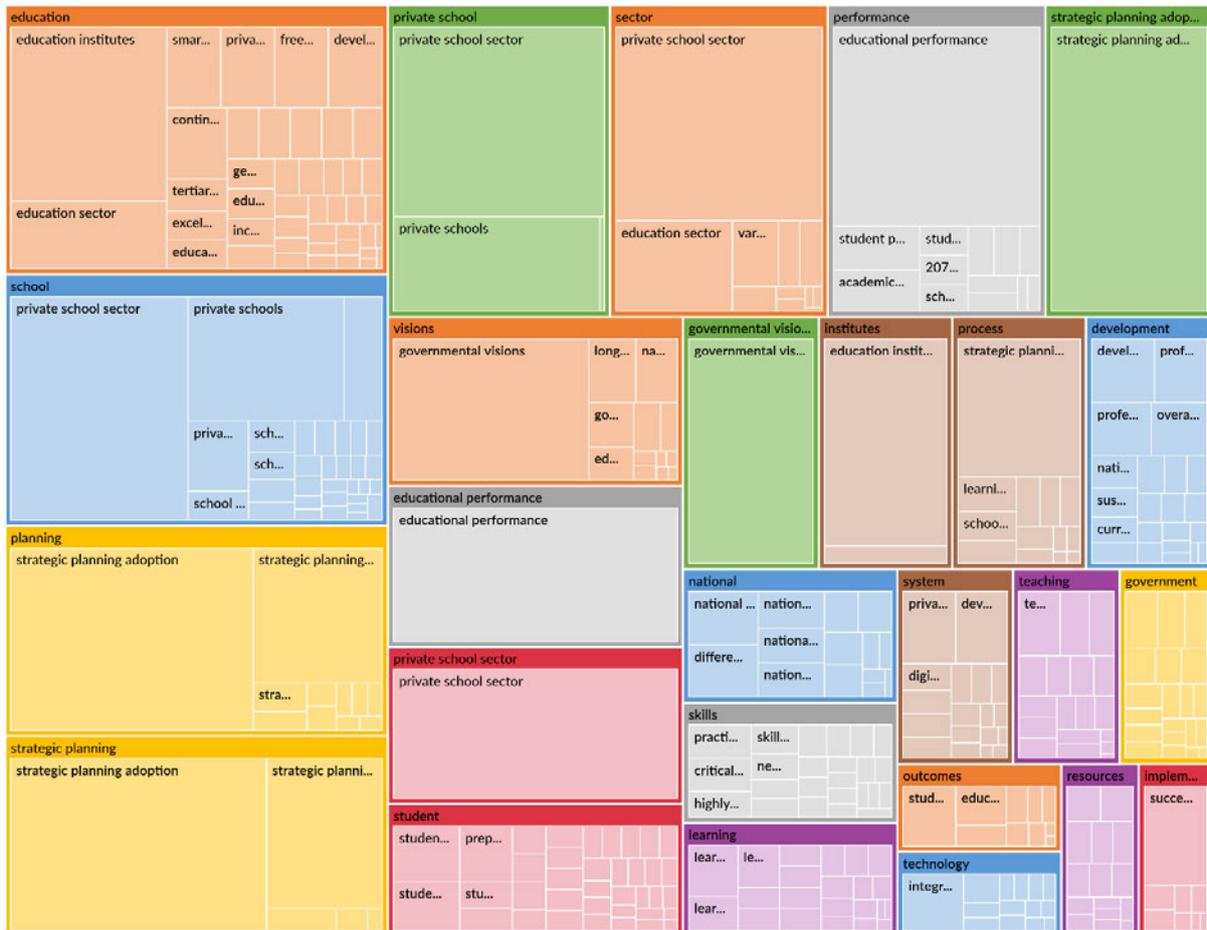


Figure 5.20 Coding scheme of interview transcript

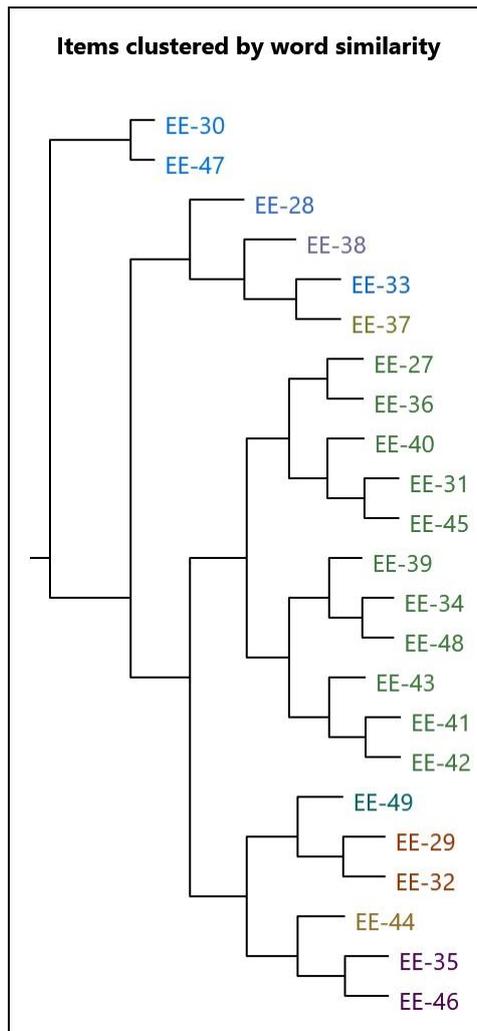


Figure 5.21 Cluster analysis of interviews

## 5.5 Findings of Thematic Analysis

### 5.5.1 Alignment with government visions and initiatives

EE38 is a skilled educational expert with 17 years of extensive experience in the education industry. She specializes in the subject of government education. A vital asset in the quest for educational excellence, EE38 has developed their expertise in education administration over the course of over two decades of dedicated service said in his interview *“We believe a lot on our government vision toward improving the education sector in UAE. Therefore, we developed our school strategic plan to be aligned with the government visions and initiatives. This is elaborated in our initiatives that are tight with KPIs as well. For example, preparing our students for some international exams like PISA aiming to graduate students that competing with their peers internationally. In addition, there are some other initiative that focus on student’s wellbeing to improve their mental and physical health, which will definitely have positive impact on their education and performance”*

Regular communication with government officials, attendance at workshops and training sessions held by government agencies, and active participation in discussions about educational policies and reforms are all part of the alignment process. Private schools are able to effectively incorporate the government's priorities, objectives, and expectations into their strategic plans thanks to these channels, which provide them with insightful information. In addition, private schools cooperate together with other institutions, governmental bodies, and pertinent groups to pool resources, exchange best practices, and jointly advance government ideas and initiatives (ADEC 2015). By working together, the government's educational goals are addressed in a thorough and coordinated manner. Private schools exhibit their dedication to aiding in national development and raising standards of instruction by coordinating their strategic plans with governmental ideas and activities (Al-Taneiji 2012). By ensuring that private schools are in line with the government's larger educational objective, this alignment ultimately serves the interests of children, instructors, and the entire educational community.

It is essential for integrating visions and activities into strategic plans for educational institutions to collaborate with governmental organizations. To promote collaborations, institutes might actively interact with governmental organizations, educational institutions, and pertinent stakeholders. Through these relationships, governmental visions can be incorporated into the strategic goals of the institutions through joint planning, resource sharing, and cooperative decision-making.

EE32 likely plays a critical role in formulating educational policies, creating strategic plans, and encouraging activities that are in line with the educational vision and goals established by the UAE government because she has worked within the government educational system for 25 years. Their wealth of experience qualifies them as a seasoned expert who can successfully negotiate the difficulties of the educational system and promote change propose two ways strategic planning adoption UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 *“Strategic planning can bring about changes in the private education sector's performance by:*

- 1. Enhancing the efficiency of the teaching staff.*
- 2. Improving the quality of the educational process through the adoption of the latest methods and strategies.”*

To determine the precise areas where educational institutions may contribute to governmental visions and efforts, a thorough needs analysis must be conducted. This entails comparing gaps between present practices and expected results and matching strategic goals with the areas

where the government has identified needs. Institutes can make sure that their strategic plans address the priorities stated in governmental visions by conducting needs assessments. Educational institutions might concentrate on capacity building activities to give their professors and staff the abilities and knowledge required to carry out governmental ambitions. Programs for professional development, conferences, and seminars that assist educators in comprehending the objectives and specifications of government initiatives may be included. Institutes can successfully incorporate governmental visions into their strategic plans by investing in capacity building.

Development of curricula is an important strategy for adopting governmental visions. The curriculum of educational institutions can be reviewed and updated to reflect the aims of governmental programs. To make sure that students are equipped to fulfill the objectives of the vision, this may entail integrating new subjects, abilities, or competencies into the curriculum. Institutes can match the curriculum with governmental goals by the larger national agenda. It is crucial to routinely monitor and evaluate the strategic plans as per interviews and questionnaire responses gauge how well the incorporation of governmental visions is progressing. Institutes can set up systems to monitor how the plans are being carried out, evaluate the results, and adapt as necessary. This ensures that the institute's strategic plans continue to reflect the government's shifting priorities and ambitions. Integrating governmental visions into strategic plans requires open and effective communication. Establishing channels of contact with government organizations will allow educational institutions to discuss execution of the visions' problems, successes, and accomplishments. Institutions can benefit from a collaborative approach and government backing by using regular reporting and feedback procedures.

With eight years of industry expertise and a focus on the government educational sector, EE45 is a skilled educational expert. Despite having a very brief lifespan, EE45 has had a considerable impact on the field and has the ability to significantly improve the state of education said *“the strategic planning adoption of UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071 has the power to revolutionize the educational performance of private schools in Abu Dhabi. By prioritizing skills development and preparing students for the future job market, private schools can equip students with the necessary competencies to thrive in a rapidly changing world. This includes promoting entrepreneurship, creativity, and critical thinking, enabling students to become self-driven learners and problem solvers”*

Educational institutions can successfully incorporate governmental visions and goals into their strategic plans by using these techniques for policy alignment, collaboration, needs assessment, capacity building, curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation, and communication. This guarantees a unified and coordinated strategy for attaining the common goals of the government and educational institutions.

### **5.5.2 Incorporation strategies**

As per interviews and questionnaire responses fully comprehend the priorities, objectives, and anticipated results of the government, private schools closely watch and analyze these documents. Schools can pinpoint the precise areas where their strategic objectives should coincide with government initiatives by evaluating these resources. Governmental visions must be incorporated through collaboration and engagement with stakeholders and government bodies (Alshabbani 2015). Private schools take an active part in the workshops, seminars, and conferences held by governmental organizations. Through these platforms, educational institutions can share ideas with one another, learn about the government's goals and objectives, and build connections with important stakeholders. Private schools are kept informed of the most recent educational policies and changes thanks to this cooperative approach, which enables them to successfully incorporate these initiatives into their strategic plans.

With an incredible 28 years of expertise in the field of education, EE43 is a skilled Educational Expert. They have devoted their careers to working in the government education sector and have knowledge in educational management. Due to their considerable experience in the education sector, EE43 is a great resource in their position. Their vast expertise surely helps them be effective in influencing and reshaping the educational landscape in the public sector, explained in her interview *“the implementation may vary among private schools due to factors such as school leadership, available resources, and the level of community engagement. Some schools may be more proactive in implementing innovative practices, while others may require additional support and guidance”*.

Aligning the curriculum and pedagogical methods with the government's educational goal is another tactic. To make sure that they are in line with the targeted learning objectives and skills highlighted by the government, private schools assess their current curriculum frameworks and teaching approaches. This alignment could entail adding fresh material, changing instructional strategies, or incorporating technology into the classroom. Private schools contribute to the

general growth of the education system and equip students to meet the changing requirements of society by matching the curriculum with the government's goal (Fatima, 2019).

Successful inclusion requires constant interaction with stakeholders and their input. As per interviews and questionnaire responses comprehend the expectations and viewpoints of students, parents, instructors, and the community, private schools actively seek their feedback. To get insightful feedback, tools including questionnaires, focus groups, and meetings are used. By addressing stakeholder needs and ambitions and ensuring alignment with governmental efforts, this input enables schools to improve their strategic plans. Measuring the effectiveness of the strategic planning process requires the use of monitoring and evaluation techniques. Private schools set up effective systems to monitor important performance indicators, gauge development, and assess the results of their projects. With the help of these methods, schools can evaluate their success in reaching the expected results, pinpoint areas for development, and make the required changes to their strategic goals.

### **5.5.3 Success measurement**

EE30 is a highly skilled educational expert with 19 years of experience working in the education industry, primarily in the field of government education. EE30 is a vital asset in the effort to achieve educational excellence since they have devoted close to two decades to the cause. They have amassed a wealth of information and expertise said in interview that *“The strategy sets out to build and achieve the highest scientific and professional education standards to serve the UAE future generations and to provide them with the necessary technical and practical skills to drive the economy in both public and private sector .It also aims to prepare a generation of Emirati professionals to sustain growth in vital sectors such as knowledge ,economy ,entrepreneurship and the overall development of the UAE labor market”*

Academic accomplishment and student performance are two typical metrics for success. Private schools monitor students' development and evaluate their performance in light of predetermined benchmarks and criteria. This involves assessing elements including test results, graduation rates, and academic honors. Schools can assess how well their strategic plans are increasing learning outcomes and lining up with the federal government's educational goal by keeping track of student achievement. Stakeholder satisfaction serves as another metric for success. Private schools ask for feedback from students, parents, instructors, and the larger community to determine how satisfied they are with the efforts that have been put in place. To get feedback on several topics, such as teaching effectiveness, the learning environment, support services, and the overall school experience, focus groups, surveys, and feedback

systems are used. Positive comments and high stakeholder satisfaction levels show that governmental visions and efforts have been successfully included into the strategic planning process in a way that satisfies stakeholders. Another indicator of success is adherence to established standards and regulatory obligations. Private schools make sure that their strategic plans adhere to the rules and regulations established by governing bodies. Regular monitoring and assessment procedures determine how well schools adhere to these standards, ensuring that the measures put into action are consistent with the strategic goals and vision of the government. The management and use of resources are taken into account while assessing the effectiveness of the strategic planning process. Private schools evaluate the efficiency with which resources, including monetary, human, and technological ones, are allotted and put to use to assist the implementation of programs in line with the vision of the government. A strategic plan that is properly implemented and where the resources are allocated are both indicators of effective resource management.

A crucial metric of success is the effect on the larger community and society. Private schools assess how their plans and activities advance the welfare and development of society. This involves evaluating elements including relationships with outside groups, social responsibility programs, and community engagement (Government of the United Arab Emirates 2016). The extent to which private schools fulfill social needs and support the larger ambitions and initiatives of the government can be used to gauge the effectiveness of the strategic planning process. For private schools in Abu Dhabi, including governmental objectives and activities into strategic planning is crucial. These schools aggressively connect their objectives, curricula, instructional strategies, and resources with the visions and efforts established by the government, according to the findings of this thematic study. Private schools make sure that their strategic plans contribute to national development and improve educational quality through stakeholder discussions, collaboration, and ongoing monitoring. A number of criteria, such as academic performance, stakeholder satisfaction, and the degree of congruence with government objectives, are used to assess the strategic planning process's success.

Additionally, private schools might have internal evaluation procedures in place to keep track of their performance and collect comments from students, parents, and teachers. This input can assist schools in identifying areas for enhancement, customizing instructional strategies, and addressing particular needs and issues. Private schools can adjust to changing educational environments and make sure their educational programs stay applicable and effective by embracing a culture of continual development and evaluation.

Private schools can invest on programs for teachers' professional growth that are in line with UAE's objective to make sure educators have access to the most recent information and pedagogical techniques. Teachers who get ongoing professional development are more equipped to use cutting-edge techniques and best practices. Teachers can take advantage of a number of professional development programs offered by the UAE government through organizations like ADEK and the Ministry of Education. For instance, the "Teacher Professional Learning Program" gives instructors the chance to develop their pedagogical expertise, find out about the newest trends in education, and work with other educators. As per interviews and questionnaire responses provide specialized professional development programs that are tailored to the needs of its teachers, private schools can work with universities, training centers, and educational institutions. According to research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009), effective professional development for teachers has a favorable impact on student achievement and overall educational results. Private schools in Abu Dhabi can guarantee high-quality education, apply cutting-edge teaching techniques, and establish stimulating learning environments for students by investing in the ongoing professional development of their teaching team.

The private school industry in Abu Dhabi may undergo a transformation as a result of the strategic planning adoption that is in line with UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071. Private schools can improve educational quality, facilitate the development of future skills, efficiently integrate technology, encourage innovation, and strengthen partnerships with diverse stakeholders by working in accordance with the vision's objectives. Due to this alignment, private schools are guaranteed to play a large part in educating and preparing kids for the future.

#### **5.5.4 Educational excellence**

As per interviews and questionnaire responses promote good education, private schools in Abu Dhabi also make investments in cutting-edge infrastructure and supplies. They offer access to libraries with large collections, well-equipped science and technology labs, and digital learning resources. With the help of these tools, students can conduct practical experiments, investigation, and discovery, which helps them grasp the material better. Additionally, private schools in Abu Dhabi work to identify and develop each student's unique skills (Langton, 2016). They provide students with opportunity to explore their interests and hone their talents outside of the conventional classroom setting by offering a wide variety of extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, music, and clubs. These activities support a well-rounded educational experience and aid in the overall development of children.

With strong credentials and 25 years of experience in the education industry, with an emphasis on the government educational sector, EE46 is a seasoned educational expert. EE46 is a great asset in the quest for educational excellence because of their 25 years of committed service, which has given them a lot of knowledge and experience said in interviews while asking about the vision 2071 said *“in order to reach the goals of the UAE’s Vision 2021 and 2071, the private school sector’s plan is to invest in the future generations and enhance the needed skills, knowledge, and curiosity to attain excellent education through integrating technology, advanced sciences, space science/topics, creativity and innovation, high focus on moral values, and discovering students hidden talents”*

The academic success of students attending private schools in Abu Dhabi reflects the dedication to provide top-notch education. These institutions frequently have strong graduation rates and a sizable number of graduates who go on to study at renowned universities all over the world (Hallinger & Heck 2010). The achievement of their graduates serves as evidence of the value placed on academic excellence in their educational initiatives and programs. Additionally, Abu Dhabi's private schools place a strong emphasis on evaluation and continual development as per interviews and questionnaire responses give top-notch instruction. They put in place effective monitoring and evaluation systems to judge how well the curriculum, instructional strategies, and student outcomes are working. Through the use of data-driven decision-making, schools are able to continuously improve educational performance by identifying areas that need improvement.

EE36 has an astounding 33 years of experience as an educational expert, making him a very accomplished individual. Their vast experience has mostly been devoted to educational management, and they have taken an active part in the public school system. With more than three decades of experience, EE36 has a plethora of information and perceptions that are crucial for enhancing and reshaping the educational landscape. Their lengthy and illustrious careers are proof of their commitment to the improvement of the educational system, making them a crucial force behind the advancement of the government's educational objectives interviewed that *“By prioritizing quality education, future skills development, technology integration, professional development, cultural understanding, national identity, and innovation and entrepreneurship, private schools can improve teaching and learning practices, enhance student outcomes, and foster a stronger focus on future skills development.”*

Strategic planning promotes private schools to use technology and cutting-edge tools to build interactive and engaging learning environments that boost motivation and engagement in students. Smart boards, virtual reality, and online learning platforms are examples of educational technologies that can improve learning opportunities and support individualized instruction (Mohiuddin 2017). Private schools have improved the quality of education, according to the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). The strategic planning and programs in line with the UAE's educational vision are credited with this progress.

Additionally, Abu Dhabi's private schools have actively carried out creative initiatives and activities that are in line with the country's goal. For instance, GEMS Education, one of the top private school operators in the UAE, has begun fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and creative thinking among students in all of its schools through the "Innovation Month" campaign. This campaign includes a number of different activities, such as coding contests, robotics competitions, and invention displays (Government of the United Arab Emirates 2016). Private schools in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi have made investments in teacher professional development in addition to curriculum improvements and technology integration. An additional well-known private school operator, Aldar Education, has created extensive professional development programs for its teachers that emphasize pedagogical training, technological integration, and cutting-edge teaching techniques. These programs are designed to give teachers the knowledge and abilities they need to provide high-quality instruction in line with UAE's vision (ADEC 2015).

### **5.5.5 Innovation and technological integration**

Additionally, private schools in Abu Dhabi use educational software, internet resources, and digital platforms to support individualized learning. With the help of these tools, students can access educational materials, work with others, and pursue independent learning. Learning management systems (LMS), for instance, are frequently used to organize courses, assignments, and exams in a digital format. Project-based learning methodologies encourage innovation by having students work on real-world issues and engage in analytical and problem-solving processes. Students in Abu Dhabi's private schools are encouraged to think creatively, investigate novel concepts, and hone their entrepreneurial abilities. To provide students practical experience with innovation and technology, they might plan hackathons, robotics contests, or innovation challenges.

EE27 is an experienced educational expert with ten years of worthwhile experience. They have had a big impact while working in the government educational sector and have a speciality in educational management. They have surely acquired a thorough awareness of the complexities involved in administering and enhancing the educational system over their 10 years in the education sector. Through their experience, EE27 is crucial in advancing improvements and adjustments in the educational system of the federal government said in her interview *“Private schools in Abu Dhabi strategically align with UAE’s Vision 2021 and 2071 by emphasizing quality education and innovation. They invest in modern teaching methods and technology, aligning with the vision of a knowledge-based economy. They also focus on developing students; skills for the future job market, in line with UAE’s vision”*

As per interviews and questionnaire responses promote innovation and technological integration, private schools in Abu Dhabi also work with businesses, universities, and research organizations. They might create alliances for joint research initiatives, internship possibilities, or mentoring schemes. These partnerships encourage the sharing of information and expertise while exposing students to technology's practical uses. The accomplishments of students in private schools in Abu Dhabi demonstrate the dedication to innovation and technological integration. Numerous schools send their students to compete in national and international STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) competitions where they present creative projects and solutions. These accomplishments demonstrate how well innovation and technology are incorporated into the curriculum.

EE35 is a committed educational expert with 12 years of worthwhile experience, especially in the government educational sector. They have experience in different facets of educational planning and implementation and have a focus in educational management. In line with governmental directives, EE35 has actively contributed to the establishment and improvement of educational policies and programs during the course of their careers explained in her interview *“It can help in motivate active employee engagement school environment. School staff can feel more engaged to the work they are doing as well as keeping their plans focus. This will help to observe the key outcomes and evaluate where and how the school is moving forward. The adoption of strategic planning assists in students’ educational achievement and assure that it is taken care of”*.

In the Emirates of Abu Dhabi, private schools have embraced technology integration as a component of their long-term planning. In many institutions, for instance, learning

management systems (LMS) have been put in place, allowing for online collaboration, assignment submission, and access to digital textbooks. This use of technology in the classroom has increased student engagement and interaction while also enhancing the efficiency of administrative chores.

Additionally, internet learning resources and educational apps are being widely used in private schools. By allowing students to participate in both traditional classroom education and online activities, these tools enable blended learning methodologies. Improved levels of student engagement and improved academic accomplishment have been found to be associated with this blended learning method, which has been shown to improve student outcomes (Source: Means et al., Private schools can foster an innovation culture by enticing instructors and learners to consider fresh perspectives, use cutting-edge techniques, and participate in research and development. This is consistent with the UAE's goal of promoting a knowledge-based economy. As per interviews and questionnaire responses establish itself as a hub for global innovation, the UAE has recently made considerable investments in R&D (Government of the United Arab Emirates 2016). Students are exposed to a mindset that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities by promoting an innovation culture in private schools.

Abu Dhabi's private schools have put in place a number of programs to encourage student innovation. For instance, they arrange innovation contests, hackathons, and project-based learning exercises that call on students to create original answers to contemporary issues. These efforts encourage cooperation and teamwork in addition to improving students' problem-solving abilities. As per interviews and questionnaire responses give students the chance to participate in actual innovation initiatives, private schools have partnered with regional companies and business authorities. Students obtain hands-on experience, guidance, and exposure to the most recent business trends and practices through these partnerships. This is in line with the UAE's goal of fostering cooperation between university and industry as per interviews and questionnaire responses create a dynamic innovation environment.

The performance and results of students can be used to observe how technological integration and innovation have an impact. According to research, integrating technology into the classroom has a favorable impact on students' motivation, engagement, and academic success (Melkonian & Areepattamannil 2017). Similar to this, encouraging an innovation culture in schools has been linked to improved creativity and critical thinking abilities in students (Langton 2016)

Increased collaboration between private schools, governmental organizations, universities, and industry partners can result from strategic planning that is in line with the UAE's goal. This cooperation can make it easier to share knowledge, allocate resources, and carry out group efforts to improve educational outcomes. To spur innovation and raise educational standards, the UAE government has been actively supporting partnerships between the commercial sector and educational institutions. For instance, the "EdTech Innovation" program was started by the UAE Ministry of Education in partnership with private businesses with the intention of fostering innovation in education through the creation and application of technology-based solutions (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015). Through these partnerships, private schools have access to knowledge, materials, and cutting-edge technology that can improve the teaching and learning process.

As per interviews and questionnaire responses improve educational achievement, private schools in Abu Dhabi have welcomed collaboration and collaborations. They work closely with governmental organizations like the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), which offers regulatory monitoring, support, and direction to guarantee high-quality education. Private schools can create a unified and coordinated approach to educational excellence by working with ADEK to match their strategic planning with the Emirate's educational policies and objectives.

Additionally, private schools work with universities and research organizations to advance R&D initiatives. This collaboration improves teaching efficiency and student learning results by enabling schools to stay current with cutting-edge pedagogical techniques and educational practices. To give students access to practical experiences, internships, and mentoring opportunities, private schools also collaborate with local businesses and organizations. These collaborations fill the knowledge gap between the needs of the workforce and education, preparing students for potential career paths. Private schools can actively include parents, neighborhood groups, and small businesses to promote a feeling of community, cultural awareness, and societal contributions. This encourages a close link between education and societal demands. Private schools in Abu Dhabi regularly involve parents and community members in the educational process because they value community involvement. To promote parent involvement, obtain input, and create strong home-school partnerships, they plan frequent meetings, workshops, and events. These partnerships not only improve student support but also give parents a better knowledge of how their children are learning and growing. Additionally, private schools in Abu Dhabi collaborate with neighborhood companies and

groups to offer students chances for civic engagement, cultural enrichment, and practical application of their studies. Schools might plan community service projects, environmental campaigns, or exchange programs across cultures. Students gain a sense of civic responsibility, cultural knowledge, and empathy through these experiences, which helps them become more well-rounded people overall. Collaboration and community involvement have a positive effect on student experiences and educational outcomes. According to research, parental involvement in school has a favorable impact on students' academic performance, motivation, and general wellbeing (Hariyati et al. 2021). Likewise, community involvement and partnerships help kids build their social skills, sense of cultural awareness, and sense of belonging (Melkonian & Areepattamannil 2017).

The use of adaptive learning systems is a significant instance of personalized learning powered by AI. These systems employ AI algorithms to continuously evaluate a student's performance and modify the curriculum as necessary. As per interviews and questionnaire responses help a student's learning process, adaptive learning platforms analyze data on student answer to questions, identify areas of difficulty, and offer targeted interventions and additional resources. By using a tailored approach, teachers can make sure that each student is given the right amount of assistance and challenge, maximizing their learning potential. AI can also help with individualized evaluation and feedback. AI can give students quick feedback through automated grading systems, enabling them to recognize their errors and make improvements in real-time. Students can learn from their mistakes and deepen their comprehension of the subject matter thanks to the prompt feedback. The global market for AI in education is anticipated to reach \$6 billion by 2025, according to a report by HolonIQ, illustrating the technology's increasing acceptance and recognition in personalized learning (Melkonian & Areepattamannil 2017). This demonstrates the enormous potential of AI to revolutionize the educational landscape, especially the educational system in Abu Dhabi.

With an amazing track record of 31 years in the education industry, EE41 is a highly skilled and accomplished Educational Expert who has worked largely in the government educational sector. Their knowledge of educational management makes them a tremendous asset to Abu Dhabi's educational system explained in interview *“AI can personalize learning experiences by analyzing students; data, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and providing targeted interventions. It can also automate administrative tasks, freeing up teachers’, time for more meaningful interactions with students. Big Data can help education institutions make data-driven decisions, identify trends, and evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs.*

*Furthermore, AI and Big Data can assist in the development of smart learning environments and adaptive assessment systems, facilitating personalized and effective education for each student.”*

Additionally, the application of big data to personalized learning offers insightful information on the academic trends, learning styles, and performance of students. Teachers can improve teaching and learning methods by identifying areas for improvement, implementing focused interventions, and making data-driven decisions by evaluating vast amounts of educational data. Big Data analytics can be used to find learning gaps, create customized interventions, and give a complete picture of each student's development and requirements. According to research by the American Institutes for Research, individualized learning strategies assisted by AI and Big Data analytics led to higher levels of student engagement, better academic performance, and higher levels of student happiness. These favorable results demonstrate how individualized learning can be used to maximize student potential and enhance educational achievements.

### **Intelligent tutoring systems**

For the successful execution of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning in Abu Dhabi's Education sector, Intelligent Tutoring Systems (ITS) play a critical role in harnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data. ITS uses AI algorithms to give students individualized advice and support, increasing their educational experiences. Artificial intelligence (AI) technology are used to construct virtual tutors that can adjust to the demands, learning preferences, and styles of each unique learner. For the purpose of providing individualized education, justifications, and feedback, these systems assess student data, including their performance, replies to exercises, and progress. ITS can provide customized interventions and assistance, assisting students in overcoming obstacles and achieving improved learning outcomes, by knowing each student's strengths and limitations. Research has demonstrated that intelligent tutoring systems are effective at raising student achievement. For instance, the U.S. Department of Education's meta-analysis revealed that students who used Intelligent Tutoring Systems outperformed those in traditional classroom settings, with an impact size about equal to an additional grade level of improvement.

The use of intelligent tutoring systems in Abu Dhabi is in line with the goal of delivering high-quality instruction and individualized learning experiences. Intelligent tutoring systems can help teachers give personalised learning, enhance classroom instruction, and cater to the unique needs of students by utilizing AI and Big Data. Teachers may have more time to devote to more

individualized and engaging interactions with students thanks to the inclusion of ITS. Additionally, Intelligent Tutoring Systems can offer ongoing evaluation and feedback, allowing students to monitor their development and make adjustments in real-time. Student engagement, motivation, and academic performance are promoted by ITS through individualized instruction and adaptive learning pathways. Collaboration between educational institutions, technology providers, and policymakers is necessary for the successful implementation of Intelligent Tutoring Systems. For these tools to be successfully integrated into classrooms, instructors must be given the necessary training and assistance.

### **Predictive analytics**

When integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data for the effective implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning in Abu Dhabi's Education sector, predictive analytics plays a vital role. Predictive analytics can offer insightful information and enable proactive decision-making by evaluating enormous volumes of educational data and discovering patterns and trends. Based on past data, predictive analytics predicts future results using statistical modeling methods and AI algorithms. It can be used in the educational setting to forecast student performance, identify students who are at risk of experiencing academic difficulties or dropping out, and suggest prompt interventions.

Predictive analytics has been shown to be useful in raising student performance in research investigations. For instance, a research at the University of California, Los Angeles discovered that predictive analytics models had an accuracy of 80% when predicting student graduation rates (Alarabi et al. 2022). The institution may establish tailored support programs and interventions to improve student achievement by identifying students who were at risk of not graduating. Predictive analytics can be used in a number of ways in the education sector in Abu Dhabi. For instance, it can be used to spot early indicators of student disengagement or academic difficulties, allowing educators to step in and offer support when it's needed. By anticipating enrollment trends, class sizes, and faculty requirements, it can also help with resource allocation optimization, resulting in more effective

According to a survey by Research and Markets, the global market for predictive analytics in education is anticipated to reach \$1.2 billion by 2025 (Alsheikh et al. 2020). This expansion demonstrates the growing appreciation of predictive analytics' importance in improving instructional strategies and student results. Predictive analytics are being implemented in Abu Dhabi's educational system in line with the goal of building a data-driven, future-proof

educational ecosystem. Educational institutions may produce focused interventions, make decisions that are supported by evidence, and efficiently manage resources by utilizing AI and Big Data. When using predictive analytics, it is essential to address ethical difficulties and data protection concerns. To respect moral norms and preserve trust, predictive models must be fair and transparent, and student data must be protected. Education institutions in Abu Dhabi must invest in a strong data infrastructure, create data governance frameworks, and train teachers and administrators if they are to successfully deploy predictive analytics. To fully utilize predictive analytics for well-informed decision-making and enhanced educational results, collaboration between educational institutions, governmental organizations, and technology suppliers is essential.

### **Administrative efficiency**

The successful implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning in Abu Dhabi's Education sector depends in large part on administrative efficiency, which is a crucial area where Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data can contribute. AI and Big Data can improve resource allocation, free up time for teachers and staff, and increase overall efficiency by automating administrative duties and streamlining processes. Handling routine questions and chores is one area of administrative efficiency that can benefit from AI and Big Data. There is less need for manual intervention when frequent questions from students, parents, and staff can be instantly answered by AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants. By 2022, 70% of customer contacts will involve AI chatbots or virtual assistants, according to a Gartner report (Buckner 2022). Additionally, procedures like student enrollment, scheduling, and resource allocation can be automated using AI and Big Data. AI algorithms can efficiently allocate budget resources, assign instructional resources, and plan classes by analyzing previous data and patterns. This ensures the best possible use of the resources that are available while also saving time and effort.

With an incredible 19 years of expertise in the education industry and a focus on the government educational sector, EE30 is a skilled educational expert. Over time, EE30 has gained a thorough understanding of the complexities of the educational system and has played a significant role in advancing reforms and advancements in the field explained the strategies used at their work place *“The UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence aims to achieve the objectives of UAE Centennial 2071, boost government performance at all levels, use an integrated smart digital system that can overcome challenges and provide quick efficient solutions, make the UAE the first in the field of AI investments in various sectors and create*

*new vital market with high economic value. In October 2017, the UAE Government launched 'UAE Strategy for Artificial Intelligence (AI)'. This marks the post-mobile government phase which will rely on various future services, sectors and infrastructure projects”*

The usage of automated grading systems is one example of AI-driven administrative efficiency in the education industry. These systems replace the requirement for human grading by teachers by using AI algorithms to assess and provide comments on student assignments and assessments. This automation can speed up student response, decrease grading errors, and save up teachers' time. In the education industry, AI has the ability to automate administrative work, freeing up 10-15% of instructors' time, according to a McKinsey analysis. Then, this time can be focused toward professional development, personalised education, and student involvement. Educational institutions must invest in infrastructure, data management systems, and staff development to ensure the successful use of AI and Big Data for administrative efficiency. Concerns over data privacy, security, and the moral application of AI to administrative tasks must be addressed.

### **Data-driven decision making**

Big Data analytics can offer insightful information about student performance, educational trends, and resource allocation. Education officials and administrators may make well-informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, and pinpoint areas for development by evaluating vast amounts of data. The objectives of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 are met via educational initiatives thanks to data-driven decision-making.

The capacity to evaluate vast amounts of educational data to learn about student performance, learning trends, and areas for development is a significant advantage of data-driven decision making. Big Data and AI algorithms can analyse and analyze this data to find patterns and correlations that might not be immediately obvious using more conventional approaches. For instance, educational institutions can pinpoint specific areas where students are having difficulty by evaluating student assessment data. Resource allocation at educational institutions can be optimized through data-driven decision making. AI algorithms can aid in scheduling classes more successfully, distributing instructional resources effectively, and allocating budget resources effectively by assessing data on student enrolment, course demands, and instructor availability. This guarantees that resources are distributed where they are most required, improving educational results. Additionally, data-driven decision making enables the creation of strategic plans and policies based on fact. Educational policymakers can spot

patterns, assess the success of current programs, and create customized interventions to meet particular needs by examining data on student demographics, performance, and outcomes. This makes it possible to guarantee that educational activities are in line with students' needs and goals as well as the needs of the larger educational system. In education, data-driven decision making has been shown to significantly increase student accomplishment, according to a Deloitte research. It claims that educational institutions can raise student results by up to 20% if they successfully use data to guide decision-making. However, educational institutions must invest in data infrastructure, data management tools, and staff development if they are to effectively use data-driven decision making. Additionally, they must handle issues of student data privacy and security, as well as guaranteed adherence to all applicable laws and standards.

### **Smart campus management**

Educational institutions can gain a lot from data-driven decision making in the area of smart campus management. The efficiency and efficacy of educational institutions in Abu Dhabi can be increased by utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data to optimize many elements of campus management. Collecting and analyzing data from multiple sources on campus, including attendance records for students, facility usage, energy use, and maintenance logs, is a key component of smart campus management. These data can be processed and analyzed by AI algorithms, which can then produce insightful information that helps with decision-making.

The same idea was presented by with 15 years of experience, EE47 has probably seen how the education industry in Abu Dhabi has changed and has been a key player in its development. They probably participated in strategic planning and decision-making procedures to raise the caliber and accessibility of education throughout the emirate in following words *“The AI strategy has five themes: the formation of the UAE AI Council workshops, programs, initiatives and field visits to government bodies develop capabilities and skills of all staff operating in the field of technology and organize training courses for government officials provide all services via AI and the full integration of AI into medical and security services launch leadership strategy and issue a government law on the safe use of AI”*.

Allocating resources more efficiently is a crucial use of data-driven decision making. Educational institutions can make educated judgments about classroom assignments, facility development, and scheduling by evaluating data on facility usage to find patterns and trends in space utilization. By ensuring that campus resources are used wisely, this lowers operating expenses and boosts overall effectiveness. Additionally, data-driven decision making can aid

in pinpointing areas where campus operations might be improved (Buckner 2022). Educational institutions can uncover maintenance patterns, equipment failure rates, and potential problems by examining maintenance records and feedback data. As a result, campus operations are disrupted less frequently and students are provided with a secure and supportive learning environment. Proactive maintenance planning and prompt repairs are also made possible.

Additionally, data-driven decision making can improve campus security and safety measures. Educational institutions can detect security weaknesses, patterns of wrongdoing, and potential threats by evaluating data from security cameras, access control systems, and incident reports. This makes it possible for them to establish suitable security measures, create emergency response plans, and guarantee the protection of both employees and students. According to a McKinsey study, data-driven campus management can reduce costs by up to 20% by increasing operational effectiveness and resource allocation. Additionally, it makes it possible for institutions to offer students a better educational experience and improves the sustainability of the whole campus. However, a strong data infrastructure, secure data management systems, and knowledgeable employees to evaluate and interpret the data are necessary for the deployment of data-driven decision making in smart campus management to be successful (Alsalamy, Behery & Abdullah 2014). To safeguard sensitive information and guarantee adherence to applicable legislation, it is also crucial to prioritize data privacy and security.

### **Lifelong learning and professional development**

A successful education sector must emphasize lifelong learning and professional development, and the combination of artificial intelligence (AI) and big data can significantly improve these areas. While professional development focuses on enhancing the competencies and capabilities of educators and other professionals in the education sector, lifelong learning refers to the continual acquisition of information and skills throughout one's life. Lifelong learning can be enabled through personalized and adaptive learning platforms with the use of AI and Big Data. To offer individualized learning experiences, these platforms analyze data about individual learners, including their learning preferences, capabilities, and areas for development. The success of learners can be ensured by using AI algorithms to create tailored suggestions, adaptive learning paths, and targeted interventions. This method encourages self-directed learning and enables people to pick up new information and abilities at their own pace, giving them the flexibility to adjust to the varying demands of the future.

Big data and artificial intelligence (AI) can provide instructors with individualized training and development possibilities. AI algorithms can suggest specialized training materials, tools, and collaborative opportunities by examining data on teachers' professional goals, skills, and limitations. This helps instructors learn new skills, broaden their pedagogical understanding, and keep up with the most recent findings and industry best practices. Programs for professional development that are powered by AI and Big Data can improve teaching efficiency and overall educational achievements. According to a McKinsey report, tailored and scalable learning experiences offered by AI-based platforms for lifelong learning and professional development have the power to revolutionize education. These platforms can use data to develop customized learning pathways, provide real-time feedback, and promote instructor collaboration.

Additionally, educational institutions can benefit from the use of AI and Big Data to undertake research and innovate in the field of education. Researchers can gain insights, spot new patterns, and assess the success of educational interventions by examining enormous amounts of educational data. The creation of data-driven policies and practices is made possible by this evidence-based approach to research and innovation, which promotes ongoing development in the field of education. It is crucial to remember that infrastructure, training programs, and data privacy safeguards must be invested in for AI and Big Data to be successfully integrated into lifelong learning and professional growth. The ethical use of AI in education must be ensured, as well as the protection of learner and educator data and the addressing of any biases or inequities that may result from these technologies.

### **Research and innovation**

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learning and enables people to pick up new information and abilities at their own pace, giving them the flexibility to adjust to the varying demands of the future.

With an incredible 23 years of expertise in the education industry and a focus on the government educational sector, EE44 is a reputable Educational Expert. With such a plethora of experience, EE44 unquestionably boasts a wealth of information and skills that may significantly influence the growth and development of Abu Dhabi's educational system explained in her interview *“big data and AI are trends for the future, students needs to be equipped with theses skill, therefore there should be comprehensive track in the future Strategic Planning for the Education sector in Abu Dhabi with list of initiatives to focus on these areas for future plans, for the currents plans there are some great initiatives like AD-coding schools and some more can be added for future plans”*

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huge role to play in Abu Dhabi's effective implementation of its Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 strategic plans for the education sector. These technological advancements have the power to promote innovation in the educational system, improve resource allocation, and increase individualized learning. To successfully incorporate these technologies into their teaching practices, it is imperative to ensure the ethical use of AI, safeguard the privacy of student data, and offer educators with the necessary training and support. Abu Dhabi's education sector may achieve better efficiency, efficacy, and innovation in line with its ambitious goals by integrating AI and Big Data.

### **5.5.6 Emirati cultural values**

To promote Emirati culture among students from various origins, cultural festivities, activities, and performances are conducted within schools. Students get to experience and learn about Emirati culture directly by taking part in activities like traditional dance, music, and painting. Additionally, Abu Dhabi's private schools interact with the UAE society and work with cultural organizations to give kids access to immersive cultural experiences. They might plan educational excursions to museums, historical places, and cultural events so that students can experience Emirati culture and legacy firsthand. As per interviews and questionnaire responses build an environment that honors and respects many cultures and viewpoints, private schools also place a strong emphasis on the principles of tolerance, respect, and inclusivity. They encourage students to accept diversity and cultivate skills for global citizenship by promoting intercultural discussion.

With a distinguished career spanning 25 years in the education industry and a focus on the government educational sector, EE32 is a highly skilled educational expert. With a tremendous record of service, EE32 is a vital contributor to the improvement of education in Abu Dhabi and contributes a plethora of knowledge and insights to the educational scene said *“the private school sector currently adopts the strategic planning process by conducting evaluations of the school and teachers, monitoring the educational process, and providing support through training workshops in line with the UAE Vision 2021 to 2071”*

The accomplishments and acclaim received by private schools in Abu Dhabi demonstrate the dedication to Emirati principles and cultural awareness. Numerous schools have received recognition for their work fostering cross-cultural understanding both domestically and abroad. Private schools in Abu Dhabi, for instance, have taken part in cultural exchange programs with schools from other nations, giving children the chance to discover other cultures while

presenting their own. These programs aid in the growth of well-rounded people who value their own cultural history while being receptive to and respectful of other cultures.

### **5.5.7 Collaboration and partnerships**

Collaboration between the government and business is an essential component of strategic planning in private schools. Schools work with governmental organizations to match their curricula and educational activities with national standards and norms, such as the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK). By working together, private schools may be certain that they are achieving the government-set educational goals and progressing in the direction of the UAE's overarching vision. As per interviews and questionnaire responses improve educational processes and give students access to higher education, private schools also form alliances with universities. These collaborations could include access to university facilities and resources, guest lectures, internship programs, and joint research initiatives. Such partnerships aid in the creation of a diverse and academically stimulating learning environment.

As per interviews and questionnaire responses promote community involvement and develop learning opportunities outside of the classroom, private schools often actively collaborate with nearby companies and community organizations. They might work together on projects like career advising workshops, mentorship programs, and internships that expose students to real-world situations and help them gain useful skills. Private schools have benefited from collaboration and collaborations as evidenced by their numerous successes and endeavors. Abu Dhabi's private schools have won numerous accolades and medals for their cooperative work, highlighting the beneficial effects of these alliances. The cooperative efforts, research projects, and community involvement activities that these schools have successfully executed have improved educational outcomes and expanded student opportunities.

Although Abu Dhabi's private schools approach strategic planning similarly, there may be changes depending on the leadership of the school, the resources available, and the unique circumstances of each institution. While some schools could put a higher priority on teaching cultural awareness or sustainability, some might place a bigger emphasis on integrating technology. The underlying objective of being in line with the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071, however, continues to apply to all private schools.

### **5.5.8 Future skills development**

By promoting creativity, innovation, and problem-solving, private schools can help students develop an entrepreneurial attitude. In a world that is changing quickly, this trains students to

become self-driven learners and flexible workers. The ability of students to recognize possibilities, take calculated risks, and think critically can all be positively impacted by entrepreneurship instruction in the classroom, according to research (von Suchodoletz et al. 2019).

EE28 is a skilled educational expert who has had a remarkable 25-year career in education, particularly in the government educational sector. They have committed themselves to make major contributions to the government's educational objectives and have competence in educational management. EE28 brings a wealth of information and a thorough awareness of the complexities of the educational system with her quarter-century of experience explained in his interview that *“Measuring the success of any strategic planning process is linked to the achievement of the targeted goals. In the school context, the success is measured not only by performing the planned tasks and activities, but rather by assessing the everlasting, bigger and sustainable impact as a result of such activities. For example, it is not enough for the school to organize sessions on the importance of saving the environment; where the measurement would be simply how many students have attended such sessions!”*

Private schools can foster an entrepreneurial spirit among students by offering entrepreneurship programs, fostering project-based learning, and supporting invention competitions. Private schools in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi have launched a number of measures to help students build future skills in line with the adoption of strategic planning. As an illustration, several private schools have included coding and robotics in their curricula so that students can develop their technical knowledge and problem-solving skills. According to Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2015), these programs are geared toward preparing students for careers in STEM sectors, which are highly sought-after in the UAE. Additionally, private schools have partnered with associations and companies to give students access to real-world learning opportunities. Included in this are mentorship programs, industry visits, and internships that expose students to the working world and aid in the development of crucial abilities needed in the workplace. Private schools may close the skills gap between the classroom and the workplace by supporting these partnerships, ensuring that students are well-prepared for their future employment (PwC 2018). The performance of students might show the effect of future skill development. The Sulieman (2022) findings show that UAE students outperformed the national average in collaborative problem-solving abilities, demonstrating their capacity to effectively collaborate in teams and resolve challenging issues (Source:

OECD, 2018). This implies that integrating future skills development in private schools has improved students' talents and equipped them for obstacles they will face in the real world.

With an incredible 20 years of expertise in the field of education, EE48 is a skilled Educational Expert who has mainly worked in the government educational sector. They have spent their whole professional lives connected to the esteemed School Academy, where they have made a huge impact on the educational scene explained in his interview *“private schools can invest in continuous professional development programs for teachers to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement innovative teaching practices. This can include training on using technology effectively, incorporating inquiry-based learning, and adapting teaching methods to cater to diverse student needs”*.

The UAE's visions highlight the need for a curriculum that is future-focused and in line with the requirements of the changing labor market. This may result in the creation of curricula that emphasize innovation, entrepreneurship, problem-solving, and critical thinking. The visions promote a change from traditional rote learning to a more hands-on, skills-based approach, ensuring that students gain the competences required for success in the knowledge-based fields. The visions acknowledge that teachers play a significant part in providing high-quality education. There is a focus on teachers' ongoing professional development to support this. As per interviews and questionnaire responses improve teaching abilities, pedagogical approaches, and technological integration, this may comprise training programs, workshops, and collaborative possibilities. Investments in teacher development can improve educational performance, which will benefit students' outcomes. The UAE's goals call for the establishment of a competitive educational environment and the positioning of the nation as a worldwide knowledge hub. This has the potential to draw in worldwide partnerships, collaborations, and expertise, bringing in top practices from all around the world. The visions encourage educational institutions to strive for excellence and enhance their performance on a global scale by promoting worldwide benchmarks and standards.

The UAE's visions support a culture of ongoing education and skill development and acknowledge the value of lifetime learning. This may result in the creation of learning options outside of the traditional classroom, like adult education, vocational training, and professional certifications. A person's educational performance can be improved at all ages, facilitating career advancement and personal improvement, by encouraging lifelong learning. The visions place a strong emphasis on encouraging more funding for research and innovation within the

education sector. This may encourage educational institutions to conduct research, investigate cutting-edge teaching techniques, and develop the field of education.

With 20 years of devoted work, mostly in the government educational sector, EE37 is an accomplished Educational Expert with a lot of expertise in the education industry. Their area of expertise is educational management, and they have had a big impact on how Abu Dhabi's educational system has developed, suggest in her interview that *“the school regulators- ie. ADEK, KHDA and Sharjah Authority should take a more proactive role in Private schools. Inspection is important, but school improvement, professional development for teachers and school leaders is equally important”*

Through the use of research-based procedures and the creation of new knowledge, educational performance can be improved by establishing a research-oriented culture. Overall, the thematic analysis points to the potential for the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 to significantly alter educational performance. These visions can have a positive effect on the educational environment in the UAE by putting an emphasis on quality education, technology integration, future-oriented curriculum, professional development for teachers, global competitiveness, lifelong learning, research, and innovation. This will help students get ready for the opportunities and challenges of the future.

#### **5.5.9 Alignment with national educational priorities**

Private schools might modify their curricula to include these skills and competences as per interviews and questionnaire responses match with these aims. They can provide cutting-edge teaching techniques that encourage participation from students, active learning, and knowledge application in real-world situations. This alignment gives students the skills they need to succeed in the workforce and contribute to society in addition to preparing them for further education. Additionally, private schools can adapt their pedagogy to the values and culture of the UAE, fostering a sense of national identity, tolerance, and global citizenship. As per interviews and questionnaire responses make sure that students have a strong sense of belonging and cultural awareness, they can incorporate UAE history, heritage, and language into their curriculum. Private schools can gain from various government efforts and support if they are in line with national interests. The growth of the education industry has received significant funding from the UAE government. For instance, the government emphasizes the value of investing in education for improving the educational system. The government has also put regulations in place to guarantee free education to UAE nationals in public schools through

higher education. Private schools now have more opportunity to work with public schools, share resources, and advance the educational system as a whole because of this dedication to accessibility.

The UAE's emphasis on innovation and technological integration is something that private schools can benefit from. As per interviews and questionnaire responses support innovative educational initiatives and adhere to best practices in education, the UAE has inked agreements with top corporations like Microsoft. Through these agreements, private schools can gain access to cutting-edge technological tools and resources, increasing their teaching and learning environment. As interviewee EE33 is prepared to undertake administrative duties associated with education, such as strategic planning, resource allocation, and performance evaluation, thanks to their 15 years of management experience. They might have worked with stakeholders to build a supportive learning environment that encourages academic performance and personal development while leading teams of educators *said “Changes and suggestions in schools can include keep working on the quality of teachers and sustaining a pipeline of experience and culturally aware teachers that can stay for a long time in schools. Also as mentioned earlier teach subjects in disruptive technologies and new subject areas like Blockchain, machine learning, info technology, and biometrics”*

As per interviews and questionnaire responses access chances for professional growth, private schools can also make use of alliances and cooperation with universities, research institutions, and other educational institutions. These collaborations may give educators access to the most recent studies, educational strategies, and best practices. Universities in the UAE, for instance, provide instructors with specific programs and courses to help them improve their topic knowledge, teaching strategies, and leadership abilities. The UAE government supports efforts for teacher training because it understands the value of professional development. Workshops, online courses, and certifications are just a few of the professional development activities that the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) provides for educators. These programs can help private schools make sure that their instructors have access to top-notch professional development opportunities. Private schools can also create professional learning communities inside of their buildings. These groups give educators a place to work together, exchange concepts, and gain knowledge from one another. They can support lesson observations, peer-to-peer mentorship, and feedback sessions, encouraging a culture of ongoing learning and development among teachers. Private schools can improve the teaching talents of their personnel, support cutting-edge teaching techniques, and guarantee conformity

with the UAE's Education Vision by investing in professional development. It gives instructors the power to implement technological integration, critical thinking, future-focused skills, and problem-solving in their lessons. In turn, this enhances student engagement, learning outcomes, and equips them to meet the needs of the labor market of the future.

The UAE government has taken steps to facilitate the integration of technology into education and has acknowledged the importance of it. For instance, the Mohammed Bin Rashid Smart Learning Program seeks to improve learning through the use of digital content and smart devices. Private schools can use this program to gain access to a variety of learning tools, including interactive learning platforms and digital textbooks. Additionally, private schools can work with digital firms like Microsoft to assist smart education initiatives and adhere to best practices in education. Schools may stay current with the most recent developments in educational technology and take advantage of the knowledge and resources of industry leaders by collaborating with them. Future-oriented abilities like digital literacy, coding, and problem-solving may all be developed while incorporating technology into the classroom. To improve students' technology aptitude and get them ready for the labor market, private schools can include coding and robotics programs, virtual reality experiences, and online learning platforms. Private schools can develop dynamic and interesting learning environments that encourage creativity, cooperation, and critical thinking by embracing technology integration. It enables personalized learning paths, differentiated training, and access to a wide range of learning resources. Additionally, technology integration supports the UAE's Education Vision by giving students the knowledge and abilities they need to succeed in the digital age.

With five years of experience in the education industry, specifically in the government educational sphere, EE31 is a qualified and prospective educational expert. Despite having been in the field for a relatively short time, they have already made significant contributions and have a lot of room to expand and have an influence said in interview *“The implications of private schools integrating UAE’s Education Vision 2021 and 2071 into their strategic plans are transformative. It calls for a shift in mindset and pedagogy, placing greater emphasis on personalized learning, critical thinking, and student-centered approaches. Private schools can anticipate changes in assessment methods, curricular adaptations, and the incorporation of emerging technologies. To thrive in this new educational landscape, schools should consider investing in infrastructure, adopting flexible learning environments, and cultivating partnerships with industries to provide relevant vocational training and internship opportunities”*. An analysis by the World Economic Forum found that successful collaboration

and partnerships in education can boost innovation, efficiency, and educational quality. It enables the sharing of resources, the exchange of best practices, and the creation of collaborative projects that tackle shared issues and objectives. Numerous programs and platforms are in place in the UAE to promote partnerships and collaboration in the field of education. For instance, to encourage information sharing and improve educational possibilities, the Abu Dhabi Department of education and knowledge (ADEK) supports collaborations between public and private schools, colleges, and community organizations. Private schools can interact with ADEK and other governmental organizations to look into collaboration opportunities and take part in programs and initiatives together. To create avenues for students' higher education and job growth, private schools can work with universities and colleges. Private schools can provide students smooth transitions and possibilities for advanced learning by forming agreements with institutions of higher learning.

Private schools can also collaborate with corporations and other organizations to close the skills gap between the classroom and the workplace. Private schools can better match their curricula to the demands of the labor market, offer internship and apprenticeship programs, and give students real-world learning experiences by working with business leaders. This improves students' professional chances and aids in preparing them for the workforce. Another crucial component of partnership for private schools is community involvement. Private schools can develop a welcoming and inclusive learning atmosphere by actively involving parents, regional community organizations, and other stakeholders. Organizing events, workshops, and activities that advance cultural awareness, civic duty, and active citizenship are examples of community involvement. Private schools can access a network of resources and experience that enriches their educational offerings and boosts student achievements by embracing collaboration and partnerships. By encouraging innovation, information sharing, and community involvement, it is consistent with the UAE's Education Vision. Private schools can learn more about their areas of strength and need for progress by gathering and evaluating pertinent data. Schools can detect trends, patterns, and areas of concern using this data-driven approach, allowing them to take preventative action to solve any issues. As per interviews and questionnaire responses assure unbiased and exacting assessments, private schools can also use external evaluation and accrediting procedures. Accreditation organizations like the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA-CESS), the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), and the Council of International Schools (CIS) offer thorough evaluation

frameworks that assist schools in comparing their performance to global standards of excellence.

The Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK) School Inspection system is an illustration of a thorough evaluation system. It evaluates several facets of a school's performance, including curriculum, assessment, leadership and administration, teaching and learning, and general student well-being. Private schools may be subject to ADEK inspections to assess their adherence to the vision's objectives and get suggestions for development. Involving parents and the larger community in the review process is another aspect of accountability. Through regular feedback surveys, parent-teacher conferences, and open lines of contact, private schools can involve parents. This promotes a sense of shared responsibility for the academic success of students, ensures transparency and gives parents the opportunity to express their ideas and concerns. Moreover, based on the evaluation results, private schools might set up processes for ongoing improvement. This entails creating action plans, putting them into practice, and tracking how well the predetermined goals are being met. It guarantees that educational institutions are receptive to criticism and dedicated to improving their performance.

Private schools must also form alliances with local businesses and industry stakeholders. These collaborations give students the chance to take part in internships, mentorship programs, and practical learning experiences. Private schools can expose students to several job pathways, encourage entrepreneurship skills, and support a smooth transition to higher education or the workforce through working with regional firms, universities, and research organizations. For instance, private schools can work with nearby businesses to offer apprenticeships or internships, giving students the chance to obtain real-world experience and hone skills particular to their field. These collaborations help both students and businesses by giving them access to a talented pool of prospective employees. Additionally, private schools can work with universities and research organizations to support academic innovation and research. This cooperation may result in cooperative research initiatives, teacher preparation courses, and the creation of cutting-edge instructional strategies. The "Enrichment" program started by the ADEK is an illustration of community involvement in the United Arab Emirates. By giving students access to after-school activities and support services, this program seeks to close the gap between private schools and the community. Private schools may reach more students and have a greater impact by making their resources and knowledge available through enrichment programs.

EE39 is a driven and aspirational educational expert with four years of experience working in the field of education, with a focus on government education. He has demonstrated a passion for education and a dedication to having a positive impact in the field despite having a very brief term said that *“private schools can implement robust systems for monitoring and evaluating their performance against the goals set in the strategic plans. This ensures accountability and enables schools to identify areas for improvement and make data driven decisions”*. Adaptability includes educational approaches and teaching strategies as well. Innovative and student-centered teaching strategies including project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, and flipped classrooms should be supported in private schools. These techniques encourage students' critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, and creativity. Technology integration also significantly contributes to flexibility and adaptability development. As per interviews and questionnaire responses provide students with dynamic and personalized learning experiences, private schools should make use of educational technology tools. This involves utilizing internet tools, instructional apps, and digital learning platforms that enable learning at any time, anywhere. As seen during the COVID-19 outbreak, technology integration also enables schools to adapt to hybrid or online learning approaches

The Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) and its educational programs serve as a shining illustration of the UAE's emphasis on adaptability and flexibility. Through interactive activities and events, the MBRSC works with schools to inspire kids about space science. Schools may adapt to the shifting landscape of scientific education and motivate future generations of scientists and engineers by embracing novel teaching techniques and including space-related themes into the curriculum. To guarantee that instructors have the abilities and knowledge required to adapt to changing educational paradigms, private schools should prioritize continual professional development for them. Teachers can be provided with the resources and techniques they need to successfully integrate cutting-edge teaching approaches through training programs, workshops, and collaboration with educational institutions. Adopting the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans for private schools will have a variety of effects, all told. As per interviews and questionnaire responses do this, it is necessary to align with national priorities, make investments in professional development and technology integration, encourage collaborations, ensure accountability, involve the community, and embrace flexibility. Private schools can help the UAE achieve its educational objectives and give students a top-notch, career-ready education by accepting these implications.

## 5.6 Chapter Summary

The research study's findings point to a number of important conclusions about the acceptance and adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the context of private schools there, as well as the contribution of educational culture and teachers' skills and capabilities to the advancement of educational reforms. According to the interviews, private schools in the United Arab Emirates have generally accepted Vision 2021 and Vision 2071, realizing their importance in determining the direction of education in the nation. The visions have given schools a framework and strategic direction for aligning their objectives and actions, establishing a feeling of shared purpose and vision among stakeholders. A full discussion of the findings of the study based on the themes identified and coded above follows in the next chapter.

Preliminary, according to the research findings, the visions have significantly improved and changed private schools in terms of the sector's impact on education. These include the use of cutting-edge technologies and instructional strategies, increased emphasis on preparing students for the problems of the future, and a move toward student-centered learning methodologies. The visions have promoted joint ventures and alliances amongst educational institutions, including corporations, industries, and schools. The interviews shed light on the importance of the UAE's educational culture in promoting the adoption and execution of the visions with regard to the role it plays in education. A climate favorable to accepting visions and advancing educational reforms has been fostered by the culture of innovation, excellence, and future-focused education. School administrators and teachers have been inspired to connect their practices with the visions and work toward positive change in private schools by the emphasis on continual improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

The research's conclusions about teachers' skills and capacities suggest that they are essential to the adoption and execution of the visions. Teachers are better able to match their teaching methods with the visions if they have the requisite information, abilities, and competencies related to innovative teaching, technology integration, and critical thinking facilitation. The government's professional development opportunities have been crucial in increasing teachers' skills and helping them to successfully implement the visions in private schools. In conclusion, the research study emphasizes how the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 are accepted and have an impact in private schools. It places a strong emphasis on how teachers' skills and capacities play a key role in fostering the adoption of ideas and carrying out educational changes. With the help of a supportive educational climate, the efforts of skilled educators, and

the support of school administrators, the visions have resulted in substantial transformations in private schools.

## **CHAPTER SIX – DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

With an emphasis on the acceptance and adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the context of private schools in the UAE, this chapter gives a thorough explanation of the study's major findings in line with the individual themes. The chapter seeks to connect these findings with the current literature and theoretical framework, giving readers a comprehensive grasp of how different perspectives affect the educational landscape.

### **6.2 Thematic Discussion of Findings**

#### **6.2.1 Theme 1: Abu Dhabi Educational Sector and UAE Vision 2021 and 2071 strategic plans**

The main goal of this thematic analysis is to investigate how Abu Dhabi's private schools integrate governmental ideas and objectives into their long-term strategies. The objective is to comprehend how the procedures, plans, and actions adopted by these institutions as per interviews and questionnaire responses support the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 for the educational sector. The investigation also seeks to identify the metrics employed in these private schools to gauge the effectiveness of the strategic planning process.

In Abu Dhabi, private schools actively work to match their strategic objectives with the goals and programs established by the national government. These institutions make sure that their goals are in accordance with the government's larger educational agenda by having a thorough awareness of government policies, rules, and educational frameworks. Private schools closely follow and research government initiatives, such as Vision 2021 and Vision 2071, which lay out the objectives and expectations for the educational system, as per interviews and questionnaire responses achieve this congruence. Private schools can contribute to the general growth of the educational system by adjusting their strategic plans in accordance with these visions by staying informed of them.

To incorporate governmental objectives and programs into their strategic plans, private schools employ a variety of ways. Engaging in stakeholder consultations, attending workshops and training sessions hosted by government officials, and actively participating in conversations about educational policies and reforms are a few of these tactics. To maximize resources, knowledge, and best practices, collaboration with other universities, governmental agencies, and other organizations is also stressed. One tactic is to thoroughly investigate and examine

laws, regulations, and educational structures. A variety of measures are used to assess the effectiveness of the strategic planning process in private schools. Indicators of academic performance such as student accomplishment, test scores, and graduation rates are included in these measurements. The success of teacher professional development programs, polls of student and parent satisfaction, and input from stakeholders are a few more metrics to consider. Assuring that the anticipated goals are being attained requires constant monitoring, periodic evaluations, and revisions to the strategic plan. Abu Dhabi's private schools use a variety of metrics to evaluate how well the process of strategic planning has included governmental goals and activities (Chaudoir 2010). These measurements offer information about the success of the tactics used and the degree to which the targeted results are achieved.

### **6.2.2 Theme 2: UAE Vision 2021 and 2071 Educational Approach**

The strategic planning used by Abu Dhabi's private schools corresponds in a number of important ways with the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071. The Abu Dhabi private schools value giving students a top-notch education and preparing them for the challenges of the future. They place a high priority on student skill development, technological integration, and innovation. Private schools handle strategic planning differently depending on their unique setting and resources, but they all use a similar approach to coordinating with the UAE's aspirations.

Private schools in Abu Dhabi prioritize providing excellent education that aligns with UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071. They focus on advanced science and technology, space science, engineering, innovation, and health sciences to prepare students for the challenges of the future. These schools implement various strategies to enhance the quality of education and promote a holistic learning experience. One example of the commitment to excellent education is seen in the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. The IB curriculum is recognized globally for its rigorous academic standards and emphasis on critical thinking, inquiry-based learning, and intercultural understanding. It provides students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for higher education and future career opportunities.

As they fit with the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071, innovation and technology integration are top priorities for private schools in Abu Dhabi. These institutions understand the value of establishing an innovative culture and preparing students for the digital age. They employ a variety of tactics to inspire students to use technology and to think creatively. Abu Dhabi's private schools make investments in cutting-edge hardware and software. They give students access to gadgets like laptops, tablets, and interactive whiteboards, enhancing the learning

environment with technology. This makes it possible for students to participate in lessons that are interactive and rich in multimedia, improving their comprehension and knowledge retention.

Private schools in Abu Dhabi strategically plan according to Emirati principles and cultural understanding, which are in line with the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071. These institutions value conserving and developing the UAE's rich cultural legacy while encouraging students to have a sense of national identity and social cohesiveness. Abu Dhabi's private schools integrate Emirati principles and cultural awareness into their curricula and instructional practices. They make sure that students have a profound awareness for their heritage by incorporating UAE history, traditions, customs, and language into a variety of disciplines. The curriculum's main elements, teaching Arabic and Islamic studies, are included in this.

Private schools in Abu Dhabi have implemented a strategic planning process that is strongly influenced by collaboration and partnerships and is in line with UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071. These institutions understand the value of collaborating with many stakeholders to improve educational outcomes and advance the field of education as a whole. To take use of their knowledge, resources, and support, private schools continuously seek collaboration with governmental organizations, academic institutions, and industry stakeholders. These collaborations give schools access to a variety of educational resources, chances for teacher professional growth, and cutting-edge instructional techniques.

### **6.2.3 Theme 3: Methods of the educational institutes in incorporating governmental visions and initiatives into their strategic plans**

Incorporating governmental ideals and ambitions into educational institutions' strategic plans can be done in a number of ways, according to thematic analysis. The following are some prominent themes: Education institutions can connect their strategic objectives with the rules and regulations established by the government. As per interviews and questionnaire responses do this, the institution's mission, aims, and objectives must be integrated with the vision and initiatives of the government. Educational institutions can show their dedication to the greater national goal by matching their strategic objectives with governmental initiatives.

### **6.2.4 Theme 4: How strategic planning adopted by the private school sector in Emirates of Abu Dhabi, align with UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071?**

The Abu Dhabi private school sector's educational landscape is significantly shaped by strategic planning. The implementation of strategic planning that is in line with UAE's Vision

2021 and 2071 is examined in this article as a way to greatly improve the academic performance of private schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Private schools can better prepare students for the future, improve academic results, and contribute to the general advancement desired by the UAE government by focusing on quality education, innovation, technology integration, and skills development.

Modern pedagogical approaches and teaching techniques are encouraged in private schools by strategic planning that is in line with UAE's vision. This encourages students to learn actively and to think critically and solve problems. Project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and collaborative learning, for instance, are efficient strategies that boost student engagement and deeper conceptual comprehension (Jackson 2023). Curriculum Development: Private schools can concentrate on enhancing their curricula to be in line with UAE's vision, stressing future-oriented skills like digital literacy, creativity, and entrepreneurship. This can be done by combining STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) classes with robotics, coding, and creative initiatives that encourage invention (Jarrah & Alkhazaleh 2020)

The development of future skills including critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and technical proficiency is prioritized in strategic planning that is in line with UAE's vision. These abilities can be incorporated into the curriculum at private schools to better prepare students for the changing employment market. In the UAE, 75% of employers believe that soft skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving, are important or very important when employing recent graduates, according to a Sulieman (2022). Private schools can make sure that students have the abilities they need to succeed in their future occupations by include these skills in the curriculum.

Strategic planning that is in line with UAE's vision encourages the incorporation of technology into classrooms, giving private schools the ability to successfully use educational technologies and digital resources. This improves student and instructor cooperation, information availability, and individualized learning experiences. The "Smart Learning" program has been adopted in both public and private schools, according to the UAE Ministry of Education, who have made the digital transformation of education a priority (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2015). The initiative gives students access to educational resources and interactive learning materials around-the-clock in an effort to improve teaching and learning through the appropriate use of technology.

Strategic planning that is in line with the UAE's goal urges private schools to put strong monitoring and evaluation procedures in place. This enables schools to evaluate the success of their plans, pinpoint areas for development, and make data-driven decisions to improve academic performance. The Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), which oversees and assesses private schools in Abu Dhabi, is extremely important. Regular inspections and evaluations are carried out by ADEK to make sure that quality requirements are being met and to offer suggestions for improvement. Private schools are given ratings and recommendations through the Irtiqaa inspection system based on a number of factors, including as teaching and learning, curriculum implementation, student accomplishment, and leadership and management. Private schools can evaluate their strengths and problems, create action plans, and continuously improve using this data-driven method.

#### **6.2.5 Theme 5: How UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071 could change the educational performance**

Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 of the United Arab Emirates, according to a thematic analysis, have the potential to have a substantial impact on the nation's educational performance. The UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 place a strong emphasis on the need to deliver high-quality education that will prepare students for the future. This emphasis on high-quality education may result in advancements in instructional strategies, curriculum design, and assessment procedures. The visions seek to provide students with the competences, knowledge, and abilities they will need to succeed in a world that is rapidly changing. The visions place a great premium on integrating technology into education. The adoption of cutting-edge teaching and learning strategies like blended learning, online platforms, and educational apps may be influenced by this reliance on technology. Educational institutions may improve the learning process, advance digital literacy, and get students ready for the digital era by using technology wisely.

#### **6.2.6 Theme 6: Impact of Artificial Intelligence and Big Data in the successful implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning for the Education sector in Abu Dhabi?**

The successful execution of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning for the Education sector in Abu Dhabi depends in large part on the success of personalized learning, which is a crucial area where Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Big Data can have a considerable impact. The ability to assess a large quantity of student data, including their learning preferences, skills, weaknesses, and progress, is a feature of AI-powered personalized learning platforms. With

the help of data analysis, AI algorithms may create recommendations and learning plans that are specific to the requirements of each student. AI can enhance students' learning experiences and boost academic results by offering individualized training and resources.

#### **6.2.7 Theme 7: Implications to private schools of adopting the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans?**

Adopting the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans has important implications for private schools in terms of being in line with national priorities. Private schools aid in the overall growth of the UAE's education industry by integrating the national frameworks and priorities into their curricula and instructional methods. This alignment shows their dedication to the nation's hopes and aims, which can improve their standing and draw in more parents and students who value innovation and high-quality education. The creation of an excellent educational system that creates well-rounded persons with the knowledge and skills required to contribute to the growth and success of the nation is one of the top priorities identified in the UAE's Education Vision 2021. As per interviews and questionnaire responses prepare students for a world that is changing quickly, the vision highlights the need to give them future-focused abilities including critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and digital literacy.

Another critical aspect for private schools implementing the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans is professional development. Teachers and administrators require ongoing professional development opportunities as per interviews and questionnaire responses successfully adopt cutting-edge teaching strategies, future-focused skills, and technological integration in the classroom. Professional development is critical to raising educational standards and developing teaching methods, according to the UAE's Education Vision. It underlines how crucial it is to give instructors the abilities, information, and materials they need as per interviews and questionnaire responses deliver excellent education and efficiently promote student learning. Private schools might set aside funds to offer their teachers thorough professional development programs. Workshops, training sessions, conferences, and partnerships with educational institutions and authorities can all be a part of these initiatives. By supporting teachers' growth and development through professional development, schools show their dedication to continuous improvement.

When private schools incorporate the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans, technology integration is a critical component. The vision highlights how crucial it is to

use technology to improve teaching and learning procedures, advance digital literacy, and get students ready for the digital age. Private schools can use technology to develop dynamic learning environments that meet the requirements and preferences of today's kids who grew up with the internet. Schools can improve student engagement, develop critical thinking abilities, and offer individualized learning experiences by effectively incorporating technology.

Incorporating technology into school might result in better learning results, according to a report from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Students can use it to collaborate with peers, access a plethora of materials, and learn digital skills that are crucial in today's society. Private educational institutions might spend money on resources and infrastructure to enable technological integration. This could entail granting access to gadgets like tablets or laptops, fast internet, and instructional software or applications. Schools can also create technologically advanced learning environments that encourage interaction, imagination, and exploration.

Private schools must consider collaboration and partnerships when incorporating the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 into their strategic plans. To improve education quality and offer students a well-rounded education, the vision places a major emphasis on developing strong links with other educational institutions, governmental bodies, corporations, and community organizations. Through collaboration and collaborations, private schools can have access to more resources, knowledge, and chances for professional growth, which can be very beneficial. Private schools can use their pooled knowledge and experience to enhance teaching methods, curriculum creation, and student outcomes by collaborating with other education sector partners.

When private schools incorporate the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans, evaluation and accountability play a big part. The vision places a strong emphasis on the value of tracking progress, evaluating results, and making sure that schools are held responsible for reaching the desired goals and objectives. To quantify their performance, pinpoint areas for development, and make data-driven decisions, private schools must set up effective systems for accountability and evaluation. By doing this, it is ensured that the strategic plans continue to be useful and adaptable to changing demands and objectives. Implementing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are consistent with the vision's goals and objectives is one method for evaluation and accountability. KPIs offer quantifiable goals and standards by which schools can gauge their progress (Arezki & Ghanem 2018). These KPIs may cover, among

other things, community involvement, student satisfaction, instructor effectiveness, and academic accomplishment.

Private schools can actively participate in the neighborhood through a variety of projects and alliances. This involvement fosters a welcoming and inclusive learning environment, improves students' learning opportunities, and fortifies the school's ties to the larger community. Private schools can interact with the neighborhood by planning events and activities. Parents, kids, and community members get the chance to connect at these events, share stories, and recognize accomplishments. Open houses, cultural festivals, volunteer efforts, and educational programs are a few examples of community activities. Additionally, private schools can involve parents in decision-making through advisory committees and parent-teacher groups. These platforms encourage a collaborative approach to school governance and improvement by allowing parents to share their perspectives, ideas, and concerns (Arezki & Ghanem 2018). Participating parents in decision-making ensures that their viewpoints are taken into account and fosters the relationship between families and schools.

The UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 has significant consequences for private institutions who wish to include them into their strategic plans. As per interviews and questionnaire responses assure the delivery of a high-quality education, schools must be flexible and responsive to the quickly changing educational landscape and the changing requirements of students. Private schools must be adaptable in how they develop and offer their curricula. To provide students with the abilities they will need in the future, they should be open to adopting new disciplines, interdisciplinary approaches, and developing educational trends. For instance, incorporating topics like sustainability, coding, and artificial intelligence into the curriculum prepares students for the requirements of the 21st-century employment market.

### **6.3 Recap of Key Findings**

A number of significant conclusions are revealed as a result of this study's thorough investigation of the adoption and influence of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the private education sector in Abu Dhabi. These findings not only increase our understanding of how visionary national goals show themselves in the educational setting, but they also shed light on the significance of educational culture and teacher competencies in this process of transformation. The deep impact of educational culture and the abilities and talents of teachers on the adoption and execution of the UAE's aspirational objectives is a key finding of the

research. The interaction of these variables, as shown by the interviews, shows that the process of educational reform in private schools is a successful synthesis of internal knowledge and external policy direction (Bock 2014). The educational culture now prevalent in the UAE, which places a strong focus on innovation, excellence, and future readiness, synergizes perfectly with the knowledge and abilities of teachers (Ashour & Fatima 2016). Private schools are given the tools they need by this synergy to successfully incorporate the visions into their curriculum. These results highlight the mutually beneficial interaction between the internal strength of educators and the external policy stimulus (Alshaali 2015).

The interviews demonstrate both the positive effects of this harmonious interaction and the useful results of this alignment. The results show how private schools have undergone radical change as a result of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 being adopted. Notably, curricula have been revised to include more emphasis on technological integration, creativity, and critical thinking. With this recalibration, the skill sets of the students are matched to the dynamic needs of the UAE's developing economy (Alsheikh et al. 2020). The sector's response to the visions' emphasis on creative thinking and problem-solving may be seen in the shift toward student-centered and inquiry-based teaching techniques. The results also emphasize how crucial it is for private schools and government organizations to work together, reiterating how committed both parties are to attaining the national aspirations (Alfaki 2014). A cross-generational engagement is evident, with significant participation from the age groups of 40 to 50, 25 to 39, and 50 and over, according to the demographic analysis of age distribution. By including perspectives from many generations, this thorough depiction makes it easier to comprehend how private schools may adapt to the goals of the UAE. A diverse viewpoint is highlighted by the large participation of education experts (60%) as well as public sector professionals (18%) and school principals/management (34%). The engagement of important stakeholders is reflected in the diversified representation, which also deepens the analysis.

With 76% female participants and 24% male participants, gender diversity gives a variety of perspectives that help to fully understand the adaptive character of private schools. The high percentage of people with master's degrees (72%) and Ph.D. holders (30%) lends credibility to the results and emphasizes the importance of this study in the academic community. A wide range of educational backgrounds ensures that a fair inclusion of respondents with bachelor's degrees (30%) and certificates (4%) contributes to the richness of the research. The study's conclusions also support Abu Dhabi's private schools' initiative in pursuing alignment with UAE goals. Their dedication to integrating their strategic goals with the aspirations of the

country is demonstrated by the emphasis placed on innovation, excellence, and knowledge-based approaches in educational programs. The respondents' extensive experience in the education sector and wealth of knowledge and abilities demonstrate a group commitment to improving the educational landscape in accordance with the goals of the UAE.

In conclusion, the results of this study confirm that the private education sector of Abu Dhabi's acceptance and implementation of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 are the consequence of a dynamic interaction between educational culture and the knowledge and skills of teachers. These results are directly related to the general observation that these two significant elements are the result of private school reforms and the incorporation of the visionary goals (Al-Taneiji & McLeod 2008). The study's conclusions highlight the importance of developing an educational ecosystem where policy goals and educator knowledge flow into one another in a fluid manner, resulting in the embodiment of national visions in the classroom. Private schools in Abu Dhabi contribute to both the accomplishment of the UAE's overall national goals and the development of education through this harmonious interplay.

#### **6.4 Linking Key Findings to Literature**

The main conclusions of this study, which show how educational culture, teacher skills, and the acceptance and adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 within the private education sector of Abu Dhabi interact intricately, are inextricably linked to previous literature that served as the research's guiding light and are in conformity to the social theory which was earlier mentioned in the preliminary stages of development of the study. In-depth interviews and questionnaires were used to gather data for this study, which has been skillfully weaved to reflect the setting of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and illuminate its distinct educational system. The research findings are contrasted with the socioeconomic and cultural context of the UAE to further deepen our understanding of how the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 are adopted and implemented within its private education sector (Ashour & Fatima 2016). The UAE has established Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 as guiding frameworks to direct its progress across multiple sectors. The UAE is known for its rapid development and ambitious national goals (Brooks et al. 2020). There is a clear resonance between these imaginative ambitions and the actions of private schools, according to the interviews with numerous players in the private education sector. The results show that these institutions have embraced the national visions as strategic imperatives that are driving curricular reforms, pedagogical changes, and institutional policies rather than just as superficial policy demands (Dutot & Van Horne 2015).

The UAE's commitment to promoting a knowledge-based economy and raising individuals who are prepared for the future is demonstrated by the alignment between its national educational goals and the strategies used by private schools. The findings show that private schools are continuously incorporating cutting-edge technologies, placing an emphasis on critical thinking, and switching to student-centered learning approaches in order to keep up with the UAE's changing economic landscape. These observations paint a picture of the UAE as a country that not only articulates lofty values but also sees to it that they are translated into workable educational plans. Additionally, the research results demonstrate how crucial teacher expertise and educational culture are to realizing the UAE's aspirations. The culture of innovation, excellence, and future-oriented education in the United Arab Emirates provides a favorable environment for the incorporation of national visions in private schools (Hallinger & Heck 2010). The adoption and implementation of these ideas are accelerated by the cultural values' congruence with the national goals, which makes it easier for them to be seamlessly incorporated into educational procedures. In this transformative journey, teachers' roles emerge as being of utmost importance (Hariyati et al. 2021). The results highlight the crucial role played by teachers with the required skills and abilities in bridging the gap between high-level policy directives and their actualization in the classroom. The UAE's strategic emphasis on offering chances for professional development has allowed instructors to efficiently match their teaching strategies with the visionary ambitions, further highlighting the importance of the country's contextual educational ecosystem (Jackson 2023).

The study also emphasizes the vital connection between the private education sector's adaptability and the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in this regard. The agreement between purpose and results shows how the UAE's ambitious goals are not just lofty dreams; they are actively influencing the educational environment and raising a generation of students who are equipped with knowledge and abilities consistent with the goals of the country (Langton 2016). The UAE's emphasis on innovation, excellence, and education that is focused on the future has created the ideal environment for the private education industry to seamlessly match with the country's aspirations. The UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 have, in the end, gone beyond being merely policy statements to become essential elements of the UAE's educational culture (Matnazarova 2021). The results of the questionnaires and interviews confirm that the private education industry in the United Arab Emirates is not only supporting these ideals but also actively working to bring them about. The socio-economic objectives, cultural values, and educational priorities of the UAE have been sculpted by the circumstances

to match with the national ambitions, setting the UAE on a path to a knowledge-driven future. Below, is thorough discourse of the individual underlying aspects between these findings and the literature of the larger educational landscape.

#### **6.4.1 Educational Culture and Visionary Alignment**

The direction and results of educational systems are strongly influenced by educational culture. It includes the common values, viewpoints, customs, and behaviors that define a learning community. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a unique educational culture as a result of its emphasis on innovation, excellence, and forward-thinking educational practices. In addition to establishing the tone for educational institutions, this culture was crucial in bringing private schools into line with the ambitious goals of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 (Al Nuaimi et al. 2015). The results of this study highlight the significant impact of UAE educational culture on the adoption and acceptance of visionary goals inside Abu Dhabi private schools. The proactive involvement of private schools in adopting the visions of the UAE demonstrates the convergence between institutional ideals and national aspirations (ADEK 2015). There are a number of causes for this alignment. First and foremost, the educational landscape has been impacted by the UAE's dedication to promoting an environment of innovation and achievement. The focus on innovative pedagogical strategies, technology integration, and holistic student development has created an environment that is open to change and new paradigms in education. Private schools have enthusiastically embraced these aspirational ambitions as a way to improve their educational offerings because they recognize the synergies between their current principles and the aspirations of the UAE.

Furthermore, there is a strong case for private schools to support the goals of the UAE given the educational culture's emphasis on preparing students for future problems. Giving students the knowledge, abilities, and mindset required for success is crucial in a world that is continually changing. Private schools understand that their purpose to create well-rounded, future-ready individuals clearly aligns with visionary goals like encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and technical competency (Abdalla Alfaki & Ahmed 2013). The results also show that the alignment process has been significantly influenced by the educational culture's emphasis on cooperation and collaboration. Private schools have actively sought partnerships with governmental institutions, businesses, and other stakeholders because they are aware of the UAE's collective approach to societal advancement (Alshabbani 2015). These collaborations serve as a channel for realizing the aspirational goals of the UAE in a coordinated way, as well as for facilitating the interchange of information and resources.

#### **6.4.2 Teacher Capacities and Vision Implementation**

The qualities and competencies of educators are crucial to the success of any educational reform or innovative program. The congruence with Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is inextricably tied to the abilities, skills, and knowledge of instructors. The results of this study highlight the critical role that teacher competencies play in achieving these ambitious goals within Abu Dhabi's private schools. Innovation, critical thinking, and preparing students for future difficulties are all highly valued aspects of the UAE's educational system (Buckner 2022). These factors need that instructors have a broad skill set and a thorough grasp of modern instructional techniques. According to the research, teachers who are knowledgeable about contemporary teaching methods, how to integrate technology, and how to promote critical thinking are better able to turn the goals of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 into actual classroom experiences.

The capacity of teachers to match their instructional strategies with these ambitions depends critically on their familiarity and comprehension of the aspirational goals, according to one of the study's primary findings (Government of the United Arab Emirates 2016). Teachers will be better able to incorporate these ideas into their curricula, teaching tactics, and assessment techniques if they have a firm knowledge of the values expressed in the visions. By doing this, it is made sure that the educational experience students receive is in line with the goals of the UAE (Hariyati et al. 2021). The study also emphasizes the value of professional development opportunities in raising teachers' vision implementation capacities. The UAE government's efforts in teacher development and training programs have made it possible for educators to get the skills and needed to successfully carry out the envisioned objectives. In addition to providing teachers with cutting-edge techniques, these chances have also encouraged a sense of ownership and dedication to the UAE's educational transformation program (Kirk & Napier 2009). The findings also highlight the importance of school leaders and administrators in creating an atmosphere that supports the visions' effective realization. Effective leadership that upholds the principles of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 motivates teachers to embrace change, try out novel teaching techniques, and work together on creative projects (Majumdar & Varadarajan 2013). Teachers who have the support, tools, and autonomy they need to flourish in their positions are supported by school administrators who appreciate the critical role that teachers play in realizing the visions.

## **6.6 Chapter Summary**

The results of this study provide a road map for Abu Dhabi's private schools as they work to realize the country's ambitions. They emphasize the value of encouraging an innovative environment, supporting ongoing teacher development, and forming tactical alliances. In the end, the visions' effective execution serves as proof of the educational system's adaptation and resilience, as it aligns with larger social goals and points future generations in the direction of excellence and success. In conclusion, the main findings of this research are consistent with previous research and the theoretical framework, providing a comprehensive view of the complex relationships influencing educational reforms (Bock 2014). The results underline the collaborative nature of change while reiterating the critical importance of teacher expertise and educational culture. The findings of this study not only add to the scholarly discussion on educational transformation but also offer private schools and legislators useful advice for coordinating educational practices with bold national objectives.

The main conclusions of the study were covered in this chapter, which shed light on how the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 were received and implemented in private schools. The research underlined how these perspectives have had a substantial impact on the field of education, resulting in modifications to curricula, instructional techniques, and stakeholder mindsets (Forstenlechner et al. 2012). Additionally, the contributions of educational culture and teacher skills to these developments were emphasized. The theoretical foundation of the study was strengthened by the discussion of the major findings, which made it evident how empirical findings relate to the body of literature.

## CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Conclusions

A thorough understanding of the complex interplay between visionary aspirations, educational culture, teacher capacities, collaborative partnerships, and their role in forming the national education ecosystem has resulted from the journey of examining the adoption and impact of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 within the private education sector of Abu Dhabi. The main conclusions of the study are summarized in this chapter, along with its limits, ramifications, and suggestions for future research.

The private education sector in Abu Dhabi is in a crucial stage of reform and evolution following the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. This study set out on a quest to understand the complex interactions that shaped how these visionary goals were adopted and had an impact in private schools. The information gained from interviews, analyses, and a thorough assessment of the literature has shed light on a complex web of teacher capacities, cultural alignment, and educational change. The main finding of this study is that the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 have had a substantial impact on the private education sector and have sparked a number of connected changes. Private schools have accepted these visions as guiding concepts that influence their educational paradigms since they are aware of the national aims (Ahmed & Alfaki 2013). The UAE's emphasis on innovation, excellence, and future-focused education has produced a fertile ground for the integration of these visionary values, it became clear through the lens of educational culture. The adoption of the ideals and their transformation into workable educational strategies are accelerated by this convergence of cultural values and national goals.

Furthermore, this research emphasizes how crucial teacher abilities are to achieving these aspirations. High-level policy directions and their effective implementation in the classroom are made possible by educators who have the necessary implementation abilities (Alarabi et al. 2022). The results show that well-equipped instructors are crucial in modifying curricula, instructional approaches, and student outcomes to match the goals of the visions. The execution of the visions has caused private schools to rethink their pedagogical techniques and content. The emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, and technology integration in the curriculum has been changed in order to give students the skills they need for the UAE's quickly changing economy. Traditional teacher-centered educational techniques have given way to student-

centered learning methodologies, which foster students' capacity for problem-solving and promote cooperative teaming (Alshabbani 2015).

This study also emphasizes the value of partnerships and collaboration in this transforming process. To increase the influence of the visions, private schools have actively entered into collaborations with governmental bodies, businesses, and other educational institutions. These partnerships give private schools access to essential tools, knowledge, and chances for professional growth (Arezki & Ghanem 2018). As this research comes to a close, it's critical to recognize the restrictions and difficulties that were faced. The generalizability of findings to a wider context may be constrained by the participants' narrow range and the geographic focus on Abu Dhabi's private education sector. The dynamic character of educational reform also offers the possibility of unforeseen difficulties and modifications that can affect the realization of the visions' trajectories. This study's ramifications go beyond Abu Dhabi's private school industry (Balfaqeeh, Hassan & Berkett 2017). The results highlight how visionary ideas and educational culture can live peacefully, illuminating the mutually beneficial relationship between institutional principles and national aspirations. The importance of educators in making these aspirations a reality on the ground is reinforced by the inclusion of teacher capacities in this equation.

These discoveries have the potential to help the national education ecosystem in the United Arab Emirates. The advice offered can be used by decision-makers, educators, and stakeholders to strategically steer the course of educational change. The UAE can increase the influence of its aspirational objectives not only within private schools but also across the entire educational fabric by prioritizing teacher development, encouraging a culture of innovation, and fortifying relationships.

## **7.2 Restatement of Purpose**

The goal of this study was to thoroughly examine how Abu Dhabi's private education sector has adopted and responded to the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. The UAE government's lofty goals serve as a road map for the country's development in a variety of fields, including education. The investigation's main goal was to learn more about how these ideals are adopted by private schools, how they affect teaching methods, and how teacher talents and educational culture influence this transformational process. The study's objective and the insights obtained through interviews and analysis grew increasingly clear as the research developed and the results came into focus. The interaction of these factors aids in developing a detailed knowledge

of the dynamic link between lofty policy aspirations and their implementation in the context of education.

The interviews with different players in the private education industry shed light on how actively private schools integrate the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 into their curricula. Not just a passing nod, but a purposeful and planned adaptation of curricula, teaching methods, and institutional regulations was made in order to coincide with these idealistic aspirations (Nasir 2017). This relationship between the purpose and the results confirms that private schools, who are aware of the national goals, professionally adopt these visions as guiding principles that direct their educational initiatives.

The results also clarify the practical effects of this acceptance. The educational environment has changed as a result of the private schools' response to the visionary aspirations. The emphasis on critical thinking, creativity, and technology integration in the curriculum is intended to better prepare students for the changing job market in the UAE (Matsumoto 2019). The results strongly imply that adoption of these ideals by the private education sector has a direct impact on educational procedures and content, helping to the fulfilment of the national objectives. The research's findings also have relevance for the goal of comprehending how teacher talents and educational culture play a part in this process. According to the report, the UAE's educational culture, which is known for its dedication to innovation and excellence, offers a favorable environment for the integration of the ideals (Langton 2016). The adoption of these visions and their transformation into workable educational practices are accelerated by the resonance between cultural values and national goals. By connecting these insights to the original goal, it is highlighted how educational culture may act as a catalyst for effective policy implementation when it is in line with lofty goals. The results also highlight the crucial part that teachers' skills play in this process of transformation. High-level policy directions and their effective implementation in the classroom are made possible by educators who have the necessary implementation abilities (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). This connection between purpose and findings highlights how crucial teacher preparedness is in determining the course of educational innovations driven by lofty objectives.

The study's conclusions are intricately connected to the purpose as reiterated, in my opinion. Through comprehensive interviews and studies, the acceptance and impact of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 inside the private education sector of Abu Dhabi, which is strongly

influenced by educational culture and teacher talents, have been made clear. The congruence of the research's goals and findings highlights how important it is for illuminating how national ambitions interact dynamically with how they are embodied in private schools (Ridge, Farah & Shami 2013). The private education industry in Abu Dhabi consensually realigns its practices with the UAE's aspirations, which not only helps the country achieve its objectives but also establishes a precedent for the seamless incorporation of idealistic ideas into realistic educational tactics.

### **7.3 Contribution to practical knowledge**

The results of this study have significant ramifications for the private education, as well as for educators, researchers, and the larger academic community. These implications provide important information that can aid in decision-making and future research attempts while also shedding light on the significance of the adoption and effect of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. For policy and practice, there are significant ramifications of the resonance between the study questions and findings. The results demonstrate how important private schools are in cultivating a culture of adherence to governmental aspirations and objectives (Hallinger & Heck 2010). This emphasizes the significance of encouraging an ecosystem of cooperation between policymakers and educators, producing a mellow synergy that hastens the attainment of societal ambitions. The focus on teacher competencies and the significant effects of professional development initiatives point to a potential area for strategic investment. A powerful tactic to improve the successful implementation of visionary objectives within classrooms is to strengthen teacher competences and skills. By examining the long-term effects of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 on student outcomes, engagement, and readiness for future problems, future research projects could build on these insights (Dutot & Van Horne 2015). This would give a thorough grasp of how visionary ambitions affect student trajectory as well as educational practices. In conclusion, the rephrased research questions and their congruence with the outcomes support the original goal of the study. The adoption and incorporation of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 into private schools, which was motivated by both educational culture and teacher abilities, shed light on the complex dynamics between high-level policy objectives and their practical manifestation in the educational landscape (Buckner 2022). As a result, this study significantly advances our understanding of the influence of visionary ambitions on education and provides useful advice for both policymakers and educators. Further specified discussion of implications of the research is captured in sub-titles below:-

### **7.3.1 Educational policy and strategic planning**

The findings of the study highlight how crucial it is to match educational policies and strategic plans with the goals set forth in Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. These visions can serve as a set of principles that educational authorities can use to guide the course of the private education sector (Matnazarova 2021). They can spark a further more coordinated effort towards accomplishing the country's long-term goals by incorporating the principles of innovation, knowledge-based learning, and global competitiveness into policy frameworks (Parkman, Litz & Gromik 2017).

### **7.3.2 Curriculum design and instructional practices**

The study's conclusions can be used by educational institutions to improve the way they develop their curricula and teach their students. In order to meet the changing needs of the UAE's economy and society, there is a strong emphasis on critical thinking, innovation, and technological integration (Mohiuddin 2017). Schools can incorporate these principles into their instructional strategies to give students the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in a world that is changing quickly.

### **7.3.3 Professional development programs**

The findings can be used by administrators and leaders in education to create and carry out specialized professional development initiatives for teachers (Thorne 2011). These programs can concentrate on providing teachers with cutting-edge teaching strategies, technological integration skills, and critical thinking facilitation abilities in recognition of the crucial role that teacher capacities play in promoting the adoption of visionary ideas. This will thus make it easier to implement the visions in classrooms effectively (Salloum et al. 2019). The report emphasizes the value of alliances and partnerships between for-profit colleges, governmental bodies, and businesses. This knowledge can be used by policymakers to create platforms that encourage fruitful partnerships, strengthening the group effort to realize the national aspirations.

### **7.3.4 Research and practice**

The study provides numerous options for more research. The long-term benefits of adopting visionary ideas on students' academic performance, employment, and general well-being can be studied by researchers (Zaran et al. 2016). In order to understand regional variations in the adoption and impact of these visions, comparative studies can be carried out across various emirates. Investigations of the difficulties and obstacles educational institutions have in putting

these values into practice can also help target interventions. This study's ramifications go beyond the boundaries of the UAE. The UAE's proactive approach to coordinating national ambitions with educational practices can serve as an example for educational institutions around the world. Other countries may encourage creativity, excellence, and the overall development of their students by applying similar visionary frameworks to their particular settings (PwC 2021). This study's ramifications are felt throughout Abu Dhabi's private school community and beyond. A transformative educational environment that equips students to succeed in a fast-paced global context might result from the alignment of educational methods with visionary objectives (Matnazarova 2021). These implications can be used by policymakers, educators, and academics to work together to create an educational ecosystem that not only satisfies the requirements of the present but also prepares the way for a prosperous and sustainable future (Parkman, Litz & Gromik 2017). The adoption of visionary ambitions within the UAE's education system emerges as a cornerstone for advancement, adaptation, and success as the country continues its growth journey (O'Sullivan 2017).

Educational leaders in private schools can take advantage of the compatibility between the UAE's lofty goals and its educational system via improving the seamless integration of national goals into educational practices by establishing a culture that values innovation, creativity, and quality. The influence of these aspirations can be increased through policies that support cooperation between the public and private sectors (Kwon, Lee & Shin 2015). Policies should place a high priority on ongoing professional development for teachers given the critical role they play. Further investments in training initiatives that give teachers the tools they need to successfully carry out the goals of the vision. It is crucial to support instructors in their ability to use cutting-edge teaching techniques, integrate technology, and encourage critical thinking (Kirk & Napier 2009). Governmental agencies, businesses, and other educational institutions can be encouraged to form collaborations with private schools. Resources, knowledge exchange, and expertise can result from collaborative projects, enhancing the educational experience for both students and teachers (Jarrah & Alkhazaleh 2020). To determine the level of acceptance and the effects of the visions, a continuous monitoring and assessment procedure needs to be built. By using data-driven decision-making will be able to identify areas for improvement, make well-informed judgments, and make sure the goals of the visions are being achieved.

Private schools should keep modifying their curricula to conform to the goals of the visions. Integrating critical thinking, creativity, and technology into a variety of courses should be

emphasized. The creation of curricula ought to be a team effort by educators, administrators, and business professionals (Hoidn & Šťastný 2021). Educators should place a high priority on student-centered pedagogies that encourage collaboration, problem-solving, and self-directed learning. Activities in the classroom should promote participation and give students the tools they need to take charge of their education (Hariyati et al. 2021). Teachers should actively pursue opportunities for professional development to advance their skills. The goal of conferences, training sessions, and workshops should be to give teachers the tools they need to apply cutting-edge and imaginative approaches in the classroom (Hallinger & Heck 2010). Private schools should aggressively look for relationships with businesses, organizations, and other institutions. Collaboration on projects, cooperative initiatives, and venues for knowledge exchange can improve the educational process and give students ties to the outside world (G-Mrabet 2012).

Assessment procedures should change to reflect the emphasis on all-around student development emphasized by the visions. Performance-based tests that measure critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and knowledge application in the real world can be used to supplement conventional exams (Dutot & Van Horne 2015). To ensure that all students, regardless of their origins or abilities, receive the benefits of the visions, practices should be created to cater to different student groups. Differentiated instruction and specially designed support systems can help create a welcoming and equitable learning environment.

#### **7.4 Limitations and Future Research Direction**

It is important to recognize and critically evaluate this study's limitations even if it has offered insightful information about the acceptance and impact of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 inside the private education sector of Abu Dhabi. These restrictions give room for consideration of the study's scope, methodology, and potential effects on how the results should be interpreted.

##### **7.4.1 Geographic scope and generalizability**

The only private schools in the emirate of Abu Dhabi were the subject of this investigation. The results might not accurately reflect the complete educational environment in the UAE, let alone other nations' educational systems. It's possible that the distinctive sociocultural and economic characteristics of Abu Dhabi do not accurately represent the dynamics in other emirates or countries (Chaudoir 2010). Therefore, care must be taken when extrapolating the results from the examined environment.

#### **7.4.2 Qualitative nature and subjectivity**

In-depth interviews were the main type of qualitative research approach used in this study. Although this method provided deep insights and a comprehension of participants' perspectives, it also inevitably added a degree of subjectivity to the interpretation of the data. The possibility of researcher bias is shown by the possibility that different researchers may come to different findings from the same interview data. The study used rigorous data analysis methods and recruited other researchers for cross-validation to lessen this constraint.

#### **7.4.3 Limited participant diversity**

Participants in this study were primarily educators, school administrators, and public servants working in the field of education. Other stakeholders' points of view—like those of kids, parents, and business representatives—were not fully investigated. Wider participation could lead to a more thorough knowledge of the multifaceted effects of the UAE's visions on many stakeholders (Government of the United Arab Emirates 2016).

#### **7.4.4 Contextual factors and changing dynamics**

Long-term strategic plans for the UAE, Vision 2021 and Vision 2071, provide aspirational objectives for the country's growth. Contextual elements and outside forces, however, can change over time, just as they can with any long-term plan. The viability and execution of these goals could be affected by changes in the economy, technology, and geopolitics. This study provides a snapshot of perceptions and changes over a certain period of time, which may not accurately represent future developments (Hoidn & Šťastný 2021).

#### **7.4.5 Language and cultural considerations**

Given that Arabic is often the major language of instruction in UAE schools, it is possible that the study's use of English as the primary language of instruction influenced participants' replies. The richness and authenticity of responses may be affected by cultural quirks and linguistic preferences (Kirk & Napier 2009). To reduce language-related restrictions, future study might think about doing interviews and data collection in the individuals' preferred language.

### **7.5 Recommendations**

A thorough analysis of the implementation and effects of the UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 within Abu Dhabi's private education industry has revealed crucial insights that open the door for well-informed recommendations. These suggestions are intended to maximize the beneficial effects on students, educators, and the larger community, improve the integration of

visionary principles into the educational landscape, and solve any implementation-related issues.

### **7.5.1 Holistic teacher development programs**

It is advised that educational authorities create and put into place comprehensive teacher development programs in order to guarantee the successful execution of the aspirational ideals expressed in Vision 2021 and Vision 2071. These programs ought to emphasize on teachers' abilities in cutting-edge teaching approaches, technology integration, and the development of critical thinking abilities (O'Sullivan 2017). Giving instructors these fundamental abilities will put them in a better position to match the visions with their instructional practices, improving the standard of instruction given to students.

### **7.5.2 Strategic curriculum alignment & performance contracts**

Private schools should take proactive steps to match the goals of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 with their curricula. To make sure that they encourage the development of abilities like critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and entrepreneurship, existing curriculum structures and material must be reviewed (Matsumoto 2019). The inclusion of these competencies in the curriculum will give students the skills they need to succeed in the quickly changing global environment, also they is great opportunity to establish performance contact with the private schools with clear annual targets for the national and common KPIs with frequently progress update, monitoring and support to support private schools in reaching the desired national educational outcomes.

### **7.5.3 Utilization of latest technologies**

A culture of research and innovation can be prioritized by educational leaders in private institutions. This can be done by giving educators incentives and resources to work on research projects that examine cutting-edge teaching techniques, technological integration, and pedagogical strategies that are in line with the visions (Pietsch & Tulowitzki 2017). Furthermore, encouraging experimentation and creativity will enable educators to design and implement original teaching practices. Finally, the utility of all new technology including AI, in the planning, adoption and execution of governmental strategies should be encouraged across all private schools as this has numerous advantages as identified in the findings of the study.

#### **7.5.4 Strengthening public-private partnerships**

Educational leaders in private institutions should place a high priority on fostering a culture of research and innovation, technology integration, professional development and students' assessments via further partnership with public and private organizations. This can be accomplished by working on projects that establish win-win relationship with private and public sector to look at modern pedagogical practices, technological integration, and vision-aligned pedagogical procedures (Soomro, TR & Ahmad 2012). Additionally, fostering experimentation and creativity by such collaboration will help teachers, students and all related stakeholders in the private education field to develop and use innovative strategies.

#### **7.5.5 Governance**

It is essential to regularly and systematically assess how well the visionary principles are being carried out. Private schools should set up systems for getting input from different parties, such as students, parents, and teachers (Thorne 2011). To make sure that the visions continue to be applicable and useful in influencing the educational landscape, this feedback loop can inform ongoing changes and modifications (Venkatesh, Speier & Morris 2002). In the same vein, governmental authorities should accord representatives of private schools in Abu Dhabi as sit at the table of formulation, planning and evaluation of progress meetings for the smooth implementation of governmental initiatives in the private schools.

#### **7.5.6 Inclusive education and diverse learning opportunities**

In order to ensure that all students, regardless of their circumstances or skills, benefit from the visions, private schools can adopt the concepts of inclusive education. This entails developing varied educational opportunities that take into account different learning preferences and requirements (Zaran et al. 2016). Private schools can support students' overall development and the creation of a varied and globally competitive workforce by promoting an inclusive atmosphere.

#### **7.5.7 Fostering global citizenship and cultural awareness**

Private schools should incorporate elements of social engagement and UAE culture into their curricula. This entails introducing them to a variety of viewpoints, cultures, and international problems (Saqr & Tennant 2016). Private schools can help shape well-rounded people who are ready to flourish in an interconnected world by encouraging a sense of global responsibility and cultural awareness (Pietsch & Tulowitzki 2017).

### **7.5.8 Long-term monitoring and adaptation**

A mechanism for long-term monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the visions on private schools can be established by educational authorities. This entails establishing ongoing evaluation procedures to monitor the development and results of the adopted initiatives (O’Sullivan 2017). To guarantee that the visions remain relevant and successful, required changes and improvements can be made based on the results of these assessments.

In summary, the UAE's national education ecosystem is a tapestry made of aspirational goals, educational values, teaching skills, and cooperative alliances. The study emphasizes the importance of educational competencies, the transforming power of visionary aspirations, the role of culture in establishing alignment, and the effects of collaborative synergy (Mohiuddin 2017). This study gives insights that can be used in other educational situations around the world in addition to helping us comprehend the educational landscape in the United Arab Emirates. Inspiring educational systems globally to connect their practices with aspirational aims for the improvement of education and society, Abu Dhabi's private education sector acts as a one of the best approaches of innovation and quality by actively embracing visionary aspirations.

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## Appendix

### Interviews

Interview conducted on (date):	
Name:	
Years of experience:	

1. How your education institutes incorporate governmental visions and initiatives into their strategic plans? And how will you measure the success of the Strategic Planning Process in the private schools?

2. Evaluate and describe the strategic planning adopted by the private school sector in Emirates of Abu Dhabi, alignment with to UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071? And What are the similarities and differences in implementation?

3. How the strategic planning adoption UAE's vision 2021 and 2071 could change the educational performance of the private school sector in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi ?

4. Is there are any implications to private schools of adopting the UAE's Education Vision 2021 and 2071 in their strategic plans, ? And what are the potential changes/suggestions. ?

5. What is the scope of Artificial Intelligence and Big Data in the successful implementation of Vision 2021 and Vision 2071 Strategic Planning for the Education sector in Abu Dhabi?

6.Are there any additional comments that you would like to make regarding the Strategic Planning Process in the UAE private schools?

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**Questionnaire**

**1. Your age group:**

- a. 18-24
- b. 25-39
- c. 40-50
- d. 50+

**2. Your gender:**

- a. Male
- b. Female

**3. Your educational level?**

- a. Diploma
- b. Bachelors
- c. Master
- d. PhD
- e. Other, Kindly specify

**4. Your years of experience in education filed?**

- a. Less than 5 years.
- b. More than 5 and less than 10 years.
- c. More than 10 and less than 15 years.
- d. More than 15 and less than 20 years.
- e. More than 20 years.

**5. In which curriculum your experience is (You can choose more than one curriculum):**

1. British curriculum.	2.American curriculum.	3.MOE curriculum.	4. Asian curriculum.	5. Other curriculums (Kindly specify) .....
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**6. Have you had experiences with Strategic Planning?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**7. Are you familiar with Abu Dhabi private education strategic plan, UAE's Vision 2021, and UAE's Vision 2071 for the educational sector?**

- a. Yes
- b. Somehow familiar
- c. No

**8. Which of the following aspects improved in AD private schools by in the past years (You can select more than one based on the most improved).**

- 1. Educational outcomes.
- 2. Quality of education.
- 3. Teaching methods.
- 4. Students' competencies.
- 5. Other, (Kindly specify) .....

**9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "The adoption of UAE's Vision 2071 is essential for the development of the educational sector in Abu Dhabi."**

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

**10. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Collaboration between private schools and the government is crucial in achieving UAE's Vision."**

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

**11. To what extent do you think private schools in Abu Dhabi have aligned their educational strategies with UAE's Vision?**

- a. Fully Aligned
- b. Partially Aligned
- c. Not Aligned at All

**12. Do you have plan aligned with educational sector in Abu Dhabi to achieve long-term goals?**

- a. Yes
- b. Somehow Yes
- c. No

**13. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Private schools in Abu Dhabi should focus on integrating technology into the classroom to achieve UAE's Vision 2071."**

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

**14. To what extent do you think your private schools in Abu Dhabi promote innovation, creativity, and talent development in their students?**

- a. Fully Promote
- b. Partially Promote
- c. Somehow Promote
- d. Do Not Promote at All

**15. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement: "Private schools in Abu Dhabi should actively participate in the initiatives to enhance the quality of the educational sector."**

- a. Strongly Agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree

**16. To what extent do you think private schools in Abu Dhabi collaborate with other the stakeholders to achieved/achieving UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071?**

- a. Fully Collaborate
- b. Partially Collaborate
- c. Do Not Collaborate at All

**17. How would you rate the overall progress of the educational sector in Abu Dhabi towards achieved/achieving UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071?**

- a. Excellent
- b. Good
- c. Fair

**18. Do you use any framework defined for Education Strategic Planning Process?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**19. Does your school Education Strategic Planning Process align with UAE's Vision 2021 and Vision 2071?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**20. Do principals have a clearly defined personal vision for the schools they serve, and ways do they enact their vision?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**21. Do you believe that having a facilitator to utilize the ANY Model of Strategic Planning has been an effective method?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**22. Are there any additional comments/suggestions/recommendations that you would like to make regarding the Strategic Planning Process in the UAE private schools?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

Add here:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

## Research Approval Letter



دائرة التعليم والمعرفة  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
AND KNOWLEDGE

<p><b>Date:</b> 17-May-2023</p> <p><b>To:</b> Private Schools Principals</p> <p><b>Subject:</b> Research Permission Request</p> <p>Dear Principal,</p> <p>The Department of Education and Knowledge would like to express its gratitude for your generous efforts and sincere cooperation in serving our researchers.</p> <p>You are kindly requested to allow the researcher: <b>Khalid Hassan Abdalla Khan Alzarooni</b> to complete his research on:</p> <p><b>The adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071 into strategic plans of private schools in emirate of Abu Dhabi</b></p> <p>Please facilitate the researcher in conducting the research for the topic mentioned above by <b>allowing him to conduct surveys for a sample group of staff.</b></p> <p>In case this research involves: a) conducting any activities at the school (examinations, sessions, workshops etc.) please follow the school policies. b) communicating with students, a prior permission from the parents is required through the school. c) communicating with parents or school staff, please follow the school policies.</p> <p>Thank you for your cooperation. Yours respectfully,</p> <p>Data Intelligence Division Director</p>	<p><b>التاريخ:</b> 17 مايو 2023</p> <p><b>السادة / مديري المدارس الخاصة المحترمين</b></p> <p><b>الموضوع:</b> تسهيل مهمة باحث</p> <p>تحية طيبة وبعد،</p> <p>يطيب لدائرة التعليم والمعرفة أن تتوجه لكم بخالص الشكر والتقدير لجهودكم الكريمة والتعاون الصادق لخدمة الباحثين.</p> <p>نود إعلامكم بالسماح للباحث: <b>خالد حسن عبدالله خان الزرعوني</b> باستكمال بحثه بعنوان:</p> <p><b>تطبيق رؤية دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة للأعوام 2021 و 2071 في الخطط الاستراتيجية للمدارس الخاصة في إمارة أبوظبي</b></p> <p>وبذلك، يُرجى التكرم بتسهيل مهام الباحث ومساعدته على إجراء الدراسة المشار إليها، من خلال <b>السماح له بإجراء استبيانات لعينة من الموظفين.</b></p> <p>إذا كان البحث يتضمن: أ) القيام بأنشطة في المدرسة (جلسات، ورش عمل، الخ) يُرجى اتباع سياسة المدرسة. ب) يتطلب التواصل مع الطلبة إذن مسبق من أولياء الأمور عن طريق المدرسة. ج) للتواصل مع أولياء الأمور أو العاملين في المدرسة يُرجى اتباع سياسة المدرسة.</p> <p>شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،</p> <p>مدير إدارة البيانات الذكية</p>
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This letter is valid for one year from the date of issue

هذه ترسلة صالحة لمدة عام واحد من تاريخ إصدارها

KMD-Research-1.1-11-2021

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**Research Ethics Application**

# SBT Doctoral Ethics Questionnaire 2021-22

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Response ID	Completion date
800990-800981-94869422	12 May 2022, 13:02 (BST)

1	Forename	khalid
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2	Surname	Al Zarooni
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3	Student number	██████████
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4	Award Programme (DBA or PhD)	DBA
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5	Research title (From your PAF)	The adoption of the UAE's Vision 2021 and 2071 into strategic plans of private schools in emirate of Abu Dhabi
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6	Involve assent-based participation, that is where agreement to participate is neither verbal nor written?	Yes
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7	Involve people other than the researcher(s) as participant researchers?	No
8	Offer financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) to participants?	No
9	Risk damage or disturbance to culturally, spiritually or historically significant artefacts or places and/or human remains?	No
10	Require the use of environmentally toxic chemicals or involve ionising radiation?	No
11	Cause any negative impact on the environment over and above that of normal daily activity?	No
12	Will the research involve children and young people under 18?	No

13	Involve potentially vulnerable individuals or groups (e.g.: people with cognitive impairments, members of minority ethnic, cultural or social groups, migrants)?	No
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14	Involve medical research with humans (including clinical trials)?	No
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20	Involve participants (e.g.: colleagues, students, business contacts, persons in high office) whose engagement may be influenced by the power relationships between yourself and them?	No
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21	Require the cooperation of a gatekeeper for initial access to documents, data sets, a research site or research participants (e.g.: employees, school children, members of self-help groups, residents of care homes, prison inmates, charities, museums, government departments, international agencies)?	No
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22	Will the research involve work outside the UK where there is specific or identifiable risk to the researcher or other research participants.?	Yes
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23	Involve any risk to the researcher (e.g.: lone working, international fieldwork)?	No
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24	Contain elements that you or members of the research team are not trained to conduct?	No
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25	Potentially involve researchers and/or participants in the disclosure of illegalities?	No
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26	Present a risk of breach of confidentiality/anonymity to either individuals and/or participating organisations?	No
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27	Involve administrative or secure data that requires permissions from the appropriate authorities before use?	No
28	Involve internet participants or other visual/vocal methods whereby participants may be identified?	Yes
29	Relate to military sites, personnel, equipment and/or the defence industry?	No
30	Involve the recruitment of NHS patients because they are NHS patients?	No
31	Involve the recruitment of children in the social care system?	No
32	Involve participants recruited because they are currently subject to a custodial order in the criminal justice system?	No

The End