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PhD Dissertation Defense

Entitled

THE IMPACT OF IRTIQA'A INSPECTORATE PROGRAM ON SCHOOL
LEADERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY AND THEIR OPERATIONAL
PRACTICES IN ABU DHABI SCHOOLS

by

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Abstract

Entering a new phase of attaining excellence in all sectors, the UAE has specifically emphasized the importance of improving and enhancing the education sector, in order to establish a knowledge-based economy. Monitoring performance of educational institutions through inspectorial programs is vital in ensuring the success of the quality of education offered

in the UAE. The study explores the impact of school inspections on school leaders' (principals, vice principals and lead teachers/ head of faculties) in Abu Dhabi Schools. The effects of school inspections on school leaders are assessed through two features: the leaders' professional identity and the leaders' operational practices through their usage of inspectorate programs at their schools. The main research question probes deep into the extent of improvement in school leaders through inspectorate programs. This study is a mixed methods design based on an explanatory sequential approach. Thus, the first phase adopts a quantitative design with a structured questionnaire, wherein stratified random sampling was used in the longitudinal study with more than 200 school leaders in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The second phase of the qualitative phase included semi-structured interviews with school leaders that focused on the school leader's improvement on both their professional identity and their practices in schools. Findings suggest that there is an evident impact of Irtiq'a inspectorate program on leaders in Abu Dhabi schools, through a positive impact on their professional identities through usage of feedback and self-evaluations. Furthermore, through the program, leaders were able to not only identify school priorities for improvement, but also develop strategic thinking as part of their operational practices. It is recommended to firstly revise self-evaluation form (SEF) that will bridge the gap between any misunderstandings between school leaders' standards and the standards of the School Inspection Framework. Moreover, parental involvement is paramount when it comes to planning for the school SEF.

Keywords: Professional Identity, Operational Practices, School Accountability, School Evaluation, School Inspection, School Monitoring.