



# **The Effectiveness Of Teamwork Of National And Expatriate Kg Teachers In Al Ain Schools: A Qualitative Study**

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**Abstract**

The objective was to improve the effectiveness of collaboration among teachers who are both national and expatriate in the AI KG schools. There were three sub-questions to answer in the study, conducted using the qualitative phenomenological technique. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data for this research. There were five native teachers and five expatriate teachers that participated in the discussion. Audio files were used to store the information gleaned from the interview. After that, the NVIVO application version 10 was used to clean, inspect, code, and analyze the data. For both native and expatriate instructors, the study found that collaboration is essential for success. Further evidence was found to support the incredible impact of collaboration, particularly when it comes to helping students learn a new language. Aside from that, researchers discovered what factors made the team more productive and what obstacles they faced were impeded.

**Keywords:** Teamwork; Teachers; schools; Students; Results: Teaching

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## **1. Introduction**

Formal and non-formal education may occur simultaneously. There are many ways for a community to impart its values, beliefs, and traditions to its members via informal education. In general, this is referred to as "society's culture," and it is handed down from one generation to the next. Formal education, on the other hand, is delivered in classrooms and is often monitored by a government body. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), both public and private schools offer a high-quality education. While public schools are funded by the federal government, private schools are funded by donations from individuals and organizations. Students may get degrees ranging from kindergarten to PhD level at a number of different universities. Plans for public schools and government-sponsored institutions are produced by the Ministry of Education or educational councils around the nation, such as the Abu Dhabi Education Council (Khamis et al., 2012). To remain competitive in a rapidly changing world of globalization, industrialization, and economic expansion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has a pressing need for highly skilled, competent, and knowledgeable personnel. It has employed non-UAE citizens to cover its labor demands in order to maintain its position as a regional and global economic powerhouse. As a

result, the UAE's cultural and economic paradigm might be threatened. To meet the economy's needs, a plan must be devised to increase the country's domestic capacity to provide it with the necessary talented and knowledgeable people force. Since the area and the nation are experiencing rapid transformation, an educated workforce and high-quality higher education are essential for the E's future.

### 1.1. Literature review / Theoretical background

Literature was reviewed to understand the definition of collaboration and the usefulness of teamwork in education. According to Tuckman's model, the phases of team growth and their respective advantages and kinds were discussed in this examination of the team. As a final point of reference, the literature study examined collaboration in schools and the benefits of cooperation in the classroom. Humans have a built-in need to connect with others in their environment. The authors define teams as groups of individuals that work together to achieve shared objectives and are held jointly responsible for their accomplishments (Carpenter, 2015). Teamwork, according to Paris Salas and Cannon-Bowers (2014), is more than just a collection of people, and collaboration is more than the sum of their individual actions of cooperation. If a group of people works together, they may be able to accomplish more in less time than if they worked alone. In addition to the capacity to solve problems quickly and establish a community of learners to assist the district in meeting its objectives, teamwork provides a number of other benefits as well. Collaboration brings about increased productivity, member flexibility and development, faster fulfillment of duties and responsibilities, higher motivation of the team, and an overall improvement in the quality of the goods and/or services provided, to name a few advantages (Bailey & Cho 2010). This shows the necessity of working together as a team.

Teachers at kindergarten schools work together to enhance their practice and students' achievement by exchanging knowledge and skills. To solve an issue, the team follows a set procedure. In the beginning, they identify a problem, and then they choose the best way to solve it. To make a choice, they acquire information from many sources. Once the team has decided, they should devise an action plan. As soon as the issue has been solved, they take a second look at their conclusion and their steps to get there. Ultimately, the process culminates in a discussion on how the issue was solved—using the cooperation strategy to educate fosters teacher collaboration while disseminating information to students. Teachers use this method to collaborate on topic preparation and share teaching methods. Using this participatory teaching method, instructors are better able to handle their responsibilities and improve professionally and personally. Furthermore, the technique helps instructors better understand and react to their students' psychological and educational requirements. Teachers and students benefit from better performance as a consequence.

### 1.2. Research questions

- a. How successful are Al Ain School's teams of expatriate and native kindergarten teachers?
- b. What is the impression of collaboration among expatriate and native KG teachers in Al Ain schools?
- c. How do expatriate and native KG teachers in Al Ain schools see the obstacles to good teamwork?.
- d. What are the lessons to be learnt from putting together teams of expatriate and native teachers in Al Ain's kindergartens?

## 2. Method

## 2.1. Sample

The participants in this research were all female kindergarten teachers from the United Arab Emirates and other countries who worked in government-run kindergartens in the city of Al Ain. They came from a variety of backgrounds, including the United Arab Emirates and other nations. For the study, the researcher picked five kindergartens in the Al Ain region as a sample, and from each school, he selected two participants to take part in the interview procedure. Participation in the research was entirely voluntary on the part of the participants, who received no monetary or other compensation for their time (McGrath et al., 2019). The selection of the sample was guided by this technique as a consequence of the results of the study. It comprises of five national and five English-licensed instructors from various nations who serve as a representative sample. The researchers selected the national kindergarten instructors by utilizing the letter N followed by a number ranging from one to five in the alphabet. The expatriate KG teachers with the letter E followed by a number from one to five for this study. The following is a short biographical sketch of one of the participants in the research.

Teaching in the United Arab Emirates for two years and a half, Teacher E 1 is an expatriate teacher. Early childhood education is her major. As a science teacher for kids in grades K-12, he has extensive experience in the field. Instructor E2 is the second foreign teacher in the classroom. She has lived in the United Arab Emirates for four years now. She has a lot of experience teaching kindergarten students. All of her teaching experience has come from the United Arab Emirates. Another foreign teacher has only been teaching for three years, and she confirmed in the interview that she has been teaching at the same kindergarten school and classroom for those three years. Each of the four teachers who received the E4 emblem had a unique experience. He originally worked as a private school teacher in Abu Dhabi for two years. Her next stop was Al Ain, where she spent the next four years working at the present institution. As a consequence, she has the most extensive teaching experience of all of the foreign teachers working in the country. Teacher E5 is the school's fifth foreign teacher in this particular instance. She has been working as a teacher for five years and has a bachelor's degree. She has just two years of teaching experience in the United Arab Emirates, while the rest of her teaching experience is in her home country of Canada. As a result, E5 is the only expatriate teacher who has previously taught in a country other than the United Arab Emirates, according to the data. I have six years of teaching experience as the first national teacher in the country.

Additional knowledge comes from teacher 3, who has six years' experience teaching in two different kindergartens around the country. N2 is the second national educator which has been a kindergarten teacher for 21 years. She is the second national teacher. As a result, she has the greatest teaching experience of all of the international and local academics included in the research. T4 has been in the classroom for three decades, making him the fourth national teacher. Only three years of teaching experience are required for teacher T5 to qualify as a national teacher. As stated above, biographies of teachers were arranged following the sequence in which interviews were done with them. Native instructors have greater experience teaching at the KG level than expatriate teachers.

## 2.2. Instrument(s)

One of the primary purposes of this research was to investigate the lived experiences of people who are members of a given group or demographic. This study employed a phenomenological technique to do this. Quantitative methods can't accurately assess human sentiments, emotions, perceptions, and attitudes. A researcher may not adequately explain the engagement of participants in a quantitative study (Cooke & Rosen, 2008). The researcher exclusively used the qualitative approach of analysis. To better understand teachers' experiences in terms of collaborative effectiveness, the researcher relied on

interviewing and re-interviewing instructors as necessary. Phenomenological interviews are in-depth, in-depth interviews based on the philosophical tradition that studies lived experiences. Allows us to have a deeper understanding of those events and form our own opinions on them.

### 2.3. Data collection procedures

The researcher had sent a letter to ADEC asking permission to interview students at Al Ain schools. Additional information sought by the researcher included the names and contact information for all instructors at Al Ain's kindergartens, both national and foreign. School administrators were issued a formal email seeking their permission to conduct the study at their various schools, which they complied with. After receiving the relevant licenses and certificates, they were also requested to plan a time to come to the school and see the facilities. The researcher planned a meeting with the school's administration in order to explain the nature of this study, how it would be done, and the ethical considerations surrounding data collection to the management of the school where the study would be conducted. According to their willingness to participate in the interview, it was determined which academics would be picked for the interview. The researcher was able to get a better understanding of the participants' shared experiences as a result of the in-depth interview questions he used. In order to avoid interrogating the participants outside of the school, the interviews were conducted inside the school itself. The average interview lasted between 15 and 20 minutes per applicant, depending on their qualifications. The data collecting method was made easier by the use of recorders. Ethical considerations were taken into account when this was done. While gathering data for this study, the researcher adhered to ethical standards. Data collection for this research was done at the participant's convenience, as an example.

### 2.4. Data analysis

Analysis of data is a critical part of turning raw data into useful information that can be used to address research questions. The factors or concerns in the research should be taken into account throughout the data analysis procedure. Nvivo 10 was used to clean, verify completeness, and code the collected data. An excellent tool for analyzing qualitative data is Nvivo 10. A researcher may use it to gather, organize, and evaluate interview data. Qualitative data analysis begins with reviewing the complete data collection and then analyzing it. The researcher studies and rereads the data to fully understand the problems at hand. In data analysis, the objective is to identify patterns. The data from each interview was transcribed into individual word files by the researcher in this study. In Nvivo 10, she made an interview folder and imported all of the word files into that folder.

## 3. Results

For the first question regarding national and expatriate teachers' partnership at KG school in AL in Education Office, all of the preceding information helped answer. Both native and expatriate teachers may benefit from cooperation, based on what we can gather from the teacher's reflections. It is also beneficial for students' growth and proficiency in English and Arabic. Finally, part of the team's efficacy is hindered by a barrier. It will be addressed in the second question of this research.

The second question sought to determine how expatriate and native KG teachers in Al Ain schools viewed the obstacles to good teamwork. Most national and expatriate educators said that instructors generally tolerate each other, although there was still some dissent. "There are some disputes over the method to pursue," instructor El explained. How long does it take to cover one topic in a class? Other than that, we couldn't agree on the best instruction means. When teacher five first arrived at her new school in 2008, no English instructor or expatriate teacher was to assist her. There are English-

Japanese instructors at her new school, but she refused to hire them because of the language barrier and cultural differences. However, living as a group at school made us more considerate of each other. It took us a while to figure out the purpose of the expatriate instructors, but in the end, they helped our pupils learn Arabic and another new language, she said. Teacher 4 said that her school had a limited number of places for expatriate instructors. She said that the volatility of expatriate instructors is to blame for this partial acceptance. Expatriate teachers work here because they "have a heart contract" or for one ear because certain expatriate teachers may "decide to return to their home countries," Teachers E1 said. To build a solid connection was tough because of this.

How can expatriate and national teachers benefit from each other's experiences in Al Ain KG schools? By synthesizing MTEN findings, we can answer this issue and receive the best practice and instructors' recommendations from those who participated. There were two parts to the solution. First, it was the one that solved the issue. Second, the idea and practice helped to improve collaboration. Teacher E1 advised that teachers be given communication training. There's a saying, "it is crucial to educate the art of communication how to ask a simple inquiry when you are not sure, say sorry when necessary, jump in and assist when you should, but also to step away when you are not needed." Additionally, she emphasized the need of collaboration in overcoming disagreements "by understanding what to say and when, and how to say it" to succeed. To avoid misunderstandings, teacher E3 agreed with the need for efficient communication. A third party, she said, "Occasionally may be helpful at this time." Members of the group should be given the option to cease their relationships with one another at the adjournment stage (Natvig & Stark 2016). The administration's reaction to the teacher's question shows unprepared for this situation. Expat teacher volatility was cited as one of the obstacles to good cooperation by one instructor. Ideally, if this step is managed correctly, it will become an integral part of the team's lifecycle. Some teachers proposed that this step be completed more effectively by the team. The results of the teacher interview show that Al-Ain KG's national and expatriate teachers work together well, and this is good news for both groups. The last element of Tuckman's model may need to be changed to ensure a healthy adjournment for the team: teamwork.

#### **4. Discussion**

ADEC schools rely heavily on collaboration, according to this report. The administration creates teams for the express goal of exchanging fresh ideas and interacting to improve the educational environment for students. The teacher's observations led to discovering three aspects that influence team effectiveness: communication, work, and personal issues. As a result, this research corroborates those of Teng and Luo (2015), who investigated the performance of two different teams in depth. According to their study, some characteristics may help teams succeed in the classroom. According to both types of research, a shared understanding and excellent communication skills are critical for cooperation. In addition, the results of this research concurred that the school administration plays an important role in building an environment that supports collaboration. Communication played a major role in the study's findings. It is crucial to establish a common language that all team members can understand and communicate effectively. The English language was used in this investigation.

Another hurdle to good collaboration was the variation in the personalities of the team members. To be successful as a team, each member must get along with the others. This may be especially problematic if one of the teachers is notoriously difficult to deal with. For some, doing more and having more or greater experience trumps all other considerations. There will be sentiments of selfishness and unpleasant or unhealthy rivalry in this setting. To effectively impart knowledge to students, two instructors must work together. Unless the two professors make an effort to build a relationship and accept one another, this situation will not arise naturally.

## 5. Conclusions

According to one national instructor, students require "at least 40 minutes to comprehend one notion," according to the study. Because not all pupils are fluent in the language of the expatriate instructor, a session in two languages can generate confusion, and students will struggle to grasp the concept quickly. In addition, the translation of what the expatriate teacher says will save the national instructor a lot of time and effort. Researchers feel that teaching each language independently is beneficial for students' performance and grasp of that language. For example, instructors should focus on making appropriate activities for their students rather than teaching them two languages at once, which can lead to confusion. Only two teachers were aware of this concept. The remainders of the instructors are OK with the varied activities, although the situation requires more discussion. There should be a consistent approach to teaching both languages in a way that helps students learn both languages while also ensuring that children feel secure and comfortable, according to several ADEC teams and ADEC individuals.

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