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**Women ESL Teachers' Perceptions about their
Roles and Professional Development Needs in
Qatar's *Education for a New Era***

by

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ABSTRACT

Research shows that successful educational reform is multi-faceted requiring rigorous planning and investment in teacher professional development.

The focus of this study is women ESL teachers in Qatar's public school educational reform, *Education for a New Era* which created 36 publicly funded Independent Schools with a standards-based curriculum using English as a Second Language as the medium of instruction in mathematics and science. The research investigated the perceptions of women ESL teachers regarding Qatar's reforms and their experiences using new approaches to teaching ESL. Professional development needs were also identified.

A mixed method approach was used. A questionnaire was distributed to 233 women ESL teachers and 18 semi-structured interviews conducted. Generally, teachers valued increased freedom, but expressed a lack of support, and noted increased workloads and conflicts between professional roles and private lives. Change facilitators were seen as supportive. Views about school administrators varied.

After analysis and presentation of the findings, I concluded that while educational reform in Qatar had been largely conceptualised from the top down, close attention is still needed regarding the role of women ESL teachers in the process of implementation. In particular, since reform is dependent upon sustained professional development for ESL teachers.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to

my loving brother

Hassan

who passed away on 19th October 2004

and to

my loving sister

Mariam

who passed away on 3rd January 2007

May Allah bless their souls

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis
CBAM	Concern Based Adoption Model
CBI	Content Based Instruction
CfBT	Centre for British Teachers
EAL	English as Additional Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
GCC	Gulf Co-operation Council
GDP	Cross Domestic Product
IELTS	International English Language Test System
IS	Independent school
K – 12	Kindergarten to Year 12
MoE	Ministry of Education
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NUDIST NVIVO	Non-numerical, Unstructured Data Interpretation, Searching and Theorising
PIRLS	Programme in International Reading Literacy
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QCEA	Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment
SEC	Supreme Education Council
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSOs	School Support Organisations
TEFL	Teaching of English as Foreign Language
TESOL	Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TPCP	Teacher Preparation Certificate Programme
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

CHAPTER 1

Background to the Study

1.1 Introduction

This study focuses on a number of broad and specific issues involved in the professional development of 233 women ESL teachers recruited by 29 of Qatar's new Independent Schools. These teachers are working within a context of system-wide educational reform.

This approach to reform, embodied in *Education for a New Era*, was adopted by Qatar in 2002. As with many national reforms, *Education for a New Era* brought with it many seemingly sound innovations, including academic standards designed to be inclusive and manifested in a standards-based curriculum, pre and in-service teacher preparation programmes, an approach to system-wide assessment based on multiple choice testing, and different ways of judging teaching and learning outcomes in relation to human, fiscal, and technological in-puts. *Education for a New Era* also brought with it a unique opportunity to develop and implement professional development for teachers working in the nation's public schools.

In this study, I argue that teachers are at the very heart of educational change, as it is in classrooms and in approaches to teaching and learning where the effects – both intended and unintended – of educational reform are manifested most clearly and most significantly. Taking my position a step further, I also argue that in order for educational reform to occur, teachers need to make sense of both the larger strategic picture, and the more detailed and calculated impacts

which occur in teaching and learning, classrooms and schools. In other words, teachers need to be able to contextualise their roles, and the expectations and demands they face, within the context of a system-wide reform programme.

Because *Education for a New Era* stresses teaching and learning in English rather than Arabic, the importance of ESL teachers to success is perhaps more critical than it may have been had Arabic remained the primary means of teaching and learning. ESL teachers, as highlighted during this study, are thus responsible for teaching English as a second language per se, and for teaching content in other domains, notably mathematics and science.

1.2 The Introduction of the English Medium and the Role of ESL Teachers

The need to reform public education in Qatar seems to have been prompted because the country's leaders recognised that educational standards and outcomes for learners enrolled in public schools providing K-12 education were simply not producing or sustaining sufficient quality. In other words, existing provision was falling short of what the nation's leaders, and the public more widely, believed was needed for the future. As a result of this concern, the Qatar Government commissioned the RAND Corporation from the USA, to carry out a study and make recommendations about the directions Qatar should pursue in the future to ensure it had a public education system broadly comparable with the best available internationally.

The RAND Corporation's mission, as stated on its website, is to help improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis. The Corporation's background is largely in defence and logistic-related programmes, and at the time of the study it conducted for the Qatar Government, the Corporation's expertise and experience in education was limited to reviews largely concerned

with the economic impact of some school-based programmes developed and implemented in various parts of the United States.

Because of the manner in which the study was commissioned and undertaken, the K-12 educational reform ‘model’ initiated in 2002, Qatar’s *Education for a New Era*, was firmly and exclusively based on approaches to charter schools seen in some parts of the United States. While charter schools are now found across the USA, their number varies greatly between the states; with some having fostered this as a preferred option while others remain sceptical about claims made for the advantages of corporatised education.

Charter schools in the United States are essentially corporatised entities supported by public funds, operating within a mandate (or charter) approved by a state or district, which are largely free of the constraints and conditions which obtain in public schools more broadly (Bodilly, 2001). This means that in the USA, charter schools seemingly offered the means to address what were seen to be the many failings of the established public education system, and they would do this by being more accountable and offering greater choice. Notably, these are particular challenges existing solely within the US public school system, and the extent to which they might be extrapolated or applied elsewhere has not been tested.

According to the US Charter Schools organisation (Bodilly, 1996 and 2001), these institutions intend to:

- increase opportunities for learning and provide access to quality education for people;
- create choice for parents and learners within the public school system;
- provide a system of accountability for results in public education;

- encourage innovative teaching practices;
- create new professional opportunities for teachers;
- encourage community and parent involvement in public education; and
- leverage improved public education.

Many of these maxims are starkly apparent in the RAND Corporation's approach to educational reform in Qatar and in its subsequent recommendations to the Qatar Government about the shape and direction of public education.

Interestingly perhaps, the RAND Corporation's essentially ideological approach to advocating charter schooling in Qatar is not supported by Buckley and Scheider (2007) study, where it is noted that like so many other school reforms, the push for charter schools has been characterised by many promises unsupported by evidence. Indeed, the creation of charter schools has become more than simply a reform, it has become a movement supported by what Carnoy et al. (2005) refer to as 'charter school zealots'.

The approach to reform advocated by the RAND Corporation called for the creation of a new national system of Independent Schools, based on a charter school model that would simultaneously compete with, and exist side by side, Ministry of Education schools. In other words, the RAND Corporation advocated creating a dual system of publicly-funded schools very much along the lines as had happened with the charter school movement in the United States.

A major advantage for Qatar's new Independent Schools, however, was that new school buildings were constructed to house them, leaving Ministry of Education schools in existing premises. Naturally, this tended to make the new Independent Schools far more attractive to potential

investors or owners, as well as to families and learners, given that the physical infrastructure was modern and facilities generally better and more advanced than existing Ministry of Education schools.

It was claimed that as a direct result of this wholesale reform of Qatar's publicly-funded education system, in which the RAND Corporation's recommendations were made without the benefit of any pilot strategies or examples, teaching and learning would improve. In short, the RAND Corporation claimed that if Qatar created notional or actual Independent Schools, broadly based on the US charter approach, then learning standards and educational outcomes would improve. As a consequence, Qatar created an entirely new school system directly based on the advice it received about charter schools and their apparent success in the United States.

It is also fair to say that no evidence was adduced about how successful charter schools actually were in comparison with their 'regular' counterparts, and as the emerging evidence subsequently shows, it painted a far less flattering picture of improved teaching and learning outcomes than the advocates of charter schooling such as the RAND Corporation claimed.

For example, a report published by the American Federation of Teachers (Nelson et al. 2004) compares the performance of charter school learners and their counterparts in traditional public schools using mathematics and reading test score data from fourth and eighth grade learners collected as part of the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often referred to in the United States as "the nation's report card". The authors report that, on average, charter achievement was lower based on both average scaled scores and differences in proficiency levels for fourth and eighth-grade mathematics and reading, although the difference in eighth-grade mathematics scaled scores was not statistically significant.

Another, more recent example, a detailed analysis by the Centre for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) at Stanford University (2009), states that Charter schools are permitted to select their focus, environment and operations and wide diversity exists across the sector. This study provides an overview that aggregates charter schools in different ways to examine different facets of their impact on learners' academic growth. The group portrait shows wide variation in performance. The study reveals that a small percentage of charter schools, 17 per cent, provide superior education opportunities for their learners. Nearly half of the charter schools nation-wide have results that are no different from the local public school options and over a third, 37 per cent, deliver learning results that are significantly worse than learners would have realised had they remained in traditional public schools.

Importantly, Qatar's Independent Schools are notionally 'independent' or self-directed, but they are subject to strict guidelines and procedures issued by the Education Institute of the Supreme Education Council (SEC). It is thus hard to see Qatar's Independent Schools as genuinely autonomous, although they do embody some of the characteristics of self-managing or self-governing schools in other western settings. Enrolment for Independent Schools was effectively capped at a maximum of 700 learners per school, no matter how popular or well thought of a particular school might be. This is a significant variation to the approach embodied in charter schools in the USA, as it is intended that these should compete for learners, with the more successful growing and the less successful shrinking to the point where they cease to exist.

However, rather than call the new entities 'charter schools', the Qatar government opted for new nomenclature. The reason for this is not clear, though it might be assumed that there was a desire to have new schools seen as different from those operated by Qatar's Ministry of Education and given the impression that Qatar was not simply adopting an entirely US-based approach to

educational reform. Thus, Qatar's new publicly-funded schools are called Independent Schools and it is in 29 of these newly-formed entities that this study took place.

From its inception, *Education for a New Era* was essentially a mandated approach to education initially intended to effectively parallel the more traditional Ministry of Education K-12 schools. Ultimately, the ambition for *Education for a New Era* was that Independent Schools would replace all Ministry of Education schools, and the Ministry itself would be replaced entirely by the Supreme Education Council (SEC).

The mandate for *Education for a New Era* stemmed directly from the decision by the Qatar Government to accept the RAND Corporation's recommendations, without subjecting them to further, more detailed analysis, so that they became simply government policy. This approach contrasts quite significantly with approaches which might be typically found in western, industrialised settings where a mandate often evolves through a course of action, sometimes beginning with a general election, and then proceeding via green and/or white papers or other processes which allow widespread consultation before legislation is developed and enacted.

Moreover, in accepting the RAND Corporation's recommendations without demur, the rationale for *Education for a New Era* was confirmed as an essentially 'top-down' model, flowing from an Emiri decree to the system, schools, teachers and wider community. There was no process of consultation, no opportunity for alternative models, and no chance for input by teachers, school leaders or other stakeholders who were thus, largely marginalised as a result.

1.3 Defining the Research and the Scope of the Study

The empirical work for this study was carried out during the second year of Qatar's reforms i.e. 2005–2006. In addition to the empirical work, the wider study presented here involved describing and analysing some of the structures of education in Qatar as well as background factors. It also involved description of the kinds of roles created within these structures for women ESL teachers and their needs for professional development as teachers within a newly-formed system.

Within the context of a major reform programme such as that contemplated in *Education for a New Era* which addressed many systemic issues one might expect, the role of teachers as professional practitioners and their professional development also needed to be considered as a central and critical issue.

Among the issues that might be considered within the broad ambit of professional development are: the conditions which sustain or undermine the professional development needs of women ESL teachers who make up a clear majority of the ESL teaching work-force in Qatar; perceptions that the teachers have about themselves within the context of reform, and how teachers perceive their personal and institutional roles within this context.

This study makes a contribution to the analysis and provision of research data on which the Supreme Education Council may make evidence-based and well-informed decisions about developing and implementing policies which provide for a more systematic approach to professional development opportunities for women ESL teachers. Ideally this should lead to sustained improvement in teaching and learning outcomes.

In approaching this study, a deliberate attempt was made to address different audiences: an academic audience, which may respond to the methodology and findings contained in a research thesis; and a wider audience of policy-makers, school leaders, teachers, parents, school support organisation staff and the community, all of whom will have access to the findings. Chapter 9 articulates public policy issues regarding women ESL teachers and their roles within education reform.

There were these reasons why I chose women ESL teachers as the focus of this study: firstly, the fact that women far outnumber their male peers in ESL teaching - 76 per cent women and 24 per cent men (Evaluation Institute, 2007); and secondly, because of my own work as a woman ESL teacher for over four years in Qatar's Ministry of Education schools (the precursors of Qatar's Independent Schools). The work gave me insights into the 'lived' experiences of women ESL teachers.

In stark contrast with many western, industrialised settings and with some less conservative Islamic nations, prevailing cultural norms in Qatar and the Gulf states more generally mean that as a woman Muslim Qatari, if I sought to work with male subjects, I would certainly encounter insurmountable difficulties. In short, it is quite difficult for a woman Muslim in Qatar and the Gulf states, to work effectively with men to whom she is not directly related, and thus, it was far easier on a cultural level for me to work with women teachers, and it was fortuitous that the ESL teacher population in Qatar's Independent Schools was overwhelmingly women which allowed me to carry out this research without significant cultural impediments.

From a personal perspective, this study stems from two broad but related interests: an intrinsic interest deriving from my experience as an ESL teacher in Qatar, coupled with an extrinsic

interest in the progress of *Education for a New Era*, an approach intended to deliver world class education through a system of apparently Independent Schools under the auspices of Qatar's Supreme Education Council.

As I explore later, in respect of Qatar's new publicly-funded schools, the term 'independent' does not obtain in the broader sense of them being autonomous, entirely self-governing or self-managing. Rather, Qatar's Independent Schools are generally less constrained by the sorts of administrative and other policies and procedures applicable to Ministry of Education schools, but they remain closely monitored and supervised via agreements with the Supreme Education Council. In addition, they must offer the core curriculum, participate in a national multiple choice testing regime, and have conditions of service for teachers determined directly by the Education Institute of the Supreme Education Council.

What is also significant here is that in implementing *Education for a New Era*, a decision was taken that all teaching and learning would take place in English. That is, save for Arabic, the core curriculum comprising English, mathematics and science, would be taught and learned entirely in English. This was, and remains, a radical departure for any Arabic speaking nation, and the decision placed women ESL teachers at the very centre of successful reform insofar as teaching and learning was concerned.

Thus, women ESL classroom teachers are playing a vital role in developing and implementing Qatar's reform programme. This lends weight to my decision to have women ESL teachers as the group on which this study should focus. Given the importance of teacher-practitioners to any successful reform, and given the importance of supporting their professional development needs, my research set out to explore the professional development needs of the women ESL teachers

teaching in Independent Schools and who participated in this study. My focus was on their perceptions about the support provided by change facilitators; their concerns, and their personal and institutional roles within the schools in which they work. The conditions sustain and undermine professional development activities as reported by women ESL teachers. My research was carried out over a whole academic year, the second year of the *Education for a New Era* reform process with its concomitant demands on many aspects of teaching and learning, as well as on the schools, teachers, learners and their families.

1.4 Definition of Terms

In order to clarify the terminology used here, some key issues are defined:

- **Qatar K-12 School reform/*Education for a New Era*:** The reform ‘model’ selected by the Qatar Government was based very closely on information provided by the RAND Corporation about US charter schools including: academic content standards, national multiple-choice testing which sought to address learner achievement aligned with academic content standards, a school report card, and a revenue limit based on enrolment and other fiscal criteria.
- **Cohort I:** Independent Schools launched in September 2004, the first Cohort selected by the Supreme Education Council inclusive of new and or up-dated school buildings and facilities. Each Independent School is a public school and functions under publicly-funded, quasi non-profit organisational status. Independent Schools are bound by the terms of a contract signed between the governing body and the Supreme Education Council.

- **Cohort II:** Independent Schools launched on September 2005, the second Cohort selected by the Supreme Education Council inclusive of new and/or up-dated school buildings and facilities with other conditions as obtaining for Cohort 1.

- **Primary:** primary schools cover years 1 to 6, and the ages of the children are typically between 6 and 11 years in Qatar.

- **Preparatory:** serves as a ‘bridge’ between primary and secondary schooling. In Qatar, preparatory school covers years 7 to 9 and learners are usually between 12 and 14 years of age.

- **Secondary:** is the stage of education following preparatory school. In Qatar, secondary schooling is generally the final stage of compulsory education with the next stage of education usually being tertiary education or university. It covers years 10 to 12, for learners aged between 15 and 18 years.

- **ESL Teachers:** when recruited by an Independent School, an ESL teacher may teach in two languages: English and Arabic. They can be teachers of English and may use two-way English/Arabic immersion pedagogy in the teaching content for Arabic, English, mathematics and science. Currently Qatar’s Supreme Education Council does not have a specific model of teaching ESL. At the time of this study, ESL teachers were required to develop their own teaching and learning materials, something which represents a very significant break with the traditions of Ministry of Education schools, and with the norms to which most teachers in this study had become accustomed.

- **Levels of ESL Instruction:** under the curriculum implemented by *Education for New Era*, each level of teaching and learning would have its own ESL teachers; with an articulated curriculum developed individually by ESL teachers. ESL teachers teach both content as well as English language. This is an important issue because it can clearly have a significant impact on the capacity of ESL teachers to carry out effective teaching and learning and considerable potential to bear upon teaching and learning content in mathematics and science as well.

- **Independent School:** a government-funded school that is granted a large measure of autonomy to carry out its educational mission and objectives while being held accountable to terms agreed in an operating contract between the school's governing body and the Supreme Education Council. All Independent Schools must meet established curriculum standards in Arabic, English, mathematics and science, as well as complying with the demands of annual multiple-choice learner testing as part of Qatar's Comprehensive Educational Assessment system (QCEA), and periodic financial audits. Tuition is free for Qataris and other learners and families eligible for public education.

- **Curriculum Standards:** these are an important part of Qatar's education reform. Standards establish goals for learning and reflect what learners should know, understand and be able to do at each grade level; and they identify what should be taught at each grade level. Standards were developed in four primary areas: English, Arabic, mathematics and science. These four core areas are designated as essential for Qatari citizens in the modern world.

- **Supreme Education Council (SEC):** established by Emiri decree #37 in November 2002, the Supreme Education Council directs the nation's education reform initiative. It plays an integral role in developing and implementing reform, including the work of the Supreme Education Council's three operational institutes the Education Institute, Evaluation Institute and Higher Education Institute, which are directly responsible for implementing and monitoring reform.

- **School Support Organisation/s (SSO/s):** A company or organisation, profit or non-profit, contracted by the Supreme Education Council to deliver on-site support services to designated Independent Schools. Services include, but are not limited to: professional development activities for teachers, mentoring for principals, materials selection, modelling of teaching performance, advice on budgetary issues, and other school-related activities.

- **Operators:** an operator could be group of educators or parents, private education-management organisations or schools, or any other entity capable of providing educational and financial guarantees of its ability to attract a sufficient number of students and educate them successfully. An Independent school operator could run one school or a network of schools. Existing schools (either private or government-run) could apply to convert to Independent school status, and new operators could apply to open a new school.

1.5 Making a Contribution to Research on the Professional Development of Teachers

Professional development for teachers can foster a change, and a growth or improvement in classroom pedagogy. It also enhances teaching skills to improve the outcomes of classroom teaching/learning processes. Professional development for a teacher is the process of becoming “the best kind of teacher that [one] personally can be” (Underhill, 1991:1). Teachers regularly ask themselves: ‘How can I become a better teacher?’, ‘How can I enjoy my teaching?’, ‘How can I feel that I am helping learning?’ They ask these questions as they think about ways of increasing their skills and ways of developing professionally; and all of this is on behalf of their learners.

As a process, professional development draws on a teacher’s inner resources for change, largely centred on personal awareness of the possibilities involved, and on the factors influencing this process. It builds on the past, because recognising how past experiences have, or have not, been personally or professionally formative, helps identify what change is desirable or possible. It also draws on the present, by stimulating a fuller awareness of a teacher’s particular teaching style and ability; and an awareness of how other teaching colleagues, as well as their students, relate to them within the work environment. Essentially, professional development contains a large measure of self-reflection because it is by questioning old practices, behaviours and habits, that alternative ways of being and doing, are able to emerge (Underhill, 1991). The intention of professional development is to provide appropriate teacher education and support and to help teachers to identify strategies pertinent to their classroom teaching and which can lead to an increased skill level in the teaching/learning processes.

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992:16) lend further support to this view of continuing professional development for teachers when they assert that “understanding teacher professional development

involves understanding not only knowledge and skills that teachers should acquire, but also understanding what sort of person the teacher is and the context in which most teachers work”. To my knowledge, very little is known about the roles of women ESL teachers within newly-adopted education reforms in different contexts, and even less is known about the professional development needs of women ESL teachers in the Qatari context.

This study intends to advance our understanding about the part played by teachers and women teachers in particular in the educational reform process as this obtains in Qatar. The main focus of the study is on 233 women ESL teachers, depicting their views, and perceptions about the conditions within which they work as teacher–professionals, and on the recommendations arising from their views about improved professional development opportunities for their community. I will do this by focusing on the specific educational reform processes that have taken place in Qatar, the introduction of English as the medium for teaching and learning in Independent Schools and the pivotal role of ESL teachers, most of whom are women.

1.6 Personal Motivation for the Study

The major reason for undertaking this study is my personal interest and involvement in teacher education and training in Qatar. In fact my own professional experience as an ESL teacher in Qatar engendered a concern for, and commitment to educational reform. In particular, this relates to the policies and procedures that are creative and serve to dramatically improve the professional development opportunities for women ESL teachers teaching within the Independent School system.

I worked for several years as an ESL teacher in Qatar’s Ministry of Education schools and as head of English language teaching in Qatar’s Language Teaching Institute. In my personal

professional praxis, and reflection on teaching and learning, I often asked myself: what kind of teacher am I?; what are the beliefs and values that shape my personality, classroom practice, my preparation and my relationships between me and my learners as well as with my colleagues? and what are my own professional development needs?

Like others unable to find convincing answers to such vexing questions, I undertook further academic studies leading to a Master's degree in Educational Technology and English Language Teaching at the University of Manchester. During this opportunity to acquire some distance from the classroom and while being confronted by new approaches and challenges, I found that my personal beliefs about teacher education, and particularly my views about teacher professional development in Qatar, began to evolve. A further step in this evolutionary process was pursuing this more intensive study of the professional development needs of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, not only because of the intrinsic interest of the study, but because of the potential value such a study might have for teachers themselves and also for the wider reforms as inspired by *Education for a New Era*.

1.7 Aims of the Study

To understand teacher development and make appropriate modifications, far more about teachers' perceptions of their roles and about their professional development needs must be known.

Goodson (1991:141-2) states that:

“A more valuable and less vulnerable entry point would be to examine teachers' work in the context of the teachers' lives, particularly in the world of teacher development; the central ingredient so far missing is the teacher's voice. Primarily the focus has been on the teacher's practice, almost the teacher as practice. What is needed is a focus that listens above all to the person at whom *development* is aimed”.

The aims of the present study are, therefore, to explore in depth, the views and perceptions of the women ESL teachers employed in the new Independent Schools in Qatar about their professional development needs within the context of the wider reform, and to address the research questions listed immediately below. This is important because it strikes me that the ways in which the ESL teachers involved in this study perceive where they are and where they may be going as teacher-professionals, will substantially influence the success or otherwise of *Education for a New Era*.

1.8 Research Questions

The following research questions were identified for this study and were written in an order starting from the macro level (the whole picture of the reform), and ending at the micro level, which relates to the conditions of professional development and women ESL teachers' roles. They are the following:

1. What perceptions do women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools have about the changes manifested in *Education for a New Era*?
2. What do women ESL teachers identify as their professional needs in implementing change at classroom level?
3. What do women ESL teachers view as their concerns in implementing change at classroom level?
4. What conditions sustain or undermine professional development activities for women ESL teachers in Independent Schools as reported by women ESL teachers?

5. What perceptions do women ESL teachers have about their roles in implementing change?

In order to fully understand how to meet the demands of change in education which leads directly to improved teaching and learning outcomes, it is important to work closely with teachers. It is widely accepted that they are key persons in implementing change (Hargreaves, 1989).

1.9 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into nine chapters which are summarised below:

Chapter 1 provides the background to the study. Here, I have included an overview of the educational reform process taking place in Qatar and the role of teachers within it. I present a statement of the main research problem. In addition, I show how I came to address the nature and the scope of the study. I provide a definition of terms, and indicate how this study aims to contribute to research on the professional development of teachers. I have also outlined my personal motivation for the study and set out the aims of the study and the research questions guiding the empirical work.

Chapter 2 looks more closely at educational change in Qatar in terms of *Education for a New Era*. It traces the educational background of Qatar from the early beginnings, and then describes contemporary education in Qatar including the recent K-12 school reform in Qatar. After this, I further explore the model for the new reform by outlining the organisational structure of the Supreme Education Council and its two main school-related institutes: the Education Institute, and the Evaluation Institute and their respective offices. Looking at the structure of the Supreme Education Council is significant, because in the way it was organised, this body posits an almost

adversarial internal framework, where the Education Institute establishes Qatar's Independent Schools and provides their operating framework, and the Evaluation Institute conducts studies and reviews of learner attainment and carries out other educational accountability measures i.e. broadly speaking the latter 'inspects' and reports on the outcomes and decisions of the former.

Chapter 3 considers the process of educational change, the factors which influence change as a universal process in society more generally, and in education in particular, the process of change, the complexity of change processes, and the actual implementation of change. It also discusses the ingredients of success in educational change. Moreover, this chapter explores several change models, and concludes that the success of change at the classroom level is based on change in teachers. The focus here is on the Concerns Based Adoption Model (CBAM) suggested by Hall and Hord (2001). This model is considered to be appropriate in explaining the findings of the study and will be described in detail in Chapter 3.

Chapter 4 reviews definitions of professional development, how and where this occurs in the context of educational reform and stresses the necessity of studying professional development. It then discusses some of the specific professional development needs of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools as well as the current professional development approach.

Chapter 5 is about second language teacher education, gender and the teaching profession and content-based instruction. It discusses content and pedagogy in second language teacher education and the differences between training and development. It highlights teachers' three main roles from Kumaravadivelu's perspective (2003). It ends with how women ESL teachers view their roles and the specific needs they have in second language teaching context.

Chapter 6 explains the research design and the research procedures used, noting that the methodology contains quantitative and qualitative elements, with an emphasis on a mixed-method approach. I describe the approach I took to the design of a questionnaire to gather responses from women ESL teachers and to data gathering. I also show how I carried out semi-structured interviews with a sub-set of women ESL teachers. The chapter gives a rationale for the research questions. It also discusses research ethics and considers the strengths and weakness of the study. The final section outlines the approach adopted in data analysis.

Chapter 7 presents the results of the teachers' survey with reference to the general background of the women ESL teachers in my sample, taking account of the impact of workload and other factors. It also discusses their views on change which is central to reform and their views on teaching materials and teaching strategies. In addition, it considers the different roles assumed by these women ESL teachers.

Chapter 8 presents the findings with regard to the views of women ESL teachers on professional development and the assessment of their needs. Teachers' expectations about professional development are analysed here, as well as their views on the professional development activities provided by the Supreme Education Council, the support delivered by change facilitators, and their concerns with regard to their current work.

Chapter 9 comprises a summary and discussion of the findings of the study. The summary is organised around the research questions of this study. The chapter ends with suggestions and recommendations for policy-makers and other stakeholders.

CHAPTER 2

Qatar: the Context

2.1 Introduction

It is generally felt that in most applied research, those involved need understandings about the contexts in which the research takes place. Understanding context also means that researchers should be in a better position to make judgements using informed rather than speculative interpretations of findings (Creswell, 2005).

This chapter first provides a broad overview of the characteristic of the State of Qatar, and secondly addresses the beginnings of education in Qatar, and its subsequent development. This paves the way for a discussion about Qatar's education reform model, *Education for a New Era*. This provides readers with a synopsis of contemporary Qatar, education reform, and the context in which women ESL teachers in this study work.

As I pointed out in Chapter 1, a key dimension of the educational reform ushered in through *Education for a New Era* is the requirement that both English and Arabic, should be used for teaching and learning in the new Independent Schools, with the former being used not only for teaching English, but also for mathematics and science: this language policy shift appears to be a validation of the emergence of English as the primary medium of communication world-wide. It further suggests how important English is in Qatar's emergence on the world stage.

This in turn means that English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers find themselves at the centre of Qatar's push towards using an English language dominated curriculum, hence I devoted my attention to women ESL teachers in this research. At the time of this study there were a total of 233 women ESL teachers employed in Qatar's Independent Schools and it is this group who are the focus of the study.

My original intention was to carry out this study using only Qatari women ESL teachers, but this proved practically impossible as I later found that many women ESL teachers in Qatar's schools were ex-patriates: i.e. largely from Arabic speaking backgrounds, but mostly from Asia. Moreover, many of them did not have specific training in teaching English as a second or foreign language, or indeed a background in English as a discipline, or as a major subject at the degree level. Additionally, women Qatari ESL teachers were hard to find with more than 10 years of experience and this may be due to the fact that women Qatari ESL teachers have shorter career cycles. Qatari teachers with more than 10 years are generally found in managerial and administrative positions in Independent Schools in Qatar.

2.2 Qatar: A General Overview

Qatar is an Arab state adjacent to Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Geographically, it comprises a small peninsula on the north-easterly coast of the larger Arabian Peninsula. Qatar is an Islamic state with Arabic as the national language, but English is increasingly spoken and rapidly emerging as the language of education and commerce. Qatar is an independent nation that together with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, constitute the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries. It has a total land area of 11,437 km².

The Qatar peninsula, somewhat thumb-shaped and jutting northward into the Arabian Gulf, is about 160 kilometres long and 55 to 80 kilometres wide. The territory is dry, with most of the country covered in gravel desert, having virtually no natural vegetation.

Figure 2.1: Map of the State of Qatar



According to a recent Planning Council report (2006), Qatar had a population of 838,065. In March 2004, there were 576,411 (77%) economically active persons, with 68% of the current population aged below 25 years, and with an estimated population growth of between 2.61-2.74% annually.

Like its near neighbours, Qatar's recent staggering economic growth has led to a huge imbalance in its population, with around 80% of its workforce comprised of expatriates. More recent estimates suggest that Qatar's population will reach over one and a half million during 2009, due to its continuing economic strength and the large number of new projects in which it is engaged. Spoken English, rather than Arabic, is the common thread that runs through the expatriate

population and the communications link which binds this population to Qatar both in an economic and sociological sense.

Qatar is a constitutional, but near absolute monarchy, and has a written constitution that derives from its independence from Britain on 3rd September 1971. Prior to this, Qatar was a British protectorate. The constitution provides that the ruling family is comprised of the Al-Thani, who settled in Qatar around the middle of the nineteenth century. The current Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani is both ruler and head of State. Since 1995, when the current Emir became ruler and head of State, Qatar has enjoyed an economic boom, and has undergone socio-political liberalisation, including comprehensive, large-scale education reform, women enfranchisement, a new and more liberal constitution, and other developments such as the launch of Al Jazeera, a leading English and Arabic news source.

2.3 The Economy

Before the discovery of oil, Qatar's economy focused on fishing and pearling (pearl diving and the commerce associated with the sale of pearls). People led a hard life largely engaged in cattle grazing, fishing, pearl diving and some trade; but after the introduction of cultured pearls from Japan in the 1920s and 1930s, Qatar's pearling industry faltered. However, the discovery of oil reserves, beginning in the 1940s, completely transformed the economy (Naji, 1976).

While oil and gas will undoubtedly remain the backbone of Qatar's economy for some time, the expanding private sector serves as the impetus for Qatar's trajectory toward a more knowledge-based economy. Oil and gas currently account for more than 55% of Qatar's gross domestic product (GDP), approximately 85% of export earnings, and 70% of government revenues. Qatar

has proven natural gas reserves exceeding 14 trillion cubic metres. They constitute more than 5% of the global total and are the third largest in the world (Planning Council, 2006).

Qatar features in the World Bank's list of 10 richest countries in terms of asset stock and global wealth per capita. The impact of Qatar's economic success can be seen in estimates of per capita income, which was initially expected to climb from an estimated \$US 32,165 in 2004 to \$US 37,800 in 2007, a change of over \$US 5,600. However, actual per capita GDP in 2007 exceeded \$US 62,000 and is expected to reach \$US 70,000 in 2008. Estimates by noted sources such as BNP Paribas and Standard and Poor indicate that in 2007, per capita GDP in Qatar was the highest in the world, eclipsing Kuwait, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries (Planning Council, 2006).

2.4 Education Policy in Qatar

2.4.1 The Early Beginnings

It is not clear precisely when formal public education began in Qatar but it is apparent that before oil was discovered, there was little or no formal education. Instead, many Qatari children memorised passages from the Qur'an and learned to read and write in a *kuttab* (informal school). Formal education was a more individual endeavour and something sought mainly by wealthy figures from the ruling family or the wider public (Abo Galalah, 1992:5).

According to Al-Misnad (1985:5), there were two types of *Kuttab* education, ordinary *kuttab*s and advanced ones. Ordinary *kuttab*s were available in almost every village and did not have specially constructed classrooms. They were held in the home of *Muttawas* (*Muttawa*, or *Mulla*, was the word locally used for *Kuttab* educators in the Gulf area) in shops, and even in village bazaars. Women *Muttawas* confined classes to their own homes. Advanced *kuttab*s, on the other

hand, were mainly situated in large towns, and were housed in special buildings and attracted only children from rich families.

The move toward more comprehensive education began when a school for males opened in Doha in 1947. *Madrasat Alislah Alhamdiah* was the first semi-regular school that looked much like a present primary school. It took 50 learners from Qatar and neighbouring Arab countries and offered a curriculum consisting of the Holy Qur'an, the Arabic Language, Arabic Grammar, Arithmetic, Islamic Religious Studies, Geography and Handicrafts, and English Language. The school employed Egyptian curricula for all subjects (Al-Subaie, 1995). It is worth noting that this is the first time the English language was introduced into Qatar's educational curriculum.

To conclude, formal education as it is widely understood in western contexts is a relatively recent development in Qatar. However, as Qatar has become increasingly aware of its potential role within a globalised economy, the need for further education reform has become clear. In recent years, Qatar's favourable economic conditions have made it possible to create and enact a fresh and dynamic vision of a future for education as expressed in *Education for a New Era*.

2.4.2 Contemporary Education in Qatar

The government took responsibility for formal education by giving financial support to *Madrasat Alislah Alhamdiah* in 1951, and expanded this support to other schools thereafter. In 1954, the number of primary schools rose to four, accommodating 560 learners. There were only 26 teachers and they were recruited from Egypt, Palestine and Iraq. At that time, the school curriculum was not well organised and curricula and other instructional plans were devised arbitrarily by headmasters of the schools concerned (Al-Misnad, 1985). The appointment of the Education Director, Mr. Abdel Badia Saqr in 1956-57 paved the way for significant improvement

because of the considerable contribution he made to the planning of school regulations and the revision of school curricula (Al-Misnad, 1985:62).

According to Al-Subaie (1995), the first modern public school in Qatar opened in 1956. Education regulations drafted in the mid-1950s led to the establishment of the first Ministry of Education (MoE), called at the time *Wizarat Al-Maarif*, one of the first ministries established in Qatar (Metz, 1994). By the late 1970s, female and male learners' participation in formal education was nearly equal.

In 1956, Qatar's K-12 educational system comprised three phases that remain largely intact today:

- **primary** consisting of six years of schooling for learners from the age of six;
- **preparatory** consisting of three years duration for learners holding the Primary Leaving Certificate; and
- **secondary** consisting of three years duration for learners holding the Preparatory School Leaving Certificate.

Currently Qatar has 141 primary schools, 152 Ministry of Education schools, 40 private Arabic medium schools and 39 recently-established Independent primary, preparatory and secondary schools under the Supreme Education Council auspices. There are 55,778 learners enrolled in Ministry of Education schools and 21,679 enrolled in Independent Schools. In 2005–2006, total enrolments were: 47,630 in primary schools, 26,500 in preparatory schools, and 23,946 in secondary schools.

Table 2.1 Overall numbers of schools, teachers and students in Qatar (Evaluation Institute, 2007)

	<u>School Number</u>	<u>Teacher Number</u>	<u>Student Number</u>
<u>System</u>	Ministry of Education	152	6802
	Private Arabic	40	853
	Independent School	39	1726
	Primary	141	5272
	Preparatory	73	2863
<u>Stage</u>	Secondary	59	2612
	TOTAL	231	9381

2.4.3 Education for a New Era: K-12 School Reform in Qatar

Before *Education for a New Era* and the creation of Independent schools under the auspices of the Supreme Education Council, Qatar’s public education was delivered solely by Ministry of Education schools. Now Qatar effectively has two school systems; both government ‘owned’ and funded, operating in parallel, something that might be considered rather unusual in a nation with around one million persons and catering largely for the needs of 250,000 Qataris.

As I noted in Chapter 1, the decision to create parallel school systems arose from advice provided by the RAND Corporation to the Qatar Government, and accepted without apparent clarification or further analysis. While there had been earlier attempts to reform the Ministry of Education, though none on the scale of approaches used elsewhere e.g. Finland, the reasons for the RAND Corporation’s advocacy of a parallel system of Ministry of Education and Independent Schools, all of which were publicly-funded, remains unclear.

What did emerge however, were substantial variations on the approach Qatar took to Ministry of Education and Independent Schools. For example, the former retained Arabic as the medium for teaching and learning, while English was introduced across the curriculum in the latter, and while

Ministry of Education schools continued in existing and often dated premises, Qatar's Independent Schools were all housed in modern, purpose-built facilities.

These two systems effectively co-exist, though there are clear discrepancies in the quality of physical infrastructure. New Independent Schools are literally new in the physical sense, and in the level of resourcing, with Independent Schools allocated greater per capita funding and thus enabled to 'poach' teachers from Ministry of Education schools because of better salaries. It seems, although it was never made explicit, that eventually the Supreme Education Council and its schools should subsume all of the functions and responsibilities of the Ministry of Education, but just how this would occur, and what the end result will be, remain in doubt. Interestingly, if the Supreme Education Council replaced the Ministry of Education, whether this would result merely in a change in name and logo remains moot to this day.

Both the Supreme Education Council and Ministry of Education schools and systems provide essentially free education to Qataris and to the children of non-Qatari families working in the public sector. As noted earlier, Qatar also has a number of private Arabic schools, and other genuinely 'independent' schools which largely cater for the many different national and language groups present in Qatar, e.g. Philippino, Iranian and Lebanese schools among many others. Currently Qatar has one publicly-funded school providing technical and vocational education and training as an alternative pathway to learners following curricula which typically lead towards university entrance.

In summary, it is clear that Qatar's publicly-funded education system and institutions have undergone radical changes over the past 50 years or so, although of these reforms, none presented such a radical change as was introduced through *Education for a New Era*. These most recent

reforms clearly sought to abandon any notion of incremental change, and to bring in a more sweeping or radical approach involving the establishment of Independent schools modelled on the charter schools in the United States.

Qatar's leaders view education as the key to future economic, political, and social progress and recognise that the economic engine of the twenty first century feeds on the skills and knowledge of its workers. Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missnad, consort of the Emir (HE Sheikh Moza, 2005:13), said at the Oxford Islamic Studies Centre in London, March 2005:

“Education is not only the right for every citizen, but also a pillar of developed and just society, Qatar recognises the power of education in stimulating a genuine cultural, social and political awaking. The principles of collaboration, respect for others, and popular participation have been the impetus for changes in all levels of our educational structure”.

This statement summarises the thinking behind the current policy of reform, and embodies the belief of people in Qatar that they should have a world-class education system.

In this section and in Chapter 1, I have outlined Qatar's public policy commitment to building a world class education system, and I have shown how this is reflected in the reform programme and strategies partially developed and embedded in *Education for New Era*. Over time, this new dimension for the education system might enable Qatar to participate more fully in an increasingly globalised economy and enjoy further social and economic development in the future. The extent to which this happens is an issue which should attract continued academic and other interest. Because reforming public education is seen as key to creating active and productive citizens, the Emir has made education one of the main priorities in his vision for Qatar.

In the following section, I trace in more detail, the way in which the foundations of the reform were laid.

2.5 Studying the Problem: Preparing the Ground for Educational Reform

In late 2001, the RAND Corporation, based in Santa Monica, California, was contracted by the Qatar Government to examine its Ministry of Education-provided public education system. At that time, there seems to have been something of a collective consensus among Qatar's leaders that: 1) the existing Ministry of Education system of public education was not producing quality educational, social and economic outcomes for Qatari learners and society as a whole; and 2) the system appeared to be out of alignment with the educational needs of a wealthy country seeking twenty first century global competitiveness. I will return to the importance of this issue in the following chapter.

The RAND Corporation is a not-for-profit institution which sees itself as helping to improve policy and decision-making through research and analysis. RAND derives its name from *research and new development*. RAND asserts that for nearly 60 years it has conducted research and analysis for decision-makers in the public and private sectors in the US and has addressed some of the challenges facing the nation and the world. These challenges include such critical social and economic issues as education, poverty, crime, and the environment, as well as a range of national security issues.

At the time when RAND carried out its study, Qatar's public education system served about 100,000 learners, over two-thirds of whom attended government-financed and government-operated schools. The RAND Corporation's study was conducted by Brewer et al. (2007: xviii).

The study reported that it found significant weaknesses in the existing Ministry of Education public education system in Qatar, viz:

- it had no vision of quality education and the structures needed to support it;
- the curriculum in Ministry schools was out-moded and emphasised rote learning and memory, leaving many learners bored and providing little opportunity for learner-teacher interaction;
- the Ministry system lacked performance indicators and there was no attempt to link learner performance with school performance;
- the scant performance information provided to teachers and administrators meant little to them because they had no authority to make changes in the schools; and
- the national investment in education in Qatar was small in relation to its national budget - teachers received low pay and little professional development, many school buildings were in poor condition, and classrooms over-crowded.

In order to address the weaknesses found in the Ministry of Education public school system, Brewer et al. (2007) proposed the following alternatives:

- **a modified centralised model:** a government-led system that would allow some school-level flexibility with or without parental choice of schools;
- **a charter school model:** a partially de-centralised and partially privatised i.e. a corporatised system. Schools operated by non-government parties could apply for and be subject to, a charter. Parents would be allowed to choose schools, and an independent monitoring body would be established; and

- **a voucher model:** the most radical approach. This would require the development of a highly de-centralised/privatised school system which would allow parents to choose any school using government-issued vouchers.

The alternatives recommended by the RAND Corporation, i.e. charter schools that were partially de-centralised and partially privatised, stemmed from an implicit but otherwise un-stated belief, that it would not be possible to reform Qatar's Ministry of Education and its schools in a sufficiently short time to achieve the outcomes sought for public education. Apparently the RAND Corporation also regarded the Ministry of Education as so bureaucratic that it could not change and adopt innovative practices, despite evidence from elsewhere that such reforms could take place – Singapore and Hong Kong for example - and result in very successful outcomes. Moreover, the likely costs and other factors involved were very likely to militate against successful reform.

Having turned its back on the possibility of reforming the Ministry of Education, the RAND Corporation's main recommendation was that Qatar should create new, essentially corporatised Independent Schools, closely modelled on charter schools in the United States. This alternative was recommended because at the time, the RAND Corporation regarded introducing a voucher-based system of choice as not sustainable in Qatar i.e. it was too radical a change to be accommodated.

Within a model of apparently increased self-determination, and without reference to the prevailing social, cultural or religious underpinnings of Qatar's education system, the RAND Corporation similarly identified four pillars of reform, namely: autonomy; accountability; variety;

and choice (Brewer et al., 2007). Certainly in my detailed analysis of all the publicly-available and accessible documents about *Education for a New Era*, I was unable to find any information or discussion indicating or otherwise suggesting that staff from the RAND Corporation had taken into account Qatar's unique circumstances. Rather, it struck me that in proposing the corporatised schools approach developed to meet issues within public education in the USA, the RAND Corporation simply assumed that this could be 'transplanted' or 'implanted' into Qatar and that it would work.

What is important here is that the RAND Corporation presented these opinions to the Qatar government without detailed justification or reference to successful educational and public policy reforms outside the United States. Moreover, it did so from a perspective constructed entirely within the conditions obtaining for public education in the United States, a country noted for the mediocre performance of its learners on critical international studies such as PISA, PIRLS and TIMSS. Further, it is clear to even the most casual observer, that the particular challenges facing public education in the United States are not mirrored in Qatar, and nor is there a real possibility of comparing the dimensions of the issues involved given the vast differences and complexities of the United States, and compact geography, size and make-up of Qatar's population.

While the RAND Corporation did make broad recommendations about the need for Qatar's new corporatised schools to have new curricula, teaching and learning materials and professional development, the detail was left un-addressed. Similarly, in its recommendations and writings, the RAND Corporation simply did not attend to the myriad operational, logistic and educational details which a reform of this scale demanded. While on the one hand, a sweeping strategic vision might be seen as a good feature, failing to support that vision with practical, sustainable steps to ensure its enactment must be seen as a serious shortcoming.

As initially planned by the RAND Corporation, the Supreme Education Council would not exercise direction over the new curriculum or over associated teaching and learning materials, or over teacher professional development. These were seen as the province of individual schools which would somehow make appropriate decisions about the matters involved. This position may also have arisen because the RAND Corporation focused on a systems-based approach which largely ignored or marginalised the human factors involved i.e. it over-looked the teachers as agents in the development and implementation of reform. It was as though the RAND Corporation believed that if the system changed, teachers and others would change by osmosis or some other implicit process. The issues involved here are more fully discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

To sum up, I would like to mention that as an integral part of this study I carried out a thorough search of all non-classified papers and other information made available to me from the RAND Corporation relating to *Education for a New Era*. This process was limited due to the classified nature of many of the RAND's materials associated with *Education for a New Era*. My perspectives on *Education for a New Era* and the manner in which the RAND Corporation carried out its policy functions in Qatar are informed by the following: a review of non classified documents; the opportunity I had as a Summer Intern at the Rand Corporation's Santa Monica headquarter in Summer 2007; and close working relationships with the RAND employees who were most closely associated with its work efforts and policies in reforming Qatar's public education system.

Additionally, during my empirical field observations, I maintained a daily journal where I noted each day's activities, meetings with my RAND Corporation mentor, and conference calls arising from meetings with members of the team working on implementation of *Education for a New*

Era. Unfortunately, I found the usefulness RAND Corporation material somewhat limited by availability and accessibility. And the manner in which the material was framed did not lend itself easily to systematic and rigorous examination. Again, from an empirical field observation perspective, I come to my interpretations through the subjective lens of a Qatari as someone who has worked for some years as an educator in the Ministry of Education, and as a parent who has a vital interest in the success of *Education for a New Era*.

2.6 *Education for a New Era*: A Policy Context

When looking more closely at *Education for a New Era* it seems we also need to address the question: what is a public policy? Perhaps too simply defined, a policy asks a straightforward question, ‘what needs to be done?’ i.e. what decisions need to be made about policy imperatives and where will these policies fit into overall government approaches. Having answered the question ‘what needs to be done?’ the next is concerned with procedural or implementation and asks ‘how should it be done?’

Thus, a well-planned approach to policy-making and implementation requires that policy-makers address these two questions. Moreover, it is increasingly the case in western and other governments that those responsible for policy can adduce substantive, robust and current research or findings to sustain the intent of the policy and its intended outcomes and consequences. This is typically referred to as evidence-based policy making. When applied to school systems, Blandford (2001:14) argues that to bring order and structure to the professional development process within a school system, a well articulated public policy is needed.

Pulling the levers of public policy is increasingly recognised as the means by which change is given effect in re-structuring educational and other organisations. That is to say, in the hierarchy

of public sector decision-making, policy-making and implementation usually precede operational and budgetary allocations. Clearly, policy-driven approaches to educational reform and improved learning outcomes should occur before other changes are made. Hargreaves and Evans (1997:80) for example, argue that the policy drives the educational reform in general and professional development in particular. They state that policies oriented to reform move professional development away from older modes to those based on research, showing how teachers learn and under what types of conditions. They further state that these new policy approaches allow the qualitative aspects of professional development to be studied, and the results applied to classroom teachers in a more effective manner.

In other words, a new policy approach may shift methods rooted in earlier command and control management thinking, to more holistic and inclusive teacher/management thinking about how effective professional development should be implemented and measured. Such new thinking in turn creates a fresh paradigm which places more responsibility on teachers for improving teaching and learning and achievement.

But what sets Qatar's approach to public policy apart, at least in terms of *Education for a New Era* and its subsequent approach to professional development, is that policies were created almost ad hoc, without a substantial evidence base, and usually without the benefit of detailed and constructive analysis. This contrasts significantly with the reform strategies seen in the west more broadly and indeed in other education systems which have achieved international recognition for learner performance.

In policy terms, while it might be desirable for example, to have teaching and learning carried out in English instead of Arabic, the assumptions underpinning this decision were never tested, and

nor was evidence available that this decision would ensure improved educational outcomes. Within the context of Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, the new pedagogy emphasised English as the primary means of teaching and learning and by implication, stressed language development more so than ever before.

So too, developing curriculum standards for the four core subjects - mathematics, science, English and Arabic – changed traditional approaches with the addition of a new demand that in the majority, they should be taught and learned in English. Clearly, teaching and learning, not only in English as a second language, but for mathematics and science as well, seems to demand an explicit policy to address second language pedagogy and the standards expected of teachers and learners. Not only did *Education for a New Era* mandate that English would be the language for teaching and learning virtually across the curriculum, but it then failed to make provision for a defined model of professional development that would facilitate the new or substantially revised teaching methods involved, thus ensuring that teachers were adequately prepared and developed for the new responsibilities they would face. This will become more evident in Chapters 7 and 8.

I argue that this obvious shortcoming stems from effectively ignoring the human dimensions of educational reform, and focusing solely or very largely, on manifesting policy in terms of systemic change which assumes that the human agents involved will automatically be 'carried along' as system-wide reform takes hold. In my view this approach is both unduly optimistic and unsound, as it belies the complexities of human behaviour, and reduces the role of many of the key players – the teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, to little more than bystanders or educational functionaries.

2.7 The Reform Model

As noted earlier, Qatar's educational reform model included a two-pronged approach, which resulted in the creation of a school system paralleling current Ministry of Education provision. There would be two school systems running side by side: one designed to be innovative, while the other remained rather static and under-resourced.

The RAND Corporation study also called for an eventual replacement of all Ministry of Education schools with Independent Schools over an un-defined period. Therefore, the broad intention of the policy seems to have been to eventually dissolve the Ministry of Education, thus allowing Independent Schools to flourish, though the means by which this was to occur was unclear.

Drawing on exclusively US-focused approaches, the RAND Corporation apparently believed that by creating facsimiles of charter schools in Qatar, there would be some notional 'competition' which would occur between publicly-funded providers. Moreover, by establishing 'competition' between publicly-funded providers, standards and outcomes would automatically improve.

Among the many weaknesses that can be readily identified in the RAND Corporation study and its subsequent implementation was the lack of clarity about the period and the means by which Qatar's Ministry of Education would be dissolved or replaced by the Supreme Education Council. Nor is it clear how the number of Independent Schools would grow – so many per year for example – to eventually overtake existing Ministry of Education schools. Added to this, among the RAND Corporation's main shortcomings were the failure to countenance the need for highly skilled teachers to develop and sustain quality teaching and learning outcomes. The overwhelming majority of Qatar's teachers were already employed in Ministry of Education schools and would almost inevitably require substantial re-skilling if they were to address a new curriculum and the other approaches embodied in *Education for a New Era*.

As I pointed out in Chapter 1, within Ministry of Education schools, teaching and learning in Arabic was maintained and the curriculum remained in place. But, in the new Independent Schools, Arabic was taught as only a subject, while English became the vehicle for the core areas of the new curriculum (English, mathematics, and science) through targeted use of ESL teachers in these core areas. *Education for a New Era* thus created a parallel educational structure which was entirely publicly-funded with a new semi-government entity, the Supreme Education Council, responsible for creating Qatar's Independent Schools at primary, preparatory and secondary level. Questions regarding the pace and direction of change, the balance between the stages, and whether other sorts of school models could be introduced remained un-addressed.

The RAND Corporation also predicted that assessment would somehow automatically raise teaching and learning standards and learning outcomes i.e. multiple choice testing of the type used in the USA would axiomatically lead to better teaching and learning and educational outcomes. Under guidance from the RAND Corporation, the Supreme Education Council oversaw the introduction of the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment system (QCEA), a system-wide, multiple choice testing programme for all years of schooling and all learners, based entirely on annual testing. What is important here, is not only that the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment approach slavishly follows the multiple choice testing regimes commonly used in the United States, and mandated by legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act in US, but that it completely fails to address assessment for learning in favour of simply assessment of learning. Thus, a major opportunity for the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment programme to contribute to improved teaching and learning outcomes was lost.

Following advice from the RAND Corporation, the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment system would also be used in Ministry of Education and private Arabic schools as well as the

Independent Schools, even though the Ministry schools and private schools used entirely different curricula, and did not use English as the primary means of teaching and learning. This move and the introduction of the testing system more widely has attracted a good deal of criticism in Qatar. It is argued that it is inherently unfair to test learners on subject matter they are not taught, and then to compare their results with those from learners in Independent Schools. Again, this development seems to stem from a systems-driven approach which overlooks the many educational and other reasons why it is inappropriate to test and compare learners in this way.

2.8 The Reform and its Impact on Teacher Education in Qatar

Over the last quarter of a century, pre-service teacher training in Qatar has been provided at the College of Education which originally formed the nucleus of Qatar University, inaugurated in 1985. Following the foundation of the University, the College of Education dealt with teacher preparation for work in Qatar's Ministry of Education schools. The University now includes six colleges, one of which is the College of Education. In keeping with Qatari tradition, all colleges at Qatar University have female and male sections providing separate education for learners from different genders in accordance with widespread practice for education across the Gulf States.

Before 2000, the College of Education offered a bachelor's degree in various subjects, including general education, and most Qatari public school teachers trained there. Since 2000, general education degrees are no longer offered, although learners can still pursue a bachelor's degree in arts or physical education or receive a diploma in early childhood education or special education. As Brewer et al., (2007) noted a new post-graduate teacher-training programme was in development at the time the study leading to *Education for a New Era* was carried out. However, this was replaced at the instigation of the Supreme Education Council in September 2003, with a

teacher preparation and certification programme affiliated to Britain's University of Southampton.

In July 2003, the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) (one of the school support organisations operating in Qatar) designed and implemented the Teacher Preparation and Certification Programme (TPCP) jointly with the University of Southampton. The purpose of TPCP was to introduce teachers to a range of teaching strategies, methods for planning and assessment, and ways to incorporate learning technologies into the classroom, as well as to enhance their content knowledge. The programme included an in-school teaching experience component. The programme had over 400 applicants, of which only 78 were selected. This group was 83 per cent women, and many of these were experienced teachers with various teaching backgrounds such as computer science, home economics and Islamic Studies (Brewer et al., 2007:107).

What appears to be interesting as far as this study is concerned, although I can reach no conclusions about potential or actual impact, is that none of the 233 female ESL teachers involved, had completed the Teacher Preparation and Certification Programme, i.e. no teacher in this study had benefited from a programme designed to address the sorts of things they would encounter later in Qatar's Independent Schools.

Thus, the radical changes envisaged and enacted by *Education for a new Era*, had a substantial impact on the teacher education programmes offered by Qatar University, the nation's only provider of in-service programmes. Among the changes required was a re-direction of approach recognising that the curriculum in Independent Schools was taught and learned in English rather than Arabic.

It was also necessary for Qatar University to address the sorts of demands placed on teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools. In these schools, seniority was no longer the sole criterion for promotion, higher order skills in English were demanded even for mathematics and science teaching, and approaches to assessment were mandated by the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment (QCEA).

Pressure was also applied to Qatar University by virtue of the fact that the RAND Corporation advocated not only a parallel public education system, but parallel teacher education which sought to provide different models for teachers aiming for careers in either Independent or Ministry of Education schools: and this in a nation with only around 1.0 million people, and 250,000 Qataris.

2.9 The Supreme Education Council (SEC)

The Supreme Education Council (SEC) was established by Emiri decree #37 in November 2002 with the central aim of directing the nation's public education policy. The Ministry of Education would be subordinated to the Supreme Education Council in status and impact. As a semi-government agency, the Supreme Education Council plays an integral role in overseeing, developing and implementing education reform, including the work of its operational institutes which are responsible for the practical success of *Education for a New Era*.

As indicated earlier, the public policy model of school reform advocated by the RAND Corporation, *Education for a New Era* reflected four core principles:

- **autonomy:** allowing schools and teachers to be innovative in their approach to meeting the needs of individual learners and parents, within a framework of international curriculum standards;

- **accountability:** implementing an objective and transparent assessment system to hold all school leaders, teachers and parents responsible for the success of learners;
- **variety:** encouraging different kinds of schools and teaching and learning programmes; and
- **choice:** allowing parents to select schools that best fit their children's needs.

While these four core principles were writ large in *Education for a New Era*, no means was provided to implement and evaluate the policy implications involved. In other words, these were essentially lofty, well-publicised principles, but they lacked demonstrable and tangible support. It is also worth observing that the principles themselves, stemmed from the underlying approach found in the United States' charter school movement.

For instance, the RAND Corporation held that accountability could be assured by implementing an apparently 'objective and transparent' assessment system to hold all schools leaders, teachers and parents responsible for the success of learners. It is clear however, that Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment (QCEA) is not comprehensive, relying entirely on multiple-choice tests conducted annually, excluding teachers from any involvement save 'teaching to the test'. Moreover, among many other shortcomings, it cannot accurately measure the 'value added' by individual schools, as an important measure of educational effectiveness in other places.

Before *Education for a New Era*, Qatar had a very traditional approach to public education, one where learners and their families were largely excluded from the entire process. This means that when seemingly well-intentioned terms such as 'autonomy' and 'variety' were introduced

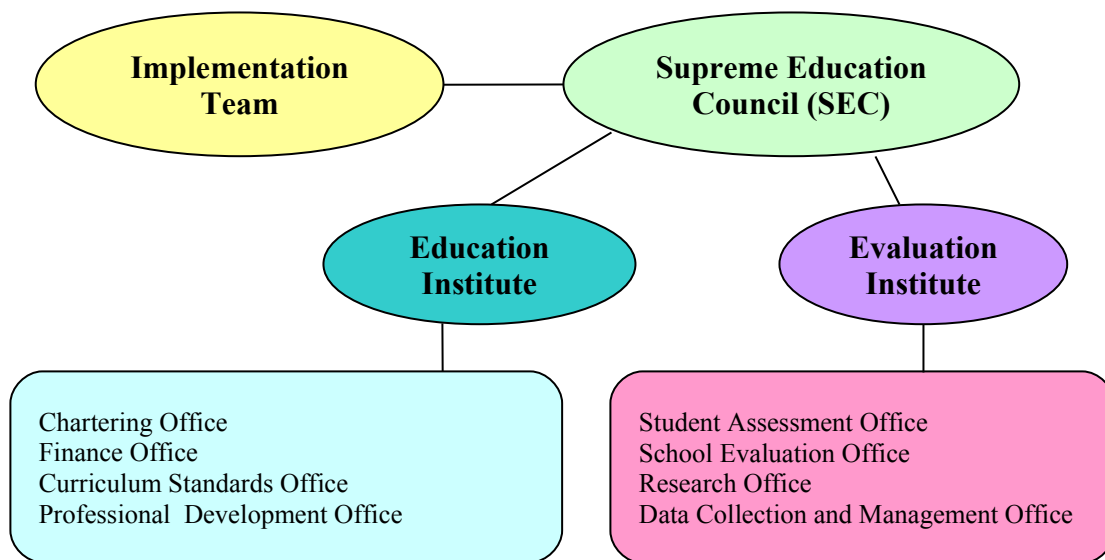
through the reform process, the terms were quite foreign to most Qataris and they lacked a local ‘currency’ which enabled people to understand what was intended and how they would apply in practice.

Indeed, I argue that in using terms such as ‘autonomy’ ‘accountability’, ‘variety’ and ‘choice’ which are commonly found in the literature related to US charter schools and which have specific contextual meaning, the RAND Corporation quite deliberately sought to move education from a largely ‘public good’ model, to one in which learners and their families were viewed as consumers, with the direct result that education in Qatar simply became another commodity to be purchased, albeit with public funds in this instance.

Having advocated a new ‘system’ of public schools, the RAND Corporation similarly posited a new entity - the Supreme Education Council - and within it, two almost internally adversarial institutes Education and Evaluation which had contrasting rather than complementary roles and functions, almost as though one – the Evaluation Institute – was designed to keep the other, the Education Institute and its schools, honest.

The support structure for *Education for a New Era* was manifested in the ways in which the Supreme Education Council was created. Initially it comprised two operational Institutes of Education and Evaluation juxtaposed in an almost adversarial manner, with the former responsible for establishing and ‘governing’ the nation’s Independent Schools, and the latter for monitoring, reporting and accountability. The Supreme Education Council’s organisational structure together with descriptions of each institute and its offices is shown in Figure 2.2

Figure 2.2 Organisational Structure of the Supreme Education Council in Qatar



The structure for the new Supreme Education Council excluded any consideration of the Ministry of Education, which continued to operate in a parallel universe.

In brief then, the Supreme Education Council comprises:

- an **Education Institute** to oversee and support Independent Schools – this is the Supreme Education Council’s operational arm for creating Independent Schools and dealing with contractual arrangements, financing and like matters;
- an **Evaluation Institute** that develops and conducts learner testing, monitors learning outcomes and evaluates school performance. This is the Supreme Education Council’s operational arm for educational accountability in Independent Schools; and

- a **Higher Education Institute** (not part of the original model) that advises individuals about career options and opportunities for higher education in Qatar and abroad, and administers scholarships and grants.

The mission of the Supreme Education Council is to strive for and maintain a high standard of public education. It is responsible for supporting and overseeing all education institutions in the new system. The Supreme Education Council is expected to formulate education policy to guide the charter school model, and then oversee the system designed to prepare an elite cohort of learners to contribute to the betterment of their nation and society. Through its actions, the Supreme Education Council has to provide visibility and credibility to Qatar's K–12 reform, striving for and maintaining a high profile, and public awareness about the charter school approach to Independent Schools.

As this study addresses professional development for women ESL teachers, I will concentrate on the Education Institute and two of its main offices: Curriculum Standards and Professional Development.

The mission of the Education Institute is to undertake the 'chartering' of schools (chartering is a term adopted in the United States, whereby schools are granted what is in effect an operating license which specifies the terms and conditions under which they function) and provide them with financial support, professional development, and other resources necessary to successfully educate learners. The Education Institute undertakes this mission by providing strategic direction and vision for the following four internal entities: Chartering, Finance, Curriculum Standards, and Professional Development, and by demonstrating strong leadership, ensuring collaboration, and maintaining the Institute's infrastructure.

2.9.1 The Curriculum Standards Office

As its name suggests, the purpose of the Curriculum Standards Office is to develop curriculum standards for Independent Schools in Arabic, English, mathematics and science for grades K-12. These curriculum standards are intended to specify the knowledge and skills that learners are expected to have at particular grade levels and to represent desired outcomes in a standards-based education system.

The original idea was to establish standards and then simply allow individual schools to design their own curricula and programmes around these standards. The difficulty in implementing this included the following: firstly, current and new teachers were un-prepared to use these standards; secondly, there was no professional development that preceded use of the standards by teachers; and thirdly, there were no materials explaining how teachers could or should use, implement and measure whether they were effectively teaching the standards. These concerns regarding the clarity of curriculum standards and their application will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

The tasks for the Curriculum Office within the Supreme Education Council involved the following: developing and up-dating curriculum and learning standards by grade and subject; ensuring that the tests found in the Qatar Comprehensive Educational Assessment were aligned with the curriculum standards; and ensuring professional development of school-level staff in applying standards to curriculum development.

The development of curriculum standards is complex and as much a key to reform as it is to improving teaching, learning and outcomes, as the standards convey critical goals and form the basis for learner assessment. The complexity of the task and the lack of availability of people with experience and expertise in standards development led this Office to use external expertise,

initially to help translate goals into content standards and content standards into performance indicators. In short, the Curriculum Office faced an untenable situation: develop new curriculum standards using the very limited number of available local personnel, few if any of whom had direct experience with a standards-based approach to curriculum, or recruit/contract external parties – individuals and organisations – familiar with similar approaches and who could fulfil Qatar’s needs within a limited time-frame.

Following international calls for expressions of interest, the CfBT was selected to develop Qatar’s new curriculum standards. This major project, involved editing and page layout of draft documents for curriculum standards (from Kindergarten to Grade 12), a scheme of work, sample lessons and teacher training materials. Two freelance editors worked on the materials for science and English, while another concentrated on those for mathematics (in English) and Arabic and on general editorial trouble-shooting (CfBT 2005).

In respect of the need for curriculum standards in Arabic, again the Curriculum Office faced another almost untenable position, viz: this was the first time anywhere that there would be a standards-based Arabic curriculum, because those available from other Arabic speaking nations were not standards-based. While the Curriculum Standards Office contracted CfBT to develop a standards-based Arabic curriculum, it did so using the national standards developed for English, mathematics and science for England, something which might be expected to create and which subsequently did give rise to a number of shortcomings.

It is also interesting to observe that the initial and continued focus of the Supreme Education Council, which closely followed the RAND Corporation’s recommendations, has been only on four curriculum areas: Arabic, English, mathematics and science. This means that other areas of the

curriculum which might be considered as important if not critical – Islamic studies, civics education, social science and humanities, and health and physical education – were and continue to be largely neglected. In other words, despite recognition in Qatar’s constitution that it is an Islamic nation and clear evidence of the ways in which Islam permeates Qatar society, the RAND Corporation made no recommendation to include Islamic studies as a core element of the new curriculum.

This lends further weight to my earlier observation that staff from the RAND Corporation made no real attempt to grapple with, or understand Qatar, merely assuming that what was ‘good’ for public education in the United States, would be equally ‘good’ for Qatar. An omission of this scale is important because as Havelock and Huberman (1978) suggest that change agents, policy-makers, and change facilitators should develop and initiate change-oriented innovations only after intensely studying the local conditions or environment in which change is scheduled to occur. While the omission of Islamic studies for publicly-funded schools in Qatar is something that strikes me as bordering on the astonishing, it is not something within the scope of this study to pursue, although it might be very worthwhile as a discrete research activity. However, in an interesting reversal, and despite trenchant criticism of the Ministry of Education, the Supreme Education Council later mandated the use of the Ministry of Education’s Islamic Studies curriculum in 2004 to overcome what was widely seen as a major gap in the curriculum.

2.9.2 The Professional Development Office

This Office is charged with providing professional training programmes for teachers, principals, and others in Qatar’s Independent Schools. The Professional Development Office is the only

entity within the Supreme Education Council which has direct responsibility for improving teaching and learning outcomes. Accordingly, it is tasked with facilitating an important part of the new school system: providing training and preparation for teachers and administrators enabling them to work effectively in an environment that encourages autonomy and innovation, while requiring accountability. Furthermore, the office is responsible for establishing training programmes based on an assessment of the professional development needs of Independent School operators, administrators, staff, and teachers.

As soon as the Supreme Education Council accepted the recommendations made by the RAND Corporation, the role of the Professional Development Office assumed even greater importance. One of its early, and indeed, continuing challenges is the shortage of highly-skilled ESL teachers who have the necessary expertise and experience to conduct teaching and learning in English for English as a subject, as well as the medium for teaching and learning in mathematics and science. Another pressing issue for the Professional Development Office was the shortage of school leaders and administrators who could take responsibility for the new schools and new approaches to teaching, learning and management.

Thus, among the main objectives for the Professional Development Office were providing and delivering quality in-service programmes to teachers and school leaders within the context of a very different educational model. This meant that the Professional Development Office would:

- 1) determine and address the professional development needs of teachers and other Independent School staff; and
- 2) screen and select professional development organisations to support school site activities, provide training and provide school site induction programmes for teachers and administrators.

It is widely accepted that professional development for teachers is absolutely critical in a climate of change. Moreover, the greater the change, the more the demand for quality professional development becomes. Interestingly however, and despite its all too obvious importance to successful reform, teachers' professional development needs can simply be overlooked when the approach to change is systems, rather than people-based. That is to say: in a largely systems-based reform such as *Education for a New Era*, when professional development was accorded no more than a passing mention by the RAND Corporation, the need to develop human capital can be overlooked or marginalised. In Qatar, professional development actually needed to assume particular import since existing teaching was largely un-professionalised, with little or no structured or systematic approach to improving teaching standards once teachers had left university.

Strangely, and despite its overt insistence on accountability as a central plank of reform, the RAND Corporation, and the Supreme Education Council were silent on an issue which many authorities elsewhere believe is critical: initial teacher certification via dedicated pre-service programmes; and teacher registration as a condition of employment in schools. Moreover, given the importance of English within Qatar's new schools, there was virtually no emphasis on ensuring that teachers had the requisite knowledge skills and understanding in ESL, or the ability to teach and assess mathematics and science in English-medium classes (RAND, 2002:34)

As reported by ESL teachers during this study, and from my own knowledge of Qatar's new Independent Schools, professional development needs began to emerge very rapidly as the demands of Qatar's new curriculum became apparent. This meant that the Supreme Education Council again had to look for external i.e. non-Qatari expertise to generate the range and intensity of programmes its teachers needed. Perhaps it was simply because of the scale involved, or for

other un-stated reasons, the Supreme Education Council engaged a number of providers with expertise in quite different schools and systems, i.e. not only schools and systems very different from Qatar, but from schools and systems very different from each other e.g. CfBT (from England), Multi-serve (from New Zealand), GTZ (from Germany), Mosaica and the Academy of Educational Development (AED) from the USA. Given the nature of these different schools and systems it might be anticipated that the diversity of backgrounds and experience may well lead to differentiated outcomes depending on which Qatar schools were involved. These entities subsequently became what are called in Qatar ‘school support organisations’ (SSOs), the role of which is discussed rather more fully in Chapter 8.

While it is possible to be a harsh critic of the initial professional development approach adopted within *Education for a New Era*, I think it is fair to say that when confronted with a major reform strategy, which was conceived at macro-policy level and which lacked organisational and operational detail, we would normally expect to see, that any attempt to deliver school-based professional development would have shortcomings. Thus, while the professional development programmes, which were initially contained in school site plans required by the Supreme Education Council, had deficiencies, the alternatives were to do nothing at all, or leave schools entirely to their own devices.

In terms of *Education for a New Era*, school site plans, within which professional development is contextualised, are blueprints for what the school staff intend to accomplish for a period between one and three years. Typically, school site plans show how a school intends to schedule professional development, the models or approaches to be used, when professional development programmes will be delivered, how much these will cost, how many days professional

development programmes entail, and how these programmes align with the mission, vision, and goals of the school.

2.10 Chapter Summary

What this chapter sets out to do is provide the reader with clearer understandings about Qatar and about its previous and current educational systems.

What is readily apparent is that since the discovery of large petroleum deposits, Qatar has experienced almost unparalleled growth and prosperity, meaning that as a modern nation state it can now afford large-scale national reform programmes such as those manifested by *Education for a New Era*. In effect too, societal shifts and greater wealth have created new demands and expectations for education. It should, however, be noted that Qatar remains characterised by very high levels of dependence on ‘imported’ labour, with expatriates forming over 80 per cent of the population, and thus vastly out-numbering Qataris.

What *Education for a New Era* represents, and hence, its importance to Qatar and its people, is one plank in a far larger approach to becoming a knowledge-based economy sustaining a knowledge-based society. That is to say: while petroleum and its by-products remain central to Qatar’s success, the resources they generate should also lead to a far more diverse, globally competitive economy.

Faced with increasing social and economic challenges, and because it has the resources to address them, Qatar turned to education as a critical means of achieving reform and transformation. In doing so however, Qatar embarked on a singular course of action, which many outside Qatar might regard as idiosyncratic, perhaps even strange.

Firstly it contracted a US entity, the RAND Corporation, which had little widely recognised expertise in human capital development, to review and report on Qatar's educational 'state of play'. Then, and without the benefit of further analysis and review, the Qatar Government adopted the RAND Corporation's recommendations that the principal means of addressing educational shortcomings should be to corporatise its public school system using a charter school approach developed to address the particular failings of the US public school system.

Not only did the RAND Corporation's recommendations lead to *Education for a New Era* as national policy, they led directly to a standards-based, four subject curriculum – Arabic, English, mathematics and science - for Qatar's Independent Schools, the imposition of English medium teaching and learning which supplanted Arabic, and a national testing regime closely aligned to testing models found in the USA.

Clearly, the move from Arabic to English medium teaching and learning was a major and lasting change which subsequently raised the demand for ESL teachers of both language and content, and to pressures on the professional development and other needs associated with such a move. Implications arising from this and other aspects of *Education for a New Era* are explored later.

CHAPTER 3

Conceptual Framework for Studying Educational Change

3.1 Introduction

Educational change has become a common theme in many public school systems world-wide and is reflected in systematic plans to improve schools, teaching and learning outcomes. Educational change is particularly relevant in Qatar, where there is a conscious and much publicised current endeavour to modernise schools and align Qatar more closely with an increasingly global society, and with teaching and learning outcomes designed to emulate and meet international best practice.

In this chapter, I briefly describe educational change in the Arab world and some of the important elements in wider educational change including teachers' needs. I also discuss how particular models can be applied to, and describe the wider sphere of, educational change, and how these are relevant to the approaches taken in this study and to the analysis of the material adduced from teachers. I focus in greater detail on the Hall and Hord (2001) Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM), showing how this offers a very fruitful way to proceed with interpretation and analysis of the data generated in the study. The data are discussed later in Chapters 7 and 8.

Additionally, this study incorporates and applies Fullan's (2001a) approach to change with a focus on the second phase of educational change which is generally known as implementation. From my perspective, I find this approach well suited as it is sufficiently descriptive by way of its vocabulary and provides a practical and easily understandable view of the stages through which change occurs within educational reform. In particular, the focus on the implementation phase is

well suited to the context of my study, including the public policy underpinning *Education for a New Era*, Independent Schools, and women ESL teachers working within this context.

One objective of this chapter is to review the literature related to the conceptual framework on which my study is based, taking into account the fact that Qatar's educational change represents systematic implementation of new government policies which stress teaching and learning in English, i.e. using English as the medium of instruction in Qatar's Independent Schools. In turn this brings to the fore, concerns about women ESL teachers, and their professional development needs within a context of managing and implementing the successful changes to teaching, learning and attainment that are sought in Qatar's national educational reform.

Because my standpoint is that teachers are at the very heart of managing and implementing reform, and my focus is essentially on the human capital elements of educational change, rather than a systems-based approach, I am particularly interested in the research literature which reflects on these dimensions, i.e. where the focus is on teachers as agents. This has led me to critically examine a number of different approaches and to conclude for the purposes of this study, that the Hall and Hord (2001) Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM) represents the best way in which to proceed.

Hall and Hord (2001), together with a number of others cited later in this chapter, emphasise just how 'central' teachers are to developing and implementing change. Moreover, there is a substantial level of consistency in favour of the argument that teachers need to be not only aware of, but actively engaged in and understand the strategic directions of educational change, in addition to grappling with the 'tactical' implications present in their classrooms and schools.

3.2 Educational Change in the Arab World

It is perhaps unsurprising that the history of educational change in the Arab world stands quite apart from what has occurred in more 'western' settings including Australia and Europe for example.

The concepts 'change' and 'reform' are by no means new to the Arab world, but the context of the terms, and the analysis which arise from them can be very different indeed. It is also fair to say, that what we now see in the Arab world more widely, and in the Gulf States in particular, are approaches to educational reform which are focused on improved outcomes, which are traditionally more familiar to observers from western contexts. In other words, apparent differences between the 'worlds' have diminished, and now there are striking similarities in concerns about quality education in both contexts, and about the means by which this can be brought about.

It is also worth pointing out that prior to the turn of the millennium, public policies addressing educational reform in the Arab world were notable for their absence, and it is only over the past decade or so that these have emerged as more coherent and planned approaches. However, some evidence exists in the Arab world of attempts to introduce educational change, though seemingly very few during the 19th and 20th centuries, as noted by Qasim Amin, Lotfi Al Sayyid, Taha Hussein, and Kurd Ali among others. The scant evidence of educational change and its absence from public policy debate is also noted in the UNDP's Arab Human Development report (UNDP, 2003). Moreover, because of concerns similar to those found in western settings e.g. educational quality, human capital development, globalisation, developing knowledge-based societies - educational policy now has far greater priority in the Arab world, and is now a common theme within public policy, social and economic development.

Since educational change in the Arab world has not until very recently been a relatively widespread phenomenon, and neither purposefully nor deliberately articulated in the national public policy of many Arab states, one of the challenges facing this study was the need to use conceptual and practical material essentially derived from and obtained within ‘western’ settings. Nonetheless, the abundance of this material did enable me to extract valuable lessons and apply these to educational reform in Qatar, which has been deeply coloured by its reliance on approaches developed and applied in the United States, and powerfully advocated by the RAND Corporation, which had early and continuing influence in developing, implementing and evaluating *Education for a New Era*.

According to increasingly widespread understandings (cf. the Abu Dhabi Education Council, Dubai’s Knowledge and Human Development Authority and various substantive reports on Arab Human Development by UNDP among others), schools within the Arab world were, and many still are, characterised by didactic and otherwise authoritarian or autocratic approaches where ‘power’ descends from those in authority, whether these are ministry officials or school principals. One immediate consequence of such ‘top-down’ approaches is the marked tendency for conformity where learning is essentially by rote and assessment of learning is carried out by recitation and repetition of what has apparently been ‘taught’ and ‘learned’.

It would not be a surprise, therefore, to learn that such approaches have been quite widely criticised for their inability to deal with change, and for the noticeable lack of creativity in teaching and learning. In Qatar and elsewhere, many traditional Arab schools were or are generally based on rote learning and lack real attempts at scholarship as this concept is widely understood in western, industrialised settings, particularly understanding, and hence, they usually do little to encourage learners to think, analyse, discuss and be critical (UNDP, 2003). Instead

learners are taught to be subservient and not question teachers, just as individuals in traditional Arab society are taught not to question their rulers. As noted by the UNDP (2003), it is clear across the Arab world that more traditional schools reflect the prevailing socio-political order within many Arab countries.

3.3 Teachers are at the Heart of Educational Change

As a teacher-practitioner, I had a long-held belief that teachers were at the core of schools, teaching and learning, and of any change that might be made, a position which gains robust support from Fullan (2001a:115), who notes that: “Educational change depends on what teachers do and think - it is as simple and as complex as that”. Similar support arises from Hall and Hord (2001) who emphasise the importance of individual teachers in the change process, and argue that successful change is predicated on how well change participants such as teachers understand and implement innovation. Additionally, Wang et al. (1993:276) state that without the co-operation of teachers at virtually all stages, change within an educational setting is unlikely. They also state that “policies do not always reach down to the classroom level. Effective policies require implementation by teachers at the classroom and learner level”. Their premise is that implementing change is not an equal process, in that teachers differ as to how and when they put into practice, intended changes within their respective classrooms. Hall and Hord (2001:7) further state that “although everyone wants to talk about such broad concepts as policy, systems, and organisational factors, successful change starts and ends at the individual level”. Indeed, I would want to argue that based on the approaches cited above, a consensus view emerges that ideally, an entire organisation does not change until each member has also changed, though I recognise that in purely practical terms, this ideal state will seldom arise.

Fullan (2001a) extends this concern when he addresses the complexities associated with implementing change, viz: change implementation is demanding because it needs the inter-relation between and across groups of change participants in different contexts and at various points of time. Within this, successful change requires change in an individual teacher. In other words, individual teachers, and teachers collectively can drive the change process in either positive or negative ways.

By extension, I argue that teachers are the ones who take the abstract of reform, and convert it into the concrete of teaching and learning. This approach finds support among authors including Fullan (2001a), Joyce et al. (1999), Hargreaves (1989), and Wang et al. (1993), all of whom broadly conclude that teachers individually and collectively are the key stakeholders in educational reform, and who provide and sustain the critical conduit for change through their individual and collective actions at the classroom level. Just how this occurs in the context of Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, emerges during the discussion which ensues when I analyse the material collected during this study of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools.

What is apparent is that the evidence from various authors cited here, emphasises the dual role of classroom teachers who are both the intended messengers and implementers of reform. Further support for this position emerges from Joyce et al. (1999) who argue that a good curriculum has no effect if the teachers to whom it has been given fail to utilise this information in their respective classrooms. The dual roles of women ESL teachers will be explored in Chapter 7.

Hargreaves (1989) argues that if there is no observable change or improvement in a teacher's classroom pedagogy, then change will not have occurred as planned and as implemented. According to Hargreaves' view of innovation, when change has been introduced, teachers

generally formulate their own interpretations of how they will implement a new policy or curriculum. Additionally, Creese and Leung (2003:5) point out that individually and collectively, teachers within their school communities will manage policy according to their local contexts, experiences and values. Hence, teachers will interact with policy not in a one-to-one reading of what 'is required', but in an interactive frame which involves their own explanation within localised communities of practice. How teachers interpret the implementation of change becomes evident in Chapters 7 and 8.

Because of the uniqueness of the individual teacher's classroom setting relative to the change process, the idea and the interpretation of change or innovation will be varied. Because teaching is an isolated event, i.e. generally one teacher - one classroom, the elements of intended change may well be perceived, interpreted and implemented differently in different classrooms (Hall and Hord, 2001). In effect, this means that individual teachers in their own classrooms, and collectively as practitioners responsible for implementing change, will have an impact because of what they think, their belief systems, and how they act and react during teaching and learning and in other settings. Thus, as teachers interpret change, and translate change into classroom actions, their actions can influence the outcomes of teaching and learning and how well learners achieve (Hargreaves, 1989; Hopkins, 2001).

Continuing the focus on classroom teachers as agents of change, Hitchcock and Hughes (1997) argue that teachers are recognised as professionals, but they are also human beings who bring to the classroom their personal background, individual personalities, attitudes, values, belief systems, as well as positive and negative experiences shaped by different influences. The authors warn that policy-makers and educational reformers who fail to grasp that changes in education also involve changes in teachers and the teaching process will have difficulty during the

implementation stage. As Fullan (1995), and Hopkins and Stern (1996:501) state “teachers are the heart of educational change because any benefits that accrue to learners as a result of educational policies require the enabling action of teachers”.

Given the importance of teachers to not only the process of reform, but to achieving better teaching and learning outcomes, it seems obvious that effective professional development programmes are necessary pre-requisites for ensuring that teachers effectively implement new curricula, for example, in accordance with what was planned and intended. Professional development needs will be discussed in the following chapter.

3.4 Phases of Educational Change

Research carried out by Fullan (2001a); Hopkins (2001), Rogers (2003); Zaltman and Duncan, (1977), and Zaltman et al. (1977), is remarkably consistent in informing us that change is almost like a recipe, exhibiting patterns and processes more often than not referred to as ‘stages’. Different observers and authors writing about change tend to define their terms in stages related to the change process, showing how change is initiated, implemented and embedded within an organisation. A notable similarity among these different observers and authors is that they also tend to define their stages of change with terms that essentially take into consideration two important elements: time and individual buy-in.

Zaltman and Duncan (1977) and Zaltman et al. (1977) when studying change in education systems, argue that this can be divided into two stages: initiation and implementation. They go on to state that each stage comprises several over-lapping sub-stages. In some contrast, authors such as Huberman and Miles (1984), and Fullan (1999, 2001a, 2007), argue for three broad phases of change and identify these as: phase 1 (initiation, mobilisation, or adoption); phase 2

(implementation or initial use); and phase 3 (continuation, incorporation, routinisation, or institutionalisation).

Here, I will critically review only the implementation stage since it is this phase upon which my study focuses most closely and I leave to others commentary and analysis addressing design and initiation, for example.

Earlier, I noted that change is sometimes accompanied by risk-aversion strategies and by tendencies to retain the status quo. Zaltman and Duncan (1977) and Zaltman et al. (1977) argue that resistance to change is evident during the initiation stage. They further suggest that this resistance forms part of human behaviour and is actually a healthy phenomenon, reflecting useful information about the support system or limitations which may affect the individual, or groups of individuals involved in change. According to their research, resistance to change can occur when the change process encounters conditions such as these: the intended change is not compatible with the existing norms or culture of the educational environment; the educational institution is resistant to change because it constructs barriers such as not allowing teachers to collaborate or take part in curriculum development or learner assessment procedures; the new arrangements prevent teachers from using school facilities and equipment, or withdraw support from teachers during the change process; there is inadequate communication between teachers and administrators within the school system, in particular when reporting problems. The data in Chapter 7 highlight the issue of clarity regarding proposed curriculum innovation in Qatar and expectations with regard to the role of teachers implementing the new curriculum.

As my research progressed I noted the importance of successful implementation, the second stage of change. In a way, it is at the implementation stage that the issues of human resistance and

clarity of purpose are often problematic. Therefore, it is important to note that without successful implementation, institutionalisation of reform within an educational setting will tend to be difficult if not impossible. As Verspoor (1989: 8) argues “implementation success was the prerequisite of institutionalisation”. In the section which follows, I discuss the implementation stage and its attendant importance when applied to educational change in more detail.

3.4.1 Implementation Phase

Implementation is not simply an extension of the first phase of reform, initiation/adoption; rather it is a ‘phenomenon in its own right’ in the process (Fullan, 1999, 2001b; Fullan and Pomfret, 1977). Fullan (1992:21) contends that

“Implementation focuses on what happens in the practice. It is concerned with the nature and the extent of actual use, as well as *factors* and *processes* that influence how and what changes are achieved (researcher’s emphasis). More broadly, the implementation perspective captures both the content and the process of contending with the new ideas, programmes, activities, structures, policies, etc. new to the people involved”.

That is to say, evaluation of implementation needs to consider the nature of changes made and the process by which people accommodate themselves to change or modified planned change to suit previous practice. Implementation is often regarded as a separate phase because it is beyond on-paper decisions or verbal declarations; it is the actual practice of adopting decisions for an innovation in which people are involved. The literature (e.g. Hanson, 1998; Fullan, 2007) reveals that studies in educational change leading to reform and innovation tend to address implementation process and strategy.

For the purposes of my study, implementation means putting a new educational idea into action and practice. It also means systemic change; or carrying out new ideas, policies, and practices that permeate the school site and change teacher behaviours. Implementation occurs when teachers or other agents of change act to alter their own professional praxis, and teaching and learning behaviours among other things. Thus teachers ‘bring to the table’ different ways of doing and viewing teaching and learning practices, the curriculum and learning materials, and issues such as the timing and importance given to particular or general activities. As I note at the outset, my premise is that teachers are the largest group of stakeholders within an educational setting; therefore they are foremost in securing the success of change and its implementation. The premise of this study is that it is teachers, enabled and encouraged by principals and others, who deploy new policies and practices of reform and turn these into concrete actions within their classrooms.

Having discussed the implementation phase, it is important to discuss the specific elements of educational change in the following section.

3.4.2 Elements of Educational Change

Fullan (2001b, 2007) argues that implementing change through new programmes or policies can be addressed using a perspective comprising three elements which include: materials, approaches and beliefs, viz:

- **materials:** the possible use of new or revised materials (teaching and learning resources such as curriculum materials or technologies);
- **approaches:** the possible use of new teaching approaches (new teaching strategies and activities); and

- **beliefs:** the possible alteration of beliefs (pedagogical assumptions or theories underlying particular new policies and programmes).

Fullan (2001b, 2007) argues that these three elements of educational change are necessary, because together they represent a means of achieving an educational goal or set of goals. An individual may implement none, one, two, or all three elements. For instance, teachers may effect change by using new curriculum materials or technologies without altering their essential approach to teaching, or they may use materials and alter some teaching behaviours, without coming to grips with the idea or belief underlying the proposed change. How teachers in this study respond to change in the Qatari context and in particular to the three main elements of change are discussed in Chapter 7.

To clarify, changing beliefs and understandings appears to be the key element for achieving and sustaining reform, and without these fundamental transformations, change may at best be superficial, and at worst, nothing more than the adoption of the nomenclature without the benefit of the important underlying principles and activities. While my study does not advocate a particular strategic outcome for *Education for a New Era*, it is important to acknowledge that it seeks to identify the support structures and systems within the change process as those structures and systems bear upon women ESL teachers.

In the next section, I further examine the change process and its attendant complexity as this applies to educational change.

3.5 The Complexity of Educational Change

As I have noted, change is a complex, multi-faceted process which is dynamic rather than static, and capable of many interpretations and understandings. The change process is complicated because it is grounded in managing the unknown, and dealing with individual concerns and interactions among change participants, which are unpredictable and uncontrollable (Hall and Hord, 2001, Fullan, 1995, 2001a). Change, therefore, takes time to achieve.

3.5.1 Change is an Organisational and Personal Process

There is a point of view, to which I adhere, that when we view change we tend to simplify it in terms of scope and impact, i.e. we try to deal with it within the span of our understanding and experience. Moreover, when confronted by change, I argue that many of us want to ‘take a step back’ and see change from a third person perspective as though what is intended or what is occurring is external to us. But this only remains true until we become directly involved in change as direct participants and intended recipients of the change process: here change becomes inescapable.

For example, Zaltman and Duncan (1977:14) in discussing the impact of organisational change, state that the complexity of understanding change for the individual is “the degree of difficulty in [an individual’s] using and understanding a change”, in particular an individual’s full understanding of change at the implementation and assessment stages. In their research, the authors take the view that the complexity of change can be either: complexity in implementing a change or complexity at fully understanding a change. I have taken this to mean that Zaltman and Duncan (1977) are alluding to teachers and others failing to come to grips with change during implementation, something that may arise for many and varied reasons, not the least of which is the lack of clarity about what the change actually is, and how it should be implemented.

Fully grappling with and trying to understand change raises a number of issues, particularly where there may be a lack of transparency or complexity which can easily give rise to misunderstandings and mis-interpretation. When the demands of change are complex, our analysis, actions and reactions will tend to break the process or the outcomes into smaller, more easily managed pieces, meaning that those responsible for planning and implementing change will be better served if they can make it more readily understood, and thus more readily accepted and adopted. In this respect, Fullan (2001a, 78) defines the complexity of change as “the difficulty and extent of change required of the individuals responsible for implementation ... and extent of alterations in beliefs, teaching strategies, and use of materials”.

To clarify, Havelock and Huberman (1978:159) identify three factors which can increase the complexity of change for an individual: “1) the number of parts there are in the innovation; 2) the number of behaviours or skills to be learned or understood before adoption is possible, and 3) the number of procedures required for effective maintenance of change over time; the more difficult it is to understand and to use, and the less rapidly an innovation will be adopted”.

In short, although change is an organisational process, it is also a personal one as well (Fullan, 2001a). For change to be effective during implementation, an individual must first have clarity about what the change process is, internalise what the change means to him/her on a personal basis, and then adapt the change through changing behavioural activities which align with the intended change by adopting and then manifesting new skill-sets and roles. We will see that this is true for teachers in Chapter 7.

3.5.2 Change Takes Time More than Expected

Fullan (2001a) views the complexity of change in education in a similar way, but emphasises implementation and points out complexity as a factor which makes change take time to accomplish. In this respect, Fullan (2001a) emphasises change implementation as the most complicated stage in the change process and states that without basic understandings, people are unable to apply innovation. He concludes that the complexity of change demands more effort from each change participant in learning new things and challenges that include the risk of failure. Fullan (2001a) states that the length of time from the initiation to institutionalisation of most changes is two or more years, while moderately complex and large-scale changes take three to five years and five to ten years respectively. But in reality, change can take longer if it lacks the clarity of change objectives, a sufficient budget, as well as support from any central or over-arching authority. According to a research review on national reform in industrialised countries conducted by Dalin et al. (1994), the length of the change process between the implementation and institutionalisation stages of major reforms can take as long as 20 years.

Indeed evidence from Finland is that its reforms which have led to outstanding learner performance on international educational studies, took 35 years to fully develop and implement. As an educator, and as a parent and a Qatari, and hence someone intimately concerned with how well Qatar achieves its lofty ambitions for *Education for a New Era*, my own view is that the evidence obtaining in places such as Finland, Hong Kong, Singapore and others with successful reform histories should have attracted considerable attention, reflection and commentary from the RAND Corporation. To me, it seems inconceivable that an organisation engaged in the degree of self-praise as the RAND Corporation, should have failed to provide its client, the Qatar Government, with advice about 'high performing' schools, systems and nations.

This is important not only because of the ethical considerations that attend research and inquiry, but because achieving lasting change and improvement takes time and it takes commitment from all of those involved. Clearly, the greater the scale of change, and in Finland's case this was at least as comprehensive as Qatar, the more demand on resources and on the capacity of any system to re-invent itself (Dalin et al., 1994).

As Senge (2006 cited in Morrison, 1998) points out that an individual's response to change can be multi-varied ranging from complete rejection to absolute acceptance. The more complicated a change is, the more requirements there may be for an individual to learn about the elements of the proposed change. This then, calls for more time for an individual to grasp and then inculcate change into his/her daily activities. Before adopting change, individuals have options - either accepting the change process inclusive of the time needed to do so, or rejecting the change and moving on (Havelock and Huberman, 1978). As noted throughout this section, it is evident from the literature that considering the complexity of the change process is vital, and that a major pre-requisite for behavioural change is sufficient time.

3.5.3 Change is Managing the Unknowable

From the examples adduced earlier, we can see that the complexity of change is reflected in concerns expressed, and behaviours manifested by individuals engaged in the change process. Because the very nature of change includes human behaviour, it is less than scientific, and therefore its outcome is not assured, although to be fair, even tightly controlled experiments in science often give rise to unexpected outcomes as Heisenberg (1930) and others have noted. Given this, it is difficult for those who construct and implement policy to accurately or thoroughly control the outcomes of intended change. Expanding on this concept of the

unpredictability of change, MacGilchrist et al. (2004) argue that change and the change process itself incorporate variables that are simply not controllable; in particular, a person's attitude, belief system and behavioural responses. The authors (ibid: 40) further add

“the prospect of change can mean different things to different people and, of course, people may react differently depending on the nature of change being proposed ... real change - real improvement ... is more than likely to be associated with some pain and some conflicts, especially if it is challenging a person's fundamental beliefs and attitude”.

Despite what policy makers and others wish, predicting the rate and impact of change is by no means an easy task, though on occasions some of the approaches employed suggest greater degrees of certainty than might be wise. Stacey (1992) notes that as change embarks upon a preliminary trajectory, it becomes more difficult to predict the intended outcomes. This does not mean we should not at least try to understand where change is going and what the consequences will be; rather that we should be aware that finite prediction is all but impossible and, therefore, we should be prepared to make adjustments as we traverse the landscape of change. It seems clear to me that change such as *Education for a New Era*, will be influenced by many variables including teacher attitudes, experiences, value systems and other issues. Balancing these potentially competing and contrasting factors, keeping change broadly on track and ensuring that targets are achieved as effectively as possible, all present considerable challenges to policy makers and change agents alike. According to Havelock and Huberman (1978), unless public policy-makers and planners of change consider and adjust for the human behavioural responses to change, a plan for change in an educational institution may dramatically differ from its original planned outcome.

Conversely, Zaltman and Duncan (1977:10) state that “all change falls into planned or unplanned dichotomies”. Using the management process of trial by error, Verspoor (1989) argues that playing it safe in the implementation of change might well be suited to implementing change on a trial basis. Verspoor (1989) further argues that, by piloting segments of the process of change on a trial basis, policy-makers and change facilitators would then be able to tell whether the change can be scalable, to a larger process. He suggests that various dimensions of change require complete understanding so that effective implementation is based on what is knowable or unknowable about the change process as tailored to a specific setting. His basic theory is that change can be managed under realistic conditions and settings if you run a small trial of the change process first; and, if change is managed and takes into consideration the psycho-social sensitivities of those engaged in the change process itself. However, in *Education for a New Era*, the reform was not piloted; thus, I formed the view that from the inception, and whether I agree with them or not, the policy-makers involved thought big and started big: whether they end big, and whether this reform is a large success or an equally large catastrophe yet remains to be seen; indeed, it is beyond the compass of this study to explore this issue more fully.

3.5.4 Change has a Human Dimension

The pre-requisite for educational change is for a group of individuals (such as teachers working within an institution, or school system) to engage with the proposed change. Simply mandating or hoping for change in a system will not ensure change. It is people who are at the core: they develop, they implement, they review, they act and react. Without considering the impact of change on people, and how important they are to cause, effect and outcomes, policy-makers and planners are simply overlooking the principal agents involved, to the greater or lesser detriment of what is intended.

As noted by Havelock and Huberman (1978:156) the best way to effect change is for policy-makers and implementers to first take into consideration “inter-personal relationships, based on trust, consideration, dominance, etc ...” as aspects of change. They further state that educational institutions are uniquely situated in that they are human intensive, and not like other institutions that may be primarily dominated by individuals using technology, machinery, construction or object manipulation. Moreover, they state that change will be more likely to succeed and possibly more sustainable by initially setting targets and plans that take into consideration the human dimensions of the change process.

From the perspective of Havelock and Huberman (1978), change in education is a complex system in which each party within an institution depends upon and relates to each other. Accordingly, a successful change process that is sustainable over time will have an initial focus on the individual stakeholder’s sensitivities and will seek buy-in before implementation. The premise here is that the change process is complex and should, therefore, not just focus on altering ‘things’, but rather on shaping the expectations of those involved, subject to the intended outcomes of change. In other words, it is not just about re-arranging physical components in a system, but rather about changing individual expectations to facilitate the change process itself. As the authors note, the people implementing change are the most significant factors in the change process and since change is a complex undertaking, it is not easily attainable. For effective and sustainable change to occur, all relevant change participants should be effectively trained provided with new knowledge, and up-dated skills.

In sum then, I am arguing that change is complex and involves human as well as other elements. Perhaps foremost among the concerns many of us will have is dealing with the unknown – change may take us to new and un-explored places and make demands that we adapt to new

situations and circumstances. We may no longer have the luxury of remaining in stasis, but be faced with change dynamics which make us uncomfortable and uneasy. As a result, according to Havelock and Huberman (1978:156), people respond to perceived threats by clinging to [status quo] their existing roles “until new roles become dominant or some accommodation is made”.

The stance taken by Havelock and Huberman (1978), and Stacey (1992), regarding the change process is shared by Hall and Hord (2001) in that they recognise and validate the view that educational change is an extremely complex process in which success requires sufficient time for individuals to gather information, analyse this information, gain knowledge, absorb this knowledge, and to finally commence the incremental process of behavioural change. They also recognise that there are no guarantees that the teachers or school administrators involved in the change process will effectively implement intended changes.

In Qatar, and elsewhere too, given the complexity of the change process and the unpredictability of human behaviour, we may assume that change under certain conditions is dependent upon what is effectively an honour system, i.e. change cannot be forced or imposed save in the narrowest of circumstances, meaning that successful outcomes depend to a great extent on those responsible for enacting what policy-makers intend. Of course, any honour system will inevitably break down when those responsible for enacting what policy-makers intend have been marginalised or divorced from the process.

For example, a principal may have new materials to distribute that are critical features of a new curriculum, but instead of ensuring that teachers use the new materials, she may state that the use of the materials is voluntary and teachers can supplement what is currently available, knowing

her teachers are comfortable with an arrangement such as this. She may follow through by distributing new materials to her teachers, but sensing that teachers are more comfortable with the old materials she will not ensure, nor monitor, the effective use of the new materials. As a result, teaching materials are not changed, nor are the behavioural practices involved in teaching and learning. In this sense then, a teacher may comply with a new curriculum without changing teaching methods. The end result of this inadequately planned cycle is that the intended change does not occur due to a subtle undermining process, due to passive teacher resistance, or due to intentionally weak or inadequate management supervision.

3.5.5 A Mandate for Change: A Problematic Agenda

The term mandate simply means a command or an authorisation to act in a particular way on an issue, to order or require. Mandating change, particularly in education, is however, a far more complex business. Someone or some entity may require that something is done, but if those responsible for the 'doing' are reluctant, unwilling or resistant, then the likelihood of successfully enacting the mandate becomes uncertain at best. What this means then, is that theoretically at least, a person, organisation or authority may command, order or require an action or outcome, but in practice, the extent to which any such mandate gains compliance rests substantially on those required to enact the change or carry it out on a daily or systematic basis.

Brighouse and Woods (1999) state that classroom teachers are the critical element in the complex equation of educational reform. They focused on schools in Birmingham, England's second largest city, outlining professional development activities for teachers and school leaders that included classroom visits, monitoring activities, and analysis of learner achievement to examine how schools actually improve and deliver better teaching and learning outcomes.

Much earlier, Verspoor (1989), in a study of change in developing countries, suggested that four elements are needed for successful teacher training to support innovation: (1) permanent and locally available in-service training e.g. through a cascading model; (2) establishment of effective systems for supervision and support of teachers; (3) adjustment of the content of teacher training to the teacher's own level of knowledge and experience; and (4) encouragement of teacher motivation and commitment e.g. through improved working conditions or opportunities for professional development.

For successful change implementation, these authors all agree that teacher buy-in is the primary pre-requisite on a divergent trajectory of change emanating from policy to classroom implementation. They also concur that classroom implementation of educational reform is not without its hurdles, and more often than not, this includes some form of passive resistance from the implementers of reforms, mainly, school principals and classroom teachers. Much of this passive resistance can be attributed to the socio-psychological aspect of human behaviour when confronted by a change in the status quo, which may be predisposed to defend the status quo of a learned behaviour.

Morrison (1998) states that an education authority, the Supreme Education Council in this study, cannot enforce a mandate and directly affect what actually occurs in a teacher's classroom. So, Morrison is arguing that the process of validating change goes well beyond notions that it can be mandated or enforced. Moreover, Morrison also posits that a teacher's classroom is the repository and vehicle for change and that this is easily validated through empirical observation of teaching practices. He further states that all elements of change are in some capacity related to human resources development such as professional development activities and the assessment of teacher and stakeholder perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and opinions.

The focus of my study is on the ways in which women ESL teachers respond to change and the ways in which the challenges of implementing educational reform are linked to their experiences, belief systems, attitudes, value systems, academic training, professional experiences, and previous professional development programmes. Given the complexity of teachers' responses and the complex processes of change itself, we can begin to understand the need to allow stakeholders the time needed to absorb and to apply the changes contemplated. I argue that change cannot be a mandated process where one-size-fits-all. Change by its very nature is complex and cannot simply be implemented top-down. Indeed, I agree with the authors cited above that, for change to be successful, teachers and support personnel must 'buy into' the changes, and determine for themselves, their efficacy. Successful change therefore involves negotiation; it cannot merely be mandated.

3.5.6 Commitment from Stakeholders and Teachers is Needed

According to Hopkins (2001) and MacGilchrist et al. (2004), an implicit commitment from individual change facilitators, school administrators, and teachers is needed for change to be successfully implemented at a school site. MacGilchrist et al. (2004) identify staff and teacher commitment as critically important for long-term sustainable change. And Hopkins (2001) argues that the complexity of change in education requires effective linkages at every level; for example, from the national to the local school site levels. Thus, successful and sustainable educational change requires commitment from all stakeholders within the educational system, and without this, little of real value may take place, with change merely demonstrated in superficial and temporary ways.

The importance of stakeholder commitment gains further support from a study conducted by Dalin et al. (1994), whose international research included the study of 31 rural primary schools in Colombia, Ethiopia and Bangladesh. They validated a perspective that teachers' motivation and commitment are significant factors for the success of sustainable education reform. This study reveals a positive correlation between successful change, and recognising the practical needs of teachers in the change process. They identified the need for changing the following behavioural practices among teachers: pedagogy, individual commitment to reform, and increased interaction among participants on both a horizontal and vertical basis.

In similar fashion, McLaughlin (1990) argues that it is not enough just to have policy structures in place calling for educational change. She states that we need something far more profound than just the introduction of policy change. In her study, she identifies the need for a change in teaching practices as being far more important. She further adds that the most important factor in the failure of educational reform is the inability to look beyond the policy structures of change. Her premise is that change agents need to place more of a focus on the content of change, and to use this focus as a catalyst to improve and initiate further beneficial changes in educational reform. McLaughlin (1990) argues that because government entities serve as policy-makers, they are in the best position to provide significant and relevant professional development opportunities, teacher networking and support personnel to assist the teacher with implementing the change process. McLaughlin further (1990:15) observes that

“Change strategies rooted in the natural networks of teachers - in their professional associations - may be more effective than strategies that adhere solely to a delivery structure outlined by the policy system ... Teachers rather than policy are responsible for integrating new practices with traditional routines.”

From the research literature cited here, I conclude that teachers play the most significant role in the change implementation process, that a commitment from all stakeholders is needed for sustainable change, that a dramatic shift in pedagogy can lead to increased learning and achievement, and that a focus needs to be placed on the content of the change process rather than the policy structures of change.

One thing which is readily apparent from the research literature dealing with change, and with educational change in particular, is that there is a wealth of material, and a number of models have emerged which lend themselves to different situations and circumstances. In the section which follows, I explore and review some of the more contemporary approaches to educational change e.g. the Communication Change Model, the Change Agent's Guide Model, and Ely's Model of Communication Change. As a result, I conclude that the model which best suits the particular domains and dimensions of this study is the Hall and Hord (2001) Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM).

3.6 Models of Change

There are very large number of commentaries, studies and analyses of change, more widely of different policy studies, and of educational reform and transformation in particular. Clearly, it is both impossible and impractical to try to canvass the diversity of approaches that such studies embrace, so instead I am focusing on a smaller number of seminal works on education reform, and using these to inform and shape my study involving women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools.

I am also aware that while the models and approaches to change I describe here are useful for addressing and explaining Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, and the role of teachers and women

ESL teachers in particular, recognising that they are ‘models’ and that *Education for a New Era*, is a reality, means that no single approach can explain or account for what has occurred to date, or what may occur in future. That having been said, I similarly offer the view that had models such as these been contemplated and considered before *Education for a New Era* was implemented, the rate of progress and levels of engagement and satisfaction by critical stakeholders including teachers, learners and families, may well have been improved.

To begin with, Ely’s model of Communication Change reflects a strong commitment to research supporting change conditions within the school environment. Ely (1990:300) suggests that there are eight key conditions that comprise the change process, in particular, dissatisfaction with conditions as they currently exist, the presence of those who are prepared to adopt change (‘adapters’) who have knowledge and sufficient skills to effect change, easy access to facilities in which change can be fostered, sufficient time for the intended adapters to learn, adapt, integrate, and reflect on their activities, a reward system in which adapters are encouraged and recognised for their contributions and efforts, stakeholder commitment, support provided by change facilitators, and an embedded demand that shared decision-making on change occurs among participants.

Ellsworth (2000), in articulating his Communication Change Model identifies different dimensions of change as: change environment, change agents, innovation, change process, intended adapter, resistance to change, and the system of change. He then argues that policy-makers, or change agents, need to have a definite desire to communicate a public policy of innovation, and that these policy-makers should communicate throughout the ‘change process’ (initiation, implementation, and institutionalisation) to the intended audience or ‘adapters’ as they are called. Adapters in this model are classroom teachers and or other implementers of change at

the school site level. But as with any change model, Ellsworth (2000) states that there can also be resistance that impedes the change process and which creates barriers or hurdles that distort the methods by which a change, or innovation reaches the adapters.

On the other hand, Havelock and Zlotolow (1995) identify stages that facilitate change. This is reflected in their Change Agent's Guide Model. The authors use the acronym 'CREATER' to define this Model. This acronym equates to: Care, Relate, Examine, Acquire, Try, Extend and Renew. They further assert that their model starts with the premise that for change to occur there must be something inherently wrong, and then there must be someone who recognises this and takes responsibility for corrective action to resolve the problem. The next steps in this model include: a concern with the relationships between change facilitators, identifying, defining, and examining problems, gaining access to the appropriate resources in order to solve the problem, effectuating the decision-making process to choose the appropriate solution to the problem, distributing the solutions among relevant stakeholders in order to gain wider acceptance, and finally, public engagement to sustain the intended change (Havelock and Zlotolow, 1995).

Having looked at the models designed by Havelock and Zlotolow (1995), and Ellsworth (2000), I have reached the conclusion that the Hall and Hord (2001) Concern Based Adoption Model (CBAM) offers a conceptual framework which is better suited to the particular needs of my study and the women ESL teachers who are involved. This does not presume that other models are unsuited, or that they cannot be utilised vis a vis *Education for a New Era*, but rather that the CBAM offers me an approach closer to the optimum given the research questions I sought to answer and the reasons why I began along this pathway some time ago.

In essence, I have chosen the C_{BAM} as it focuses far more closely on individual teachers and how they become agents of change within the context of system-wide educational reform. In choosing the C_{BAM}, I also wanted an approach which lent itself to moving from a conceptual perspective to the practical business of teaching and learning: the actual praxis involved at classroom and school level. Details of this model will be explained in the following sections.

3.7 Concern-Based Adoption Model (C_{BAM})

Schools like other human intensive organisations may be defined as small learning communities governed by internally-generated social rules that permeate the work environment. Schools develop their own culture through human interaction and the creation of differing roles by staff members working within the confines of the school. Based on the individual personalities of teachers, administrators, and support personnel within this environment, some schools adapt to and adopt change quickly. Other schools are slow and or reluctant to adopt change, even though change might well be positive for the school in general, and individual teachers' classrooms in particular. In this context we need to understand change and the processes involved.

According to the Hall and Hord (2001), change is a process that requires time during which individual teachers can alter their belief system and teaching practice; therefore, time is a pre-requisite for change, and inadequate time may mean that the change process is delayed or unduly hampered. The premise of the C_{BAM} is that individual change agents, such as teachers, are the smallest unit within the change system, although by no means the least important; thus, they form small parts of a greater whole.

For change to take place and for its outcomes to be successful, each sub-system is required to interact effectively to produce an overall intentional change. At the heart of the model are the

change adopters (teachers), and recipients of the change process (learners). For change to occur, facilitators (educational/school leadership) must understand how teachers and other school personnel perceive change. Hall and Hord (2001) state that through a well-grounded understanding of teacher perceptions regarding change, school leaders and managers can adjust their change processes accordingly.

In reviewing the CBAM, Ellsworth (2000) posits that it is based on two critical assumptions: firstly, “change is a process through which people and organisations will move as they gradually come to understand change; and as they become skilled and competent in the use of new ways” (Ellsworth (2000) cited in Hall and Hord, 2001:4-5); and secondly, change facilitators such as school administrators can use diagnostic tools to support change by providing teachers with strategies for change implementation as teachers adopt and implement change in their classrooms (Ellsworth, 2000).

I have employed CBAM in my research because it is essentially an approach that tries to take into consideration the social psychology of teachers and administrators in a change environment, i.e. it treats teachers from a very ‘human’ perspective, rather than as merely elements of a larger systemic approach. In reviewing and considering the various elements of the CBAM, inclusive of its stages and categories, I have found that it is the most appropriate model for my study; in particular because the subjects of my study - women ESL teachers working within a context of change – are very much the human elements of *Education for a New Era*, and the primary means by which it will either reach its objectives or otherwise.

Another advantage for my study is that the model is founded on a notion that change does not happen immediately; and that time is a factor for sustained adoption. In understanding and

applying this model in a practical manner, to Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, it can be seen that there should be an emphasis on understanding the needs of teachers and other school personnel involved in the change process. By understanding, or at least taking into consideration these needs, teachers will come to recognise the importance of other teachers to the success of the changes sought within the school environment.

To conclude, the CBAM is an approach to change that seeks to take into consideration the scale and dimensions within schools as 'teaching environments'; and it recognises that teachers, school administrators, and other change facilitators must have sufficient time to express concerns while adopting and adapting to change. It connects with people by trying to factor in their concerns into what we might term a 'change equation'. The model considers the smallest unit, i.e. teachers within the organisation, while adopting a systemic view of change applied by way of collective consensus. Thus, it is a model allowing concerns to be expressed and it provides for more transparent implementation.

In short then, the CBAM emphasises the importance of people and the time they need to understand, absorb, personalise, and implement change. It also places the onus on school leaders and administrators to support change by recognising the diversity that teachers bring to the workplace in terms of their needs, experiences, knowledge, and skills. Hall and Hord (2001) argue that if teachers must change, they have to recognise that they must change habits and practices that they know and use on a daily basis. An intended disconnection from past practice will naturally give rise to some anxiety and a sense of loss as teachers alter prevailing behavioural patterns and their pedagogy adapts to new circumstances and exceptions.

In the following section, I explore the two diagnostic dimensions embedded in the CBAM which allow for assessment of the change process. These are: Stages of Concern and Levels of Use. These dimensions may be used to monitor and to assess change implementation and to facilitate support for the change process (Ellsworth, 2000; Hall and Hord, 2001).

3.7.1 Stages of Concern (SoC)

To understand the term *concern* as used within the CBAM we need first to understand how this term is defined. According to Hall et al. (1977:5) cited in Hall and Hord (2001:61-62), concern is defined as follows:

“The composite representation of the feelings, pre-occupation, thought, and consideration given to a particular issue or task is called concern.”

Obviously, the stages during which teachers and others express concerns are as varied as the people themselves. Hall and Hord (2001:62) define Stages of Concern as “a developmental pattern to how our feelings and perceptions evolve as the change process unfolds”. Concern for one person may not be concern for another because as individuals, we all possess different tolerance for ambiguity and issues that creates subtle, immediate, or disruptive change. We all react differently to the issues or events which affect us; and our responses to change process are no different.

In order to facilitate the monitoring, or tracking of change, Hall et al. (1977) defined distinct stages of concern and mapped these as developmental patterns reflecting how a person’s feelings and perceptions evolve during the change process. The assumption is that identifying these patterns of human behaviour can in turn, allow school administrators and change facilitators to

interpret the human side of change by sensing how teachers and school personnel feel about the changes in which they are involved.

Dalin (1998) provides a breakdown of how the seven stages involved can be related to implementing innovation. Dalin's analysis is presented as Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: The Seven Stages of Concerns based on the CBAM as adapted from (Hall and Hord, 2001:63)

Group of Concerns	Stages of Concern	Definition
<i>Impact-concern</i>	6 Re-focusing	The stage of exploring more benefits from the existing innovations and defining the alternatives to gain advantages from a more powerful innovation. Teachers have clear views both sides of the entire change: weakness and strength. They

		are ready either to make more progress on an innovation or to create further innovation in order to improve change or replace it.
	5 Collaboration	The stage of emphasising working with others regarding the utilisation of innovations. Teachers have more concerns about teaching collaboration and look for co-operation in working with other colleagues with respect to change or innovation.
	4 Consequence	The stage of focusing on the impact of an innovation on change clients, e.g. the outcomes in terms of performance and competence, and the provision of facilities based on clients' needs in order to get better outcomes. Teachers pay attention to change in learning achievement by looking at necessary improvement.
<i>Task-concern</i>	3 Management	The stage of paying attention to an innovation process, including the best use of information, resources which are related to efficiency, management and the requirement of time. Teachers are concerned with these aspects and drown in a huge amount of paperwork and the daily crisis of their classroom work.
<i>Self-concern</i>	2 Personal	The stage of analysis of change regarding the clients' role meeting the demands of changes or innovations. This role is related to the reward structure of the organisation. Teachers think about how change or an innovation could affect them and are uncertain about the requirements of change.
	1 Informational	The stage of general awareness of, and interest in an innovation, and of wanting to learn more, but change clients are still not concerned. Teachers are concerned with change but are not anxious to learn more about the characteristics of change or innovation.
	0 Awareness	The stage in which change clients have only little concern about an innovation. Teachers have little interest in change.

While the seven stages of concern shown in Table 3.1 are proposed in the CBAM model, it is by no means evident that all teachers will undergo all seven stages, either in their entirety or partially. Nor is it clear that teachers will necessarily have the same or similar responses and reactions during any one stage, meaning that some stages may be more intensive than others depending upon the individual involved. It may also be true that because we are all different and because we tend to accept and react to change in different ways, any stage may be circumvented, according to a teacher's knowledge and experience. In short, teachers and others involved in reform and

change may well reflect a larger degree of heterogeneity, rather than homogeneity, despite all facing largely the same issues.

This breakdown of stages of concern did prove to be useful in the analysis of the questionnaire and interview data in my study and in identifying the stage of concern that the women ESL teachers participating in this study were in with regard to how they presented themselves and how they perceived change in Independent Schools. We will see that the majority of the women ESL teachers were at the self-concern stage. This will be demonstrated in Chapter 8.

3.7.2 Level of Use (LoU)

As a teacher moves through the stages of concern, the level in the change transition begins with the *Non-User* and then the *User*. According to Hall and Hord (2001), the stages that follow the Levels of Use move a teacher who has experienced working with innovations from Non-User to User. The distinction between Non-User and User is not quite as straightforward as it might first appear, and Dalin (1998) provides an interesting analysis showing how there are eight levels, two within the non-user stage, and a further six within the user stage, each providing a finer gradation of how change is approached and integrated.

Table 3.2 Level of Use (LoU) as adapted from Hall and Hord (2001:82)

<i>Non-users are categorised as follows</i>
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Level 0 (Non-use)	At this level teachers have little information upon which to act or to change their behaviour. An innovation, if it exists within their schools is not in their sphere of knowledge; therefore they are unable to apply it. At the non-user level, teachers have no awareness of the change process related to an instructional innovation.
Level 1 (Orientation)	This is the basic awareness stage for a teacher who has just received exposure to an innovation. At this stage, a teacher will usually proceed with caution, assessing how innovation might impact on her and her classroom. Entering this stage, a teacher tends to become interested in the innovation, but proceeds with caution as to its adoption.
<i>Users are categorised as follows</i>	
Level II (Preparation)	At this level a teacher is initiated to the innovation by using it for the first time. For example, the use of a new report card, a dual language immersion programme, a new pedagogy for teaching ESL, new curriculum materials, or introducing a new teacher's edition of a recently adopted textbook series.
Level III (Mechanical)	A teacher at this level tends to go through the motions, not quite applying the innovation as expected by the change facilitator. Due to its newness, the teacher views the innovation as time-consuming and does not tend to invest the time needed for its full use. This level is characterised by simply learning fundamentals, or the basic tasks associated with the innovation.
Level IV (Routine)	The teacher is now able to implement the innovation with slight modifications. But support must be provided to the teacher to ensure the effectiveness of successful implementation.
Level V (Refinement)	Through practice a teacher gains confidence in the application of the innovation. For school administrators and other change facilitators, this is the level at which reflection, changed behaviour, practice, and change in classroom pedagogy occurs. At this stage, a teacher gains the knowledge of how to solve problematic issues with classroom implementation of the innovation. At this stage, the teacher gains knowledge about adjusting the innovation to her style of teaching, and begins to focus on learner outcomes and achievement.
Level VI (Integration)	At this level, teachers begin to collaborate with their colleagues regarding the effects that the innovations are having as they apply them to daily teaching responsibilities. Teachers at this level tend to promote the innovation among themselves and other stakeholders.
Level VII (Renewal)	The teacher at this level has full cognition of how the innovation works and what its intended outcomes are for her classroom. It is at this stage that a teacher begins to critically analyse the innovation for the sustainability of its future use in attaining improved student outcomes.

Table 3.2 that identifies the Level of Use will be applied to the data analysis in my study. I will then use the framework to identify the Level of Use reached by the women ESL teachers participating in this study and to ascertain how their materials, approaches and beliefs have been altered to the Level of Use in the context of Independent Schools.

The marked difference between the Level of Use and Stages of Concern is that the Stages of Concern appear to reflect more of the feelings that teachers may have and the impact that change has on them: the affective domain, so to speak. Levels of Use on the other hand, are somewhat more behaviourally oriented in that the focus is on change in teaching practice during implementation. During this research I found both the Levels of Use and Stages of Concern to be beneficial, particularly in data analysis as they seek to capture different but potentially related stages in the change process at the point of implementation. This kind of systematic description and analysis can help to provide base line data for planning strategies and other activities to ensure that change is embedded and supported at classroom level.

In sum, the CBAM provides an approach to monitoring, and implementing change within schools. As the model focuses on the change process before and during implementation, it has utility and applicability to schools and others involved. The CBAM also emerges as an approach that teachers themselves might use as it has ‘clinical’ elements; that is to say, it follows a sequence that appears to be easily understood, though the stages may take longer time.

3.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I argue that for educational change to be successfully sustained and embedded in the culture of a school setting, exemplary professional development programmes are needed. I further argue that change needs to be sustained by relevant professional development based on

periodic needs assessments of teachers that can provide teachers with the continuous support needed for sustained educational reform that will be institutionalised over time.

The chapter presents literature on educational change and models of change, foregrounding the CBAM as a conceptual framework that is applicable to the analysis of the data grounded by the study in Qatar. Early in the chapter, I looked at reform and educational change in the Arab world and noted that educational practices were in the past largely based on rote learning and recitation, meaning that professional development for teachers tended to be primarily focused on the minutiae of the curriculum and structural issues related to power and authority in the school.

Because I am arguing that teachers are the heart of educational change and their roles and needs within a climate of change should always be taken into account, I devoted the next four sections to this topic. I reviewed the literature paying particular attention to change in relation to stakeholders, stages, and the characteristics of the change process itself. I also touched on stages in the change process of initiation, implementation, and institutionalisation.

Finally, I considered several models of change that have been applied to research on educational innovation, and to aspects of the change process within schools and school systems, and I concluded that the most pertinent to this study is the CBAM (Hall and Hord, 2001).

In the following chapter, I present a literature review related to professional development and its relation to educational reform.

CHAPTER 4

Studying Professional Development

4.1 Introduction

Professional development is at the heart of this study. My research framework and the research questions attempt to understand professional development in the particular context of Qatar. I also argue that professional development needs for teachers are absolutely critical in the climate of change in Qatar. What this chapter shows is that teacher professional development is a complex issue, something clearly expressed in the respondents' views I obtained during extensive interviews.

As I noted earlier, a considerable body of research has emerged about teacher professional development. This is important not only in educational reform, but in ensuring quality teaching and learning and improved educational outcomes. I believe it is also important that we understand what is meant by 'professional development' as the term appears in both common and specialised usage. Accordingly, I review different approaches to 'professional development' and I devise a working definition for the purposes of my study. Importantly, this addresses relationships between professional development and educational reform, the necessity of studying professional development, and the particular professional development approaches that have been deployed in Qatar's Independent Schools.

4.2 Definitions of Professional Development

Professional development in education is referred to in various ways. For example, over the last two decades the nomenclature for professional development has changed from ‘training’, to words such as ‘staff development’, ‘in-service teacher education’, ‘professional study’, and ‘learning journey’, to name but a few. To a great extent, many of these new terms appear to be inter-changeable, depending on the educational school system in which the professional development takes place.

Williams (1982) provided a definition of professional development as the process by which individuals, groups and organisations learn to be more effective and efficient. This definition is at best, a basic view of how people should work, but does not sufficiently define professional development as we know it today.

After studying various aspects of professional development, Taylor (1975) noted two successful elements in teacher professional development. These were: ‘staff development’ and the further pursuit of ‘professional study’. In his study, he identified two different uses for professional development. The first, he defined as the further pursuit of professional study that is as a more individualised approach to meet the specific individual needs of teachers. The second, or the staff development approach, was determined to fit the ‘needs of the situation’; i.e. to fit the specific needs of a school site programme in more of a collective manner. We can see that while Taylor’s (1975) definition of professional development is superficially dated, it seems to align well with contemporary collaborative approaches to professional development, by determining that an individual teacher’s professional development needs are as important as the school’s needs. In fact, Taylor was one of the first to look at professional development more holistically,

particularly by calling for a balance between the demands of the school and the needs of the teachers. This will be taken up again in Chapter 8, where I show that teachers in this study generally believe that schools tended to consider ‘school’ needs rather than those of their teachers.

Cadwood and Gibbon (1981) defined professional development as experiential involvement by a teacher in the process of growing. This process is not short term: it is a continuous, never-ending developmental activity. Again, their approach does not clearly define professional development in a formal sense, but it is rather more specific than that seen in Williams (1982).

Watson (1976:18) provides a more specific approach to defining professional development and argues that the term “staff development refers to the activity of ensuring the personal and professional development of staff of the school”. This means that Watson’s approach appears to be rather more closely aligned with how we typically see and define professional development today. According to Watson, the fundamental role of professional development, as created for a classroom teacher, embodies the need to develop relevant processes which are applicable to performance, and which ensure the professional growth of a teacher; as well as the improved performance of the school.

What is important about Watson (1976) is the implication that teacher professional development is joint or collaborative, involving both teachers and the school, including its leadership. A collective approach to staff development should ensure that collaborative planning is not lost, and that schools gain from the synergies involved. This means that in Watson’s view, professional development involves the entire staff in the day-to-day operation and management of a school environment. Watson further notes that staff development should have an over-arching theme of

school improvement, as well as professional development for individual teachers, and that professional development should be synonymous with personal development.

By way of clarification, Watson calls for teachers to be closely involved with all staff in the day-to-day operation of a school, but given how schools need to act within periods of great change, it seems unlikely that having all teachers and all other staff consistently involved in some form of consensus actions and decision-making is at all practical. Moreover, from what we know about effective leadership, attempting to govern and manage a complex organisation such as a school by consensus is hardly likely to succeed, and in any event it strips the principal and other senior staff of their legitimate roles and responsibilities in leading and managing the school. Thus, Watson's approach might also be seen as one where the legitimate leadership and management responsibilities that need to be exercised by school leaders are replaced or reduced.

In Qatar's Independent Schools, teachers are not viewed as part of a school's leadership or management, and it is likely that moving from a discrete separation of teacher as professional, to teacher as leader and manager, would involve something closer to revolution rather than evolution, at least in Qatar at present. Moreover, based on my experience, Qatar's teachers, or at least those in this study, have quite enough to contend with and they would be resistant to taking on additional roles and responsibilities. This will become more evident in Chapter 8.

In studying the emerging aspects of professional development, Hoyle (1980); Joyce and Showers (1980), and Day (1999) all argue that the principal purpose of professional development is the acquisition of subject or content knowledge and teaching skills. Day (1999:4) goes on to state:

“Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives”.

Day’s definition of professional development adopts a forward-looking ideology based on a set of principles. Day is concerned with developing a professional development paradigm rather than with the process. His professional development principles focus on the notion that “teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching” (Day, 1999: 4). However, as I will show later, my data indicate that the majority of women ESL teachers in this study do not view professional development in this manner. That is not to say that all do not view it this way, but that from a practical standpoint, the moral purpose of teaching is rarely if ever discussed during or after a professional development session. Again this becomes more apparent in Chapter 8.

According to Billings (1977:22), professional development can be defined as:

“A deliberate and continuous process involving the identification and discussion of present and anticipated needs of individual staff for furthering their job satisfaction and career prospects and of the institution for supporting academic work and plans, and the implementation of programmes of staff activities designed for the harmonious satisfaction of needs”.

Billings (1977:22) provides an excellent definition of professional development that is ironically contemporary despite its age. In short, Billings states that professional development has two distinct audiences: individual teachers, and the institution in which they work. Watson (1976) and Billings (1977) distinguish between the needs of the teachers and the needs of the school, and as such their approach to professional development appears to provide a stronger foundation for teachers.

While professional development cannot be all things to all teachers, when it is well planned and well executed it can address the personal needs of teachers taking into consideration the needs they actually identify. While Billings (1977) provides a comprehensive and applicable definition of professional development, Morant (1981:22) provides us with a more condensed and concise definition: “the education intended to support and assist the professional development that teachers ought to experience through their working lives”. However, Morant’s (1981) definition does not address the practical aspect of professional development activities; nor does it address the purposes of professional development.

To sum up, among the broad approaches to the definitions of professional development there are: (a) ones that favour the school and at the possible expense of the teacher; (b) ones that are more oriented towards the individual or groups rather than the school; and (c) others that are more collaborative taking into account both teacher and school needs. This study will argue for the collaborative approach since I look for alignment between the teachers’ needs and those of the school.

While there are many approaches to professional development, not all entail precise definitions. For the purposes of my study, I have taken the view that professional development arises as part of a wider public policy process, through which individual teacher and institutional needs can be addressed. Within the context of educational policy, with which professional development is inextricably bound, any formal definition needs to cover areas such as the curriculum, and human, financial, and technological resources. Professional development also needs to take account of the settings in which teachers and principals work, and it should be implemented as a transparent and continuous process aimed at developing the content knowledge and teaching skills of teachers and the management skills of principals leading to measurably improved teaching, learning and management outcomes.

4.3 Teacher Development as Professional Development: Praxis for Professionals

Guskey (2000) argues that three additional defining characteristics of a profession should be considered when defining or clarifying the intended meaning of professional development. Firstly, it is an intended process with a specific purpose. It is a process that is purposefully designed with an intended purpose. Secondly, it is a process that is purposefully designed with an intended purpose of bringing about positive change in teaching behaviour and pedagogy. Thirdly, the intent or aims of professional development programmes need to be clear from the outset. This clarity facilitates the gathering of information needed to validate the attainment of the goals that were initially set. This is important as according to Branham (1992) and Todnem and Warner (1994), it is easier to address possible unintended consequences when goals are initially clarified with all stakeholders and in the absence of clearly stated goals it is difficult to assess whether progress has occurred. In Chapter 8, I return to discuss more fully issues

including the absence of clarity and well-defined objectives in professional development for the women ESL teachers in this study.

Another characteristic is that professional development is a continuous, job-embedded process. Guskey (2000:19) argues that, for teachers to be effective, they need to be continuous learners, checking for understanding, as they gain expertise through professional development opportunities that are applicable to what they do as teachers in their classrooms. He stresses knowledge of content and awareness of process as two key ingredients to effective teaching, and suggests that professional development should incorporate best practices which address these ideas. As I will show later, the women ESL teachers are aiming for best practices in trying to check for learners' understanding, but Qatar's school support organisations do not facilitate this procedure, something I elaborate on in Chapter 8.

Thus, for the women ESL teachers in this study, faced with the challenges of a new school system and the need to teach English across the curriculum rather than just as a second language, access to activities which could improve their teaching are paramount. Such activities need to embrace the elements alluded to by Guskey (2000), i.e. improving their own English language skills as a pre-cursor to improving those of learners, gaining clear understandings about the core curricula in Independent Schools, and developing as teacher-practitioners by acquiring and improving their array of skills, knowledge and understanding. This means that theory and practice need to be brought together to achieve praxis in teaching, learning and assessment.

Finally, the professional development of teachers is a systematic process. For example, Sparkes (1996) states that changes at the individual level need to be supported and encouraged at the organisational level, and if this does not occur, intended innovation will fail. For professional

development to be effective, it must be systemically embedded with intended outcomes of organisational development, and individual improvement. Sparkes (1996) advances thinking about the planning and implementation of professional development, by taking into consideration changes at the organisational and the individual level: a systemic approach, so to speak. Additionally, Sparkes (1996) considers that change is not an overnight process, but rather one that occurs over an extended period and takes into consideration various organisational levels. He also states that the success of effective professional development includes a clear and compelling vision of the improvements needed, combined with explicit ideas on organisational characteristics, inclusive of the vision and mission of the organisation. Bearing in mind the needs of women ESL teachers in Qatar, I argue that effective professional development for these teachers should include a clear and compelling vision of the improvements needed, combined with explicit articulation of ideas about organisational characteristics and a clear vision and mission for the organisation. What should effective professional development embrace as far as ESL teachers in this study are concerned? I will return to this question in Chapter 8.

4.4 Professional Development and Educational Reform

With the advent of what is sometimes termed the ‘academic standards movement’ in the western world in the 1990s, professional development became one cornerstone of public school reform. Funds allocated through government agencies, generally departments and ministries of education, were earmarked for teacher professional development programmes related to improving learner achievement via better pedagogy. School systems throughout the western world became the recipients of these funds, and in turn were required to produce high-level professional development programmes for classroom teachers. Moreover, because developments in one or more jurisdictions tend to attract the attention of others, particularly if they are widely regarded as

successful, professional development programmes for public schools and their teachers in Australia, Britain, Canada and elsewhere, drew international audiences and as a result, professional development rapidly emerged as one of the major building blocks in attempts to reform and improve public education world-wide. This included attempts by developing nations to emulate or model their own programmes on those originally developed for western countries, as these nations sought to compete more effectively in an increasingly globalised economy, and as the value of human capital development was pressed by international agencies including the World Bank and UNESCO.

Although approaches to educational reform varied enormously depending upon factors such as the extent of available resources, professional development grew to become one vehicle through which improvements in teaching and learning, and educational outcomes might be achieved. Indeed, what emerged during the 1990s and 2000s was a more overt focus on ‘becoming learning societies’ which could sustain knowledge economies. Thus, teachers as ‘transmitters of knowledge’ came to the fore since it was, as professionals, that they could instil reform and improvement via teaching and learning (Hargreaves et al., 2007).

At the same time, in Qatar’s *Education for a New Era*, teachers came to be viewed as more responsible and more accountable for curriculum development, teaching academic content standards within classrooms, administering but not participating in new forms of assessment, aligning teaching and learning materials with content standards, using disaggregated data to inform instruction, and using new learner report cards. Teachers came to be positioned as the people to deliver these policies, in other words, their implementers. A fuller discussion of the extent to which these responsibilities were fulfilled appears in Chapters 7 and 8.

As a consequence of educational reform evolving and growing world-wide, the public policy debate has increasingly focused on improving quality and standards via quality professional development predominantly aimed at teachers. The recent situation in Qatar has emerged as broadly similar, even though professional development was more or less, and perhaps surprisingly, ‘glossed over’ in the early formulation of *Education for a New Era*.

Further weight has been added to the debate as a result of it now being possible to make broad, though sometimes over-stated, comparisons between nations due to their participation and learner performance in various international studies such as PISA, PIRLS and TIMSS. Since Qatar began participating in this now widespread and equally widely measured process of educational change, the performance of Qatar’s learners has remained very low, despite the allocation of very considerable resources to its Independent Schools. Qatar has been consistently placed among the five lowermost nations in the cross-national studies noted earlier (Evaluation Institute, 2008). Interestingly though, low learner performance on various international studies has not yet emerged as a cause for concern in Qatar. This stands in marked contrast with the attention that such results typically garner in countries such as Australia and Britain where concerns about ‘ranking’ and ‘improvement’ loom large on political, public and educational agendas.

At the same time the focus on professional development and learner performance has sharpened, not to mention the many other facets of public education systems that are now scrutinised more carefully, and there has been a concomitant growth in the ‘free flow’ of our knowledge and understanding, largely assisted by the unfiltered mechanisms offered through the worldwide web for example. The net effect has been an exponential expansion of contemporary understandings about the curriculum, how subjects might be taught and learned and many other domains within the broad sphere of schools, classrooms and teaching and learning.

Another clearly observable parallel arises in terms of the types of skills, knowledge and understanding that learners are now seen to require, something in stark contrast with a generation ago. What this means is that to be effective, teachers must be aware of emerging trends, and have sufficient professional expertise to make judgements about new pedagogies, knowledge and methods. Thus, it is not merely a case of teachers being ‘fashionable’ or ‘fadish’, rather they need to be sufficiently well informed to make sound judgements about their own pedagogy and other practices, and the wider issues involved in teaching and learning.

As noted earlier, *Education for a New Era* with its sharp focus on English as the medium for teaching and learning, even in mathematics and science, placed vastly increased pressure on the quality of ESL teachers, and enhanced the need for them to have the skills, knowledge and understandings in terms of ESL, and in mathematics and science pedagogy too. However, ESL provision in Qatar’s Independent Schools lacked any across-the-board pedagogy, other than that which individual teachers may have evolved personally or in groups. There was an absence of a clear approach to ESL teacher development, and to advancing mathematics and science via English medium teaching and learning. In Chapter 8, I explore in more detail the impact of proposed changes to the development of English language pedagogy on professional development programmes.

According to Sparks and Hirsh (1997), at all levels of education, there are many excellent examples of highly effective endeavours in professional development. Every successful programme that is focused on improving teaching and learning, curriculum revision, school restructuring design, or systematic reform, has at its centre, the provision of quality professional development for classroom teachers and other support personnel. However, serious concerns remain about the effectiveness of many professional development practices and the literature on

this topic is littered with descriptions of high expectations that resulted in failure (Corcoran, 1995; Guskey, 1986; Guskey and Huberman, 1995), and reviews of modern professional development programmes are often equally pessimistic (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1996 and Frechtling et al., 1995).

In fact, many conventional forms of professional development are seen as too top-down and too isolated from school and classroom realities to have much impact on practice. As a result, anticipated or expected improvements are seldom realised. As Cooley (1997:18) has observed,

“I have concluded that most educational reform takes place in our literature and on the pages of Education Week, not in schools and classrooms ... it seemed to me that all this talk about waves and waves of reforms really refers to trends in the reform literature, not changes that are really taking place in real schools. Of course, that is true of waves. They tend to be highly visible at the surface, but do not affect what is going on down in the lower depths”.

My study sought to address some of the evident weaknesses in the types of professional development programmes described by Cooley. I wanted to find out whether it is possible to have coherent and systematic methods of professional development for teachers within a system of at least notionally Independent Schools, which are publicly-funded but which operate more or less corporately, and where there is no formal all-embracing central authority such as a Ministry of Education, although the Education Institute is rapidly looming as a de facto replacement. In particular, I wanted to explore the professional development needs of women ESL teachers, anticipating that they would articulate these in the context of the emerging reform model.

Guskey (1994) observes that educators themselves frequently regard professional development as having little impact on their day-to-day responsibilities, or as being applicable to their classroom needs. Some even consider it a waste of their professional time. They may participate in professional development primarily because of contractual obligations, but often see it as something they must ‘get out of the way’, so that they can get back to the important work of teaching. But, not all professional development in education is ineffective, meaningless, and wasteful. Rather, educators simply have not done a very good job of documenting the positive effects of professional development (Consortium for Policy Research in Education, 1996 and Guskey, 1994).

It is generally recognised that the school context will expand teachers’ professional development options beyond those available in traditional in-service models (Sandholtz, 2002), and thus, what becomes important during explicit reform, is the extent to which opportunities provided within a school are identified, meaningful and accessible. Within Qatar’s Independent Schools, it has become a relatively widespread practice for women ESL teachers to have opinions about what they consider to be meaningful professional development, and what they believe they need to develop and grow as professionals. The degree to which this input is actually used to plan professional development programmes for women ESL teachers is explored in Chapter 8.

To add to the methodological complexities involved, identifying and addressing teachers’ professional development needs is shared between the Supreme Education Council’s Education Institute that houses a Professional Development Office, and staff from the multi-national school support organisations that are under contract to the Supreme Education Council to assist in carrying forward the aims of *Education for a New Era*.

In broad terms at least, an expectation seems to have arisen in the Professional Development Office and among staff from school support organisations that ESL teachers in Independent Schools will engage in action research, peer teaching/peer observation, teacher groups and associations. This study examines whether or not these external ‘requirements’ for teachers are actually fulfilled within the Independent Schools at which they teach. This is important as, under the terms of their contracts with the Education Institute, school support organisations are supposed to deliver support services to teachers in Independent Schools. Part of these services entails assisting teachers to become familiar with, and contribute to, educational journals, engage in peer discussion and to facilitate opportunities for new teachers to learn from more experienced teachers. In Chapter 8, I review the role of school support organisations and the support provided to teachers.

4.5 The Necessity of Studying Professional Development

As I have emphasised in this chapter, many commentators now see teacher professional development as part and parcel of education reform, largely because, as those working in public policy developed and implemented moves towards curriculum standards, more was expected of teachers, particularly those working in core areas such as English, mathematics and science (Kennedy, 1998). It is readily apparent that new curriculum standards demand a more knowledgeable workforce that is skilled in curriculum content coupled and the pedagogy with which to deliver it. Teachers cannot be divorced from the standards, and if these change, then teachers may need to make adjustments to existing pedagogy and to their own understandings about issues such as content.

Alongside the development of a more comprehensive standards-based approach to the curriculum and to learning outcomes, some education systems including parts of Australia, New Zealand and the United States, came to leadership and management as being largely devolved to schools rather than centralised. This gave the schools involved the capacity to make decisions about the balance of how discretionary funds were used, including provision for professional development. It should be noted, however, that districts, states and regions did not move uniformly to self-managing or self-governing schools, and that even where this did occur e.g. in New Zealand, differences between centralised funding and local funding remained apparent. In other places, schools remained very much part of larger systems, with more centralised, but participatory involvement, for the ministry or department and schools in designing and implementing professional development.

Within the context of Qatar's Independent Schools, we might expect to see the sorts of approaches that are more commonly found in western, industrialised settings, viz: an advantage often accruing to self-managing or self-governing schools is that they can take a longer-term view of planning and executing professional development i.e. a three to five year horizon as opposed to an annual or short-term plan. It is not so much that those in self-managing or self-governing schools become more astute than their peers elsewhere, rather that they can enact strategic, school-based approaches to what individual schools see as priorities, for example, professional development as a major contributor to improving teaching and learning outcomes.

However, to be fair, even if Qatar's Independent Schools, began to more closely emulate those commonly found in western, industrialised settings, they would still be subject to the same sorts of budgetary and other pressures which can de-rail longer-term strategic plans in favour of meeting emerging contingencies, thus rendering professional development planning difficult.

It strikes me that what is important in Qatar's Independent Schools is that they develop policy documents such as a school site plan, thus linking elements of the plan to fiscal and educational inputs and teaching and learning outcomes. Such policy documents should provide a clear framework for predictable resource allocation, and support for those things the staff believe are important for their school. Here I opine that if a policy document such as school site plan emerges by consensus, professional development appears rather more likely to gain teacher 'buy in' for development and implementation.

Examples drawn from the research literature cited in Chapter 3, including (Hall and Hord, 2001), show that change implementation at classroom level should be grounded in teachers' individual concerns about putting new policies into practice. McLaughlin (1990) however, argues that change outcomes cannot be enforced by policy imperatives alone; particularly change implementation in classrooms which is based on teachers' individual capacity in terms of their knowledge, teaching skills, and beliefs. Thus, while a policy may mandate a change, it is teachers in classrooms who actually make the change effective or otherwise.

In Chapter 8, I report on my attempts to find out if the women ESL teachers involved in this study had specific knowledge about whether there was a long-term professional development plan in which they would become involved. I also consider whether professional development has been mandated in terms of a long-term plan, and if this has resulted in changes in pedagogy or practice.

In Qatar, the Supreme Education Council's Professional Development Office was to provide professional development activities in a coherent manner for staff from Independent Schools. In a number of different locations, including Qatar, teachers are required to participate in

professional development activities as part of their conditions of service, i.e. it is a contractual obligation. It seems from this and other studies, that many teachers view this as unimportant, as a misguided process representing something they have to do, rather than something that they need and want to do. Certainly, in my own experience and as it emerged during my conversations with ESL teachers in this study, teachers may be ‘present’ for professional development, but otherwise simply not ‘there’. This becomes rather more evident in the exploration reported in Chapter 8.

In an approach that was passive rather than active, the Professional Development Office initially produced and distributed a catalogue of general professional development activities for teachers in Independent Schools to review and select programmes in which they could participate. I explore in Chapter 8, whether teachers embarked upon these activities and if so, to what degree they influenced or determined them, or to what degree they were largely made available or imposed, the extent to which teachers found them to be effective, aligned and appropriately planned, and whether the activities were applicable to classroom needs.

4.6 Tailoring Professional Development Programmes to Meet Teachers’ Needs

If the aim of *Education for a New Era* is not just change, but change for the good, resulting in improved teaching and learning outcomes, allowing teachers to remain in stasis cannot be an option. Indeed, it seems that the more ambitious the aims of educational reform, the more critical teachers are to its success. Innovation almost always involves a change of direction, and a change in pace, but to succeed, these must overcome the inertia naturally inherent in a teaching workforce which may be inured to years of rote learning and recitation, and to retaining the status quo. Assuming that change will occur by osmosis or leaving it to accident, is surely a recipe for failure.

If teachers are the agents of change as Fullan (1995), Hargreaves (1989) and others argue, then they must be equipped to change themselves, including their behaviours and practices, and those of the learners for whom they are responsible. Developing teachers as professional practitioners is an essential element of successfully designing and implementing innovation and reform, especially since the literature is clear about the importance of teachers as agents and actors in taking reform forward and achieving whatever ambitions are associated with it. This means as I noted earlier, that ‘developing’ teachers is integral to change and intended outcomes, and this cannot be merely incidental or worse, accidental.

What this clearly means, is that reform and innovation will surely fall short, unless it is accompanied by well-designed and carefully implemented programmes tailored to meet the professional development needs of the main stakeholders, the teachers.

If teacher professional development is central to educational reform and to achieving the ambitions embedded in *Education for a New Era*, then new approaches e.g. standards-based models of curriculum and assessment, rely on teachers who are re-skilled and re-educated about what is involved and which new strategies are needed. Without the essential pre-cursor of professional development related to new curriculum and assessment for example, it seems unfair and unreasonable to expect that teachers will make the transition ‘automatically’ or be guided by some ‘unseen hand’.

Within educational settings, as indicated earlier, it is generally understood that professional development includes multi-varied learning experiences which are typically planned, and intended to improve teachers’ classroom pedagogy and thus, teaching and learning outcomes. This means that professional development can occur in diverse situations and settings. It need

not be confined to just one approach, or to ‘formal’ activities such as those delivered by institutions of higher education for example.

Of course, for professional development to be effective, no matter where it takes place, requires sound planning and forethought, noting that Hopkins (2001:9) emphasises professional development through in-service training, supervision and mentoring in collegial surroundings. Fullan (2001a:71) extends this premise by suggesting that the successful implementation of professional development requires continuous encouragement, in which, “the more factors supporting implementation, the more change in practice will be accomplished”. Hopkins also notes the need for support in the design of professional development action plans, asserting that such plans should have clarity of purpose and statements relative to outcomes of professional development for teachers.

In studying various aspects of professional development, Hopkins (2001) adds weight to the research of Havelock and Huberman (1978) and Stacey (1992), by indicating that adult learning is a process of individual change which is diverse and which does not lend itself to some pre-ordained blueprint with rigid structures. Therefore, if professional development is to be successful, and result in dramatic changes in classroom teaching, a classroom-based system which evaluates and reports on the outcomes must be established. It is only through well-designed systems that monitor educational change, that its effects and successes can be tracked.

Following a similar line of thinking, Scheerens (1992) argues that successful classroom pedagogy may be sustained through a shared vision of change objectives inclusive of continuous in-service training, professional development, time for teacher collaboration, and support for increased

teaching skills and knowledge of curriculum content. The importance of a shared vision on change objectives becomes more evident in Chapter 7.

Dalin et al. (1994) strongly suggest that it is continuing in-service training available at the school site, and effective monitoring, coupled with support systems and strategies, that promote successful educational change. These authors also state that successful professional development demands longitudinal policies based on extended timeframes for professional development. Further support for Dalin et al. (1994) is found in Goldenberg and Gallimore (1991), who state that changing a teacher's belief system and subsequent teaching behaviours in favour of educational change, requires time, monitoring, and resources; and these types of change do not occur overnight by simply offering a series of scheduled professional development workshops for teachers. Goldenberg and Gallimore (1991) further argue that 'one-shot' workshops for teachers do not work, and do very little to advance educational reform. They add that "to genuinely improve teaching, we must say goodbye to quick-fix workshops and hello to staff development that provides intellectual stimulation and opportunities to develop new knowledge and skills" (ibid: 69). The types of professional development needed by women ESL teachers are discussed in Chapter 8.

Building on the work of Goldenberg and Gallimore (1991), Shulman (1987) argues that professional development for teachers should be based on a teaching knowledge base. He further asserts that this kind of knowledge base would be a powerful strategy for professional development programmes. Shulman's study reveals that the majority of professional development programmes concentrate on a teacher's classroom management style, but in reality, very few are actually focused on "the management of ideas within the classroom discourse" (1987:1). He further adds that changes at the classroom level are the result of teacher practice. And he defines

teacher practice in the following domains: practice of change in the curriculum practice of instruction, practice in the use of subject-matter or content knowledge, and practice of pedagogical skills based on teachers' beliefs and understandings.

Thus, according to Shulman (1987), teachers should be encouraged to use the context of their classrooms to further develop their professional skills. The classroom context includes: content knowledge and skills relevant to what students need to know and be able to do, educational materials, e.g., curriculum and assessment, the teaching and learning process, and collegial practice by working with experienced teachers toward developing their own teaching strategies and skills. In Chapter 8, I show how the ESL teachers in my study lacked encouragement from school support organisations to make sense of their context.

MacGilchrist et al. (2004) take a position broadly consistent with Shulman's premise and his recommendations, arguing, as does Shulman (1987), for continuing personal and professional development opportunities for teachers. They also add that professional development can have a strong influence on learners' skill development, self-confidence and classroom behaviour, and state that it is necessary for teachers to stay abreast of changes in their areas of expertise, particularly in respect of the content of what they teach. MacGilchrist et al. (2004) cite relevant research that shows that teachers need to be concerned with improving pedagogy, continuous learning, and with gaining knowledge in scientific discoveries which are related to their teaching responsibilities.

4.7 Professional Development in School Sites

From the literature we can see that there are many approaches to professional development that can be used for teacher professional growth and applied learning including: individual approaches, the group approach, and the school site approach (Guskey, 2000). In this section, I focus on reviewing school site professional development as this is the approach most commonly, though not exclusively, found in Qatar's Independent Schools.

In general, school site plans are driven by consensus, and involve agreement between a school's teachers, leaders and others, about how the plan will work, when and how it will be implemented. As Bell (1991) notes, the school site plan has an impact on the school and its teachers because it requires them to make choices from competing alternatives. During the time that my study was conducted, Qatar's Independent Schools used school site plans to define professional development needs over a multi-year period. In Chapter 8, I explore the extent to which this approach was actually used.

Cowan and Wright (1990) found that professional development days have significant benefits for teachers. If scheduled correctly, the defined numbers of days provide many creative avenues for teachers to pursue. For example, teachers may initiate grade level policy discussions on grading, learner attendance, peer evaluations, study and field trips aligned with the curriculum, materials acquisition in relation to adopted textbooks and workbooks, parent involvement policies, school-wide learner discipline procedures, and a host of other important functions that make for a better school environment. However, from a rather different perspective than Cowan and Wright (1990), Bell (1991) claims that approaches based on the school site plan have inherent weaknesses. For example, he states that teacher union contracts, boards of governance, school

system policies, and insufficient resources can all act to frustrate the intended purposes of the school site plan's multi-year focus. In ideal settings, multi-year strategic approaches to school or organisations' management are generally preferable to more ad hoc or shorter-term approaches. I take the view that embedding teacher professional development firmly within a longer-term plan seems far more likely to gain teacher 'buy-in' and to provide a more systematic approach that lends itself to being formatively as well as summatively evaluated in terms of the outcomes it intends, and those it actually delivers. These arguments are supported by the evidence reported in Chapters 7 and 8.

If school site plans emerge from genuine consensus in which teachers, school leaders and others have all played an active and substantive role, then they appear far more likely to add value to the school, and to teaching and learning outcomes. Through such consensus models, it seems more likely that professional development needs will be recognised and addressed.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the professional development literature and the critical role of teachers in the context of educational reform, especially when they are expected to introduce new teaching and learning strategies and take on changed roles with increased accountability, although sometimes narrowly defined. In Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, teachers became more responsible for developing and implementing a curriculum derived from a standards-driven approach, and at the same time they assumed responsibility for new tasks.

Another key theme in the chapter was that good professional development is situated and the models selected depend on the outcomes sought by those planning professional development programmes. I also stressed the need for research on professional development, especially

research which focuses on the specific needs of teachers and school principals in different settings. At the end, I discussed the school site plan approach because it is the only mechanism currently used in Qatar's Independent Schools.

CHAPTER 5

Second Language Teacher Education and Teachers' Roles

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines a number of different aspects of teaching as a profession within the context of Qatar and its Independent Schools. It opens with a section on the relationship between gender and teaching since my study involved 233 women ESL teachers. The next section deals with aspects of content-based introduction in second language teacher education needs within the context of policy shifts in this direction. Additionally, the chapter reviews the literature dealing with second language teacher education and how insights from this literature can this be applied to Qatar's Independent Schools. I reviewed the researched literature in order to address questions such as: what sorts of needs arise for the women ESL teachers involved in this study, and how might these be met? What are the implications of introducing English medium teaching and learning in Qatar's standards-based curriculum? And how is content-based instruction (CBI) applied in Qatar's Independent Schools? What are the implications for the professional development of teachers?

If we are to create and implement successful professional development for teachers, whether it is for specialised English as a second language teachers or generalist primary or secondary science teachers, then it seems logical that we should understand the role of the teacher-professional, either within the subject specialism, or the other domains in which they work. I plan to explore some dimensions of this broad topic later in the chapter, with particular reference to the needs and development of the women ESL teachers involved in this study.

Moreover, it is important to review the different possible roles of teachers and I did so having regard to Kumravadivelu (2003), who argues that teachers may have varying and different roles including those of passive technicians, reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals. While there are other approaches to teacher roles, I found Kumravadivelu's conceptual framework valuable as it allowed me to explore the sorts of characteristics and behaviours evinced by the women ESL teachers involved in this study, and to do so in a systematic and proven manner. This is important as I wished to examine how these characteristics and behaviours remained in stasis or evolved within the wider context of the demands made by *Education for a New Era*.

There is a great deal of literature which tells us that changing professional behaviour may be broadly analogous to change in policy: it tends to occur by evolutionary increments rather than by revolutionary upheaval. This suggests that changing ingrained habits and practices requires effort and application that is sustained rather than short-term, with each successive step building upon the previous one. Looking at how teachers move through, or remain in, different roles such as those identified by Kumravadivelu, may provide an interesting picture of what is going on and how, and of what implications this may have for ESL teaching in the Qatar context.

5.2 Gender and Teaching: Qatar in Context

In this section I review the sorts of relationships which may arise between gender and teaching. This is important as teaching in Qatar's public education system, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, is characterised by (a) very large numbers of women teachers (76 per cent) compared with men (24 per cent), and (b) by very clear segregation of the entire workforce along gender lines i.e. women

teachers work in schools with female learners and men teachers in schools with male learners, there being no publicly-funded co-educational schools in Qatar.

Earlier in this study (cf. Chapter 1), I outlined my reasons for focussing on women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, and showed that despite the marked differences in culture, religion and other factors, teaching in Qatar is as feminised a profession as it is world-wide. We know from extensive studies, and from examining data over many years, that many developed and less well developed nations show clear evidence of gender imbalance in the education workforce, and in almost all cases, women outnumber men, often by very substantial margins: i.e. gender differences within education are not new, and nor are they confined to particular locations (UNDP, 2003).

According to most studies and analyses, what has occurred over recent years is a decline in the numbers of men entering teaching, while the number of women teachers demonstrates a slight, but steady increase (Skelton and Francis, 2005). Thus, the picture which emerges suggests that teaching more apparently at primary level, but still evident in secondary schools, is a largely feminised profession. For instance, Drudy et al. (2005) state that female predominance in school teaching is to be found in most countries throughout the world, with women occupying two-thirds or more of the teaching positions.

A recent study by Clarke (2008) on discourse of gender in education in the United Arab Emirates, found that a number of student teachers commented that teaching was one of the few careers acceptable to their families, while a few expressed concerns over whether their future husbands would 'permit' them to pursue a career of any sort. Such attitudes are also cited by Lefrere (2007) as a possible source of the relatively higher unemployment rates among women school

leavers and graduates across the Gulf region. More widely, according to Skelton and Francis (2005), primary teaching has been seen as an 'ideal job for women', and indeed women have been positioned as 'naturally able' to perform this job because of their supposedly inherent nurturing qualities.

Machin and Vignoles (2005) illustrate another important aspect of teacher supply, pointing out that teaching is a career relatively popular with women graduates, a critical aspect of the distinction between men's and women's occupational choices being that often women are simultaneously making decisions about starting a family, and hence deciding whether to participate in the labour market. This is particularly true in teaching since it is argued that a teaching career has complementarities with family formation, especially in the ease with which one can return to teaching after career interruption. Dolton and Makepeace (1993) find that choice of teaching as a career is intimately related to the decision to participate in the labour market for women more generally. This is true in the sense that unobserved factors which make a woman more likely to select a career outside teaching, make her less likely to participate in the labour market and vice versa. This generates a positive correlation in the teaching occupational choice decision and the decision to work.

Porter et al. (1993:54) explain the significance of gender to policy analysis as follows:

Given the continued strong gendered nature of the teaching profession ... one must really wonder why this powerful feature continues to be neglected in the consideration of educational policy ... Understanding the gender dimension of mainstream professional issues could provide the key needed for either more effective educational change, an appreciation of why teachers sometimes so strongly resist change when it is imposed on them, or even abandonment of ill-conceived educational reforms.

Given this attention by Porter et al. (1993) to the wider issue of teaching as a feminised profession, questions obviously arise about how this issue remained singularly un-addressed in the context of developing and implementing Qatar's *Education for a New Era*, given the extent to which women ESL teachers in particular are critical to implementing the English-medium, standards-based curriculum.

What strikes me as rather surprising is that in the genesis of *Education for a New Era*, which according to the RAND Corporation drew upon a detailed analysis of Qatar, the nation's obvious dependence on expatriates appears to have simply been overlooked. This is important as there are very large numbers of expatriates among the 233 ESL teachers involved in this study comprising teachers from 25 different nationalities including Qatari, with all but the latter generally only able to live and work in Qatar as long as they had employment, and with a number also quite mobile due to world-wide shortages of qualified teachers (cf. Chapter 7). Non-Qatari women ESL teachers in this study comprise two groups: the wives and/or daughters of male expatriates who are able to remain in Qatar only for as long as their fathers and/or husbands remain in employment locally, and single working professionals who are sponsored and employed by an Independent School and for whom remaining employed is a condition of continued residence in Qatar.

Besides this, there is a very strong likelihood of teacher turnover due to factors such as: the propensity of Qatari women to bear children earlier than their peers in more westernised settings, and to have larger numbers of children, which may mean either longer or more frequent breaks from the workforce; the employment of married women ESL teachers with working spouses who are usually on fixed-term local contracts and who may well leave Qatar for other opportunities, particularly where the men are in professions and occupations in 'demand'; and basing

employment contracts for all teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools on a one-year, fixed term basis with concomitant concerns about job security and the willingness of teachers to seek longer-term roles elsewhere.

What we can conclude then is that, despite the many substantial social, cultural and religious differences obtaining in Qatar as compared with western settings in particular, the gender distribution of teachers reflects patterns which are broadly similar to those found elsewhere i.e. the teaching workforce is heavily feminised, 76 per cent of ESL teachers working in Qatar's Independent Schools were women, with only 24 per cent men (cf. Chapter 2). So, while there may be a degree of certainty about the reasons why Qatari women enter teaching, which largely stem from it being a culturally and socially acceptable occupation for Arabian Gulf women, the additional complexities involved and the presence of non-Qataris requires a deeper analysis of the reasons why these women entered and remain in teaching, as opposed to pursuing other careers. The patterns are in fact, quite different from those obtaining in western settings.

Since ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools are required to teach English language as well as teaching other subjects such as mathematics and science in English, this puts extra demands on them. Given the emphasis in *Education for a New Era* on teaching and learning in English across the new core curriculum, ESL teachers, of whom the overwhelming majority are women, appear to be at the very heart of the intentions for *Education for a New Era*.

This suggests that because ESL teachers are vital to the success of Qatar's educational reform, making them more than usually prominent. Further teaching and learning outcomes that that rely on English for method and content also lend weight to the need for the ESL teachers in this study to understand and make sense of what *Education for a New Era* means and intends i.e. to

contextualise its demands on teaching and learning within their own classrooms (Sandholtz, 2002). Thus I argue that women ESL teachers in this study are far from the passive on-lookers apparently envisaged in a systems-based reform model, but rather they are clearly critical to achieving both immediate and longer-term success.

5.3 Content Based Instruction (CBI)

Content-based instruction is “an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organised around the content or information that learners will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:204). Content-based instruction is thus, the integration of selected content with language teaching aims.

Stoller (2008:59) defines content-based instruction as “an umbrella term referring to instructional approaches that make a dual, though not necessarily equal, commitment to language and content-learning objectives”. This means that content-based instruction involves integrating the learning of language with the learning of content simultaneously. Here, content typically means academic subject matter such as mathematics, science, or social studies. In content-based instruction, the language is utilised as the medium for teaching subject content (Mohan, 1986).

Content-based instruction is therefore, an approach to second language teaching and learning which advocates that any curricula should be organised by content themes or topics, not by grammar points or language functions. In response to traditional grammar teaching, which may rely on de-contextualised drill exercises to teach language, content-based instruction further holds that language should not be taught in a manner that is isolated from content, but that it should instead be taught within content-rich, authentic contexts.

According to Davison and Williams (2001), content-based instruction has emerged as a major force in English as a second language pedagogy, with a rationale founded on the notion that integrating language and content has pedagogic value, as the use of meaningful language will motivate learners and enable content learning along with language learning.

Moreover, as Stryker and Leaver (1997) argue, content-based instruction requires better qualified language teachers, and teachers who are not only well qualified academically but more widely in terms of their capacities as teacher-professionals. Language teachers must, therefore, be knowledgeable in content areas and be able to elicit knowledge from learners. In addition, language teachers have a responsibility to keep context and comprehensibility foremost, to select and adapt authentic materials for use in class, to provide scaffolding for learners' linguistic content learning, and to create learner-centred classrooms.

According to Brinton et al. (1989:5) this approach views “the target language largely as the vehicle through which subject matter content is learned rather than as the immediate object of study”. The inherent challenge presented by content-based instruction was first explicitly stated by Mohan (1986). According to him there is a need for an integrative approach, which relates language learning and content learning that considers language as a medium of learning and acknowledges the role of context in communication (Mohan et al., 2001).

Hence, content-based instruction can be seen as being appropriate for second language learning where the subject matter of language teaching is not grammar or functions, but content or subject matter from outside the domain of language. The language being taught could be used to present subject matter, where learners learn the language as a by-product of learning about real world content.

I found during this study, and had this finding reinforced by teacher observations, that Qatar lacks a well-founded approach to ESL teaching. That is to say: there is no model or conceptual framework within which ESL teaching and learning take place, and only a merely incidental link between English medium teaching and learning and improved educational outcomes. Moreover, there is a similar absence of a model or conceptual framework for teaching mathematics and science content via English. In short, the circumstances described by Leung (2005), in which the emergence of content-based instruction as a paradigm in language education and its implementation across educational contexts have radically changed the role of language teachers, and the language curriculum in primary and secondary school settings and in post-secondary contexts, is noticeably absent.

It is now widely accepted that it takes five to seven years for ESL learners to gain full proficiency in English. While it is understood that conversational English can be learned fairly quickly, this differs quite significantly from the demands made when learning about English and learning content in English, and it actually takes far longer to learn the formal aspects of a language, and to address the cognitive needs embodied in learning mathematics and science content. If a single approach for teaching and learning is used, an integrated approach of the kind advocated by content-based instruction appears to be most supportive of ESL learner achievement in English, mathematics and science for example.

Clearly however, teachers cannot wait for learners who are working in English as a second language to develop the required level of competency in English language before tackling the demands of the curriculum, but must enable learners to participate in curriculum content learning while they are simultaneously learning English: this is a core challenge for the women ESL teachers in this study and one needing careful resolution if a reform process predicated on

teaching and learning in English is to be successful. This further requires that academic content is linked to language objectives and that these are compatible with academic content, and this in turn demands a well-constructed approach to teaching and learning in English across the core curriculum, rather than depending on teachers arriving at ad hoc solutions.

Stoller (2008:65) argues that “the integration of content and language-learning objectives represents challenges for policy makers, programme planners, curriculum designers, teachers, material writers, teacher educators, teacher supervisors, test writers and learners” and that because of this it is not possible to reach at least a theoretical assumption that content and language create a symbiotic relationship. To this assertion, Stoller (2008:65) adds two more challenges: “(a) the selection and sequencing of language items dictated by content sources rather than pre-determined language syllabuses; and (b) the alignment of content with language structures and functions that emerge from the subject matter”. Another of the challenges facing teaching and learning in Qatar’s Independent Schools and content-based instruction is the design of appropriate tasks. Creese (in press) states that content-based instruction needs to balance a focus on form with a focus on meaning in integrating content and language. Thus, designers also need to create suitable content materials with a language focus.

Pica (2008:80) argues that, as the responsibilities given to professional educators world-wide have expanded and evolved, ESL teachers are called on to broaden the scope of their work and to be teachers of the language as well teachers of the content. They find themselves responsible for meeting the subject content needs of their learners and their linguistic and communicative needs. We will see how this has happened to the women ESL teachers involved in this study in Chapter 8. They have had to broaden the scope of their professional activities in quite significant ways;

and they are now responsible for both: subject content including mathematics and science, and teaching English language to non-native speakers.

Because Qatar's women ESL teachers are a cornerstone of *Education for a New Era*; they are required to straddle and manage substantial and often contrasting perspectives: teaching in ESL contexts, teaching English language as a subject, and teaching the content of mathematics and science in English as well. Because the ESL teachers in this study occupy multi-faceted roles as teachers of and about English, and as teachers of mathematics and science content via English medium teaching and learning, their professional development needs seem likely to be more complex, added to which is the diversity of academic and other backgrounds found in this study. All of these demands stress the need for effective professional development offered by or via the Supreme Education Council, in order that teachers may become and remain effective not only in teaching and learning, but as 'instruments' of change and reform.

In the following section, I review some of the literature dealing with second language teacher education together with its main elements: training and development.

5.4 Content and Pedagogy in Second Language Teacher Education

What is significant about Qatar's Independent Schools is that teaching and learning in English has literally been made 'mainstream' i.e. it is the sole medium for teaching and learning in three of the four subjects which comprise the core curriculum – English, mathematics and science. In broad terms, this might be thought of as immersion by default. As part of my research I looked very closely at the range of materials provided by the RAND Corporation, and those published by the Supreme Education Council. In none of these could I find any substantive reference to a rationale for making English the main medium of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

What I did observe, however, were assertions that teaching and learning in English would improve educational outcomes as though one were a necessary corollary for the other. And as I noted earlier, Islamic studies was simply omitted from the curriculum until the Ministry of Education syllabus was adopted two years after *Education for a New Era* began.

The move to teaching and learning in English for Qatar's Independent Schools was certainly radical, as was the effective down-grading of Qatar's national language to subordinate status. One net effect of this decision is that as many learners in Qatar's Independent Schools do not have fluent Arabic speaking teachers, they thus lack bilingual teaching and learning opportunities, something that might be considered a disadvantage, particularly for those at the very beginning of an education in English, and for those who may be struggling with the content demands of mathematics and science, for example.

Clearly, a feature that distinguishes Qatar from many settings in which ESL teaching and learning occurs more widely, is that it obtains for the entire learner population in Qatar's Independent Schools, not just a sub-set or minority of learners such as might typically be found in settings such as Australia, Britain, Canada or New Zealand. That is to say, the entire school population in Qatar, almost all of whom are native Arabic speakers, undertake teaching and learning entirely English save for Arabic lessons and the Islamic studies curriculum. In some senses then, this means that Qatar is more akin to other places which rely on teaching in English for the large majority of learners who may not have English as their first language e.g. Hong Kong and Malaysia, or in the growing number of English-medium and/or 'foreign curriculum' schools in countries such as Korea.

What this means is that many of the strategies employed where there are fewer ESL learners e.g. withdrawal, immersion or additional teaching and learning, are not readily applicable to Qatar's Independent Schools which means that more sustainable and effective approaches are needed which enable ESL teachers to carry out their work effectively.

As I noted earlier, due to various factors, ESL teachers in Qatar will almost certainly have different needs at different times during their career, more so during a climate of change, and the needs of the Independent Schools in which they work will also change over time. This may mean major and continued pressures on teachers to re-skill and up-date their knowledge in the curriculum, second language acquisition research, composition theory and practice, technology, or assessment.

Moreover, it might be expected that for *Education for a New Era*, a teacher's classroom might be the best source of further professional development, but this will very much depend on the support mechanisms which are put in place by the school, and by the Supreme Education Council. Simply assuming that teachers will get better at what they do by allowing them to continue with prevailing approaches and pedagogies is literally fraught with dangers. Further, ignoring the research evidence that has emerged about effective teaching and learning strategies such as content-based instruction does not seem likely to advance and improve quality teaching and learning outcomes in Qatar's Independent Schools.

I am now turning to teacher education which generally has two main components, these being content and pedagogy, because this is the pre-cursor for direct and responsible classroom experiences, and because in Qatar, ESL teachers have undergone vastly different pre-service programmes, and indeed some have not benefited from them at all. Broadly speaking, pedagogy

encompasses a set of teaching and learning strategies indicated by such things as the theories underlying syllabus design adopted or adapted by the teacher and the learner in order to jointly achieve stated and unstated goals involved in language learning in the classroom. In terms of content, Kumaravadivelu (2003:18) states that in the context of second language education, content is generally seen to form a set of insights and concepts derived from academic disciplines such as general education, linguistic science, second language acquisition, cognitive psychology, and information science. Taken together, these provide the theoretical bases essential for the study of language, language learning, language teaching, and language teacher education.

Many teachers, of whom I am one, when confronted by the “complexity of language, learning and language learners every day of their working lives”, will no doubt share the conviction that “no single perspective on language, no single explanation for learning, and no unitary view of contributions of language learners will account for what they must grapple with on a daily basis” (Larsen-Freeman, 1991:269). As I noted earlier, this is just this sort of complexity with which the women ESL teachers in this study constantly grapple, and it is no less an issue for the type and nature of professional development they both expect and require as a consequence.

Research tells us that there is considerable variation in what teachers do in their classrooms and in the degree to which they are eclectic or follow a particular model. Studies by Swaffar et al. (1982), Nunan (1989), Legutke and Thomas (1991), and Kumaravadivelu (1993), show that teachers, who are trained in a particular method, do not necessarily conform to its theoretical principles and classroom procedures. In such studies, teachers who claim to follow the same method often use different classroom procedures that are not consistent with the method they say they had adopted. In addition, teachers who claim to follow different methods, often use the same classroom procedures, with the same results over time. Teachers develop and follow a

carefully delineated task-hierarchy, a weighted sequence of activities not necessarily associated with any established method. In Chapter 8, I explore in more detail the views of ESL teachers in this study who suggested that their approaches were eclectic, and that they did not subscribe to, nor practise, a particular approach.

5.5 Training, Development and the Challenge of Supporting a Heterogeneous Body of Teachers

By way of an initial general observation, Richards and Nunan (1990: xi) argue that “the field of teacher education is a relatively un-explored one in both second and foreign language teaching. The literature on teacher education in language teaching is slight compared with the literature on issues such as methods and techniques for classroom teaching”. In Qatar’s Independent Schools as is the case elsewhere, teachers who may be required to teach language through academic subjects can be at a disadvantage in terms of their actual level of preparation in those subjects.

Freeman (2001) states that second language teacher education describes the field of professional activity through which individuals learn to teach a second language. This professional activity is generally referred to as *teacher training*, while the professional activities that are undertaken by experienced teachers, mainly on individual basis, and which may be voluntary, are referred to as *teacher development*. In this study, teacher education refers to the sum of experiences and activities through which individuals learn to be second language teachers. Those learning to teach, whether they are new to the profession, or more experienced, whether in pre or in-service contexts, are referred to as teacher-learners (Kennedy, 1998: xi).

Freeman (2001:73) notes that teacher education is predicated on the idea that knowledge about teaching and learning can be transmitted through the process of organised professional education to develop the individual skills repertoire of teachers. This knowledge consists of subject matter and pedagogy. This means that pre-service teacher education programmes may provide teacher-learners with certain knowledge including general theories about language learning, descriptive grammar approaches to particular languages, and pedagogic methods and models.

Table 5.1 shows a form of transition between teacher training i.e. pre-service education, and teacher development (i.e. in-service programmes). It also shows that there are certain features which appear to be common in both, suggesting that the two are not as mutually exclusive as they might first appear.

This is important because as we will see in Chapter 7, most of the women ESL teachers in this study are generally untrained and responsible for teaching and learning in areas where they are essentially unqualified and as I have noted already, they come from a wide range of national, language and other backgrounds. In examining their needs, and in trying to ensure they make as close to an optimum contribution to *Education for a New Era* as possible, it strikes me that the Supreme Education Council's school support organisations need to assess teacher needs based on where they are in their overall development, ensuring that they address shortcomings in teachers' experience and expertise i.e. plan and deliver professional development according to identified teacher needs, rather than making assumptions about other factors.

Table 5.1 Teacher Training and Teacher Development by Freeman (2001:77)

	<div> <div>‘what’</div> <div>‘how’</div> </div>		‘to what effect’ impact/outcome
	Content	process	
Teacher Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defined externally Usually determined beforehand Providing access to knowledge base 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transmitting knowledge and skills Organising access to new content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Externally assessed Bounded Often drawing on publicly-demonstrated evidence
In Common	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External process of presentation/articulation triggers Internal process or incorporation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use leads to usefulness
Teacher Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually generated through experience Determined by/in relation to participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sense making, using articulated experience to construct new understandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-assessed Open-ended Often using self-reported evidence

Clearly in an ideal world, teachers would undergo broadly comparable types of pre-service education and training meaning that approaches to later professional development might be more consistent and uniformly applied. However, this ideal is far from current reality, where pre-service programmes vary considerably within nations, and more so between nations. What this means though is that teachers, including the ESL teachers in this study, will tend to gain optimum benefit from professional development programmes that build on the knowledge, skills and understandings they gained in pre-service programmes.

While professional development need by no means be a linear activity, i.e. it does not need to follow directly from pre-service experience, it does strike me that more benefits will flow if those delivering professional development are aware of the sorts of knowledge, skills and understandings teachers have. Within this context what is as important is that organisations offering professional development avoid making assumptions about the levels of knowledge,

skills and understandings teachers have and/or assumptions about the nature and extent of pre-service programmes which may be vastly different. In short, my argument is that professional development will be more successful if it is tailored to teachers' needs, avoids assumptions about their pre-service education and training, and does not presume that the models obtaining in one country apply to another.

This issue takes on particular import when, as shall be shown in Chapters 7 and 8, the women ESL teachers in this study comprise individuals from 25 different nationalities, come from a wide range of academic disciplines which seldom include teaching English as a second language or teaching English more generally, and who are teaching English because they are native speakers or have some facility in the language.

I am arguing that while it may be sometimes useful to differentiate 'training' from 'development', maintaining this separation is not always helpful, as I will show for women ESL teachers involved in this study. Without dwelling overly on the circumstances of ESL teachers, it is fair to say that they come from a diverse range of educational and professional backgrounds, some may have undertaken pre-service programmes for English as second language teaching, for others their pre-service experience is entirely different, some were engaged for their apparent capacity to use English even though their academic qualifications are not related, and some are not native English speakers. The complexity of these issues becomes far more evident in Chapter 7.

What this means is that professional development for this heterogeneous group of women ESL teachers must inevitably combine aspects of both '*training*' and '*development*': they may need programmes addressing their present responsibilities as ESL teachers and thus enable them to develop their knowledge and pedagogy, particularly where they may lack exposure and training

in either teaching ESL or teaching per se; and they may need programmes addressing their wider responsibilities as teachers and agents of change within very different schools which seek to enable them to grow as teacher–practitioners in terms of teaching and of themselves as teachers.

Thus, at the same time, the women ESL teachers in this study may need programmes that cater for and address quite different requirements. Moreover, given the heterogeneity of backgrounds and experience among ESL teachers in this study, it seems to me that individual or ‘one-off’ approaches to professional development are likely to be less successful, and indeed as I noted earlier, professional development gains are larger when part of a wider, more fully articulated programme designed to meet teachers’ needs. What this suggests is that unless there is continued professional development, differences in approach and outcome will not only remain, but may actually be exacerbated. This will be evident from the discussion of the data in Chapter 8.

Since ESL teachers in Qatar’s Independent Schools are required to teach English language as well as teaching the content of other subjects such as mathematics and science via English, this places extra demands on them. Hence, if Qatar’s teachers are to become professionalised practitioners, who actively engage in reflective review and analysis of their own practices and behaviours, then they will need assistance and guidance in making what is a substantial transition from their own experience of pedagogy as learners. My experience as an educator in Qatar, including in Ministry of Education schools and institutions, and my wider knowledge of circumstances in other Arabic speaking countries, suggests that many current ESL teachers will have been working in schools with quite limited approaches to teaching and learning pedagogy. Moreover, as I have found, and has been reported in UNDP papers on education in the Middle East and North Africa region (UNDP, 2003), many ESL teachers, particularly those from Arabic speaking backgrounds will have encountered and worked in schools where teaching and learning

is firmly rooted in rote learning and recitation, where there is largely top-down management, and where promotion and esteem is very largely based on seniority rather than competence.

5.6 Qatar's ESL Teachers: Contrasting Roles

It is probably unsurprising that the role of the teacher has become a recurrent topic of discussion within general teacher education as well as in language education per se. It is also hardly surprising that this discussion introduces the notion that education may involve several players interacting with each other and in different ways over time e.g. teachers, school leaders, administrators, policy-makers, curriculum planners, teacher educators, textbook authors and others. Overall, ESL teachers in this study are supposed to change their approach from being teacher-centred to classroom learner-centred facilitators responsible for enhancing the skills, knowledge and understandings that learners bring to the classroom.

Another issue, and one which remains un-resolved in Qatar, is that ESL teachers may have been trained to teach what we might term 'linguistic knowledge' rather than subject specific or related content – though in Qatar it is more largely the case that content teachers who happen to speak English are working as ESL teachers. What this can mean is the ESL teachers “may be insufficiently grounded to teach subject matter” (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:220) or that subject teachers are insufficiently grounded to teach content through English as a second language. This is likely to indicate that teaching and learning outcomes fall below desired levels i.e. they are sub-optimal, and in Qatar's case do not appear to sustain the ambitions of *Education for a New Era*.

The literature also indicates that teachers may have varying, sometimes quite different roles. Kumaravadivelu (2003) illustrates three potential teacher roles: passive technicians, reflective practitioners, and transformative intellectuals. One thing that became evident during the progress

of this study, particularly during my interviews with teachers, is that the women ESL teachers in question, may transit a number of roles and functions within a short time span such as a day's teaching and learning activities.

5.6.1 Teachers as Passive Technicians

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), teachers and their teaching methods are considered very important because the effectiveness of either cannot be proven beyond doubt in any empirical sense. In other words, relationships between teaching and teaching methods and learning outcomes are sometimes opaque, but we do know that more effective teachers can certainly make a difference to learning outcomes.

Within this larger context, in my experience some pre-service and in-service programmes tend to dichotomise teacher education/development i.e. they may focus on either the 'education' part or the 'teacher/teaching' part. Again in my experience any failure to adequately address both aspects generally leads to less favourable results. Further, my direct experience as a teacher-practitioner in Qatar's schools and my wider knowledge of educational practice in the Gulf has made me keenly aware that many teachers, including those trained or educated in the Arab world, come to teaching from a didactic, technicist perspective where learners are seen as merely there to absorb transmitted knowledge, retain and then recite it during forms of assessment such as tests and quizzes.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), in the role of 'passive technician', teachers tend towards the mechanical or automatic rather than reflexive or autonomous, and are largely concerned with ensuring that learners cover the curriculum content and associated tasks. Here the teacher functions essentially as a conduit, simply channelling the flow of information from one end of the

educational spectrum (the teacher as expert) to the other (the learner) without significant input or alteration to curriculum content or learning outcomes.

As ‘passive technicians’ teachers may be constrained by operating from rather didactic, fixed, pedagogic assumptions and may seldom seriously question their validity or relevance to specific learning and teaching contexts. In other words, the ‘passive technician’ distributes accepted knowledge, skills and understandings without being actively involved in helping learners to shape their own responses, or consider any wider implications that may arise. This also means that when faced with context-specific learning and teaching challenges, the ‘passive technician’ will generally turn to an established professional knowledge base and search for a formula which allows them to address and redress the problems involved.

By extension, according to Kincheloe (1993:240) Kumaravadivelu’s ‘passive technician’ utilises a technicist approach that may be thought of as “so passive, so un-challenging, and so boring that teachers often lose their sense of wonder and excitement about learning to teach”. This passive technicist approach to teaching and learning raises numerous challenges for Qatar’s Independent Schools which are using curricula that are designed to actively engage learners in their learning, and their teachers in teaching, and thus transform those teachers who may be passive technicians into enabled facilitators, and ensure teachers are as committed to their own learning as they are to that of the pupils in their classrooms.

Having drawn most teachers from other Qatar schools, where passive technicist approaches are very common, Independent Schools face a major challenge. There are also major challenges for teachers moving into this new environment and for those involved in their professional development. Professional development must, therefore, address established patterns and habits

developed by teachers over time and in institutional settings with top-down approaches to leadership, management and teaching and learning. This is by no means an easy task, and accomplishing the changes needed in professional practice is dependent upon planning for professional development in the longer-term using clearly developed strategies rather than ad hoc or fragmented approaches.

5.6.2 Teachers as Reflective Practitioners

The notions of reflection-in-action and the reflective practitioner were first posited by Donald Schön in *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983). Schön described how reflection-in-action could be used by professionals as a tool to improve their practice. Schön later noted that it is possible to describe the tacit knowledge implicit in our actions through a process of observation and reflection (Schön, 1987). Schön's concept of reflection-in-action has attracted a great deal of attention across several disciplines, as the idea of the reflective practitioner has been adapted to suit the circumstances of different professions.

By extension, Schön's *Reflective Practitioner* embodies and displays interactive processes that seek to take into account relationships between the teacher–self and others, and between the teacher–self and context. That is to say, teachers are active contributors to understanding relationships between themselves and others including other teachers and learners, and between themselves and what is being taught and learned. Thus, reflective practitioners expand their professional and personal horizons to take into account underlying assumptions and priorities that may shape interactions within a given time, place and situation.

What this means of course, is that a view of teachers as reflective practitioners necessarily excludes the notion that they are merely passive transmitters of knowledge. However, there is a

danger that by focusing on the role of teacher and the teacher alone, the reflective movement can tend to treat reflection as a largely introspective process involving teachers and their reflective capacity, and not as an interactive process involving teachers, learners, colleagues and administrators.

While my study does not allow me to reach definitive conclusions about whether some, many, or all of the ESL teachers involved, represent teachers as reflective practitioners, it seems to me, that during my interviews with ESL teachers and in the comments that I report later, there are elements of reflective practice emerging among novice and more experienced teachers. Thus, another dilemma for effective professional development is addressing the needs of teachers who may differ considerably in terms of their experience as teachers or in other roles they may have had, and/or in terms of where they are as teacher–professionals including being either passive technicians or reflective practitioners.

5.6.3 Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), teachers may also be transformative intellectuals, i.e. change agents. This idea of teachers as transformative intellectuals is derived mainly from the works of critical pedagogues such as Giroux (1988), McLaren (1995), Simon (1987), and applied linguists such as Benesch (2001), and Pennycook (2001). These authors view teachers as “professionals who are able and willing to reflect upon the ideological principles that inform their practice, who connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues, and work together to share ideas, exercise power over the conditions of their labour and embody in their teaching a vision of a better and more human life” (Giroux and McLaren, 1989: xxiii).

Giroux (1988: xxxiii) points to “the role that teachers and administrators might play as transformative intellectuals who develop counter-hegemonic pedagogies that not only empower students by giving them the knowledge and social skills they will need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents, but also educate them for transformative action”. Thus, the concept of teachers as transformative intellectuals stretches their role beyond the borders of the classroom. They are engaged in a dual task: they strive not only for educational advancement but also for personal transformation. In Chapter 8, I show that some women ESL teachers are beginning to emerge as transformative intellectuals in Qatar.

Ideally, teachers should organise themselves into learning communities dedicated to creating and implementing forms of knowledge, skills and understandings that are directly relevant to their needs as professional practitioners (Clarke, 2008) and (Creese 2005). These knowledge, skills and understandings need to be relevant to both general and specific contexts, and to the sorts and range of curricula, syllabuses and teaching and learning materials which enable them to address their own and their learners’ needs, wants and situations. If as Kumaravadivelu (2003) has argued, teachers are to be transformative intellectuals, or at least reflective practitioners rather than passive technicians, it is imperative for them to maximise socio-political awareness between themselves and among their learners using consciousness-raising and problem-posing activities.

5.6.4 ESL Teachers’ Roles in Qatar’s Independent Schools

As I argued in the literature review chapter, those who have the most direct and prolonged bearing on shaping and re-shaping desired teaching and learning outcomes, are classroom teachers. I also want to posit that in *Education for a New Era*, ESL teachers have roles of considerable import, not just as supporting actors, but as leading players.

As I noted in Chapter 2, women ESL teachers who work in Qatar's Independent Schools may have contrasting roles: at primary level they teach English as a subject as well as mathematics and science content via English-medium classes. At secondary level they are more sharply focused on teaching English as a second language, with some also teaching mathematics and science content via English-medium classes. These teachers are a diverse and heterogeneous group who bring to the ESL classroom and to the mathematics and science classrooms, substantial differences in skills knowledge and understanding.

As I indicated earlier, during my interviews with ESL teachers and in the comments reported later, there are signs that their roles as passive technicians, reflective practitioners, and/or transformative intellectuals, may vary over time and circumstance with elements of each appearing to arise at different times and in different settings. That said whether ESL teachers see themselves in any or all of these roles is something that needs far more detailed exploration. Again in an ideal world, we might expect that teachers, including the ESL teachers in this study will develop as practitioners and the praxis of their teaching will evolve over time rather than remaining static, especially when taking into account pressures such as those stemming from large scale systemic and school reform. Table 5.2 shows features which overlap within each of Kumaravadivelu's three broad categories.

Table 5.2 Teachers' Different Roles (as adapted from Kumaravadivelu, 2003:16)

	<u>Teachers as passive technicians</u>	<u>Teachers as reflective practitioners</u>	<u>Teachers as transformative intellectuals</u>
<u>Primary role of teacher</u>	Conduit	Facilitator	Change agents
<u>Primary source of knowledge</u>	Professional knowledge + empirical research by experts	Professional knowledge + teacher's personal knowledge + guided action research by teachers	Professional knowledge + teacher's personal knowledge + self-exploratory research by teachers
<u>Primary goal of teaching</u>	Maximising content knowledge through prescribed activities	All above + maximising learning potential through problem-solving activities	All above + maximising socio-political awareness through problem-posing activities
<u>Primary orientation of teaching</u>	Discrete approach, anchored in the discipline	Integrated approach, anchored in the classroom	Holistic approach, anchored in the society
<u>Primary players in the teaching process (in rank order)</u>	Experts + teachers	Teachers + experts + learners	Teachers + learners + experts + community activists

We can see from the above table, the levels of knowledge, skills and understandings, and the ways in which these can be applied or utilised differently. For instance, passive technicians may generally tend to accept what other 'experts' might say, and use this in limited ways as mere transmitters to learners with whom they do not actively engage. However, reflective practitioners do not merely accept what others tell them, they re-focus and re-assess information and behaviours in the context of their own understandings, making sense of and applying knowledge to create new learning for them and their learners; and yet, transformative intellectuals see themselves as actively engaged not only in the processes of teaching and learning but in the wider understanding of education in socio-cultural context.

5.7 What Qatar's ESL Teachers May Need in Second Language Contexts

Richards and Farrell (2005:17) argue that a strategic approach to professional development starts with needs analysis. Needs analysis refers to both an institution's needs and the perceived needs of teachers. Needs analysis should include the needs of both the individual and the institution as a whole as I argued in Chapter 4. At the individual level this means that areas for training and development, for different teachers, can be identified and strategies recommended for helping them achieve their goals. Moreover, Diaz-Maggioli (2003:4) observes that "programmes which involve participants in the planning, organisation, management, delivery and evaluation of all actions in which they are expected to participate have more chances of success than those planned using a top-down approach, where administrators make decisions in lieu of teachers". These injunctions are important because learning and teaching needs, wants and situations are unpredictably numerous. Moreover, involving teachers directly in professional development in its entirety is the key to effective programmes in general and to ESL programmes in particular. It helps to create a vested interest among them for the success of their activities in schools.

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995:186) identify teachers' needs as (1) classroom based opportunities to practice, assess, observe, and reflect on the new knowledge and skills they are learning; (2) engagement with a network of peers and experts that allows discussion and knowledge sharing; (3) sustained, intensive experiences that include activities, such as modelling, coaching, analysis, and problem-solving, and (4) a solid foundation in research and methodologies that is derived from and addressed to teachers, their practice, and learners. The needs that are mentioned by Darling-Hammond and Maclaughlin capture the needs of women ESL teachers in this study which are discussed in Chapter 8.

Freeman (2001:79) argues that the more providers of teacher education can account for time, place and prior knowledge in programme designs, the more successful these programmes are likely to be. Moreover, teachers' schedules must allow for adequate time for participation in the entire cycle of the professional development experience. Time emerged as an issue for the women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools which took part in this study. A significant number indicated that they felt they were often over-loaded, and had no direct say in their professional development. This point is further explored in Chapter 8.

Kumaravadivelu (2003:42) argues that the primary task of in-service and pre-service teacher education programmes is to create conditions for present and prospective teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge, skill, authority and autonomy to construct their own personal pedagogic knowledge. This may mean that current approaches to teacher education and professional development are inadequate to prepare teachers to address unpredictable needs, wants and situations; hence, the need for continually renewing professional skills and knowledge. This is a response to that fact that not everything teachers need to know can be provided at pre-service level, nor can it be delivered in short-term professional development. And of course, we must remain cognisant of the fact that the knowledge base of teaching constantly changes and new information emerges about content and pedagogy.

The approach generally adopted by school support organisations in Qatar, which are ostensibly working 'with' teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, is to deliver supply-led approaches to professional development. Put rather simply, supply-led means that programmes and/or courses are offered on the basis of staffing, history, tradition, availability and like matters, with little if any attempt to re-configure provision and deliver what clients or consumers may need or require. Here the notion of supply-led stands in quite stark contrast with the notion of demand-driven

provision, where the latter is generally far better at enabling learners – in this case ESL teachers - to exert more influence on the range and type of professional education that is provided to them.

Within the context of Qatar's new Independent Schools, what emerges during this study are sometimes trenchant criticisms that staff from school support organisations are not really working 'with' teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, but are rather working 'on' them by delivering what is available and not what is needed.

Perhaps surprisingly, what women ESL teachers involved in this study report is that they are largely ignored when it comes to designing and delivering professional development, that this professional development is generally not tailored to their known and emerging needs, and that it comprises short-term, ad hoc and disconnected elements which are not always helpful in addressing curriculum and other needs. I will elaborate on this point in Chapter 8.

5.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter opened with a brief discussion of relationships between gender and education showing how school teaching is essentially a feminised workforce, not only in Qatar but far more widely. I then reviewed the literature on Content Based Instruction and some of the literature dealing with second-language teacher education, focusing in particular on content and pedagogy in second-language teacher education programmes.

After this, I considered the distinction that is made between 'training' and 'development' and assessed its relevance to Qatar. I also looked at the roles of ESL teachers in Qatar in terms of second-language teaching and learning, and teaching mathematics and science in English-medium classrooms. Drawing on the work of Kumaravadivelu (2003), I expanded on the sorts of

roles in which teachers might find themselves, or create for themselves as practitioners, and I argued that women ESL teachers are critical to the longer-term success of *Education for a New Era* as they provide a major foundation for the change and transformation that is supported to occur through second-language teaching and learning, and through the learning and teaching of mathematics and science in English-medium classrooms within the context of Qatar's *Education for a New Era*.

CHAPTER 6

Design, Methodology and Methods of Data Collection

6.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the methodology used in this research. It describes the design and methods that were employed for data collection. The design used quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture data, and followed from two earlier pilot studies which trialled and tested different versions of the instruments I planned to use to gather information from ESL teachers. I discuss the rationale for using both approaches, and I address the limitations associated with the processes of capturing data. I also consider the technical aspects of the following: the research design, a mixed-methods approach, the sampling technique and the pilot study. I also show how I sought to achieve close alignment between the research questions posed earlier and the methods selected to address them.

6.2 Focus of the Study

A research design is generally a plan or structure which provides the researcher with a framework for both capturing and analysing the data collected. According to Edwards and Talbot (1999), Hitchcock and Hughes (1997), and Robson (2003), an effective research design includes methods by which specific research questions (what to look at) are framed, the choice of research strategy (how to collect data), and research tactics (how to analyse data).

In recent years, educational researchers have engaged in a contentious debate over research methods (Robson, 2003). The debate has arisen in part because of re-appraisals within the social sciences of the grounding of scientific knowledge claims, new views of what constitutes a convincing explanation of social phenomena, and new conceptions of the appropriate relationship between researcher and researched (Robson, 2003). In education, as in other disciplines, so-called 'qualitative' methods have been proposed both as alternatives and as complements to 'quantitative' methods (Hitchcock and Hughes (1997). Questions have been raised about the relationship between different approaches to educational research, how research bears upon the practice of education, and publication criteria (Robson, 2003).

Thus, my decision was influenced by the development of research methodology and the perceived legitimacy of both quantitative and qualitative research, which means that researchers in social and human sciences have increasingly adapted mixed method approaches that employ strategies to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2005). According to Robson (2003), the mixed method approach is based on the methodological notion of method triangulation as a means of seeking convergence across qualitative and quantitative methods.

Mixed method approaches, such as those I used in this study, involve using qualitative and quantitative approaches within and across each stage of the research process, with simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data. I used a mixed method approach because I wanted to obtain answers to a broader and more complete range of research questions with qualitative and quantitative methods deployed collectively rather than adopting what has become a more customary adversarial division between qualitative and quantitative methods. I also believed that a mixed method approach would provide me with additional insights and understanding that

might be missed in a mono-method study, and generate stronger evidence for my conclusions through convergence and corroboration of findings.

As noted, I opted to use a mixed-method approach that included a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. Because of this, I had to ensure clear connections and alignment with my research questions and the methodology selected. As such, conceptualisation of my research began with the issue of ‘connectivity’ clearly in mind (Creswell, 2005). For clarity of purpose and ease of discussion, I re-state the research questions in Table 6.1 and indicate which data sections address these:

Table 6.1 Research Questions, Sets and Sections of those Data Sets

#	<u>Research Questions</u>	<u>Data Sets and Sections</u>
1	1. What perceptions do women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools have about the changes manifested in <i>Education for a New Era</i> ?	Interview section D
2	What do women ESL teachers identify as their professional needs in implementing change at classroom level?	Interview section D and Questionnaire section C
3	What do women ESL teachers view as their concerns in implementing change at classroom level?	Interview sections B and D
4	What conditions sustain or undermine professional development activities for women ESL teachers in Independent Schools as reported by women ESL teachers?	Questionnaire sections B and D, Interview section D
5	What perceptions do women ESL teachers have about their roles in implementing change?	Interview sections B, C and D

As Yin (2003) and Andrews (2003) point out, research questions guide research, and therefore, connections between the research questions and the research methodology should be clear.

6.3 Research Paradigm: Interpretive/Constructivist Paradigm

I understand that every study depends on a methodology that comprises basic principles and foundations of concepts, ideas, tools and techniques for a researcher to follow (Grix, 2004). However, as Crossley and Vulliamy (1997) observe, dividing research methods into potentially adversarial positions, can generate what they term ‘a self-created conundrum’, which subsequently produces stifling effects on the entire research enterprise. While I could not accurately presage what my research would find, or what conclusions I might ultimately reach, I felt that the issues with which I was dealing were likely to reflect high levels of complexity. For example, when addressing teachers’ roles, beliefs and needs, I was looking at perceptions which may change over time and in the face of new information. Moreover, my research is mediated via the personal and professional lives of teachers so it was important for me to have the means to address the challenges likely to arise when dealing with the ‘human face’ of teaching and learning.

As a result, a mixed method using quantitative and qualitative approaches appears to be far better suited to the task of capturing broad trends about how educational reform is perceived among women ESL teachers in Qatar’s Independent Schools, while at the same time enabling me to more thoroughly access the voices of the women themselves and uncover some of the diversity of beliefs and experiences represented among them. Given the area of interest already described, I seek and gauge teachers’ perceptions about their professional development including responses from neophyte and more experienced teacher-practitioners. The basic assumption underlying the approach I used is that knowledge is a socially constructed reality, meaning that we need to try and to understand complex experience from participants’ viewpoints in order to grasp the realities

with which they are dealing. In short, I have used interpretive inquiry with the aim of characterising how people experience the world, the ways they interact together, and the settings in which these interactions take place.

In applying quantitative approaches I have also employed empirical-analytic inquiry which sought metric or categorical descriptions of phenomena in ways which were complementary to, rather than competing with, qualitative measures. Taken together, the use of interpretive and empirical-analytic inquiry creates a third paradigm critical inquiry which provides a space for both causal and interpretive explanations of otherwise complex human and/or other behaviour.

Gage (1989) illustrates that such paradigms cover the aggregate of values and assumptions adopted by certain academic communities regarding the nature of research enterprise. They reflect the researcher's position and support recognition of what is important, and what is legitimate, within a particular framework or world-view. Aspects guided by such paradigms include the conceptualisation of research problems, techniques and methods. The boundary between opposing research approaches such as positivist/interpretive can often be blurred, and in many cases it appears that apparently 'opposing' approaches may share common features.

Here, I have used a number of research methods to try to provide a representative picture of the population of women ESL teachers working in Qatar's Independent Schools, the skills needed to implement reform, and teachers' perceptions of the outcomes of effective professional development activities. I also use an interpretive paradigm so that I can gather insights into what the women ESL teachers involved in this study report to be the 'realities' of their roles, beliefs and perceptions. The interpretive paradigm allows exploration of social realities, multiple meanings and deeper understanding of the impact of phenomena such as educational reforms on

the lives of people. In this case, the focus is on the impact of reform on the lives of the women ESL teachers involved in this study and their professional development and career needs, within their ‘lived reality’. It is this insight I want to emphasise through the study, supported by qualitative data on a more personal and human level. I was also interested in teachers’ accounts about their roles and needs for professional development which would help them understand and implement reform.

6.4 Research Methodology: Further Consideration Regarding the Mixed Method Approach

Choices about research methodology and particular methods are influenced by the nature, context, objectives, number and kind of people who carry out the study, and the amount of time and money available for the research (Creswell, 2005; Robson 2003). In this context, my research can be described from the perspective of the third critical enquiry paradigm which allows it to be exploratory and descriptive in nature as well as to gather and deploy quantitative data. As I stated earlier, it was intended to study women ESL teachers’ perceptions about change, professional development needs and their roles in transforming schools in Qatar. The methods I employ serve the interests of my study i.e. I use a questionnaire to collect quantitative data from 233 women ESL teachers, and semi-structured qualitative interviews to collect information from a sub-set of 18 women ESL teachers. By using a mixed method approach, I am striving to employ the best of both worlds.

Phillips (1982:589) notes the following:

“Qualitative and quantitative approaches are complementary, not competitive. Powerful research would combine both approaches. First, one could use large-scale quantitative analysis to demonstrate the existence of a previously unsuspected phenomenon. Then, one

could use small-scale qualitative analysis to investigate the detailed processes producing the phenomenon.”

According to Taylor et al (1997:41):

“Policy research is aiming to unravel the complexities of the policy process, a task for which qualitative approaches in our view are better. This is not to deny a place for quantitative methods within critical policy research, either alone or in combination with qualitative methods.”

Hence, in this study, there are elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches – the latter applying to the data I collected via teacher questionnaires and the former to the data I gathered during semi-structured interviews with ESL teachers. Notably, I did not try to balance or equate qualitative and quantitative approaches so that each had the same notional value, for these reasons: firstly, the sort of investigation and analysis I embarked upon is unique in Qatar, as no similar or detailed study has been undertaken thus far, and as Marshall and Rossman (1995) and Creswell (2005) note, a qualitative approach can be very useful in new areas of research; secondly, this research started without a set of rigid initial assumptions, not intending to test a particular pre-existing or apriori hypothesis, but to rely on what can be inferred from information gathered from the women ESL teachers involved; thirdly, most of the data was obtained via fieldwork with women ESL teachers as the actual circumstances of work or life are considered as ideal for gathering qualitative data; and finally as Taylor et al. argue (1997), in a number of ways, employing qualitative methods can be regarded as a better tool to use when engaged in researching, reviewing or evaluating policy.

What is apparent is that more generally, qualitative methodologies tend to reflect the perspective of research participants in more obvious ways, e.g. through semi-structured interviews with open-

ended questions. Obviously too, qualitative methodologies are concerned with the studied use and capture of a variety of empirical data such as: personal experiences, using tools such as semi-structured interviews, field observations, life histories, human interactions, and visual data, all of which describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Benz and Newman, 1998). Other authors such as Bryman (2001) and Patton (2002), state that qualitative methods provide a humanistic or empathic avenue for researchers to use with individuals when conducting interviews or other investigatory processes in the collection of data. Bryman (2001) concludes that by using qualitative methods, researchers gain an improved understanding of individual behaviour, values, and beliefs in relation to the context or venue of the context in which the research takes place.

As a researcher, I could simply have used an instrument such as a questionnaire as a single, practical and cost-effective method of collecting and quantifying data. But I believe this would have been too limiting and that it was likely to omit and/or fail to capture important and potentially critical information which women ESL teachers might provide during semi-structured interviews. Thus, I am arguing that employing a single method and process such as a questionnaire could not have provided me with the same extent and depth of insights into teachers' general backgrounds, and their views on professional development needs as I actually gathered using a combination of approaches (Bryman, 1995; Edwards and Talbot, 1999). In addition, I sensed that it might be difficult, if not impossible to determine whether teachers were providing truthful responses or simply responding to survey questions in an expeditious manner (Cohen et al., 2001).

It thus became clear to me, that in order to round out my data, and to provide a more holistic view of the selected teacher sample in relation to my research questions, I needed to use an approach

which successfully embedded qualitative aspects so that I could observe and comment upon those areas where I believed that a questionnaire or similar instrument could not. This is not to say that my use of qualitative methods did not exclude quantitative aspects, rather that in gathering and addressing teachers' views via semi-structured interviews, a qualitative approach seemed likely to add greater weight to the research and 'flesh out' the overall findings. My approach gains support from Bryman (1995:64) who argues that when quantitative evidence does not confirm or support qualitative findings, "there is a tendency for researchers to regard their qualitative evidence as more trustworthy than their quantitative data".

To sum up, this study uses a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis, including information deriving from subjects' responses to questionnaire items and from semi-structured interviews with the researcher in person. Having chosen to use these two approaches in combination, it became apparent to me that I also needed a detailed framework within which I would work to collect data. Using ideas from Creswell (2003) and Benz and Newman (1998), my plan included: selection of two samples, a design for the pilot study with both groups, a design for collecting data, a design for dis-aggregating data, a time-frame for collecting data, a design for data analysis, and a design for portraying the data. In the following sections, I provide more procedural and substantive insights into my use of a mixed method approach.

6.5 Sampling and Population

Cohen et al. (2001) state that careful sampling enables validity in research. Researchers should also consider sample size in relation to a teacher's time, access to teachers, teaching schedules, and the feasibility of conducting research within a live setting such as a school. I used purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2001), which being popular in qualitative research can also clearly be

applied to my quantitative approach, largely because I already had a purpose in mind i.e. I was working with a pre-defined group of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools.

What is important here is that I had originally intended to use Qatari teachers as the basis of my study, but found that there were surprisingly few such people among the larger women ESL population, so I decided to focus on a sample comprising ESL teachers in general. I was very successful in my efforts to obtain the co-operation of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, such that of the entire population, only two teachers declined to participate, meaning that I had a sample covering very nearly the entire population; and I have used the term 'sample' because while I have a 99 per cent participation rate from women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, in strict terms I do not have the full population.

In terms of the sub-set of teachers I wished to use for more detailed semi-structured interviews, I adopted a stratified rather than simple random sampling approach, and this involved selecting sub-samples of teachers within the overall population. This was because I wanted to create a number of smaller, but more homogeneous sub-groups (Bryman, 2001; Cohen et al., 2001).

The quality of a research study stands or falls, not only on the suitability of methodology and research techniques, but also on the suitability of the sampling strategy that is adopted (Morrison, 1993). Cohen et al (2001) emphasise that researchers must take sampling decisions early in the general planning of a research study. Experienced researchers often start with the whole population and work downwards to create an appropriate sample, whereas less experienced researchers often work from the bottom up; that is, they first determine the minimum number of respondents needed to conduct the research (Bailey, 1978). Even so, unless they identify a total

population in advance, it is virtually impossible for them to assess how representative the sample that they have drawn actually is.

As noted earlier, in this study, the questionnaire used in the first phase targeted all women ESL teachers working in Cohorts I and II of Qatar's Independent Schools i.e. the entire population of women ESL teachers. Phase 2 involved individual, semi-structured interviews targeting 18 women ESL teachers with a range of experience and seniority, at different Independent Schools e.g. exemplary (boys from year 1 to 4 taught by women staff), primary, preparatory and secondary.

I selected the 18 women ESL teachers for inclusion in the group to participate in semi-structured interviews using a stratified approach, which gave me three teachers from each category of years of experience (cf. Table 6.2). Ideally I would have preferred to focus on Qatari nationals, but this proved impossible in respect of the last two categories. As noted earlier, I used a stratified approach with an otherwise heterogeneous population about which I already held information on the extent of diversity and lack of similarity among teachers.

Table 6.2: The Targeted Sample in the Current Study

<u>Years of experience</u>	<u>ESL teachers in Independent Schools</u>	
	<u>Questionnaire</u>	<u>Interview</u>
0-3	109	3
4-6	53	3
7-9	26	3
10-12	25	3
13-15	12	3
Above 15	8	3
TOTAL	233	18

As indicated in Chapter 1, only women ESL teachers were selected for this study for three reasons: firstly, generally the number of women teachers in Qatar's schools is far higher than the number of male teachers; the proportion of women teachers in Independent Schools is 76% while the proportion of males is 24% (Evaluation Institute, 2007). Secondly, because I am a woman researcher, and I was an ESL teacher in Ministry of Education schools for four years, it was easier for me to conduct research with women teachers, as I was more familiar with their backgrounds i.e. we were more likely to have shared or common experiences which could make interactions flow more smoothly. Finally, since I am a woman Muslim Qatari researcher, there are firm cultural restrictions on the extent to which I can work with men respondents i.e. as a woman Muslim I am not allowed to work alone with men who are not members of my immediate family, and since an interview approach means sitting face-to-face with respondents to build trust, working with men respondents, no matter how desirable, would have created enormous negative and complex issues.

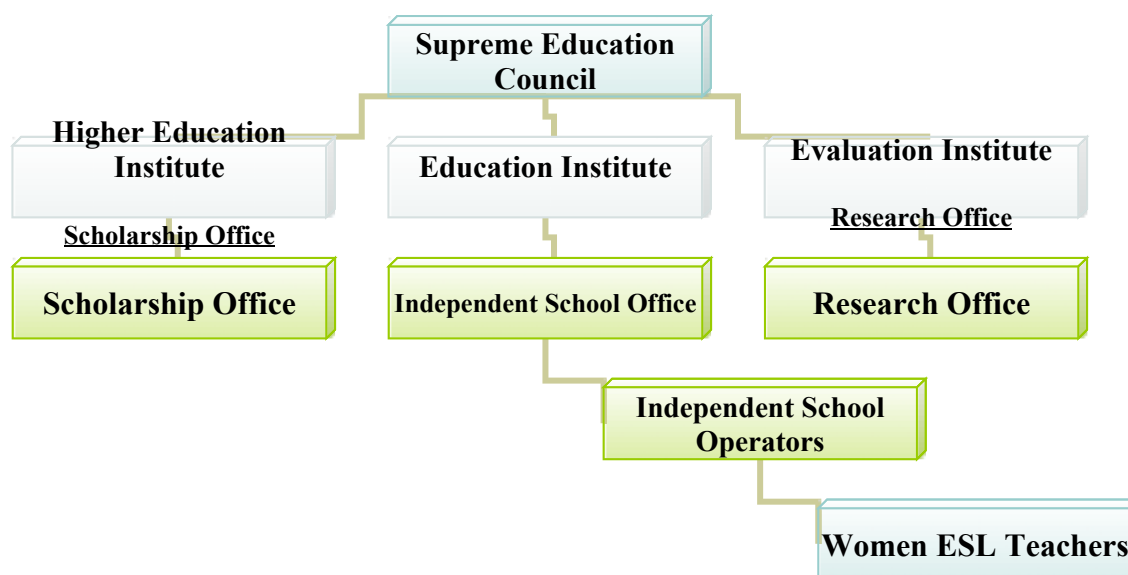
6.6 Gaining Entry to Independent Schools

Formal research approval was sought and granted by the Higher Education Institute, the Independent Schools Office in the Education Institute, and more importantly from the Director of the Research Office. It should be noted that these approvals do not necessarily grant the researcher entry to Independent Schools which must be individually negotiated with school operators. The formal request to schools was in the form of an introductory letter, sent by fax (see **Appendix I**), that provided details of the purpose of the study and type of instruments to be administered. It was attached with a recommendation letter from the Director of the Research Office and sent to all schools by fax. All contact letters were in English because the language of

the reform at the time of conducting the research was in English, as advocated from the outset by the RAND Corporation.

Clearly, the goodwill of some school operators and principals allowed me to conduct the study, although this did not necessarily guarantee co-operation from the teachers involved. This meant that I also needed to approach the women ESL teachers via a formal meeting in each Independent School in which an explanation about the purpose of research was provided. A formal verbal request was made to each respondent to complete a survey questionnaire. In addition, each questionnaire had a letter requesting the respondent to complete the survey, explaining the research again, and assuring confidentiality. Hence, my entry was hierarchal and flowed from the top of the Supreme Education Council, to respondents.

Figure 6.1: Gaining Entry: Research Flow Chart



Additionally, I was conscious about not disrupting school programmes. This was because in my experience as a teacher, I learnt that schools tend to disregard activities that interfere with school

routines. In these cases, teachers will quickly fill in questionnaires or answer the questions in a way that may not be useful for the purpose of a study, for example by telling questioners what they would like to hear. The questionnaire was administered during the break time for teachers lasting about half an hour, and interviews were conducted at a time when a teacher was free for about two hours.

6.7 Initial Research Design

This section discusses the steps I initially undertook to develop the two research instruments employed in this study: the survey questionnaire, and the semi-structured interview. I developed each instrument based on the needs of my study. Prior to their development, I discussed their effective use with colleagues and my last advisor. I explored issues pertaining to validity and reliability in terms of the type and range of data analysis which would be used in my study, and the adoption of a mixed method approach to collect and analyse data. Before going into detail about the design and use of each research instrument, I believe that a brief discussion of the piloting phases involved will be useful.

I was able to approach the issues involved and develop my level of personal skill as a researcher by working with two colleagues who were English language teachers and inspectors in Arabian Gulf Countries; one from Kuwait and the other from Oman. One advantage stemming from this ‘self-development’ was that it enabled me to become familiar with what Robson (2003) calls ‘the sequence of questions’: introduction, main body of the interview, cool-off and closure, because it is said that certain methods of opening the interview can help to establish rapport and co-operation of the interviewee.

When I developed the rationale for my mixed method approach, I wanted to obtain as much information about the population of women ESL teachers working in Qatar's Independent Schools as possible, taking into account the constraints of cost and time. A questionnaire is a very useful tool for this purpose, being generally cost-effective, not too time-consuming and able to be administered by a single researcher (Lewis et al., 2002; Punch, 2000). Using a questionnaire also enabled me to make a rapid analysis of a large amount of data for using SPSS, something I discuss later (cf. section 6.10).

As with any study, questionnaires have certain limitations. Denscombe (2003:160) notes three main drawbacks, viz:

- pre-coded questions can be frustrating for respondents and discourage answers;
- a simple 'tick the box' practice might encourage people to respond and can be experienced as negative and off-putting; and
- pre-coded questions can bias findings towards the researcher's, rather than a respondent's, way of seeing things.

Obviously, questionnaires can inflict a structure on answers and shape the nature of responses in ways that reflect the researcher's rather than a respondent's thinking, but by piloting and revising the questionnaire I used three times, I sought to eliminate this as far as possible.

Another obvious shortcoming for questionnaires is that they can provide little opportunity for a researcher to check the truthfulness of respondents' answers, and while I was present when questionnaires were distributed and completed, there is no reliable mechanism to ensure that teachers were truthful in their responses. This means that as with any large scale survey which

employs questionnaires, respondents' answers must largely be taken 'as read', and an assumption made that the responses are truthful and accurate. When I collected the completed questionnaires, I checked question by question to make sure that teachers did not miss questions (Neuman, 2003).

To minimise these disadvantages typically associated with designing and administering questionnaires, I was cognisant of the guidance and direction tendered by others, including Wallace (1991), Nunan (1992), and McDonough and McDonough (1997), all of whom make similar points about the issues involved. For example, a questionnaire should be clear about what is intended, instructions for respondents should be explicit, and should indicate where answers are to be ticked, circled, or written out. Similarly, questions should be neither complex nor confusing, nor should they ask more than one thing at the same time.

For my questionnaires, the purpose of the investigation was highlighted in my accompanying cover letter which made clear what the study was about and who was participating. Further, I provided precise instructions for respondents at the top of each section. In designing the questionnaire I sought to make it as simple and straightforward as possible, and here the trialling was very useful for clarifying later versions. To ensure that pages did not appear to be 'crowded', I used different fonts and other techniques to distinguish questions from instructions.

6.7.1 Piloting the Research Instruments

Bryman (2001), Cohen et al. (2001), and Gorard (2001), suggest a need to conduct a pilot before undertaking 'actual' research to ensure that the instruments function well. Taking these suggestions into account, I carried out a pilot before embarking upon the larger study, so that I could check the relevance, utility and application of each instrument. This pilot study sought to

eliminate ambiguities in wording, identify redundant questions and misunderstood items, and gain feedback about the validity of the instruments. Given that I intended to survey the entire population of 233 women ESL teachers in 29 Independent Schools, I needed an instrument that would be accurate as well as easy to administer to a group as large as the one that I sought to study.

After reviewing the literature on the efficacy of using questionnaires with large-scale populations, I decided that using a questionnaire would be the best approach to take in collecting the substantive data needed for my study. As to the qualitative aspects of my data collection, I decided that semi-structured interviews appeared to be the approach which would work best with women ESL teachers for the following reasons: the population selected for interview comprised 18 women ESL teachers, the interview format lent itself to the one-to-one approach that I felt would be important to the collection of data and I anticipated that it would gather information that an instrument such as a questionnaire could not capture; and, in particular, because at one time, I also served as an ESL teacher, I also believed that through the use of the semi-structured interview process, I could easily follow up on questions that were not clear, or which had several components. And lastly, because I knew that all interviews would be on school premises, I needed an individual interview where I could try to establish instant rapport, and create an environment of confidentiality and comfort.

Members of the academic staff at University of Birmingham, PhD colleagues, and ESL teachers in two Ministry of Education schools provided feedback. They were asked to comment on:

- whether items were clear and precise;
- whether items were able to explore teachers' perceptions of professional development within a context of change; and

- to make suggestions for improving the survey questionnaire, interview questions; and the study.

Both Gorard (2001) and Robson (2003) recommend a two stage pre-testing process, and this is the format I used with the questionnaire as well the interview:

- ***Initial Pre-test:*** The instruments, especially the questionnaire, were modified three times as a result of feedback before the pilot, by for example, changing the structure of the questionnaire, building themes in sections, and changing some words such as ‘instructional materials’ to ‘teaching and learning materials’. Teaching experiences were categorised into sub-sections (0-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, and more than 5 years of experience). Sections such as: knowledge, skill, attitude and awareness were re-labelled into two main sections - skills needed and ESL teachers’ expectation of outcomes of professional development of ESL teachers.
- ***Pilot Study:*** the pilot was conducted in April 2005 in two secondary Ministry of Education schools in Qatar with women ESL teachers who appeared to have similar backgrounds (in training, qualifications, and other factors) to the anticipated respondents in Independent Schools. These women ESL teachers were asked to complete questionnaires and to answer interview questions in writing. It was not possible to use a pilot sample of women ESL teachers from Qatar’s Independent School as these schools are relatively few in number, and I aimed to include all these in the data collection phase.

Table 6.3: Pilot Study Research: Women ESL Teacher Respondents

<u>Ministry of Education</u>	<u># of ESL teachers</u>	<u># of Questionnaire</u>	<u># of Interviews</u>
School 1	4	4	3
School 2	5	5	2
TOTAL	9	9	5

As a result, several suggestions were made at the pre-piloting and piloting stages to ensure that the questionnaire and the interview questions were more suited to the study in terms of format and clarity of words. The main issue with piloting was that I could not undertake this task in person since travelling to Qatar to conduct a pilot was costly. While this may have helped clarify other important aspects e.g. perhaps refining the themes and sub-themes and identifying potential difficulties, this was overcome by technical input from members of the academic staff at the University of Birmingham that allowed further discussion on anticipated data and analysis. One shortcoming of piloting the research instruments with women ESL teachers was that they were conducted at a distance via e-mail and this did not allow face-to-face discussion/interaction about improving both instruments.

In my view as a researcher, the interview questions appeared to be clear and easy to comprehend. However, the women ESL teachers in the pilot did not answer some questions possibly because they were too complex, or had sub-questions, and in these cases some refinement and re-writing was undertaken. For example, “What were the most meaningful aspects of your education (including teacher education) that contributed to your development as a teacher?” was changed to “What was your light bulb moment in your teaching career?”. This view accords with Lewis (2000) that when preparing research, the researcher should ensure that questions are crystal clear,

and that an attempt to make them as easy to handle as possible, is made by using a pilot study. This experience is likely to be helpful in shaping the questions appropriately.

In developing and designing my study, I was very much aware of the approaches suggested by Cohen et al. (2001), Oppenheim (2001), and Wengraf (2001), all of whom state that interview formats are special types of conversational interactions which can take the form of structured, semi-structured, unstructured, and group interviews. I was also concerned to ensure that the semi-structured interview process supported the coherence of data collection (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1997; Rose and Grosvenor, 2001). Depending upon the objectives of the investigation, the researcher is at liberty to use one or any combination of these formats. Moreover, research conducted by Bryman (2001), Drever (1995), and Rose and Grosvenor (2001) reveals that the interview format is one of the most popular methods for data collection, in particular with small groups and on a small scale.

According to Edwards and Talbot's (1999:85) studies on the interview format, "the centre of the onion is reached with interviews". In other words, the interview format can be used in a multitude of ways to achieve the end result of obtaining data by multi-varied methods. For example, a researcher could use interviews as the primary or sole method or in combination with other methods, both quantitative and qualitative; as in the various grounded theory studies, or in a multi-method approach (Robson, 2003). Because interviews have the virtue of flexibility they can be very useful in assessing perceptions, life experiences, attitudes, opinions, meanings, aspirations, individual constructions of reality, and individual definitions of situations.

My experience in piloting the interview allowed me to make adjustments to both the questions, and the methods by which I asked the questions. For example, I changed some of the questions

to make them clearer to interviewees. I also made a decision that I should adjust my tone of voice, posture and personal behaviour when administering/participating in semi-structured interviews. I was very conscious that I needed to be more ‘human’ and appear to be more relaxed during the interview process. I particularly wanted to avoid the ‘transference’ process; that is to say, I did not want to transfer perceived anxiety on my part to the interviewee during the interview session. In a strict sense, this decision did not flow from the pilot, but from my perceptions and discussions with others about ensuring the best possible rates of participation and candour in the answers of female ESL teachers in this study.

Using this approach, I used semi-structured interviews to gather as much information about teachers’ circumstances as this form of data-gathering allowed. In doing so, I remained very much aware that the data I was obtaining was not ‘factual’ in any objective sense, because it was based on teachers’ perceptions and beliefs. Moreover, I had no reason to believe that the teachers with whom I was interacting would be deliberately dishonest or mis-leading, as there was nothing in this study which would create immediate implicit or explicit disadvantages or benefits for them. Thus, I gathered statements about teachers’ preferences for professional development, their opinions about their school and support structures for their professional needs. I was also able to explore their experiences, motivations and analytical reasoning about what was happening in their schools. The semi-structured format also allowed me to explore ambiguities, and to correct mis-interpretations elicited from the questions. I am confident that the process I used led to me secure accurate and quality perceptual data (Cohen et al., 2001; Drever, 1995).

Having completed the pilot study, I made a number of adjustments before proceeding with the main study, as described below:

- I decided to present details of the members of the sample (i.e. the years of experience possessed by the teachers) in tabular form.
- My initial explorations during the pilot phase showed a weakness in delivering comprehensive teacher responses i.e. those I obtained tended to be shallower than I had hoped. As a result of this, I decided to change the interview questions from written to oral. Minimal written responses may have been due to factors such as heavy workload or the fact that there was no indication of the depth of reflection required by participants. Hence, although teachers who participated undoubtedly have experiences, they may not want to share these with someone else, especially if they have encountered challenges or critical incidents that may be viewed as weaknesses. Further, written responses in English may not have been suited to local ESL teachers as for many, their first language is Arabic. Therefore, I decided to offer teachers the choice of being interviewed in Arabic or English, requiring me to translate an English interview question into the Arabic language and be prepared to interview teachers in the language they chose.
- In piloting, I did not use computer-assisted analysis because of small numbers, but I decided to use this approach (quantitative, using SPSS, and qualitative, using NVIVO.7) in the larger study for two reasons. Firstly, since I obtained a large number of responses (233 respondents to the questionnaire and 18 transcribed interviews), using appropriate software had the advantage of reducing analysis time and eliminating error. Secondly, software serves to facilitate accurate and transparent data analysis while providing a quick and simple way of coding who said what, and when, which in turn should lead to a more reliable, general picture of the data (Morrison and Moir, 1998; Richards and Richards, 1994).

- The interview questions and responses were recorded after written permission from teachers and after giving them the choice to answer questions in Arabic. The interviews lasted for at least two hours to get the depth of the reflection that I sought from teachers. This also allowed me to follow-up or to probe further, those issues raised by ESL teachers regarding professional development during the course of the interview.

To sum up, drawing on Robson (2003), piloting the questionnaire and the interview questions gave me the opportunity to re-shape, rectify and remove possible ambiguities in the questions before starting the research. Further, this enabled me to re-adjust plans and ensure that selected questions yielded appropriate data compatible with the research questions. Because time permitted, I was fortunate in that I could pilot each instrument on a small sample, make the necessary adjustments to each instrument, and then administer them accordingly.

Having discussed the initial research design and how piloting helped me modify the research instruments, in the following section, I now discuss the actual design of each research instruments that were used in this study.

6.8 Actual Research Design

6.8.1 Survey Questionnaire

In order to obtain women ESL teachers' broader views on the sorts of general background and skills they needed, and their perceptions about professional development, a questionnaire was chosen because it is capable of generating useful baseline data about the sample, about the types of professional development opportunities available to teachers, their level of involvement, and their attitudes and perceptions regarding the value of these activities.

In developing my questionnaire, I used a five-point rating-scale (Likert, 1932) to collect data and assign it relative values determined by the ESL teachers in this study (see **Appendix III**). In developing my approach I was conscious of the guidance of McDonough and McDonough (1997) who aptly illustrate the pros and cons of scaled questions, showing that these permit and encourage shades of opinion that may be given numerical value, but also have the disadvantage that people may vary in the degree of caution they employ when responding. Despite the wealth of literature on using even or uneven rating scales e.g. four or six-point, as opposed to five or seven-point, I decided to use an uneven scale with a neutral mid-point in the questionnaire, allowing for a 'non-committed' response. The questionnaire survey was divided into five sections:

- **Section A (Demographics of ESL Teachers):** Teachers were asked to provide information concerning their age, teaching experience, nationality, school, teaching position, teaching qualifications and where they obtained their qualification.
- **Section B (Professional Development Needs Assessment):** Teachers were asked to provide information regarding their professional development activities such as frequency of attendance, location, duration and the purpose.
- **Section C (Skills Needed for Effective ESL Teachers):** Teachers were asked to respond by way of the five-point rating scale with their opinions about statements such as the skills needed for effective ESL teachers using English language as a medium of instruction, skills needed for group work activities and action research, etc.

- **Section D (Expectations of Outcomes of Professional Development of ESL Teachers):**

Teachers in this section were asked to respond by way of the five-point rating scale with their opinions on statements about their expectations about the benefits of professional development such as daily collaboration with other teachers, life-long learning for teachers and team teaching, etc.

- **Section E (Details for Follow-Up):** Teachers were asked to provide contact details for the next phase of the research, if they were interested in being interviewed. Most of the women ESL teachers in this study expressed interest in a follow-up.

To discuss my study and administer the questionnaire, I travelled to each of Qatar's Cohort I and Cohort II Independent Schools, meeting with all 233 women ESL teachers, speaking about my study and asking them to take part. All women ESL teachers, with the exception of two Qataris, agreed to be involved. This meant that I was successful in obtaining data on very nearly 100 per cent of the women ESL teacher population in Qatar's Independent Schools at that time. I believe that my success in gaining such a large and positive response was entirely due to my face-to-face meetings with teachers and the fact that I carried out the initial phases in person rather than through third parties. Although I administered the questionnaire in English in the school auditorium or staff meeting rooms, when Arabic-speaking teachers needed clarification, I explained questions and issues in Arabic. Assistance with questionnaire distribution was provided by my niece, who is reading English at Qatar University.

6.8.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

The semi-structured interview was directly focused on my research questions. In constructing my research framework, I developed the procedures that I would use to ask the questions during interviews. In my planning, I took care to ensure that the main questions would be asked consistently and that interview procedures were well organised in advance (Cohen et al., 2001; Wengraf, 2001). Importantly, I gave women ESL teachers who came from Arabic-speaking backgrounds, the choice to be interviewed in English or Arabic. Perhaps surprisingly, all of the women ESL teachers in this study preferred to be interviewed in English.

For the semi-structured interviews I used Easen's framework (1985) which contains the public display, the blind spot, the dreamer spot and the untapped reservoir (see Appendix V). According to Easen (1985) public display means the part of our self that we know about and which others see, while the blind spot means the part of our self that others see, but of which we are ignorant and there may be a considerable mis-match between our perception of ourselves and the perceptions of others. The dreamer spot refers to that part of our self that we alone know and this contains our fears, fantasies and thrills, while the untapped reservoir is unknown.

It should be noted, however, that using a semi-structured interview within a research study is not without its challenges. For example, the first phase requires preparing for each interview. The second includes conducting interviews, recording each interview, and transcribing each recorded event. The third includes the analysis of the data derived from the aforementioned data gathering methods. I was also aware of the concerns noted by Bryman (2001), and Edwards and Talbot (1999) that research work associated with conducting a semi-structured interview is time-consuming and costly. By way of establishing a metric, a one-hour interview requires a minimum of six to seven hours of invested time. Moreover, it emerged during this study, that one

interview in this study typically yielded approximately 16 pages on average, of transcribed material (see **Appendix VI** for a sample of a transcribed interview).

I carried out and taped my interviews face-to-face, with the 18 women ESL teachers involved in this study entirely in English, using informal and confidential settings. As noted earlier, I took pains to gain teachers' formal written consent before I conducted the interviews and I reinforced the purpose of my study and the purpose of the interview when I met with each respondent.

Given the importance of what the women ESL teachers involved in this study had to say about issues such as their professional development needs, and reform more generally, I was very careful to note all crucial statements relating to the questions and teachers' opinions, as well as their anecdotal comments. When and where it seemed appropriate, I followed up on certain key comments related to concerns about professional development and the various aspects of educational reform under which they were working. Because of this attention to detail, I was able to cross-check my notes with tape-recorded interviews and more accurately identify the key elements related to my research study.

Interview questions were categorised into four sections, (see **Appendix IV**):

- **Section A (Background Information):** When speaking with teachers, I obtained and recorded background material which essentially comprised factual information such as their name, age, school, years of experience, qualification, position held in school and salary.
- **Section B (Personal Information):** Teachers were asked questions about their self-perceptions as teachers and members in society having different roles such as being

mothers, wives, sisters and daughters. During life-time crises and other significant events, we may be forced to question and re-appraise the existing structure, to search for new possibilities in ourselves and our world and re-build our lives. As noted earlier, I started my approach to semi-structured interviews using Easen's framework (1985) to understand teachers as persons and the different roles assigned to them, which I hoped would allow me to record and interpret the material I obtained rather more fully. Easen's framework enabled me to gain an early and solid grasp of who the participants in my study were within an acknowledged conceptual framework. I also adopted a sequence of questioning so I could explore deeper meanings within the information that teachers provided, and probe those responses that seemed to be compounding a number of issues together.

- **Section C (Educational Experiences):** This asked for the experiences of teachers when they were learners themselves or undergoing training at university, the ideal teacher and the light bulb moment in their student career life.
- **Section D (Professional Experiences):** I enquired about teaching capability, perceptions about roles and beliefs in making learning ESL successful, teaching methods employed, teaching workload, learning and teaching materials used in the classroom, professional development needs, support needed from the school and the professional landscape comprising perceptions, relations and support from the following: operators, principals, school support organisations, colleagues, and learners.

6.9 Establishing Trustworthiness in Mixed Method Design

It is widely accepted that the essential test of validity of a finding in the natural sciences is that it can be directly replicated by an independent investigator; this approach is not generally possible in the social sciences, especially when a qualitative design is used, due to the fact that identical circumstances cannot be re-created for the attempt to replicate. The best that can usually be sought is sustaining results which are broadly similar in nature and characteristics, as Bloor (1997:37) notes “social life contains elements which are generalisable across settings and other elements that are particular to a given setting”.

What this also means is that concepts such as *reliability* and *validity*, which are quite central to quantitative research, are not often used by many advocates of qualitative design, with authors such as Lincoln and Guba (1985) preferring concepts like transferability, dependability and conformability. Entrenched, and some would argue, ill-informed, opponents of qualitative studies and the results obtained, claim that without *reliability* and *validity* qualitative research is somehow unreliable and invalid (Kvale, 1996), although Oakley (2000) suggests several measures that should typify qualitative research and that to maintain appropriate standards, it is essential that research should be credible, confirmable, transferable, authentic, dependable, and reliable.

Attempting to describe and measure perceptions, beliefs and feelings is not something that can be readily achieved by quantitative studies; instead in this study, I focus on verifying and testing my findings by looking for trustworthiness, which demands attention to credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility (i.e. deals with the focus of the research and refers to confidence in how well data and processes of analysis address the intended focus) , transferability (i.e. is the degree to which the findings of this inquiry can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of the project), dependability (i.e. is an assessment of the quality of the integrated

processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation), and confirmability (i.e. is a measure of how well the inquiry's findings are supported by the data collected) function as the qualitative equivalents for internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Table 6.4 shows how different strategies in this study were employed to enhance the veracity of the research procedures. The table shows how procedures were built into the research methods used, and how they contributed to the transferability, dependability, confirmability, trustworthiness and credibility of the findings.

Table 6.4 Strategies used to Verify the Study's Authenticity

<u>Procedures for verification</u>	<u>Strategies built into research design</u>
Transferability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thick description provided throughout the study ▪ Extensive use of data to demonstrate themes from perspectives of ESL teachers
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data collected over different time periods, two phases ▪ Audio-taped recordings and extensive and full transcription
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regular discussions with my supervisor based on data ▪ Presentation to relevant conferences about research findings
Trustworthiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comparison of responses ▪ Comparison of data collection in questionnaire with data collected in interviews ▪ Extensive number of informants (N=233)
Credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The findings chapters will show the chain of evidence presented which is grounded in the empirical data ▪ The conclusions developed account for negative cases disconfirming evidence

Credibility of findings can also be strengthened by sustained engagement in the field (Yin, 2003; Cohen et al., 2001). In addition, as I have noted in Table 4.2, this was the case with the study presented here. The credibility of a study rests on the degree to which there is evidence that negative cases are analysed and used to improve the theoretical fit between the data and the theory development process (Huberman and Miles, 1984).

According to Punch (2000), the strength of the argument contained in the findings is a key feature of demonstrating transferability as well as credibility. Transferability from data occurs at two levels: the degree to which the findings are transferable with the population and sample studied, and the degree to which the results are transferable to other populations. Further, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), thick, rich description adds to verification, as it allows the reader to make decisions regarding transferability to other settings because of the degree of detail in the information provided.

Maxwell (1992) argues that dependability and confirmability are enhanced if threats to inaccuracy in data collection are reduced. Here, dependability relates to the issue of ensuring that data collected are stable and consistent over time, and dependability is enhanced by strategies such as the extensive interviewing I used in this study and the use of audio tape transcripts which can be checked and re-checked to verify data, and the interpretations and construal of the researcher. Confirmability can also mean something akin to the notion of replicability (Lee, 1999), that is to provide readers with sufficient detail so that they can assess whether the data would be reproducible in subsequent analyses.

6.10 Data Analysis

Data analysis is an essential component of sound research. For example, Dey (1993:30) argues, “while our impressions and intuitions certainly have their place in analysing data, we can also benefit from the more rigorous and logical procedures of analysis”. The types of data, the quantity and quality of the data, and how it will be analysed, must be made critical parts of the methodology employed from the beginning (Robson, 2003; Tesch, 1990). Important discussion relating to the kind of data sets to be produced and about approaches to data analysis cannot

simply be an afterthought, but must instead be contemplated and addressed well in advance of the study going ahead, as was the case here.

Here, I present, in a succinct form, a brief description of the data sets generated by my study and of the approaches I adopted in data analysis. I leave more detailed discussion and analysis for Chapters 7 and 8 where results of the data analysis of the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are presented as themes.

6.10.1 Questionnaire Data

The data I obtained from ESL teachers' questionnaires were analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 16 for Windows) (Corston and Colman, 2003; Vanitbancha, 2003). Statistical descriptors used in this study are frequency (f), percentage (%) and mean (X).

Data in Parts 1 and 2 which were elicited to present a description of the sample (sex, age, educational background and teaching experiences) and ESL teachers' professional development needs were analysed in terms of frequency (f) and percentage (%). Results from Part 1 data are presented in far greater detail in Chapter 7.

Data in Parts 3 and 4 were analysed using the statistical mean (X) and standard deviation. Following procedures outlined by Ferguson and Takane (1989) and Kannasutr (1999), mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the patterning of the views of ESL teachers on the skills they needed as well their perceptions of the outcomes of professional development. The average weight of opinions is displayed in forms of mean (X) and standard deviation (s), and interpreted as:

5.6 – 6.0	means	Very high opinion
4.6 – 5.5	means	High opinion
3.6 – 4.5	means	Fairly high opinion
2.6 – 3.5	means	Fairly low opinion
1.6 – 2.5	means	Low opinion
1.0 – 1.5	means	Very low opinion

The underlying assumptions for the statistical analysis carried out in this study are based on the review of the literature and concepts of change in education discussed in Chapter 3. Other research studies indicate that change needs teachers' efforts and is unlikely to be straightforward (Hall and Hord, 2001; Huberman and Miles, 1984; McLaughlin, 1990). Therefore, issues such as teachers' perceptions of change and how they viewed the world formed by their teaching experiences and roles (Huberman and Miles, 1984), are presented in rather more detail in Chapter 8.

6.10.2 Interview Data

In this part of the study, the emphasis was very much on collecting, analysing and interpreting qualitative data. This meant that I took a number of steps to ensure that I obtained the sorts of rich and diverse information which can be collected from face-to-face interviews with a number of respondents. Creswell (2003) and others believe that qualitative data analysis should start from the beginning of data collection by organising and preparing data for analysis. Bearing this in mind, I began informal analysis of the data while collection was still ongoing and the formal analysis immediately after data collection (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1997).

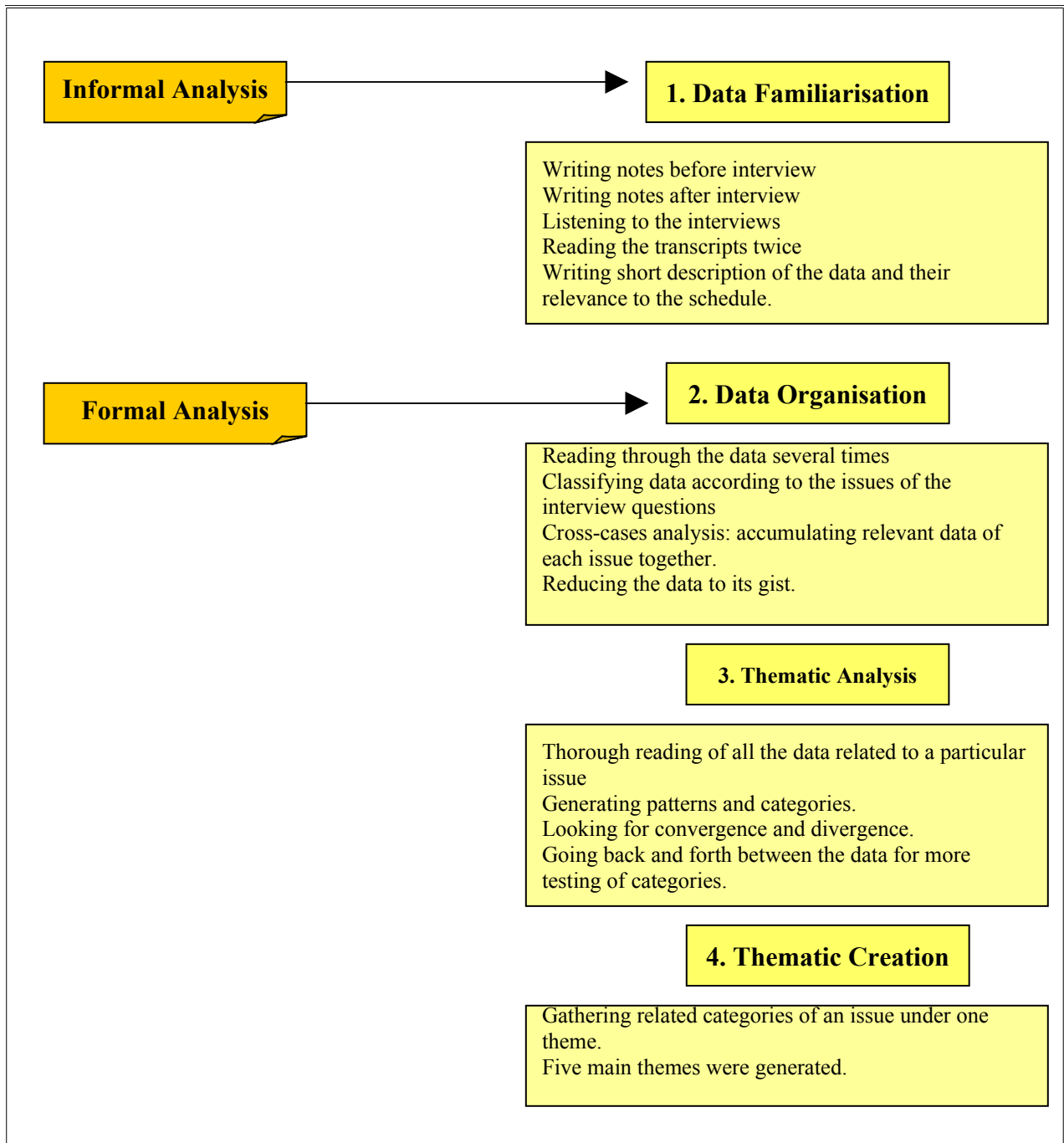
I believe that my subsequent analysis was aided by intrinsic familiarity with the qualitative responses and the information I obtained, and because I transcribed all the interviews myself. This required me to read through data to obtain a general sense of the information and then reflect on overall meanings - beliefs about reform, teaching, support from school, personal roles versus

professional roles are cases in point. During this stage, I also wrote notes in margins and re-coded my general thoughts about the data.

To carry out more formal analysis of my data I employed Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) NVIVO 7, which aided me in obtaining an accurate and transparent picture while providing an audit of the data analysis process as a whole. I chose NVIVO 7 primarily because of colleagues' recommendations, the fact that it addressed some earlier problems with other packages, and it was available at the university. Moreover, NVIVO 7 is simple to use and it is possible to import documents directly from word processing packages and code these on screen. Coding stripes can be made visible so that the researcher can see, at a glance which codes have been used where. In addition, it is possible to write memoranda about particular aspects of documents and link these to relevant pieces of text in different documents.

Figure 6.2 outlines the processes and stages involved in analysing the qualitative data generated by my study. Thereafter, each stage is discussed in turn.

Figure 6.2 Process of Qualitative Data Analysis used in this Study



6.10.2.1 Data Familiarisation

Data familiarisation should furnish the researcher with a broad picture of the data collected before formal analysis begins. To help fulfil this objective, one of the strategies I used to gain an overview of the material, was writing notes after each interview, recording non-verbal cues, and jotting down general ideas before listening to tape-recorded material. The next step was to listen carefully to recorded interviews twice before transcribing each one, using guidance from Miles and Huberman (1994), Dey (1993), and Patton (2002). Agar (1996:103) makes the following recommendation: “read the transcripts in their entirety several times. Immerse yourself in the details, trying to get a sense of the interview as a whole before breaking it into parts”. So, after transcribing, I read all the interviews several times, listing key ideas and recurrent themes. A final step during familiarisation is to judge the data collected in semi-structured interviews that need greater exploration in the light of the research aims. In this study, familiarisation involved immersion in the data, listening to tapes, reading transcripts, and noting recurrent ideas, themes and patterns.

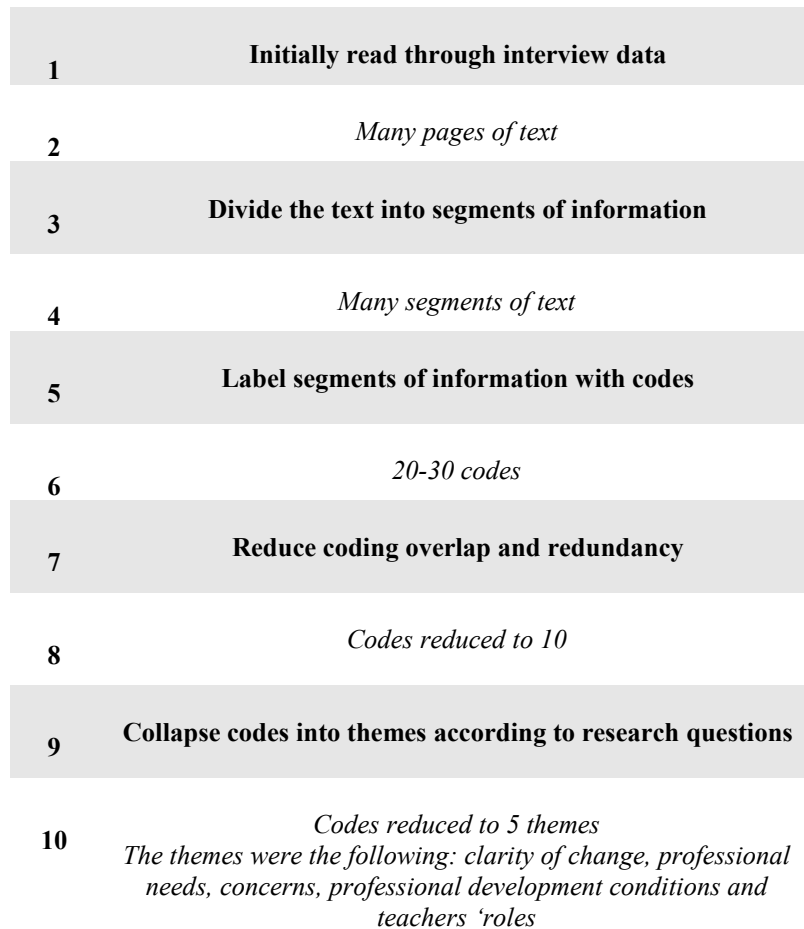
Making sense of the data involved both intuition and a systematic method. Intuition is about seeing categories, themes, patterns, making guesses, making arguments, and asking further questions about the data. In this respect, being familiar with the discipline helped identify important themes and being systematic about tracking particular behaviours, words, and attitudes helped me focus on salient aspects of the research. Some of themes that emerged were beliefs, roles, support, concerns and clarity about the rate and direction of change.

6.10.2.2 Data Organisation

Data organisation is a method of facilitating intensive analysis, and without systematic and thorough approaches to data organisation, any analysis may be chaotic. In my study, in order to make data manageable and by using NVIVO 7, I accumulated interview transcripts into a single, comprehensive file. This step helped me gain a more inclusive picture of the data accumulated because it enabled a complete database for the qualitative oral interview data (Merriam, 1988). A second step was to classify data according to the main themes related to the principal research questions, noting as Dey (1993:40) claims, “without classifying the data, we have no way of knowing what it is that we are analysing”.

What is significant here is that I moved from brainstorming and collating, to identifying and analysing the extensive information the women ESL teachers in this study had provided during the semi-structured interviews. By being systematic and thorough, I was able to focus on the main questions I posed at the beginning of this study, and to critically reflect on what the women ESL teachers had to say about important and challenging issues such as their own professional development, the pace and nature of reform, and what they saw as essential steps to improve teaching and learning. Classifying the data in the manner I did, provided me with a virtual taxonomy within which I was able to focus closely on the issues salient to this research, and remove or reduce the efforts spent on those of lesser import.

Figure 6.3: The Visual Model of the Coding Process in the Interview



(Adopted and modified from Creswell, 2005:23)

My next step was to create a file for each interview question, by using the facility for creating nodes in NVIVO 7. I did this by accumulating all relevant data concerned with one issue within

one file, which I labelled according to the main theme for that question (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Patton; 2002). Coding is a systematic way of understanding and keeping track of research data that allowed me to focus and track certain kinds of information, leaving aside what may not be relevant to be dealt with later or discarded. As Marshall and Rossman (1995:113) have emphasised, “careful attention to how data are being reduced is necessary throughout the research endeavour”.

Table 6.5 Link between the Coding Framework used for Data Analysis and Research Questions

#	<u>Research Questions</u>	<u>Coding Framework</u>
1	What perceptions do women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools have about the changes manifested in <i>Education for a New Era</i> ?	Theme 1: Clarity of Change
2	What do women ESL teachers identify as their professional needs in implementing change at classroom level?	Theme 2: Professional Needs
3	What do women ESL teachers view as their concerns in implementing change at classroom level?	Theme 3: Concerns
4	What conditions sustain or undermine professional development activities for women ESL teachers in Independent Schools as reported by women ESL teachers?	Theme 4: Professional development conditions
5	What perceptions do women ESL teachers have about their roles in implementing change?	Theme 5: Teachers’ roles

6.10.2.3 Thematic Analysis

The main themes of this study are teachers’ beliefs about reform, perceptions about change clarity, teaching materials, support from change facilitators, professional development needs and teachers’ contrasting roles. Ideally, content analysis involves making sense of themes in research, and building an understanding of how different themes knit together to form a whole. Here, using NVIVO 7 as the analytical tool is rather less helpful, because while this can be useful in terms of counting ‘who said what’ within a theme, in order to relate the theme to other ideas, it is necessary to consider the memoranda written during analysis. I did, however, find the model

explorer tool in NVIVO 7 of help in mapping diagrammatically how themes related to each other. More broadly, when considering memoranda and coded data together, to extract themes across the data, I found it useful to write a short summary at each node. This included, for example, detail such as how many teachers spoke about the clarity of change.

Once data were gathered together under descriptive codes, thematic ideas began to emerge from this process when thematic codes were applied. The purpose of this stage was to ensure that systematic evidence was generated from data for the themes which emerged in the first round of coding. In this way, I carried out a check which sought to address the validity of my research results in ways that made it easier to see if all data relevant to professional development, for example, had been assembled and reported, and this required coding data electronically rather than by using a manual approach such as highlighting issues on paper. This enables quantitative and qualitative data to be presented in terms of themes rather than as a series of separate categories.

6.10.2.4 Thematic Creation

The last step of analysing qualitative data is by using themes, which can act in a similar manner to codes, allowing data to be aggregated around, or to form, a major idea. Accordingly to Creswell (2005), themes form a core element in qualitative data analysis. Like codes, themes can have labels that typically consist of between two and four words.

Here, I built themes based on the repetition of topics by women ESL teachers and based on interview questions as mentioned in **Appendix IV**. Themes, as mentioned earlier, were the clarity of change, professional needs, concerns, professional development conditions, and finally

teachers' roles. These data were analysed taking account of the conceptual framework introduced in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Because I posed a number of critical questions, I was careful to ensure that the information I gathered from teachers enabled me to address these in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

As I read my data, I became aware of emerging commonalities, and when I found several instances in the same category, I created a theme from them, to which I paid special attention. I found myself progressively focusing upon such themes, yet not ignoring other matters, for example, data from the questionnaires and interviews was reviewed and interpreted for meaning. Data deriving from the semi-structured interviews supplied deeper and broader information and was thus used as a main source for later discussion supported by information obtained from the questionnaires. I should note, however, that I found categorisation and thematic creation to be the most challenging parts of the data analysis encountered in this study.

The discussion of the data was set out under five thematic headings: change in teachers' beliefs, teaching strategies, roles, professional development needs, and support from change facilitators. The data analysed was presented in descriptive form and in tables in Chapters 7 and 8.

6.11 Ethical Issues

According to Robson (2003), it is essential to conduct research in an ethically responsible manner. Ethics refers to rules of conduct, typically, to conformity to a code or set of principles (Reynolds, 1979; Pring, 2000; Creswell, 2005). Mertens (1998) contends that ethical guidelines in research are needed to guard against any possible errors, including the less obvious, yet harmful effects of research. This guidance required that in my study the question of whether the

proposed research might harm the women ESL teachers involved in this study should be addressed.

Creswell (2005) argues that individuals who participate in a study have certain rights. Participants need to know the purpose and aims of the study, the use of results, and the likely social consequences the study will have on their lives. They also have the right to refuse to participate in a study and can withdraw at any time. When they participate and provide information, their anonymity is protected and guaranteed by the researcher. I recognised the right of any potential participant to withdraw from the research for any or no reason, at any time, and informed participants of this right (see **Appendix II** - Informed Consent) but as a teacher sharing a similar background to some of the women ESL teachers involved in this study, I was conscientious in ensuring teachers were very much aware that their participation was entirely voluntary. As I noted earlier, two Qatari nationals declined the invitation to be involved in this study, leaving me with just less than 100 per cent of the overall population of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools. Blaxter et al. (1996:146) claim that

“Ethical research involves getting informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. It involves reaching agreement about the use of this data, and how its analysis will be reported and disseminated. And it is about keeping to such agreements when they have been reached”.

In this study, I obtained participants' consent without deception, and provided enough information about the research project to enable participants to make informed decisions about their involvement. I informed school operators, principals, and women ESL teachers before commencing my study. I asked for permission and consent from those concerned, and explained

what I was going to do in the study. These steps reflected my concerns about subjects' rights, feelings and privacy.

Creswell (2005) mentions that it is also important to respect the site where the research takes place. This respect should be shown by gaining permission before entering a site, by disturbing the site as little as possible during a study, and by viewing oneself as a 'guest' at the research site. In this study, I sought permission from relevant authorities (i.e. SEC), and persons owning public or private materials when data were sought in any phase of the study including operators, principals and teachers. I arranged to visit every school at least once before starting my project in order to introduce myself, to gain consent and establish friendly relations.

Moreover, Neuman (2003:302) argues that "survey researchers can intrude into a respondent's privacy asking about intimate actions and personal beliefs. Researchers should treat all respondents with dignity and reduce anxiety or discomfort". I used code numbers rather than participants' names on records that contained sensitive information to help protect confidentiality. All personal data stored on computers and files was not saved without the knowledge and agreement of participants, nor without granting them access to it. I informed teachers that all of data would be treated confidentially, and in this way gained their trust as a researcher. Some teachers said:

"When you talked about some of your problems, your country's problems, I was really happy about that. So I become free to you, I feel that you are an honest person." (Hadya)

"I appreciate speaking to someone who can understand with knowledge from different sides I really appreciate it and I thank you." (Rene)

Because of these strategies, I also felt that women ESL teachers were generally relaxed during the fieldwork, and I experienced fewer barriers with regard to their participation in either questionnaire completion or semi-structured interviews. It is pleasing to observe that I met with a high level of co-operation on the part of each participant.

6.12 Scope and Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there are external and internal constraints. An indication of these and their impact is given below.

6.12.1 Access

Strangers are not always trusted in institutions such as schools for various reasons. Principals and teachers may sometimes think that a researcher's presence may deliberately or inadvertently expose shortcomings in certain aspects of their work and they may feel uncomfortable. This is particularly true during an intense focus on education. As a result, winning the trust of teachers and principals is a challenge that a study such as this needed to meet.

Cohen et al. (2001) make a number of useful suggestions for negotiating access, and drawing from this guidance, I followed a similar route and sought official permission to carry out the study. This meant that while I was sponsored by the Higher Education Institute in Qatar, it was still necessary to gain permission from the Director of the Research Office in the Evaluation Institute to engage in fieldwork with teachers. In turn, this meant providing the Director of the Research Office with a detailed research proposal showing how the project would address the ethical implications involved in dealing with teachers, principals and learners.

During the fieldwork components of the study, my intention was to be as open and transparent as possible with women ESL teachers and to share interim and eventual findings with them. A written agreement between myself and the women ESL teachers involved was also provided. All women ESL teachers selected for interview received a copy of the interview scripts in order to ensure that these accurately represented their views and were not merely my interpretation. The purpose of these steps was to keep participants abreast of data collection as well as to discuss with them issues that may give rise to some discomfort during my presence in a school.

6.12.2 Women ESL Teachers: Qataris and Expatriates

As I indicated in Chapter 2, my initial intention was to carry out this study using only Qatar nationals as subjects, but this proved to be impossible as most ESL teachers in newly-Independent Schools are expatriates, the majority coming from Arab and Asian countries. This required a change in my approach to include ESL teachers irrespective of nationality, and it also resulted in my gathering a range of data that spread across a far more heterogeneous group. I also found (as shown in Table 6.6) that teachers fell into a number of categories including that of ‘co-ordinator’.

Table 6.6: ESL Teachers’ Positions in Independent Schools¹

<u>Teaching Positions</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
English language teacher (<i>English as a Subject</i>)	132	56.7
Classroom teacher (<i>Mathematics, Science and English</i>)	87	37.3
Co-ordinator	27	11.6
Other (teacher assistant, team leader, head of section)	13	5.6

¹ As can be seen from Table 6.6, the total number of women ESL teachers was 259 and this is due to some ESL teachers doing two professional roles, i.e. they are coordinators and teachers as well.

It is noticeable that 27 (around 12 per cent) of the teachers in this study occupy roles as co-ordinators within Qatar's Independent Schools, roles that require diverse professional activities including mentoring. In Qatar's Independent Schools co-ordinators play a critical part in developing beginning teachers' professional roles, since they focus on helping and guiding novice teachers through developmental stages, during which the mentor's own role will change accordingly.

6.12.3 Time Constraints

As always, time and resource constraints act to place bounds around the scope of the study. Time was a factor in this study – an all-too-obvious constraint. External conditions attached to the project by the Supreme Education Council and the Independent Schools involved, required the fieldwork to be completed within a specified time-frame with little or no scope for this to be extended.

6.12.4 A New Reform Initiative: Implications for the Research

As indicated in earlier chapters, *Education for a New Era* is a relatively new national education reform initiative begun in 2002. The first group of Independent Schools commenced operation in 2004 generally being referred to in Qatar as Cohort 1, while the second group (Cohort II) began operation in 2005. By way of timing, this was the first research study to address the professional development needs as expressed by women ESL teachers teaching in 29 of Qatar's new Independent Schools.

The constraints on my study became evident as I commenced an examination of the underlying policies, procedures, and regulations stemming from *Education for a New Era*. In short, there was a critical lack of accessible and available information. Perhaps surprisingly, the approach on

which Qatar's Independent Schools were apparently based lacked published policies and operational guidelines. Additionally, at the time of this study, there were few external financial requirements attached to the new Independent Schools, and very little published information dealing with the core curriculum, so, not only was there a dearth of information, but other important issues were covered only in draft form, with drafts not readily accessible and remaining subject to substantial change. It is also likely that even when a greater amount of material emerges, it may not cover ground useful to this particular study.

In general terms then, this study was not greatly assisted by the types and range of information which may be available in well-developed education systems, or indeed in other places undertaking national reforms as profound as those in Qatar. In fact, this lack of information formed a constraint on this study and would act similarly on any other external investigation of the early years of *Education for a New Era*.

This is only in part due to the recent nature of *Education for a New Era*. Predominantly the cause is the incomplete nature of the approach suggested for Qatar. As indicated in earlier chapters, this approach was based on the US charter school model, and lacked the sorts of comprehensive information that researchers and policy-makers alike would typically regard as adequate for such a major undertaking, i.e. there were scant if any written policies, regulations or even explanations, nor a rationale necessary to conduct anything approaching a definitive policy analysis or to carry out summative or formative evaluations.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings associated with documenting *Education for a New Era* and its outcomes – although this would make a very worthwhile examination in itself – this study attempts to capture and represent the roles and identify professional development needs of

women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools - teachers who are at the frontline, ensuring that the nation moves towards a world class education system in a what is essentially a bilingual approach, through the use of English and Arabic within the core curriculum. A notable advantage accruing to me is my active involvement in various aspects of *Education for a New Era*, for example, in brainstorming workshops for Qatar's core curriculum standards, and through many training workshops conducted by the Professional Development Office for school operators and teachers.

6.13 Fieldwork Experience: Reflections

This section is a reflection on my fieldwork experience undertaken between August-September 2005, and March-April 2006, in Qatar. Even though considerable input had gone into preparing for the field trip, I realised that I had not anticipated all the challenges that I would face. Noting such challenges, Fraenkel and Wallen (2000) comment that no study is ever carried out as precisely planned.

The logistics of conducting the study seemed simple at first; however, there were many exceptions that I had not factored into my planning. For example, co-ordinating with the Supreme Education Council to gain appropriate consent to conduct my study took more time than anticipated. Moreover, I took full responsibility for administering the research project at each school, and I did not anticipate the time that it would take to distribute and then collect the materials involved. Nevertheless, I was able to achieve a high response rate to the questionnaire. Access to the Independent Schools was unproblematic although I had to approach each school individually to gain multiple permissions to access the women ESL teachers. All women ESL teachers in the sub-sample agreed to the use of a recorder for the interviews; however, there was

difficulty in finding suitable rooms. In one instance, I had to discontinue an interview and re-schedule it.

While the early focus of the study was on women Qatari (nationals) ESL teachers, initial data revealed that there were insufficient numbers to focus on this group alone in both phases of data collection; therefore, I expanded the study to include all women ESL teachers, the majority of whom are expatriates. Moreover, as I analysed data from semi-structured interviews, I found that it was more time consuming than I had anticipated.

In my early thoughts on shaping the methodology for this investigation, I decided that a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques i.e. a mixed method approach, was probably best suited to adducing the level, type and sophistication of information that I sought. I believed that I could only do this using a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, where the former would act as the structure and the latter as the body.

Having taken this early decision, I was very much aware that I could gather data from the 233 women ESL teachers in this study via mechanisms such as a questionnaire, and apply a range of quantitative analyses that might present interesting, potentially robust and insightful information. The questionnaire I used with the women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools was deliberately constructed using close-ended questions to elicit a range of information e.g. age, years of experience, academic qualifications and so on.

The most important limitation I foresaw here was that despite possible interest, quantitative approaches, no matter how robust and how intensive, would not necessarily allow me to pursue deeper and more personal analyses of what women ESL teachers in this study believed about

teaching in their classrooms and schools, Qatar's new Independent Schools, and the direction *Education for a New Era* was taking.

Moreover, I believed that correlating data I obtained from questionnaires did not appear likely to take my investigation in the direction I wished to pursue, and nor did this appear likely to produce results which would be helpful in gaining deeper insights into teachers and teaching. Using correlations would not inevitably influence the data I obtained from questionnaires, rather it would simply measure them, look for and depict relationships, but it would not readily allow to me infer, nor would it enable me to adopt experimental techniques involving manipulating the data so that I could conclusively demonstrate causal relationships between variables. For example, correlations showing that teacher age was strongly associated with length of teaching career, or that teacher qualifications did not have a clear relationship with ESL teaching, even assuming desirable levels of statistical significance i.e. probability ($p < .005$), while perhaps interesting, do not particularly help our understandings about the complexities of teaching ESL in Qatar's Independent Schools.

I was very much aware that most commonly used statistical tests assume that a population is Gaussian in nature but it is also important to note that I did not believe my sample of 233 women ESL teachers conformed to what is usually termed a normal distribution i.e. the Gaussian (*bell shaped*) curve (Cresswell, 2005). This includes the reasons I note above – all teachers are women, and all are teaching ESL in Qatar's Independent Schools. This meant that I could not assume that my sample, even if I treated it as a *population*, is normally distributed, the result being limits to the statistical tests allowing me to make inferences about the mean (and other properties) of the population involved.

I was also aware of the general rule that no conclusions about a population should be drawn except on the basis of properly randomised sampling, otherwise any assumptions about statistical procedures maybe violated and it is impossible to know what confidence to place in the conclusions obtained. To adjust for a-typicality, I may have attempted to formulate more precise relationships within the sample in order to extrapolate these to the larger population but such adjustments generally require experience, reflection and large samples which allow for model testing and estimation.

While I could have treated my sample of 233 women teachers as a *population* and then carried out various statistical analyses, the end result would have been that all the relationships described and results obtained were statistically significant, which again would not have proved to be useful for my study which sought deeper insights.

Bearing in mind the preceding explanation, it seems clear that using parametric measures of association e.g. correlation that seeks to describe relationships, with my sub-sample of 18 women ESL teachers could have only produced anomalous and clearly limited results. This is because the 18 women ESL teachers are a sub-set of a larger pre-selected sample, chosen to reflect certain characteristics. Thus not only is this sub-set of 18 women ESL teachers likely to be markedly a-typical, it is simply too small to generate results which are statistically significant with the likelihood of very weak levels of probability, and scant if any possibility of extrapolating findings to a population.

6.14 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines the methodological underpinnings of my research design and discusses in more detail the reasons why specific research methods – particularly a mixed method approach -

were selected. The design, development and use of the various research instruments employed in this study are all grounded in the research literature and I have offered a rationale for the decisions made about them.

The main aim of this chapter was to give an account of how evidence was gathered systematically to address the five research questions I posed, focusing on how women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools perceive their roles and their professional development needs during a climate of change. Hence, this chapter has addressed the design, access, and sampling aspects of my study, together with the approaches I took to data collection and data analysis, and the sorts of results which emerged. It has also discussed some of the limitations of the study, the constraints upon myself as researcher, and how the challenges involved were overcome.

In reviewing the data obtained from women ESL teachers involved in this study, I was able to identify trends and patterns by developing logical and consequential relationships between data sets. This confirmed the value of the mixed method approach I employed which allowed different perspectives, and therefore, different structures of analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994). By applying the models of Hall and Hord (2001) and Fullan (2001a) to my data, I was able to focus on the research questions, and examine similarities and differences between and within data sets. A more detailed account of my approach to data analysis is presented in descriptive form, themes and tables in Chapters 7 and 8.

CHAPTER 7

Changes in Teachers' Beliefs, Teaching Strategies and Roles

7.1 Introduction

Change is a complex process, which takes time to accomplish. Here, complexity generally refers to the difficulty and to the extent of change required of the individual responsible for implementation. According to Fullan (2001a), any change can be examined with regard to the difficulty, skill required, and extent of alterations to beliefs, teaching strategies, and the use of materials: in other words the extent of its complexity. Also according to Fullan, within the overall process of change initiation, implementation and institutionalisation are key elements.

One of the issues which confronted me in this research, and which confronts those leading *Education for a New Era*, is simply the scale of what is involved in developing and implementing system-wide reform of public education. And while it could not be part of my particular investigation, I was very much aware that because of the demands on those leading and participating in *Education for a New Era*, these leaders and implementers need to have

sophisticated understandings of the range of activities, structures, diagnoses, teaching strategies, and philosophical underpinnings if effective implementation is to be achieved.

Education for a New Era represents a complex, multi-faceted reform programme, which entails re-shaping teaching and learning within Qatar's Independent Schools in entirely new ways. A reform programme of this scale is not to be undertaken lightly, and the efforts of those involved are, therefore, substantial and likely to continue for some years if its ambitions are to be realised. Within the context of *Education for a New Era* which emphasises teaching and learning in English as opposed to Arabic, implementing change at classroom level also entails changes in the pedagogy and behaviours of individual women ESL teachers in terms of altering their beliefs, roles and teaching strategies, and it entails support from change facilitators in order to drive the whole system of change (cf. Chapter 3).

The origins of *Education for a New Era* show elements which are innovative and international in tone, e.g. a national standards-based curriculum. There is little doubt though, that the changes in pedagogy and other domains required since the Supreme Education Council was established have been complex and contested not only by teachers, but to an extent by wider elements across the country, and in emerging commentary and criticism of the manner in which reform was designed and implemented. It thus remains to be seen whether the national standards based-curriculum emerges as a springboard for new and better teaching and learning, or is merely a new set of constraints within which teachers are effectively fettered. In terms of a broad summary, the findings from interviews with teachers in my study revealed that they were aware of new policies and programmes, although the level of awareness varied.

Moreover, teachers charged with responsibility for implementing reform in a practical, classroom-based sense, were concerned about what this actually meant for materials, teaching practices and beliefs. It seems clear that teachers had increased freedom to exercise professional judgment about how and what they taught, but many also believed that they might be lost and needed help and support from the Supreme Education Council to guide them to more successful teaching and learning outcomes. Hence, while women ESL teachers in Qatar had the power to decide how they taught, they were not provided with well-defined guidance about how to translate reforms into classroom practice, and those in this study readily agreed that very specific guidance was desirable.

The main purpose of this chapter is to explore the beliefs, materials, strategies and roles of the women ESL teachers involved in this study. It describes their beliefs and considers their openness to the changes which are required by the new reforms. Findings based on my analysis of the questionnaires and the interview data from ESL teachers are discussed, bearing in mind that questionnaire answers give overviews of the pattern of responses from women ESL teachers' backgrounds, while interviews offer more in-depth information, particularly about these teachers' beliefs, roles and teaching strategies. To help identify the source of quotations, a list of pseudonyms for teachers with basic identifying characteristics for each teacher is provided in **Appendix VII**.

This led me to examine and report on the evolving new roles of the women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools, something which becomes more evident from the information I obtained during face-to-face interviews with subjects in this study and which is reported later in this chapter.

Before I present the analysis, it is essential to return to the research questions which are:

1. What perceptions do women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools have about the changes manifested in *Education for a New Era*?
2. What do women ESL teachers identify as their professional needs in implementing change at classroom level?
3. What do women ESL teachers view as their concerns in implementing change at classroom level?
4. What conditions sustain or undermine professional development activities for women ESL teachers in Independent Schools as reported by women ESL teachers?
5. What perceptions do women ESL teachers have about their roles in implementing change?

Hence, Chapters 7 and 8 present the data used to address these questions while Chapter 9 summarises the findings directly related to the five research questions mentioned above.

7.2 General Background of the Women ESL Teachers

As I indicated in Chapter 2, in *Education for a New Era*, schools have been opened in different cohorts, with each comprising a number of schools: Cohort I schools were launched in September 2004 and Cohort II schools in September 2005. Most Independent Schools opening in the first two cohorts were primary and exemplary schools (exemplary schools in Qatar are schools for male learners from year 1 to year 4 in which the teaching is done by women. These schools opened in the 1980s because of the large number of women staff). As shown in Table 7.1, the questionnaire was administered to 233 women ESL teachers in the various schools comprising Cohorts I and II.

<u>Number of schools</u>	<u>Type of school</u>	<u>No. of ESL teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
8	Exemplary Years 1 – 4	60	25.7
13	Primary Years 1 – 6	115	49.4
5	Preparatory Years 7 – 9	43	18.5
3	Secondary Years 10 – 12	15	6.4
Total		233	100.0

Table 7.1 Number of Survey Questionnaires Distributed to Women ESL Teachers

As shown in Table 7.1, the study involved eight exemplary schools, thirteen primary, five preparatory and three secondary schools. The greatest number of participants in the study worked in primary schools. There were also higher teacher numbers in exemplary and preparatory schools, with relatively few found in secondary schools, reflecting the fact that there were only three Independent secondary schools then available for female learners. In creating a larger number of Independent primary schools compared with preparatory and secondary schools, it seems that, on the one hand, the Supreme Education Council simply followed demographic norms, but on the other hand, it could also be argued that the Supreme Education Council made a decision to focus on primary schools as these are involved with younger learners who may be

more receptive to the proposed impact of *Education for a New Era*, and to teaching and learning in English, although there is no explicit evidence to sustain this viewpoint.

Teacher age: women ESL teachers in Independent Schools

Initial analysis revealed that the age of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools ranged from 20 to 58 years. Table 7.2 shows that the mean age of women ESL teachers was nearly 30 years, suggesting a number of years' experience, though not necessarily in teaching, following graduation. This may be important because as Berends et al. (2002) claim, the experiences teachers accumulate over the years contribute to their teaching practice, and it is, therefore, important to understand the extent to which the backgrounds of the teachers in this study relate to potential or actual support for the aims and ambitions of *Education for a New Era*.

Table 7.2 Women ESL Teachers Average Age

Total # of ESL Teachers	Minimum Age	Maximum Age	Mean	Std. Deviation
233	20	58	29.81	5.954

Teacher nationalities for women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools

Another potentially interesting early finding in my study was that of 233 women ESL teachers working in 29 of Qatar's Independent Schools, there were 25 different nationalities. Without the benefit of further, more detailed analysis, this situation does seem likely to lead to potentially substantial variation in the 'types' of English, used and equally significant differences in the approaches taken by women ESL teachers who were trained in different organisations and/or jurisdictions. Table 7.3 shows the number of women ESL teachers by nationality. Again, it is interesting to observe that Qatari nationals accounted for a little less than a third of the sample (29.5%), while speakers from other Arab backgrounds accounted for the large majority at 45%.

Asian teachers comprised 10.3% of the sample and 9.8% identified themselves as native speakers of what might be thought of as ‘mainstream English’ varieties. Only 4.2% of the sample had an African background, with just 1.7% comprising speakers of other European languages.

Table 7.3 Nationality of Women ESL Teachers Teaching in Independent Schools

<u>Nationality of ESL teachers</u>	<u>No. of teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
Qatar	70	30
Middle East Arabic-speaking countries	102	43.8
Asian, non-Arabic speakers	24	10.3
English mainstream countries	23	9.9
African countries	10	4.3
European countries	4	1.7
Total	233	99.6

The diversity of teachers’ backgrounds raises interesting questions about the extent of complexity vis a vis individual identities. While this study did not allow me to explore teachers’ levels of competence and performance in English, it does seem likely that these will bear upon their capacities in teaching ESL and/or mathematics and science in English-medium classrooms.

That is to say: when taking into consideration factors such as the age range, national background, length of teaching and language spoken, we might expect to find quite marked differences between teacher perceptions, behaviours and actions. If we add to these variables, other factors including teacher diversity, the status of English as an international language (or at least an

international lingua franca), issues related to globalisation, and questions about possible pedagogic implications of a multi-national teaching force within a specific context of reform in Qatar, the result is a far greater range of questions and more lines of enquiry than are able to be pursued in this study.

My own observation, stemming from my discussions with teachers during the fieldwork, is that a shortcoming of *Education for a New Era* is found in its failure to incorporate teachers as agents of change, meaning that those most responsible for changing teaching and learning, and consequently improving outcomes, were effectively marginalised. Thus, *Education for a New Era* emerges from this study as far more a systems-driven approach to educational reform than one based on developing the human capital.

Clearly, the diversity represented in the workforce in Qatar's Independent Schools reflects the fact that educational reform is taking place in a global era and is, in fact, shaped by global trends in education, in the uses of new technology and in the development of the knowledge economy. One further change ushered in by globalisation is, of course, the spread of English as an international language, or at least as a lingua franca (Jenkins, 2007), and as a medium of instruction at all levels of education. This has opened up a wider range of employment opportunities and greater geographic mobility for those who have the cultural and linguistic capital to benefit from the greatly expanded uses of English in education systems around the world.

The findings of this study with regard to the backgrounds of the teachers provide vivid evidence of this new trans-national mobility among English-speaking teachers. At the same time, these

new patterns of teacher recruitment may well reduce opportunities for local teachers who specialise in the teaching of English as a second or foreign language. Thus, as I noted in earlier chapters, Qatari teachers who were previously teaching in Ministry of Education schools, where Arabic was the medium of instruction, tended not to be considered as candidates for employment in the new, English-medium Independent Schools. However, the net effect of creating a multinational teaching workforce in the context of national educational reform makes the provision of quality professional development rather more complex. The challenges involved in meeting the professional development needs of a teaching workforce as diverse as the one created in Qatar are considerable. Moreover, the investment in professional development may end up being short-term, since there may be rapid turnover among expatriate teachers for the sorts of reasons I have outlined elsewhere.

	<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Educational</u> <u>qualifications</u> <u>of</u> <u>women</u> <u>ESL</u> <u>teachers</u> <u>teaching</u> <u>in</u> <u>Independent</u> <u>Schools</u>	No qualification listed (other)	20	8.6
	2 year diploma	11	4.7
	3 year diploma	4	1.7
	4 year degree	178	76.4
	Masters degree	20	8.6
We can see from	Total	233	100%

Table 7.4, that the

majority of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools hold at least a bachelor's degree in various disciplines (86%).

Table 7.4 Qualification of Women ESL Teachers in Independent Schools

A worrying feature is that most of the teachers, who gained their qualifications outside Qatar (a total of 140 teachers, see Table 7.5), had not actually been formally trained in an educational discipline. To clarify, some teachers wrote their academic subject next to their credentials in the questionnaire, showing that among those teaching ESL, are ‘teachers’ who qualified in chemical engineering, interior design, agricultural engineering, business and commerce.

Table 7.5 Where ESL teachers Gained their Teaching Qualifications

<u>Where ESL teachers gain their qualifications</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
Qatar	93	39.9
Elsewhere	140	60.1
Total	233	100.0

The findings from interviews indicate that teachers in this study with non-ESL specialisations, such as tourism, chemical engineering and business, were effectively compelled to teach English as a subject or mathematics and science in English, simply because there were inadequate numbers of trained ESL teachers for the tasks involved. In short, not only were many teachers being required to teach well outside their discipline, they were similarly required to become ESL teachers, without appropriate, or in many cases, any training/professional development at all.

During my interviews with teachers I found a substantial degree of concurrence about the nature of teachers' concerns, particularly in primary schools, as the following two citations illustrate.

“Don't ask me what my major is. It is Chemical Engineering. This job is challenging since I have to teach English, Math and Science, but I enjoy it.” (Mini)

“I am a graduate from Hotel and Tourism Faculty. I studied in English language. I had experience teaching kindergarten in Egypt. It is not difficult. Any one can speak it, can teach it.” (Dalia)

Potential impact of the diversity in teachers' nationalities, qualifications and language backgrounds

Data obtained from the interviews conducted during this study provided glimpses into the kinds of communication issues and attitudes related to the diverse language background of the ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools. For example, one teacher said

“One of my colleagues is very odd, she is Russian, she has very strange accent so we can't communicate with her normally. She speaks English with odd accent, I can't understand her from the first time and she has to repeat herself many times. Her pronunciation is very strange and this is a vital problem. We have 25 students that are losing their English. The school had a decision two weeks ago to put an Arabic assistant with her in the classroom.” (Dalia)

Another South African teacher who had been criticised because of her accent, said

“I believe in equity, fairness and no people controlling things, controlling my actions. I come to this country and have been criticised for my accent as if we have choices about which country we will be born in.” (Trudy)

Another North American teacher was confused about which English should be used in her teaching – the American or British variety, saying

“This is American native; you teach them from your context, you teach them where you are from. If they inform us what is the basic vocabulary students should have and then you can go further. I am not sure what they want to teach: flat or apartment. I don’t know. American or British English, or am I suppose to teach both? I don’t know. I am supposed to teach biscuits or cookies?” (Debra)

While globalisation and other factors associated with a largely internationalised workforce can have many strengths, there may be shortcomings too, not the least of which is a lack of substantial knowledge about the levels of competence and performance of teachers from non-English speaking backgrounds and their capacity to carry out effective teaching and learning in a language which is a second language to them and to their learners. This is not to say that all native English speakers are axiomatically better teachers in English, or better ESL teachers, rather that far more needs to be known about how well prepared the women ESL teachers are in terms of teaching ESL per se, and teaching subjects such as mathematics and science in English, all to learners for whom English is a second language. What we can see from the findings is that there are different varieties of English represented in this workforce. Moreover, different views of language and language education are represented, as is to be expected in any workforce. As Larsen-Freeman (1991) (see Chapter 5) notes, there can be no single perspective on language, no single explanation for learning, and no unitary view of the contributions that language learners will make on a daily basis.

Once again, the genesis of *Education for a New Era* appears to have overlooked the potential challenges arising from such a diverse and heterogeneous workforce, and certainly nothing in the implementation phases led to decisions about how these might be addressed and resolved. This leads me to conclude that it is hard to see how the goals of *Education for a New Era* can be realised if its approach which is based on teaching and learning in English, is fundamentally undermined by quite possibly unprepared teacher practitioners who might be otherwise ill-equipped in terms of the demands placed upon them. Not that fault or blame should be attributed to the teachers themselves; rather this is an issue which needs deeper study and the development of strategies to reduce the potential disadvantages which may accrue to learners and their families and to the reform programme more widely.

The experience of women ESL teachers in this study appears to be another important element. Data presented in Table 7.6 show that many have had relatively little experience as teacher-practitioners i.e. nearly half of the sample have three or fewer years' teaching experience. There may be some comfort though, as over half the women ESL teachers in this study have more than four years' teaching experience, which may go a little way to allaying deeper concerns, as a number of studies (Hall and Hord, 2001; Huberman and Miles, 1984) indicate that teachers with three to five years' experience (and more of course) are generally better able to manage the tasks associated with being a competent teacher-practitioner.

Teaching Experience	No. of Teachers	%
0 - 3 years	109	46.8
4 - 6 years	53	22.7
7 - 9 years	26	11.2
10 - 12 years	25	10.7
13 - 15 years	12	5.2
More than 15 years	8	3.4
Total	233	100.0

Table 7.6 ESL Teachers' Years of Experience

What remains of interest is the extent to which teachers with quite different backgrounds, qualifications and levels of experience react in similar or different ways to the demands posed by *Education for a New Era*. This is important in the context of the CBAM I have employed in this study as indicated in Chapter 3 (Hall and Hord, 2001), as different responses may arise from teachers with more or less teaching experience, with issues that bear significantly upon one teacher having little or no effect on another. Moreover, it might be expected that different levels of teaching experience provide a different basis for dealing with change, uncertainty and ambiguity, i.e. perhaps more experienced teachers can tolerate disruption or change better than novices who are already contending with the pressures of being less experienced. In contrast however, perhaps neophyte teachers at the beginning of their careers are more receptive to change, while those with some years of experience are more resistant.

I found that the teachers in this study faced many challenges, most often in their approaches to teaching and learning and improving learning outcomes, but that they often lacked a detailed grasp of what was expected of them and just what they were being asked to do. This is important because as the research literature (Hall and Hord, 2001) tells us, when teachers face innovation and change, but lack understanding, implementation might well be inconsistent with what the developers originally envisioned.

Studies by Havelock and Huberman (1978) suggest that if policy-makers cannot have full control over the behaviour of the participants involved in change, it is unlikely that change will be achieved as planned. Results from some of the educational change projects in their research indicate that ‘actual’ change differed from its original plan because there were not enough ‘right’ people to implement change. *Education for a New Era* in Qatar may well be facing the same problem (Hall and Hord, 2001).

What we know is that policy-makers, even in the most ideal circumstances, cannot immediately control all of the factors involved in change, in particular the very nature of the human dimensions involved ensures that change is a complex, dynamic and multi-faceted process which can give rise to unintended outcomes and equally unintended consequences.

My examination of *Education for a New Era*, and that of others, suggests that its design and implementation fell somewhat short of the ‘ideal’, in that teachers in particular were marginalised as the approach involved concentrated on systems change, rather than addressing the people who would act as agents of change. Thus, in terms of the analysis presented by Havelock and Huberman (1978), Qatar certainly lacked a sufficient number of the ‘right’ people to carry *Education for a New Era* forward with the vigour it needed. However, having the right people to implement change is one component of successful reform, but not the whole thing.

7.3 The Impact of Workload on Women ESL Teachers’ Roles

I found from many respondents in this study that they were over-loaded because of the new roles and functions expected of them. In terms of workload, they seemed to be concerned that reform had significantly increased their responsibilities, and some argued that the Independent Schools’

workload was onerous and there were no extra resources provided to reduce the burdens they faced. I noted that the teachers involved in this study must attend the Supreme Education Council and school support organisation professional development workshops to adapt to their new roles in Qatar's Independent Schools. This is a major change since most of the teachers involved were formerly employed in Ministry of Education schools where practices are very different indeed.

This situation is illustrated by comments from one teacher in the study, which are entirely consistent with the larger number of responses I obtained.

“Right now the amount of work is a lot, I go back home at 3 o'clock. I sit and I start working. I email people, publishers, doing the schedule for the next day because we always have workshops. We have ladies going on sick leave, so you have always to change the schedule, checking files of teachers, writing reports about teachers.” (Ameera)

Other co-ordinators spoke about the number of workshops that new women ESL teachers have to attend while at the same time teaching in the school. This can bring a teacher's professional responsibilities into direct conflict with those she experiences in wider Qatar society where she may, at the same time, be a mother, spouse or daughter and incur clear social and familial obligations as a result. This results in teacher co-ordinators, having to obtain cover for some classes so they can attend the Supreme Education Council and school support organisation workshops daily from 1200 to 1630 for a month. Such conflicts and pressures are illustrated by the following observations.

“Some of them are married and they have workshops late at night. I can handle all their lessons. I don't care covering their lessons and putting pressure on myself to make others happy.” (Rawada)

“We had workshops. The academic principal told us that we are going to stay every Monday until 4:00 p.m. The teacher on that day will be overloaded and they are going to teach between 7 to 9 classes. The student won’t understand and the teacher won’t be able. So learning won’t happen. If there is no learning, what is the benefit?” (Nadia)

Another Qatari ESL teacher attended the Supreme Education Council workshops, but when she married, her husband asked her to choose between being over-loaded in Independent Schools or being an ‘ordinary teacher’ in a Ministry of Education School and not being over-loaded, because she had to adapt to her new role and responsibilities of being a married woman. Again the conflict between a teacher’s professional responsibilities and her social and familial obligations is highlighted. This teacher left her post in an Independent School for a year but later re-joined a Cohort II Independent School.

“When I get married, I was having a course, so I finished school 3 o’clock and the course started at 4:00 till 8:30. The course was about teaching young learners. The course lasted for a month. When I was going out 6:30 in the morning and I came home at 8:30 evening daily, my husband get upset and told me to choose between the course or school, but every day 6:30 to 8:30 was too much, so I quit from Independent School.” (Salwa)

Another teacher said the school itself overloads teachers with meetings at very short notice. She highlighted the new roles and responsibilities of teachers in Independent Schools that are completely different from those in Ministry of Education schools and indicated that the Supreme Education Council should be aware of this substantial difference. As a result, some of the teachers in this study argued that their workload should be decreased to allow time for planning, curriculum development and innovative pedagogy, as illustrated below.

“Now we have department meetings, heads meeting, meeting with the principal. Most of meetings are conducted in the break. I have a teacher who is teaching 20 hours a week, in my perspective it works well in Ministry of Education schools but here we are responsible for preparing the curriculum, following students. This is a big question, there is a huge difference between Ministry of Education and SEC, what works there can’t work here. Twenty hours classes do not work in Independent Schools.” (Nadia)

It is clear that if the structures within which teachers’ work are not addressed, then teachers may implicitly or explicitly resist. Rather than allow largely self-protective measures to develop and flourish, this fundamental issue should have been addressed well before reform was implemented (Fullan, 2001a).

This study found that among the 233 teachers involved in the initial survey, there were 25 different nationalities, that many had qualifications other than in education and ESL teaching in particular, that differences in the ‘Englishes’ that were habitually used were readily apparent, and that almost half of them had a few years of teaching experience at most. Moreover, most of the teachers involved believed that they were professionally overloaded with additional burdens as a direct result of demands placed on them by *Education for a New Era*.

In some senses my findings were surprising for a number of reasons. Firstly, in relation to teacher qualifications, background and experience, there was no explicit SEC policy which set pre-conditions for teacher employment such as those which typically obtain via teacher certification/registration in a large number of other countries, there was also no explicit SEC policy directing or advising schools about the levels of competence and/or performance required before they engaged English-speaking staff offering ESL programmes, and further there was no policy which specified whether teachers should be qualified via an academic qualification and/or

experience in terms of the curriculum content i.e. English, mathematics and science for which they would be responsible.

Secondly, in relation to the sorts of expectations or requirements for teachers in attending and/or participating in professional development programmes of a general or specific nature offered by school support organisations and/or other agencies as part of a wider contract with the Supreme Education Council, no guidelines were provided to Qatar's Independent Schools for managing teacher workload i.e. there were no contractual conditions which required teachers to participate in a certain number of hours or days of professional development, and no real way of keeping track of just how much or how little some Independent Schools required of their teachers in terms of out-of-school professional development, nor whether professional development involved learner-free days or extra work.

7.4 An Analysis of Teachers' Views on Change

Before I began this study, I surmised that the ESL teachers involved would be no less concerned with the scale and rate of change than others had discovered in earlier studies in very different locations. I came to this view because I was well aware that by and large teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools had been excluded from the design and implementation phases of *Education for a New Era*. One of the questions which remain, however, is whether excluding teachers was by omission or commission, and while I can do no more than speculate, it is my view that teachers were quite deliberately left out of designing and implementing *Education for a New Era*.

On one level, while questions relating to just how and why teachers were left out of designing and implementing *Education for a New Era* are important, that they were seems to fly in the face

of compelling results obtained in detailed studies of educational reform and transformation. For example, Fullan (2001a:115) notes that “educational change depends on what teachers do and think, it is as simple and complex as that”, and according to research across very different settings, Brighouse and Woods (1999), Fullan (2001a), Hall and Hord (2001), and Verspoor (1989) all indicate that successful change at classroom level relies on individual teachers in terms of changing their beliefs and teaching strategies. I am also arguing that leaving teachers aside in a reform programme as unparalleled in Qatar as *Education for a New Era*, becomes more starkly apparent and seemingly inconsistent when we consider the nature of change deriving e.g. national curriculum standards, professional development activities, school support organisations, the Supreme Education Council itself, and the whole notion of Independent Schools largely as facsimiles of US charter schools, all of which were entirely novel to Qatar’s existing educational culture.

As I noted in Chapter 3, there are three dimensions in implementing a new programme or policy: beliefs, materials and approaches of teaching. Later, I take these perspectives and use them to provide a framework for analysing my research findings with additional discussion of women ESL teachers’ views obtained from the interviews I carried out. Just how ESL teachers in this study responded to and managed to deal with the changes demanded by *Education for a New Era* becomes far more evident in the comments and observations they made to me, illustrative examples of which appear later.

7.4.1 Women ESL Teachers’ Beliefs about Reform

Change in teaching approach or style in using new materials and resources is among the most visible aspects of innovation, and perhaps the easiest to measure, but only in quite narrow ways. That is to say, simply providing teachers with new materials and resources is one thing, having

them use these in appropriate and educationally effective ways is quite another. Here we need to bear in mind Fullan's (1992; 2001b) injunction that change in teaching approach or style in using new materials presents greater difficulty if new skills must be acquired and new ways of conducting learning activities established.

The majority of women ESL teachers involved in this study agreed that change was necessary, largely due to what they saw as an excessively authoritarian approach to schooling in Ministry schools, combined with rigidities imposed by Qatar's Ministry of Education. Some teachers looked at K-12 school reform as a positive change, of which they wished to be part. Responses from teachers with whom I spoke tended to confirm these wider views, as the following remarks indicate.

"I want to add something good for the students like a change for the whole country. Joining an Independent School is really very good, because it is reforming the whole country so that type of work I really like and I want to be part of it." (Mini)

"The reform is a train that is going towards Independent Schools, it is not going backwards, and it is going forwards. Joining and teaching in Independent School was a light bulb because it created a better character in me." (Fadia)

Another woman Qatari ESL teacher questioned herself about whether she was doing the right thing, whether it was enough, and whether she was achieving the vision of Qatar. She stated

"The country is spending lots of money on buildings because they've got hope in their citizenship. Am I achieving what the country is aiming for? Sometimes I work overtime and I have not been given any money. I've got the responsibility and I am part of the reform." (Nadia)

Yet another woman ESL teacher believed in the concept of Independent Schools because of the freedom they seemed to offer, she said:

“I believe in Independent Schools, there are no textbooks, I am writing the curriculum. I am free to do anything. It is a new idea, a new development, a new teaching model here in Qatar. A new project by HH Sheikh Moza.” (Dalia)

Marris (1993) makes the case that all real change involves loss, anxiety and struggles and this is shown in the marked contrast of some women ESL teachers who were concerned about the future of the Independent Schools, and felt some personal anxieties in their work environment. Examples include:

“The school may be closed; the whole system of Independent School may be switched to something different.” (Ameena)

“I am afraid that one day the SEC will transform Independent Schools to another thing. As an idea, Independent School is very beautiful, it reflects the personality of the operators, their mission and vision and this is what makes Independent Schools unique.” (Maha)

Looking a little more widely, one teacher reported that as a result of the instability created by *Education for a New Era*, it would be the learners, who suffer, and not benefit, rather than the teachers. She noted that:

“I don’t know what is going to happen next year. The fact is that these girls are going to suffer if they change the structure of the

school because they are not going to be taught by native or first language speakers, they are going to be taught by Qataris.” (Trudy)

One teacher advanced trenchant criticism of the Supreme Education Council and its staff which she held to be unpredictable and rule-governed which limited teachers’ freedom to act. She noted:

“The SEC and its people are a great failure. No planning, every day there will be a rule from the SEC. Independent Schools mean freedom but SEC narrows this freedom. The SEC is going to turn into the MoE. There should be evaluation all time. The SEC should have a higher authority to evaluate them as the SEC.” (Ameena)

“I want from the authorities to improve the conditions in Independent Schools, environment of students and teachers as well. They should give freedom for teachers and students both. They should send supervisors regularly and suddenly. What is reality? Why do they believe in dramas? Why they don’t believe in honesty? (Trudy)

From the information I obtained, it is the lack of clarity that emerges as a major concern for teachers during the implementation stages of *Education for a New Era* in Qatar’s Independent Schools. The teachers in my study reported that they found that the demands of change were simply not clear to them and what these meant in practice. They wanted the Supreme Education Council to be clear about its policies and indicated that more visits were required to check whether teachers were implementing policies in the right way. One teacher, illustrative of many others, noted:

“I want from the SEC clarity, not to leave us as teachers for the principal or the admin staff without any guidance. I want regular visits from SEC, maybe once a month. Teachers should be observed. It is not assessment of teaching; it is assessment for teaching to help teachers teach effectively.” (Dalia)

In brief, it seems that the teachers were operating within a complex, turbulent, contradictory, relentless, uncertain, and unpredictable environment that was new for them. They reported that they were encountering problems at virtually every stage of the implementation of *Education for a New Era*, from the early conceptual stages to actual classroom practice. This is something reported in similar research, which though carried out some time ago, remains relevant today, by Gross et al. (1971) who found that a majority of the teachers in their study were unable to identify the essential features of the innovations they were using. Perhaps this is unsurprising as a number of studies (Berman, 1981; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Goodlad, 1970; Gross et al., 1971) report that the actual use of innovations in schools is discouragingly low.

Gross et al. (1971) studied an inter-city elementary school attempting to implement major organisational change in teachers' roles. The authors were primarily interested in the process of implementation and the extent to which teachers actually changed their behaviour as required by the innovation. Gross et al. (1971) attributed shallow or unsatisfactory reform outcomes to a lack of clarity, teachers' lack of skills and/or knowledge, an absence of support structures, poor administrative planning and the heavy logistic burdens placed on teachers i.e. in this study teachers faced operating procedures that were incompatible with those needed to support change and thus, suffered from what the authors describe as role overload and extra work. Gross et al. (1971) also note that innovations introduced into schools are only proposals; to achieve their intended effects, they must be implemented. More recent studies of reform have also found that clarity and complexity remain as major problems (Fullan, 1999).

Gross et al. (1971) and Huberman and Miles (1984) both found that abstract goals combined with a mandate for teachers to operationalise them resulted in confusion, frustrations, anxiety and abandoning of efforts. As I noted in Chapter 3, Fullan (2001a) indicates that a painful lack of clarity will be experienced when innovations are attempted under conditions that do not support the development of teachers' understandings.

7.4.2 Women ESL Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Materials

Within the context of *Education for a New Era*, the new curriculum for Qatar's Independent Schools refers to the overall teaching and learning programme offered by a school, with the formal 'curriculum' comprising four core subjects: Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science. Teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools gained the autonomy to choose their own learning resources provided that they met new curriculum standards and best met learners' individual needs. Therefore, teachers are effectively implementing the new curriculum standards in Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science that have been developed specifically for Qatar. This means that apart from the curriculum standards which underpin the four core subjects: Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science, teachers are free to use whatever resources, materials and other things they need to carry out teaching and learning activities. Each Independent School then develops and chooses its own unique 'curriculum' to meet the standards prescribed for these four subjects.

One of the results arising from my study is that Qatar's ESL teachers were quite literally lost without appropriate and suitable textbooks and teaching and learning resources. Expecting them to select and obtain textbooks and teaching and learning resources without adequate support and

guidance was a clear omission, more so since many of the ESL teachers in this study are relatively inexperienced – nearly half of them having fewer than three years’ teaching experience, and few if any, formally trained in ESL methods and practices. Without adequate support and guidance from change facilitators, this may result in teachers simply adopting a passive technician role (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

These challenges were not just confined to newer teachers as two more experienced teachers noted:

“For a conscientious teacher, I want to give the children what they really need because there isn’t a textbook. I am not always aware of the minimum. Teachers should not spend all their time re-inventing the wheel, it should be this is the basic, I can add this. But since so much of my energy and my brain is doing the basics, I don’t have time to make the phenomenal display to go with.” (Debra)

“We have the standards that we teach, but we don’t have textbooks that include these standards. When I joined the school last year, I asked about textbooks, and they said that they did not have any. I was told to create my own materials and I should just make sure to teach the standards, I was totally lost.” (Rosina)

Other teachers, however, indicated a firm belief in the new curriculum standards, feeling that they had changed from teaching the textbook to teaching the standards, although just how this was manifested in practice remained a little uncertain. One thing such teachers valued was the freedom to exercise their professional judgements about how they teach, with one reporting:

“I enjoy teaching the standards so much. All my life I was a teacher teaching a book, I have to teach from A to Z. This is my role. But now I feel I am a free person when I am teaching the standards. I am the one who is deciding what I am going to teach. I am the one to create the whole lesson, the orientation, the practice phase, the presentation phase and the closure. I felt that I am getting this part from the internet, from different resources.” (Ameera)

The actual aim of having a standards-based curriculum and English standards per se in Qatar's Independent Schools is so that learners develop English language skills commensurate with the needs of further and higher education, or the labour market where English is increasingly employed as the lingua franca. Qatar's particular standards focus on achieving skilled and functional outcomes for learners. Although as noted elsewhere, the approach to ESL teaching lacks a firm basis in a well-established and tested rationale. It was not surprising then, that some women ESL teachers in this study questioned the burden they faced in developing a curriculum and detailed schemes of work, which are otherwise missing or inadequate. Teachers noted for example:

"The scheme of work is fantastic and the activities themselves are fine. Not all of learning activities should be the big Disney moment. The problem comes when we get *comma, dot, dot, dot* and I don't know what *dots* mean." (Debra)

"There are lots of gaps in the scheme of work. I have to write dialogues, there is no model given by the SEC about how it should look like. I would like to have a disk from the SEC where I can put on and change the students' names, where there will be a model that I can match, at least I have confidence. We have the scheme of work but we don't have a model with it. There are two sample lessons and that is it. The scheme of work could be more accessible for teachers." (Sara)

My findings related to teachers' concerns about the direction and pace of change and their associated duties and responsibilities, echo the findings from studies such as those by Bodilly (1996, 1998) and Stringfield et al. (1997). These studies show that change which provides more prescriptive materials, curriculum, and assignments, has faster implementation rates as several factors including provision of a structured curriculum, concrete examples of teaching and learning practices reflecting the reform, and specific, practical mechanisms for achieving the

higher standards established as a goal, facilitate the implementation of reform efforts for most teachers. Smith et al. (1998) also report that these approaches are even more helpful when they take into consideration the individual needs of the school, its particular population, and the experiences of its teachers.

7.4.3 Women ESL Teachers' Beliefs about Teaching Strategies

Manouchehri and Goodman (1998) indicate that how the curriculum is utilised depends on teachers' perceptions and the image of the subjects they teach, which means that teachers' subject content knowledge and teaching strategies translate into practice through their beliefs. In other words, teachers' beliefs influence how teachers may teach (Van Hook, 2002). The success of educational change in the ESL classroom is accordingly grounded in beliefs about teaching strategies which ESL teachers hold. This section looks at women ESL teachers' beliefs about the success of ESL teaching strategies in Qatar's Independent Schools. The findings are based on interviews conducted face-to-face with ESL teacher practitioners.

It is apparent that the ESL teachers in this study have certain approaches for 'controlling' or managing learners, understanding concepts, learning by association and using different strategies for teaching English which will benefit learning. One teacher noted, for example, that her approach was to be very strict at the beginning of the academic year, viz:

“My policy is, in the first three months, build class management with strictness. You will have time to be their mother or sister but

not their friend. There is a huge difference in the relationships between a friend, a sister, or a mother. Respect between friends is different than respect between mothers and sisters.” (Nadia)

In a similar vein another teacher noted:

“My classroom is U shape because I can become the centre of my class. I can control it very well. Group work is not good, it always dominated by one good child and others sit and do nothing especially the weak students; they sit in a corner and hide themselves somewhere. But in pair work, you can circulate the work and look at students, what they are doing.” (Hadya)

When it came to more widely held beliefs about other issues, a teacher noted that she favoured concept-building rather than memorisation. She also showed preference for tangible concepts not abstract theories. As she put it:

“Memorising is nothing. My life is based on concepts. I understand concepts. I don’t understand theory. If you make things simpler, you make things easy to understand. I teach concepts to my students.” (Hadya)

Speaking about the importance of understanding rather than memorisation, another teacher noted:

“Teaching is more about understanding and getting people to learn basically the concepts in Math, Science and English.” (Trudy)

Other women teachers in this study demonstrated positive attitudes towards learning by doing, and by using key associations to ensure the success of ESL teaching. Findings from my interviews indicated that some ESL teachers believed in the strategy of learning by association and by using hands. One put it this way:

“I like an educational culture. I like the relationship of mutual respect, to learn by association because that is how children learn. I try to make my lessons as interesting as possible.” (Rene)

Another saw value in celebrating learners’ work and using this as a form of encouraging others, when she noted:

“I display students’ works all the time, encourage them. When students write any topic, any essay, I tell them to hang it up. They will be very happy. I like students to use hands because I believe that learning without hands is not good learning.” (Sameera)

The teachers believed that they had a major role to play in ensuring that learning occurred, something neatly illustrated in the following quotation:

“I want 80% of my teaching for children to carry home, 80% is done in the class, the other 20% have to work in the house.” (Rosina)

From my findings, it emerged that most women ESL teachers believed that a variety of teaching strategies would help increase the success of ESL teaching. The ESL teachers thought that teaching strategies which met learners’ preferences and which were based on their basic content knowledge and learning capacity could enhance success. In the view of these teachers, the best teaching strategies are those that work well in enhancing learners’ language skills. Observations from two of the teachers in this study illustrate this point quite well.

“I like to have students who are engaged in a lot of activities. It is not just like sitting and listening to the teacher who writes in a blank. They are moving around the classroom and asking questions to each other; this is how you learn a language.” (Debra)

“I am an eclectic teacher. I like to use what works. I like to use a variety of works. One day we might be using the overhead projector. The next day, we may have a chart to be filled with a partner. I mean there is a variety of teaching and you have to choose the one which will let students speak.” (Fadia)

As is indicated in Chapter 2, the K–12 curriculum standards, developed as an integral element of *Education for a New Era*, are supposed to be both challenging and capable of delivering world-class educational outcomes for young Qataris. Importantly, the standards which contain both content and performance are intended to promote two pillars of *Education for a New Era*: variety and autonomy, but it should be noted that the designers of the reform implementation process assiduously avoided dictating or proposing a curriculum per se, nor do they prescribe how information and skills are to be conveyed. As I have noted elsewhere, individual teachers are made responsible for selecting textbooks if any, and which teaching and learning resources to use, together with the most appropriate methods of ESL teaching, and teaching mathematics and science in English medium classrooms.

More importantly, Qatar’s curriculum standards demand that teachers promote critical thinking skills by providing opportunities for learners to engage in constructing their own learning and knowledge, rather than merely repeating what they have memorised ‘parrot-fashion’. Making this transition is likely to be by no means easy for teachers who may be inured to didactic classroom practices, rote learning and recitation, and top-down authority models of school management and leadership. Here, recognising the diversity of the backgrounds involved, I do not presume that all the women ESL teachers in this study are drawn from the teacher as authority model, but it is safe to assume that those from the Arab world more generally, and those transferring from Qatar’s Ministry of Education schools, will almost certainly fall into the teacher

as didact category. This means that providing and delivering effective professional development to help teachers bridge this critical gap in practice is essential if a standards-based curriculum is to have the effects its designers intended.

What my questionnaires and interviews with ESL teachers revealed is that teachers needed to improve their skills in group work and co-operative learning, although the environment, even within Qatar's Independent Schools, may militate against this as it does not normally encourage group work and collaborative learning. Teachers also felt that they needed to up-date their skills by using authentic materials in teaching English and skills in learner-centred teaching and learning so that they could make a transition from Ministry of Education schools where a teacher-centred approach is very much the norm. Table 7.7, which appears immediately below, provides a synopsis of the teachers' responses to particular aspects of their continued professional development.

Table 7.7 Skills Needed for Effective Women ESL Teachers

<u>Skills Needed for Effective Women ESL Teachers</u>		<u># of Teachers</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>St.D</u>
C.7	I need to improve my skills in group work	233	3.36	1.176
C.8	I need to update my skills in producing authentic and engaging teaching materials	233	3.47	.997
C.6	I need to update my skills in co-operative learning	233	3.60	.965
C.9	I need to develop my skills in student-centred learning	233	3.65	.995
C.10	I need to update my ability to use action research	233	3.65	.941
C.4	I need to improve my pedagogical strategies to help promote a good school	233	4.21	.823
C.3	I need to use English as the dominant language of teaching and learning	233	4.24	.866
C.1	I need to plan instructions on how to use specific learning strategies (previewing, skimming, inferring information)	233	4.33	.719
C.5	I need to attend a demonstration lesson by an ‘expert teacher’/video displaying model lesson to support my professional growth	233	4.36	.742
C.2	I need to provide opportunities for learners to explore topics of personal interest through a foreign language i.e. English	233	4.42	.646

By using a five-point scale where 5 represented ‘strongly agree’, 1 represented ‘strongly disagree’, and 3 represented ‘neither agree nor disagree’, a picture was revealed of women ESL teachers working in Qatar’s Independent Schools who are not yet positive about their skills, something which might be expected from teachers who are mainly in the early stages of career development, and who may lack appropriate backgrounds in teacher education. As indicated in Chapter 5, a lack of confidence about skills, knowledge and understandings is often found in both naive and even more experienced teachers in other educational settings who have not had substantial access to quality professional development programmes, (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

Changing the fundamental beliefs of teachers like those in this study is even more difficult, because the process often challenges sets of long-held and ingrained core principles about the purposes of education. Moreover, beliefs are more often than not implicit, seldom discussed, or widely understood, but exist at the level of unstated assumptions and values. Indeed, McLaughlin and Mitra (2000) reach a similar conclusion based on their study of three innovations. They were concerned about what it would take to achieve deep reform, and they found that the problem for implementation of reform is not only teachers learning how to do it, but teachers learning the theoretical basis or foundations in respect of why they are doing it.

7.5 New Roles for Women ESL Teachers in the Reform

At the centre of *Education for a New Era* is a seemingly simple maxim, teachers are required to change from being teacher-centred to learner-centred. Of course, as noted earlier, change in beliefs and practices is not readily achieved by a notional mandate or policy: it requires far deeper and more fundamental approaches by the main agents, in this case, teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools. The change from being teacher-centred to learner-centred should be reflected in the selection of teaching methods employed in the classroom as this provides one indicator of how teachers' roles have altered. Note that Pica (2008) as mentioned in Chapter 5, argues that ESL teachers expand their roles in the context of change by finding themselves responsible for meeting the subject needs of their learners as well as their linguistic and communicative needs.

The classroom roles for women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools were new in two broad ways: firstly, they demanded a change in classroom approach and management particularly from being teacher-centred to learner-centred, and secondly, they required a broadening of

teachers' professional activities to embrace not only teaching ESL, but addressing mathematics and science via English medium teaching and learning. This resulted in teachers having to embrace the dual responsibilities of teaching and learning content and language with young ESL learners who must also acquire the mathematics and science knowledge and skills via English medium classrooms. I provide data obtained from teacher questionnaires in Table 7.8 below which show the extent to which women ESL teachers in my study occupy different roles and carry out different functions in Qatar's Independent Schools.

It is noticeable that 27 (around 12 per cent) of the teachers in this study occupy roles as co-ordinators within Qatar's Independent Schools, roles that require diverse professional activities including mentoring. In Qatar's Independent Schools co-ordinators play a critical part in developing new teachers' professional roles where they are focused on helping and guiding new teachers through developmental stages, during which the mentor's own role will change accordingly. I found that in this study most co-ordinators highlighted their main responsibility as building good relationships with teachers and reducing the gap between teachers and administration by finding common ground. Illustrative examples include:

"I think that I should be helpful. I am the co-ordinator, not the principal. I am here to make their lives easier. Help them find meeting points between administrative and teachers. I should be the connection between them. That is why I should have good relationships with my teachers as well with my principal."
(Ameena)

"I am trying always to be supportive; to have them as much as possible. What made it easy for me is that I am responsible for the school schedule so I always try to help them and if there is anything, I switch the schedule for them. I try to study their personal life. I am trying my best." (Ameera)

Another ESL woman co-ordinator emphasises the point that co-ordination means sharing professional knowledge, not competing with other teachers. She said,

“I am co-operative with teachers, I share every activity, I don’t compete with my team, I am the co-ordinator, and I don’t compete with them that my worksheet is better than theirs. I don’t hide what I am doing.” (Debra)

Yet other co-ordinators stress the point that they should be very close to their teachers and know something about their personal lives so they can help them define a professional path since they are new and they have ‘zero’ knowledge in teaching, viz:

“I always ask my teachers what do they like? It is a speaking activity but it is personal, it is related to their lives. When I know them, I become friendly and when I see someone sad I take her aside and ask her why she is sad today. She feels that I really care.” (Nadia)

“I am friendly, even if I am the co-ordinator of the department, they are very close to me, and they even talk with me about their social life. I am a supportive co-ordinator for my colleagues, I always ask the Professional Development co-ordinator here if there are courses for my teachers since all of them are inexperienced, this is their first time to teach.” (Salwa)

Other women ESL teachers talked about the advantages or benefits of being a co-ordinator from two sides: dealing with many learners and dealing with adults. Dealing with teachers is seen to be harder than dealing with learners since their needs and personalities appear to be different and complicated, though there would be many who deal with young people on a regular basis who would argue that it is no less difficult, and it may be more so. Co-ordinators who spoke about this issue indicated:

“As a co-ordinator you don’t have a class. I move between five classes. I hate it. Being a class teacher is much better. Instead of

dealing with 150 students, I have to deal with 25 students only. You know them better, their personalities, their lives, their parents, their favourite things, but with 150, you don't have time, you can't remember their names sometimes.” (Ameena)

“It is really harder to deal with ladies than dealing with students; you have to understand their personalities where students' personalities are easier to understand. You know directly if this student is A or C, if he is sensitive or not, they show, but with teachers it is very complex.” (Ameera)

From the information I obtained, it seems clear that co-ordinators recognise that among the important roles they play is building good relationships with other teachers by listening, advising, mentoring and supporting new and less experienced teachers to define their professional career paths during a climate of change. Part of this role involves women ESL teachers in this study protecting naïve and/or inexperienced teachers from adverse organisational forces, providing them with challenging assignments, sponsoring their advancement, and fostering their positive exposure and visibility in Independent Schools. This tends to fit with a recent study by Shank (2005), who found that through collegial support and challenge, novices and experienced teachers can learn to be open about their practices and grapple with the complexities of teaching.

It is worth noting here that even though there are 27 co-ordinators among the ESL teachers involved in this study, given what I learned about the nationalities, backgrounds, qualifications and experience of the larger sample of 233, it may well be that even people in more responsible posts such as co-ordinators, are actually relatively inexperienced, meaning that they are on a similar if not parallel journey to their less experienced and more 'junior' colleagues, and they will also require support, guidance and assistance to ensure this occurs.

7.5.1 Changing Roles from ESL Teachers to ESL Co-ordinators

Clearly ESL teachers played a crucial leadership role in implementing reform as co-ordinators and academic supervisors in this study. Moreover, some teachers reported a shift in their roles, responsibilities and practices which demanded that they re-shape themselves as teacher-practitioners. For instance, some co-ordinators reported that they were not on a par with their teaching colleagues by virtue of their more senior roles in the school. In their roles they needed to move from being a teacher to academic supervisor, with added responsibilities in dealing with their colleagues. One such co-ordinator noted:

“I don’t sit all the day with them; there are different feelings because I used to be one of their colleagues. Now I am their academic supervisor. The way they see me now is different. They switched Ameera from being a teacher, a colleague in the same room to another person. She is academic supervisor. She is entering classes to write reports about them.” (Ameera)

Another ESL woman co-ordinator expressed the view that to be an effective co-ordinator there should be a ‘red line’ between her and the teachers for whom she was responsible. She said:

“You can’t be their friend. There are boundaries. You should be one grade higher than them. You sit with them, you laugh, you talk, but it doesn’t extend to accepting gifts, like friends do. It should be one step ahead.” (Rawada)

Perhaps strikingly, one woman ESL co-ordinator in this study said there was lack of clarity about her job, there is no job description setting out what she is supposed to do. She argues that:

“As a co-ordinator they didn’t give us any job description. Rather than co-ordinating lesson planning, what should I do? What should I not do? Nothing.” (Debra)

Equally, other co-ordinators spoke about their lack of power and authority in Independent Schools in taking decisions, viz:

“I cannot make decisions on my own. I have to refer to the academic supervisor who is not specialised in English. I need to change things. I need to do many things but I don’t have the position, the authority to do it.” (Maha)

Other non-Qatari women ESL co-ordinators examined the culture in defining their roles with women ESL teachers in Independent Schools, saying:

“In India, you can be stricter with teachers if you are the head of section. I will give them a task and a deadline, no one will question it. Here in Qatar, being an Asian, I have to tackle people in a different way and try to make them work. I have to tell them the positives of doing such a thing, convince them and then I will ask them to do the job.” (Mini)

“I came here with my mental American mind observing and figuring out how things will go as a co-ordinator. We were not given any rules, any handbooks; as we haven’t been introduced to the staff. So there is no induction at the beginning of the year.” (Debra)

It is clear from the findings that I obtained, that the ESL teachers are reflective and attentive. Many of them showed the kind of independence expected of them. They were being asked to re-conceptualise their roles, but were being asked to do so without clear ‘ground rules’ for what was expected of them, and the manner in which they should go about their professional tasks. This suggests that teachers needed to understand, in some detail, the process of change and the outcomes expected of them. They also need to be provided with understandings about the sorts of factors that exert influences on the process of reform and its outcomes. This is supported in a study by Loucks-Horsley et al. (1997) in which they found that people considering and experiencing change evolve in the kinds of questions they ask and in their use of whatever change

is. From quotations mentioned above, we can see that women ESL teachers' questions were more self-oriented.

7.5.2 Personal and Professional: Contrasting Roles for Women ESL Teachers

What I observed in speaking with the teachers involved in this study is that their appreciation for complexities and paradoxes in their professional, social, political and cultural roles, their quest for connection, and the need for educational and personal control emerged as common themes. It was also clear that teachers tried to balance their professional and social roles, but it became apparent from their observations, that this was hard, and they often needed to sacrifice one in favour of the other, or at least subordinate one of them. In Qatar, and perhaps other Gulf locations too, women ESL teachers face significant dilemmas arising from conflicts between their professional and social roles and responsibilities. Some gave more priority to the former, and some to the latter, but no one in this study had apparently managed to create what they thought was an ideal balance.

“I felt guilty because I gave my work the first priority rather than motherhood.” (Dalia)

“I am trying to be a mother, a teacher, this is a hard job. I think it is mission impossible, a mother and a teacher in an Independent School and being a co-ordinator and a teacher, this is double mission, it is impossible. I am wondering.” (Wadha)

Despite an apparent conflict in their professional and social roles, the majority of women ESL teachers to whom I spoke expressed their love of teaching as a profession and working with learners. Two typical observations are reported below.

“I love my students a lot and I explain to them that I am here to teach them because they have a future; they have to be

distinguished men for this country. I love my students a lot.”
(Ameera)

“I love to teach English. It is all that I’ve been doing in my whole life and I really enjoy it. Sometime the workload is more than at other times but I really enjoy it.” (Rene)

Interestingly perhaps, one teacher reported that she found her ‘professional’ self when moving from teaching adults to younger learners, when she observed:

“I discovered myself that I am a good teacher when I started teaching children. I felt I was a failure when I was teaching adults, I found myself as a teacher with little kids.” (Dalia)

It became clear that the teachers in this study have developed particular styles that they believe worked best for them. These teachers appeared to be aware of their teaching styles, as well as of differences in learning styles among learners in the classrooms. In effect, they had a mixture of styles of teaching, and were eclectic in their teaching as the following observations illustrate:

“I am an eclectic teacher. I like to use what works. I like to use a variety of works. I don’t like to do the same thing every day.”
(Debra)

“I have to control the classroom. I have to be authoritarian. I am democratic when we discuss, when we do an activity, when they tell me I want to do it in this way.” (Dalia)

Women ESL teachers appear to have evolved and developed teaching styles based on their beliefs about what constitutes good teaching, personal preferences, their abilities, and norms of their particular discipline. Some still believe that classrooms should be teacher rather than learner-centred, where the teacher remains as an expert and authority in presenting information. Others

take a far more learner-centred outlook, viewing themselves more as facilitators of learning, and have adopted approaches far more heavily based on the learners' needs.

7.5.3 Three Main Roles for Women ESL Teachers

Despite being to a great extent marginalised or overlooked during the design and implementation of *Education for a New Era*, something readily apparent from even the most cursory reading of the proposals advanced by the RAND Corporation, the role of teachers remains critical to achieving the ends and objectives of Qatar's reform strategy. Qatar's Independent Schools must rely on well-qualified and enthusiastic classroom leaders who possess a deep understanding of subject matter, employ proven contemporary techniques in their teaching, and are capable of motivating learners to achieve their highest potential. This is simply because Qatar's reform requires teachers to use new curricula that are meant to engage learners in learning, change teachers from didacts to facilitators, and ensure that teachers are as committed to their own learning as they are to the learning of those in the classroom.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues that teachers can adopt one of three main roles in teaching: passive technicians, reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals. Extracts from the interviews show that some teachers adopted passive technician roles, in which they want direction from the authorities to assign textbooks for them or show them how to implement the standards. Here are the voices of two teachers opting for their kind of role:

“There isn't a textbook. I am not aware of the minimum. The SEC should tell us what is the basic and we can add this and that.”
(Debra)

“The system doesn’t furnish us with textbooks. There are so many textbooks in the market. Guide us which ones are aligned with the standards?” (Rosina)

On the other hand, data I gathered during interviews with the women ESL teachers showed that the majority of them showed something of a reflective approach in their teaching and interactions with other teachers. Other teachers appeared to be engaged in continuous reflective dialogue with themselves. They were questioning themselves as teachers as part of their role in the reform and exploring their capacity to learn new skills and knowledge. These reflective attitudes are illustrated below.

“I always keep thinking and talking to myself all the time. When I go to bed, I question myself. Even when dealing with my teachers, I always ask myself: did I give advice in a good way? Should I say it in this way? Should I encourage my students next time?” (Ameena)

“Sometimes I sit back and observe. If I have an opinion about teaching I will state it. I will be critical if people are just complaining and complaining.” (Debra)

How teachers in this study manage their emotional responses is also interesting, with one indicating that she did not wish these to intrude into teaching and learning, viz:

“I am trying not to let my emotions reflect on my teaching. I leave all my emotions behind me when I enter the classroom, I do not want to affect my students’ learning.” (Kholoud)

Due to her perceptions about the lack of support she was receiving from her Independent School, this teacher actively questioned her duties and role as a teacher. As a result, she chose to teach herself, not in a narrow personal sense, but as a teacher–practitioner largely left to her own devices. She said quite simply:

“I decided to teach myself, depended on myself, not to wait for others to tell me how I should teach or how I should work. I stopped with myself and I told her I have to teach you; nobody is going to teach you except me. I will change, I have to change. I have to learn. I will not wait for anybody to tell me what is going on? What is new?”(Dalia)

According to Kumaravadivelu (2003), when teachers take on the third role, that of transformative intellectuals, this requires them to be change agents, empowering learners by not only giving them the knowledge and social skills to be able to function in the society but educating learners for transformative action. In my study in Qatar two teachers gave voice to ideas such as these:

“I am not teaching academics, I try to teach morals, values and correct behaviours. I try to teach them to the best of their ability that I have come across.” (Trudy)

“I don’t want just to educate, I want to build a character. Building a confident character, changing her attitude is my ideal dream. I want her to believe in herself, in her abilities.” (Nadia)

Other teachers in this study also appeared to be concerned to act as transformative intellectuals, saying that they saw learning as continuous and related to life outside school, i.e. what is learnt and applied in school, is also applicable in the outside world.

“I am very encouraging by trying to get them to understand what they are doing, getting them realise that what they learn in the class doesn’t only apply in the class, it applies to outside as well.” (Trudy)

“I believe that they are not students for one year, they have to learn something that they live with. Getting them to understand not to separate what they learn in school from real life, to make connections between inside and outside, making them understand what they learn in year 1 will not stop in Year 2.” (Ameena)

More recently, the RAND Corporation carried out what was largely a self-evaluation reporting on its role and success in developing and implementing *Education for a New Era* as a top-down, policy-driven strategy. This essentially comprised limited visits to Independent Schools and observation of some teaching practice and teaching and learning behaviour. In a pattern which has become consistent across other RAND Corporation reports addressing *Education for a New Era*, this study asserted that the roles and perceptions of teachers had changed, although it had done so without appearing to find out why this had occurred and to what extent compared with previous practices. Brewer et al. (2007) report that teachers in Independent Schools had begun to re-define their roles, viewing themselves as facilitators of learning rather than the ‘teaching machines’ they had felt themselves to be in Ministry of Education schools, yet there is little more than assertion based on very limited teacher numbers to sustain this claim. It is also argued that teachers reported that because they were responsible for curriculum and for learning outcomes, they spent more time thinking about the goals of the lessons they presented and were more likely to reflect on their practice. While a great deal of this is similar to what my research reflects, this may simply be because of happenstance.

7.6 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to look more closely at the backgrounds, professional profiles and experiences of 233 women ESL teachers in Qatar’s Independent Schools. It documented the fact that there were 25 different nationalities represented in this larger group, and the average age was just over 28 years, with just under half of the teachers involved having fewer than three years’ experience, and just over half having more than three years.

I also showed that the teachers came from disparate educational backgrounds and that many of these teachers did not relate to the current teaching and learning activities they were engaged in. Moreover, the native speakers among them spoke a number of different ‘Englishes’. I concluded that the question of who is teaching ESL in Qatar’s Independent Schools was a very real one, bearing in mind that few of the teachers involved had been formally trained in the field of language education and others were teaching English largely because they could speak it and there was no one else available.

Given these factors it is hard to see just how readily and successfully Qatar’s Independent Schools can move to English-medium teaching and learning across the curriculum regardless of how broadly this is defined.

This situation is exacerbated by the fact that the teachers were left out of discussion about the early design of *Education for a New Era*. Apparently, it was assumed that they would simply be carried along by the reform and become willing participants in generating and leading the changes sought: how optimistic these assumptions turn out to be remains to be seen. Moreover, in the absence of professional development which provides the skills, knowledge and understandings that the teachers’ need, hoping for successful outcomes seems to be somewhat more problematic?

Despite this, many of the teachers in this study expressed confidence in the approaches they had developed, and displayed considerable levels of tenacity and forbearance, despite their inadequate teaching and learning materials and resources.

CHAPTER 8

Professional Development Needs and Support from Change Facilitators

Teachers also spoke of the challenges posed by the new

roles they were undertaking as teachers or as co-ordinators in the new Independent Schools, and of the workload implications. In addition, some spoke of conflicts between their professional roles and responsibilities outside schools, as wives and mothers. To conclude, I showed how individuals varied in the ways in which they assumed their roles. Following Kumaravadivelu (2003), I distinguished between those who acted as ‘passive technicians’, ‘reflective practitioners’ or ‘informative intellectuals’.

8.1 Introduction

The literature in Chapter 3 (Fullan, 1995, 2001a; Goldenberg and Gallimore, 1991; Hall and Hord, 2001; MacGilchrist et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 1990; Rogers, 2003) indicates that the success of change at classroom level requires new knowledge and skills for individual teachers, as well as continuous support from change facilitators. This support can be in terms of teacher training in subject content and pedagogical knowledge and skills (Kumaravadielu, 2003; Freeman, 2001), encouraging teacher collaboration (Clarke, 2008; Creese, 2005), enhancing teaching capacity, encouraging curriculum and professional development, and providing sufficient learning materials in relation to teachers' needs and local settings (Sandholtz, 2002).

To meet the objectives of the reform in Qatar, throughout the process of change, women ESL teachers have had to make sense of new policies, and enrich themselves with the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in change innovation effectively. Day (1999:7) emphasises that it is not possible to have curriculum development without concomitant teacher development and that “there can be no curriculum implementation without teacher training”.

As I indicated in Chapter 4, professional development is a complex issue. Teachers in *Education for a New Era* became more responsible and more accountable for curriculum development, teaching academic content standards within classrooms, administering new forms of assessment, aligning teaching and learning materials with content standards, using disaggregated data to inform teaching and learning, and using new report cards for learners.

This chapter looks at these women ESL teachers' views and perceptions about effective professional development activities, the support they would like to have from different change facilitators, and their concerns with regard to reform. The discussion is based on data I obtained from teacher questionnaires and face-to-face interviews with the teachers in this study. Tables are used to illustrate findings at relevant points.

8.2 The Nature and Extent of Teachers' Participation in Professional Development Activities

As mentioned in Chapter 4, successful reform focuses on improving teaching and learning, curriculum revision, school re-structuring and design. Systematic reform must have, at its centre, the provision of quality professional development for classroom teachers and other support personnel (Sparks and Hirsh, 1997). As indicated in Chapter 3, Havelock and Huberman (1978) and Hall and Hord (2001) argue that change in education comprises attempts to manage something which cannot be definitively planned within the context of a far larger approach to system-wide reform and transformation, i.e. it has just too many variables and contingencies and thus, must assume grappling with the un-knowable, no matter how much effort might have been devoted to planning beforehand.

Evidence from these studies shows that no one can control the whole process of change for change implementation. It depends on the people concerned, not on a plan. Successful change at classroom level, therefore, needs change in teachers because they are the smallest, but by no means the least significant unit in the change process. Havelock and Huberman point out that change is not easy to achieve unless all teachers are well trained with new knowledge and necessary skills (cf. Chapter 3). Manouchehri and Goodman (1998) support this notion and indicate that teachers cannot put change into practice if they lack knowledge of the teaching

context and ideas about what should be done in those circumstances. Grounded in these perspectives, this section discusses the findings regarding the women ESL teachers' views on their professional development needs.

Education for New Era requires most teachers to re-think their teaching practices, to construct new classroom roles and expectations about teaching and learning outcomes, and to teach in ways they may have not taught before, and in ways that they may not have experienced as learners themselves. Success ultimately turns on how well teachers accomplish the serious and difficult tasks of learning the skills and perspectives subsumed within a new vision of practices and beliefs about teaching and learning and moving on from those that that may have dominated their professional lives to date. More support for professional development is needed for teachers to acquire the new knowledge and skills required if reform in Qatar is to be successful.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, Guskey (2000) stated that good professional development begins and ends with the assessment of an individual's reactions to workshops and activities. Additionally, Hopkins (2001), also mentioned in Chapter 4, finds that a professional development plan should have sufficient learning materials, and should be based on content knowledge, and teaching and learning strategies for teachers to learn and apply to their classrooms.

The findings from the questionnaires regarding the teachers' participation in professional development activities are set out in Table 8.1. The table shows that 40% of the women ESL teachers reported having professional development 'on a regular basis', whereas 17% attended about once a month, 19% participated once a semester, and 13% once a year. Apparently about 10% of the women ESL teachers had not attended any professional development activities in their

career to date. Taken together, about a quarter of respondents in this survey had experienced little or no professional development on a regular basis.

Table 8.1 Frequency of Professional Development Activities

<u>Frequency of Professional Development Activities</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
On a regular basis (every two weeks)	94	40.3
About once a month	40	17.2
About once a semester	44	18.9
About once a year	32	13.7
Never	23	9.9
Total	233	100.0

As indicated in Chapter 4, Cowan and Wright (1990) found that professional development days have significant benefits for teachers, if scheduled correctly. Such days can provide many creative avenues for teachers to pursue. The lack of ‘professional’ development provision for Qatar’s teacher-practitioners raises a number of awkward questions for *Education for a New Era* which strongly asserts the need for teachers to move towards ‘world-class outcomes’ and to become effective professionals - at least this is what appears in public statements (Evaluation Institute, 2007).

We can see from Table 8.2 that almost three-quarters of the women ESL teachers in this study usually participated in professional development activities in schools, while more than half of respondents actually preferred to participate outside school. This may be due to their personal roles as mothers and wives and the need to balance their roles with their professional role. This is an area that may benefit from further exploration.

Table 8.2 Location of Professional Development Activities

<u>Location of Professional Development Activities</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
Participate in professional development activities in school	174	74.7
Participate in professional development activities outside school	121	51.9

Table 8.3 shows that the women ESL teachers preferred workshops that lasted for a short period of time, i.e. not more than four hours, while a few preferred those lasting for one day, and 34% reported a preference for more than a day for such activities. The dominating trend in the responses I obtained was that women ESL teachers preferred professional development activities of a short duration, lasting between two to four hours, something which may again reflect the demands placed on them in their personal roles as mothers, wives, sisters, or in other roles they assumed outside the context of the school and classroom.

Table 8.3 Duration of Professional Development Activities

<u>Duration of Professional Activities</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
2 - 4 hours	121	52
One day	35	15.1
Two or more days	77	33

Total	233	100
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Much of the recent literature on teacher learning and professional development calls for professional development that is sustained over time. A study by Clement and Vandenberghe (2000) found that longer-term activities are more likely to provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion of content, learner conceptions and misconceptions, and pedagogical strategies. Additionally, activities that extend over time are more likely to allow teachers to try new practices in classrooms and obtain feedback on their teaching. Shulman and Sparks (1992) argue that continual deepening of knowledge and skills is an integral part of any profession and that teaching is no exception.

Many women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools when I carried out my study had transferred from Ministry of Education schools. It is likely that these teachers would be motivated to participate in professional development as a means of helping them 'survive' the transition and additional expectations created by a reform programme. After all, teaching in Independent Schools where the focus is meant to be on the learner, is supposed to be different from teaching in a centrally-controlled Ministry of Education school where the focus is more on rote learning and recitation. What this study shows is that around two-thirds of teachers wanted to improve their practical teaching skills, with a similar margin (64%) expressing the view that they wanted to develop their understanding of the teaching and learning process.

Table 8.4 Purpose of Professional Development Activities

<u>Purpose of Professional Development</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>%</u>
Practical Teaching Skills	143	61.4

Pedagogical Knowledge (theoretical)	76	32.6
Teaching and Learning Processes	149	63.9
Attitude and Awareness of myself as a Teacher	82	35.2

More than half of the women ESL teachers were enrolled in professional development activities focused on the practical aspects of teaching, or on teaching and learning processes. This seems to reflect the urgent need felt by women ESL teachers to be equipped with the strategies and approaches they needed to deal with their part in *Education for a New Era* with so many new or revised skills to be learnt, for example, how to teach with reference to Qatar's curriculum standards and means of assessing learners.

My interpretation of these qualitative findings is supported by the interview data in which women ESL teachers draw attention to the urgent need to show them how to develop content knowledge.

One teacher said:

“Some of us have content knowledge about our subjects, OK. But, then maybe we lack a real understanding or knowledge as to how to teach the subject. Then there are some of us teaching ESL who do not have a good content or knowledge about our subject English or even really know how to teach it.” (Sara)

This quotation echoes the findings reported in a study by Loucks-Horsley et al. (1997) which concluded that, in order to meet the demands associated with reform, teachers must be immersed in the subjects they teach, and have the ability to communicate knowledge and to develop advanced thinking and problem-solving skills among learners.

8.3 Women ESL Teachers' Attitudes Regarding Professional Development

The findings from the questionnaires showed that the majority of women ESL teachers had positive attitudes towards professional development. Data obtained from interviews support the views expressed in the teachers' questionnaire responses shown in Table 8.5. On a five-point scale, where 5 represented 'strongly agree', 1 represented 'strongly disagree', and 3 represented 'neither agree nor disagree', most teachers responded positively with mean scores being over 4 save for one response which fell just short.

Table 8.5 Women ESL Teachers' Attitudes to Professional Development

Women ESL Teachers' Attitudes to Professional Development		<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>St. D</u>
D. 5	Teamwork is important for teachers	233	4.68	.625
D. 2	Teachers become better educators through general professional development	233	4.62	.640
D. 8	The professional development of teachers can contribute to an effective school	233	4.48	.616
D. 7	Improving teaching ability through professional development influences learner performance	233	4.42	.761
D. 9	Effective schools focus on the life-long learning of teachers	233	4.40	.789
D.10	Team teaching would support the development of teachers	233	4.40	.720
D. 6	Daily teacher collaboration would support their classroom practice	233	4.21	.739
D. 4	Professional development for teachers can result in sound teaching practice	233	4.15	.771
D. 1	A needs analysis questionnaire should be conducted before professional development activities are assigned for teachers	233	4.08	.829
D. 3	Teachers become better educators through professional development focused on pedagogy	233	3.81	.931

What is notable about these findings is the level of consistency regarding what the women ESL teachers in this study felt and thought about professional development. In fact, only the question about whether teachers become better educators through professional development which focused

on pedagogy, gained a score of slightly less than 4, suggesting that the women ESL teachers in this study were strongly focused on the need for sound professional development programmes, consistently delivered, but importantly tailored to their needs rather than simply being part of a regular schedule not necessarily connected with them or their needs. This finding is broadly in line with studies mentioned earlier in Chapter 5 such as Richards and Farrell (2005) and Díaz-Maggioli (2003) who argue that a strategic approach to professional development starts with needs analysis, and that professional development programmes involving participants in the planning, organisation, management and delivery are more successful than top-down approaches where administrators make decisions in lieu of teachers.

What we understand about effective learning is that a combination of theory and practice (Kumaravadivelu, 2003; Kennedy, 1998) firmly based on what learners already know, co-located within existing realms of knowledge and experience, generates better outcomes. It is thus interesting to see just how the ESL teachers in this study viewed professional development within this context. To an extent at least, effective learning must be seen as relevant by the learner and not just by the teacher. Presenting material, no matter how theoretically well-grounded it may be, without a context for learners – whether these are ESL teachers or young people in a mathematics classroom – seems almost certain to produce sub-optimal outcomes.

So when looking to professional development – whether this is considered as ‘training’, or ‘development’, or a combination (Freeman, 2001) – ESL teachers are going to need contexts within which they can explore and learn, and if these contexts do not exist by virtue of background or experience, then they will need to be created first-hand so that learning becomes rooted and is enabled to flourish (Sandholtz, 2002).

By way of further clarification, the women ESL teachers' accounts of the impact of the Supreme Education Council's INSET scheme on their practice made it clear that in-service provision had had a very varied influence, with quite different outcomes being reported from the same provision, some women ESL teachers acknowledging an emotional experience inherent in the learning situation; hence, initial positive outcomes could sometimes be short-lived without a sense of enhanced expertise being associated with, for instance, knowledge and skills. However, such outcomes may be useful and even necessary pre-cursors for changing practice and increasing self-confidence. Affective outcomes should go hand in hand with increases in a sense of competence in new knowledge and skills. Revealing this kind of affective outcome, one teacher said:

“I got the conclusion that if I trust myself and there is self-esteem, everything will go smoothly, so I wasn't that much worried and then the support we get from the SEC, the workshops are massive.”
(Ameera)

Some women ESL teachers reported motivational and attitudinal outcomes and the enhanced enthusiasm and motivation to implement ideas received by observing the trainers' way of working and by attempting to emulate it. This type of outcome can involve changes in teachers' attitudes towards their occupational role, their professional development, and the reform process itself as well as raising self-esteem. One teacher said:

“I got that training course in the Education Institute for four weeks. I finished this course last Thursday and I learnt a lot. I used to ask them very tiny details and they gave me a lot of answers. Dr. X, Y. The last one Z was useless, she has nothing to say.” (Dalia)

In short, the teachers involved in this study clearly believed that quality professional development was important for them as individuals, and for the improvements in teaching and learning sought by *Education for a New Era*. Without appropriate and effectively targeted professional development related both to the wider ambitions of *Education for a New Era*, and to teachers' professional needs in terms of pedagogy, curriculum knowledge and other factors, it is clear that there will be shortcomings in how far and how well the reform proceeds, and in gaining the improvements in teaching and learning which the reform is meant to address.

8.4 Views on Professional Development Activities Provided by Independent Schools and the Supreme Education Council

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, *Education for a New Era* demands that educational institutions such as the Professional Development Office in the Education Institute and school support organisations operating in the Independent Schools develop teachers professionally. This means that the Independent Schools have to assess their teachers' capacity before considering strategies to enhance their effectiveness and new roles for them in the reform. This is an important change since women ESL teachers need to update their knowledge and skills regularly in order to fulfil the demands of the reform in Qatar. This section aims to explore women ESL teachers' views on the professional development activities provided by the Supreme Education Council and school support organisations at the time when my study was carried out.

In my interviews, most women ESL teachers in the sub-sample argued that teachers' input in designing professional development activities or workshops is more effective than workshops designed by change facilitators who do not seem to understand the real needs of teachers. They said:

“The system should make up its mind to provide us with really high quality professional development that is relevant to our use with our students. I mean, this cannot be that difficult. Ask teachers for help and we can tell you what we need and we can help organise activities that will help us help the students. It’s really frustrating to see how the system just moves along without taking into consideration our classroom needs. We need more materials and more support to do our jobs.” (Rosina)

“I am preparing to deliver a workshop because these are not many workshops. This is affecting teachers and even affecting their work.” (Salwa)

One woman ESL teacher argued that the administration needs professional development guidance in how to evaluate teachers and how to deal with them, stating:

“I think that professional development for management team is not going so well, it is not enough, they still have some old points of view like shouting at teachers. They are attending classes suddenly to see if the teacher is prepared or not. They don’t want to see any learning happening in their school.” (Nadia)

Others mentioned the special needs of women teachers in attending professional development workshops, arguing as follows:

“Some ESL teachers are married and they have workshops late at night. I will handle the supplementary lessons and put pressure on myself to make them happy.” (Rawada)

“The workshops were during the lunch breaks and this is one of the points that I hate here. You have to work during the breaks. We don’t have time, and we don’t have lunch, no breakfast break. We work 200% of the working hours.” (Wadha)

These quotations reflect the findings reported in Porter et al. (1993) (cf. Chapter 5) who addressed the gaps in policy with regard to gender and with regard to teaching as a feminised

profession. Overlooking the needs of women teachers potentially results in resentment and teachers may end up resisting the changes imposed upon them. The scheduling of some of the workshops for the teachers in the study in Qatar clearly did not cater for their needs as women teachers.

As I indicated earlier in Chapter 7, the findings from the questionnaires indicated that women ESL teachers were from 25 different backgrounds and that the majority of them had received their higher education in different disciplines, but they were remarkably consistent in arguing for the professional development activities to be focused on ESL. Typical examples of their observations were:

“The majority of the teachers do not have formal ESL training and there is no attempt to fix this by the school or even the system.”
(Mini)

“The SEC or at least the school should offer courses on ESL methods, but they don’t. They just give us what they think they need, but it really isn’t.” (Kholoud)

“You would think that with so many of us teaching ESL that the school would offer us ESL-related workshops, after all, the annual testing in the core areas is in English, but there aren’t any ESL workshops, it is professional development fit for all. ” (Nadia)

What seems clear to me, having listened carefully to what the ESL teachers in this study observed, is that there is an obvious need for a clearer definition or approach to ESL teachers as professionals and practitioners. That is to say, as Kumaravadivelu (2003) argues, ESL teachers need specific knowledge to deliver ESL content and this obtains in the generality no less than it does in Qatar’s Independent Schools. Language, teaching and learning is grounded in theory: it is more than just a matter of learning methods and ESL teachers need to be aware of this. Of

course, approaching ESL teaching from the perspective of professional praxis, must take into account the sorts of discipline-specific knowledge arising from linguistic science, second language acquisition and cognitive psychology. Contextualising and managing this knowledge can then provide a theoretical basis which is essential for ESL teachers to engage in language education.

Time was another issue that came up in the interviews. The women ESL teachers in my study had the same view of professional development as the teachers in a study by Guskey (2000) (cf. Chapter 4). As my study and others show, professional development should be a continuous process, rather than a one-time activity. The teachers in my study commented as follows:

“We need professional development that links to our daily jobs of teaching our students. We don’t need any more of these one day programmes that are not focused on our needs. We need the kind of professional development that is continuing and focused on what we need in our classrooms.” (Trudy)

“The SEC and school support organisations don’t give us adequate depth or time on the professional development that they have scheduled for us. The professional development is like a one time only activity with ongoing or sustained emphasis. It’s kind of quick fix rather than long term.” (Debra)

These findings are aligned with Freeman’s study (2001) (see Chapter 5). He found that the more providers of teacher education can account for time, place and prior knowledge in programme design, the more successful these programmes are likely to be. In addition, he found that teachers’ schedules must allow adequate time for participation in the entire cycle of their professional development. The women ESL teachers in my study asked for professional development linked to their day-to-day teaching. This echoes a study by Loucks-Horesely et al. (1997) in which they found that in order to meet the demands associated with reform, teachers

must be immersed in the subjects they teach and have the ability to communicate knowledge and to develop advanced thinking and problem-solving skills among learners.

In summary, the findings from the interviews in my study suggested that women ESL teachers view professional development as most effective if it is designed and delivered by teachers themselves, since they feel that no one can understand the reality of classroom and learners' needs better than them. They viewed professional development as a comprehensive and inclusive activity that should include teachers as well administrators. This finding is supported by Watson (1976) and Billings (1977) who distinguish between the needs of the teachers and the school, and as such their approach to professional development appears to provide a strong foundation for teachers (cf. Chapter 5).

ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools have a heavy burden to broaden the scope of their work, and to be teachers of the English language and teachers of content in mathematics and science in English as well. These new roles require specialised professional development of the type requested by the women ESL teachers in this study. Moreover, the ESL teachers in this study view professional development as a long process and not something akin to a 'quick fix'. This finding has resonances with Lortie's study (1970) which used a questionnaire and a sample of almost 6,000 teachers, and found that teacher training over a short time-frame does not equip teachers for the realities of the classroom.

What I learned during this study from my discussions with ESL teachers was that the professional development offered to non-specialist teachers and indeed sometimes more widely, tended to be ad hoc, in-service and short-term. What this means is that the novice ESL teachers, and seemingly others in Qatar's Independent Schools, gain their expertise and knowledge largely

through on-the-job experience and through the local in-service education programmes offered by the Professional Development Office of the Supreme Education Council.

As a result of this I believe that there is a clear implication for the professional development of the ESL teachers i.e. that professional development may continue to be problematic unless different approaches are adopted. These approaches need to enable ESL teachers to acquire and use the requisite skills and knowledge involved in teaching and learning in second language settings. These recommendations are in line with those of Corcoran (1995), Guskey (2000) and Guskey and Huberman (1995). These researchers also found that most professional development tends to be too top down and does not include teachers or school site staff during the planning phase.

8.5 Views of Support from Change Facilitators

The review of the literature in Chapter 3 indicated that the success of any educational change requires support from change facilitators (Fullan, 1995, and 2001a; Hall and Hord, 2001; MacGilchrist et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 1990; Rogers, 2003). This section, therefore, presents my findings regarding the support which women ESL teachers would like from change facilitators; e.g. the Supreme Education Council, Independent School administrators and school support organisations.

The findings from interviews indicate that all the women ESL teachers in the sub-sample would like support from the government, their schools and school support organisations in helping them to fulfil the needs of the transformation to the new system of Independent Schools and to raise their awareness of what is required from them in terms of acquired skills and knowledge. Based on this, school administrators with a broad vision were required.

The majority of the women ESL teachers claimed they had good support from Independent School operators and principals whom they viewed as good listeners and diplomats who knew how to tackle problems wisely. One said:

“Most of us feel confident and secure. The operator² gives us time. I got a teacher with problems; he gave her time to improve. He gave her time to cope and accept the change. I do respect him.”
(Nadia)

Another woman ESL teacher stated that because her schools’ operator and principal was a woman, she understands their special needs as women. She said:

“My operator is a human being first of all. She is very flexible and very supportive. Since she is a woman, she understands the needs of her teachers.” (Ameera)

One woman ESL teacher said that good support from administrators should not only be in training, but should include support in the budget for producing learning materials, stating:

“The operator sat with us and talked with us. He provided all the resources needed for the English department. He is a good operator. There is no clash between us and him. He is a good listener and he understands our needs as effective ESL teachers.” (Ameena)

Most women ESL teachers had good support in terms of professional development activities designed by the Supreme Education Council or school support organisations but not all women ESL teachers received that opportunity equally. One of the women ESL teachers argued that the operator should believe in equity and the need for the professional development for all teachers, Qataris and non-Qataris. In this respect, she said:

² Operator is the owner of the Independent School and he/she is responsible legally in front of the Supreme Education Council and the Qatari Court.

“The operator doesn’t give us money that we need for the school. Sometimes he pays but he misunderstands what is important and what is not as he is not an educator. I want to go to TESOL Arabia conference in Dubai and he doesn’t allow other ESL teachers to join me since they are not Qatari. I think professional development is the most important thing for all teachers in the reform.” (Nadia)

On the other hand, some women ESL teachers had negative views about their administrators.

They had had different points of view from their school principals. They argued as follows:

“I don’t agree with my principal’s decisions. There are policies that I don’t agree with. She wants to have lots of assemblies, but she doesn’t realise how much time is taken from the learning.” (Debra)

“My principal has a lovely smile, but she doesn’t really do anything like enforcing the rules behind the scenes.” (Rene)

One woman ESL teacher stated that her operator was neither qualified in education nor in ‘people skills’, commenting:

“Our operator is not qualified. Teachers are afraid of her. She thinks that learning happens by a stick, she is not flexible in learning. She doesn’t know how to smile!” (Sameera)

Communication was also an issue that the women ESL teachers highlighted during interviews.

The majority of the non-Arab women ESL teachers were struggling with communicating with administrators who were Arabs and Qataris, as the latter did not speak English fluently, or did not have any English speaking skills at all. This is a vital requirement since the most of the reform is delivered and written in English. On this issue, they remarked:

“My principal is friendly with me. Language is one of the obstacles to communicate with her.” (Mini)

“English language is a problem; I need to get a translator to understand my principal.” (Rosina)

“There is lack of communication between the English staff and admin. We have a staff meeting and they will say something in Arabic and teachers would discuss it for long time and then they will say it in English very straightforward.” (Trudy)

One woman ESL teacher had a different point of view regarding lack of communication, not with respect to using the language, but in interpreting the culture, saying:

“The operator is highly educated but not necessarily by culture, maybe bi-lingual but not culture. I think there is misunderstanding when it comes to meanings behind what expressions actually mean.” (Debra)

Another woman ESL teacher wanted more involvement in administrators’ decisions about school because she claimed that teachers knew more about learning, and argued:

“They do not listen to us, in this school you’ve got more admin than teachers and if you ask them something, they do not know anything.” (Trudy)

To sum up, the majority of women ESL teachers claimed they had support from change facilitators who were supportive, good listeners and provided the resources needed. On the other hand, some teachers claimed that administrators were neither qualified nor knew what to do. Other women ESL teachers who were non-Arabs found out that communication was an obstacle. Most of the women ESL teachers wanted more input into administrators’ decisions that are related to learning since they are the ones who know more about teaching and learning in schools and classrooms. These findings echo those reported in the literature reviewed in Chapter 3, especially studies by Fullan (2001a), Goldenberg and Gallimore (1991), and Hall and Hord

(2001), in which it was shown that the success of change at classroom level requires new knowledge and skills for individual teachers as well as continuous support from change facilitators.

ESL teachers in this study clearly believe that they need to have access to continuous, hands-on implementation and support if they are to succeed in realising the reform's ambitious vision of a world-class education system. In particular, they argue that it is critical for the principals and teachers in the new schools to have help in becoming autonomous professionals doing substantially more demanding work than the Ministry of Education tended to require. Hence, as indicated in Chapter 2, school support organisations play a significant role in professional development for teachers, something which is critical to success. School support organisations are profit or non-profit organisations assigned and contracted by the Supreme Education Council for Independent Schools in their first year of operation to help the administrators as well as teachers implement the requirements of *Education for a New Era*.

Interview data obtained during this study suggest that a few teachers found school support organisations were supportive and helped them learn to be independent. They delivered a good number of workshops about applying the standards. On this matter, they stated that:

“We learnt a lot from them and the most important thing that we learnt was to be independent. They taught us how to depend on ourselves.” (Fadia)

“They were very supportive. They helped us with the planning, standards, workshops. You should be open-minded to implement their ideas. Change is difficult.” (Ameena)

“They gave us lots of workshops, they are of great support. They helped in curriculum standards and how to apply them. They gave us workshops weekly.” (Wadha)

One woman ESL teacher stated that one year of support was not enough and she wanted continuous support from school support organisations, asserting:

“They were very helpful. I wish they had stayed for another year so they could explain what scheme of work, not like the SEC.” (Dalia)

However, the majority of women ESL teachers did not agree with that the role of school support organisations was being fully discharged and they wanted more support from them. Some women ESL teachers mentioned the lack of understanding of Qatari culture and how to deal with teachers. It was also felt that teachers cannot take on innovative ideas without understanding the implications, not only knowing the *how* but also as the *why*. One teacher commented as follows:

“The English consultant did not accept argument. She said “do not argue with me”, but I need to argue, I need to understand. I am not arguing for the sake of argument. I am arguing to understand, to learn and she does not give me the chance to do that.” (Nadia)

Other women ESL teachers mentioned that the school support organisations did not take the initiative and come to teachers and support them. Teachers had to ask them for support. Two of these teachers noted:

“School support organisations are sitting in their office, they are not helping. Just going to them and asking them for something out are not helping at all. They can be more proactive.” (Rawada)

“CfBT, I did not like them, it was drama only. She was preparing something and asked us to log on; we can do it by ourselves, no need for her presence.” (Hadya)

Other women ESL teachers talked about the change of staff in the school support organisations and said that this was not good for teachers' professional needs. One of the teachers stated:

“They are doing excellent work but there were some changes between the staff. There was a lady supporting me and then they changed the school supporting team and this really affects teachers.” (Mini)

Other women ESL teachers indicated that their needs were not fulfilled by the school support organisations. These teachers wanted more practical workshops and ESL workshops that were focused on the four skills of English – reading, writing, speaking and listening. At the end, it was clear that their concern was not about the quantity of professional development, but about the teachers' needs. In this respect, they said:

“All the time they gave us handouts, sheets, books, they did not help me in the practical things. By the end of the year, they gave us nine workshops, but we did not feel we have school support organisations or support as they called themselves.” (Sameera)

“Most of the workshops are focused on reading; we did take any workshops about listening skills, writing or speaking skills. They design anything for our development. They have to consult our needs and views on what is best for us.” (Nadia)

One other woman ESL teacher did not feel that staff from some of the school support organisations were professional, as they lacked experience and the teachers were actually more experienced than them. She argued:

“Some people are not professional. The English co-ordinator is 29 years old. She's got five years experience only. Do you think that

she is a good advisor and teachers can depend on her? She just wanted me to teach the easiest standards and avoid the difficult things all the time. There will be a gap in learning, she doesn't explain, she orders. If they like you, they will help you. It is something sad really here in Independent Schools, this is discrimination." (Sameera)

In sum, although some of the women ESL teachers found school support organisations supportive, a majority of teachers found to the contrary. School support organisations were seen as reactive, or to an extent, unresponsive, to teachers' needs; and their workshops did not reflect the practical needs of teachers. Teachers in this study were also concerned about the change of staff within school support organisations and about the fact, that some of their staff did not appear to be professional and that they lacked experience.

My findings echo those of the Berends et al. (2002) study which found that without leadership, support, and availability of resources, clear communication, provision of materials and staff support, and efforts on the part of the design teams to build a consensus of teacher support, and without strong principal leadership, implementation of reform is likely to fail or at least lag far behind the planned schedule. In addition, as indicated in Chapters 3 and 5, in order to achieve successful change, Goldenberge and Gallimore (1991) and Kleiner et al. (1999) suggest that there should be provision for continuous support in real teaching contexts and sufficient time for teachers to learn, absorb, reflect and practise new ideas related to change.

8.6 Women ESL Teachers' Concerns about the Independent Schools

As indicated in Chapter 3, concerns are very often person-specific, i.e. a concern for one person may not be a concern for another. Individuals possess different tolerance for a lack of clarity in the change process (Hall and Hord, 2001). Following Dalin (1998), we know that there are

several stages of concerns ranging from awareness to re-focusing. During this study, as I obtained information from teacher interviews, it became apparent that the majority of the women ESL teachers in the study were between the informational and personal levels of concern. To clarify, some teachers were concerned with reform, but were not anxious to learn much more about the characteristics or requirements of change. On the other hand, there were teachers who were uncertain about the requirements of change and who did want to learn more, particularly in the use of materials such as the schemes of work (cf. Chapter 7).

Women ESL teachers who clearly had very different backgrounds in terms of knowledge and skills to implement change could not move forward from the self concern level (certainty for the success of change utilisation to meet change objectives) to the task concerns level (the emphasis on change implementation process, e.g. the best use of information and resources related to efficiency, management and the requirement of time).

Women ESL teachers in this study reported concerns which centred on two main related themes: lack of job security and the impact of *Qatarisation*. These teachers' also had very real concerns about a variety of social and personal conditions, some of which clearly intersected. Interview data show that most of the women ESL teachers were anxious about their own careers, especially the long-term prospects for retention and promotion. A Qatari woman ESL teacher reported that having a different point of view from school administrators may result in teachers losing their jobs. Fears were also expressed that if the Supreme Education Council fails to develop approaches that protect the rights of Qatari teachers working in Independent Schools, this situation will not improve over time. She said:

“Being secured professionally, if you have different point of view from the operator or principal, you will be dismissed, fired. The SEC should have benchmarks to protect Qatari teachers working in

Independent Schools, but they don't have time, their sudden benchmarks are only for operators". (Ameena)

Another woman ESL teacher highlighted the lack of pension arrangements for non-nationals, who also lack security as they are 'sponsored' employees, with the loss of sponsorship usually resulting in removal from Qatar, leaving employers in a powerful position over employees. Needless to say, Qatar's employers are not generally held to account for how they treat their employees, although this may change in the future if Qatar moves to adopt more liberal approaches and implement various aspects of human rights law. This teacher put her concerns as follows:

"So that's a question area for me, because there is no job security that is leading to a complete different area. There is nothing paid for my pension when I am older, none of this would I get in the State. I am anxious, at any moment, I will be fired. The whole issue in Qatar is really anxiety; it governs a lot of my colleagues: American and British." (Debra)

The majority of women ESL teachers in the study voiced concerns about the one-year contract that does not provide substantial security and about the risks involved in signing such a thing, arguing:

"My concern is personally the one-year contract. If the operator tells me that he does not want me anymore, he can dismiss me easily. I am afraid, this is a risk and I have to take it." (Nadia)

"There is no security for employees in Independent Schools, we sign a contract for a year but anyone who wants to withdraw has to inform the school two weeks prior. We don't feel safe or secure in Independent Schools. There are no rights for teachers, one hour and you can be thrown away and nobody will listen to you." (Sameera)

To sum up, women ESL teachers highlighted feeling professionally insecure in Independent Schools that rely on one-year contracts. They were also concerned about pension schemes that

exclude non-nationals, and about their possible termination resulting from having a different viewpoint from school operators. The women ESL teachers appeared to be sending a clear message to the Supreme Education Council that such matters need to be rectified in order to improve the professional environment for teachers.

A majority of the non-Qatari women ESL teachers were afraid of *Qatarisation* as this would affect the ‘permanency’ of their job in Independent Schools. *Qatarisation* is a national policy that strives, where possible, to replace as much expatriate labour with suitably qualified Qataris. It mirrors policy in other Gulf States where dependence on ‘imported’ labour remains prevalent.

“I might be given the sack one day; I might be dismissed from my work, because I am not Qatari. We have been told that 70% of teachers should be Qatari, so I might be out of my job.” (Fadia)

“Permanency of the job and this is natural because *Qatarisation* is coming and all other nationalities are worried about it. If that is not there, the school will benefit from other nationalities, the school will not benefit from my contribution.” (Mini)

It is apparent that non-national teachers perceive *Qatarisation* as a negative move that will affect them. This perception tends to overlook the reality that it is Qataris that operate Independent Schools and national policy is to give priority to Qataris in the workforce. However, thus far at least, the number of Qataris working in Independent Schools is far fewer than the number of expatriates, and efforts need to be made by the Supreme Education Council to increase this number. At the same time, the Supreme Education Council needs policies to protect Qatari as well non-Qatari teachers who contribute in positive ways to Qatari cultural, social, political and economic life and well-being. It seems readily apparent that Qatar will continue to experience

shortages of Qatari teachers and that the Independent School system will continue to rely heavily on non-Qatari teachers, something that is very evident in other sectors of the labour market.

8.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter summarises the women ESL teachers' views and perceptions about their professional development activities, the support they had and would like to have from different change facilitators, and their concerns about the reform process.

Being women ESL teachers, they had special and societal needs (e.g. as married women). They also reported that they felt overloaded by workshops conducted outside schools and working hours. The majority of women ESL teachers in this study indicated that they had support from change facilitators: the latter were supportive, good listeners and provided the resources needed. Their views about administrators were more mixed: some felt they were not qualified and that they were ignorant of what to do. Some of the women ESL teachers were non-Arabs and for them communication was an obstacle. Teachers wanted more input into administrators' decisions related to learning since as teachers they were the people with the expertise in teaching and learning in schools and classrooms. Lastly, the teachers in the study had two main concerns related to the reform and to their work in the new Independent Schools. These two concerns intersected: they included the uncertainties related to *Qatarisation* and lack of job security due to the one-year contract system.

The ESL teachers in this study also reported concerns about the nature, timing and delivery of professional development which did not really address their needs as either teacher–professionals, nor their specific needs as ESL teachers. Most also seemed to believe that school support organisations 'delivered' what they had on offer, rather than striving to tailor programmes to the

needs and demands of teachers within the context of the dramatic changes required by *Education for a New Era*.

My own observation is that school support organisations failed to take into account the diversity of backgrounds, experience and understandings among the ESL teachers in this study, i.e. school support organisations were insufficiently aware of great differences in pre-service education, that teachers were very often working ‘outside’ their discipline/subject specialism, and that incorrect assumptions about homogeneity led to inadequate preparation and delivery.

CHAPTER 9

Summary and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

This study has a number of significant features viz: it is the first to carry out a genuinely external review of critical aspects of Qatar's reform programme *Education for a New Era*; it reflects on *Education for a New Era* from the perspectives of women ESL teachers dealing with an essentially synthetic approach to reform driven by a US model; it is the first of its kind in any Gulf state, many of which have embarked upon radical changes to public education in recent years; and the focus of this study is on the human elements involved in large-scale systemic reform, rather than on a systems-driven approach led by top-down policy.

One of the main aims of this study was thus, to shed new and unique light on the working conditions, concerns, and professional development needs of women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools. This aim was adopted because I saw these teachers were absolutely critical as the main-stay of *Education for a New Era* which has at its core, a dramatic move to teaching and learning a new, standards-based curriculum in English including English medium classrooms for mathematics and science. Moreover, I wanted to focus on teachers as the main actors and agents in enabling, or indeed, disabling reform, given that they were largely marginalised and overlooked in the design, development and implementation of *Education for a New Era*, and were largely treated as a de- or unprofessionalised body which would create reform in schools by

osmosis or other methods which were entirely unclear to me as a researcher, and to the women ESL teachers involved in this study as teacher–practitioners.

Prior to undertaking this study, I conducted a thorough review of the literature to determine whether there were any previous investigations dealing with the professional development needs of K-12 women ESL teachers teaching within a reform model based on a charter school adopted from the United States. My research confirmed that no studies of this type existed, and that there was scant evidence of reform programmes being subject to external review and enquiry anywhere in the Gulf region. Nor were there any studies of a similar nature in a Middle East or Gulf country that had created substantially revised public policy leading to educational reform such as Qatar’s *Education for a New Era*.

This study explores women ESL teachers’ views on the ways in which Qatar’s national reform programme *Education for a New Era* is being implemented in Independent Schools. In particular, it focuses on how women ESL teachers are reacting to the nature, pace and scale of change demanded by *Education for a New Era* and their perceptions of where and how they fit within the wider context of system-wide reform and transformation.

The research questions re-visited in section 9.2 below reflect this broad research focus and address the perceptions, beliefs and concerns of the women teachers. The study essentially employed a mixed method approach. Firstly, I designed a questionnaire aimed at all 233 women ESL teachers working in the then 29 Independent Schools. These women teachers were the first two cohorts of Qatar’s Independent Schools. Secondly, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 teachers collecting additional and rich qualitative data. Questionnaire data were analysed

using SPSS for Windows programme (version 16), while data from interviews were analysed using NVIVO 7.

The main purpose of this chapter is to re-visit the research questions posed at the beginning of this study, particularly those focusing on how women ESL teachers viewed the change and what it meant for them. I considered their beliefs, roles and perceptions and I reviewed their professional development and support needs. This chapter serves as a summary and makes suggestions and recommendations about possible ways forward for *Education for a New Era*. It also provides pointers as to where additional research and analysis may be needed. The chapter integrates the findings from teachers' questionnaire responses and from the 18 teachers in the sub-sample during the face-to-face semi-structured interviews.

In some senses the results I obtained are unsurprising, tending to largely confirm what other researchers had discovered earlier, albeit in western settings (cf. Chapters 3, 4 and 5). However, there is a unique situation obtaining for Qatar, and I have shown that the wide ranging changes in language education policy and procedures taking place offer new perceptions about educational reform.

As might be expected, there are substantial differences between Qatar and the typically western and some Asian locations where research on educational reform has generally taken place to date. Moreover, prevailing economic and social circumstances and the nature of Qatar as a nation state all act to ensure that strategies for reform cannot simply be 'transported' unchanged from one location to another. Given this situation, it is all the more surprising to find an attempt to implant the US charter school or corporatised approach to education without making significant adjustments. Nevertheless, the study does demonstrate that in Qatar which is a conservative,

Islamic nation, the critical issues for teachers remain largely the same as many of those obtaining in western, industrialised settings, i.e. largely regardless of context.

What I have done here, is to build a local dimension on top of the substantive base of well-established approaches used elsewhere. That is to say, my mixed method derives from paradigms tested in other, albeit largely western, industrialised locations and my approach to large scale educational reform draws upon models and techniques successfully used and applied in non-Arab and non-Gulf contexts. In short, I have combined approaches founded on what I call the ‘western empirical canon’ of educational research and analysis, and used these in a small Islamic, Arab nation grappling with modernisation, globalisation and the overwhelming desire to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for its people. What I have also shown is that contemporary methods and approaches from western, industrialised settings can be adapted and used to carry out research and enquiry in places such as Qatar, and that there need be no dissonance between this ‘western empirical canon’ of educational research and analysis and the needs and demands of a very different setting.

While I make no claims to having advanced new knowledge about ESL teaching in Qatar or elsewhere, my findings lend a great deal of weight to addressing the practical and very real problems associated with the professional development needs of teachers who are working in ESL settings and delivering mathematics and science content via English medium teaching and learning. Needs have been heightened by the demands of *Education for a New Era*, particularly by the introduction of English medium teaching and learning in three of the four core subjects in Qatar’s new curriculum.

This is the first, independent, external investigation of critical aspects of *Education for a New Era*, and the first to focus on women ESL teachers as critical agents of change. It is worth noting that despite the very substantial resources provided for *Education for a New Era* and for the Supreme Education Council itself, there were no firm plans to carry out a comprehensive formative evaluation or review, and nor were clear milestones or deadlines established to measure the progress of reform in Qatar's Independent Schools, apart from a simple head count of the number of teachers in the new Independent Schools in each cohort and in total.

In a very real sense, the Supreme Education Council appears to have breached one of its own pillars: accountability, by not adducing independent, verifiable data about the progress of *Education for a New Era* and its impact on teaching and learning and educational attainment in Qatar.

This study, therefore, seeks to fill an important gap and provide authentic and practical observations about what women ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools need in order to improve their own performance as teacher-practitioners and to produce better teaching and learning outcomes as a result. Thus, my research has been successful in providing insights into ESL teacher professional development needs in a context where English medium teaching and learning is seen as a key to success.

My research met the requirements of my research sponsor, the Supreme Education Council's Higher Education Institute. Its conclusions will help shape and inform the future direction of *Education for a New Era* and it should make a contribution to educational provision in Qatar.

9.2 Summary and Conclusions

1. What perceptions do women ESL teachers teaching in Independent Schools have about the changes manifested in Education for a New Era?

During interviews with women ESL teachers it emerged that they would like Qatar's new standards-based curriculum to have explicit objectives and content. They generally felt that while the new standards-based curriculum offered some advantages, it lacked clarity and left them largely to their own devices when it came to critical issues such as teaching and learning resources. And perhaps more importantly, there was little or no guidance regarding the pedagogy they should employ as ESL teachers and when teaching mathematics and science content in English medium classrooms. The findings revealed that women ESL teachers were uncertain about the quality of the school ESL curricula they had developed, and that they needed clearer guidelines in applying and using schemes of work. Moreover, they believed that they had inadequate time and space to prepare for the broad and specific demands contained in *Education for a New Era* and that this created additional stresses and workload.

This finding accords with the research literature cited in Chapter 3, particularly in the sense that successful change needs clarity in terms of its aims and objectives. Without a basic understanding of the aims and objectives of change, people are often unable to engage in innovation effectively: teachers need time to learn, understand and interpret new practices related to teaching, something that the findings in this study readily confirm.

My findings support the conclusions reached by others, that successful change requires support and management in explicit, realistic conditions and local settings, continuous improvement of individual teachers' knowledge, skills and teaching practice, as well as support in developing and

using learning materials throughout their professional career. In fact, the importance of having realistic plans and clear strategies for implementation is seen clearly in the work of Havelock and Huberman (1978). Moreover, my findings about the need for encouragement among women ESL teachers to engage in active learning processes and the need for consistent collaboration between change participants (i.e. teachers and change facilitators) is entirely consistent with the study by Dalin et al. (1994).

What my findings also illustrate is that women ESL teachers were reluctant to engage in and utilise change – in pedagogy or the curriculum for example - because they were unsure whether what they had designed and been implementing was right or wrong. In other words, they lacked clear guidance about the expectations of the reform, and had not been given clear direction about which approaches were more likely to succeed. As a result, it seems that the women ESL teachers did not fully develop or apply the fundamental principles required by the new curriculum e.g. integrated teaching, action research, and a learner-centred approach.

Studies by Bodilly (2001, 1998) and Berends et al. (2002) are consistent in pointing out that change may take longer, or may not be achieved as intended, if it lacks clarity in its objectives and the innovations sought. In this study, women ESL teachers generally viewed Qatar's standards-based curriculum and schemes of work as too general and ambiguous, or simply as too flexible and difficult for them to interpret and put into practice: the curriculum lacks in clarity and leaves far too much unsaid. The apparent vagueness associated with Qatar's standards-based curriculum and schemes of work presaged further problems in achieving teaching and learning objectives as well as bearing upon the creation of school vision and enacting appropriate teaching and learning policies at school and classroom level.

From the results of this study, it seems clear that a change such as *Education for a New Era* which is mandated, but which lacks clarity in terms of its objectives and which fails to address key aspects of the change process, will inevitably delay success and may actually not be successfully implemented. The findings obtaining from the research with women ESL teachers in the first two cohorts are clearly aligned with those reported by Fullan (2001a), Hall and Hord (2001) and Havelock and Huberman, (1978). It should be noted, however, that as this study was carried out at quite an early stage of *Education for a New Era*, it is still not clear whether uncertainties surrounding the new standards-based curriculum and school vision and policy will delay successful implementation at classroom level.

While they are given the power and authority to determine what is taught and learned, and how it is taught and learned, many women ESL teachers expressed the view that far more guidance and direction was required from the Supreme Education Council, especially as textbook provision was not part of the reform, and all teaching and learning materials had to be sourced by teachers. One result of this lack of guidance and direction was that many women ESL teachers felt lost, unsure of what they were doing, and uncertain about whether their approaches were appropriate and useful for learners. Hence, women ESL teachers believed that the Supreme Education Council should take critical steps to improve communication, through new policies, and by providing enhanced training and professional development opportunities, which they believed were important to develop teaching and learning and improve the outcomes of Independent Schools.

2. What do women ESL teachers identify as their professional needs in implementing change at classroom level?

By and large, the majority of women ESL teachers in this study believed that the working and educational environment in Qatar's new Independent Schools was better than the rigid, conformist approaches they had experienced in Ministry of Education schools. In responses very much aligned with those noted earlier, and despite their reservations about the lack of guidance and direction vis-a-vis the curriculum and other issues, a majority of the women ESL teachers indicated that they had power to teach what they want, something they considered to be very positive since it recognised their professionalism. However, it was apparent that being empowered to teach what they wanted was challenging for women ESL teachers as they felt they lacked the authority over resources, and this presented them with an obvious dilemma. It also created difficulties for those who had innovative ideas, but were constrained or unable to put these into practice.

Indeed, the power to allocate teaching and learning resources seems to be rarely in women ESL teachers' hands, this being the preserve of the school administration which did not necessarily, and in some cases simply did not, consult with women ESL teachers about their needs. Moreover, as each school is at least notionally independent, the attitudes, approaches and predispositions of the operator can differ substantially, so while in one school it may be possible for teachers to argue successfully for language laboratory space and equipment, this might not be a realistic strategy for another, thereby causing frustration among teachers, and both potential and actual differences in learner performance and attainment, and hence among schools.

The findings deriving from my study offer support for the idea that teachers acting alone, or even in concert, cannot ensure change. They need sound and continuing professional development directly related to their teaching and learning needs. This point was noted earlier with reference to work by Dalin et al. (1994) and Verspoor (1989). The women ESL teachers in this study identified needs in two main areas: curriculum materials and content and pedagogical knowledge. They also indicated that they would also like support on curriculum and learning materials. They wanted help in implementing the new standards-based curriculum, since this was very different from the approach which most teachers were previously exposed to in Ministry of Education schools. Thus, they wanted practical curriculum guidelines and content, training on curriculum design procedures, assistance in implementing the new curriculum, in developing and using teaching and learning materials in enhancing schemes of work, and in making provision for learning materials to serve different learning styles. The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by McLaughlin (1990) who indicates that change outcomes cannot be forced or enforced by policy imperatives alone, especially change implementation in the classroom which is based on teachers' individual capacity in terms of their knowledge, teaching skills and beliefs.

Finally, women ESL teachers reported their need in the content and pedagogical knowledge to enhance their English language content knowledge in four skills: reading, listening, speaking, writing, and developing their teaching strategies and integrated teaching ability to meet learners' needs and individual differences as well as designing learning materials because of the policy of no textbooks. They viewed this as a particular need as new approaches to teaching and learning were intended to be learner rather than teacher-centred, and they needed materials which addressed the core curricula and learners' needs. Women ESL teachers' concerns here are broadly akin to those noted by Chubb and Moe (1992), Havelock and Huberman (1978) and

Berends et al. (2002), all of which show that a lack of requisite knowledge and skills, teaching strategies and sufficient knowledge about implementing change could result in a low rate of change at classroom level.

3. What do women ESL teachers view as their concerns in implementing change at classroom level?

The findings obtained during this study support the view that the complexity of change and the degree of foresight and planning involved are critical. They revealed that women ESL teachers had concerns about implementing change in two inter-related areas: *Qatarisation* and lack of job security.

The main concern for women ESL teachers related directly to their conditions of service, including tenure. It is hardly surprising that these women ESL teachers were very concerned about their lack of job security, stemming directly from the one-year, fixed term contracts offered by Independent Schools and from the uncertainty about the long-term viability and success of Independent Schools themselves. The impact of this insecurity was felt by both Qatari and non-Qatari teachers, and while it may have provided flexibility for the schools in question, the messages it conveyed to women ESL teachers about how they were seen and valued, were clearly negative.

More broadly, clear inequities in teachers' salaries and entitlements created additional concerns for non-Qatari women ESL teachers all of whom were paid less and in some cases markedly so, than their Qatari peers with the same qualifications and experience. Non-Qatari women ESL teachers were also denied access to Qatar's national social security scheme which provides pensions for employees post-retirement. Naturally, the non-Qatari women ESL teachers were

similarly concerned about the national policy of *Qatarisation*, which favours employment of nationals wherever possible.

One thing which emerges quite clearly from this study is that the women ESL teachers involved have different professional interests and concerns at different stages in their careers. That is to say: the career paths, interests, expectations and needs of the ESL teachers in this study are by no means homogeneous, and nor are they necessarily linear in nature. For example, this study shows that ESL teachers with fewer than three years of experience tended to be concerned about managing the classroom and controlling learners. This suggests a need to focus professional support and in-service education on these concerns, although not exclusively.

As others, including Dalin (1998), and Kleiner et al. (1999) have pointed out, professional development support and assistance should be adequate, continuous and sufficient to enable teachers to become comfortable with change and enable them to enliven their teaching practice and beliefs, enhance individual commitment to change, and encourage interaction among school staff to work together at all levels. That I found similar patterns emerging among ESL teachers in Qatar's Independent Schools is, thus, not surprising.

I also want to argue that as the ESL teachers in this study have shown that they have different professional interests and concerns at different stages in their professional lives, and that they may move through different phases during the same day or over time, there is a need to more carefully map and match their professional development opportunities and provision with individual career trajectories, rather than assuming levels of commonality or homogeneity. From what I learned from the ESL teachers in this study, they would be far more receptive to, and

actively participate in professional development which they believed was tailored to their needs, met a range of professional demands and enabled them to be better teacher–practitioners.

I think it is fair to say that, in combination, these concerns and the insecurities perceived by all women ESL teachers in this study limited the development of healthy professional roles, since teachers were worried about their livelihood in the medium to longer-term. These concerns and the insecurities stemming from them also served to demoralise teachers although most had invested substantial amounts of personal time and energy in curriculum development while at the same time having to accept that their contracts may be terminated on the whim of their employer.

4. ***What conditions sustain or undermine professional development activities for women ESL teachers in Independent Schools as reported by women ESL teachers?***

The women ESL teachers in this study identified professional development as the cornerstone of *Education for a New Era*. It also looms large because a substantial number of the teachers had fewer than three years' professional experience and came from a range of different social, language and educational backgrounds, including higher education in disciplines other than education and/or ESL teaching. From their perspective, these teachers believed they were not the right people to implement change while relying on their current skills and qualifications. Studies by Havelock and Huberman (1978) claim that if policy-makers cannot have an influence over the behaviours of the participants involved in change, it is unlikely that change can be achieved as planned. Results from other research indicate that change differs from its original plan because there are not enough of the 'right' people engaged in implementing change (Hall and Hord, 2001).

Within the context of this study, my observation is that without the benefit of tailored, continuous professional development, for example in Qatar's new standards-based curriculum and the sorts of pedagogies and practices meant to sustain it, women ESL teachers are unable to implement this critical change effectively. My findings show that the women ESL teachers in the first two cohorts clearly experienced difficulties in understanding the curriculum standards, schemes of work, and in integrating skills development and learner-centred approaches to teaching and learning. This is hardly a surprising result given the diversity of backgrounds among these women ESL teachers, and the radically different approaches demanded by Qatar's new standards-based curriculum compared with the largely rote learning and recitation models with which most of them had worked previously.

In practice this means that the Supreme Education Council and the school support organisations need to take major responsibility for providing additional and substantial professional development for these women ESL teachers. This provision needs to be intensive since it is these teachers upon whom the heaviest burdens fall – they are responsible for teaching and learning in ESL per se, and for teaching and learning in mathematics and science in English medium classrooms.

This study also reveals that one of the ways of ensuring teachers are empowered is by treating them as peers and professionals in developing and implementing programmes and activities which they perceive are relevant, appropriate and beneficial. To do less, leaving teachers as passive recipients of professional development in which they have had little or no say, is more likely to ensure they are discouraged, and that any intended outcomes will be less likely to obtain.

The picture of *Education for a New Era* in Qatar which emerges from this research with women ESL teachers is characterised by a number of shortcomings: professional development workshops were supply-led rather than demand-driven, meaning that they focused on the interests of organisers/providers rather than on the real needs of the women ESL teachers. Goldenberg and Gallimore (1991) have shown quite conclusively that ‘quick-fix’ workshops fail to work effectively, while McLaughlin (1990) indicates that packaged management approaches which fail to acknowledge the characteristics of the local environment, and one-off pre-implementation training are ineffective in accelerating change at classroom level.

Most of the women ESL teachers in this study reported that they lacked the support necessary to develop and sustain their knowledge and skills, e.g. in subject content – the demands of the English curriculum and the curriculum demands made by both mathematics and science which are taught and learned in English-medium classrooms, pedagogic, curriculum knowledge and to develop a learner-centred approach. Again, most women ESL teachers in this study reported that their capacity to adapt to, and adopt, new approaches was compromised by what they perceived to be a high workload. Moreover, the manner in which *Education for a New Era* in Qatar was designed and implemented, meant that unqualified women ESL teachers were placed or left in charge of teaching English across the curriculum without the benefit of guidance and direction tailored to their needs, guidance and direction which specifically targeted improving teaching and learning in ESL and in teaching mathematics and science in English medium classrooms.

This study showed that the professional development offered to non-specialist teachers tended to be in-service and short-term. This meant that novice women ESL teachers in Independent Schools largely gained expertise and knowledge through essentially on-the-job experience and via local in-service education programmes offered by the Supreme Education Council’s

Professional Development Office. This raises a number of issues for the professional development of women ESL teachers, and suggests that the situation is unlikely to improve either soon or in any dramatic way, unless different approaches are adopted which enable them to acquire and use the requisite skills and knowledge for teaching and learning in second language settings.

While the women ESL teachers acknowledged that the Supreme Education Council and its school support organisations do provide professional development opportunities, many of them, especially those with other responsibilities that are typical for women in Qatar society, found attendance at workshops and seminars difficult and that these often intruded on other obligations they were expected to meet. One consequence was the women ESL teachers found themselves in need of professional development, but were unable to capitalise upon what was available because of other commitments, the rigidity of school timetabling, and the training activities themselves. They argued for time for professional development to be set aside as part of their contract, since this would support their professional roles without sacrificing wider obligations and responsibilities outside the school environment.

5. *What perceptions do women ESL teachers have about their roles in implementing change?*

What I found from my interviews with women ESL teachers is that they occupy the range of roles suggested by Kumravadivelu (2003), depending on their years of experience. In general terms, I found that women ESL teachers with fewer than three years of experience occupied roles somewhere between being passive technicians and reflective practitioners. On the other hand,

women ESL teachers with more than three years of experience, occupied positions somewhere between being reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals.

Moreover, I identified women ESL teachers who were using reflective dialogue in order to try and make sense of the reform and its application. Other women ESL teachers provided responses and information suggesting that they were on the way to becoming transformative intellectuals, i.e. change agents who understand that education reform is not about transferring knowledge and equipping learners with skills, but rather more concerned with supporting learners in more holistic ways.

As I have noted elsewhere, some women ESL teachers had attempted to look at Qatar's standards-based curriculum and the standards themselves in constructively critical ways, but they felt that they needed guidance and support from the staff of the school support organisations. Some women ESL teachers took the rather harsh view that some staff from school support organisations were high-handed to the point of arrogance, apparently brooking no argument or discussion, but instead insisting that their ideas should be adopted without dissent. If indeed such in-service practices did occur, they were clearly not conducive to creating and sustaining the reflective environment needed for women ESL teachers to change from being passive technicians to reflective practitioners.

A number of the Qatari women among the ESL teachers noted that they struggled to balance their professional and social roles. This is because there are many demands on Qatari women resulting from culture and tradition. This meant that whether mothers, daughters, sisters, or wives, all of them had compelling responsibilities and obligations which they had to discharge. What this meant for women ESL teachers was that, outside the normal working day, their time was

occupied, and that it was often necessary to take time off work to fulfil the role of nurse or carer, which are seen as duties which accord with Islamic principles. The net outcome of these societal expectations was a regular pattern of absence with other teachers having to cover for absent colleagues.

According to Fullan (1999), schools themselves are 'living systems' that change in non-linear and unpredictable ways. And here I note that organisational change does not only deal with just one *reality* in schools, but with multiple realities in much the same way as the name literacy might be more appropriately styled *literacies*, reflecting the complexities such terms now face. Hence, since schools are changing and dynamic eco-systems, then the roles teachers and school leaders occupy must be similarly re-assessed and re-modelled, sometimes quite rapidly. Moreover, it seems just as clear that teachers may take on several roles simultaneously.

As I mentioned in earlier chapters, there is very clear evidence from very different education systems and schools world-wide, particularly those in parts of Asia, Australasia and western Europe, that teachers' roles have changed, and that they have changed irrevocably. The extent to which these changes are mirrored in the Arabic speaking world and Qatar, in particular, was a fundamental concern during this study. For example, teaching was once considered to be very largely individualised with learners as merely passive recipients of transmitted and accepted knowledge. Here, the teachers were effectively didacts with custodial guardianship of what skills, knowledge and understandings were conveyed, how they were assessed and the levels of success learners ultimately obtained. Such teachers were responsible for elementary skills, enabling forms of social control and for maintaining social discipline in a range of ways.

Now it is far more common for teachers to be seen as both individual and co-operative, responsible for stimulating and fostering natural creativity and curiosity among learners, and acting as mentor and guide. Within this context teachers are seen as working with learners towards the objective of a socially just, peaceful, progressive and creative society. No longer are teachers seen predominantly as mere dispensers of information, but rather as facilitators and/or managers of learning and achievement.

What this means is that it is now widely accepted that teachers are expected to teach in transformative ways – more so perhaps when reform becomes a central characteristic of schools and education systems as it has in Qatar's *Education for a New Era*. Thus in broad terms, what the research tells us is that teachers are part of a dynamic praxis where they face new and perhaps un-precedented demands to go about the business of teaching and learning in unique and novel ways. The old certainties, if ever there were any, are long gone, and teachers now face very different circumstances where they are expected to be facilitators, guides and mentors, rather than transmitting perceived wisdom to otherwise passive learners.

In this study, I explore women ESL teacher roles using the approach taken from Kumaravadivelu (2003) (cf. Chapter 5), in which she classifies teachers as passive technicians, reflective practitioners and transformative intellectuals. The strength of Kumaravadivelu's model is found in its focus on exploring teachers' attitudes and behaviours and doing so from teachers' own perspectives. What is important here is that I did not assume that Kumaravadivelu's three categories were somehow water-tight within which individual teachers would be found and constrained. Rather, I wanted to explore women ESL teachers' changing roles, and indeed if they were changing, within the context of Qatar's *Education for a New Era*. This meant that I did not start with a fixed pre-conception that I would find some women ESL teachers were clearly

passive technicians, others reflective practitioners while others might be transformative intellectuals.

Of course, I came to this investigation with ideas informed and fashioned by my own experience as a teacher, as a parent, and as someone with a pressing and continuing interest in the education and well-being of my own children and those of Qatar more generally. In essence, I began from a perspective that teaching is at the same time eclectic, interactive and dynamic, and that it is a process leading to outcomes rather than an outcome itself.

In broad terms, I did not expect to find the women ESL teachers in this study neatly compartmentalised into one of Kumaravadivelu's three categories, but I was open-minded about the extent to which I might find a dominant approach, or indeed whether teachers moved across different roles at different times according to circumstance. In fact, I discovered that the women ESL teachers in this study showed evidence of moving between roles depending on circumstance, context and the demands made of them by *Education for a New Era*. Again, what is important is that I was more than prepared for the evidence; I derived from teacher questionnaires and during semi-structured interviews to inform re-shape my views about how teachers viewed themselves and their roles helping sustain *Education for a New Era*.

In effect, what I discovered during this study is that teachers moving in and out of roles are germane to teaching and learning processes, and that there is no reason to discourage teachers remaining flexible and adaptable. Of course, I readily accept that enabling the women ESL teachers in this study to become more rigorously reflective practitioners and/or transformative intellectuals is very much integral to enabling schools to function as Fullan's 'living systems' that change in non-linear and unpredictable ways. Moreover, re-structuring the ways in which

Education for a New Era manifests policies on teaching and learning, is imperative if the desire is to enable teachers to be energetic, creative and innovative and learners to be actively engaged in their own learning.

As a result of lengthy discussions with women ESL teachers during semi-structured interviews that form a major part of this study, I found that their personal and professional boundaries were not fixed. Sometimes, I found that teachers seemed to be more passive technicians in where they wanted clear direction about issues such as textbooks or showing them how to implement Qatar's curriculum standards. At other times, the women ESL teachers in this study were engaged in reflective dialogue and questioning their capacity to learn new skills and knowledge. At others, the same teachers appeared to be acting as transformative intellectuals where saw the bigger reform picture where education is not just about teaching but about shaping the character of a new generation.

The women ESL teachers in this study, for the most part appeared willing to deal with new approaches, systems and methods. But within the context of *Education for a New Era*, schools were still functioning largely as top-down, organisationally and administratively driven systems, standing in quite stark contrast to the sorts of approaches that Fullan and others believe are essential. It also seems apparent that numerous factors remain within the Independent School environment which militates against fulfilling the notion of the teacher as professional.

Thus it seems to me, that the information I gathered from the women ESL teachers in this study, does not yet enable them to become transformative intellectuals at the forefront of leading *Education for a New Era*. I also found that for the most part, the women ESL teachers in this study individually and collectively implemented elements and parts of *Education for a New Era*

9.3 Overall Recommendations

Following this summary of the findings, organised around the research questions, I would like to make the following recommendations:

1. The Supreme Education Council should explicitly document the strategic objectives for *Education for a New Era*, based on a clear analysis and definition of the underlying philosophy and vision for reform and transformation of Qatar's public education. It should also provide a clear and unambiguous picture of what Qatar's public education system should look like after *Education for a New Era* is fully implemented, couched in terms of the four pillars of reform - autonomy, accountability, variety and choice. In addition, it should specify the terms of teacher professional development, elucidate what quality provision means for other stakeholders, particularly the College of Education at Qatar University. This material should be accessible for everyone concerned with reform and the eventual success of *Education for a New Era*, and it should clarify the roles and responsibilities of different participants and agents of reform as clearly as possible.
2. The Supreme Education Council should provide more overt guidance and direction to schools and other stakeholders, which goes well beyond the 'technical' nature of fiscal contracts between schools and the Supreme Education Council. It should also be instrumental in helping to build networks of schools and teachers so that 'independence' does not come to mean professional isolation and remoteness, and it should become more aware of the challenges facing the reform process in schools and classrooms.

3. The Supreme Education Council should note that effective, quality professional development for women ESL teachers is a cornerstone for the successful foundation of *Education for a New Era*, and ensure that this becomes a strategic priority with adequate resources to underpin success. Given the importance of ESL teaching across the curriculum, it should provide guidance to Independent School operators regarding the allocation of resources for innovative delivery of English language teaching and learning.
4. The Supreme Education Council should ensure that the staff from school support organisations working in Independent Schools are adequately qualified and experienced so that they are capable of providing the guidance and direction that the women ESL teachers in this study actually need.
5. The Supreme Education Council should build communities of teaching and learning such as “TESOL Qatar Network” or “CBI Community” where women ESL teachers working in ESL per se, or in teaching mathematics and science in English medium classrooms, can work together in constructive and non-threatening ways to enhance their skills and knowledge. The Supreme Education Council should ensure that policy-makers working on their behalf are mindful that different contexts and systems may work well for a period, but need revising as circumstances change. Supporting teachers’ learning communities may involve evolutionary processes rather than relying on fixed or pre-determined plans and methods.
6. The Supreme Education Council should acknowledge and address the concerns that teachers have about the clarity of change, pedagogical content, knowledge and skills and

their need for, support in teaching methods and skills, and developing teaching and learning materials, including schemes of work, for example. The Supreme Education Council should also ensure that teachers have access to the specific knowledge in terms of ESL and content-based instruction. The Supreme Education Council should support women ESL teachers in dealing with authentic problems and needs in the actual conditions they face on a day-to-day basis. This means having in place competent supervision and mentoring within a context of managing change, and continued assistance and support for women ESL teachers as a key factor for long-term success.

7. The Supreme Education Council should develop a systematic approach to approving teachers' qualifications so that only recognised and well-qualified staff are employed by Qatar's Independent Schools, recognising the need to draw teaching staff from a wide range of backgrounds. The Supreme Education Council should also offer opportunities for teacher advancement, the acquisition of better qualifications and better salaries.
8. The Supreme Education Council should develop a systematic approach to addressing teaching capacity via appropriate, quality professional development and training particularly focused on implementing Qatar's standards-based curriculum, teaching and learning materials. Accordingly, the Supreme Education Council should develop approaches to professional development which recognise two primary considerations – quality of provision measured in terms of the needs of women ESL teachers and others; and flexibility of provision - which takes into account the many competing pressures on teachers; and develop approaches to professional development recognising that teachers and schools may be very different from one another, that needs may change over time,

and accepting that approaches and structures that may be effective in one school may not be transferable to another.

9. The Supreme Education Council should address the terms and conditions of teachers' contracts and introduce greater flexibility as a way of recognising the cultural demands placed upon Qatari and other Muslim women, and the increased workload associated with generating new material and school reform generally. The Supreme Education Council should ensure that the policy-makers that it employs on contract re-think ways in which schools are staffed, funded and managed, taking into account the range and type of concerns expressed by the women ESL teachers in this study. A one-size-fits-all approach is not likely to be successful; bearing in mind the diverse needs and demands. The Council should be aware that issues such as professional dissatisfaction and turnover among women ESL teachers are very likely to increase if they are not addressed, and that the outcome of this will be a failure to meet performance standards and educate the nation's young to world-class standards.
10. The Supreme Education Council should develop a systematic approach to addressing teachers' concerns about employment and conditions of service, recognising that existing disparities and inconsistencies, and short-term contracts all militate against developing a professional, quality workforce. The Supreme Education Council should establish clear and unambiguous guidelines for determining the suitability of teachers to work in Qatar's Independent Schools including determining the appropriate level and nature of acceptable qualifications and the skills, knowledge and understandings teachers must have. The Supreme Education Council should develop and document evidence about the

characteristics and the expectations of roles needed and adopted by women ESL teachers in order to implement the reform in the ‘right way’ as was originally intended, i.e. make explicit what it is that teachers are expected to do and how they are expected to do it.

11. Administrators in Qatar’s Independent Schools should adapt to change by altering their views on how to deal with teachers and how to evaluate them. Improving teaching and making the whole of the learning process more effective is the key to raising standards. More widely, it is clearly established that effective teachers lead to effective learning outcomes, and hence, there is a need for individual schools, as much as the system more generally, to recruit, retain and develop its teachers if the intent of improved outcomes is to be achieved. Similarly, it is well known that effective teaching and learning does not simply happen by chance, but rather requires dedicated teaching staff, well-equipped with a repertoire of skills, knowledge and understandings that empower and enable them to act as professionals.

12. In Qatar too, women teachers also have societal needs particularly when married, and thus tend to be overloaded by workshops that are conducted outside working hours or during break times. This encroachment into personal time can become problematic. My findings from interviews with ESL teachers suggest that there is an urgent need for specialised professional development for them that is far more strongly focused on ESL content and strategies. It also follows that school operators, administrators and leaders begin to accept the principle that ESL teachers are genuine teacher–professionals, something that might be assisted as Qatar implements its recently developed national professional standards for teachers. Notwithstanding any introduction of teacher standards, or of

registration/certification procedures, it emerged during discussion with teachers involved in this study, that they saw themselves as becoming increasingly professional and increasingly responsible for managing improved teaching and learning outcomes. This suggests that ESL teachers should be implicitly concerned and actively involved in their own career development.

13. Improved learning outcomes are at the heart of *Education for a New Era*. Indeed, I argue that educational reform in Qatar will have failed demonstrably, if teaching and learning outcomes do not improve over time. Information about learners that focuses solely or primarily on summative assessment, as is very clearly the case with the Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment system (QCEA), must fail to address the need for timely classroom interventions. In essence then, and until it introduces alternative strategies, Qatar faces an untenable position. Learner performance on international studies such as PISA, PIRLS and TIMSS shows that Qatar is among the lowest performing nations participating. Moreover, the only system-wide mechanism for assessing learner achievement in Qatar is the largely accountability and summatively-focused Qatar Comprehensive Education Assessment system (QCEA), with even the limited evidence from this source showing virtually no improvement and some declines in learner performance when comparing year by year outcomes (Evaluation Institute, 2007). This suggests a clear need to re-evaluate what is done and why it is done if Qatar's Independent Schools, their teachers, and learners are to gain substantial benefits from the investments made in *Education for a New Era*. Continuing to follow pathways established at the beginning of reform appears likely to offer limited means at best in terms of improving teaching and learning outcomes and learner achievement overall.

9.4 Suggestions for Further Research

As indicated in Chapter 2, this study is limited to women ESL teachers in Independent Schools who very largely work with female learners, and consequently it may be interesting to learn whether men ESL teachers in Independent Schools with male learners, are encountering the same sorts of difficulties, and to the same extent. If men ESL teachers in Independent Schools with male learners are meeting the same problems in terms of materials preparation, sourcing, professional development, and job security, then clearly there is a far wider and genuine mismatch between *Education for a New Era*, and the overall context in which its aims are being implemented. If, on the other hand, men ESL teachers in Independent Schools with male learners are not facing these challenges and problems to the same extent, and are finding less interference with their professional roles, then it is clear that women ESL teachers are not receiving parity of treatment within the K–12 school reform. This also is a cause for concern since women ESL teachers play an essential role in Qatar, and at the same time cultural and religious imperatives prevail. Therefore, a similar study in Independent Schools with male learners is recommended.

Another potential area for research is with women ESL teachers working in Ministry of Education schools. Using a similar approach, it would be interesting to document differences in morale and other factors between these teachers and those in Independent Schools, their roles, and professional development opportunities available to them. Information from such a study could be useful for the Supreme Education Council since it may signal potential for greater staff mobility across different types of schools in Qatar.

A third area of potential research, relates to the efforts of other developing and developed countries in educational reform, and their experiences in implementing change, since it may be

possible to learn from these and import certain instances of good practice into *Education for a New Era*, in order to better serve the schools in the Qatari context. Such research may reveal insights about the extent of these countries' reliance on external sources in human capacity building.

APPENDICES

- Appendix I: Formal Request to Independent Schools**
- Appendix II: Informed Consent**
- Appendix III: ESL Teacher Questionnaire**
- Appendix IV: Interview Questions**
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- Appendix VII: ESL Teacher Backgrounds**

Appendix I: Formal Request to Independent Schools

15th August 2005

Dear Mr/Mrs (Name of Operator)

Operator of XXX Independent School

RE: Conducting Research in XXX Independent School with ESL Teachers

I am presently doing my PhD in Education at University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. My research title is “Women ESL Teachers’ Perceptions of their Roles and Professional Development Needs in *Qatar’s Education for a New Era*”. I would be very appreciative if you could allow me to conduct my research in your respective school with the women ESL teachers.

The purpose of this research is to elicit women ESL teachers’ perceptions and beliefs about change, their roles and professional development needs.

Can you please call me on this phone number to arrange an appointment to introduce myself to you and the respective teachers and go through my research?

Thanking you in advance for your co-operation.

Best regards
Kholode Al-Obaidli, PhD candidate
School of Education
University of Birmingham
Email:
Mobile: xxxxxxxx

N.B. Attached a recommendation letter from Dr. Watkins, Director of Research Office, Evaluation Institute, Supreme Education Council, Doha, Qatar.

1st August 2005
Ms. Kholode Mohammad Al-Obaidli
School of Education
University of Birmingham

Dear Kholode

I am writing following our recent conversations about your proposed research involving English as a second language teachers in Qatar's new independent schools.

As you are aware, *Education for a New Era*, is in its early stages of development and implementation and has not so far had the benefit of insights into how well it is working, or what improvements might be made. Of course, the contribution of teachers to educational reform cannot be understated, and much of the research onto teacher effectiveness tells us that their contribution to successful teaching and learning and thus to implementing new approaches in schools and classrooms is vital.

As your research focuses quite specifically on teachers, and not just teachers in general but those working in English as a second language which is even more fundamental given the decision to offer teaching and learning in mathematics and science via English, then its contribution to *Education for a New Era* is likely to be more critical than usual. For these reasons I believe your research offers the opportunity for insights into reform per se, and to teacher effectiveness within the context of Qatar's new independent schools.

Thus I am very happy that the Research Office and Evaluation Institute more widely is able to offer you support, more so, since it will be the first substantive external approach to some of the issues involved and it may well counter some of the suppositions and assumptions that have been made to date. Moreover, I look forward to being able to use the results of your research to help bring about changes in *Education for a New Era*, changes which should see further improvements and better outcomes for young Qataris and the nation more widely.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Richard Watkins
Director Office of Research

Appendix II: Informed Consent

My name is Kholode Al-Obaidli. I am doing research on a project entitled “Women ESL Teachers’ Perceptions of their Roles and Professional Development Needs in *Qatar’s Education for a New Era*”. This project is sponsored by the Higher Education Institute, the Supreme Education Council, Doha, Qatar.

I can be contacted at _____
_____ should you have any questions.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in the project, before we start I would like to emphasise that:

- Your participation is entirely voluntary
- You are free to refuse to answer any questions;
- You are free to withdraw at any time.

The questionnaire results and interview will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to me and my supervisor. Excerpts from interview may be made part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will your name or any identifying characteristics be included in the report.

Please sign this form to show that I have read the consent you

.....(Signed)
.....(Printed)
.....(Date)

Please send a report on the results of the project: (YES, NO) circle one

Address for those requesting a research report

.....
.....
.....

Appendix III: ESL Teacher Questionnaire

A. Demographic Information of ESL Teachers

Please answer the following questions

1. Age: _____
2. Teaching experience: (0-3) (4-6) (7-9) (10-12) (12-15) (more than 15)
3. Nationality: _____
4. School: _____

Tick only ONE appropriate answer

5. Teaching position held:

- ☐ English teacher
- ☐ Classroom teacher
- ☐ Co-ordinator
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

6. Teaching Qualification:

- ☐ 2 year diploma.
- ☐ 3 year diploma.
- ☐ 4 year degree.
- ☐ Masters Degree.
- ☐ PhD
- ☐ Other/s _____

7. Where did you get your qualification?

- ☐ Qatar.
- ☐ Abroad. (Name the country) _____

Page (1)

B. Professional Development

Tick only ONE appropriate answer:

1. I attend PD activities:

- ☐ On a regular basis (every two weeks)
- ☐ About once a month.
- ☐ About once a semester.
- ☐ About once a year.
- ☐ Never.

2. I usually participate in PD activities that are:

- ☐ At school. ☐ Outside school.

3. The duration of PD activities I attend usually:

- ☐ 2-4 hours.
- ☐ one day.
- ☐ Two or more days.

4. The purpose of PD I attend is to improve my

- ☐ Practical teaching skills
- ☐ Pedagogical knowledge(i.e. theoretical)
- ☐ Teaching and learning processes
- ☐ Attitude and awareness of myself as a teacher.

Page (2)

C. Skills Needed for Effective ESL Teachers

<i>Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement, by circling only ONE number</i>				
1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

1. I need to plan instructions on how to use specific learning strategies (previewing, skimming, inferring information).
(1 2 3 4 5)
2. I need to provide opportunities for pupils to explore topics of personal interest through the foreign language.
(1 2 3 4 5)
3. I need to use English as the dominant language of instructions.
(1 2 3 4 5)
4. I need to improve the pedagogical strategies to help promote a good school.
(1 2 3 4 5)
5. I need to attend a demonstration lesson by an 'expert teacher'/video displaying model lesson to support my professional growth.
(1 2 3 4 5)
6. I need to update my skills in cooperative learning.
(1 2 3 4 5)
7. I need to improve my skills in group work.
(1 2 3 4 5)
8. I need to update my skills in producing authentic and engaging teaching materials.
(1 2 3 4 5)
9. I need to develop my skills in student-centred learning.
(1 2 3 4 5)
10. I need to update my ability to use action research.
(1 2 3 4 5)

Page (3)

D. ESL Teachers Attitudes to Professional Development

<i>Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement, by circling only ONE number</i>				
1	2	3	4	5
strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree

1. A needs analysis questionnaire should be conducted before PD activities are assigned for teachers.
(1 2 3 4 5)
2. Teachers become better educators through general professional development.
(1 2 3 4 5)
3. Teachers become better educators through professional development focused on pedagogy
(1 2 3 4 5)
4. The PD of teachers can result in sound teaching practice.
(1 2 3 4 5)
5. Teamwork is important for teacher support.
(1 2 3 4 5)
6. Daily teacher collaboration would support their classroom practice.
(1 2 3 4 5)
7. Improving teaching ability through PD influence the performance of a pupil.
(1 2 3 4 5)
8. The PD of teachers can contribute to an effective school.
(1 2 3 4 5)
9. Effective schools focus on the life-long learning of teachers.
(1 2 3 4 5)
10. Team teaching would support the development of teachers.
(1 2 3 4 5)

Page (4)

E. Contact Details for Follow-Up

Could you please indicate your details for follow-up research, please it is very important

Name:.....

Email:.....

Work number:.....

Mobile Number (if possible).....

Page (5) End of Questionnaire

Appendix IV: Interview Questions

Section A: General Background

- Name:
- Age:
- Year of Experience
- Name of School
- Job Title
- Date
- Location of Interview

- Time started:
- Time Ended:

Section B: Personal Information: Easn's (1985) diagrams to be used

1. Who are you?
2. Where did you come from?
3. How many schools you have been teaching in?
4. Look at the following three diagrams, during your life, circumstances may have provided you with new knowledge about yourself in some of the areas discussed in the diagrams:
 - Try to find one incident for each of three areas: your 'blind spot', your 'dreamer spot', and your 'untapped reservoir'.
 - Describe each incident briefly
 - Explain how each incident increased your knowledge about yourself.

Section C: Educational Experiences

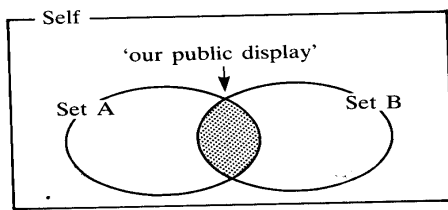
1. What were your school experiences?
2. Do you have an ideal teacher? Why?
3. When did you decide to become an English teacher and why?
4. Can you remember a light bulb moment when you were a student or a student-teacher?

Section D: Professional Experiences

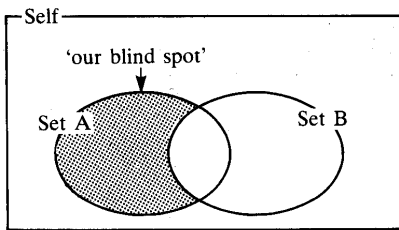
1. Where have you worked?
2. What kind of teacher are you? (Challenging, supportive, authoritarian, strict, friendly, enthusiastic, approachable)
3. What is your classroom look like?
4. Who is your influential colleague or critical friend?
5. What is your light bulb moment in your teaching career?
6. What is your dream in work? What are the boundaries of your dream?
7. What is your biggest anxiety?
8. Talk about the following in terms of support: operator, principal, SSOs and professional development needs, department, colleagues and your students.

Appendix V: Easen's Diagrams (1985)

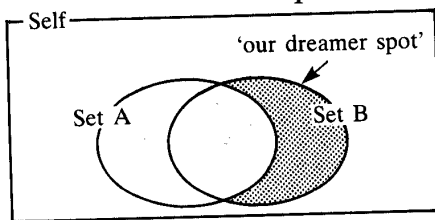
1. Our Public Display



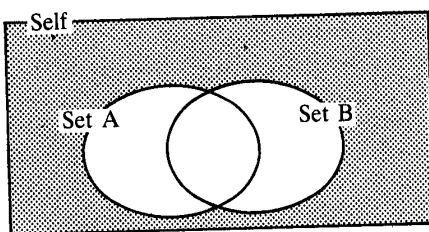
2. Our Blind Spot



3. Our Dreamer Spot



4. Our Untapped Reservoir



Appendix VI: Interview's Sample

Cohort I (XXX Independent Primary School for Girls)
10-12 years of experience

Who are you?

I am probably defined first and foremost as a Muslim woman by choice, since I am a convert or revered depending on how you like to say it, and I am a teacher by love and by nature, even I am not in the classroom I am a teacher. I am a lover of learning and knowledge seeker, and I have a diverse amount of interests, spanning all kinds of topics, how am I? I am somebody interested in life, interested in learning. I am somebody who notices crocks and idioms and the way things are presented, that is who I am.

(Who are you?) I am a friend, I am a daughter and a wife, all those. I tried to be there in the good, in the bad, supportive and all that.

Where did you come from?

I am from United States, and I was pretty much raised in mid west of the country. I was born in Mecessbi in south because my dad was doing his master there, then we lived in Ohio, my dad was doing his doctorate there, then we lived in Arkansas for about eight years, then when my parents divorced I moved to Missouri, and I lived there pretty much through my masters, with a year in Michigan with my dad, and a year in France. So pretty much I have been in Missouri. And after that, I have lived in a different state that was Columbia Missouri, and my current residency is Dover Dalwase, which is east coast. I lived in a lot of places in the states.

How many schools you have been taught in?

Approximately nine schools, I taught in Islamic school, private school, I don't remember the name of it; I have to look at my CV, taught in Islamic School in Columbia Missouri kindergarten and fifth grade English for one year. I taught French one to one at Columbia Missouri University, and I was also taught fifth grade again at the same private Islamic School, and it was English as ESL, and then I taught in public school system French. I taught private classes because I was sub-tutor, when people are absent or had maternity leave, so I replaced for 10 to 12 weeks, then I went to Kansas Missouri, and I taught in the greater Islamic school of the city, and I taught English from third grade to high school, and there was ESL and English. I did that for year and a half, then I taught for half a year at Dowling College which is University x, ESL programme, and there was a special arrangement and I taught group of Saudi Muslim woman, they requested me to be their teacher, which it was quite nice and I taught them for one semester. Then I taught in Al-Maha private school in Qatar for two years, and Al-Isra for this year.

What is your public display?

What every body said about me and I agree with them which the biggest thing, I am a sensitive person. I am really sensitive to what other people feel. I am also sensitive to have my feeling hurt. Put your self in the shoes of somebody else. I can often feel what they must be going through. I am overly empathetic. I often mediate the way I say something or behave, because of that I especially pay attention to the way I speak to children, because I know that the keep the words with them forever, and especially from a teacher. And the way are teachers put in the classroom we are giving them as a model, as somebody to love and we have to be very aware of what we do and say and how affects children with the rest of their lives.

What is your blind spot?

Some thing that I have heard people say about me but that I don't believe is that I am a snap. People think that I am stuck up, and I don't understand where that comes from. I am inheritably shy person and I have really to be in the mood to be outgoing. Sometimes I sit back and observe,

and more of it as shyness, that's me I sit and observe. If I have an opinion about teaching, I will state it, I don't know where idea that I am is a snap come from. **(How that increased your knowledge about themselves?)** I guess maybe that analyse and try to figure it out, and I come to the conclusion maybe because it there are time that I will sit and be quiet and I believe if you don't have something good to say, don't say it at all. So there are certain topics when are people talking about that I don't need to join into, I will be critical if people are just complaining and complaining, I just sit there and I don't need to be part of it, then I will change the topic, so maybe they will think that I am better to have talked about that. I don't know what it does it is just try to help you figure out what why they would say that, and it is necessarily a negative thing or they don't know me, because a lot of it has come from friends, who when they first met me, they thought that I am a snap. What does that mean? Is that shyness that comes out?

What is your dreamer spot?

This is probably will be fears, I don't give away much fancies or thrills but I do occupy my thoughts with fears. **(What fears you have?)** I have a fear of not having enough money to live on and I know it stands from my parents divorce. We didn't have money for many of years until my mum finished her doctorate and she finished her doctorate until I have finished high school, from age 12 to 17. We didn't have enough money, so my biggest fears is not working, not having enough money to be able to pay the bills, this is the biggest problem. (And now do you have enough money?) Yes, but I am a big saver. I have enough money with my salary currently but what I discovered when I compared salaries here, cost of living and actual lives in the state and salary, not I am making more if I am living in the state. People say you make much money, it was true a few years ago in Doha but currently with everything cost here, I think the state is less expensive than here. So that a question area for me, because there is no job security that is led to a complete different area. There is nothing paid for my pension when I am older, none of this would I be get in the state. My mini benefit that what I get from working in Doha might not be enough long term. **(How that increased your knowledge about yourself?)** When you are aware of your fears, you can try to give them away to Allah and not be scared anymore, and it is good to acknowledge what your fears are and realise you risks or successful or your in-can, all of this is are from Allah and it is written long time ago before I was born, and it is a thing that I can't have control over, so I am aware of it, and I should focus on more important things.

What is your untapped reservoir?

I mentioned one negative point, which was the divorce of my parents, it is a negative one, and I am going to talk about a positive one, which is when I became a Muslim. A major positive thing in my life, it was something where I was given life meaning. I mean before that this idea we came from apes, we just exist because something wanted boom, generatic boom, you don't really think that belong to anything, life is random, but knowing now as a Muslim that we are created with a purposes to represent Allah on earth, knowing that we have come here with a mission to try to encourage the right, encourage people to be good, kind, give charity, encourage people to treat people with less material preparatory, to realise nothing is matter, you can't take with you, we are all made of dirt, clay, in qur'an there is different words for it, non of us are better than others, and to try to be an agent of change on the people around you, and live your life in a meaningful way. To me this is untapped reservoir in the sense that I am always short in this area, but it is amazing how many people you can touch, since it is interview for your research, I usually don't talk about it, then it is amazing, I am Muslim woman who covers that and looks different in America. I have been covering my face eight or nine years before I was married. In that time, after I have started

covering my face with everyone think that I am going to scare people, it is going to be bad, nobody is going to talk to you, and every body is going to be afraid of you when you walk down the street. Four people said their shahada with me, since I covered my face, since I have been Muslim, people didn't know me before hand, people see religious person as somebody has convictions and lives by it. Covering my face I don't believe it is a requirement, I do believe that it is good, it is always done through the history of Islam, but I don't believe that any body is bad, because they don't. In my whole journey of Islam, I have to accept that I believe in Allah, I believe that there is one God, I believe that my life has that purpose. It is logical and it makes sense, it affects my emotions, everything is there and I believe I am going to do this even if my parents are upset. The first time when I have that revulsion was when I said my shahada, then another time it came to me when I decided to wear hijab, because I didn't wear scarf immediately, when I said shahad I said I believe this, I can't deny it, but I am going to beg Allah to forgive me for the rest of my life every day because I don't want to look different, but Allah give you strength when you have none. So a year later, I am wearing a scarf, then I always been attracted to pull towards, when I see women in my community in America covered their face for such kind hearted, bias women, women that I like to emulate. It was something that I like, I like the privacy, I can't explain, it was just a pull from me, so I had an argument with my mum that she wants Debby who was 17 years old and just got away from friends, she doesn't want Debby who I am now, and I am not going to please her just until we become like them, they want us to be like them, they want to become like they are, and I am not going to, so I just put on. She is not going to agree on me with a scarf, what a little square fabric can do? So I just decided that I am going to wear it, because this is what I want to do it in my worship with Allah, but to me it is no different than somebody who prays the extra Raaka, some body who wake up in the middle of the night and pray, nobody says to somebody who prays extra why do you do that? It is not required, why you bother and pray extra, but for some reason Muslim seem to ask me why you do put Niqab on, it is not required. What you are doing? They seem to think it is okay to say it with niqab, they never say it with extra prayer. Why do you give more money with required Zaka, why do you give more charity? What is wrong with you? We pray extra, we give charity extra, no body question that, we do things extra because we love Allah that is the end of the story, right? You make Haj once, how many people make so many Omeera and Haj, no body say why do you do omeera so many, you only have to make Haj only once. No one is allowed to interfere with somebody's life. I am not saying that hijab equals Omeera, it doesn't equal prayer, or Zaka, or Omeera , just using this as an example, there are many things that we do the required, and we do the extra and no body says any thing. Yet but if a woman like me, I like the modesty, I like to feel that I am reserved for Allah, I like the feeling that I am religious person, because I gave up a lot to be religious person, maybe I am not going to be the great perfect example, but I am still striving to be best I can be, to me that is mean, and if in future when I teach, I know that people have to see my mouth to learn English or French, so in the future if I am teaching I have to take it off, maybe I am teaching adult men, and if I have chosen to do that, I will take it off, so they can see my face. Now I am teaching little girls, there is no question. **(How did you become a Muslim?)** There is a girl in my class in university. I converted January 26th, 1996, so that is 15 years, and in October 90s, I have in university, it is a very long story, basically in October, classes started in August, and I was in a night TEFL class, one of the students walked in and she got a scarf in her head, and she is just like me, regular American white woman at the university level, I don't know it drew my attention, what is this? What are you doing Elizabeth? And she and I went for a coffee afterwards, and I asked her lots of questions and Allah just put that ball, I have no intention of converting, I am smart intelligent woman, this is interesting, tell me what is it? Why

are you doing this? What is about? She was a new convert, she converted in the night before and she wears her scarf immediately, she is very feeling, spiritual based person, I am much more logical minded, so I did more analysis, I want to see this and this and compare. She introduced me to a lot of women with scarf and before I didn't see one. There were there but I didn't see it, I didn't register. I put my study on the Islam as whole; my teachers would hate me if they knew. I did the permanent in my classes, but I was really in day and night the qura'n in one said and the bible on the other, they gave me the qura'n that had the English and they gave me a book called the muslim Christian dialogue, this was years ago, we didn't have nice books that we have today. Every night I was looking and comparing. I go to religious lessons (halqa) and listen and ask questions. I remember the major thing people did, for example, when I ask questions, they wouldn't give me any answer, many time, there was lady in particular. (What kind of questions) everything, about women's rights, I can't remember them honestly, I wish have that zeal when you first learning, I can't remember but she would fax questions to Saudi Arabia to get answers, they did that, and actually told me that I don't know. My parents are both college professors, and in my whole life there is a certain level of intellectual discussion, my parents are specialised in an area, so they know what they know and they comfortable with the words that I don't know because they don't know to have everything in the world, and they know that it is impossible, but when somebody a lot time in the church, when I ask some questions for the minister, he just would give an answer, he would never say I don't know, and I respect somebody who says I don't know because they make know what they really know. So as a teacher, I will often tell my students I don't know, why shall we look and find tomorrow because I still remember a teacher, when I brought something and I would show them that what the entire class was wrong, and they didn't correct them, and this really put negative light on me, they can admit that they were wrong and to me this is really a negative character flow, any way back to this lady in particular, her dad was Saudi and her mum was Egyptian, she was the most elegant one, I would just like to emulate her, she is wonderful, she would often teach me and told me new things, she was very open to maintaining her Islamic standards but communicating and being with those who are not Muslims, and all the mistakes for going to make, because we don't know Islamic culture, we don't know what is right and wrong and the morals in Islam . She was very kind and open. **(What was your parents' reaction towards your Islam?)** I didn't tell them immediately, before I said shahada I remember calling my father and my father has go to seminary, a school to be minister and he'd left it to be an actor, he says this is a same job, so my whole life we had that sarcastic thing about religion in my house, religion is for the poor, ignorant masses of people, because their life sucks so bad, it gives them something beautiful to dream about for after they die. This is the mentality in my house. So for me, to realise that I am a religious, it is very frightening because I am intelligent person and intelligence and religion don't go together. My dad gave me a bible when I was twelve, I went for confirmation and my mum was more religious than my father. My dad gave me the bible and told there are good stories to live by, not this is the truth, this is the essence of your life, and this is the guidance for your life. Since he goes to that seminary, I called him and I remember a conversation late at night, dad just explain the trinity to me, just make me understand the trinity and he told me I can't , so Debby you believe or don't , and it was that shocked moment and I don't know what I am thinking about and I guess he was sensing my search , he said to me before you do anything drastic, promise me you will go to some churches to see if there are fit for you, one you will feel more comfortable because in the west I don't know if you realise we have a variety of churches, so I went to many churches with different students, he told me what ever you do, you have to go to a pentecostal , what ever you do you have to go to a pentecostal church, you just have to see it. (What is pentecostal?) pentecostal are very

conservative , they called Holy Rollers, they believe in talking tongues, when they spirit of god come in them and they start talking, so I went there and their women's hair are so long, they don't cut it and my hair was long, they wear long skirts, it was a good experience, I know that you can't see my face on the tap, but I was not interested, I went to another church where people drinking coffees and playing guitar and every one is comfortable, just a variety of churches that was available in my city, I was just reaffirming to my self that I really believe in Islam. Even with all the differences in Arabic culture, I am not Arab I am American but Islam is the answer and I can't deny it. So one night I have dinner with friends, and Elizabeth was there and I have no intention to say my shahada, making that step I don't know. It is admitting, admitting that my past was wrong, once I say it I have to pray, I have to fast, and in my intelligence side compete with my internal bringing that somebody's religious is ignorant, I know it was right but I don't want this label that I was ignorant, so I read many things about Islam, so anybody ask me anything I have the answer, it is impossible, we can't know every thing about Islam, I can't know everything, that's silly. So in that dinner, I ended with saying my shahada, best moment in my life. It was January, there was new snow I walked on it, the moon was sparkling on it like diamonds, it was cool but not freezing, it was me, a new breath of fresh air, I thought like a baby.

Educational experiences

What were your school experiences when you were a student or a student teacher?

I was always teacher pleaser , usually I was the top, I was in gifted education programme, special programme when they pull you out and let you different things, for instance when I was in grad six, we were programming on the computer when the computer was little magnetic cassette taps, we write programmes and saved on that tap, it was so old before the floppy and we would work on base 5 and base 2 numbers and do adding, all kind of funny stuff, that urges expanding the mind. I never had to study things came easy. I was little bit shy in the class like a lot of studio kids, yet I always have friends and my friends was in variety of areas, even I was athletic, I put hijab and I didn't exercise any more. I played football, basketball, in the swimming team, play tennis, all the sports. And I have friends interested in school, it is not SAT like England, but they have separation: if you are in harder classes versus weaker classes, so a lot of my colleagues and my classmates in school were also smarter kids. So it wasn't like you were put down and people have fun of you if you didn't do your homework, something like peer pressure stuff. I generally like school. I didn't have ever negative experiences; I have not sent to the principal office, I didn't have anything that will turn me off of the school.

Do you have an ideal teacher?

Yes, the one that I can name without hesitation is Mrs Wadeselle, she was my French teacher at high school, she was always smiling, enthusiastic, had praise for everybody's attempts, she didn't kill people when they try to pronounce French horribly, or they would use incorrect verb tenses, or forget something, she was always encouraging, somebody that I like to emulate, did not use a text book which I prefer always not to use textbook. I emulate my ideal teacher and that actually works well in independent schools because we are not supposed to have textbooks according to the Supreme Education Council. So for me the whole thing about writing activity, communicating activity, so many things that I do in my teaching came from her. She was phenomenal, and the thing that was interested that she encourages students to go to universities and higher education and also encourages people who have abilities in repairing cars for constructing, she didn't talk down to people. She dealt with people equally; there is not superiority of actions.

When did you decide to become an English teacher?

I decided to become an English teacher after I became Muslim, because there was a need in the community, many of my children's friends did not speak English, my university was in the town, so a lot of Muslims come for university studies, a lot of Arabs from Palestine, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, we had big mix of people, they were opening a school, they ask me to teach at it, methodology transfer easily, for language methodology is the same in any language. That is why I went to English, because there was a need within my community, so I taught in the school two different times, and then I just continue teaching English.

Can you remember a light bulb moment when you were a student?

I remember when I lost my interest in math, and change to foreign languages, they are very similar instead of manipulating numbers, you manipulate rules of grammar in languages, any way they are very similar. The thing with math, I said that I was in a gifted education programme, I was learning how to programme computers, I was suppose to go to algebra in the seventh grade, I was not suppose to do adding and subtracting in this grade, I was suppose to go on, so my parents got divorced and we moved to Missouri with my mum, and the school system there would not allow me to go on with algebra. I discovered my personality that if I don't like something, I would not do it. I love math, I was thinking to be mathematician, I lost my interest by being held back, by being forced to do adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, word problems again another year, we couldn't have algebra until eighth grade, and they wouldn't make any exception, even though my transcripts showed that I was supposed to do algebra, I was normal in the classroom do what I was supposed to do. My mind completely switched to French, I put all my energy, all my love to French.

Professional**How did you move to Independent School?**

By the end of the last year, I was looking for a change. I have a friend who works for the SSO, she works for Mosaica, for two years I was talking with her about what was going on in the Supreme Education Council and the reform movement and it interested me because I like to see positive change and I would like to be part of and opportunity came for interviewing for this job but it was interested because I ended up interviewing of being a teacher and I requested from them what class or age I am going to teach, level, what exactly I will be doing, pretty much I sign the contract in April and I didn't know until four days before I was teaching what class I was teaching, that was frustrated to me. I want to switch because I would like to be part of the change, I want help make it better, I want to share new ideas in teaching. I would like to make people away from repeat after me. I want to get away from memorisation to communicative education methodology, I am really want to be part of that, I am sorry I am talking too much. (Did you read an advertisement in the newspaper?) It was a suggestion from somebody who knows Dr. Abdul-Aziz. Then I went for an interview, Dr. Abdul-aziz and a vice-principal who is no longer here and an accountant. (Did you remember the interview?) The things I remembered from it, Dr. Abdul-aziz was really enthusiastic about providing any resources we would need for teaching which I thought it was wonderful. I remember I was impressed because he has a doctor in education which I thought he will be very useful, so understand more about other people I met about what really goes in teaching and what really teachers need. The vice-principal asked me who to do a lesson plan, I gave American terms and they used to British terms, but it was basically the same

thing. The set up, the format of lesson plans would be different, it depends how you might be trained on it.

What kind of a teacher you are?

I like to be friendly, there is distance in their respect but I don't like to be authoritarian. I like to be in charge, as a teacher you should have control over your class, but I don't want children to be afraid of me by any means, they call me Ms Debby, they don't call me teacher, I hate that. I like to be challenging, I like to have students who are actively engaged in a lot of activities, it is not just like sitting and listening to the teacher and writing in a blank. They are moving around the classroom and asking questions to each other. I am an eclectic teacher, I like to use what works, I like to use a variety of works, I don't like to do the same thing every day. One day we might be using over head, and on the next day, we may have a chart to be fill with a partner, we might be using a senses asking the whole class how many people like this, or don't like it. I mean there is a variety of teaching, I always enthusiastic in topics whether I truly like or don't like it, because if you stand up and tell children this is boring, this is useless, why we are doing this, we can finish this and we can do something fun. A child might be interested in that, it makes wonderful advancement in knowledge in this area in twenty years, will be feeling that there is something wring with them because the teacher treated the topic like it wasn't worthwhile. You know oh I am not supposed to like that. You know you can highlight children's emotions just be being enthusiastic and makes children enthusiastic, I mean it is contagious. How many students came to me and say what I found about volcanoes in the Internet. Honestly I cared less about volcanoes, but it was one of our themes and they bring all this wonderful things, all that tells me that they are so interested, they went home and look further and in doing that they are learning, what else they have been seen in the internet, what else they pick their interest in the encyclopaedia. I am a big propaner of a paper, dictionary over a computer dictionary or the hand help dictionary because your eyes pass over ten to fifteen different words as you going to find out. Look out how many words you are getting and you don't realise you are doing it. I really like books, I don't know I think there is a teacher like to be known as somebody who also cooperative. I am flexible also in my teaching for the teachable moment, because if a child is asking, I got a lesson plan but they bringing something from home, you have to take time and be willing to talk over it, you have to validate what they are learning. They have to be able to own this and feel it is good that I did this. Cooperative also with the teachers I share every activity, I don't compete with my team, I am the coordinator, I don't compete with my team, I don't compete with them that my worksheet is better than yours. I don't hide what I am doing. I told them openly this is how I am going to explain the activity, they will have questions on how I did it, I will try to explain it more. I mean they are openly share, it is the children's learning, this is not Debra Halwelly came up with.

What is your classroom look like?

It is rectangle by design. Sometimes I have grouping of little five and six, I have twenty seven student, so I'll have them group by five and six, sometimes there is a shape, like a double horsehoe, so there is a sensual focus area in the middle, there are times they will be in rows. I like to have variety of classroom design, for change and also different ways works for different activities. If you are going to do lots of interactive activities and move to talk to each other, it is really nice to have this open nice middle area. If they are going to do more partners work writing sentences, or organising or putting stories, put the scenes in the right order and then write up the sentences what was happening, it is really nice to put them in four, five, six tables, so they can easily work with the partner, I mean different styles. (Do you have educational display where you

have your students' work? Do you have reading corner?) I brought from my own purchase about 250 books, unfortunately about hundreds had been walked off. I have another reading area, which is in the back so I can move the cabinet. On the wall we have lots of math display, English display, students work, and the spelling words for the week. I had a work bank for all the Supreme Education Council words, about 800 words they should know in the fourth grade, it is from kindergarten to 4th grade. The problem my students didn't start kindergarten in English like this. It is a lot of words. They do have three English classes a day and I have got a deal with them, if a teacher doesn't come up, I am going to come to read them a story or play with a game, so I get extra. I can't leave them without a teacher, it is just goes against everything inside me, it is common in Qatar but I can't do it.

Who is your influential colleague or critical friend?

Outside al-Issra, I have my friend Marje and we share a lot of information with each other. She is with Mosaica SSO, and this year she is an English co-ordinator in an independent school outside Doha. We share a lot of information, theories, if I am stuck with something; I will give her a call and ask her how to do it. Here in this school, I am more seen like a mentor teacher to a lot of them. Sometimes to show the model of processes of sharing of doing it, I will ask for input. I am not comfortable as, I think that I am a snap, I am not snap. I am not taking their criticism to heart because I feel this is not criticism. I don't think they will understand what I was doing. There is one teacher that I have come recently to know, she is the 3rd grade coordinator, and she is just away from her dissertation doctorate in Iraq, unfortunately because of war, and it can only be done in residence so I don't think that she is going to be able to finish it. She is really has interesting ideas; her area is with teaching adults, I am really happy to share with her similar activities but with younger children. We work together and she gave interesting ideas.

What is your light bulb moment in your teaching career?

Big question mark, moving to Independent School was a big change; light bulb means something you change fundamentally like my direction. Moving to independent school to other I have been teaching more EFL, even in al-Maha students have much certain level of English, which was much higher, so I was able to do a lot more writing, higher level reading, this is much more EFL. As a coordinator in both places I was more influential in al-Maha, I was English coordinator for the whole school, I was giving all kind of talks how to generate, how to use teaching games in lessons, I found that I was thinking to be able to do this here in al-Issra, I have not got the time, because I have to write everything. It is like the teacher reinventing the wheel. The scheme of work from the Supreme Education Council is fantastic but the activities themselves are fine, are great because not all of them should be the big Disney moment. The problem when we got,..... (coma, dot, dot, dot) and I don't know what that dots mean? So it will give a list of vocabulary in a notepad, like for example houses in grade 4, houses around the world, honestly I live 36 and I didn't know what is a roundvall is and I am glad that I knew it. (What is it?) It is a house in Africa and it is made of mud, a circular shape and has a fetch roof. So it was one specify roundvall and coma dot dot dot? What is that mean? One of my colleagues she is British and she used bungalow, we don't talk about bungalows in the state. A bungalow to me is like you stay in a Hawaii beach, it is not in every day conversations. I taught them TP I hope that is okay, you know that is American native, you teach them from your context, you teach them where are you from, and in something like this I feel that they can do more, not limiting us. If they inform us what is the basic vocabulary they should have and then you can go further. I didn't write this exam, I am not in their brain, I am not sure what they want, and I am not sure whether they want

me to teach flat or apartment, I don't know. American or British, or am I suppose to teach both? I don't know. I am suppose to teach biscuits on the American meaning which is the little one that you put some jam or butter on it, or the British which mean cookies. So I teach them British and this what you are going to hear Ms. Debra say, and I try to use the British one but I am going to communicate in American because I am their teacher. There is a beginning of a guide but it is not elaborated. Me as a caring teacher, I will sit and search the Internet and find what is suitable for 4th grade. For a conscious teacher and really wants to give the children what they really need because there is not a book. I am not always aware of the minimum, I feel honestly if they are going to take in the next four years and have teachers submit their best lesson, they stand the guidelines they give, and then they have a committee take those and revamped them and they say this is wonderful lets add this vocabulary that we really didn't meant, and put together like a basic, primer for the teacher to use for each grade. Teachers should spent all their times reinventing the wheel, it should be this is the basic, I can add this, but since so much of my energy and my brain is on doing the basic, I don't have time to make the phenomenal display to go with it. Or for example, in teaching houses, do you know how many hours in the internet in will take to find pictures of the different houses to match these that they are photogenic when they are photocopied. Hours! Internet is a wonderful resource and it is also a waste of time, you can spend hours and hours in google images trying to find pictures. (In the interview, you told me that Dr. Abdul-aziz is going to provide all the resources the teachers will need) exactly, we have some books in the library but they are like the life cycle of a butterfly, so you can use that when you are doing science lesson, a couple of ABC posters. He has a really smart nice lab where he has some Malaysian programmes but far how they match the standards. He has provided for all the teachers laptop computers. It doesn't have any virus protection on it, and almost everybody is infected in it. Internet connection at home is on our own expenses, which is fine, but as far as having a bank of this pictures doesn't exist. We can find it in the school, but there is only few hours in the school day. This is the first year for grade 4th to teach all in English, so I have nothing from the last year to work on. The children the first time they did all the English was last year, so a lot of the year 3 students didn't have the basics, they were taught well. The teacher did a wonderful job with what she had, they like learning grade 1 last year, and they ask us to teach year 4 standards. I don't remember what was my focal point is but as far as he is willing to purchase things, I am not aware of what is available to be purchased. I don't have a CD that has every picture and I don't know where to get one, and I spent time to find something like this, but I didn't find this, maybe it exists but I didn't find it. I use my Microsoft clip art in the Internet but it doesn't have a picture of everything. It is very limited, he said if there is website, and he can let us join. I come along website, but I didn't have a list of websites to give to him, I haven't time to do this, I am spending much time just to get my daily lesson written. I have to write the dialogue, there is no model given that how it should be look like, even If I modified to meet my class, I like to use my students names, I like to have that control all over it, but I would like to be a disc from the SEC where I can put on and change the students names, where will be a model that I can match, at least I have confidence this what they are imagining I would come up with. We have the scheme of work but we don't have a model with it. There are two sample lessons and that is it. The scheme of work could be more accessible for the teachers. Honestly what I would like them to take for the first three years our corpus of work that we have done, because we have to compile our resources of work. Every time I turned around they require something for us as a teacher here. So maybe it is three months ago, everything for term 1, they need a copy for everything; they want to put it in the resource pack for the next year teachers, that is a headache, why they didn't tell us from September. I would save everything, I have to go back and find out. I

think it is a good idea, every time you turned around; there some things more work to be done. I know this is pushing a lot of us to have a negative attitude towards the school, not necessarily want to come back, working for SEC schools, independent schools, huge reputation too much work, and I totally know why now. I am writing dialogues, I am writing texts, every text that they have to read I have to write.

What is your dream in work? What are the boundaries of your dream?

My dream is to be a teacher of teacher foreign languages. I'd like to work in the university level in master, bachelor programmes, potentially with doctorate students. I'd like to do more research in use of language in contexts, writing and writing journals. There are so many fields of interest to me, especially how children learn languages, and how they learn more than one language. Children when they hit 10 to 12 in their age, it is explosion, they go from code switching, not finding a word, sometimes they sound like foreigners, two lexical going on. The amount of children has two languages it is just fascinating. I would like to do bilingual gifted students in research, because there is so much done in that. (What are the boundaries of your dreams?) It is back to what I said about my fears and give it back to Allah and not worry. Actualising that knowledge, realising and putting in to practice, I don't need to worry about it, Allah is going to take care of it. I will try to do them, my intention is, my future plans I am taking the GRE which is necessary in the state for graduate students because my master marks are too old, doing that this summer and then next year I will teach and then the following year I will go for my PhD because you have to apply for a doctorate a year in advance, so the following year I am going to do my PhD inshahllah. For me it is a matter of time. **(How about financial?)** I am hoping to do what I did for my master and get it paid for, I got tuition mission because I taught French, maybe not paying tuition and give a salary for my teaching.

What is your biggest anxiety when you enter independent school gate?

I was anxious at any moment I will be fired, the person who get you visa of staying, will kick you out of the country. The whole issue in Qatar is really anxiety, it governs a lot of mine and a lot of my colleagues foreigners, American and British, it governs a lot of our behaviour, like we don't want to rock the boat too much like pointing too many things that should be fixed and are not working right and you are going to have job next week. It is just makes you go with the float and do much negativity, which negativity is not good things that we point out that things should be changed, people is just complaining. Another part of my anxiety is from my previous job that I had the principal at that time was less truthful about everything. I was nervous for the things that she told us are going to be about, for example the recourses. We have resources, we have data shows in our rooms, we have computers, we have VCR, we don't have books, how can we teach children without books, even the poorest school in America, at least 50 books per classroom as a classroom library. We got zero here and we are not a poor school. It is a lack of understanding what reading is. Reading is very important when it is come to vocabulary knowledge. Having conversation with adults we use about nine of specialise vocabulary, less common words. When you read a child's book, child pictures is 32, compare that to adults talking. Children learn vocabulary with the picture book; they see what is happening from the picture. They should have the visual and the slowness and have the teacher to go over it, video doesn't cut it, your brain goes into it, you are not thinking when you are watching TV. I mean if you look at studies, so it is important to have books and we don't feel that here. **(About sponsorship?)** Oh, my sponsorship is under the operator, I don't believe it is al-Issra because when I look at my visa I believe it is under one of his businesses.

Talk about your operator?

Highly educated but not necessarily by culture, maybe bilingual but not culture. I think that there is misunderstanding when it comes to meanings behind what expressions actually means. There were assumptions made I think on his part about me and my part about him. American culture if you are new in the place of employment like a school culture and you are just hired as a teacher, you don't come in and start bossy every body around. Yes I have more years of experiences but I am hired as a teacher and they told in the first day of teaching that I am also the coordinator of grade 4th, not literacy coordinator of the whole school, coordinator of the four subjects for grade 4, basically lesson planning what they told me. I will coordinate the lesson planning. But again in America when you walk in a place in any position, you don't come in and start bossing people around. I was hired as a teacher, I am on the same level, when the principal gave us the lecture, he said we are going to work as a team, so I came in wanting to share this is what I think, what do you think? Not I am a dictator telling you what you have to do. I have heard that the operator not happy of me because I did not tell the teachers what they are supposed to do. I came here with my mental American mind observing and figure out how things will go as a teacher. We were not given any rules, any handbooks, we haven't have not been introduced to the staff. So there is no general introduction of beginning of the year. I didn't even know who is the secretary is. There is a lot of basic in how to start up a school, at least from my upbringing in the states that are not done here. I don't know what the discipline policies are. I was more to find out if my children were hit, physically hit by the teacher. I was told in one of higher position of this school, she is the queen of her classroom, and she can do whatever she wants in her classroom. There is no action taken against the teacher who hit her students, I just can't figure out something here. Then they overloaded me that I have to teach 3 to 4 hours a day, that is too much and I am the only one who write English for the whole school, writing dialogues, texts and worksheets. In my grade I am the only one who do English and sometimes contributing math and science worksheets. Math is the easiest thing to teach or do the sheets, it is not like a dialogue and then another one for the slow learners and sometimes I write one for the upper one because I want to challenge better students, they are smart, I got some smart kids, they are doing very well, and it is sad, this is a big backdrop for the SEC and I have heard it is traditional culture the way you taught from the past, you put all the students in one school and you don't have classes for the one who is really know what is going on, you don't separate them from the one that have no ideas, and there is no basic special aid, I mean if you are blind, or autistic you go to special school, otherwise you make it or break it in the public school, there is no dyslexic or she got learning disabilities, or she can't read. There is no special help for those who need extra helping. We do like someone who comes once or twice a week and she never taken the students that I said they should be taken out and I have huge gap between my lowest level students and upper level students enormous, I feel like that I am not doing this either. We chat as a group of teachers that there is about 25 to 30 students need to be separated and have extra help, one of the students have doesn't even know the letters, imagine on the other side I have a girl with a very high level of reading texts, and I don't have time to bring pictures for everything, which is not the best practice. English as foreign language learners needs pictures to visualise things, they can associate things while they are learning. I am not proud that we don't have picture of everything, there should be, but again it is time constraints. My operator needs to know how to manage, I know that he is famous in this country, I know that he has lots of qualifications. From the beginning I am American x number years of experience and I know definite ideas in how to teach English and I have been put between three non Qatari Arab teachers, a Palastinien, a Syrian and Lebanese, from that day I started as a

coordinator, they have gone behind my back complaining for everybody, it is insane and really kills my moral, I mean you don't want to deal with them any more, they go to the principal, to the vice-principal and to the accountant, and other coordinators. As a coordinator they didn't give us any job description rather coordinating lesson planning, what should I do, what I should not, nothing. **(You sign your contract as a teacher or as a coordinator?)** As an English teacher, so there is no money given for being coordinator. So if you look to my educational level, it is not necessarily high salary. I was thinking that I need to communicate better with my staff, but from the beginning they were complaining about me. I don't know what I do wrong other than I speak English as a native speaker. Allah had made me born in America, I am not telling them that they speak corporally, I am not criticising them but what happened they made it all the way to the operator, so there is a big meeting here, I was coming with my stuff, the vice- principal and the operator and another woman and basically it was to ask about the standards and where we were and why so I gave variety of reasons think that the meeting was about. Then he turned the floor to them and they started she doesn't have the worksheets ready and she doesn't do this and that, if you listen to this less qualifier you know how pity this is because nobody always and never do things. The operator laid to me as if I were not professional in front of every body, to the extent I was sitting over there and I couldn't hear any more. This is my western style this not to motivate or getting you to change and then the very next day I was told by the principal to write a letter accepting an offer to send me to TESOL Arabia conference and to pay for my hotel and my ticket, I was beyond confused. He was telling me what a horrible teacher I was and unprofessional in front of every body, how I was worthless I was shocked, how do you stop him. I asked another teacher who was here last year, oh he is just showing how he is fair and he is like apologising. To me he is just motivating you to change, that he build the team that you are not great, he wants to make me professional by being unprofessional himself. I don't motivate negatively, I motivate positively, secondly you need to know who you are talking to, and do you think I am willing to work here next year? No.

Your principal

Very nice, her English is very good lots of vocabulary, I don't think she understand what I was saying with the words, sometimes I feel she is in the word level and understand biographic level, we have a lot of communication that goes like this (crossing her hands) because I ask one question and I will get different answer. She feels that her English is much better than it is, so she just get angry with us that we don't understand, or picky on details and that is not good of her report, so me and another native speaker tend to avoid her so we don't misunderstand her. I like her a lot, but there is lots of misunderstanding and to get that avoid in the sentence building, I just hi salam in my way and that is it. She is very nice, but I don't agree with her decisions like I don't think it is okay to hit children. She didn't but she defended teachers when they did. There are policies that I don't agree with. She wants to have a lot of assemblies. Assemblies are good, but you have to realise how much time is taking from the learning. When we have let children dance and sing, we have to practise that, not after school, when do we have to teach?

School support organisations

We have not one, I didn't was here last year.

Your colleagues

I was been working very hard not to hold gracious, at least professional gracious, but I don't trust them. But I try to be fair, I understand it comes from jealousy professional, a fear of change; they

have to learn how to teach. I definitely acknowledged the good that they do; I often mention that this person has wonderful display in her classroom. She has got a very good way of teaching math, when I observe them I always try to do that, I don't feel it any in return.

Your students

My students are durable. They have come along way they are very enthusiastic learners. You have to realise as a teacher that not all talking out is out of rudeness and disrespect. She tries to use English the only English she can use, so what I get from her is can I go to the bathroom, can I drink water, and it will be in the most inappropriate time, I will be in the middle of doing something. I realised that she tries to use the English she has, little by little she using her English I had not been aware in the beginning this is not the time to ask to go to the bathroom, then I start realising she tries to participate what she knows and I have seen their mid term grades of having 8 Is to having 1 (I is the lowest level) it is F but they call it I. that is a huge learning process, people not notice it because it is not to 100. One day in a student came to me in the mother's day and she was translating the whole poem in English without any pauses.

Appendix VII: ESL Teachers' Background

Teachers 0-3	
1. Kholoud	Qatari, single, Muslim, 27 yrs old, 3 yrs of experience. English teacher for Grade 3 in Cohort I primary school for girls, BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University.

2. Salwa	Qatari, married, Muslim, 25 yrs old, 3 yrs of experience. English coordinator and teacher in Cohort II primary school for girls, BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University.
3. Rawada	Qatari by nationality, Egyptian by origin, single, Muslim, 3 yrs of experience. English coordinator in scientific primary school for girls, Cohort I, BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University and Diploma in ICELT.
Teachers 4-6	
1. Sara	Qatari, married, Muslim, 28 yrs old, 5 yrs of experience. English teacher for grade 3 in developmental primary school for girls, Cohort I, BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University.
2. Maha	Qatari, single, Muslim, 30 yrs old, 6 yrs of experience. English coordinator in scientific school for boys' primary, Cohort I. BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University. She is going to be an operator for a school in Cohort III.
3. Nadia	Qatari, single, Muslim, 28 yrs old, 5 yrs of experience. English coordinator for preparatory school for girls, Cohort II, BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University.
Teachers 7-9	
1. Ameena	Qatari, married, Muslim, 30 yrs old, 7 yrs of experience. English coordinator in scientific school for boys' primary, Cohort I. BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University. She is going to be an operator for a school in Cohort III.
2. Sameera	Canadian by nationality, Palestinian by origin, married, Muslim, 46 yrs old, 9 yrs of experience. Curriculum coordinator for the core subject and classroom teachers for Grade 3 in primary school for girls, Cohort II, BEd in Math from Cairo University, Egypt.
3. Wadha	Qatari married, Muslim, 33 yrs old, 8 yrs of experience. English Coordinator in the scientific preparatory school for girls, Cohort I. BEd in Education and ELT from Qatar University.
Teachers 10-12	
1. Dalia	Egyptian married, Muslim, 37 yrs old, 12 yrs experience.

	Homeroom teacher in Cohort I primary school for boys, BA in Tourism and Hotel Management from Egypt University.
2. Mini	Indian married, Christian, 37 yrs old, 12 yrs experience. English Coordinator for grades 5 & 6 in Cohort II primary school for girls. BED in Education and Maths and MEd in Education and Math from India.
3. Debra	White American married, Muslim, 36 yrs old, 10 yrs experience. Grade 4 English teacher and coordinator in a primary school for girls, cohort I. BSD in Science and Education and MA in teaching French as a foreign language from Missouri University in US.
Teachers 13-15	
1. Trudy	Black south African, married, Christian, 34 yrs old, 13 yrs of experience. Classroom teacher for Grade 1 in primary school for girls, Cohort I. High Education Diploma in Education and Geography from South Africa.
2. Hadya	Indian by origin, Australian by nationality, married, Muslim 33 yrs old, 13 yrs experience. English teacher for grade 12 in scientific secondary school for girls, Cohort I. BA in English Literature from Deli University, India, MA in English Literature from American Global University in US and MPhil in ELT from Deli University, India and PhD in TESOL from the same university mentioned above.
3. Ameera	Egyptian, married, Muslim, 37 yrs old, 15 yrs experience, Academic supervisor in a developmental primary school for boys, cohort I. BA IN English Literature from Qatar University.
More than 15 years	
1. Fadia	Syrian married, Muslim, 41 yrs old, 17 yrs experience. English teacher at secondary school for girls, Cohort II. BA in English Literature from Damascus University in Syria.
2. Rene	Black South African, single, Christian, 38 yrs old, 17 yrs experience. English teacher at primary school for girls, cohort I. BA in English, Psychology and Sociology and MA in Educational Management and Curriculum Development from Western Cape University in South Africa.
3. Rosina	Indian married, Christian, 45 yrs old, 18 yrs experience.

	Class teacher for grade 1 in a primary school for girls, cohort I. BA in Commerce and Diploma in Education and Teacher Training in Goa University in India.
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