



## **Teachers' Perceptions of Curriculum Alignment, Professional Development, and Teaching Practices**

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This study explores teachers' perceptions of curriculum alignment, teaching methods, and professional development programs at Rawdah High School in Beirut. Utilising a quantitative research design, data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire completed by 80 teachers across various disciplines. The study aims to evaluate the relevance of the curriculum to intended learning outcomes, the effectiveness of teaching methods, and the impact of professional development on student learning and achievement. Results indicate that while most teachers find the curriculum well-aligned with educational goals and teaching practices moderately effective, professional development received the lowest satisfaction score, highlighting significant room for improvement. Additionally, administrative support and resource availability emerged as crucial factors for fostering an effective learning environment. These findings provide actionable insights for school leaders to enhance educational practices, align professional development with contemporary educational challenges, and contribute to ongoing discussions on educational reform in Lebanon. The study also lays the groundwork for further regional research in this area.

**Keywords:** teacher perceptions, curriculum alignment, professional development, teaching practices, educational effectiveness

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Overview of Rawdah High School**

Established in 1961, Rawdah High School is a distinctive educational institution in Beirut, Lebanon. Its unwavering commitment to academic excellence and character development sets it apart. Situated in the heart of Beirut, the school has expanded to cater to over 1,600 students, offering a comprehensive education that seamlessly blends traditional learning methods with state-of-the-art facilities. This unique blend of tradition and modernity is a hallmark of Rawdah High School's educational approach, making it a significant player in the academic landscape of Beirut (Beirut.com, 2024).

**Citation:** El-Annan, S. H., & Hassoun, R. A. (2025). Teachers' perceptions of curriculum alignment, professional development, and teaching practices. *International Journal of Instruction*, 18(3), 141-158.

Rawdah High School, a symbol of educational excellence in Lebanon and the Middle East, is dedicated to nurturing well-rounded individuals. The school's mission is not just a statement but a living reality. It is brought to life through a balanced curriculum encompassing various academic courses and programs, character education, and social responsibility. This holistic approach ensures that students excel academically and become responsible and ethical individuals. (Chehimi, 2021).

Rawdah High School, a cornerstone of Beirut's educational landscape, has pioneered innovative educational opportunities. The institution's unwavering focus on addressing modern education's evolving needs and challenges has produced academically proficient students capable of leading society. This commitment to academic excellence, combined with a supportive environment that caters to students from diverse backgrounds, has positioned Rawdah as one of the most vital schools in the Lebanese education system. Over the past six decades, the school's role in shaping students into well-rounded individuals who excel academically and contribute to society is truly inspiring and a source of pride for all involved in the educational process (Rawdah High School).

### **The Urgent Significance of the Study**

Quantitative analysis of teachers' perceptions is crucial for evaluating school performance, such as at Rawdah High School. Teachers are central in implementing curricula and educational practices that impact student achievement. Their insights provide valuable information on aligning academic goals and students' learning processes. Quantified perspectives enable educators and administrators to identify the strengths and weaknesses of teaching methods, curriculum development, and school management (Špela & Mirazchiyski, 2023). Moreover, quantitative data from teachers can confirm or challenge beliefs about influential schooling variables like leadership, teaching practices, and school climate. This allows schools to measure the impact of these factors and inform policies and interventions (Fan, 2022). Lastly, teachers' assessments are becoming essential for educational change. Quantitative analysis of their views can refine teaching practices and improve learning outcomes by ensuring decisions are based on educators' experiences and feedback, leading to positive changes in student learning (Guskey, 2016).

### **Research Questions**

Main Research Question:

What is teachers' perception in Rawdah High School of the efficacy of the curriculum, teaching practices, and professional development programmes in enhancing students' learning and participation?

*Sub-questions:*

To what extent do teachers agree that the curriculum is consistent with the intended learning outcomes at Rawdah High School?

How satisfied are teachers with the professional development opportunities offered by the school concerning improving their teaching practices and students' learning?

**Research Objectives**

- **Assess Curriculum Alignment:** The following research questions will be used to assess teachers' perceptions of how the current curriculum meets the intended learning outcomes in Rawdah High School.
- **Evaluate Professional Development Impact:** To assess the impact of the professional development programs offered to the teachers in Rawdah High School to improve their teaching practices and increase students' participation.
- **Analyze Teaching Methods Effectiveness:** To assess the respondents' satisfaction level with the teaching strategies used in Rawdah High School to enhance students' learning and participation.

**Research Contribution**

This research work is uniquely positioned in the educational research domain as it provides quantitative evidence on the teachers' perception of curriculum congruence, professional development, and teaching practices in a leading academic institution in Lebanon. Its distinct contributions include:

- **Localised Insight:** This study provides valuable information about the efficiency of educational practices in Lebanese high schools, fostering a sense of connection and relevance among Middle Eastern educators. It can help develop the relatively scarce literature on education in the region.
- **Immediate Solutions:** The study offers actionable recommendations to the Rawdah High School administration, providing a clear path to improving the curriculum design, professional development programs, and teaching practices, thereby contributing to sustainable education development.
- **Theoretical Advancement:** This study significantly contributes to the theoretical knowledge base by exploring the connection between teacher perceptions and educational effectiveness. Providing insights into how teacher feedback can enhance educational policies and practices stimulates intellectual engagement and further research.
- **Practical Application:** The results of this study can be directly applied to similar institutions in Lebanon and neighbouring countries, empowering educators to enhance their educational practices, especially in curriculum and teacher professional learning.

**LITERATURE REVIEW****Curriculum Alignment in Education***Importance of Curriculum Alignment*

Curriculum alignment is a critical component and the cornerstone of learning achievement. What is taught in classrooms must align with the intended learning objectives and tests. Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are not just coherent frameworks but the very essence of practical education. If the curriculum is well aligned, it guides the teacher

in teaching the content to enable the students to perform well in the assessments and improve the overall learning outcomes (Chehimi, 2021).

Several studies have established that curriculum alignment can influence students' achievements by presenting well-defined and coherent learning objectives. Research has shown that where the curriculum is well aligned with the education standards, the students are better positioned to understand what is expected of them and thus excel in their studies. For example, according to Guskey (2016), integrating curriculum with assessment serves the dual purpose of facilitating the achievement of instructional goals and enhancing the quality of instruction. This is so because alignment assists teachers in developing lessons that are more specific to the assessment criteria, thus preparing the students for internal and external assessments.

In addition, Fan's (2022) analysis highlights the need for alignment in supporting equity in education. In this regard, curriculum alignment eliminates differences in students' learning outcomes across the different groups since all students are taught under a standard set of curriculum standards. This is especially important in a multicultural learning environment where students come from various backgrounds with different abilities and resources. Curriculum alignment, therefore, helps level the playing ground for all students, thus giving all of them a chance to excel.

Furthermore, Špela and Mirazchiyski (2023) have studied the general effect of curriculum alignment on school effectiveness. Their study pointed out that where curriculum content is well aligned, student learning and performance in school are continually enhanced. This is because alignment helps ensure that all the components in the educational process, such as teaching, learning, and even the assessment process, are all in harmony and are working towards achieving the same goals, thus making the learning environment more conducive.

Altogether, these studies underscore the role of curriculum content match in attaining educational objectives and enhancing students' academic performance and equity. When curriculum, instruction, and assessment are well coordinated, schools can provide a coherent and purposeful learning environment that assists teachers and students in achieving their academic goals.

#### *Teacher Perceptions of Curriculum Effectiveness*

Teachers' perceptions of curriculum alignment are critical to the success of any educational system. Teachers' perception that the curriculum is congruent with the intended learning outcomes leads to the use of appropriate teaching practices. Studies show that a positive attitude towards curriculum alignment enhances the teacher's capacity to convey information more effectively and purposefully, thus increasing the students' interest and performance. (Yang., 2023). Clayback et al. (2022) state that teachers who understand the curriculum and order and are in synch with tests feel more empowered to teach. Such an alignment provides a direct line of sight for teachers to channel their energies towards achieving specific learning outcomes and enhancing teaching practices.

However, some difficulties are connected with curriculum matching with the intended learning outcomes. Teachers can be constrained by the curriculum standards that do not allow them to address the needs of the students and classroom or individual learning differences. Khine (2013) found that although curriculum alignment has the advantage of making the learning goals more uniform, it also has the disadvantage of putting pressure on the teacher to conform to the curriculum, limiting creativity and innovation in the classroom.

Curriculum alignment has its advantages, as highlighted below. Teachers with a well-aligned curriculum that aligns with the curriculum they teach state that they are more confident in their teaching, and student achievement improves. They better understand the goal they are trying to achieve in the education system. Seitz (2020) has noted that when curriculum alignment is done, it enhances teacher confidence and instructional coherence, enhancing the student's learning achievements. This alignment ensures that the educational quality is standard across different student populations while emphasising the significance of a well-articulated curriculum.

#### *Impact of Professional Development on Curriculum and Teaching Practices*

Continuing professional development is critical in how teachers are socialised into a given way of perceiving and performing the role of teaching and curriculum implementation. Therefore, professional development involves preparing teachers with the necessary tools and knowledge to modify their teaching practices to be consistent with the curriculum and enhance the learners' performance. The effectiveness of professional development is most significant when it is connected to curriculum objectives and offers strategies that can be implemented in the classroom (Domitrovich, Williford, & Snyder, 2021).

The studies have also revealed that when teachers are provided with specific professional development interventions, they can change their teaching practices to enhance the curriculum alignment and students' motivation. Professional development improves the skills of teachers in adopting new approaches to teaching and learning, including differentiation and other learning strategies, which are essential for addressing students' needs within a context of standardisation (Patfield, Gore, & Harris, 2023).

Further, curriculum alignment professional development assists teachers in learning how to teach to meet specific learning outcomes. Teachers who have taken professional development courses in curriculum planning and assessment methods have confidence in presenting content congruent with the lesson learning and improvement objectives (Opfer & Pedder, 2020).

However, professional development has a problem in that it must be practical and targeted at the issues teachers face in their classrooms. Successful professional development usually consists of cooperative projects, additional support, and application, which allow teachers to practice and improve new approaches to the curriculum. (Kennedy, 2018). Professional development plays a crucial role in shaping curriculum implementation and teaching strategies since it gives educators the best

approaches and information to improve their teaching techniques by curriculum objectives (McChesney, 2017).

### **Teacher Perceptions and Educational Effectiveness**

#### *Significance of Feedback from the Teacher*

Teacher feedback is now widely accepted as an essential factor in decision-making for education and improving schools. Studies have established that when teachers give feedback on curriculum, teaching practices, and school policies, decisions directly impact the quality of instructions and students' performances. Teacher feedback provides a view of the reality in the classroom, and thus, the strategies to be implemented at the school level must be more sensitive to the needs of the teachers and the students. This means that the teachers' views are more likely to point to the differences between policy and practice so that the necessary measures can be taken to change the situation (Derrington & Sanders, 2019).

Research has shown that teacher feedback positively impacts the flexibility of instructional practices and curriculum development. For instance, Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017 established that schools seeking and incorporating teacher feedback in their decision-making processes usually have higher teacher satisfaction and better student performance. Teacher feedback improves the instruction process, increases professional teacher responsibility, and contributes to the school climate of cooperation (Tuytens & Devos, 2020).

#### *Teacher Evaluation as a Means of School Development*

In particular, teacher evaluations and feedback systems effectively facilitate school development. Studies show that teacher evaluations improve teaching practices when used for formative purposes, where the purpose is to give feedback rather than rate teachers. According to DeMonte, 2017, the results of teacher evaluations should be tied to professional development because this approach helps teachers reflect on their practices and modify them to promote the school's educational mission (DeMonte, 2017).

Furthermore, schools that efficiently use teacher evaluations employ them as a development tool. Teacher evaluations, when done in a supportive manner, provide the framework for schools to adapt to the educational processes based on feedback received from the teachers. This is especially useful in determining where teachers may require more support or professional development so administrators can better target the areas of need (Taylor & Tyler, 2017). When the teacher feedback is integrated into the school's strategic development, the quality of teaching and learning activities, as well as students' achievement, is likely to be improved, making the school environment more sensitive to the need to adapt to changing conditions (Jones & Youngs, 2021).

### **Challenges in Middle Eastern Schools**

Middle Eastern schools face unique challenges, notably in curriculum alignment, teacher autonomy, and professional development. Centralised curriculum policies often limit teachers' flexibility and restrict their feedback, as seen in Lebanese schools where

top-down models prevail (BouJaoude & Ghaith, 2017). Educational equity is another concern, as a homogenised curriculum can create gaps among students with diverse learning backgrounds. Limited differentiated instruction options hinder support for students with varying abilities, compounded by poverty and under-resourced schools affecting educational equity in the MENA region (Akkari, 2004). Professional development opportunities are often narrow and do not address teachers' practical challenges (Noureddine & Heilig, 2020). Cultural expectations further complicate curriculum implementation, making it challenging to balance traditional rote learning with modern pedagogical approaches (Mitchell, 2005). Additionally, Rupp (2009) noted that secondary education often fails to prepare students for the demands of higher education, leading to gaps in critical thinking and independent learning. Addressing these challenges is essential for improving the region's teacher feedback mechanisms and professional development.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Constructivist Learning Theory, articulated by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, posits that learning is an active process shaped by our environment and social interactions. Vygotsky's sociocultural theory emphasises the role of educators in tailoring learning based on students' cognitive development. However, in the Middle East, Chehimi (2021) found that Lebanese teachers face challenges due to rigid curricular demands that hinder the effective implementation of constructivist methods, revealing a tension between standardised guidelines and student-centred instruction.

Bertalanffy's Systems Theory offers another perspective, viewing educational contexts as systems where elements like curriculum design and teaching practices interact. Effective school systems rely on continuous feedback loops between teachers and curriculum developers to enhance learning. Unfortunately, centralised curriculum policies in Lebanon often limit teacher input (BouJaoude & Ghaith, 2017). This study investigates whether the feedback mechanism at Rawdah High School helps balance instructional quality with curriculum alignment.

Leithwood and Jantzi's Transformational Leadership Theory highlights how educational leaders inspire positive change through cooperation and empowerment. Transformational leaders foster environments where teacher feedback is encouraged and used to inform curriculum and professional development decisions. This is particularly important for professional development, as it promotes collaboration between school leaders and teachers instead of top-down approaches. Al-Tarawneh (2019) found that transformational leadership increased teacher motivation and improved curriculum adaptability in Jordanian schools, leading to better instructional outcomes when teachers had a voice in the curriculum. The current study explores whether Rawdah High School demonstrates similar practices that value teachers' input in professional development and curriculum alignment.

Deming's Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle has become essential for continuous improvement in education. It emphasises that teacher contributions should guide curriculum decisions based on student performance data and classroom realities (Muinde & Mbataru, 2023). However, in Lebanon, formative assessment practices

remain limited, with many schools focusing on summative assessments (Harb, 2020). This study will also assess whether Rawdah High School integrates teacher feedback into its improvement cycles or if such feedback is marginal in decision-making.

Spillane and Coldren's Distributed Leadership Theory argues that leadership is a shared responsibility involving diverse stakeholders, including teachers. Their model supports empowerment and collective input in curriculum development. A study by Mansour and Hamadeh (2018) found that private schools in Lebanon with collaborative leadership had higher teacher engagement and effectiveness. In contrast, public schools often employ hierarchical models that limit teacher involvement. This study will investigate whether Rawdah High School adopts a distributed leadership model that values teacher participation or if decisions are made centrally with insufficient teacher involvement.

Overall, this exploration reveals the importance of teacher agency, collaboration, and feedback in enhancing educational quality. Theoretical frameworks such as Constructivist Theory, Systems Theory, and Continuous Improvement Models emphasise the necessity of ongoing feedback and empowering teachers as decision-makers in education, thereby influencing quality curriculum alignment and professional development efforts.

Research in Lebanese educational settings shows that top-down, structured approaches often limit the effective use of teacher feedback in curriculum development due to strict policies and lack of teacher autonomy (Chehimi, 2021; BouJaoude & Ghaith, 2017). This study explores whether Rawdah High School influences teachers' perceptions and feedback to influence curriculum alignment, instructional strategies, and professional development. By focusing on a private school in Lebanon, the research aims to enhance understanding of the challenges and potential for teacher-centred reforms in the region.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

Despite the extensive literature on teacher perceptions in Western contexts, there is a notable lack of research examining these themes in Middle Eastern educational systems, particularly regarding curriculum alignment, professional development, and instructional strategies. While Western studies highlight the influence of teacher perceptions on instructional quality and student achievement, these findings may not apply to Middle Eastern schools due to significant sociocultural, political, and systemic differences. Much of the existing research centres around teachers' autonomy in Western education, but many Middle Eastern countries, like Lebanon, operate under a centralised system with limited teacher input. This disparity raises questions about how teacher perceptions of curriculum and professional development differ across cultures and how reduced teacher agency impacts instructional quality and student engagement. Additionally, few studies address the socio-political factors influencing curriculum delivery in the Middle East. Lebanon's educational landscape, influenced by cultural diversity and political instability, complicates the implementation of standardised curricula, particularly in private schools needing differentiation. Current literature often overlooks how these factors affect teacher decision-making and professional development access. There is also a lack of research on the effectiveness of professional development in Lebanon. While global literature stresses the need for continuous,



targeted professional learning, studies on whether local programs effectively prepare teachers are scarce. Additionally, comparative studies between private and public schools are limited, hindering understanding of how resources and school leadership impact curriculum alignment. This study aims to fill these gaps by examining teacher perceptions at Rawdah High School in Beirut, a private institution, and how these perceptions affect teaching quality and student engagement. By focusing on this context, the research seeks to understand the institutional support systems affecting curriculum delivery and professional learning opportunities. The findings will inform Lebanon's ongoing educational reform debate, highlighting the intersection of teacher perceptions with curriculum mandates and professional development. Ultimately, this study contributes to academic literature and offers recommendations for policymakers and educators to develop more effective regional educational systems.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Design**

This study employs quantitative methods to assess teacher perceptions. A self-administered survey featuring close-ended questions on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to gauge agreement with statements about curriculum, teaching, and professional development. This structured approach helps identify trends and relationships within educational practices (Creswell, 2014; McLeod, 2019). Quantitative methods were selected for their objectivity and capacity to generate measurable insights from a large group of participants. This design is handy for identifying relationships between variables and minimising researcher bias during data analysis.

### **Participants**

The sample included 80 teachers at Rawdah High School in Beirut from diverse backgrounds in teaching experience and subjects such as mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. On average, the teachers had 10 years of experience, with some boasting up to 20 years.

### **Context**

The research occurred at Rawdah High School in Beirut, Lebanon, a prestigious private school with around 1,600 students. Known for its rigorous curriculum, the school emphasises whole-child development and employs traditional and modern teaching methods. The curriculum aligns with national and international standards, supported by strong leadership focused on professional development.

### **Instrumentation**

This study's primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire to assess teachers' perceptions of curriculum alignment, instructional strategies, and professional development effectiveness. The survey consisted of 25 close-ended Likert scale questions (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to quantify participants' agreement with various statements. Open-ended questions were included for qualitative feedback. It underwent content validation by educational experts to validate the

instrument, resulting in minor revisions for clarity and relevance. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, achieving a score of 0.89 from a pilot study with 10 teachers, indicating high internal consistency. The questions were organised into three domains: Curriculum Alignment (8 items,  $\alpha = 0.87$ ), Instructional Practices (10 items,  $\alpha = 0.85$ ), and Professional Development (7 items,  $\alpha = 0.88$ ). To ensure objectivity, the survey was administered anonymously via a neutral platform, without administrative oversight, and neutral language was utilised to minimise response bias.

### Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected online within two weeks, with participants recruited via email invitations. Anonymity was ensured to promote honest responses. The responses were analysed using statistical software, focusing on descriptive statistics and correlations between curriculum alignment and professional development.

## FINDINGS

### Statistical Analysis

#### *Descriptive Statistics*

The following table provides the mean, median, and mode for each quantitative Likert-scale survey item, summarising teacher perceptions on curriculum alignment, teaching methods, professional development, and school resources.

Table 1

The mean, median, and mode for each of the quantitative Likert-scale survey items

Survey Question	Mean	Median	Mode
The curriculum at Rawdah High School aligns well with our learning outcomes.	4.2	4	4
The teaching methods I employ effectively engage students.	4.1	4	4
Students demonstrate a notable improvement in analytical and problem-solving abilities.	3.9	4	4
Rawdah High School provides regular and relevant professional development.	3.8	4	3
I am supported by the administration when implementing new teaching strategies.	4	4	4
Educational accreditations positively impact our education quality.	4.1	4	4
Sufficient resources are available to support an engaging learning environment.	3.9	4	4
Continuous professional development is highly valued and accessible.	3.8	4	3
Faculty collaboration is fostered to improve educational practices.	3.7	4	4
Technology integration meets contemporary educational needs.	4	4	4
Professional development workshops improve student learning outcomes.	3.9	4	4
Assessment methods effectively measure student learning.	4	4	4
Student engagement has increased due to teaching innovations.	4.1	4	4
The infrastructure supports students' physical and mental well-being.	3.8	4	3

*Frequency Distribution:*

The table below summarises the frequency distribution for critical questions, providing insights into how teacher responses are spread across the Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Agree Strongly).

Table 2

The frequency distribution for a selection of critical questions

Survey Question	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
The curriculum aligns well with learning outcomes.	2	5	10	45	38
Teaching methods effectively engage students.	1	6	12	48	33
Professional development is relevant and regular.	4	8	20	42	26
Administration supports new teaching strategies.	3	7	15	50	25

The results presented above align with the research questions guiding this study. The main research question sought to explore teachers' perceptions of the efficacy of the curriculum, teaching practices, and professional development programs in enhancing students' learning and participation. The descriptive statistics and frequency distributions demonstrate a generally positive perception of curriculum alignment (mean = 4.2), indicating that most teachers agree that the curriculum is consistent with the intended learning outcomes, directly answering the first sub-question. Similarly, the results for teaching practices (mean = 4.1) reflect positive perceptions, with most teachers indicating that their instructional methods effectively promote student engagement. However, the results for professional development (mean = 3.8) reveal more mixed perceptions, suggesting that while many teachers find the training beneficial, some express dissatisfaction, aligning with the second sub-question concerning the adequacy of professional development opportunities. The overall consistency in teacher responses across both descriptive and frequency data supports the study's aim of examining the relationships between curriculum, teaching methods, and professional development, providing a comprehensive view of teacher perceptions at Rawdah High School.

**DISCUSSION****Analysis of Quantitative Data**

The study at Rawdah High School highlights how curriculum alignment affects teacher autonomy and creativity. With a mean score of 4.2, most teachers view the curriculum as well-structured for achieving learning outcomes and providing clear instructional expectations. However, rigid alignment can limit teaching flexibility and creativity. While teachers rated their methods positively (4.1), the lower score for professional development (3.8) suggests they feel constrained in adapting their strategies, consistent with Khine's (2013) findings on the drawbacks of excessive standardisation. Data reveals that although teachers are confident, lower ratings for professional

development and resources (3.9) indicate that support for innovative teaching is lacking. Overly rigid curricula may prioritise content coverage over engagement, as Seitz (2020) discusses. Thus, teachers at Rawdah require greater freedom to experiment with diverse methodologies.

The design of professional development contributes to this limitation. Lower satisfaction scores suggest that current training does not adequately equip teachers for adaptive instruction. Opfer and Pedder (2020) emphasise that professional development should focus on practical strategies that empower teachers.

A more flexible curriculum approach is recommended to improve this situation, allowing for modular content delivery while adhering to core objectives. Additionally, professional development should emphasise creative teaching strategies rather than mere compliance.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that while curriculum alignment is viewed positively, enhancing teacher autonomy and creativity is essential. Balancing coherence with flexibility can empower teachers and foster a dynamic educational environment beneficial for educators and students.

#### **Comparison with Existing Literature**

The research conducted at Rawdah High School has revealed some similarities with the current literature on curriculum alignment, teaching practices, and professional development. Still, some aspects call for further critical discussion.

Regarding curriculum alignment, the high level of teacher agreement at Rawdah aligns with the findings of other scholars such as Guskey (2016) and Fan (2022). Both stress the importance of ensuring the curriculum is well articulated to enhance student achievement due to a well-organized learning environment. However, Rawdah's case presents some concerns regarding the applicability of the concept of curriculum alignment in a multicultural context. Fan (2022) also explains how curriculum alignment can help reduce achievement gaps by student subgroups, which is relevant to Rawdah's case as it has students of different backgrounds. However, the study fails to consider some of the possible drawbacks of this alignment, including the possibility of the alignment hindering flexibility and creativity in teaching practices, as pointed out by Khine (2013).

For this reason, the notion of curriculum alignment is seen as positive; it can have adverse effects, such as the exclusion of innovative or non-traditional teaching methods. Seitz (2020) and Clayback et al. (2022) explain that, on the one hand, there is the need for consistency in the implementation of the strategies, while on the other hand, there is the need to give the teacher some room to manoeuvre to address the unique circumstances of the class. At Rawdah, although most teachers think that the curriculum aligns with the learning goals, there is no further elaboration on how this affects teaching and learning flexibility. The literature also raises concerns about overemphasising alignment and the dangers of adopting a one-size-fits-all approach to the learning needs of students, which may, in the long run, deter student engagement and learning.

The findings on professional development at Rawdah are also consistent with the general discussions in the literature. However, there is a clear gap between the teachers' needs and the available resources. Domitrovich et al. (2021) and Patfield et al. (2023) noted that the best professional development is targeted to the needs of the educators and the problems they encounter in the classroom. At Rawdah, while the teachers' perception of the professional development opportunities is positive, the mean score of 3.8 is relatively low, which may indicate that these opportunities are not fully satisfying the teachers' needs. This aligns with Kennedy's (2018) and McChesney's (2017) criticism, who pointed out that generic or non-specific professional development does not lead to the desired change in teaching practices. The Rawdah study is in line with this, indicating that more targeted, contextualised professional development, especially on new technologies and how to teach diverse learners, may help teachers meet the demands of their practice.

In addition, the administrative support results at Rawdah extend the current literature on leadership in education. Although Huber and Skedsmo (2016) and Taylor and Tyler (2017) stress how administrative support helps to encourage teacher innovation, the differences in the teacher responses at Rawdah show that this support is not always provided to the teachers. This variability is significant because a lack of support from the leadership may demotivate the teachers, who may not be able to incorporate new teaching techniques. The literature review reveals that distributed leadership enhances a collaborative school culture where teacher feedback is crucial in decision-making. Spillane and Coldren (2020) also support the idea of teachers' participation in the leadership processes with the possibility of their input being implemented into the school's policies. In Rawdah, the support given to the teachers regarding administration is considered good. However, the study indicates that more structured and comprehensive leadership measures could help eradicate the discontentment observed in the study.

In conclusion, the case of Rawdah is generally consistent with the current literature on curriculum alignment, professional development, and administrative support. However, it also shows where further thinking and critical analysis are required. Curriculum alignment and instructional flexibility, the personalisation of professional development, and the consistency of administrative support were identified as areas of improvement for the school and other schools in similar contexts. This critical comparison highlights the importance of a more sophisticated approach to analysing educational change and development based on teachers' views on the existing practices.

## LIMITATIONS

A significant limitation of this study is that it relies solely on quantitative data, which does not fully understand teachers' experiences and beliefs. Additionally, response bias may occur, with teachers giving overly optimistic answers to align with school goals, potentially inflating positive outcomes. Due to cultural differences, the findings are specific to Rawdah High School and may not apply to other schools or contexts in Lebanon or beyond; thus, while the study offers valuable insights into teacher perceptions at Rawdah, comparisons with other schools should be avoided. Further

research is needed to see if similar trends exist in different types of schools or geographic areas.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

### *Theoretical Implications*

The study's findings have important theoretical implications, reinforcing and expanding existing educational theories. Teachers at Rawdah High School demonstrated positive perceptions of curriculum alignment, aligning with Constructivist Learning Theory, emphasising the significance of clear learning objectives for cognitive development and engagement. The high mean score for curriculum alignment (4.2) suggests that a structured curriculum leads to effective teaching, consistent with Guskey's findings on curriculum coherence and student outcomes. The study also reflects Systems Theory, highlighting the need to align curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessments for a balanced educational system. While curriculum consistency was positively rated, professional development received a lower average score (3.8), indicating gaps that may hinder this balance. This aligns with Khine's critique of standardised curricula limiting teacher creativity, emphasising the need for adaptive professional development. Additionally, the findings point to Transformational Leadership Theory, underlining the importance of targeted professional learning for continuous improvement. Opfer and Pedder noted that the mixed responses suggest a need for relevant and adaptive professional development tailored to teachers' challenges. Finally, the results contribute to Middle Eastern educational literature, particularly in Lebanon, where professional development often prioritises theory over practical application. The study supports the link between curriculum alignment, instructional quality, and the need for targeted professional development that empowers teachers in their contexts, suggesting a greater focus on teacher agency and collaborative leadership.

### *Practical Implications*

**Curriculum Development:** Since the teachers' opinions on curriculum alignment are optimistic, the school should keep enhancing its curriculum to meet the learning outcomes. However, teachers must be included in any changes that are being made in the curriculum so that they can share their opinions and needs. **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** Although professional development is always welcomed, the slightly lower marks indicate that it should be made more relevant to the needs of the teachers at Rawdah. Increasing the focus of the professional development offerings to more specific sessions aligned with current educational issues, such as technology and differentiated instruction, may enhance the effectiveness of these sessions. **School Administration Decisions:** The survey findings also stress the need to sustain good support for teachers, especially in implementing new strategies. School leaders should ensure that they engage teachers frequently to get feedback and provide more targeted support to make all the staff feel supported to innovate in the classroom. Also, providing enough learning resources, equipment, and other necessities for students' welfare will improve the educational environment. In this way, Rawdah High School can capitalise on its areas of success and develop the areas that teachers have

highlighted as requiring further support, thus increasing the overall effectiveness of its pedagogy.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined teachers' perceptions of curriculum alignment, teaching practices, professional development, and administrative support at Rawdah High School, providing critical insights into the strengths and areas for improvement within the institution's educational framework. Overall, the findings indicated that teachers view the curriculum as well-structured and effective in supporting student learning outcomes. Similarly, teaching practices were positively perceived, with educators feeling confident in their instructional approaches. However, the study also revealed areas where further development is needed, particularly professional development opportunities and resource availability.

A key insight from the findings is that while curriculum alignment contributes positively to instructional clarity and consistency, it may also limit teacher autonomy and creativity when it becomes overly rigid. Some educators expressed a desire for greater flexibility to adapt content delivery to meet the diverse learning needs of students. The results also highlighted the importance of professional development but revealed that current programs often focus more on theoretical knowledge than practical teaching strategies, limiting their impact on classroom practices. Additionally, while administrative support was generally well-regarded, there remains a need to ensure that leadership actively fosters a collaborative learning culture where teachers feel empowered to innovate and share feedback.

To address these findings, it is recommended that curriculum flexibility be enhanced by incorporating modular content delivery models and teacher-driven curriculum committees to allow for greater adaptability while maintaining alignment with learning objectives. Professional development initiatives should shift toward more targeted, subject-specific workshops focused on practical strategies and include peer collaboration opportunities such as lesson observations and feedback sessions. Additionally, administrative support can be strengthened by creating open feedback channels for teacher input and ensuring manageable workloads to allow educators sufficient time to apply new strategies.

In conclusion, Rawdah High School has a strong foundation in curriculum alignment and teaching practices. However, it can further enhance its educational impact by providing greater instructional flexibility, more practical professional development, and continued collaborative support from school leadership. By addressing these areas, the school can create a more dynamic, inclusive, and student-centred learning environment while also serving as a model for other institutions aiming to balance curriculum coherence with teacher creativity for improved educational outcomes.

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