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Jordan's Teachers and Principals in a Global Landscape: *Executive Brief*

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Jordan's Teachers and Principals in a Global Landscape: *Executive Brief*

This brief highlights some of the main findings from Jordan's 2018 National Teacher Survey, benchmarking them against data from the OECD's 2018 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), which was released in two volumes; in June 2019 and March 2020. 48 countries and economies participated in TALIS 2018, including two Arab States (Saudi Arabia and the UAE). Jordan was not among the formal country participants in the 2018 TALIS cycle. However, the OECD allowed Jordan the use of their methodology and questionnaires to develop a Jordan-specific teacher survey that was also run in 2018. The methods, sampling and 50% of questions used in the Jordan Teacher Survey were identical to TALIS. Jordan's 2018 National Teacher Survey was a nationally representative survey of 5,722 basic education teachers (grades 1-10), along with their school principals from 361 Ministry of Education (MoE), private and UNRWA schools. It was conducted through a partnership between Jordan's MoE and the Queen Rania Foundation, with funding from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Global Affairs Canada. This brief compares data from Jordan's grade 7-10 teachers and principals with lower secondary education teachers participating in TALIS.

The profile of the teaching workforce

Two-thirds of teachers in Jordan and OECD countries were female. When it comes to principals, in Jordan 63% were female compared to less than half (48%) of principals in OECD countries. A majority of TALIS participating countries show an unequal balance between the proportion of female teachers and female principals, but Jordan does not. The trend in Jordan may largely be a result of gender segregation of many lower primary schools (i.e. grade 7-10 schools), with all-male or all-female staff and students.

Jordan's teachers were younger, by an average of 8 years, compared to OECD teachers, and had less classroom experience, by an average of 7 fewer years. The average age of a teacher in Jordan is 36, compared to 44 in OECD countries. The average number of years working as a teacher was 10 among Jordanian teachers, and 17 among OECD teachers. **Similarly, Jordan's principals were younger, by an average of 6 years, compared to OECD principals, and had 3 fewer years of experience working as a principal.** Only 1% of Jordan's principals were aged 60 and above, compared to 20% of OECD's principals; this is attributable to Jordan's retirement age (60 for males, 55 for females).

Jordan's teachers and principals were less qualified than their OECD counterparts. The majority of teachers in Jordan, OECD and other Arab countries participating in TALIS (Saudi Arabia and the UAE), were qualified with a bachelor's degree or equivalent. However, when compared to Jordan, more than five times as many teachers in the OECD held master's degrees or equivalent (8% in Jordan, compared to 44% in OECD countries). More than 6 in 10 principals in Jordan reported receiving bachelor's degrees or equivalent, while more than 6 in 10 principals in the OECD reported receiving master's degrees or equivalent. Interestingly, Jordan's principals were almost 4 times as likely to report having a doctoral degree or equivalent, when compared to OECD country principals (15% compared to 4%).

The majority of Jordan's principals (91%) work full-time without teaching obligations; this is very different from the OECD, where 30% of principals reported working full-time with



teaching obligations. This may suggest that Jordan's principals are more of administrative, rather than academic, leaders.

Continuous professional development and mentorship

The vast majority of teachers (more than 9 in 10) in Jordan and the OECD reported receiving some form of continuous professional development in the 12 months prior to survey administration. Specifically, more than 7 in 10 teachers in Jordan and the OECD reported participating in in-person courses or seminars, which was the most common form of professional development received.

The main barrier to professional development reported by teachers in Jordan was the lack of incentives for participation, an issue which is less prominently reported by OECD teachers (66% of Jordanian teachers, compared to 48% of OECD teachers, reported this as a barrier). **Additionally, more than half of teachers in Jordan agreed that no relevant professional development is offered to them, compared to 38% of teachers in the OECD.** This suggests that Jordan needs a better way of assessing the need for teacher professional development. **Finally, twice as many teachers in Jordan agreed that “A lack of employer support” is a barrier to their professional development (61%), when compared to OECD teacher reports (32%).** Both Jordan's National Teacher Survey and TALIS 2018 did not define “employer” in the questionnaire; when answering this question, teachers may have referred to their school principal, or in the case of public school teachers, the MoE.

Principal reports suggest 90% of Jordan's teachers have access to mentoring programs, compared to two-thirds of OECD teachers, and only 30% of teachers in Saudi Arabia. In Jordan, principal reports indicated such programs are more commonly provided to all teachers at the school, while principals in OECD countries and in Turkey were more likely to report that mentoring programs are provided to novice teachers.

The majority of principals in Jordan, the OECD and other participating Arab countries reported receiving a school administration or principal training program as part of their formal principal training.

Teacher appraisals and feedback

Teacher appraisal was commonplace across schools in Jordan and OECD countries, with various individuals or bodies being involved. In Jordan and OECD countries, principals indicated that they are the most frequently involved in teacher appraisals (as opposed to other members of the school management team, teachers' mentors, other teachers or external bodies or individuals). Other members of the school management team were the second most likely appraisers of teacher performance in Jordan and the OECD.

Measures commonly reported by principals in Jordan and the OECD to occur following appraisals were discussions with teachers to remedy weaknesses, or creating teacher development plans. Practices less commonly reported included increases in teachers' salaries or bonuses (32% of principals reported this in Jordan, compared to 41% of OECD principals).



However, twice as many principals in the OECD compared to those in Jordan (51% versus 25%) reported that dismissals, or non-renewal of contracts, occurred following appraisals.

The majority of teachers in the OECD and Jordan (9 in 10) reported receiving feedback in their school, with the most commonly used method being observation of classroom teaching. Other methods used that were more commonly reported by Jordanian compared to OECD teachers are teachers' self-assessment of their own work (68% versus 44%) and an assessment of teachers' content knowledge (64% versus 51%).

School profiles

Roughly 3 in 10 teachers in Jordan worked in schools where more than 30% of students come from socio-economically disadvantaged homes, compared to 20% of teachers in OECD countries. On the other hand, principal reports suggest only 8% of Jordan's teachers were working in schools where more than 10% of students have formally identified special needs. In comparison, this figure is three times higher for OECD teachers. Jordan's reported low percentage may hint at issues regarding the inclusion of students with special needs in its schools, or issues with identifying students with special needs who are in schools.

Relations between students and teachers, and the school more generally, were very positive in Jordan, the OECD, in Saudi Arabia and in the UAE. In Jordan, 89% of teachers agreed that teachers and students usually get on well with each other, compared to 96% of OECD teachers.

There are much more pronounced resource shortages in Jordan's schools compared to OECD countries' schools. For example: 60% of Jordanian principals reported a shortage of support personnel hinders their ability to provide quality instruction quite a bit or a lot, compared to 33% of OECD principals; 59% of Jordanian principals reported a shortage of qualified teachers influenced the schools ability to provide quality instruction quite a bit or a lot, compared to 21% of OECD principals; 52% of Jordanian principals reported insufficient internet access compared to 19% of OECD principals; 45% of Jordanian principals reported a shortage or inadequacy of library materials compared to 16% of OECD principals. **Student-teacher ratios in Jordan were also much higher than in the OECD, the UAE and Saudi Arabia; 21:1 in Jordan, compared to 12:1 in the OECD.**

What happens in the classroom?

Jordan's teachers had among the lowest reported average working hours per week, and the lowest average time spent teaching per week, when compared to OECD countries. The total number of **working hours** of a teacher in Jordan was **25% less** per week compared to OECD teachers (29 working hours compared to 39 hours), but was equivalent to teachers in Saudi Arabia (29 hours) and similar to Turkey (32 hours). The number of hours Jordan's teachers reported spending on **teaching** was **15% less** per week compared to OECD teachers (18 hours compared to 21 hours). Jordan was also in the bottom 20% of all 48 TALIS participating countries in terms of average time spent on teaching per week. The number of hours Jordan's teachers reported spending on **lesson planning and preparation** per week was over **40% less** than OECD teachers (4 versus 7 hours).



There is not enough time being spent on teaching and learning in Jordan's classrooms; more than 40% of lesson time is being spent on administrative tasks and keeping order in the classroom. Jordan's students are getting 20% less teaching and learning time per class as OECD students are. When in the classroom, Jordanian teachers reported only spending an average of 58% of the lesson time on teaching and learning, compared to an average of 78% among OECD teachers. **Instead of teaching, Jordan's teachers reported spending one quarter of class time just keeping order in the class (twice the OECD rate), in addition to almost a fifth of lesson time on administrative tasks (twice the OECD rate).**

Teachers in Jordan have higher self-efficacy beliefs in their ability to perform specific tasks when compared to teachers in the OECD. For example, 92% of Jordan's teachers reported being able to motivate students who show low interest in school work quite a bit or a lot, in comparison to 68% of OECD's teachers.

The two most frequently used assessment methods reported by teachers in Jordan and OECD countries is observation of students and providing immediate feedback (86% and 79% respectively), and administering their own assessment (81% and 77% respectively). Less than half of teachers in Jordan (47%) and the OECD (41%) reported that they let students evaluate their own progress. Teachers in Jordan (80%) were much more likely than OECD teachers (58%) to report regular use of providing written feedback on student work, in addition to a mark.

Teachers' perceptions of the profession

Most teachers believed the profession is undervalued in society; 66% of teachers in Jordan and 74% of teachers in the OECD disagreed that "the profession is valued in society". Views regarding the profession's value varied significantly by gender. In OECD countries, male teachers held more positive views towards the profession when compared to female teachers, while female teachers in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were more likely to hold positive views towards the profession than their male counterparts.

Jordan's teachers reported low job satisfaction when compared to OECD and the other participating Arab countries. For example, more than twice as many Jordanian compared to OECD teachers reported that they regret becoming a teacher (23% versus 9%).

Teacher retention in Jordan was higher than in the OECD; 19% of Jordan's teachers reported plans to leave the profession within the next 5 years, compared to 25% of OECD teachers. This difference may largely be due to the age demographic of teachers in Jordan and the OECD; with teachers in Jordan being younger by 8 years on average. It is important to note that only 5% of teachers in Jordan are aged 50 or above, compared to 1 in 3 teachers in the OECD aged 50 or above. Hence, more teachers in the OECD may have reported plans to leave the profession as there may be more teachers who retire out of the profession, rather than leaving for other reasons.