

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

THE CHALLENGES FACING TEACHER UNIONS IN
LEBANON AND THEIR ROLE IN EDUCATION REFORM

by
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The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step ~ Lao Tzu

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In Lebanon, teacher unions have been linked to strikes and have been seen as fighting only for their members' self-interest and as not being concerned about issues of educational quality issues. In addition, teacher unions are currently perceived to be highly politicized as political and sectarian groups have influenced them and their decisions and have shifted their focus away from advocating for teachers' needs and from other important educational matters. However, there is no documented research that negates these perceptions of teacher unions or that examines the perspectives of the union members on the role their unions have played and can play in the improvement of the quality in education. This study utilizes a qualitative research design and specifically a grounded theory approach that investigate from the union leaders' and union members' perspectives about: 1) the function or primary purpose of teacher unions 2) challenges facing teacher unions today, and 3) the role of union in education reform. The study also conducts a comparative analysis to bring about an understanding of the different perspectives of the groups (union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members) and to assess whether an alignment exists amongst them. In-depth individual interviews, formal field interviews, and focus group interviews were used to collect data from 17 public school union leaders and 21 teachers who are active (12) and inactive (9) in the public school unions.

Findings of this study revealed that the three groups (union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members) believed that the primary purpose of teacher unions is to protect teachers' rights, improve educational services, and voice teachers' concerns. As for the challenges facing teacher unions in Lebanon, most of the participants in the three groups stated that teacher unions face challenges related to union work such as interference of the government and political sectarian leaders in union decisions. Due to political leaders' interferences, most union members believed that their union leaders have more loyalty to their political parties than union work. Results also showed that the study participants thought that political interferences are also causing administrative corruptions in public schools, which is adding to the challenges of teacher unions in improving education. Also, teacher unions' repeated failure of union strategies might have caused distrust of teachers in the effectiveness of the union and lost the support of parents and the community for teacher unions. Another challenge that participants highlighted was the ineffective policy making processes in the Ministry of Education that showed a neglect of public schools. This neglect also resulted in severe and deeply rooted problems in public education. Union leaders and active union members identified additional challenges which are the lack of respect of teaching as a profession, lack of unity among union members, lack of supportive conditions needed to facilitate union work, and lack of security in the country. As for the current role that teacher unions are playing in education reform, teacher unions are assuming an advocacy role in recruiting competent teachers to the cadre, improving terms of employment for teachers, and opening prekindergarten classes in public schools.

Teacher unions are also working on raising awareness about problems that are occurring in public schools. For the future role that teacher unions can play in education reform, participants responded that it should continue to play an advocacy role but in improving professional development of teachers. It should also have a policy development and decision making role by contributing to enforcing accountability in public schools and assuming a role in educational decisions related to curriculum improvement.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A labor union is defined as a social entity that is organized, that has an active role in society, that is built on a set of goals and values and is reliant on a collective group that has its own dynamics, and that has developed shared goals meant to safeguard the employer's interests and improve the employee's working conditions and quality of life (Sanjaqdar, 2007). This definition of unions, which was presented by one of the union leaders during the Public Secondary School Teacher League's conference in Lebanon in 2006, states that the union's main role is to serve society. Labor unions, in developed and developing countries, have played a major role in introducing and implementing political, social, and economic reforms. In some developing countries, such as Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka, labor unions have contributed to the establishment of a state and have helped these countries achieve national independence (Devarajan, Ghanem, and Thierfelder, 1997). Similarly, in a few Arab countries, such as Egypt and Tunisia, labor unions have helped achieve democracy and change authoritarian regimes (Lee & Weinthal, 2011).

However, in other countries, labor unions have not been able to achieve the same positive results. For example, in Lebanon, labor unions such as the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (CGTL) (الإتحاد العمالي العام), have struggled to fulfill their economic, political, and social role towards their members and society. Many factors have led to the CGTL's inability to fulfill its roles. These factors include the government's aggressive control of labor unions, the collapse of the economy, and CGTL's failure to accommodate the changes in labor market. Other factors also include internal organizational challenges, such as the absence of strategic planning, low

union membership, internal conflict among members due to political affiliations and competitiveness, and the absence of democracy within union (Sader, 2004).

Some internal and external challenges faced by teacher unions in Lebanon are similar to those faced by CGTL such as government control of labor unions, economic crises, and conflict resulting from political affiliations among union members. On the other hand, teacher unions face additional challenges. A common challenge amongst teacher unions around the world is their inability to change the community's perspective and to demonstrate that teaching is a profession rather than an occupation. Today, teaching has characteristics that prevent it from being viewed as a profession. One of these characteristics includes low and unappealing salaries that do not attract potential teachers to the profession. Moreover, from a cultural perspective, teaching, despite its importance in society's development, is still viewed as a feminine job (Sykes, 1999). Labeling teaching as "feminine" has undervalued its worth and has resulted in the workforce being dominated by women. Nevertheless, women occupy fewer leadership positions because of discrimination in the workplace. Indeed, research suggest that women who are competent and who have reached leadership positions continue to struggle with gender equality issues (UNESCO, 2011). Another characteristic that undermines the status of teaching as a profession is the reliance of teaching on a kind of authority as a method for control, which has made it seem similar to an occupation (Bashshur, 1982; Sykes, 1999). An example given is teacher evaluations. School boards and administrators make the decisions using evaluations instead of other teachers to retain, promote, or dismiss teachers, which are quite similar to evaluations performed in regular occupations (Sykes, 1999). In addition, teachers are not granted autonomy to make decisions in their own classrooms. Sykes (1999) reveals that the teaching profession should be viewed differently. Teachers should follow a certain set of standards, which

include prioritizing the welfare of individuals, having the suitable technical competencies, having autonomy in decision-making, assuming a collective responsibility, developing peer review as a control method, and following certain codes of conduct to set good practices (Sykes, 1999). To raise the standards of teaching to a profession, teacher unions in different countries have adopted strategies that promote professionalism among teachers, leading them to be able to expand their role in the educational reform using different models of unionism.

Early in their history, teacher unions used a model of industrial unionism that based its negotiations on the collective bargaining approach to organize workers from the same industry. This model was used to bargain on issues related to working conditions, such as salaries, benefits, and retirement funds (Peterson, 1999). Collective bargaining is defined as a process where two groups, one representing the employer and the other representing labor unions, meet and negotiate issues related to employees' wages and working conditions to reach a legally binding agreement (Streshly & DeMitchell, 1994). After being criticized for advocating only for their members' interests, teacher unions looked to new models. These models included professional unionism, a form of unionism that is focused on improving the quality of education and on transforming teaching into a profession. Teacher unions have also used social justice unionism, which allows union members to be involved in the decision-making process. Social justice unionism facilitates collaboration with community organizations and addresses social justice matters (Peterson, 1999). Unions also adopted other organizing models, such as the social movement unionism, which is an approach that combines "an anti-economistic, anti-sectionalist, and transformative vision with mobilizing repertoires" (Gindin, 1995, p.268) where members of the union are expected to lead, to organize, and to connect with community organizations.

Background

In Lebanon, there are three teacher unions for both public and private schools. These unions include the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (TSL) (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان), which was established in 1938 for private schools, the Public Primary School Teachers League (PPSTL) (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي), which was formed in 1972, and the Public Secondary School Teachers League (LPESPL) (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي), which was formed in 1980.

The rise of teacher unions in Lebanon has had a positive impact on the propagation and development of public schools in most Lebanese areas (Maalouf & Abou Rjeily, 1987, as cited in Samaha, 2006). Before 1975, teacher unions raised demands related to improving education. Teacher unions requested “democratizing and nationalizing education” which was supported by Fouad Chehab’s government (retrieved from <http://english.al-akhbar.com/node/10488>; Samaha, 2006). Al-Amine (1994) noted that demands raised by teacher unions also included the improvement of the curriculum, the unification of textbooks, the translation of math and science subjects into Arabic, and the enhancement of public education. In addition, these unions emphasized the importance of students’ health and raised awareness on the significance of including early childhood education in public schools. Teacher unions had a supportive environment to achieve these demands. Their demands were supported by socialists and communist political parties since these political parties have similar aims. After 1975, teacher unions in Lebanon focused mainly on one aspect of the teaching profession as they attempted to raise teachers’ wages and improve teachers’ working conditions. However, the salaries remained low and could not attract potential teachers to teaching (Al-Amine, 1994; Samaha, 2006).

Criticism of teacher unions has introduced a new set of challenges for the Lebanese union leaders. For instance, a strike initiated by the Union Coordination Committee (UCC) (لجنة التنسيق)

(النقابية), a committee that coordinates between the private and public teacher unions and other labor unions, called for 'pay justice', which could have cost the Lebanese treasury approximately 3692 billion Lebanese Pounds. This strike spurred major controversy in the country ("Lebanese teachers to strike for pay justice," 2014; Fadel, 2013), a controversy which was evident in the division it created. People were conflicted between supporting teachers and standing against teachers' demands for fear that the economy might collapse under additional financial burdens. This was evident when teacher unions resorted to strategies such as boycotting official exams to exert more pressure on the government. While public school teachers, as union members, refused to proctor official exams until their demands were met, other teacher unions, such as the English Language Teacher League, offered their services to replace public school teachers and proctor exams ("English teachers will participate in the public examinations control and correction," n.d.). Subsequently, teacher unions negotiated with the government and both sides reached consensus. Both sides agreed that teachers should continue to proctor official exams. However, if their demands were not met, teacher unions would resort to boycotting the correction of the official exams. The disagreements that arose between the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and teacher unions led to the issuance of certificates for students and resulted in an end of the teacher strike without attainment of teacher demands.

Union leaders have focused on one aspect of the teaching profession and that is the increase teachers' salaries. Although it is important for teachers as professionals to have attractive salaries, unions' use of strategies such as boycotting official exams to request such an improvement has placed students' futures at stake and has deprived them from the support of the public. Also, union leaders have lost the support of many teachers due to their failure to achieve the salary and scale increase. The other important aspects of the teaching profession in addition

to education reform issues were not addressed by teacher unions and as a consequence have increased community criticism and have weakened the union's approach to reach their goals.

Research Problem

Teacher unions in Lebanon have faced several challenges in their attempt to achieve their objectives and in their attempt to assume their roles as labor unions. First, public school teacher unions are denied the right to organize through government laws (Samaha, 2006). Public school teacher unions are leagues and not legal labor unions and thus are not allowed to perform union acts. Second, after the Lebanese Civil War of 1975, teacher unions were accused of fighting only for their members' interests, and of ignoring the issues of educational quality as related to the teaching profession (Samaha, 2006). Third, according to the literature, another major challenge facing Lebanese teacher unions is the perception that they are politicized in nature, which undermines their ability from to make autonomous decisions. Indeed, after the teacher union election of 2012, many union leaders ran under the banner of political parties and won the majority of seats (retrieved from <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2015/Jan-26/285301-political-parties-sweep-public-secondary-school-teachers-vote.ashx>). Political and sectarian affiliations have influenced unions in Lebanon and have influenced their decisions, in turn compromising unions' members and their demands for important educational matters. According to Shalaby et al. (2010), factors that have weakened unions in the Arab countries are the absence of autonomy and inability to separate political work from union work.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the primary purpose and functions of teacher unions in Lebanon including their role in education reform. In addition, this study examines the challenges currently faced by teacher unions. These challenges were studied from the two

perspectives: that of union leaders and that of union members in an attempt to explore the level of alignment between the views of the two groups. Finally, this study also took into consideration the professionalization of teaching in education reform that has been recently addressed in the strategic plan of the project called Quality Education for Growth that is conducted by Ministry of Education in Lebanon

(<http://www.mehe.gov.lb/Templates/Internal.aspx?PostingId=20>).

Research Questions

This research was conducted from the perspective of both union leaders and union members. The recommendations that arise from this study are grounded in the participants' experiences, as well as the reviewed literature. To reach its intended purpose, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the primary purpose of teacher unions?
- 2) What challenges do teacher unions face?
- 3) What role, if any, do/can teacher unions play to contribute to education reform?

Rationale of the Problem

There is a limited number of studies that have been conducted on teacher unions in Lebanon. The available studies have mostly been conducted in a Western context, specifically in North America. Some research has examined the effect of unions on students, teachers, and schools' climate. Other studies have focused on teachers' salaries and their working conditions. Many studies found that teacher unions have influence. For example, researchers have shown that teacher unions have been successful in increasing teachers' salaries (Baugh & Stone, 1982; Zwerling & Thomason, 1995; Duplantis et al., 1995; Hoxby, 1996; Lemke, 2004). However,

most of these studies were conducted by economists and did not explore teacher unions from an educational perspective.

Studies on the effects of teachers' unions on teacher quality have shown contradictory findings, making it difficult to draw accurate conclusions on the nature of the impact of teacher unions. For example, Zhang (2009), who conducted a study on the relationship between teacher unions and teacher quality in the United States, found that compared with non-unionized districts, strongly unionized districts have teachers who are highly qualified, specialized, and who are more committed to their jobs than those teachers in nonunionized districts. Other studies, such as one conducted by Hoxby and Leigh (2004) showed that teacher unions were the main reasons behind the entrance of low-level aptitude women to the teaching field in the US. Hoxby and Leigh (2004) found that the decline of teachers' aptitude in the teaching field resulted from pay compression¹ that was influenced by teacher unions.

Similarly, research was conducted on the effect of unions on student performance. Results have shown contradictory and inconclusive findings. Eberts and Stone (1987), Steelman, Powell, and Carini (2000), and Nelson and Rosen (1996) found that students in unionized districts or American States tend to show higher scores on standardized tests than students in non-unionized districts or States, while Hoxby (1996), Kurth (1987), and Peltzman (1993) found that teacher unions negatively affected students' performance. In addition, Kurth's (1987), findings showed that teacher unions lowered SAT scores. Finally, Hoxby's findings showed that teacher union caused an increase in dropout rates of students.

¹ Pay compression is the situation that occurs when there is only a small difference in pay between employees regardless of their skills or experience

Only a few studies examined the role of teacher unions in education reform. These studies have generated contradictory results and have concluded with calls for further research. A study conducted by Yusim (2008), from the perspective of school administrators, union practitioners and union reformers, investigated the role of unions in education reform. The findings showed that participants have understood the importance of unions in their role for education reform. Other findings showed the importance of collectivity and leadership to achieve success. Similarly, Donaldson et al. (2013) examined the role of the teachers' union in a reform initiative called Together Initiative (TI), an initiative that was applied in various districts in the US. This study found that union leaders were supportive of the reform initiative. Labor management relationship played a major role in the success of education reform. Union leaders who could not develop effective labor management relations resorted to industrial unionism. Another study conducted by Smith (1997) found that rank and file union members and union representatives believed that their unions should seek to balance their traditional labor union role such as increasing wages and improving working conditions of teachers and its educational role to improve education. However, union leaders' responses were not in agreement with their members' response. Although union leaders were not satisfied with the industrial unionism model², they chose to continue to use it. On the other hand, Adelberg (2008) conducted a study from the autonomous perspective of teacher union members that found that members were not able to see a role for their union in education reform. Despite the controversy about the role of teacher unions in education reform, there is a trend in acknowledging the importance of the role of teachers as collaborators in education reform (Stewart, 2012). As a result, in *the 2012 International Summit on the Teaching Profession*, teacher unions from twenty-three countries, as

² Industrial unionism model referred to as the "traditional model". This model focus on teachers as workers united to ensure a healthy work environment, better working conditions, and fair wages and treatment

representatives of teachers, were involved in the summit to give their perspective about raising teacher quality and improving educational system (Stewart, 2012). This decision of involving teacher unions in summit actually shows that there is a growing understanding among policymakers that teachers actually have a critical role to play to have a successful reform. My study focuses on teacher unions and explores teacher unions in a non-Western cultural context.

My research study adds to the knowledge base on the role of union in education reform since it identifies the role of teacher unions in education reform from the perspectives of union leaders and union members.

Moreover, most of the studies on teacher unions used a quantitative method since they searched for a relationship or correlation between teacher unions and each of students, teachers, or schools (Zhang, 2009; Baugh & Stone, 1982; Zwierling & Thomason, 1995; Duplantis, Chandler, & Geske, 1995; Hoxby, 1996; Lemke, 2004; Eberts & Stone, 1987; Pantuosco & Ullrich 2010; Kurth, 1987; Steelman, Powell, & Carini, 2000; Nelson & Rosen, 1996; Nelson & Gould, 1988; Samaha, 2006). Of the studies reviewed, only eight used a qualitative methodology (Adelberg, 2008; Bernstein, 2003; Yusim, 2008; Chapman, 2013, Asselin, 2012; Rottmann, 2011; Smith, 1997; Heystek & Lethoko, 2001) and two adopted a mixed method approach (Griffith, 2009; Donaldson et al., 2013). Conversely, there were no qualitative studies that performed an in-depth examination of the joint perspectives teachers and union leaders on the purpose of unions and the challenges that unions face as they attempt to reform the education sector. The methodology of this study at hand adopts a qualitative approach and examines the perspectives of both union members and union leaders and their role in education reform.

Although controversies spurred by unions have dominated the news media in Lebanon and the region, studies on teachers' unions in Arab countries are almost non-existent. After

reviewing English and Arabic regional databases (Shamaa, Arab e-Marefa, Al Manhal, ERIC, and Education Research Complete), one study was found. Samaha (2006) investigated the level of awareness of unionism and professionalism among teachers. Samaha (2006) found that there was a dichotomy between the awareness of unionism and professionalism among teachers. However, Samaha's quantitative study neglected to investigate the perception of union members on the functions and representativeness of the union.

This study also builds on previous research and literature conducted in a Western context. Moreover, this research follows a comparative approach that examines the views of union leaders and members. This study also seeks to understand the functions of teacher unions and the challenges that these unions are currently facing from both perspectives of union leaders and union members. This study is conducted in a different cultural context. As such, this research also highlights the cultural conditions that might impact the views and practices of unions (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The first and oldest teacher union in the world, the Educational Institute of Scotland, was established in the UK in 1847 with the purpose to "promote sound learning and advance the interests of education" (retrieved from http://www.eis.org.uk/About/our_history.htm). This purpose actually shows that teachers care about improving education. In fact, recent studies have shown that teachers have a desire to be viewed as professionals and to change society's views about them and teaching (Causarano, 2012). However, the conditions imposed on teachers, such as the decline in the economy and the injustices that occur in the workplace, have led teacher unions to focus on increasing wages and on improving working conditions. Teacher unions were criticized by the community for caring about their members' interests only without working to improve education (Samaha, 2006). This criticism made teacher unions search for alternative strategies to be more involved in education development. Teacher unions in some countries such as the United States attempted to find a balance and incorporate aspects of both a professional association and a labor union. This attempt will further be discussed in this chapter.

To understand the challenges faced by teacher unions and the role that they play in education reform, this chapter introduces the following: a historical review that explores teacher unions in three different settings, particularly in the U.S., Finland, and Tunisia where teachers' unions are influential. Second, this review presents the history of teacher unions in Lebanon, the goals they have achieved, and the challenges that hinder teaching from becoming a profession. Third, the chapter focuses on teacher unions' contributions to education reform in the aforementioned countries. Fourth, the literature reviews teacher unions in Lebanon, specifically the history of teacher unions. This history includes teacher unions' successes and crises, in

addition to the goals they have achieved and the challenges teachers currently face. Fifth, the chapter discusses current models of teacher unions, goals of education reform as reflected in the profile of student in the 21st century, the image of an effective teacher, and the characteristics of a healthy school climate. Finally, this chapter reviews empirical studies conducted on the role of union in education reform and the effects of unions on students, on teachers, and the school climate.

Teacher Unions around the World: A Historical Background

The purpose of this section is to present teacher unions in different countries, especially those countries where unions are recognized for their strengths. This section also discusses the factors that contribute to teacher unions' success. In addition, the challenges that teacher unions currently face are revealed. The section begins by presenting the history of teacher unions in the United States, Finland, and Tunisia that informed the current study and framed its analysis.

Teacher Unions in the United States

Before the mid-nineteenth century, there were no labor unions that were formed in the United States to protect the rights of workers from low wages, poor work conditions, discrimination, and other factors that contribute to a poor workplace experience. When skilled laborers began immigrating to the U.S. from Germany and England, the idea of unionism started to emerge (Baker et al., 2004). Workers began using a collective approach to protect their rights in the workplace. Teachers in the United States united to tackle an educational cause to improve public education. The two largest teacher unions that emerged in the United States were the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The NEA was established as a professional association while the AFT was formed to act more like a labor union. At later stages, these federations were able to incorporate both aspects of a

professional association and a labor union. In addition, many unions were founded at the local level as well, but most of these unions were affiliated with the NEA and the AFT at the national level. The following sections will discuss these two unions, and the challenges that both unions have faced.

The National Educational Association. At the national level, the National Education Association is one of the largest professional organizations and unions in the U.S. Currently, the NEA is comprised of approximately 3.2 million members, which consists of school teachers, student teachers, college professors, retirees, and support personnel. The National Education Association was founded in 1857 with a focus on professionalism in teaching, and on developing the profession of teaching to become “a profession not just an ordinary vocation” (Wesley, 1957, p. 30). The association’s goals were set not only to improve schools but also to develop teachers socially and pedagogically, and to increase the public’s interest in education (NEA, 2013). In addition, association’s missions also included aspects of social justice in their goals. National Education Association members believe that a good quality education should be a right for all children. However, the NEA did not believe in using labor union strategies. For example, to achieve equal educational rights for children, NEA leaders did not believe in strikes and unionized approaches. Leaders wanted the NEA to be viewed as a professional association, instead of a labor union. A professional association caters to each person’s needs to provide the necessary information to attract professionals in the field, to help professionals network and to connect and learn from each other’s experience, and finally to offer continuous professional development (Hurd, 2000).

The American Federation of Teachers. The American Federation of Teachers is the second largest union organization and it currently includes 1.5 million members. The AFT is

affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) previously called the American Federation of Labor, which is a national trade union center (American Federation of Teachers, 2016). The AFT includes teachers from all levels, paraprofessionals and school-related personnel, staff and faculty members in higher education, government employees, and nurses and healthcare professionals. The American Federation of Teachers was first established as a union in the year 1916 after NEA member and social activist Margaret Haley and her elementary teacher colleague, Catherine Coggin, opposed the NEA's methods of obtaining teacher's rights. These activists believed that an industrialized approach is more effective (American Federation of Teachers, 2016).

A dichotomy exists between the two approaches of unionism and professionalism (Samaha, 2006; Bernstein 2003; Murphy 1990). The NEA is characterized by "professionalism" and the AFT is representative of "unionism" (Murphy, 1990). This meant that the AFT adopted an "industrial style collective bargaining" approach in negotiations (Sykes, Schneider, and Plank, 2009), which is a form of collective bargaining that is focuses on factors related to work conditions such as "wages, hours, teacher assignment, pension and healthcare benefits, teacher preparation time, and class size--all subjects that may also affect teaching and learning" (Koski, 2012, p. 71). The AFT also performed strikes when an impasse was reached with school administration. On the other hand, the NEA refused to act in a unionized manner and chose to adopt a professional negotiation strategy, which is similar to the meet-and-confer method where negotiation is the only tool used. However, professional negotiation strategy was not as successful as collective bargaining (Lieberman, 2000). Due to pressures from its competitor unions and a decrease in its membership, the NEA adopted the collective bargaining approach to achieve its goals (Murphy, 1990). Due to a conflict of interest, administrators chose to leave the

NEA as they are unable to represent school management and negotiate with their fellow members in teacher union at the same time (Streshly & DeMitchell, 1994). In 1960, the NEA finally accepted to be officially recognized as a labor union (NEA, 2013; Murphy, 1990). In addition, President John F. Kennedy passed an executive order in 1962 that recognized the rights of public workers to perform collective bargaining (Murphy, 1990). Even the AFT sought to move beyond industrial unionism and to change the view of the community. The AFT and NEA adopted new unionism models that combined aspects of industrialism, professionalism, and even social justice which will be discussed in the upcoming section of this study (Peterson, 1999). The two teacher federations were finally able to remove the dichotomy between the two concepts of unionism and professionalism.

Unionism led to a greater success for teacher unions in the U.S. than the exclusive focus on the status of the profession or professionalism during the 1920s until 1970s because unionism fulfilled the needs of teachers at that time period. The Great Depression years led to a decrease in teachers' salaries that consequently made teachers feel economically insecure (American Federation of Teachers, 2016). Collective bargaining law brought both labor unions and management to the discussion table, preserved the rights of both teachers and school administration, and helped develop a healthy relationship across the school organization. In addition, teachers felt protected from any possible school management abuse such as dismissal or unfair treatment. Collective bargaining also resulted in a tremendous increase in union memberships in both the NEA and AFT (Peterson, 1999; retrieved from <http://occupytheory.org/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-collective-bargaining/>).

Challenges Faced by Teacher Unions in US

Teacher unions have faced many challenges since their establishment. These challenges have included a downturn in the economy, school management-imposed conditions, criticism from the community because of an increased focus on union members' interests, education reform initiatives that have caused the dismissal of teachers, and the marginalization of the role of teachers in the decision-making process. To surpass these challenges, teacher unions have adopted different models and have succeeded on many fronts.

Teacher unions have faced challenges in protecting teachers' rights in the workplace and in voicing their concerns. During the 1920s, salaries were low and membership in teacher unions decreased due to management conditions that forced teachers to sign yellow dog contracts, which were contracts that the school administration imposed on teachers and prevented them from joining a union. Teachers unions advocated to stop yellow dog contracts and to pass tenure laws for teachers in order to provide them with job security (AFT, 2014). In addition, teachers demanded to have a role in decisions-making especially those decisions related to teaching. Therefore, teacher unions resorted to a negotiation strategy called meet and confer. This strategy, embraced in schools, gave teachers the right to participate in contract negotiations. The product of the meet and confer method is a memorandum of understanding (MOU), which results in an agreement between teacher unions and the school administration. National Educational Association members and officials sustained the MOU in their practice, while the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) turned to industrial collective bargaining as the solution to achieve their goals (Sykes, Schneider, Plank, & Ford, 2009). The use of meet and confer came under criticism by many educators and union members. This criticism was because the MOU could not force schools' administrations to formally bargain with union representatives or to even abide the

two parties, school administrators and teacher unions, by the conditions set in the MOU (Streshly & DeMitchell, 1994). Moreover, despite the fact that industrial style collective bargaining protected teachers' rights in the workplace, it did not manage to address educational issues.

The community, including parents, criticized the use of industrial style collective bargaining and accused teacher of focusing solely on "bread and butter" issues or the essentials for living for their members, and of neglecting to consider other issues that are important in education (Lieberman, 2000). One main critic of unions was Myron Lieberman, a former AFT candidate for presidency and a former consultant for both the NEA and the AFT. Myron Lieberman (2000) criticized the NEA and the AFT and argued for unions to eliminate competition in wages, to control recruitment to the teaching profession, to increase demands of union members, and to lobby against laws that protect unskilled teachers. Moreover, community members criticized the efforts and the strikes conducted by teacher unions because these unions did not protect the students' right for better education (Peterson, 1999). The sole focus of unions on members' interests created tension between the community and the unions (Weiner, 2012), and made teachers seem unprofessional and self-centered (Kahlenburg, 2003).

Another criticism of the teaching profession and of the two teacher federations, the NEA and the AFT, came from the U.S. President Ronald Reagan. In 1983, a report, called A Nation at Risk, was issued by Reagan's administration showed poor academic performance in schools across the United States (Kahlenberg, 2003). According to the report, 23 million adults in the United States were found to be illiterate when tested in reading, writing, and comprehension (retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html>). While most people saw this report as an attack on public education and on teachers, Albert Shanker, the former president of the AFT at the time, embraced the criticisms and took them as recommendation for

improvement. The former president of the AFT advocated for many reforms, such as site-based management (SBM) and merit based on performance. Albert Shanker also believed that teaching should be more professional where standards are set, entry-level requirements to the profession are controlled, and accountability is reinforced (Kahlenberg, 2007). This historical event changed how teacher federations in the U.S. worked to achieve their goals. Teacher unions adopted new models, which will be discussed in another section of this thesis.

Today, teacher unions face a new set of challenges in schools and in the political arena. According to many scholars, a neoliberalism movement has taken over the education arena and has had a detrimental effect on education in general (Ross & Gibson, 2006; Weiner, 2013; Ross, 2007). Ross and Gibson (2006) explain that neoliberalism focuses on five aspects: applying the free market rule, reducing public expenditures, aiming for deregulation, promoting privatization, and replacing community concerns with individual concerns. While labor unions use a collective approach to achieve a common interest, neoliberalism promotes individualism and competition (Weiner, 2012). Neoliberalism also works on “reducing wages by de-unionizing workers and eliminating workers' rights that had been won over many years of struggle” (retrieved from <http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=376>). Many scholars and practitioners perceive that one example of neoliberalism that permeated the educational sector in the U.S. was the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 that linked student scores on standardized exams to performance in school (Hursh, 2006). Under this act, if a public school failed to achieve yearly progress, sanctions are applied. After five years of bad performance, the public school faces closure (Lipman, 2006). As a result, many teachers in public schools were dismissed due to school closure. Many schools in the U.S. closed down due to neoliberal projects disguised as “education reform” projects (retrieved from <http://monthlyreview.org/2011/07/01/neoliberal->

[education-restructuring/](#)). Teacher unions in the U.S. are now looking for more ways to combat what they perceive to be neoliberal attacks on public education and attempts to privatize education sector.

Teacher Unions in Finland

The Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) is viewed as one of the strongest teacher unions in the world. One factor that contributed to the success of teacher unions in Finland is the country's strong educational system (OECD, 2010). The education reforms that took place in the 1980s allowed Finnish students to score better on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) exam. This academic success placed Finland's educational system under spotlight and led educators from around the world to investigate Finland's success. The development of a strong teacher union was seen as one of the factors that contributed to Finland's success, which led the study at hand to examine Finland's case. This section will highlight the structure of Finland's teacher union, the model it uses to achieve its goals, as well as the factors that contribute to its strength. This section will also report the lessons learned from the implementation of its national educational reform agenda to show how reform has strengthened Finland's union and has raised the educational standard.

Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ)

This section discusses the factors that have made Finland's teacher unions so successful. With membership reaching approximately 95% of the teaching sector, Opetusalan Ammattijärjestö (OAJ) also known as Trade Union of Education in Finland is the only union that exists for teachers. The Trade Union of Education in Finland has 120,011 members, who include teachers from different levels starting from early childhood education to vocational and university levels, in addition to pre-service teachers and retirees (OAJ, 2014). The Trade Union

of Education in Finland is the largest member of the Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland, which is also known as Confederation of Unions for Academic Professionals in Finland (AKAVA). Ever since education reform was implemented in 1984, the OAJ has never had the need to conduct a strike (Hill, 2014).

One of the factors contributing to the success of the OAJ is its unity. OAJ advocates for the majority of teachers. In the 1800s, there were many teacher associations for elementary and secondary teachers such as the Häme Elementary School's Benefactors Association and Elementary School Teachers' Union (OAJ, 2014). In 1973, several teacher unions united and formed the Trade Union of Education in Finland, which is currently known as Opetusalan Ammattijärjestö (OAJ, 2014). Having one nationwide union for teachers unifies the vision among teachers, reduces cuts in the budget, and creates more impact than the presence of many unions (Semi, 2012).

Another factor that contributed to the success of OAJ is having the right to collective bargaining. The OAJ is the only union in Finland that has the right to collectively bargain and to ensure better working conditions and salaries for teachers. The OAJ also negotiates at the municipal and national levels and provides services for its teacher members. These services include consultation, membership in Teachers' Unemployment Benefit Fund, and insurance benefits (OAJ, 2014). The Trade Union of Education in Finland, through the accomplishment of its goals, seems to be applying the professional unionism model. The trade union's focus is on maintaining teacher professionalism and quality education for all students and enhancing the working environment for teachers and the learning environment for students. Labor unions also ensured all education resources needed are available. Moreover, the OAJ tries to collectively advocate for education to remain a priority on the politicians' agenda. To achieve unions'

objectives, the OAJ developed allies, networked with other organizations, reached out to other labor unions, to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and to parent organizations and collaborated with them (OAJ, 2014).

Teacher Union and Education Reform. During the 1950s, Finland had an inequitable education system that created an achievement gap between students from upper and lower socioeconomic backgrounds (Sahlberg, 2009). For instance, many students living in rural areas left school after six compulsory years of education, which constituted about 60 % of Finland's population since these citizens did not have access to schools or quality education that urban areas had (OECD, 2010). To provide an equitable system, the Finnish government planned and implemented a national education reform project that moved teaching towards a profession. This reform strengthened OAJ and facilitated its education, economic, and social role. This reform altered the community's view of teachers, increased teachers' wages, improved education, and created a more attracting profession (Sahlberg, 2009). This section will discuss the positive factors of education reform that indirectly reflected on teacher unions' performance and succeeded in raising the standards of teaching to a profession.

Scholars examining Finland's success attributed it to a national motive to revive the economy and to make it competitive among developed countries. First, the success of education reform and the education system in Finland began with the ability of its leaders to develop consensus among political parties, and to formulate a plan that contributed to the country's development, especially after the end of World War II (OECD, 2010; Sahlberg, 2009). Second, the desire to build a strong research and development system and to move Finland from an agricultural economy to an industrial economy created a need for Finland to undergo reform. Third, Finland wanted to emulate Sweden and provide free services to its citizens. Implementing

reforms allowed Finland to offer its students in schools “two course meals, free healthcare, transportation, learning materials, and counseling” (OECD, 2010, p. 24). In addition, the government of Finland also provided programs for students with special needs, further reducing the inequality achievement gap (OECD, 2010). Despite all the services that Finland provided to its citizens, its average spending per student is still less than the spending of twelve developed countries, which include the U.S., Germany, and France (retrieved from <http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/48630868.pdf>).

Moreover, much of Finland’s attributed success in education reform occurred when the government promoted trust by developing, communicating, and reiterating the fact that teachers are professionals. Teachers were encouraged to take risks and to have flexibility in the classroom, which allowed them to try new methods and to go through trial and error to reach the set objectives (Sahlberg, 2009). The government also ensured that quality teachers were available in the classrooms. After the reform, teacher preparation programs in universities allowed student teachers to focus on building knowledge of their subject matter and to learn effective pedagogies. The government also made the teaching profession more attractive by increasing the salary range and being selective of students entering the teaching program in order to raise standards of the teaching profession. School administration also provided autonomy for teachers in the classrooms but required them to have research skills so that they can develop an inquiry-based curriculum (OECD, 2010). Moreover, the government removed standardized testing that created pressure on schools, teachers, and students (Sahlberg, 2009; OECD, 2010). In return, training teachers to become professionals and entrusting them to make the right decisions allowed the community to trust in teachers’ judgment.

Furthermore, the educational system was transformed from a centralized bureaucratic structure to a more decentralized flexible structure. First, the government gave municipalities the responsibility to support schools. In turn, municipalities granted schools the authority to set their own curriculum to reflect the needs of the community. Second, the government also granted teachers more autonomy in the classrooms and the power to make decisions related to teaching. In addition, teachers were granted the right to choose concepts, methods, and textbooks they believed were essential to maximize teaching and learning, as long as they met the national framework requirements. Teachers were also allocated the time to work on curriculum planning (OECD, 2010; Sahlberg, 2009). Third, the municipalities and the OAJ both worked to ensure that quality teaching was provided through the development of a support system for new and experienced teachers. Municipalities were responsible for inducting new teachers and for conducting mentoring programs (The 2AgePro Consortium, 2009). According to local municipalities, each mentoring program differs according to the needs of teachers. Some schools in Finland supported teachers by encouraging informal discussions among them. Others supported teachers by promoting personal development plans, conducting continuing education courses based on needs, and developing peer group mentoring programs. The OAJ, on the other hand, provided support for teachers by conducting peer discussions and courses about salaries, retirement plans, and methods of organizing that could help teachers understand their rights and receive consultation services from other experienced teachers.

Finland also implemented evaluation measures to ensure the sustainability of success. Evaluation measures were conducted through instituting policies that linked performance results to professional development and further introducing the improvement of the conditions of organizational work in order to facilitate the work of the teachers. The government of Finland

believed in maintaining the existing successful methods and introducing new innovative ideas, which added to the success of the reform (Sahlberg, 2009).

Teacher Unions in Tunisia

Union Générale Tunisienne Du Travail (UGTT) is a national labor union federation that played a leading role in the “Jasmine Revolution,” which is a social protest that successfully overthrew Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali’s authoritarian regime and initiated the Arab Spring. The social movement in Tunisia came about as a result of an accumulation of problems that included the lack of democracy, the presence of corruption, and the economic crises that increased unemployment amongst Tunisia’s youth (Baker, 2015). The UGTT includes two teacher unions as members, the General Union of Basic Education (SGEB) for primary school teachers and the General Union of Secondary Education (SGES) for secondary school teachers. These teacher unions were recognized as leaders in the UGTT during the Jasmine Revolution. This section introduces the UGTT and discusses the factors that strengthened it.

Union Générale Tunisienne Du Travail (UGTT) and its Success Factors. The UGTT was established in 1946 before Tunisia’s independence. The membership of this union is 700,000 union members who belong to different labor unions and who include teacher unions (Bishara, 2014). There are factors that contributed to the strength of the UGTT and that enabled it to become a reference for Tunisian people when conflicts arose in Tunisia. These factors include the independence of the UGTT, its history of achievements, the experience of its leaders, the relations maintained with political parties, and the existence of a supportive environment in Tunisia that favors unionism and political activism.

One of the strength of the UGTT is its ability to maintain its independence despite multiple attempts from political leaders to control it and even to weaken it (Bishara, 2014). One example was when Habib Bourguiba, first president of Tunisia, attempted to control the UGTT after the UGTT helped Bourguiba achieve Tunisia's independence. The UGTT resisted and opposed Bourguiba's regime in 1978. Many UGTT activists faced violent acts against them. Some activists were even placed in jail whereas others were exiled but remained to indirectly assist UGTT (retrieved from <http://www.merip.org/mer/mer258/tunisian-labor-leaders-reflect-upon-revolt-0>). The UGTT in 1987 allied itself with Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, the Prime Minister, who ousted Bourguiba from presidency. Ben Ali assumed presidency and promised citizens democracy and social and economic development. However, Ben Ali suppressed freedom of expression and established a dictatorship, where he remained in the presidency for 23 years (Humud & Arieff, 2014). During Ben Ali's rule, the UGTT's top leadership was weakened; however, UGTT's local unions and membership were able to remain their autonomy (Bishara, 2014).

Another factor that contributed to the UGTT's success was the union's experience that enabled the UGTT to mobilize society. Union leaders in the UGTT cannot assume leadership positions before completing nine years of militancy experience (Wolf, 2014). This policy gave an advantage to secular members since many radicals could not achieve years of experience because they were suppressed and placed in jail by authoritarian regimes. The experience of the UGTT was also gained from its long history of political activism (Wolf, 2014). This history allowed UGTT leaders to preserve the trust of their members despite the presence of a legalization law for trade union pluralism³, allowing it to remain the only federation that

³ Trade union pluralism allows for existence of more than one labor union in an occupation

conducts collective bargaining with the government (Bishara, 2014). Moreover, UGTT union leaders used strategies that attracted new members and retained old members. According to Baker (2015) and Beissinger et al. (2013), the UGTT used strategies that supported democracy and social justice. For instance, the UGTT encouraged gender equality and reached out to the youth. In addition, UGTT's work on economic education grasped the attention of college students and specifically low-income students (Connell, 2015 as cited in Baker, 2015). These strategies, in addition to the use of social media, are amongst the characteristics that brought about the success of a diverse social movement in 2011, which was also dominated by group of youths under the age of 25 (Beissinger, Putnam, Jamal, and Mazur, 2013).

The UGTT was also able to maintain good relationships with all political parties. These relationships allowed the UGTT to be viewed as a negotiator between political parties when conflicts arose in the country. According to Bishara (2014), the UGTT's strong organization, its history of activism, and its political influence allowed the union to assume this "mediator role." In addition, the ability of the UGTT to mobilize thousands of members and civilians made it even stronger than any existing political party (Bishara, 2014). This relationship with political parties enabled the UGTT to achieve some of its goals such as an increase in wages for different sectors and a change of status for 350,000 contractual workers to full-timers (Omri, 2013). In addition, the UGTT was able to play a leading role in the national dialogue after the Jasmine revolution. Assuming this "mediator role," the UGTT called on political parties to participate in the negotiations that resulted in the creation of a new constitution for Tunisia (Baker, 2015; Bishara, 2014).

The third and most important factor that led to the UGTT's success was the external environment surrounding the UGTT, giving this Tunisian federation the support it needed to

grow further. Tunisia has an educated society that values political activism and democracy (Baker, 2015). In fact, Tunisia was among the first countries in the region to have a bill of rights and a constitution (Boubakri, 2014). Also, civil society in Tunisia advanced during French colonialism. The French developed Tunisia's "civic thought," encouraging civil discussions in an attempt to create loyal elites. These discussions made the intellectuals question the status quo (Baker, 2015). During that time, Tunisians learned about unionism and labor organization that led to establishment of UGTT. Subsequently, the UGTT succeeded in organizing workers and creating international relations that helped Tunisia to achieve its independence (Omri, 2013).

To conclude, the UGTT is a strongly rooted federation with a large trade union membership that has played a political role in Tunisia's pre and post revolution. It seems that the UGTT used social movement unionism as a strategy to overthrow Ben Ali's authoritarian regime since the demand emerged from their rank and file members and the Tunisian society. The UGTT's relationships allowed it to bring together political groups to form a national dialogue and to draft Tunisia's new constitution, which recognized civil society, human dignity, and democracy (Baker, 2015).

Teacher Unions in Lebanon

Teacher unions in Lebanon have played a major role in advocating for teachers' social and economic rights. To understand the state of teacher unions in Lebanon, this section introduces a brief history of private and public school teacher unions, the goals they have achieved, and the challenges they face. This section also highlights the current conditions of teaching in Lebanon, and pinpoints the role that teacher unions have played in educational reform and the role teacher unions have played in raising the standards of teaching as a profession.

A Brief History of Lebanese Teacher Unions

In Lebanon, unions for teachers were established because of a need for an organized labor union that was able to voice teachers' opinions and concerns and to preserve their rights as professionals in the workplace, especially rights previously taken for granted by the government. This section will present the history of teacher unions, the goals that they have achieved, and the challenges they have encountered throughout history.

The rise of teacher unions in Lebanon. Three unions were formed that represented teachers in public schools and private schools. These unions were the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان), which was a union established for teachers in private schools, the Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي), and the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي).

Teacher union in private schools. The Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان) for private schools was first established in 1938 during the French Mandate. The Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان) was founded in collaboration with private school administration previously to the formation of public schools' leagues. The aim of the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان) was to raise teachers' professional status and to improve education (Samaha, 2006). The teacher union in private schools was reinstated after the Lebanese independence under the name of Teacher Syndicate of Private Schools (نقابة معلمي المدارس الخاصة) through Decree 202 issued on the 7th of November 1958.

A major conflict occurred for private school teacher union when Teacher Syndicate of Private Schools (نقابة معلمي المدارس الخاصة) was divided due to a clash between two groups during elections. One group supported the Makassed Islamic Association and the other group supported an emerging leader named Antoine Sebaalani (Samaha, 2006, p. 140-141). Elections in unions

were usually conducted in agreement between Christian and Muslim groups. However, after Makassed's candidates lost the election to Sebaalani's group, Makassed's candidates used their references in the Lebanese government or *wasta* to request the establishment of a new private school union. In May 10, 1971, Decree 1/193 was issued and allowed the establishment of a new union for private schools known as the General Teacher Union (نقابة المعلمين العامة). In 1992, the two unions reunited to form the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان) (Samaha, 2006).

Teacher unions in public schools. Before the Chehabist era in 1959, private education was perceived to be better than public education, since public education was considered weak in quality and was not available in all areas of Lebanon. Christian and Muslim religious schools were quite common, and they accommodated students from a low socioeconomic background (Zbib, 2014). To achieve social justice and to reduce social inequality, the Lebanese government, during President Fouad Chehab's era, and community worked to strengthen public schools in Lebanon. Large numbers of public schools were built in rural areas. By the 1960s, public education was able to compete with private education (United Nations Development Programme & Council for Development and Reconstruction, 2009; Samaha, 2006). This section highlights the uprising of public teacher leagues and their attempt to form a union. It also introduces the challenges that public school league leaders, both in primary and secondary, have faced throughout the years.

Unlike teachers in private schools, teachers of public schools faced major challenges in founding their leagues, which prevented them from being officially acknowledged as unions. Despite the efforts of public school teachers to communicate the importance of forming a cadre with policies and procedures that were different than those employees in administrative

occupations in the public sector, the government did not differentiate between the cadres of teachers and other public employees. The government also did not see the benefit for public school teachers to form a union. In fact, the government believed that forming a union delayed teachers from performing their jobs. Thus, to prevent any union-like actions by teachers, the government issued Decree 112 in 1959, which threatened to dismiss employees who encouraged or performed any union-like acts (Samaha, 2006).

In 1948, after Lebanon's independence from France, the first public educational body of teachers was formed. Teachers started to move towards the unionization approach where they collectively worked to voice their opinions and to ensure that their voices were heard. Elementary teachers were the first to raise demands to improve their current status. These teachers felt they were taken for granted by the government since their wages were the lowest among teachers and their jobs were viewed as less prestigious than teachers in secondary schools and private schools. Elementary teachers asked for better working conditions, specifically for a raise in wages, and an increase in the rate of promotion to be granted once every two years, and a decrease of years of service from 30 years to 20 years (Sahely, 1973, p. 11). In 1950, when their demands reached an impasse with the government, elementary teachers resorted to their first strike. As a result, the government placed pressure on public school teachers and threatened to fire them from their jobs. The government also sent the leaders of the strikes to disciplinary councils in an attempt to intimidate them. This act did not stop public school teachers from engaging in strikes. On the contrary, these acts motivated teachers to pursue their goals. In 1969, the persistence of elementary teachers led them to get two promotion scales in 1964 and a proportionate raise of 6, 9, and 12 % depending on their pay scale. In addition, on the 5th of April 1972, through decree 335 issued after a strike that lasted more than a month, 7,235 elementary

and middle school teachers, were granted a league called Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي). The league had a social and cultural orientation and did not act as a union. Public school teachers are members in the public school league unlike in private schools where they have a choice to be in the union. The league was made up of 15 members in each of the five governorates of Lebanon in the East, South, Mount Lebanon, Beirut, and Bekaa. Afterwards, members of the league chose a president, a vice president, and cabinet members representing the five governorates (Sahely, 1973, p. 82; Samaha, 2006, p. 144). Public school elementary teachers did not see the establishment of a league as a complete accomplishment because the decree made it difficult for public school league leaders to make decisions and bound them through stiff conditions from acting as a union (Sahely, 1973).

Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) worked with their fellow colleagues in Public Secondary Teachers League and Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon to achieve common goals. Sometimes, alliances formed involved unions from the public sector and the private sector, such as the CGTL, where teacher leagues were able to maintain the rights that they had attained and to voice teachers' demands. For example, in 2009, the Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) was able to unite through Decree 1553. The decree allowed the league to form an executive committee made up of 18 league leaders that made the league's decisions. Forming this executive committee facilitated decision making for the Public Primary School Teachers League and strengthened its position.

The Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) was established through Decree 871 issued on the 25th of November 1980. This decree for secondary school teachers, which was less conditioned than Public Primary Schools Teachers League's

decree, granted the establishment of one league which facilitated formation of internal regulations of Public Secondary School Teachers League. Also, Decree 871 did not include statements that banned teachers' strikes. This flexibility was due to the ongoing Lebanese Civil War, which weakened the government's control over the public sector. In addition, the connection of some of teachers in the league to political parties and the strength of political parties during that period permitted them to receive a less restricting decree (Samaha, 2006, p. 126). Secondary school teachers, unlike their colleagues in elementary and middle school, were well-situated socially and economically, and did not feel the need to voice any demands until 1959, when the government differentiated between teaching and other prestigious professions through providing special pay remuneration to engineers, doctors, and excluded teachers. This differentiation resulted in the first strike conducted by secondary public school teachers in 1960s, which led to issuance of decree 66/52 and 66/53 in 1966 (Samaha, 2006, p. 151). Secondary public school teachers were granted special pay remuneration and a promotion of two grade levels instead of one every two years in exchange for increasing hours of work by four hours a week.

During the civil war, the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم) (الثانوي الرسمي) was divided into two committees, the Executive Committee that worked in the eastern part of Lebanon, while the Communication Committee handled the remainder of the regions of Lebanon. Despite the war, the two committees were able to collaborate to achieve union demands (Sanjaqdar, 2006). Throughout the years, the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) became more organized and experienced than the Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي). The Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) also learned new strategies to exert

pressure on the Lebanese government in order to achieve their goals, such as conducting strikes and boycotting official exams (Samaha, 2006).

A flourishing Period: 1968 to 1975. The period between 1968 and 1975 was a flourishing period for teacher unions in Lebanon because unions promoted issues that were in need for reform and that contributed to the improvement of public schools. Also, membership in teacher unions increased (Samaha, 2006, p. 55). At the time, teacher unions had demands that were not financial in nature. Instead, these demands were focused on improving education. Some of these demands included developing curriculum, unifying textbooks, organizing math and science subjects, reinforcing public education and improving it, taking care of students' health, and raising awareness on the importance of the role of kindergarten (Al-Amine, 1994). One of the factors that helped teacher unions achieve their goals was the rise of political parties to power, leftists in particular, such as the Lebanese Communist Party and the Progressive Socialist Party. Political parties supported public school teachers to fight for their right to organize. In addition, leftist parties' ideologies, such as the achievement of equality and social justice, were reflected through the leftist party's actions in supporting organized labor movements. Leftist parties assisted teacher unions in strengthening public schools and in promoting compulsory education for all children at the primary level (Ismael and Ismael, 1998 as cited in Khayat, 2012).

The crisis of 1973. On January 23, 1973, one year after the establishment of the Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي), an open strike led to the dismissal of 309 teachers from their jobs (Samaha, 2006, p. 70). The strike began with a demand to create a cadre for teachers. This demand also included giving teachers the freedom of speech and the freedom to express themselves, in addition to the right to form one union that

represents all teachers in public schools, and the right to be involved in committees that deal with educational issues, such as curriculum's reform, uniting textbooks, and deciding and reducing the books' prices. In the formulation of a new cadre, teacher unions demanded an increase in wage. Unions also wanted professional development for teachers, equipping public schools with the educational resources needed, and adding pre-kindergarten classes to include children from 3 to 5 years of age. Other demands included the categorization of teachers according to certifications and experience acquired, the spreading of public education in all Lebanese areas, and making education compulsory for all children (Samaha, 2006; Sahely, 1973). The teacher union of the private sector (TSL) supported these demands.

One of the factors that resulted in a crisis during the strike was the political orientation that it assumed, after political parties called on their members to support the five Public Primary School Teachers Leagues. In addition, the strike coincided with the farmers' strike of 15,000 participants in Nabateyeh. The strike escalated, killing two people in Nabateyeh in the clash and injuring twenty-six. The attention and the increased participation that the strike attained, in addition to the crises that occurred during the strike, led the Ministry of Education to place a hold on the payment of salaries of the teachers who participated in the strike. This hold upset teachers even further. Teachers from secondary public schools decided to join their fellow colleagues in the strike for one day. The government then issued two decrees 4820 and 4824, which dismissed 309 teachers and assigned 252 new teachers to replace them. The unions realized the extent of the damage done, stopped the strike, and undertook a new approach in negotiations with the government. Union leaders visited President Sleiman Franjiye and requested to recall the decrees issued. Eleven months after being terminated from their jobs, and after communicating with various political and religious leaders, and performing various strikes, teachers were reassigned

back to their jobs (Samaha, 2006, p. 70-72). According to Samaha (2006), although leaders of Public Primary School Teachers Leagues were unique in demanding educational quality, they did not have the necessary experience to organize a labor union. The crises of 1973 led union leaders of the Public Primary Schools Teachers Leagues to strengthen their knowledge about tactics in unionization. In addition, these leagues engaged in more negotiations, prioritized demands, reached a compromise, and managed open strikes (Samaha, 2006, p. 77).

Teacher unions formed alliances with one another, especially in 1973, and at other times made alliances with labor unions from other professions or sectors and formed committees. These committees were the ones that called for strikes or announce decisions. When teacher unions of public and private sectors coordinated with one another, the committee that was formed was called the Teachers Bureau. However, when alliances were formed between teachers and labor unions from other professions or sectors, the committee was called the Union Coordination Committee (UCC) (هيئة التنسيق النقابية). The UCC was first formed in 1979 and coordinated between the following unions: the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon, the Public Primary Schools Teachers League, the Public Secondary School Teachers League, the Vocational Teachers League, the Public Administrators League, and the Retired Teachers of Public Secondary School League, excluding Lebanese University League (Samaha, 2006).

The second crisis in 1987. In 1987, another major crisis faced teacher unions in Lebanon took place when the unions' members faced threats, kidnapping, and assassinations. The crises began when the Teachers Bureau called on its members to answer the CGTL's call for strike on the decline in the value of the Lebanese Lira. Teachers Bureau added more demands: to increase wages and adjust the Cooperative for Civil Servants (تعاونية موظفي الدولة) and to include healthcare in hospitals by increasing contract agreements with hospitals and allowing teachers not to pay

upon admission to hospitals. Demands also included the adjustment of Decree 39 that involved the dismissal of teachers from their jobs in private schools, the execution of Decree 34 that revolved around lowering teachers work hours in public schools, and issuing a law that inserts the special remuneration given to teachers in their basic salary (Samaha, 2006, p. 81). The Teachers Bureau called for more strikes to boycott the correction of official exams, which led the militias to target teacher union leaders to stop the strikes. Some union leaders were physically abused; others were threatened and even kidnapped. This attack on teacher union occurred because official exams were usually taken by children of all socioeconomic class and therefore included the children of political elites. In 1988, the UCC declared the end of the strike after the government allocated a large budget to the Cooperative for Civil Servants (تعاونية موظفي الدولة) (Samaha, 2006, p. 84).

An attempt to move towards professional unionism. On January 2005, under the theme of “international labor solidarity”, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) came to the Middle East to empower teacher unions in Lebanon and the Arab region. The American Federation of Teachers’ main focus was to help teacher unions in Lebanon understand the methods needed to build a union and move towards a professional unionism model. The AFT chose the professional unionism model with the assumption that it kept the focus on professionalization of teachers away from political matters.

According to Sukarieh and Tannock (2010) and Peterson (1999), the professional unionism model does not incorporate political analysis, disregards social justice matters, and fails to involve community in the education. However, Sukarieh and Tannock (2010) saw that these dimensions were considered important in the unionism model to be adopted for the context of Lebanon, especially since Lebanon has many sects and since politics is present in every aspect

of the Lebanese citizen's daily life. In 2006, the Israeli attack on Lebanon further exacerbated the relationship between Lebanese teacher unions and AFT leaders and broke the trust between them. Lebanese teacher unions thought that there were underlying motives to AFT's work in Middle East and that there was a hidden political agenda that the AFT wanted to execute. As result, teacher union leaders chose to stop working with the AFT (Sukarieh & Tannock, 2010). Lebanese teacher unions at that time came to understand the aspects of a professional unionism model; however, they did not adopt this model to achieve their objectives.

Goals Achieved by Teacher Unions

Teacher unions in Lebanon have achieved some goals that will be discussed in this section. Teacher unions considered the establishment of their union or league as their first achievement. These unions gave teachers the right to voice their demands and to preserve their rights. Indeed, as mentioned in previous sections, Lebanese teacher unions were able to achieve salary and scale increases. Other goals that were listed in this section are the creation of Cooperative for Civil Servants, the establishment of a cadre for teachers, and the adjustment of Law 29 that causes arbitrary dismissal of teachers in the private sector.

Teacher unions also succeeded in the creation of a permanent Cooperative for Civil Servants (تعاونية موظفي الدولة). The Cooperative for Civil Servants (تعاونية موظفي الدولة) was created in 1963 as a temporary security fund. Currently, the services offered by the Cooperative for Civil Servants (تعاونية موظفي الدولة) includes employee retirement, partial coverage of admission to hospitals, funding education of employees' children, loans, discounts on items through deals conducted with companies, financial support in special cases, maternity, and the provision of other social services (retrieved from http://www.mfe.gov.lb/gen_info.shtml#P1). After the Lebanese Civil War, unions struggled to keep the Cooperative for Civil Servants

(تعاونية موظفي الدولة) from collapsing or merging with the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) (Samaha, 2006, p. 99-100). In 1987, judges created their own mutual fund, separate from the rest of civil servants that had Cooperative for Civil Servants as a fund. This action encouraged Lebanese University professors to do the same. In addition, in 1992, the Hariri government undertook a project of privatization where the government wanted to reduce or remove the financial commitment of Cooperative for Civil Servants that is placed upon it. To do so, each year the government reduced the Cooperative for Civil Servants' budget (تعاونية موظفي الدولة) (Samaha, 2006, p. 99). Teacher unions in the public sector feared a decline in services offered to public school teachers in the Cooperative for Civil Servants and worked to maintain the benefits they have and strengthened the services offered.

The creation of a cadre for teachers was also another milestone achieved by unions in 1996. Since the 1970s, teachers felt that the teaching profession's structure should be different from other administrative occupations. Teachers called for the formation of a new cadre that took different aspects into consideration such as teaching experience and degrees, continuous professional development of teachers, career ladder, pay scale, and years of service (Sahely, 1973, p. 89). In 1996, after a struggle that lasted for twenty four years, the government finally issued a law to form a cadre for teachers who taught primary and secondary levels (Samaha, 2006, p. 104).

In addition, teacher unions were able to adjust Law 29, which states that private schools can dismiss teachers without any reason by sending them a notice before the month of July (Samaha, 2006, p. 106). Before this law was adjusted, teachers faced arbitrary dismissal in private schools. Some teachers were dismissed for joining the Teachers Syndicate of Lebanon (نقابة المعلمين في لبنان) while other female teachers were sometimes dismissed for financial reasons,

for example, to avoid the extra costs of maternity leave. Moreover, to reduce the amount of arbitrary dismissals that result from financial burden on school administration, the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon created a retirement fund that reduced retirement cost on the school administration. School administrations now pay 1% of teachers' salaries on behalf of primary teachers each year and 2% of teachers' salaries on behalf of secondary teachers, while teachers would pay 6% and the Ministry of Finance pays the remainder. If the school administration chooses to dismiss a teacher before the end of service then the school would assume the payment for the entire amount of the teacher's retirement. However, the retirement fund did not resolve the problem entirely (Samaha, 2006, p. 106-108) as fair dismissal of teachers in private schools remains a priority for teacher unions.

Current Challenges Facing Teacher Unions

Teacher unions in Lebanon have surpassed many obstacles over the years. Yet, internal and external challenges facing teacher unions have increased and have threatened the continuity of union work. According to the literature, the challenges that impede union work are the following: legal and organizational challenges, the economic crises that affect labor market, the influence of sectarian-based political parties on unions' decisions, the criticism from the public related to union strategies, and the lack of involvement of rank and file members in the union (Samaha, 2006; Al-Amine, 1994). Other challenges discussed in this section are related to the teaching profession.

Legal and organizational challenges. The presence of legal challenges was one of the major challenges facing teacher unions. Although Convention 87 of 1948 that Lebanese government emphasized the freedom of workers to form unions and the protection of the right to organize, the Lebanese government continued to forbid teacher unions in public sector from

forming unions. In fact, the law imposed by the government only permits public school teachers to form cultural leagues after several demands and strikes. In addition, the government closely monitored the cultural leagues' work, granting the Minister of Education and Higher Education the authority to dismiss the leagues' administration if the league does not perform its job as specified by the decree (Samaha, 2006).

Second, the government's decision to form five primary public school leagues in the five governorates instead of one united league placed further impediments on the Public Primary School Teachers League. According to Samaha (2006), this imposition reflected negatively on the performance of Public Primary School Teachers League, especially in terms of their decision-making and election processes. However, in 2009, the Public Primary School Teachers League was finally able to unify its five leagues under Decree 1553. Another example of government encroachment on teacher unions was the dismissal of 309 teachers in the crises of 1973 (Samaha, 2006). These teachers were dismissed for conducting an open strike to voice their demands. Feeling threatened by collective activities, the government instated Decree 112 in 1959. This decree penalized teachers for any unionized acts. More particularly, Section 15 of Decree 112 inhibits civil employees from joining organizations or professional associations. In addition, this decree also warns government employees against missing work to perform strikes and against inciting others to join strikes. Decree 112 is still in effect today and has endangered the proliferation of leagues' work.

Third, private school teachers' work under government policies that are either outdated or that have given school administrations the discretion in many organizational aspects such as recruitment and dismissal of employees. One example of injustice is the arbitrary dismissal of private school teachers through the enactment of Law 29, which allows school administrations to

dismiss private school teachers without any reason. Although private school teachers are permitted to form unions, the Teacher Syndicate of Lebanon was unable to protect its members from mistreatment stemming from the school's administration. Unions were only able to engage in negotiations with the administration to solve conflicts. This law was slightly amended through negotiations made by the TSL and school administrators and required schools' administration to notify the teacher before the 5th of July of his or her employment status for the next school year. However, despite this amendment, Law 29 still fell short of protecting the teachers' rights because teachers continued to be arbitrarily dismissed (Samaha, 2006).

Economic crises. Another factor that impacted teacher unions in Lebanon is the economic crisis. The inflation of market prices that was estimated to be 121 percent for the past 16 years was not met with an increase in the standard for living for workers ("Lebanon: strike follows Government failure to decide educators' salary increase," 2014). As a result, the UCC's focus shifted completely to fit the teachers' pay scale. In 2012, the UCC demanded a salary and scale increase and called for a mass demonstration. Thousands of union members answered the call. This demonstration pressured the government to agree to issue a salary and scale policy for the public sector. However, the government warned that the pay increase will further harm the economy, and thusly delayed the policy implementation process. Subsequently, the UCC further pressured the government and called on teachers to refuse proctoring official exams until the policy was issued ("Lebanon: teachers demand first salary increase in 10 years," 2012). This action created a lot of controversy amongst teachers and in turn, unions lost the community's support, which further added to union challenges.

Sectarian-based political leaders' interference in union. Scholars have found that there is continuous attempt from sectarian-based political parties to interfere in union decisions.

According to Samaha's findings, some union members were dissatisfied with teacher union's performance because they believed that the union is politicized. Political interference has negatively affected labor unions' elections. As a result, labor union elections have become a competition for political parties (Haddad, 2012). The loyalty of the nominated union members towards their sectarian-based political parties has helped them get their union leadership seats rather than their competence (Samaha, 2006; retrieved from <http://legal-agenda.com/en/article.php?id=697&folder=articles&lang=en>). In addition, sectarian-based political leaders dictate many of the union leaders' decisions, which create distrust for union members in their leaders and union. In fact, research showed that some teachers as union members were dissatisfied with teacher union's performance because they believed that the union is politicized (Samaha, 2006).

Sectarian political leaders have also had a great influence over many institutions and government decisions, including education. Sectarian politicians promote references or *wasta*, which results in the appointment of unqualified individuals. This *wasta* is visible in the appointment of contractual teachers. In fact, some contractual teachers have failed employment exams or lacked university degrees, but with political pressure they still received their appointment as tenured teachers (Al-Amine, 2010).

Community criticism. The public has criticized teacher unions for focusing only on teachers' living matters and for not advocating aspects related to education reform (Al-Amine, 1994; Samaha, 2006). Samaha (2006)'s findings have shown that despite teachers' ability to develop unionism awareness, teachers did not have professionalism awareness. The majority of teachers, or 72.2% of participants, surveyed in Samaha (2006)'s study, have not participated in any education related conferences or seminars for the last three years. Samaha (2006) concluded

in his study that there is a dichotomy between unionism and professionalism among teachers in Lebanon. This conclusion might be a result of the strategy adopted by teacher unions in Lebanon.

Lack of involvement of rank and file union members. Rank and file members are not involved in union decisions. A study conducted on union has shown weak participation in teacher unions. Samaha (2006) showed that 55 % of union members have never participated in general assemblies,⁴ 27% have participated few times, and only 18.1% have participated often. In addition, rank and file members are not involved in union decisions. Samaha's findings have shown that in public schools, 51.4% of respondent have never participated in elections and 82.8% have never run for elections. Participation increased during strikes and reached 64.5 % for teachers in both public and private sector. These statistics show that the strategies of Lebanese teacher unions need to be reviewed to engage union members in their union.

Challenges related to the teaching profession. Aside from the dominance and urgency of the fair pay scale that teacher unions in Lebanon fight for, there are other challenges related to teacher unionism work that emanate from the nature of the teaching profession itself. Teaching is rarely viewed as a profession, which consequently reflects on the work of teachers and their unions. Although teachers in private schools are better positioned than teachers in public schools, both groups still lack the freedom that professionals need to make their own decisions on issues such as recruitment, professional development and the curriculum. Many researchers (Al-Amine, 2010; Ghamrawi, 2010; Matar, 2011; Karami-Akkary, 2014) have reported other barriers that affect teaching as a profession. These barriers include unskilled teachers, the lack of professional

⁴ General assembly is defined as the highest authority of the labor union organization, which comprises of all the members or their representatives

development based on needs, the lack of teacher autonomy, and political interference in education that allow for unskilled teachers and a decreased quality of education.

Unskilled teachers pose a challenge to teacher unions. In a study performed on factors that affect public schools in Lebanon through the perspective of teachers and principals, Matar (2011) found that the top factor affecting public schools' performance is the lack of quality teachers in the classrooms. There are many unskilled teachers teaching in Lebanese public schools. According to Matar (2011), there are 54.5% of public school teachers who are not qualified to teach. These teachers either hold a Lebanese Baccalaureate II certificates or do not hold any certificates, and do not have the necessary knowledge base to teach. In addition, unqualified teachers are not provided with adequate professional development to attain the needed skills. This situation is exacerbated by the increased presence of contractual teachers in Lebanese public schools, which consist of 33.6% of the public education body (Al Amine, 2007). The number of contractual teachers increased during Lebanese war due to a need that emerged in schools to replace those teachers who were not able to get to their jobs. Special provisions to grant these teachers tenure were done in politicized manner, which resulted in many untrained teachers entering the teaching force (Matar, 2011).

The lack of a support system that helps teachers develop professionally is another challenge. For example, during the Lebanese Civil War, there was a demand for teachers to fill the positions of those teachers who were no longer able to get to their schools. Unskilled teachers were recruited at that time as a temporary solution, but these teachers later became part of the cadre without being provided with professional development to help them acquire the skills they lack. Al-Amine (2010) stated that even teachers who hold degrees lacked preparation in education, especially in pedagogy. Moreover, the ineffectiveness of the few attempts at

professional development led many teachers to view training sessions as obligations rather than as opportunities for development. Professional development training sessions are viewed as obligations because they are not matched with teachers' needs. As for contractual teachers, they do not attend professional development sessions, which contribute to their lack of motivation and prevents them from developing a sense of belonging to the school (Mattar, 2011). Another constraint that does not allow teachers to develop as professionals is the burdensome bureaucratic system. This bureaucracy prevents teachers from being autonomous in their classrooms (Karami-Akkary, 2014; Ghamrawi, 2010). Teachers are not being trained to be critical thinkers and decision-makers. The expectation and role of teachers is limited to teaching the predetermined curriculum and implementing decisions made by the school administration. This bureaucratic system negatively influences teachers to believe that taking initiatives and being innovative is unacceptable and can be seen as threatening to people in positions of authority (Karami-Akkary, 2014).

After presenting cases of strong teacher unions and labor federations in the U.S., Finland, and Tunisia and the case of Lebanese teacher unions, the next section will display the models that teacher unions have adopted and give a theoretical perspective of researchers and scholars.

Models of Teacher Unions

Teacher unions from around the world have used common approaches that help them reach their goals. Researchers, scholars, and union reformers developed theoretical models depicting these current approaches that are applied by teacher unions. These models categorize unions based on their objectives. This section presents four of these unionism models. The success and limitations of each model will also be discussed.

Industrial unionism. The industrial unionism model, also referred to as the “traditional model”, was the first model to be adopted by teacher unions around the world. This model focused on teachers as workers united to ensure a healthy work environment, better working conditions, and fair wages and treatment (Peterson, 1999). Kerchner and Koppich (2004) highlighted the limitations of industrial unionism as a model. Kerchner and Koppich (2004) state that industrial unionism focuses on separation of labor-management relation, especially in tasks and responsibilities. Managers, such as principals of schools, are perceived as decision-makers, while teachers are limited to teaching and executing managers’ decisions.

Despite limitations of industrial unionism model, some researchers and teachers have recognized the importance of industrial unionism model and indicated that providing teachers with their rights will reflect on teaching and will raise the quality of education (Peterson, 1999; Adelberg, 2008). This perception is based on teachers’ assumption that when teachers feel comfortable in their workplace, they can focus on important matters such as student learning (Adelberg, 2008). In addition, teacher unions, using industrial unionism model, organized around teacher dissatisfaction and protection of teachers, which limited bargaining between union and management. Teacher unions, especially in the United States have fought and won the right to collective bargaining. Collective bargaining has given union the ability to negotiate on several aspects of industrial unionism that ensure that the rights of teachers are preserved. According to Peterson (1999), the power of teachers comes from having a “trade-union consciousness”, which means teachers, like all workers, should unite, trade their services for living, and protect themselves against any abuse in the workplace. However, these researchers have also recognized that industrial unionism model does not address aspects related to improving education, which has become a demand of teachers and the community (Peterson, 1999; Adelberg, 2008).

Professional unionism

Professional unionism is a model created to find balance between teachers' interests, the teaching profession, and education (Kerchner & Koppich, 1993, p. 19). Professional unionism focuses on education quality and teaching profession while fighting to improve teachers' social and economic status (Peterson, 1999). This model encouraged unions to take initiatives in school reform, to push for amendments in the structure of the union, and to bring along change in the culture of the union.

Unions initiated some successful reforms using professional unionism model. The Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN), a network of more than 200 local unions gathered from the NEA and the AFT, was among the first to initiate an educational reform projects. TURN worked on reforming teachers' contracts to promote quality teaching and learning, and to improve labor/management collaboration (retrieved from <http://www.broadeducation.org/news/147.html>). Some aspects of the reform allowed the involvement of teachers in decision-making, created professional development programs, created staffing models to improve productivity, supported charter and pilot schools, sought alternative compensation for teachers, and linked teacher accountability to student achievement (Kerchner, 2004). One successful union reform that was initiated by the Toledo Federation of Teachers and was recognized by scholars is Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. The Peer Assistance and Review program, which includes both formative and summative evaluation, was created in collaboration and agreement with Toledo's public schools using collective bargaining (Koppich, 2009). This program is used to assist both new teachers and experienced teachers who are labeled as "underperforming" (Koppich, 2009). Another union initiated reform was the promotion of a positive culture of learning and teaching (COLT), which was initiated by South

African unions. In their study, Heystek and Lethoko (2001) examined the role that teacher unions played in enhancing the characteristics of COLT in schools and in moving teaching towards a profession. Findings revealed that teacher unions have created workshops that can motivate teachers, that establish codes of conducts for teaching, that encourage their members to model exemplary behaviors for their student, and that engaged in COLT projects. Also, all three teacher unions, South Africa Teachers Union (SATU), South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), and National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA), highlighted the importance of providing teachers with satisfactory working conditions and salaries.

The professional unionism model can develop a positive change in the structure of unions, which in turn can lead to a cultural change in unions. In a case study conducted on a local union called Albuquerque Teacher Federation (ATF), Bernstein (2003) examined the ATF's organizational structure. Bernstein (2003) found that the ATF was historically focused on industrial unionism aspects and that it attempted to adopt a professional unionism model, shifting its focus towards education quality. To achieve this goal, the ATF formed committees and task forces that involved teachers in professional dialogue and created professional support. The Albuquerque Teacher Federation also developed partnerships to provide professional development programs, such as mentoring, which help raise quality of teachers. Bernstein (2003) revealed that as a result of this shift, members felt empowered and were able to take on leadership roles. The structural change that was conducted in the ATF developed a new culture in the union (Bernstein, 2003).

Social justice unionism

Social justice unionism is a term that emerged from social unionism, and is defined as a model that can “attract, retain, and mobilize members” by raising “the importance of moral commitments of labor-movement members, leaders, and supporters” (Robinson, 1993, p. 21 as cited in Ross, 2007, p. 14). Some teacher union members from NEA and AFT introduced the social justice unionism model to widen the scope of teacher union’s focus and to address issues related to social justice and equity in schools and democracy in union. Peterson (1999) advocated for the social justice unionism model, because it could protect teacher’s rights, maintain professionalism in the workplace, and promote what is best for students, schools and society.

Few studies have examined the practices of teacher unions using the social justice models. Research showed that teacher unions, who have applied social justice unionism, advocated for their members, built coalitions with students, parents, and community groups, organized to achieve justice and equity, focused on professional development, and supported local social justice initiatives (Rottmann, 2008; Asselin, 2012).

The literature reveals a few obstacles that emerged while using the social justice unionism model. Teachers faced difficulty balancing their jobs and organizing the community at the same time. Teachers also felt too overwhelmed to teach, to establish relationships, to build leadership, to conduct meetings, to connect with community, to conduct research and planning, and to hold policymakers responsible for their actions (Asselin, 2012). In addition, not many teachers believed that teacher unions could change to focus on social justice, often mobilizing other members and convincing them that transformational union was a challenge (Asselin, 2012). Also, some scholars criticized social justice unionism and stated that it does not target industrial unionism aspect practically, which brought forth further concerns to union members (Weiner,

2013). Moreover, Weiner (2013) stated that only few scholars criticized democratic practices in social justice unionism, pointing out that they reflect limited involvement of rank and file members, rather than those members' contribution to decision-making, which leaves the decisions to remain to be influenced by union leaders.

Social movement unionism

Social movement unionism (SMU) emerged from social unionism and was defined by Snow & Benford (1988) as a model that develops specific collective action “to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists” (as cited in Ross, 2007, p.19). Ross (2007) defines the SMU model as linking “an anti-economistic, anti-sectionalist, and transformative vision with mobilizing repertoire and organizational forms” where rank and file members lead the union and address all concerns that affect workers, the public, and the nation as a whole (p.28). Social Movement Unionism promotes democratization and has proven to be successful in many developing countries such as Brazil, the Philippines, Argentina, and South Africa more than developed countries, bringing about social change in authoritarian settings (Serdar, 2009).

Elements of social movement unionism were examined in several studies. One example is a study that examined the activities of South Africa's federation called Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) from the perspective of union members. Dibben, Murray, & Mellahi (2012) revealed that COSATU adopted a social movement unionism model and showed strong union advocacy. COSATU had a shared set of beliefs and mobilized their union membership. This ability was attributed to the high level of internal democracy that was present in the federation. In addition, the study showed that COSATU was also able to use strategic

engagement with the government to attain bargaining power. Finally, COSATU also was able to connect with community organizations to achieve social justice.

Moreover, another study performed by Serdar (2009) examined the development and limitation of social movement unionism model in Argentina. The union members and leaders in Argentina first established the Argentine Workers Center (CTA) to fight neoliberal reform. Union leaders and members wanted to formulate an autonomous, democratic union that upholds union ethics and is open to other community organizations. Serdar (2009) stated that the success of the CTA in applying SMU model was due to two things: 1) its ability to strengthen structure of unions and build strong campaigns to fight neoliberalism and 2) its ability to build relations with union and non-union groups and organize community mobilization. Serdar (2009) also emphasized the importance of balance between strengthening structural power and forming alliances when adopting an SMU model. In fact, Serdar's (2009) findings showed that the CTA's heavy reliance on alliance caused it to miss a political opportunity and become conditioned by external factors such as an existing hostile political environment, limitations of labor codes, and neoliberal economic reform.

Unionization and Education Reform

Teacher unions around the world have taken part in education reform in an effort to improve education, help teachers develop professionally and feel supported, fight to protect public education, and improve their public image as promoters of reform and not blockers of reform. In this section, this research will present the goals of reform in the 21st century followed by a review of empirical literature done on teacher unions. Empirical literature includes union effect on teacher salaries, working conditions, and teacher quality in addition to the unions' effect on students' performance and school climate.

Goals of Education Reform

Teacher unions must understand the goals of education reform especially in setting their union goals or when collaborating with the school administration or Ministry of Education on curriculum, professional development of teachers, and any reform project. Richard Gibboney (1994) states that reform starts when an individual first decides to reflect on what he or she already knows and when an individual questions his or her own actions. With the emerging of global economy, schools have a responsibility to meet the market's demands. This section will briefly present the characteristics needed by the 21st century student, the characteristics of an effective teacher, and the characteristics of a healthy educational organization. These characteristics represent dominant goals of educational reform.

The profile of student today includes knowledge and competences needed to be leaders, good citizens, and self-learners. Twenty-first century students need to learn to be responsible and accountable citizens and critical thinkers to succeed in their careers (a list of 21st century knowledge and competence are presented in **Appendix I**). Students must learn to become self-learners by setting objectives and by monitoring their own progress (Savin-Baden & Major, 2004). Students must have global awareness and life skills to adapt easily and socialize and must be able to use critical thinking skills to analyze and challenge the status quo. Further, students must have technology skills and innovative skills to grow and they must also acquire the knowledge of 21st century subjects such as business, civics, economics, health, and environment (Adelberg, 2008; Charney & Peterson, 1999; Velez, 2012).

To cater to the needs of 21st century students, highly qualified or effective teachers must also have certain competencies and knowledge. The role of an effective teacher in the 21st century must be that of a reflective practitioner, a role model, competent, collaborator, and a

continuous learner. Effective teachers should possess good communication skills, should be compassionate towards students, and should be able to cater to diversity (Stronge, 2002; Ossunde, 1996 as cited in Glenn, 2006).

The environment that allows for teachers and students to develop twenty-first century knowledge skills is categorized as a healthy organization. A healthy educational organization must create a welcoming atmosphere that maximizes teaching and fosters learning. Educational organizations must also contain shared values, develop trust among stakeholders, create job satisfaction and commitment among staff, strive for continuous academic excellence, and promote open communication among all stakeholders (Griffith, 2009).

By understanding the current needs to reform education, teacher unions can collaborate with schools to ensure that students gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. Teacher unions can also assist in the professional development of teachers to acquire skills needed to cater to their students' needs. Finally, teacher unions can work on ensuring that a positive school climate is provided for teachers and students in order to maximize teaching and learning.

Role of Union in Education Reform

Union leaders' actions are highly influenced by social, economic, and political factors (Donaldson et al., 2013). However, the role of unions in education reform cannot be exclusively determined by union leaders. Education reform must be based on the agreement of both union leaders and union members. This agreement must specify what should be done to reach reform and how it should be done. A study done by Yusim (2008) examined the role of the union from the perspective of two groups: the practitioners or leaders and the union reformers. Yusim (2008)'s findings revealed that both groups sustain that for reform to occur, sustainable leadership in unions, administrations, and boards of education must be created and maintained.

In addition, the two groups have to collaborate and base their decisions on the professionalization of teaching. The success of reform is also linked to the quality of the relationship of the participants in reform projects. Findings in a study conducted by Donaldson et al. (2013), showed that local union leaders, who were on good terms with management of schools in their district, supported the reform initiative and were eager to work with school leaders to promote its implementation. In districts where relationship between unions and management was not well established, local union leaders did not support the reform and focused on using an industrialist style approach with little focus beyond securing their members' rights.

The lack of involvement of rank and file members and the lack of communication in the union can create misunderstanding about the role that a union plays or can play in education reform. In a study conducted by Adelberg (2008), findings showed that teachers did not believe that unions had a role to play in education reform. Adelberg (2008) stated that this result emerged due to the lack of communication between unions on the national level and state level and their members. This lack of communication led union members to perceive that teacher unions at the national-level and state-level work using an industrial unionism model. Another study conducted by Smith (1997) showed that union members, whose unions focused on aspects of industrial unionism model, felt displeased and wanted their unions to become involved in reform issues, while concurrently fighting to improve the teachers' working conditions. Smith (1997) indicated that the NEA implemented a national strategy where it created a balance between unionism and professionalism. However, there was no evidence on the state and local level of how much the local and state level unions that are affiliated with the NEA have applied the NEA strategy.

Effects on students. Teacher unions have shown to indirectly affect the performance of students. This section presents empirical studies that examined the effects of teacher unions on students using standardized tests and student achievement tests. Other studies showed the impact of teacher unions' collective bargaining contracts on students. Despite contradictory studies, teacher unions have shown to play a key role in positively affecting students (Carini, 2003).

To measure the impact of teacher unions on students, some scholars studied teacher unions on standardized testing and found them to have an overall positive effect. Steelman, Powell, and Carini (2000), Nelson and Rosen (1996), and Eberts and Stone (1987) found that participation of teacher unions is correlated with an increase in standardized test scores. Eberts and Stone (1987) analyzed data from the 1970s that were collected by Sustaining Effects Survey (SES) on 14000 fourth graders. These scholars found that students' scores on standardized achievement tests in unionized districts were 3% higher than those in non-unionized districts. Eberts and Stone's findings also showed that the average students benefit most from schools in unionized districts than schools in non-unionized districts due to the standardization applied in teaching. On the other hand, it is inferred from the study that achievers, who have scored considerably higher or lower than the average score on standardized tests tend to do better in non-unionized districts since these districts have special programs in schools that cater better to these students' needs.

The demands of teacher unions have turned funding away from special programs towards increasing teachers' salaries. In analyzing why teacher unions contribute to the increase in standardized tests such as the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT), Steel, Powell and Carini (2000) found a positive correlation between teacher unionization rates and standardized tests scores. The researcher inferred that possible reasons for

this finding might be that teacher union demands, such as reducing class sizes, benefits students since it allows teachers in the classrooms to become more attentive to their students' needs. Contrarily, Kurth (1987) found that the effect of teacher unionism was negatively correlated with students' SAT scores. Kurth (1987) explained that in advocating for salary increases for their members, teacher unions use tactics, such as the reallocation of the state budget from educational programs towards teachers' salaries, damaging educational achievement. The methodology of Kurth's study was criticized by two AFT members named Howard Nelson and Jewell Gould. Nelson and Gould claimed that there are problems in the data used for measurement of collective bargaining. In addition, Nelson and Gould also mentioned the study's failure to understand lags in interpreting the effects of social change, as well as missing variables, which might have altered Kurth's results. Nelson and Gould (1988) replicated Kurth's study and found contradictory findings that showed positive correlation between teacher unionism and SAT scores.

Other studies examined the effect of teacher unions using a collective bargaining contract. Scholars agreed that the collective bargaining approach has increased school expenditure (Hoxby, 1996; Hoxby, 2004; Peltzman, 1993). Responding to the teacher unions' demands to decrease the teacher to student ratio and to increase teachers' salaries has had a negative effect. The cause of the negative effect was due to the influence of teacher unions on educational state policies (Peltzman, 1993). This effect resulted in reallocation of budget to increase salaries (Kurth, 1987; Kurth, 1988). Similarly, Hoxby (1996) findings showed that unionized schools have a 2.3 % higher dropout rate than schools in nonunionized districts. Some scholars criticized Hoxby's methodology and stated that it was flawed. Scholars stated that Hoxby did not carefully choose definition terms. For example, in addition to teachers, principals,

counselors, and teacher aides were also included in Hoxby's study. In addition, Hoxby did not control important factors in her study that might have caused bias in the outcome (Eberts, 2007; Shanker, 1996). Moreover, Hoxby neglected to collect data from all 5,043 districts, which is approximately 33% of the districts in the US at that time. If the data from these districts were taken into consideration, it could have made a difference in the results in Hoxby's study (Kerchner, 2004).

Effects on Teachers. There is agreement that teacher unions have played a major role in improving the teachers' economic status. Scholars agree that teacher unions have contributed to the increase of teachers' wages and have improved working conditions. Research in the U.S. has estimated the average effect of the presence of unions on wages to be between 5 and 10 percent depending on geographic location (Zwerlin & Thomason, 1995; Duplantis et al., 1995; Lemke, 2004; Kerchner 2004; Hoxby, 1996; Baugh and Stone, 1982). Zwerling and Thomason (1995) found that teacher unions, through collective bargaining, have increased the salaries of those teachers who already were highly paid. Yet, teacher unions were not able to increase the salaries of those teachers who were not well-paid.

Few studies have shown that the presence of teacher unions increases the quality of teachers in schools. One study conducted in America's large urban and suburban districts examined the relationship teacher unions and teacher quality. In her study, Zangh (2009) revealed that unionized districts have better qualified teachers and are able to retain them better than non-unionized districts. This higher level in quality is contributed to unionized districts, which have better working conditions and higher salaries. In addition, Kerchner (2004) findings on teacher unions and education quality found that teacher resignation and dismissal rate fell

when layoff provision, a limit in class size, and a strong grievance procedure were found, which are found in unionized states and districts.

On the other hand, some scholars argued that unions protect unskilled teachers and prevent high achievers from entering the teaching profession. Hoxby and Leigh (2004) investigated the decline in teachers' aptitude from the 1960s until 2000 using SAT scores as measurement. Their study found that teacher unionization may have "compressed pay, benefits, and non-monetary returns to aptitude in teaching" (p. 236). The salaries offered to teachers cannot attract high achievers into the teaching profession. Yet, Hoxby and Leigh's study only focused on the effect of teacher unionization and did not take into consideration other possible causes, in the decline of teachers' aptitude. Moreover, Liebermann (2000) stated that teacher unions protect unskilled teachers and prevent any changes in laws, such as teacher tenure law, as well as controlled entry to the teaching profession. Moreover, despite the fact that teacher unions increase teachers' salaries, positively affecting state productivity, Pantuosco and Ullrich (2010) revealed that teacher unions have an overall negative effect on gross state productivity (GSP) per employee. The results were attributed by Pantuosco and Ullrich (2010) to two contradictory explanations linked to quality of teachers and teaching. The first explanation might be that unionized districts place pressure to increase teachers' wages and provide further instructional support, which can increase state tax on revenues, but improve education instead. Another explanation would be that there could be unionized teachers who are incompetent and who lower the quality of education. However, terminating these unionized teachers can be costly and can raise the GSP (Pantuosco & Ullrich, 2010).

In summary, research has shown contradictory findings which made it hard to reach an overall conclusion about some effects of teacher unions on teachers.

Effects on school climate. Building a positive school climate is essential to increase teachers' performances and student achievements. There were a few studies conducted on teacher unions and their effect on schools' climate. The few studies that were found showed a positive correlation between teacher unions and school climate.

In his study, Griffith (2009) performed a mixed design case study in an Ohio high school to examine the correlation between teacher perception and school climate. Findings revealed that teachers, who supported a local union, felt protected from unreasonable demands. These teachers also experienced a higher level of self-esteem, exhibited more trust towards their colleagues and performed their job with satisfaction. These teachers were less influenced by the principal and gave a fair judgment for the principal than teachers who did not belong to a union. Unlike nonunionized teachers, unionized teachers also felt a sense of belonging to the school. Moreover, the group that supported unions had a higher overall organizational health index than the group that did not support unions. Similarly, in his study, Carini (2003) found that teachers who are associated with local unions showed more autonomy in the classroom, had better job satisfaction, and were able to influence school policy more than nonunionized teachers.

Summary of the Literature

The purpose of the literature review was to describe teachers' unions and their functions in multiple contexts such as the United States, Finland, and Tunisia, while highlighting the path they followed to emerge as a major presence in the educational arena. The literature review also surveyed empirical studies that examined the unions' effects on schools, as well as their contribution to educational reform. Furthermore, the review looked at teacher unions in Lebanon, highlighting the goals they achieved, the challenges they face, and some obstacles that prevent teaching from becoming viewed as a profession in Lebanon.

In the U.S., the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) were first founded to support teachers and to assist in the improvement of education. The emergence of each of the federations was different in the beginning. Both federations were formed by different groups, had different visions, and used different strategies. The NEA, which was first established by administrators, supported teachers through professional development and through the improvement of education quality using the negotiation tool, while the AFT, which was first established by teachers, focused on essentials for living such as increasing wages, benefits, and reducing class size using collective bargaining and strikes. While these two unions both represented the two concepts of professionalism and unionism, they both understood the importance of each concept and developed new strategies that led to targeting to achieve both of these concepts. One important achievement of both the NEA and the AFT was the establishment of a collective bargaining law that ensured the rights of teachers are protected. The instatement of the collective bargaining law increased the strength of teacher unions and gave them a strong voice and the power to advance negotiations to include other essential matters, such as education reform. Both the NEA and the AFT have reached the level where they were able to fulfill their social, economic, educational, and political role and have had an impact on society.

In Finland, a teacher union, known as the OAJ, showed the characteristics of a strong union. The OAJ's strength was developed through a few factors. These factors included representing 95% of teachers using strategies such as collective bargaining, catering to its members' concerns, connecting with union and nonunion organizations, and targeting education reform matters, such as providing professional development to its members and being involved in educational matters. In addition, the government's reform initiative strengthened the OAJ and

raised the standard of education as a profession. The union also gave Finland recognition as having one of the best educational systems in the world. Finland showed the community that teaching is indeed a profession and that teachers can be trusted to provide good education to children despite their socioeconomic background. The education reform that was applied in Finland gave teachers attractive salaries, strengthened the preparatory programs of teachers, and raised the standards of entrance to the teaching profession. The reform also gave teachers autonomy in the classrooms and a decision-making role in curriculum planning and implementation.

In Tunisia, the UGTT, which is a teacher federation, is perceived to be one the strongest labor union in the Arab world. It was able to change the Ben Ali's authoritarian regime and created the Jasmine Revolution. There are several factors that contributed to the success of the UGTT. One of these factors is the UGTT's ability to maintain its independence. It was able to play a key role in politics and maintained a good relationship with political parties while keeping distance from any attempts of control made by politicians. Another factor that helped strengthen the UGTT was the extensive experience of its union leaders and its history of activism. In addition, the UGTT had the financial resources to create developmental union activities. Also, the existence of a supportive environment that favors activism assisted in the strengthening of the UGTT.

The literature review also discussed teacher unions in the context of Lebanon. The section began by introducing Lebanese teacher unions' achievements and the role they played in education reform throughout the years. Literature showed that due to the economic struggle that Lebanon faced teacher unions after Lebanese Civil War focused on raising teacher wages and increasing their benefits. This union decision raised criticism from the public for not addressing

educational issues. In addition, politics have influenced teacher unions' decisions and affected their ability to attain union goals. In the 1970s, Lebanese political groups were most influential since they were a great support for unions. Today, however, political leaders have succeeded in controlling union decisions rather than strengthening the unions' positions. This interference in the unions has caused union leaders to make decisions that might not represent their members' point of views.

The next section in this literature covered empirical studies conducted on teachers' unions to show effect of teacher unions and its role. Empirical studies have shown great contradictions especially on studies conducted on the impact of teacher unions on students' performance, teachers, and schools. Despite these contradictions, most studies revealed that unions had an overall positive effect on students' performance, increased teachers' salaries, and positively affected school climate. On the other hand, teacher unions were viewed to negatively impact some aspects of education because they could contribute to an increase in school spending. Other studies also examined the role of union in education reform. Adelberg (2008) showed that union members did not see a role for teacher unions in education reform. In her study, Adelberg (2008) emphasized the importance of communication between rank and file members and union to understand the role that unions are playing in education reform. Also, Smith (1997) revealed that union representatives and rank and file members wanted their union to have a balanced role in advocating for teachers' social and economic well-being and education reform.

Moreover, the literature review also presented current models that teacher unions have adopted around the world in an attempt to move beyond the traditional industrial unionism model that is solely concerned with members' material needs. Each model that was introduced had its

benefits and limitations. The summary of all four prevalent models was presented: industrial unionism, professional unionism, social justice unionism, and social movement unionism. These four models are essential and complement each other. The unionism models show that a democratic union is one that encourages its rank and file members to lead and mobilize the rest of members to achieve goals set. To further strengthen their voice and be heard, teacher unions need to develop strong alliances with community organizations. As for the goals set, teacher unions need to have a social justice orientation whereby justice and fairness are at the core of their collective action frame. However, social justice cannot be achieved without ensuring that fair wages are provided for teachers and working conditions are suitable for teaching and learning. Finally, for teachers to communicate and connect with the community and to be effective as activists, they need to be professionals in their field and have to understand how they improve teaching and show their commitment towards students' learning.

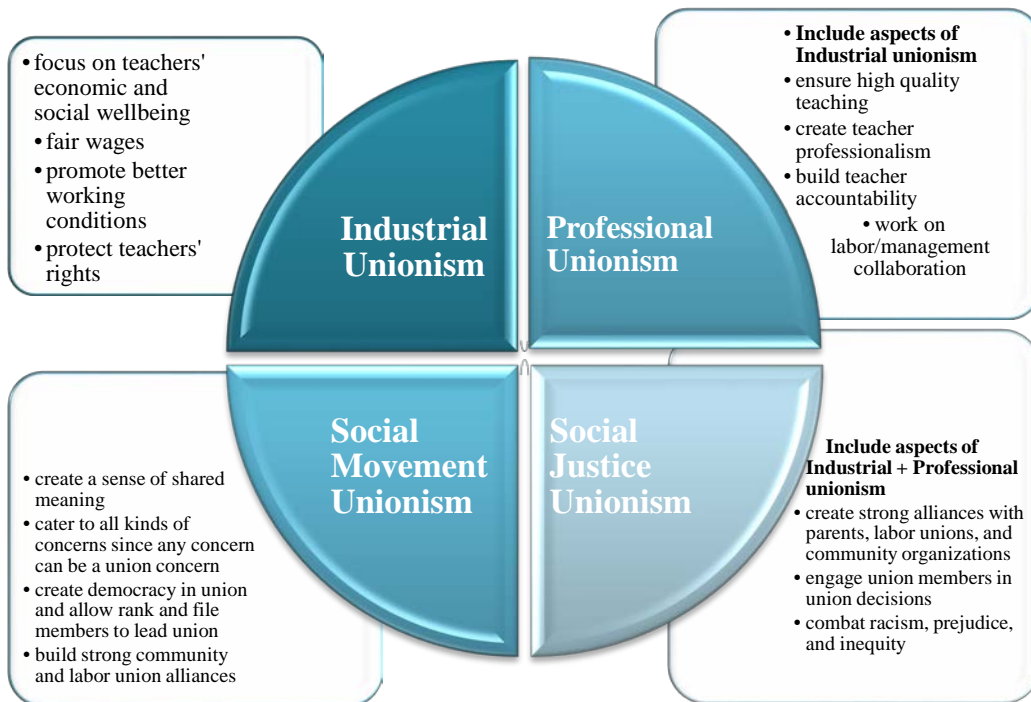


Chart 2.1 Summary of Teacher Unionism Models

Industrial Unionism

Aspects of industrial unionism are vital for teacher unions to preserve the rights of teachers and to voice their concerns. This section highlights the aspects that focus on teachers' economic and social well-being necessary and that make teachers feel comfortable and secure. These include facets maintaining fair wages, promoting better working conditions, and protecting teachers' rights.

With new models of unionism emerging, today, the goals of industrial unionism remain important. Industrial unionism posits that union members' economic and social well-being should be maintained through ensuring fair wages and promoting better working conditions. Once members feel comfortable in their work environment, they can focus on their profession. In addition, teachers as workers may sometimes encounter management abuse, which can jeopardize their rights. According to Soffield and Salmond (2003), verbal abuse in the workplace decreases morale, increases job dissatisfaction, and creates a hostile work environment, which might lead the worker to leave the workplace.

Professional Unionism

Professional unionism invites union members to have a leading role in education reform movements and to address aspects that can improve quality of education (Bernstein, 2003; Kerchner & Koppich, 2004). This type of unionism also includes aspects of industrial unionism. The study focused on the goals of professional unionism, goals that include high quality teaching, creating teacher professionalism, increasing teacher accountability, and working on labor/management collaboration

The professional unionism model adds to the goals of industrial unionism by targeting the professionalization of teaching. This model also promotes teacher involvement in the improvement of the teaching profession, which in turn develops teacher commitment and provides quality education to students (Charney & Peterson, 1999). Teachers who participate in union-related activities can be involved in the development and implementation of processes such as teacher evaluation, curriculum, teacher career ladder, professional development, mentoring programs, and many other educational aspects that can help improve teaching as a profession (Kerchner, 2004). Another important aspect in the professional unionism model is the relationship between labor and management. The model states that teachers should develop a good relationship with management to facilitate collaboration and to focus on educational matters to achieve successful reforms (Donaldson et al., 2013; Kerchner & Mitchell, 1988). Professional unionism model also encourages principals to engage teachers in decision-making and to delegate authorities to make decisions in educational matters. As such, the model promotes sharing and distribution of power, which creates more commitment, accountability, and intrinsic motivation among teachers (Yusim, 2008).

Social Justice Unionism

The social justice unionism model places students and the community at the center of union concerns while maintaining the goals of defending teachers' rights and protecting teacher professionalism in the workplace (Peterson, 1999). The goals of social justice unionism are to keep students' interest in mind and address community concerns, create alliances with parents, labor unions, and community organizations, and to mobilize union members to combat racism, prejudice, and inequity.

Social justice unionism model illustrates the need to address social justice matters, especially in the curriculum and in teaching to reduce inequity in society (Charney & Peterson, 1999). Using social justice model also encourages the involvement of rank and file members in the unions' decision-making, which creates democracy in the union (Peterson, 1999). Engaging members in union decisions shows that the union truly represents teachers. Finally, this model emphasizes the importance of connecting and partnering with community such as parents, community organizations, and other labor unions to develop the strength and support needed to be able achieve union objectives.

Social Movement Unionism

Social justice unionism was criticized as being an impractical model that cannot address industrial unionism aspects and as a model that cannot achieve democracy, especially as it espouses a top down design model where decisions are influenced by union leaders (Weiner, 2013). As a response, social movement unionism was adopted. Although there are different models of social movement unionism, this thesis will adopt Ross' model. This study will focus on is the creation of a sense of shared meaning, catering to all kinds of concerns since any concern can be a union concern, the creation of democracy in union and allow rank and file members to lead union and building strong community and labor union alliances.

Social movement unionism does not specify what the important issues are but rather it works from the bottom up. Rank and file members of the union do not just engage democratically in the union but rather they lead and mobilize the union in an attempt to develop change in society as a whole (Ross, 2007). Rank and file members specify the concerns that the union should target. Rank and file members' concerns might not be limited to work-related matters. In a social movement unionism, a member is not only a worker, but she/he plays

additional roles such as a mother, a father, a neighbor, a community member and as such has other concerns that union can address.

According to Ross (2007), social movement unionism contains three main aspects: collective action frame or ethos, repertoire, and internal organizational practices. First, collective action frame or ethos provides the union with a sense of shared meaning and sets a purpose for unions by identifying workers' interests and identities, the types of problems faced, the solutions required to solve these problems, and the rationale that drives individuals to engage in union activity (Benford & Snow, 2000 as cited in Ross 2008). Second, repertoires are a series of strategies that help implement the ethos. In deciding on a repertoire, unions can create strong alliances with community organization and labor unions. Some actions chosen are "nonpartisan lobbying, union-community coalitions, extra parliamentary mobilizations like demonstrations or political strikes, international solidarity actions, community volunteerism, and charitable fundraising" (Ross, 2008, p. 135). Third, internal organizational practices define roles, delegate tasks, and specify the importance of the tasks given. Also, internal organizational practices identify the division of labor of leaders, staff, and active members and inactive members and their role in decision-making and implementation (Ross, 2007).

In the following chapter, the methods used to collect and analyze data will be discussed in detail, and will describe how information was gathered from union leaders and union members about the primary purposes of teacher unions, their unions' challenges, and their unions' role in education reform.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perspectives of union leaders and union members of the functions of teacher unions in the Lebanese context, the challenges faced by teacher unions, and the role that the unions are playing or can play in education reform. This study also identified the level of alignment between the views of union leaders and union members.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions from the perspective of union leaders and union members:

- 1) What is the primary purpose of teacher unions?
- 2) What challenges do teacher unions face?
- 3) What role, if any, do/can teacher unions play to contribute to education reform?

Research Design

Qualitative research is an interactive approach of research used to reveal trends in thought and beliefs, and to explore the research problem to gain an understanding of the underlying motives (Wyse, 2011). According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), qualitative research permits the researcher to gain an insight of “the inner experience of participants, to determine how meanings are formed through and in culture, and to discover rather than test variables” (p. 12). This method allows researchers to build on previously constructed knowledge. Qualitative research is used in this study since it aims to understand the challenges facing teacher unions and

seeks to explore teacher unions' role in education reform from the different perspectives of union leaders and union members.

Paradigm Choice

A research paradigm is used as a “set of lenses” where the researcher looks at fieldwork through preexisting assumptions to help direct his or her actions (Burke, 2007). This study adopts a constructivist paradigm. This paradigm states that the world is constructed by people who perceive it through “human action, interaction, and emotional responses that people have to events and problems they encounter” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 6). Each person constructs reality in a way that influences their behavior and that cannot be compared to “external reality” or to other people’s perception of reality (Sobh & Perry, 2005). Thus, constructing knowledge becomes the main goal of every researcher seeking to understand the assumptions underlying people’s actions and governing their choices (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Given that the problem cannot be removed from its surrounding reality as many aspects (social, racial, cultural, political, gender-related) influence analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), this research seeks to explore the problem from three different perspectives to create results that are reliable.

Perspective Choice

The perspective that is chosen for this study is symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism, created by Bulmer (1969), is a process of interaction that examines society through subjective meanings that people place on objects, events, and behaviors. Meaning is defined by people through interpretation of symbols related to their action and interaction. This research captures the subjective meaning through face-to-face interaction between union

members and union leaders, and focuses on details rather than on viewing the situation from a macro-level perspective (Charmaz, 2006).

Methodology Choice

This study follows grounded theory guidelines. Grounded theory was originally constructed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and was further built upon by Charmaz (2006). Grounded theory is defined as “the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45). Grounded theory differs from qualitative descriptive method because it develops theories that are analyzed from reality and because it does not “force preconceived ideas and theories” on data collected or include preset hypothesis (Charmaz, 2006, p. 17). A conceptual framework can be used as a point of reference to guide the researcher in the comparative analysis during the data analysis process. Yet, the framework is held provisionally during the data collection procedures so that it does not affect the data generated from the participants. Also, grounded theory uses theoretical sampling, which is a procedure used through selecting cases to be studied to gain new insight or to expand and improve on concepts that already exist (Charmaz, 2006).

Selection of Participants

For this study, theoretical sampling is used to collect data that focuses on “places, people, and events that maximizes opportunities to develop concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions, uncover variations, and identify relationships between concepts” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 143). The researcher selected the participants who have the potential to contribute the most to the development of the theoretical understanding. Charmaz (2006) specifies that when

deciding on a number of participants, the researcher must be aware of two issues: 1) participants should be chosen based on a set of criteria to ensure that they can add value to the study 2) looking at what is considered to be rich and sufficient data can help reach saturation and bring about the emergence of a new theory. Sufficient data is ensured once new data no longer provides new insights on the categories.

The participants in this study are union members and union leaders of Lebanese public schools. Although some might not be supportive of their unions' decisions, all of the teachers and administrators in public schools who are part of the cadre are also members in the teacher leagues (Samaha, 2006, 125). Therefore, the participants in this study belong to either the Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) or the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي). Each of the two leagues has an executive committee that is made up of 18 leaders elected by public school representatives of leagues. In the current committee of the Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي), there are 16 male leaders and two female leaders. As for the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي), there are fifteen male leaders and three union leaders. Public Primary School Teacher League has around 1800 union representatives (retrieved from <http://tarbaweya.org/essaydetails.php?eid=10049&cid=264&pid=0#.VptLWFJBfY>) and Public Secondary School Teacher League has around 538 union representative (retrieved from <http://yasour.org/2012/list.php?go=fullnews&newsid=58310>).

Thirty-eight participants were selected for participation in this study including eight union leaders from the executive committee of Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي), nine union leaders from the executive committee of Public

Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) (Table 1), and twenty one union members (elementary, intermediate, and secondary) (Table 2). The leaders in the leagues were chosen based on their availability and consent to be interviewed. Table 1 shows the distribution of leaders in the leagues and identifies the quantity of gender.

These union members were also divided between active members in the leagues and inactive members. This research also came across a few active and inactive members who were contractual teachers and who do not belong to the two leagues. Contractual teachers belong to one of the two committees, the Public Primary School Contractors Committee or the Public Secondary School Contractors Committee. The active contractual teacher that participated in the study belonged to the Public Secondary School Contractors Committee. Contractual teachers make up 33.6% of the teaching body in the public sector (Al Amine, 2007) and therefore their responses were taken into consideration. In addition, public schools were chosen for the sample since teachers in public schools face more challenges than teachers in private schools, and they tend to be more active in unions (Matar, 2011; Al Amine, 2012).

Table 1

Distribution of Union Leaders

	Public Primary Schools Teachers League	Public Secondary School Teachers League
Total number of committee members	18	18
Participants	8	9
Number of Males/Females	8/0	8/1

Table 2*Distribution of Union Members*

	Active Members		Inactive Members	
	Elementary & Intermediate	Secondary	Elementary & Intermediate	Secondary
Sample of participants	12		9	
Number of Teachers	7	5	5	4
Number of Males/Females	6/1	2/3	5/0	3/1
Full-timers/Contractual	7/0	4/1	3/2	3/1

Union members, both active and inactive, in this study participated voluntarily from different public schools in Beirut and the Greater Beirut area. The location was determined according to the researcher's convenience. In the Greater Beirut area, sampling method, stratified purposeful sampling, was used to determine the union members. The research tried to ensure that both genders are equally represented; however, this research found more male union leaders than female union leaders and more female teachers than male teachers. This assumption, which was actually seen in the data collection, was based on the fact that teaching is considered a "feminized" occupation (Sykes, 1999, p. 229) since it contains more females than males. According to Sykes (1999), "women became chief source of supply in the teacher labor market.... administration became a male pursuit" (p. 229). The criteria of selection of union members were selected on their participation status in their union: active members and inactive members.

Union members were considered *active members* if they “served on union committees or were building⁵ representatives, had attended at least five union meetings in a year, engaged in political action and promoted union issues in their buildings or community” (Popiel, 2010, p. 12). Active members were selected based on the assumption that they have most insight about what happens in their unions and are able to provide the researcher with vital information about challenges within the unions.

Moreover, union members were considered *inactive members* if they “did not serve on any union committees, were not building representatives, had attended two or fewer union meetings, and had not engaged in political action in the past year” (Popiel, 2010, p. 12). Samaha’s (2006) revealed that 58.8% of teachers in public schools are inactive members and have never participated in general assemblies of unions. Inactive members were chosen as participants in this study because their perspective on the challenges facing their unions was believed to enrich the data generated by this study. The backgrounds of the participants are presented below.

Table 3

Background of Union Leaders

Union Membership	Type of School	Union Experience	Union Training
UP1	Primary School	15	Preparation of Union Cadre
UP2	Primary School	2	No
UP3	Primary School	5	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung conferences
UP4	Primary School	35	No
UP5	Primary School	1	No
UP6	Primary School	1	No
UP7	Primary School	4	Conference conducted by Education International "Against

⁵ Building representative is referring to school representative

UP8	Primary School	6	the privatization of education"; "Education for All"; "Professions' Safety" No
US1	Secondary School	25	Two workshops conducted by the administration of the league
US2	Secondary School	1	No
US3	Secondary School	8	Management of Organization and Communication; Preparation of an Effective Trade Union Cadre; Union Training; Methods in dialog
US4	Secondary School	1	Yes
US5	Secondary School	10	Two workshops conducted on union work
US6	Secondary School	6	Yes
US7	Secondary School	6	No
US8	Secondary School	25	Workshop on Union work/ union rights/ and all its mechanisms
US9	Secondary School	10	Union Training in Padova Hotel

Seventeen union leaders participated in this study. Their ages ranged between 40 and 64. Four union leaders' ages ranged between 40-49 years old, three union leaders' ages ranged between 50-59 years old. Finally, ten out of seventeen union leaders were in their sixties, making them close to retirement age or at the retirement age. Concerning their educational background, most of the union leaders either held a bachelor degree, teaching diploma degree, master degrees, or doctorate degree. Only three did not have a university degree or only had a teacher institute degree. In addition, this research shows that most union leaders have union experience since they have held leadership position in the union before. However, the table also shows that many union leaders, even those who have years of experience, either have not attended any union training sessions or have attended very few training sessions.

Table 4*Background of Active union members*

Union Membership	Type of School	Degree	Current Position in School	Teaching Experience
AP1	Primary School	Bachelor in Philosophy	Supervisor	36
AP2	Primary School	Teaching Diploma in Theatre	Theatre Teacher	35
AP3	Primary School	Bachelor in Business (accounting and marketing)	Supervisor	35
AP4	Primary School	Bachelor in Mathematics	Supervisor	42
AP5	Primary School	Bachelor in Business (accounting and marketing)	Math Teacher	37
AP6	Primary School	Bachelor in Arabic	Arabic Teacher	35
AP7	Primary School	Bachelor in Arabic	Arabic Teacher	15
AS1	Secondary School	Bachelor in Geography	Supervisor	30
AS2	Secondary School	Doctorate in Geography	Geography Teacher	34
AS3	Secondary School	Masters in Philosophy and Psychology	Supervisor	13
AS4	Secondary School	Teaching Diploma in Physics	Principal	39
AS5	Secondary School	Teaching Diploma in Philosophy	Philosophy Teacher	7

There were twelve active union members who participated in this study. The active union members' age ranged between 35 and 64 years. Two active union members between the ages of 35 and 39 years, and five were between the ages of 50-59 years. In addition, there were five active members between the ages of 60 and 64 years. As for their educational background, active union members, who participated in this study, were educated with at least a university degree.

As for their union experience, most of the active union members were union representatives.

Five of the active union members were new in assuming their role as union representatives.

Table 5

Background of Inactive Members

Union Membership	Type of School	Degree	Current Position in School	Teaching Experience
IP1	Primary School	Three university years in Sociology (incomplete)	Kindergarten II Teacher	25
IP2	Primary School	Bachelor in Education	Kindergarten III Teacher	6
IP3	Primary School	Bachelor in English	English Teacher	12
IP4	Primary School	Third year in Science	Physics, Chemistry, Biology Teacher	38
IP5	Primary School	Bachelor in Psychology	Civics Teacher	35
IS1	Secondary School	Master in English Literature (pending Thesis)	English Teacher	6
IS2	Secondary School	Bachelor in English	English Teacher	7
IS3	Secondary School	Bachelor in French Language; Master in Education Administration	French Teacher	7
IS4	Secondary School	Doctorate in History	History Teacher	12

There were nine inactive members who participated in this study. Inactive union members' age ranged between 27 and 64 years. There were five inactive members out of nine whose ages were between 27 and 35. In addition, there were two inactive members whose ages were between 36 and 45 and two inactive union members whose ages ranged between 60-64 years. All inactive members had more than five years of teaching experience. Although most

inactive members had university degrees, some of the primary teachers did not teach the subjects according to their attained degrees.

Data Collection Tools

Data for this study was collected through three methods: formal field interviews, focus groups interviews, and in-depth interviews. Research was conducted with union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members where background information form of union leaders and union members and field notes were used as additional sources of providing data.

Formal Field Interview

Formal field interview is a type of group interview where a researcher meets two or more participants in a field setting, in a place away from disruptions. The interview used a semi-structured format where the researcher takes a directive role (Frey & Fontana, 1991). Formal field interviews are useful because they allow participants to respond without any pressure. Formal field interviews also build on the response or counter argue a certain response to develop a clearer image of the “truth” (Frey & Fontana, 1991, p. 179). The individual in a group tends to show eagerness to express ideas and feelings since he or she feels safer in a group than in a one on one interview (retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/w3241e/w3241e06.htm>). Formal field interviews were used with two primary school union leaders and four active members since they were located in the same place and were available to meet for an interview.

Focus Groups

The focus group interview is a technique used to explore phenomena studied through group interaction where researchers play an active role in generating and maintaining group discussions (Morgan, 1996). A focus group usually contains 6 to 10 participants in one group.

Focus groups are used to help the researcher acquire an in-depth knowledge by stimulating a discussion in a formal setting, by creating a dynamic interaction among participants that promotes sharing, and by comparing of experiences, feelings, and beliefs (Krueger & Casey, 2009; Morgan, 1996). According to Krueger and Casey (2009), conducting focus groups encourages self-disclosure among participants because they tend to feel more comfortable in an environment that is tolerant and that does not judge them.

For this study, two focus groups were conducted with union leaders and teacher union members. One focus group consisted of eight union leaders from the Public Secondary School Teachers League (see **Appendix A** for list of questions). The sample of participants in the focus groups of union leaders was formed from the attendees of the leagues' weekly meeting who accepted to participate in this study. Another focus group was formed from nine teachers who were inactive members of the public school unions. Teachers who participated were from the following teaching levels: two inactive members from public schools who teach elementary level and three inactive union members from public schools who teach intermediate level and four inactive union members from public schools who teach secondary level (See **Appendix B** for list of questions).

In-depth Interview

In-depth interviews are used “to see the exact shape, nature and essence of a phenomenon appearing in the experience, consciousness, state or way of being of each participant or individual case, and then to obtain more general insights regarding the phenomenon when looking across cases” (Witz, Goodwin, Hart, & Thomas, 2001, p. 195). In-depth interviews, according to Charmaz (2006), allow the researcher to go beyond the surface of the topic and to

reveal feelings and beliefs of participants, to ask questions to retrieve details or explanations, to observe the participants' reactions, and to ponder further on statements stated.

This research conducted an in-depth interview with the former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي). The former president had served for many years in union leadership positions and was perceived to have an extended knowledge of challenges that unions face. Currently, the president also serves as a member of the executive committee in the Public Secondary School Teachers League and was present in the focus group conducted with secondary union leaders. Secondly, an in-depth interview was conducted with the current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة الرسمي), especially since he was not present in the focus groups and since his insight was essential to understand the current challenges facing unions.

Also, individual interviews were conducted with six union leaders from the Public Primary Schools Teachers League (see **Appendix A** for list of questions). In-depth interviews were also conducted with eight active union members. The participants were mainly union representatives of the two leagues: the union leaders of the committee from the Public Primary Schools Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) and one union leader from the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي).

To triangulate the data, two union leaders (one from Public Primary Schools Teachers League and one from Public Secondary School Teachers League), two active union members (one from Public Primary School Teachers League and one from Public Secondary School Teachers League) and two inactive union members (one from Public Primary School Teachers League and one from Public Secondary School Teachers League) were interviewed. These

members were chosen from the participants who attended focus groups and who participated in the in-depth interviews, which lasted between 30-60 minutes.

Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected using methods recommended by the literature, which would best create rich and meaningful data and add value to the study. Participants were contacted through emails and were sent a consent form which stated the study's purpose and requested their available time to meet. Union leaders and union members, who accepted to participate in this study, also filled out a background information form. During interviews or focus groups, participants were asked open ended questions followed by probing questions that further stimulated the discussion. The procedure of data collection proceeded in the following manner.

First, in-depth interviews were conducted with the former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي). The former president was chosen because he introduced major events that occurred in the union and identified the challenges that faced teacher unions during his term. Second, an in-depth interview was conducted with the current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة (أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي). The current president explained his perspective on the current challenges facing teacher unions and the current status of the union, the league's strategies, and the league's future role in education reform. Third, a focus group was held with the union leaders in the executive committee of the Public Secondary School Teachers League after they held their weekly meeting. As for union leaders of the Public Primary School Teacher League, in-depth interviews and formal field interviews were conducted as an alternative to a focus group due to the primary union leaders' inability to meet for several months. Fourth, a focus group was held with teachers who are inactive members in the public school unions to get their perspective about

union challenges and their role in education reform. Fifth, in-depth interviews and formal field interviews were held with active union members instead of a focus group due to their inability to meet at one time. Finally, the data that were collected were analyzed to generate themes.

The second phase in collecting data was to conduct triangulation. First, interviews were requested from two participants from each group of union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members who already took part in focus groups, formal field interviews, or in-depth interviews in the first phase of data collection. Second, the chosen participants were presented with the themes that emerged from the analysis and were asked to further elaborate on them. Third, participants were asked to give any comments or statements that might add value to the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

This study uses constant comparative as a method for analysis of the data collected. The constant comparative method “combines systematic data collection, coding, and analysis with theoretical sampling in order to generate theory that is integrated, close to the data, and expressed in a form clear enough for further testing” (Conrad, Neumann, Haworth, & Scott, 1993, p. 280). Some of the analysis methods that were used include reading and rereading, memo writing, describing, coding, and data labeling. These methods were used to identify patterns and to interpret data that emerged from union leaders and union members’ perceptions about the challenges facing the two public schools’ teacher unions and their role in education reform. The results of this study present all of the participants’ responses since the purpose of this research is exploratory and therefore all of the data are considered significant. The theoretical literature that was explored and synthesized during the literature review process helped provisionally and was

revisited as a part of the constant comparative data analysis approach to analyze the data collected for this study.

This study followed the procedural guidelines of the grounded theory methodology as outlined by Charmaz (2006). Data collected from focus groups and interviews was transcribed into codes and underwent four levels of analysis: 1) initial coding 2) focused coding 3) axial coding 4) theoretical coding. Initial coding analyzes the data collected in details using the line by line and word by word technique. Initial coding also labels data to construct meaning, and to identify existing gaps, which assesses whether more data needs to be collected. Data collected from focus groups that were conducted with union leaders and active and inactive union members were the researchers' initial source of data. The data provided insights about teacher unions of public schools in Lebanon. Afterwards, the data were placed into categories to highlight the significance of the data and then sorted, synthesized, and organized to formulate concepts (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). Finally, theoretical coding was applied where categories were further examined to look for a relation between them which helped in emergence of a theory.

Quality Criteria

During data collection and data analysis, the researcher made sure to use strategies to legitimize the findings of the study and to ensure quality was provided in the research. In quantitative studies, researchers seek to achieve validity (internal and external), reliability, and objectivity. Corresponding to the quality criteria specified in quantitative research, Lincoln & Guba (1981) suggested the following criteria for qualitative research that are discussed below: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability.

Credibility. Credibility, which addresses internal validity in qualitative research studies, questions the findings of the study and compares it to the existing reality, which is constructed from several dimensions. According to Merriam (1995), strengthening the credibility of the study requires the researcher to apply various techniques such as triangulation, member checks, peer/colleague examination, statements' of researcher's experience, bias, and assumptions, and submersion/engagement in research situation. This study attempted to achieve credibility through member check, triangulation, and peer examination. The researcher sent the participants' their responses and asked them to confirm the interpretation. To ensure that the data reflect the response of the participants and to gain further insight and clarification, triangulation method was used through in-depth interviews with two of the participants from each of the focus groups. In addition, the researcher requested from another peer researcher to transcribe and code a sample of data for comparison purposes, and to ensure that the interpretation and coding of the data are valid.

Transferability. Transferability is viewed as the extent to which the findings of the study can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. According to Merriam (1995), in qualitative research, transferability can hardly be applied to another context since the findings emerge from a specific context and are therefore considered a unique case. Also, the aim of qualitative research is to understand a certain phenomenon rather than generalize. Nonetheless, lack of transferability is considered a limitation of qualitative research, which is also applicable to this study. On the other hand, Lincoln and Guba (1981) stated that findings of the study can be transferable if the researcher considers the phenomenon with its current setting to be similar to his or her own study and situated in a similar context. Therefore, this research is made to ensure a proper detailed description of the data, step by step procedure, and reflections are provided in

this study that can facilitate decision making for other researchers and allow for comparison of study to take place (Shenton, 2004).

Dependability. Dependability, which addresses the reliability of the study, is a technique used to ensure that the replication of the study is possible and that the results that are yielded are consistent. Merriam (1995) and Sheraton (2004) state that the study should be detailed especially in its methodology to ensure that dependability is achieved. The study methodology should specify in detail the research design, selection of the sample and describe the setting, the data collection tools, data collection procedure, data analysis procedures, and any detail or limitation that might affect the study. Merriam (1995) also restates the importance of conducting triangulation and peer examination to ensure data collected and analyzed are reliable. The researcher has previously stated her intentions to use triangulation and peer-examination.

Confirmability. Confirmability is defined as “a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Pandey & Patnaik, 2014). Confirmability refers to interpretation of data and whether it is well supported by the participants’ responses and literature. To achieve confirmability, Shenton (2004) recommends that an audit trail be used to show how and why the researcher chose the approaches, research design and paradigm, selection of participants, data collection tools, and data analysis methods. The researcher used triangulation to validate the data collected further and bring forth more clarity and understanding of the responses of participants. The researcher used thick description and multiple tools and followed step by step procedures that minimize bias, create reliable data, and strengthen findings of the study.

Limitations

This study faced several problems, which reduced the response rate of the findings. The limitations include the size of the study sample, capture the women's perspective as union leaders, and the mistrust of some of the union leaders in intentions of the research.

First, the sample size for this study was thirty-eight participants, divided among three groups (union leader, active union members, and inactive union members). The sample size of this study did not cover the private education sector in Lebanon. Consequently, expanding the sample size and reaching other sectors could have added to the knowledge about the challenges facing teacher unions in Lebanon.

Second, some of the union leaders who were contacted voiced their mistrust in the motive of the research and researcher. People in the Middle East perceive the researcher as a public investigator (Al-Amine, 2009), which prevented all of the union leaders' views. This mistrust also prevented this study from capturing women's perspective as leaders.

Third, this study also aimed to conduct focus group with union leaders of the Public Primary Teachers League and one with active union members to capture the interaction between the members. However, the participants had difficulty in meeting which prevented an interaction that could have otherwise enriched the data further.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The aim of this study is to investigate the perspectives of union leaders and union members on: a) the functions of teacher unions in the Lebanese context, b) the challenges faced by teacher unions, and c) the role that unions play or can play in education reform. This study also identifies the level of alignment between the views of union leaders and union members.

This chapter presents the results obtained from analyzing the data collected from interviews to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1. From the perspective of union leaders, active members, and inactive members, and using documents related to Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) and the Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي), the first section of this chapter presents the organizational structure of these two leagues⁶ and describes the process with which league leaders and league representatives are elected. The first section also discusses the roles of league leaders and representatives. The second section provides the participants' responses regarding the primary purpose of teacher unions. The third section lists the strategies that teacher unions use to achieve their goals. The fourth section identifies the challenges faced by teacher unions, while the fifth section describes teacher unions' current contributions to educational reform. Finally, this chapter presents respondents' recommendations regarding the additional roles that teacher unions should assume to further improve education reform.

⁶ The term union is used throughout of the results section; unless the respondents specifically referred to public school teacher league then the term league is used.

Teacher Unions in Lebanon: Organizational Structure

The Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) and the Public Secondary Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) are Lebanese teacher unions that represent public school teachers. The main offices for these two leagues are located next to the Ministry of Education and Higher and Education (MEHE). According to Decrees 871 and 1553, the purpose of public school teacher leagues is to focus “on social and cultural matters that concern teachers, organize their professional conditions, and improve their productivity” (p. 1). However, based on the results of this study, it is clear that this definition does not fully capture the objectives of public school teacher leagues. The actual function of public school teacher leagues differs from these decrees’ definition. In fact, teacher leagues act in a union-like manner even though Lebanese laws prohibit them from performing such acts.

In this section, the functions of teacher unions are introduced as indicated by the leagues’ organizational structures. The internal regulations and related legislative decrees of teacher unions in Lebanon for Public Secondary School Teachers League (الرابطة أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) and Public Primary School Teachers League (الرابطة الثقافية للمعلمين الرسميين في الابتدائي) are examined to depict this organizational structure and the league members’ formally assigned tasks. These documents and decrees legalized the establishment of leagues, identified the roles and responsibilities of union leaders in leagues, and stated the process of election and its procedures. The documents and decrees also list the conditions that would lead to the dismissal of the leagues’ administration. However, these legislative decrees and leagues’ internal regulations do not fully capture the actual practice of teacher leagues. As a result, interviews were conducted with current union leaders and union members in the public school leagues to supplement missing information and depict current formal expectations. Subsequently, this section begins by

introducing the election process of each of the Public Primary School Teachers League and the Public Secondary School Teachers Leagues to show the function of teacher unions. This section also presents the role that league leaders undertake and each of the leagues' decision-making process.

Election Procedure

In Lebanon, teacher league elections are conducted through a process that is designed and perceived to be democratic. The election process brings together teachers who belong to various sects and to different Lebanese regions. The Public Secondary School Teachers League's (الرابطة) (أساتذة التعليم الثانوي الرسمي) internal regulations document reveals that, every two years in November, elections are held to elect league representatives. According to the former president of Public Secondary School Teachers League, league representatives are considered to be the core network of communication for the public school leagues. The former president of Public Secondary School Teachers League explained that there are around 300 electoral units located for secondary school teachers who work in the public secondary schools, in the Teachers Institute (دار معلمين), in the Ministry of Education, and the Center for Educational Research and Development. For every fifteen teachers in the unit, one league representative gets elected.

After the elections, league representatives meet and elect the executive committee of league leaders, which consists of eighteen secondary school teachers with at least one person from every governorate. The first five positions go to those candidates who receive the highest votes in the five governorates. The rest of the thirteen leadership positions depend on sequence of the votes of candidates. Subsequently, the eighteen league leaders meet and elect their president and distribute the tasks amongst each other. Elections are then conducted in the five governorates where nine league leaders get elected to each branch office. Then, league leaders

from the executive committee who are from the same governorates join those nine league leaders of the governorate to form the league branch office.

The Public Primary School Teachers League also has similar regulations for its elections with minor differences in the structure of the league. The Public Primary School Teachers League has an additional league leadership level in Lebanese districts called the Communication Committee league leaders. This leadership level remained in the organizational structure even after the issuance of Decree 1553, a decree that united the five primary leagues in governance by forming an executive committee. The role of the communication committee will be discussed later in this section. As for its election process, the Public Primary School Teachers League holds its elections for its executive committee in April every three years. Representatives in the league are elected first. For every ten teachers, one representative is elected for a maximum of four league representatives per unit.

The second phase of election occurs when league representatives elect an executive committee that includes at least two teachers from each governorate. League representatives also elect communication committee leaders in their own districts and elect a league branch office leader in their governorates. Leagues in the governorates are comprised of fifteen league leaders who are joined by executive committee members who also come from the same governorate. As for leaders chosen in governorates, they include at least one teacher from each district. Similarly, communication committees in the districts are made up of fifteen league leaders and branch office leaders in governorate who come from same district.

Roles of Union Leaders and the Decision-Making Process

In the section, the roles of league leaders and decision-making process are illustrated through Chart 4.1 and 4.3, which represent the organizational charts of the Public Primary

School Teachers League and the Public Secondary School Teachers League as specified in the leagues' internal regulations. However, in reality, the executive committees' roles can differ from those tasks assigned in teacher leagues' organizational charts. For example, some of the league leaders in both public school leagues are assigned more than one task during the distribution of tasks. In other instances, a task could be divided amongst more than one league leader (current executive committee roles are listed in **Appendix G**).

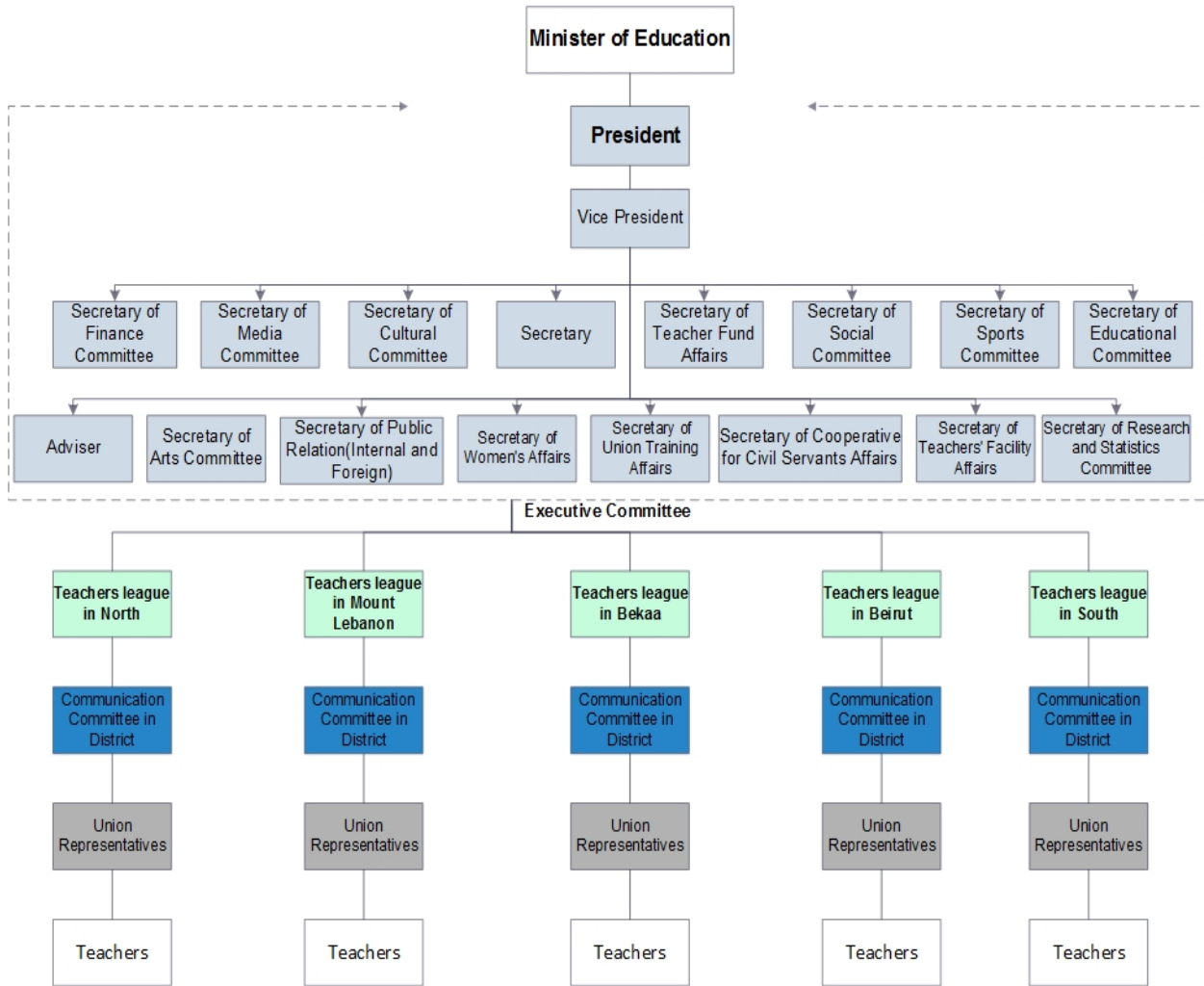
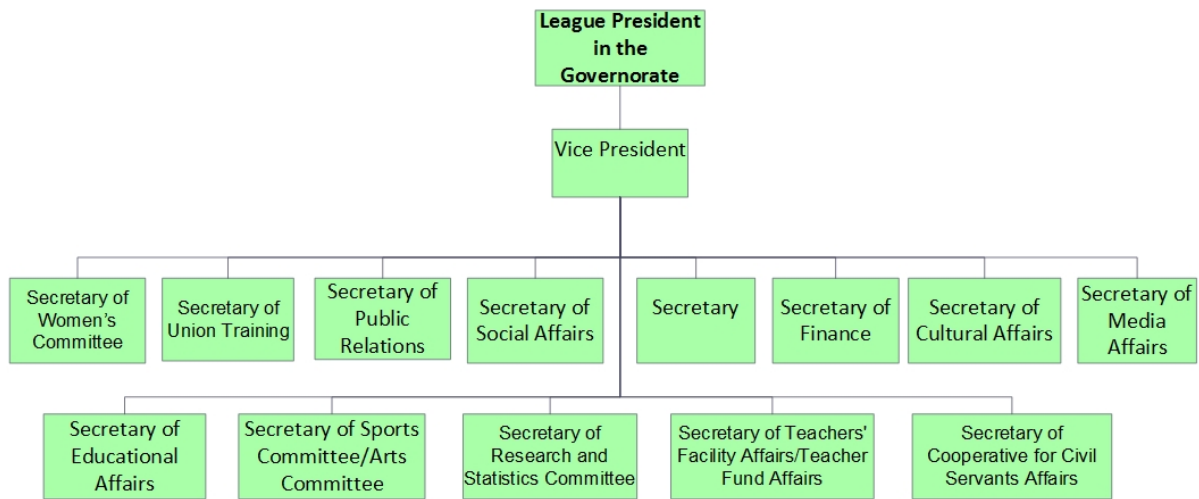


Chart 4.1: Public Primary School Teachers League



Charts 4.2: Public Primary School Teachers League in Governorates

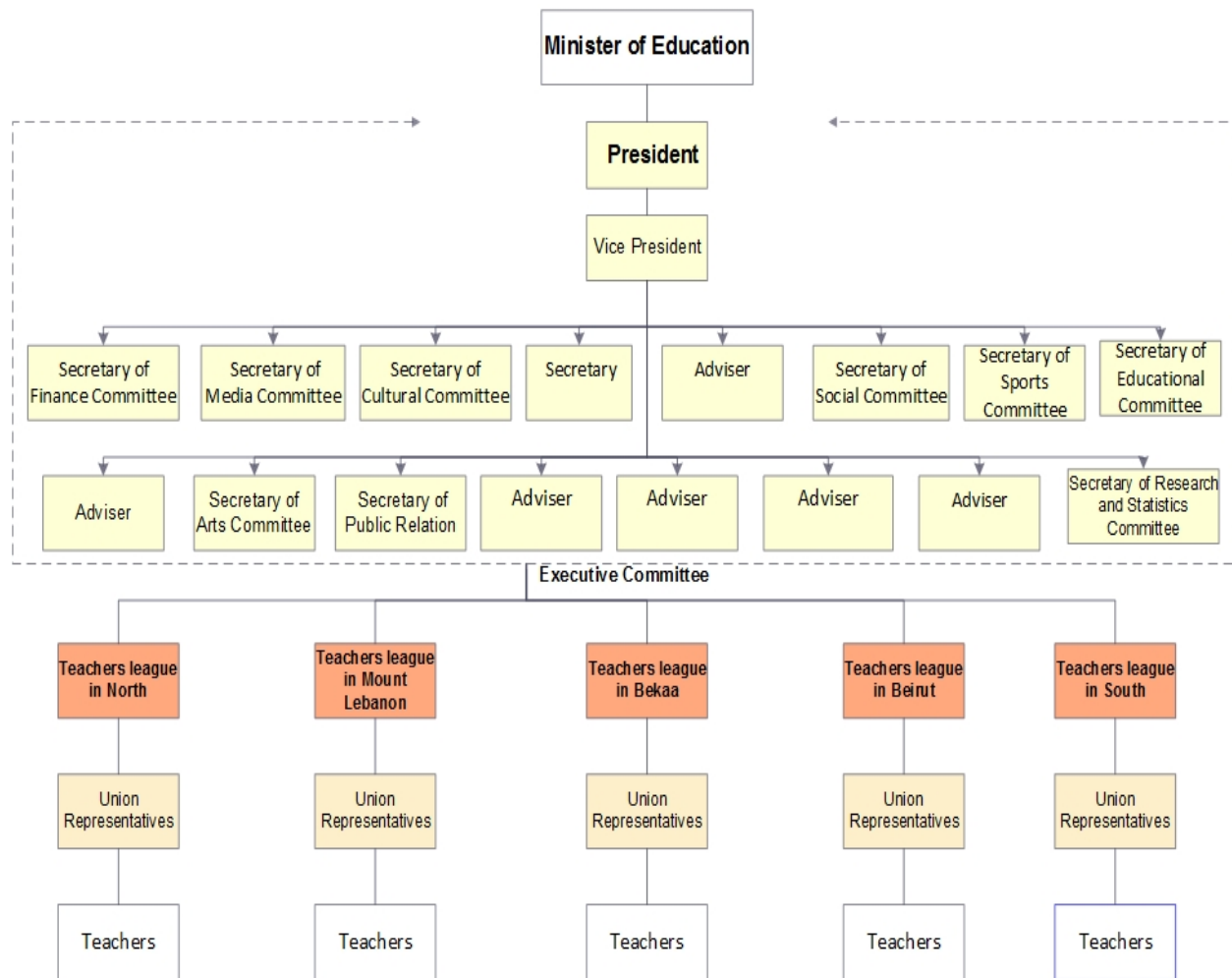


Chart 4.3: Public Secondary School Teachers League

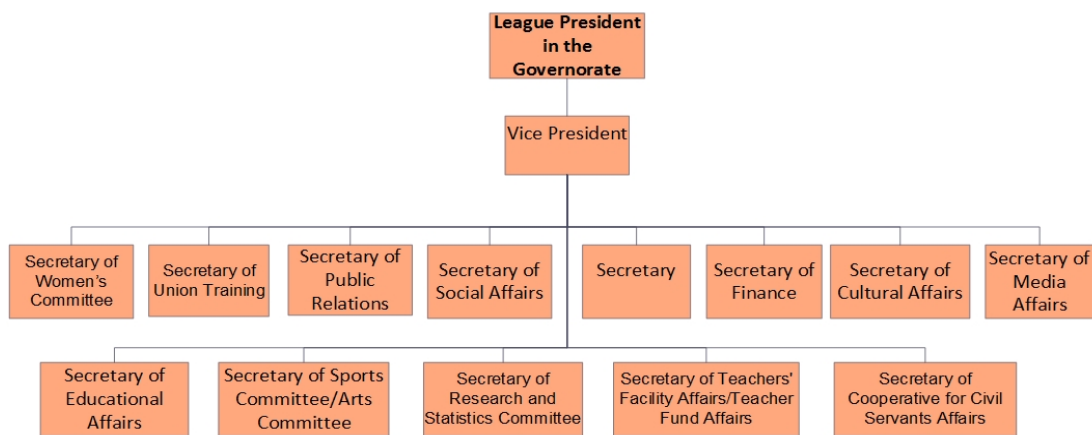


Chart 4.4: Public Secondary School Teachers League in Governorates

As shown in the organizational charts, decision-making in the Public Primary School Teachers League and the Public Secondary School Teachers League is performed using a top-down approach. According to primary union leader (UP6), the work of the leagues is connected to the Minister of Education and Higher Education and his team, who tend to come with their own political agenda. The Minister of Education and Higher Education is considered to be an honorary president of the leagues and is granted authority through legislative Decrees 871 and 1553 to limit the leagues' administrations' work. The Minister also has the power to dissolve the executive committees of the two leagues if the leagues are unable to perform their tasks in accordance to decrees or if leagues are harming the public interest. In addition, the Minister of Education and Higher Education can dissolve the league's administration if the league's administration does not perform activities that benefit teachers or if it has stopped conducting activities for three consecutive years.

The members of the executive committee are the leaders who set the leagues' goals. Subsequently, league representatives in the general assembly approve these goals (interview with current president of secondary school league leader; internal regulations of the two leagues). One of the leaders from Public Primary School Teachers League (UP3) stated that standards set by international organizations such as the United Nations and the International Labor Organization (ILO) are used as a benchmark to set the goals for teachers in Lebanon. One example that respondent UP3 gave was when UNESCO and the ILO in 1966 produced a document called the Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers. This document identified the teachers' rights and responsibilities and the teaching profession's features. In 2000, the Primary School Teachers League referred to the UNESCO and ILO document and advocated for the issuance of a law that recruits only university degree holders to the teachers' cadre.

Roles within teacher unions. As specified in the internal regulations of the leagues, the role of each union member is described below. This description depicts the tasks and responsibilities expected of union members and union leaders in the leagues. The roles of union members will be discussed starting from the base of leagues with the rank and file members and moving to the top of hierarchy to the president of the league.

Rank and file members. Rank and file members are the primary or secondary school teachers. These teachers are the union members. In public schools, all fulltime teachers are members of the leagues. The role of rank and file members is not limited to league representative elections. In fact, rank and file members have the right to amend internal regulations. These members are also granted the right, through voting, to express their opinions in general assemblies, and the right to accept or reject their executive committee's proposed strategic plan, recommendations, and programs.

League representatives. League representatives fill the second level of the hierarchy. This level is where communication between league leaders and rank and file members is maintained. In the case of Public Primary School Teachers League, communication is also maintained through communication committees in the districts. The role of league representatives, aside from electing executive committee, is to monitor the work of the executive committee. Thus, league representatives are granted the authority to discuss the executive committee's administrative and financial reports and to retrieve trust from executive committee when deemed necessary. League representatives can also be delegated the authority to take decisions on behalf of rank and file members for a specific period of time. Periodic meetings are usually held where league representatives transfer information to all the teaching body in every school to take the appropriate decisions (Interview with primary active union member AP4).

Communication committee leaders. Union leaders in communication committees are expected to connect union representatives with union leaders in governorates. Communication committee leaders communicate decisions taken in branch offices of governorate and executive committees and deliver the suggestions or concerns of the district's union representatives and teachers to the league in governorate. Communication committee leaders are also allowed to conduct activities in the district if these activities do not interfere with the plans of leagues in the governorate or executive committee.

Union leagues in governorates. The role of union leaders in the governorates is to assist in the implementation of the approved strategic union plan. According to internal regulations of both leagues, the duty of union leaders in governorates is to form alliances with other labor unions in the same governorate after gaining approval from the executive committee. However, in Public Primary Teachers League's internal regulations, it is specified that leagues can form alliances with other social, cultural, or educational committees but not with labor unions, preventing its employees from performing labor union acts.

Executive committee. The executive committee is made up of a secretary of committees and has the authority to call for meetings for league leaders in the governorates, communication committees, and league representatives (as mentioned in internal regulations). The committee is also responsible for setting guiding procedures for elections of league representatives and of new executive committee and determining the membership fee. The secretary of a committee is responsible for suggesting and leading the projects related to their role. In addition, each secretary implements union decisions related to his or her assigned area. Secretaries of committees head committees that include union leaders from governorates and districts assigned in the same area, as well advisers and professionals from outside unions to achieve their

objectives. One example is the secretary of the educational committee whose task is to suggest educational studies related to the curriculum, programs, and pedagogy and to follow-up on all educational matters. Primary union leader UP7 described his previous role as the secretary of cooperative for civil servants and gave an example of an achievement that they, as union leaders, achieved in cooperative for civil servants. Respondent UP7 stated that league leaders of the executive committee worked on the increase of health coverage of family members under the care of public school teachers, such as fathers, mothers, or aunts. The government categorizes primary teachers as third and fourth class, and as a result pays 25% of the hospital bill. However, during the year 2016, the primary league and the UCC were able to increase the percentage of coverage so that teachers only pay 10% of the hospital bill on behalf of their family members with a ceiling of 500,000 LL. Secondary teachers, who are listed under first or second-class treatment for healthcare plan, pay up to 1 million Lebanese Lira from the patient's hospital bill.

As for the president of the executive committee, he or she is granted authority to guide the league to achieve its goals. According to the leagues' internal regulations, the president calls and leads various league meetings, including executive committee meetings. The president also supervises the implementation of the approved strategic plan, as well as the progress made with projects of the committees. The president is granted authority to spend three times the amount of the minimum wage with the approval of the executive committee. Finally, the president represents his league during negotiations and events.

Primary Purpose of Teacher Unions

Union leaders from the Public Primary School Teachers League and from the Public Secondary School Teachers League, in addition to union members who are teachers and administrators in public schools with an active or inactive status in the union, were asked about

the primary purpose of unions. Through focus groups, formal field interviews, and in-depth interviews, each group communicated their perceptions on teacher unions' functions. After data was collected from respondents, it was coded into themes and subthemes. The frequency of each theme and subtheme was included for each group (union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members). The following section details the primary functions of teacher unions in Lebanon.

Table 6

Primary Functions of Teacher Unions

Themes	Total Number of Union Leaders (out of 17)	Total Number of Active Union Members (out of 12)	Total Number of Inactive Union Members (out of 9)
Protect Teachers' Rights	17	12	9
<i>Ensure Fair Wages and Improve Working Conditions</i>	17	10	9
<i>Ensure Gender Equity in Benefits</i>	0	2	0
<i>Combat Injustice or Violent Acts Against Teachers</i>	2	1	0
Improve Educational Services	16	9	4
Voice Teachers' Concerns	5	4	9
Provide Special Benefits to Union Members	4	0	0
Combat Corruption in the Country	2	3	0
Raise Teachers' Morale	2	2	0

According to union leaders, the purpose of teacher unions is to protect teachers' rights, improve educational services, voice teachers' concerns, provide special benefits to union members, combat corruption in the country, and raise teachers' morale. Active union members were in accordance with union leaders in all themes except the theme of providing special benefits to union members. On the other hand, inactive union members stated that the teacher

unions' role was to protect teachers' rights, improve educational services, and voice teachers' concerns. The roles are described below.

Protect Teachers' Rights

All participants agreed that the primary function of teacher unions is to protect teachers' rights. These members specified that the protection of teachers' rights includes ensuring fair wages and working conditions, safeguarding gender equity in benefits, and combatting injustice or violent acts against teachers.

Ensure fair wages and improve working conditions. According to participants, Lebanese teacher unions for public schools were formed due to unfair wages and working conditions. All seventeen union leaders, ten active union members (six primary active members and four secondary active members), and nine inactive union members agreed that to protect teachers' rights, unions have to ensure fair wages and have to improve working conditions for its members. In a focus group interview, eight secondary school union leaders mentioned that teachers are paid unfairly and that this injustice in salaries creates a large gap between secondary school teachers and university professors:

Teachers are not given their rights. In the past, when we did a comparison between the salary of ministers, professors, and secondary school teachers, we found that between the professor and the secondary school teacher, there was only two grade levels. The salary of teachers was 505 Lebanese Liras and the salary of the Minister was 750 Lebanese Lira. The difference was one and a half times. How much do secondary school teachers make now and how much do Ministers make? Ministers get paid maybe 10 or 12 times more than secondary school teachers. This is the law. Between professors and secondary school

teachers, there is now a difference of 50 to 52 grade levels. The rights of teachers are wasted. There is an attack on secondary school teachers' rights, which the league wants to protect.

Due to this increase in wage gap, active secondary school union members (AS2 and AS3) mentioned that their league is now mostly focused on increasing wages when setting its strategic plan. Although members AS2 and AS3 agreed about the importance of increasing wages, they did not believe that an increase in wages should be their league's sole priority.

In addition, active secondary school union member AS1 noted that the Public Secondary School Teachers League has worked for forty years to increase wages and to improve their members' working conditions:

Throughout our forty years of struggle for our demands, this league sought to improve the working conditions of the secondary school teacher...Among its most important roles was the protection of teachers' interests both, financial and morale.

As for primary public school teachers, they had a similar response to secondary active union members. One of the primary active union members (AP1) expressed that the league's aim is to protect the rights of its employees from unfair or biased acts in the workplace

The goal of the union is to protect the rights of the employees. It [union] demands for teachers' rights if there is prejudice. It demands for an increase in salaries. It demands for cooperatives for civil servants' rights for employees.

Another teacher from primary public schools (AP5) stated that the function of teacher unions is to protect teachers' rights through the preservation of teachers' benefits, which teachers consider as being more important than wages:

All will be done to obtain our rights and protect what we have previously achieved during what has been our fight for 50 years or more. We have rights that are more important than wages. These rights include retirement, end of service, and a cooperative for civil servants. In addition, these benefits are at risk because often laws are passed that teachers are not aware of. Our league follows up on laws that are passed and sees whether they are fair or unfair for teachers.

Also, primary public school teacher AP2 asserted that the role of teacher unions is to protect teachers' rights. Respondent AP2 also criticized the government for not protecting its employees' rights and for not safeguarding its citizen's basic rights and needs. She pointed out that teacher unions have assumed the government's role and have worked towards improving teachers' working conditions. Respondent AP2 believed that protecting teachers' rights and raising their wages could have a positive effect on teaching:

A union is an institution that works to protect its members. It was established to protect their rights. When a union member is not given his rights by his organization, the union helps him...The teacher's league, which emerged because of an urgent need, was established because teachers' rights in Lebanon are not granted. The government only uses policies approved by human rights or international labor organizations if it benefits it, but it never thinks about its citizens. I work in the public sector and not in the private

sector and that is why it is a need...Every time the teacher's condition improves, the teaching process becomes more successful...We face injustice whether it's because of the high cost of living, or the adjustment of wages...What kind of government does not adjust the salaries of its employees from [year] 1996 and leaves things in chaos? These are not the things that we should be demanding. These are postulates in life. I'm doing my job, paying my taxes, I'm not late to work, and I'm working energetically and confidently to satisfy myself first before even stating that I have a professional conscience. Because of that, we are forced to demand for postulates in life. We always raise the [demand] bar to get so little.

Similarly, nine inactive members also agreed with their counterparts. These members understood that the purpose of teacher leagues is to protect teachers' rights and to ensure fair wages for teachers. Inactive union members appreciate the leagues' existence to advocate for their concerns. However, some inactive members felt the league is currently not effective in achieving this goal:

It [league] demands for our rights such as wages and work hours. It also works to increase teachers' earnings that they have maintained throughout the years of service...I am glad that I belong to a league that takes care of me and of my basic rights. We are very pessimistic now as the league is currently not doing anything.

Ensure gender equity in benefits. In protecting teachers' rights, participants also stated that teacher unions attempt to ensure that women are treated fairly. However, teacher union members mentioned that female teachers are treated differently than male teachers. As such, two active primary union members indicated that public school teacher unions in Lebanon have

attempted to protect gender equity especially in terms of employees' benefits. Respondent AP5 conveyed the teacher union's struggle by mentioning the following:

Regarding equality between male and female teachers, we as female teachers now receive a family allowance. This was accomplished thanks to the league. A female teacher would not have received these benefits before. This is something new where a female employee gets paid on behalf of her husband and children.

Combat injustice or violent acts against teachers. Participants indicated that teacher unions in Lebanon work to protect teachers from any prejudice acts and physical abuse in the workplace. Two primary union leaders and one secondary active union member mentioned that violent acts against teachers have increased. Oftentimes, conflicts between teachers and students have led to physical abuse. Public school teacher leagues refuse such acts, work to resolve these problems and to prevent similar acts from occurring. Union leader UP8 explains the situation:

There is also another issue we have been talking about for two years now: violent acts that occur in schools. As a response, the Ministry of Education has created hotlines for parents. If teachers say anything to students, parents call. These days, teachers are getting mistreated as well. I saw a teacher who was physically abused by a student because he told the student to leave the classroom. This hotline created an opposite effect. The teacher was arrested and there is a lawsuit against him. The government has to help us here. We don't want to deal with the problem when it occurs. We want to preempt the problem. We are not responsible for problems but we follow up on them. We highlight the problems before they occur and we express our opinions about them.

A secondary active union member (AS5) further discussed the problem of teachers getting physically abused by students. This respondent criticized the methods that have been used by the Ministry to support students who have increased intimidation against teachers. Respondent AS5 explains:

The league has to protect teachers. Currently, there is a teacher who was physically abused in Tripoli. A student and his brother hit him because he told the student to leave the classroom. A hotline was created for students. Thus, if a teacher said anything to a student or removed points off a student's grade or gave him a comment, the student can call and complain to the Ministry.

Improve Quality of Educational Services

Many participants acknowledged the role of teacher unions in improving education in schools. Sixteen union leaders and nine active union members indicated that the primary function of teacher union is to improve quality in educational services. In addition, four inactive participants conveyed that the league raised demands that focused on educational concerns. However, the participants disagreed on the extent to which public school teacher unions addressed educational concerns. Five active union members recognized the function of teacher unions in improving education but stated that teacher unions in Lebanon do not focus on improving educational quality. Although some inactive members believed that part of the union's function is to follow up on the improvement of the curriculum and public school needs, other inactive members did not believe that this is a function of teacher unions. The reason for their

view might be because these members are not active within the union or because they may have not seen their union performs this function.

In a focus group, union leaders of Public Secondary School Teachers League (US1-US8) declared that one of the league's goals was to improve education. These secondary school union leaders pointed out that they have played a role in raising awareness on the corruption and problems that exist within the educational sector:

We have conducted many educational conferences. We have pointed out problems.

However, the overall corruption that exists in the educational sector controlled the academic setting and secondary school teaching. Two secondary school active union members agreed with their league leaders' responses and stated that their league played an important role in improving education. Indeed, respondent AS4, who is an active secondary school union member, stated that the Public School Teachers League conducted five conferences to raise awareness about educational issues in public schools: It is not true that the league has limited its demands to increasing salaries [of its members]. It always raises issues that are related to improving the curriculum. Few educational conferences were conducted by the Public Secondary School Teachers League to improve education. We are looking to the League to preserve public education, develop public education, and to upgrade the quality of public education.

Another secondary school active union member (AS1) believed that public school teacher leagues have tried to raise the quality of education. Respondent AS1 stated "there is a serious effort from us to improve secondary education in all its forms, not only secondary education but

also primary education.” An active primary school union (AP3) had a similar response and added that schools have to become more competitive:

Teacher unions want to raise the standard level of primary education, to improve it academically to reach a certain quality and to have it become competitive. We have recently seen that in the scores that students in public schools achieved, which were exceptionally good...We are not only concerned with the increase in salaries. It is also important for us to improve education. We care that schools we belong to are competitive because public school teachers in Lebanon deserve to belong to reputable schools.

On the other hand, two secondary school active union members (AS2 and AS3) believed that teacher unions did not cater to educational matters. An active secondary school union member (AS3) specified that public school teacher unions only focus is on increasing wages and have ignored their role in developing the educational sector:

From the practical side, the league is focused on increasing wages only. This is the reality. From the academic and practical side, they should not only target an increase in salaries. Also, the government is supposed to involve the leagues, whom are teachers responsible for education in Lebanon, in improving education. Leagues should also have a role in organizing programs and in following up on the advancement of education in the world.

Voice Teachers' Concerns

According to participants, another primary function of teacher unions is to voice teachers' concerns. Five primary union leaders, four active union members (two primary teachers and two

secondary school teachers), and all nine inactive union members (five primary and four secondary school teachers) believed that teacher unions exist to raise the voices of teachers and make them heard. Two primary active union members (AP5 and AP6) affirmed this view by explaining that the purpose of teacher unions is to convey the demands of teachers to authority figures from all sects. Inactive members had a similar response, noting:

The purpose of the union is to transfer the voice of teachers from schools to authorities [in the government] that represent them. Some of the concerns include salaries and scale increase, high cost of living, and the approval or rejection of strikes.

In addition, two secondary active participants (AS2 and AS3) indicated that union leaders have voiced demands that unite teachers from all parts of Lebanon. These respondents also emphasized the importance of unified leadership and unified decisions. Furthermore, a primary school union leader (UP1) discussed that they, as union leaders, have worked to transform teachers' voice into policy. The respondent states: "the first thing we start with is demand. Any reform requires legalization. It starts with the employee's voice to get to legislation so that it becomes a policy."

However, another primary union leader (UP6) revealed that the league is not always able to voice all its members' concerns because of the large number of members they represent. Respondent UP6 noted: "we discuss each teacher's distress. As the representatives of 25,000 teachers, how much can we voice all of their opinions? We cannot express the opinions of 25,000 teachers."

Provide Special Benefits to Union Members

Four primary union leaders specified that one of primary functions of teacher union is to provide special benefits to union members. Due to political instability and economic crises hindering union goals, primary league union leaders have focused on providing services to union members to reduce the financial burden on their union members. Therefore, primary league union leaders created teacher discount cards for teachers to use. A primary union leader (UP3) stated:

We are currently working on creating a card for teachers. This card can be used in different places. We are visiting supermarkets, doctors' syndicate, and pharmacists' syndicate to get discounts for these teachers and to decrease a bit the financial struggle that they are experiencing.

Another primary union leader (UP2) specified the places where teacher discount cards could be used and how much this card would cost:

In primary schools, we are working on a card that can help teachers with social and financial matters. We are communicating with supermarkets to get discounts. This card is cheap. It costs 20,000 or 25,000 Lebanese pounds. We should not have to go to large supermarkets to get teachers discounts. Why doesn't the government do that?

In a formal field interview, two other primary union leaders (UP7 and UP8) also discussed teacher discount cards, specifying the discount, which teachers receive in supermarkets.

We are creating cards for teachers to get them discounts and large supermarkets are helping out in this matter. We don't want to disrupt the school year [with strikes]. At the

same time it can be used as an ID card. We are unable to get any increases because the government does not respond. Since there is no salary and scale increase, we thought of an alternative. We saw that the average teacher or citizen spends at least 1,000,000 LL a month if the family consists of father, mother, and three kids. We asked supermarkets if they could give us 10-15% as a discount for teachers who possess this card.

Combat Corruption in the Country

Two union leaders (a primary and a secondary union leader) and three active union members (two primary and one secondary active union member) indicated that another function of the teacher union is to combat corruption in Lebanon. A primary union leader (UP4) described how union leaders investigate the corruption in the country to prove that the salary and scale increase can be financed:

Teacher unions acted like a civil movement through struggles, strikes, and protests. When the UCC's [Union Coordination Committee] work began, we saw that politicians wanted to confront us with all their strength and these are the people stealing from our country. We have leaders in each political group. We saw the absence of accountability in real estate, harbors, and in marine properties, which in of itself can finance the salary and scale increase if used properly. We formed a statistical committee and started investigating all these issues. For example, in the harbor, we looked at how much money goes to waste each month. This also applied to the airport. We conducted strikes in all harbors. For example, Zaytuna Bay is rented for a surreal price to the previous Minister of Finance. In addition, we investigated every Ministry that is corrupt without any

exception. We were the ones who started this civil movement before any other civil movement group.

A primary active union member (AP2) also witnessed teacher unions fighting corruption in Lebanon and catering to the concerns of Lebanese employees in different sectors. Respondent AP2 acknowledged the importance of these concerns and suggested that teacher unions should collaborate with other labor unions to resolve these problems:

The existing corruption is a challenge. Imagine teacher leagues carrying teacher and employee concerns in Lebanon! It is bearing social, cultural, healthcare, humanitarian demands, as well as the trash crisis. Teacher leagues should not be the only ones bearing these issues. If there were labor unions in each sector then efforts could be shared.

In addition, a secondary school union leader and two active members indicated that teacher unions, as part of combating corruption, have worked to prevent sectarianism and political interferences in union decisions. A secondary school union leader (US8) stated:

For the past twenty years, the teacher union's reputation was that it fights multiple battles that cater to national concerns....The most dangerous union work involves overcoming sectarian barriers. You categorize people according to their social interests while authority figures sort them according to their sects. There were great battles related to this issue. However, the difficulty lies within the fact that some unions have transformed into sectarian associations. Political groups ask us how many seats does the Sunni sect get, how many seats does the Shiite sect get, and how many seats does the Orthodox sect get? Are we creating a union or a sectarian committee? This sectarianism causes a lot of problems. One positive factors of our union, as the Public Secondary School Teachers

League, is that it has never applied sectarian sorting directly or indirectly. We are independent in our union work. We fight sectarianism through labor union work.

Raise Teachers' Morale

Two primary union leaders and two active union members noted that an essential function of the teacher union is to raise teachers' morale. A primary union leader (UP5) valued teacher recognition as a tool to raise morale. Respondent UP5 gave an example of how, he, as a union leader honored teachers and principals who deserve recognition:

Teacher unions have many goals to accomplish. They are not only focused on strikes and demonstrations. I chose, as a union leader in the league, to handle cultural issues. I am the secretary of cultural affairs. Why did I choose that? There are competent teachers in the Ministry of Education who have completed their teaching service and who have been neglected instead of being appreciated throughout their years of service. If there is a good Arabic teacher who is able to teach students poetry, and his or her students succeeded in competitions in other countries because of him or her, then this teacher should be recognized. Also, we have principals who do a great job in managing their schools, putting forth great effort, and producing excellent results. Some inspectors and educators search for gaps and do not give teachers constructive feedback, motivate them, or publicly recognize them so that they become role models for others to follow...The principal of X school deserved to be appreciated so I took the initiative as secretary of cultural affairs without referring back to the league to present this person with a plaque. This is not a financial reward but rather a reward that improves morale. I represent the league in all of Lebanon, but I need help to collect information about good teachers so

that the league can recognize them. Sometimes, a teacher appreciates recognition more than the salary. There are teachers who need to be honored and who need to be encouraged because they are the ones who can influence education.

Another primary union leader (UP2) also agreed that it is important to motivate teachers and to raise their morale so that the teachers can in turn improve their performance. Respondent UP2 shared how the league ensures that training courses are provided to teachers:

There are always plans to motivate teachers. We recommend courses for teachers... We go back to the same point: motivation, providing incentives and improving the teachers' conditions. If a person is not motivated, he or she will not work. We always try to create incentives for teachers. Some incentives include follow-up sessions with the Center for Educational Research and Development. For example, some teachers are not familiar with excel, and as such we request sessions for them.

Strategies Used to Achieve Union Goals: Union Leaders and Union Members Responses

Participants were asked about the strategies that teacher unions use to reach their goals. Table 4 shows the frequency of responses for each group (union leaders, active union members, inactive union members) that indicated the themes and subthemes.

Table 7*Strategies Used To Achieve Union Goals by Teacher Unions*

Themes	Total Union Leaders (out of 17)	Total Active Union Members (out of 12)	Total Inactive union Members (out of 9)
Meet and Confer	15	4	9
Use Various Types of Pressure Tactics	17	11	9
<i>Demonstrations, Strikes, and Protests</i>	10	11	9
<i>Refusal to Proctor or Correct Official Exams</i>	1	5	0
Form Alliances with Other Labor Unions	2	4	0
Use Modern Communication tools	5	1	0
<i>Mobile Application</i>	3	0	0
<i>Use of Media Coverage in Union Events</i>	1	0	0
<i>Social Media</i>	1	1	0
Create Networking Opportunity to Gain Support	1	0	0

Union leaders provided this research with a list of methods used by teachers to achieve union goals. These methods include meet and confer, the use of pressure tactics, formation of alliances with other labor unions, the use of modern communication tools, and the creation of networking opportunities. Similarly, active union members also mentioned the same themes as union leaders did, with the exception of creating networking opportunity to gain support, a method, which is not used much by teacher unions. Most of the active union members stressed the use of various types of pressure tactics, which they are involved in. However, inactive members were only familiar with meet and confer and the use of pressure tactics as strategies.

Meet and Confer

The first union strategy, mentioned by many respondents, was the use of the ‘meet and confer’ method.⁷ Fifteen union leaders, four active union members, and nine inactive union members indicated that teacher leagues union use the meet and confer method as a strategy to reach their union goals. Secondary union leaders, through a focus group, declared that they usually meet with politicians to follow up on union matters. The primary union leaders’ responses were similar to the response of the secondary school union leaders. One example is when a primary union leader (UP6) specified that periodical meetings were usually held between government officials and union leaders:

The first strategy we used was to hold a discussion with government officials. We often do that through periodical meetings with the Minister, with the general manager, and with individuals assigned by the Minister to join discussion.

Another primary union leader (UP5) added that these meetings aimed to build relationships with key legislators to facilitate the achievement of the union’s demands:

Union members are present in all Lebanese areas and meet with religious figures and politicians to explain teachers’ demands...some individuals in the league have relations with legislators. For example, we are affiliated with political party X and we use pressure in parliament elections as a strategy. We can help parliament leader X in elections if he helps us achieve our goals.

⁷ An informal process through which labor and management work together to solve or avoid problems, or strive to improve the working environment

Inactive union members also had a similar response. Inactive members specified that the leagues begin by bargaining with government officials and sending pamphlets to the Ministry of Education. Likewise, two active union members (AP5 and AP6) recognized that teacher leagues use the meet and confer method when they negotiate union demands with authority figures from all sects

Use Various Types of Pressure Tactics

The second strategy that all seventeen union leaders, eleven active union members, and nine inactive members identified is the teacher unions' employment of pressure tactics. When negotiations with the government fail, teacher unions look for different ways to pressure the government to achieve the union's goals. Participants mentioned several pressure tactics that are employed by teacher unions. These tactics include holding demonstrations, strikes, and protests and boycotting the proctoring or correction of official exams.

Demonstrations, strikes, and protests. In identifying the kind of tactics that teacher unions use to pressure the government, ten union leaders, which include all primary union leaders, in addition to former and current secondary league presidents, eleven active union members, and nine inactive union members acknowledged that unions use demonstrations, strikes, and protests as a method to escalate union action and to place pressure on the Lebanese government. A primary union leader (UP4) explains the escalation process:

We, as teacher unions, have never attained a demand without calling for a strike for a day or two as a kind of a warning sign. Second, we perform strikes for a week or two. Third, we turn to protests in front of the Ministry of Education or Finance, and finally we conduct demonstrations.

However, some union leaders felt that strikes and demonstrations are not always the best methods of pressure to reach union goals. For instance, a primary union leader (UP6) mentioned the ineffectiveness of strikes, demonstrations, and protests as pressure tactics:

In Lebanon, there is an understanding that if a person participates in strikes, then he or she attains his or her demands. This is a misconception because we tried and we did not get anything. That is why we all went back to our schools and resumed teaching and working.

Refusal to proctor or correct official exams. Another pressure tactic that teacher unions use is to boycott of proctoring and correcting official exams. There are five active union members (three primary and two secondary) and the current president of Public Secondary School Teachers League who acknowledged teacher unions' refusal to proctor or to correct official exams as the highest level of pressure tactics.

Active union members communicated the reasons behind the use of boycotts. A secondary active union member (AS4) believed that the refusal to proctor or correct official exams was the result of teachers' deteriorating working conditions. Another active secondary school teacher (AS1) suggested that teachers refuse to correct official exams because political authority figures usually disregard public school teachers' demands, since these teachers are seen as educators of children who belong to low socioeconomic classes. Nevertheless, when teachers refuse to correct official exams, a tactic that affects all social classes, the issue receives greater attention from politicians. Respondent AS1 explains:

If we escalate the strikes and no one responds to us, we refuse to correct official exams.

The authority figures do not care about our situation even during demonstrations because,

we, public secondary school teachers teach the children of the poor. For them, those children are not a concern even if this results in school closures all year. It hurts them when we refuse to correct the exams, not because of public school students, but because of students who go to private schools. This was our best weapon. Yet, the action [submission of certificates] that happened was intended to strike the education in Lebanon and privatize it.

The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League also confirmed that the refusal to proctor official exams was used as a strategy. However, the president stated that teacher unions' last attempt in boycotting the correction of official exams was not successful. He shared:

We don't have weapons and we don't have artillery. All we have are words and the right to object. We object through our words, statements, and through communicating with people. We object through our positions in strikes and through our refusal to correct official exams. All these strategies were used and did not get us results because political figures are persistent in not granting the people their rights. They only care about themselves and the last thing they care about is education, the trash crisis, or this country.

Form Alliances with Other Labor Unions

Two union leaders (one primary and one secondary union leaders) and four active union members (two primary and two secondary active union members) communicated another union strategy that the league employs. This strategy involves forming alliances with other labor unions in order to strengthen their position. According to the former president, teachers create alliances

with other labor unions when they have shared demands with other sectors, such as ranks and salary scale, retirement fund, cooperative for civil servants. Today, an example of a labor union alliance is visible in the formation of the Union Coordination Committee (UCC). The former president stated that the UCC consists of representatives from Public Primary School Teachers League, Public Secondary School Teachers League, and a union of private schools, which is called the Teachers Syndicate of Lebanon (TSL), union of public vocational institutes, and union of public administrators. The UCC works to create a larger support group for union demands. Oftentimes, the leagues also coordinate with contractual teachers to gain additional support. Contractual teachers have two committees that act as a union, one for primary teachers and another for secondary teachers. The former president of Public Secondary School Teachers League listed the sectors that the leagues have formed alliances with:

We coordinate with a group that consists of public workers in the public sector and with private sectors as a whole like the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (CGTL) or professional associations such as the Doctors Syndicate and Lawyers Syndicate.

Additionally, two primary union leaders revealed the importance of creating alliances to develop a strong position and to be able to achieve its set goals. A primary union leader (UP2) discussed the leagues' attempt to stay connected with other labor unions. He explains:

After the plan is created, teacher leagues follow up with teachers, with private school teacher union, and with the vocational school league. We always communicate with one another. We can't fight our battles alone.

Also, active union members recognized the alliances that teacher unions usually form. A secondary active member (AS5), similar to the former president's declaration, indicated that contractual teachers collaborate with leagues and try to form alliances to solve problems. Respondent AS5 described the large quantity of contractual teachers and the extent of their influence, explaining why it is important to gain their support:

We are forming a new committee that surpasses political and sectarian barriers. We meet with teacher leagues and coordinate with them to work on our problems... We have participated with leagues in strikes more than once. The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League once got up and thanked all the primary teachers and he did not thank the contractual teachers, even though there are forty contractual teachers in the school that I work in. We are enough to proceed with regular teaching days in the school despite the strike. However, we stood in solidarity with them during the strike.

A primary active union member (AP2), on the other hand, stated that previously, teacher leagues were more active and formed more alliances than current teacher leagues. Respondent AP2 said:

In the past, the leagues, whom I would like to call unions because there was unity in the positions taken, supported one another. The General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (CGTL) and the taxi drivers' union supported teacher unions and teacher unions supported the CGTL and taxi drivers' union. There was always cooperation. Today, this method does not exist anymore. This is why it is very important to re-activate the role of trade unions.

Use of Modern Communication Tools

Five primary union leaders, nine inactive members, and one active union member recognized the importance of using modern communication tools as a union strategy. Participants identified three modern communication tools. These tools include mobile applications, the use of media coverage in union events, and the use of social media. Primary union leader UP3 shared the teacher leagues' latest accomplishment using modern communication tools. This method involved setting up a mobile application to maintain connection with their members:

Despite the obstacles we face, we created a mobile application to organize news and activities, and to communicate with teachers. Research studies can now be easily shared. Any teacher who is in Lebanon can download this application and receive news.

Another primary union leader (UP2) described how union leaders used the media to deliver their messages and demands. Respondent UP2 said "We maintain our work through media by publishing statements and clarifying our demands." In addition, another primary union (UP1) highlighted the use of social media stating "we are not silent about our rights. We voice our rights on social media and everywhere." **Create Networking Opportunity to Gain Support**

One primary union leader specified that creating networking opportunities could help gain support. As examples, primary union leaders attended social events, such as funerals and teacher recognition events, to connect with policymakers, to create unity, and to gain support among teachers. However, this union leader communicated that the league did not employ this strategy as often as it should. The primary union leader (UP5) stated:

I like the league to work on the grounds. For example, if there is a social activity in Aley, we should all participate in it. How will we tighten the bonds of love between us? We should participate in joyful events, such as zajal or poetry performed by student, or events where teachers are honored. These events make us more successful and help unite us. I participated in Saida in an event named “Friends of Public Schools” conducted by Minister Y. I loved the idea because it was a successful event where the students’ work was showcased...I learned things and wanted to apply it to my students... We, as a league, should interact more with society. We should not only meet and perform strikes... The league is still not working well on the grounds. I liked something we did and that is we visited the Patriarch and Mufti together as a league. We also paid condolences to politicians together. I felt a kind of unity in doing this.

Challenges Facing Teacher Unions

In this section, the challenges facing teacher unions are identified from the perspective of union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members. Chart 4.3 shows the frequency of responses of the participants on each theme and subtheme. This chart performs comparisons between each of these groups (union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members).

Table 8*Challenges facing Teacher Unions*

Themes	Total Union Leaders (out of 17)	Total Active Union Members (out of 12)	Total Inactive Union Members (out of 9)
Challenges Related to the Union Work	17	11	9
Lack of Legal Recognition of Unions	11	7	0
Repeated Failure of Old Union Strategies	11	5	0
<i>Increasing Need for Creative Tactics</i>	10	5	0
<i>Lack of Involvement of Young Teachers in Union</i>	1	0	0
Many Unmet Basic Teachers' Demands	3	3	0
Interference in the Union Decision-Making Process	17	11	9
From Government	6	8	9
<i>Having Punitive Decrees against Unionizing in the Public Sector</i>	3	3	0
<i>Being Irresponsible to Teachers' Demands</i>	6	5	9
<i>Enforcing Authoritarian Decisions by the Minister of Education on Union</i>	2	2	0
From Sectarian/Political Leaders	4	10	9
<i>Manipulation of Public's Perception of Teacher Unions using Media</i>	2	2	0
<i>Loyalty of Union Leaders and Union Members to Political Parties</i>	3	10	9
Lack of Respect of Teaching as a Profession	8	5	0
<i>View of Teaching as a Blue Collar Profession</i>	3	0	0
<i>Feminizing Teaching as a Profession</i>	1	1	0
<i>Low Salaries</i>	9	5	0
Administrative Corruption in Schools	17	9	9
<i>Appointment of Incompetent Personnel</i>	12	8	9
<i>Misuse of Resources</i>	5	3	0
<i>Absence of Accountability</i>	2	3	0
Lack of Trust among Teachers in the Effectiveness of Union	1	10	9
Lack of Unity among Union Members	2	5	0
Lack of Support of Union from Parents and the Community	2	2	9
Severe and Deeply Rooted Problems in Public Education	1	3	9
Lack of Security in the Country	4	5	0
Lack of Supportive Conditions Needed to Facilitate Union Work	2	4	0
<i>Absence of Time Allocation for Union Work</i>	1	0	0

<i>Absence of Union Centers for Teachers to Conduct Union Activity</i>	2	0	0
<i>Lack of Training for Union Leaders and Union Members</i>	1	3	0
Ineffective Policy Making Processes in the Ministry of Education	17	8	9
Lack of a Strategic Plan at Ministry of Education to Improve Public Schools	14	6	9
Lack of Participation of Unions in Decision Making	11	3	0
Decrease in Funding for Education	6	3	0
<i>Decrease in Resources Allocated for Teacher Benefits</i>	2	3	0
<i>Lack Funding for Teaching Resources and School Facilities</i>	6	0	0
Influence of International Development Agencies on Education Policy	1	4	0

The results have shown that teacher unions in Lebanon face many challenges. The main themes that have showed the highest responses by all three groups (union leaders, active union members, inactive union members) were the challenges related to union work, administrative corruption in schools, and ineffective policy making processes in the Ministry of Education. However, the three groups' responses differed in subthemes and frequency. These challenges and others are discussed below.

Challenges Related to the Union Work

All seventeen union leaders, eleven active members, and nine inactive members stated that teacher leagues face challenges related to union work. Under this theme, the participants, through their responses, specified the following challenges: the lack of legal recognition of unions in the public sector, the failure to embrace new effective strategies, the lack of focus in the union on the issues of quality in education, and governmental interference in the union decision-making process.

Lack of legal recognition of union. Eleven union leaders consisting of four primary union leaders and eight secondary unions considered the lack of legal recognition as a union a

challenge. Similarly, seven active union members, mostly from secondary schools, agreed that one of the challenges is the lack of recognition of unions in the public sector. This lack of recognition, according to the active union respondents, hinders union work and limits its ability to defend its members. Indeed, a few Lebanese laws were passed to prevent the league from becoming a recognized union in Lebanon.

During their focus group interview, union leaders within the Public Secondary School Teachers' League discussed the obstacles that hindered union work. These obstacles include internal conflicts and political barriers that they have faced in transforming the league into a union. Secondary union leaders preferred that the league becomes a union and explained the importance of this preference:

The first union challenge is that the league is not a union. We are a cultural league that was established under pressure, which resulted in the issuance of a decree. This league is under the jurisdiction of the Minister. If he decides to eradicate it, he can.... It has to be a union so that its work becomes legitimate. There is an obstacle that exists in the laws that prevents the league from becoming a union. To have organized and appropriate union work, it [league] has to become a union to protect the rights of secondary school teachers. However, authority figures stand against transforming leagues into unions.

Secondary union leaders also revealed the attempts that they have made to push for the league to become a union. Secondary union leaders also sought help from Education International, which is a union federation that represents teachers and education employees from around all over the world.

There was a project led by Education International, which we are affiliated with, which discussed this matter with the government and with the speaker of the parliament because Education International supports us. It is an organization that promotes quality in teaching and that organizes over a 100 leagues from around the world. We call them leagues in the Arab world, while the West calls them unions. It was difficult in Lebanon. They tried for days, during the former president's time, to demand that the government makes us officially into a union. There were objections to it. Education International discussed our situation and did not succeed.

As for primary union leaders, four union leaders gave responses that were similar to their colleagues in the secondary league. The primary union leaders described the disadvantages of being a league and not a union. As an example, primary union leader UP3 highlighted a situation that occurred with teachers and that left them helpless, as the union was unable to defend the teachers' case in court because the union was not a legalized unified entity:

The second challenge is that the league is not a unified entity. Teachers might get exposed to theft. A theft incident once occurred where teachers gave a civil employee in a ministry one billion Lebanese Lira to add their years of service as contractual teachers to their end of year service in the cadre. He received money and gave them receipts, but these receipts turned out to be forged. More than a billion Lebanese Lira. We, as primary and secondary teachers' leagues, could not do anything. We could not even file a lawsuit because we are not a legal entity.

This respondent (UP3) also expressed his concern about the fragmentation of the league and the formation of multiple teacher unions:

Even though Lebanon has agreed on Convention 87 of International Labor Organization (ILO), union work is not allowed in public education. We are afraid to go in this direction, to organize union work and to end up like the CGTL. Today, we are a league with a decree and we represent all teachers in public education in Lebanon. We are afraid to form a union and then have teachers in the North say they want their own union, the South wants a union, mathematics teachers want their own union, and Arabic teachers want a union.

Another primary union leader (UP1) also wanted the league to become a union but only if it was granted more authority to make educational decisions. The union leader's response came also from fear of fragmentation within the league. The respondent said:

I am with the league becoming a union with a condition to have the right to a veto and to be a partner in decision-making, especially decrees related to the league and teachers. It should be given 52% of the right to reject decisions that it considers unfair, else I do not support transforming the league into a union. This transformation will allow for a multiplicity of unions to form. I am with unionizing the educational body in Lebanon and not with dividing it.

In addition, seven active union members in primary and secondary recognized that their leagues are not legally unions. These active union members showed that there is a need for their leagues to become a union so that it can preserve their rights. Primary active union member AP1 stated that there is a group of union leaders and members working to transform their leagues into legally recognized unions:

We are not a union. We are a league for teachers. There is still no approval for us to become a union...Now the primary leagues are united and for the first time they have one league. We aim to make the league a union so that it is able to preserve the rights of every teacher even when the teacher retires.

A secondary active member (AS1) also agreed with her fellow colleague and had a similar response. Respondent AS1 hoped that the league transforms into a union so that it becomes more effective:

We request that the league becomes a union that is protected and that can defend our rights. For example, recently, employees stole secondary school teachers' retirement money. If we had a union we would have hired lawyers and reclaimed the teachers' money. Since we are not a union, we could not do anything.

According to a primary active union member (AP2), political leaders' apprehension of the leagues' increase in power has hindered the leagues' attempt to transform into legal unions:

The fight against political authority figures is a challenge. They do not want unions. They prefer that public school teacher leagues remain leagues. It is true that leagues perform collective work but this work is not effective. When the league becomes a union, it is more effective and is able to unite everyone...The bigger challenge involves keeping teacher leagues as leagues at a time when the league cannot unite stances. If the league was a union, and I am with those demanding for it to become a union, there will no longer be any politics in union work. Teachers are among the people who know what union work is about. In a union, politicians will not be able to control union decisions to this extent.

However, there was disagreement among the respondents on whether this lack of recognition of leagues as unions is problematic or not. From the perspective of primary union leaders, transforming the league into a union might weaken teachers' union movements due to the legalization of trade union pluralism.⁸ Due to this concern, primary league union leaders expressed their preference for the league to become similar to an order or a professional association, such as the Order of Engineers. Respondents explained that if leagues become similar to professional associations, then they will be able to grant not only services, but they will also be able to grant their members a license to practice:

We want a professional association similar to an order, such as Order of Physicians and Dentists Order, where a teacher will not be allowed to teach before receiving a teaching license. This [a teachers' order that grants certificates] does not exist in our country. If you have a university degree, you are allowed to teach in any school and any class as long as the principal is convinced of you or if you have wasta. On the other hand, in other countries, there is a license for the teaching profession that prepares a teacher who holds a university degree... We do not want to stay a labor union like we are now. Private school teacher union follows Ministry of Labor and not Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The Ministry of Labor cannot oversee educational matters. At least, public school teachers' leagues follow the Ministry of Education.

Repeated failure of old union strategies. Eleven union leaders and five active union members indicated that there is a repeated failure of the employed strategies and a failure to adopt new alternatives and more effective strategies. The participants discussed how their usual

⁸ Trade union pluralism is allowance of more than one union to form in the same occupation

escalation tactics were rendered ineffective in the face of the government's resistance to grant them their rights. In addition, respondents pointed out that the lack of new creative tactics might be a result of the predominance of old-timers in the union leadership and the limited voice for young teachers in the work of the union.

Increasing need for creative tactics. Ten union leaders (nine secondary union leaders and two primary union leaders) and five active union members (three primary active members and two secondary active union members) mentioned that the tenacity of the government's resistance against their demands has left them in a dire need for new creative union tactics. These participants explained that when teacher leagues boycotted official exams by not participating in proctoring or correcting, the Minister of Education and Higher Education made an unexpected extreme decision by cancelling exams for that year and issuing certificates of completion to all students. Respondents explained that the Ministry should have protected the wellbeing of the students by not cancelling the exam, and indicated that this action has left them helpless and in need of new tactics. Secondary school union leaders expressed their concern about the issuance of certificates for official exams:

All the educational sector in Lebanon was struck. Can there be more carelessness done than when these certificates were issued? Can we still produce education now after the issuance of these certificates?

In addition, the current president of the secondary school union leader feared that political authority figures might issue certificates again, which may negatively reflect on the educational sector, especially if the leagues conducted more strikes. Therefore, union leaders chose not to strike due to the political instability:

Nothing can be done more than what has already been done. Since authority figures have no sense of responsibility, they issued certificates. They prevented the Lebanese youth from having a certificate that is internationally recognized. They are ready to issue certificates again, once, twice, and three times. They are willing to strike the education sector... We have a conscious and we are responsible for these students. If we choose not to teach until we get our rights, it is a problem, and if we continue working and living in this deteriorating financial situation, it is also a problem. We choose the less problematic situation and we continue to teach because these children are our children. We hope that a day will come where authority figures assume their responsibilities and give the people their rights.

Another primary union leader's (UP2) response further highlighted the ineffectiveness of this union tactic. Respondent UP2 noted:

Four years ago, the Minister of Education and Higher Education issued certificates for official exams and as a result, people were under the impression that teachers were wrong. Many of our students traveled to European countries and their certificates were not accepted. A teacher would never grant certificates. This is not acceptable. There is injustice happening concerning teachers' rights.

The ineffectiveness of union's tactics left many union members feeling disappointed in the league. A secondary active union (AS1) described the challenge that teacher leagues face, highlighting the extreme measures the Ministry takes and the helplessness that members of the union feel:

The minister gave certificates, even though we were negotiating with him about the correction of exams. He broke all his promises to us and issued certificates. The issuance of certificates negatively affected public education. We were betting on this strategy, which was the refusal to correct official exams, to achieve our demands. It is part of the ministries' responsibility to meet our demands and the demands of all the sectors in Lebanon. First, the certifications were a painful hit and it was the beginning of the privatization of the public sector. This year, the Minister wanted teachers to re-correct the official exams and tried to bring teachers in from the private sector to correct official exams to replace us, teachers from the public sector. Requesting the re-correction of exams is an act that can harm our dignity and prestige. He wants to break us down so that we do not demand anything anymore and so that he can continue to weaken this sector. Of course we refused.

Another secondary active union (AS5) reiterated the same fears, and explained the failure of this tactic to produce results for the teachers as well as the negative implication that this failure has had on students:

The UCC conducted a strike and refused to correct official exams until the salary and scale increases were provided. The Minister refused to respond to the demands and issued certificates. This was two years ago. As a result, we had some of the worst quality students. For the Union Coordination Committee, its mistake was to trust the Minister. The Minister kept delaying and delaying, and now teachers fear the issuance of certificates. If they conduct a strike and he tells them that certificates would be issued and

they will quickly correct the exams... Teachers who teach with a conscious are the ones who suffer because they have the worst quality of students.

Lack of involvement of young teachers in union. A primary school union leader (UP5) criticized the leadership within leagues. Respondent UP5 revealed the absence of strategies that involved young teachers in union work. This respondent expressed the need for young teachers to get involved in union activities to add to the development of union work and education as a whole:

A criticism of ourselves: I did not find youth in our league. It is true that we have our teaching experience, but the participation of young teachers in international conferences about education and unions would help in development and reform.

Many unmet basic teachers' demands. Two primary union leaders, the former president of the secondary league, and three secondary active union members mentioned that leagues could not focus on educational matters due to the persistence of unmet basic demands. Union leaders discussed factors that prevented leagues from assuming their educational role, such as trade union facility time.⁹ These factors force union leaders to prioritize their demands, such as financial problems due to low salaries, the lack of educational awareness amongst some teachers, and the selection of union leaders. Moreover, union leaders specified the importance of having a supportive environment that allows leagues to improve education as a profession. The former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League emphasized that teachers voice a demand for an increase in wages, which can enable them to live decently, before being able to improve educational services:

⁹ Trade union facility time is paid time off for union leaders and union representatives to carry out trade union duties

Fighting for fair wages is more of a priority than education and national concerns because of the current situation. If you tell a teacher come and philosophize he will tell you before doing that, I want to eat.

A primary school union leader (UP3) reaffirmed these themes and agreed with the former president's response. The respondent conveyed why union leaders were not able to focus on improving education:

Most demands are teacher-related, rather than educational. This is due to teachers' social condition that prevents them from being devoted to their schools. The league is working with urgency, which means it always directs its movements to achieve teachers' demands so that teachers can carry on with their work.

Secondary school active members (AS3) also acknowledged that teacher leagues are not focused on raising educational standards but preferred their league to focus on improving education:

From the practical side, the league only focuses on the increase of wages. This is the reality. From the academic and practical side, they should not only target the increase in salaries. The government is supposed to involve the leagues, those responsible for education in Lebanon, in the improvement of education. Leagues should have a role in organizing programs; follow up on the advancement of education in the world. It is not okay for such a development in the world to occur, while here we are satisfied with increasing our wages only... Those who reach union positions, maybe due to their occupation or situation, lack the ability to be creative, lack the ability to develop, and lack the ability to follow up on educational development matters that occur globally, or union

leaders choose to retreat from their participative role in curriculum improvement and limit demands to increase in wages.

Interference in the union decision-making process. One of the major union challenges was the government and political and sectarian leaders' interference in the union decision-making process. All seventeen union leaders, nine inactive unions, and eleven active union members noted that the government and political and sectarian union leaders' interferences have hindered rather than have supported the union decision-making process. Participants claimed that government hindering effects resulted from 1) enforcing punitive decrees against unionizing in public sector 2) being irresponsive to teachers' demands 3) enforcing authoritarian decisions by the Minister of Education and Higher Education on unions and 4) marginalizing the role of union in education reform projects. As for the interference of sectarian political leaders, participants mentioned the following 1) manipulating public's perception of teacher unions using media and 2) demanding more loyalty of union leaders to political parties than union work.

Having punitive decrees against unionizing in the public sector. As part of the interference in union decision-making, three union leaders (two primary and one secondary union leaders) and three active union members (one primary and two secondary active union members) considered the presence of a government decree that prevents public employees from performing any union-like acts as a major challenge to the work of the leagues. As per the decree, and unlike their union counterparts, teachers' leagues cannot organize strikes. Some of the participants mentioned that in the 1970s, several teachers were fired for participating in strikes due to Decree 112, which is still in effect. One of the active members highlighted this challenge, indicating that the current Minister of Education and Higher Education has indeed threatened the leagues to fire

teachers if they continued to strike. However, union leaders showed less concern about this law. The union leaders pointed that despite the limiting effect of this decree, teacher league still managed to perform union like acts. A secondary school union leader (US8) noted:

We have Decree 112 in the laws of public employees that prevent us from practicing union work. The ones who strike are terminated from their jobs. Due to the teachers' struggle, union work is applied on the grounds and they negotiate with us like any union but legally they do not recognize us as a union.

Union leaders seem to believe that the existing leagues have established their presence, and the acting ministers of education are unlikely to perform any harmful acts towards their members. A primary union leader (UP4) noted:

The decree able to fire teachers if they perform union work is an obstacle for us, but the leagues have their legitimacy, similar to civil movements that are in the streets today. The Union Coordination Committee has a large aura around it and no one can restrict its role. No minister will dare say that he wants to dismiss a teacher.

Active union members, on the other hand, expressed their fear of the use of these punitive decrees. A secondary active union member (AS2) stated that teachers and active union members are under continuous threat to get fired from their jobs:

Today, the Minister has threatened us. We conducted a strike and he said that he would apply the decree. If he applies the decree, it means he can stop us from teaching and he can get us fired. According to the laws, a union is different from a league. A league is exactly what is defined in the decrees today. The Minister or any direct or indirect leader

can impede its work. On the other hand, if it was a union, the opposite happens. It has statutory immunity.

Being irresponsible to teachers' demands. Another barrier that participants viewed as impeding the work of the union is the government's irresponsiveness to teachers' demands. Six union leaders (four primary and two secondary union leaders), five active union members (two primary and three secondary active union members), and nine inactive union members indicated that teacher unions face difficulty in dealing with the government. Participants repeatedly reported that the government is irresponsible to the demands of teachers even when these demands are not too taxing. One of the primary union leaders (UP2) discussed the impediments that authorities cause the union:

One of the issues we worked on was a small educational issue, for example, encouraging procedural subjects such as music and theatre. There are many schools that lack the equipment. There are schools that do not have playgrounds...We are working on these matters...Give us the minimum of our demands; we don't want to break the government's budget. We tried being positive. We suggested a law that is ideal. We reached a compromise. When it came to issuing law, there was a problem.

Similarly, inactive union members noted the difficulty in communicating with the government. According to inactive members, the government does not negotiate with the union on the demands that they raise:

The challenges that we face are that the legislative and executive branches of government are not acting on the demands of the leagues...In Lebanon, the biggest challenge is dealing with the government. It does not respond to teachers. We demand but we do not

receive...The leagues play their role, but currently the situation is politicized and tense and political authority groups are unresponsive.

Active members also discussed the unsuccessful attempts of teacher unions to bargain with the government, making it difficult to achieve any type of demand. A primary active union member (AP4) specified that the government refuses to respond to the union's demands even when the union escalates to strikes:

There has not been a response on the leagues' demands from the Ministry, the government, or the parliament. There has not been any response and leagues did not achieve any goals. You know about the strikes that occurred a couple of years ago. They made teachers take to the streets but teachers could not achieve anything. There has always been counteracts against teacher unions.

Also, a secondary active union member (AS4) mentioned that the government continues to disregard union demands, even when a union raises a demand that improves public education. Respondent AS4 believes that this negligence is because political authority figures have focused their support on businessmen and these businessmen's interests:

We didn't only demand for an increase in wages. We had other legitimate demands that are concerned with quality in education. No one responded to us. The political atmosphere is in favor of businessmen, since they work together these days. In the past, when we used to perform strikes for one week, political authority figures would respond and ask what we want and what they can do.

In addition, a secondary active union member AS1 stated that government authorities attempted to remove previously attained union's rights and grant teachers a low percentage increase on their salaries:

The executive committee is under the government's control. The government does not want to grant us our rights but wants to take them away. We went down to the streets. We were 100,000 individuals in May 14 and they promised us a salary and scale increase. There were lies during Minister Z's days. Last thing we found out was that they were going to study the salary and scale increase, propose a salary and scale increase different from Minister K's drafted salary and scale increase...there was inflation in market prices and the last time an increase of the cost of living was issued was in 1996. So when the salary and scale increase was proposed in 2012, there was a wage hike of 121%. We want this percentage and nothing more. However, the proposed salary and scale increase removes 60% teaching increase, which was a previously acquired right.

Enforcing authoritarian decisions by the Minister of Education and Higher Education on union. The government issued a decree for the creation of public school teacher leagues. This degree granted the Minister of Education and Higher Education power over public school teachers' leagues. Participants who included two primary union leaders and two secondary active union members indicated that this power granted to the Minister of Education and Higher Education through decrees is a challenge that unions face. Primary union leader UP6 conveyed that the authority granted to the Minister on union matters is excessive. Respondent UP6 showed that, although teachers are most knowledgeable of problems that occur in schools, the power that teacher unions have is limited:

The union knows everything that is happening around it. It also has a vision, but it can't do much... If we decided to do something and the Minister of Education and Higher Education and his team do not approve, then nothing happens.

Another primary union leader (UP3) reaffirms this challenge and views it as impeding union work. Respondent UP3 further states that the Minister is granted the right to eliminate the union's administration:

The first challenge is that we are not a union. We are a cultural league established under pressure, through a decree issued by the Minister. This league is under the jurisdiction of the Minister: if he decides to eradicate it, he can.

Manipulation of the public's perception of teacher unions using media. Another challenge facing teacher union emerges from the interference of political and sectarian leaders. Two primary union leaders and two primary active union members indicated that political leaders have attempted to ruin teacher unions' public image using the media. Two primary union leaders (UP7 and UP8) explained that the media promotes a misperception of the leagues. This misperception is that leagues only work to increase their members' wages and do not care about the corruption that some teachers are responsible for during official exams. On television, the Minister accused teachers of leaking questions before exams and correcting exams unfairly. These televised accusations undermine the credibility of teachers' action and of their leagues:

The host of a television show agreed with the Minister and stated that it is true that all leagues want to talk about is the increase of wages... the host also asked what are these leagues doing? All they want is money. This is not true. Since 1946, our official

certificates have been more important than our passports. Our students go to other countries and they are not required to do any entrance exam to universities there. This image was shaken after the war. That was why in the first round of exams, 85% of students passed the exam. In the second round of exams, 4% of students who passed the exam. This adds the numbers to 89%, which means there is no fraud. There will still be this invisible needle [percent that do not pass] that cannot be found at the expense of a teacher's dignity.

As for active union members, two primary active union members (AP5 and AP6) stated that the role of the media is influenced by politicians who want to show that the teachers do not care about students in their schools and only care about increasing their wages. During a formal field interview, respondent AP5 conveyed this view through the following statements, while AP6 nodded in agreement:

One of the challenges facing leagues is the attempt to alter public opinion. This is a game played by the governing authority. They show that teachers have taken all their rights and that they have no aim but to disrupt the school so that they can sit at home and relax. In addition, private schools are not committed to the strikes, and thus, the parent who has placed his child in a public school feels aggrieved. They would think that all public school teachers do is strike, despite the fact that our aim is the opposite...Also the media plays a negative role, specifically the media that is controlled by political leaders...It plays on both sides. Afterwards, the media shows that teachers have good salaries and are able to teach their children in private schools.

Loyalty of union leaders and union members to political parties. Union leaders and active union members agreed that maintaining independence in union work was crucial to the success of unions. However, the results have shown a discrepancy where this loyalty is seen as excessive and as a challenge to the union work between union leaders and union members. While only 3 out of 17 union leaders pointed that loyalty to the political party overshadowed loyalty to the union, the majority of union members (active and inactive) believe that it is a big challenge to maintain their loyalty to the union and that their current union leaders have more loyalty to political parties than union work, which in itself is a major challenge for the union.

Most union leaders explained that, although they [union leaders] run their leagues' elections under the banners of political parties, they do not necessarily work based on the parties' agendas but rather work to achieve teachers' demands. During their interviews, five primary union leaders claimed that they had a union conscious despite their affiliation with political parties. A primary union leader (UP2) noted:

We decided as educators that we would run the leagues' elections on political party basis. This does not mean that we will not work on education. For example, I placed pressure on my political party and conducted meetings with my political party leaders to explain the union's situation and have them adopt union demands and gain their support... Some union leaders do not perform union work. They work politics. They do not care about teachers' rights, but we are not like that. We care about teachers' interests... We are 18 union leaders and every one of us represents a political party. Inside the league, we place pressure on our political parties to achieve teachers' goals. Sometimes the political parties do not have a clear image on the matter and are against it. We clarify the issues to our

political party because we are in the league and have the essential knowledge on these issues. The political party would support us since it wants the benefits for its members. Another primary union leader (UP7) agreed and spoke about the unions' resistance to political parties' agendas when he said:

I would like to note that, despite political affiliations of some union leaders, our union work is distant from political work. In any union movement or any demand that concerns teachers, a political person leaves his politics outside when dealing with union work. When there is a choice, a person chooses union work over political work because union work is a representational kind of work and a union leader is held responsible. He receives a proxy and is elected by teachers. For this reason, for a person to be entrusted, he prefers his union work to political work... we are working with a clear conscious. In the last 3 years, we have made 536 trips to Beirut doing union work. We are from the North. We go to demonstrations, to meetings in leagues, and to meetings with Minister A, and so on.

However, a primary union leader (UP3) expressed that although union elections are considered democratic, alliances with political parties and the loyalty of union members to political parties reduce the possibility for the most competent candidates to be elected to union leadership positions. Respondent UP3 conveyed this challenge through the following statement:

The selection of trade union leaders has been based on political affiliations, especially when it is done on a broad level. In schools, they [teachers] are able to choose a union representative who is prepared to perform union work. However, it is not always the most competent teachers who end up in the highest union leadership positions. Alliances in

elections take place like in any other trade union work. In elections, responsibilities are distributed. In other words, unfortunately, political parties force their control in a democratic process through alliances.

Teachers, as union members, also have more loyalty to political parties than they do to their union. Primary union leader (UP4) described the extent to which political leaders have influenced union members. This respondent explained that when political and sectarian leaders participate in demonstrations, the participation of union members also increases in demonstrations. Respondent UP4 provided an example where a demonstration was expected to attract around 300 members due to rainy weather. When union leaders invited a political and sectarian leader to join the demonstration, member participation reached approximately 3000 to 4000 members. Similarly, another primary union leader (UP3) recognized the influence that political leaders have in elections. Primary union leader UP6 stated that political affiliations and conditions in Lebanon reflect negatively on union leaders and their performance. Respondent UP6 mentioned:

We are a political group. We represent politicians even if we are educators. If politicians get into a dispute, we also get into a dispute. For example, if the number of union leaders needed in the meeting will not be reached and thus the meeting gets cancelled. We are linked one way or another to political work in the country. In my opinion this is wrong. We are educators. We need to remain educators. I am from a political party and the league in Tripoli is from another political party. I dealt with them with love and open mindedness and they recognized it and changed their ways from last year.

On the other hand, most active union members and inactive union members view their leaders as controlled by sectarian political leaders. Primary active member AP1, indicated that political parties made an alliance to gain control of the league and succeeded in altering the union members' opinions about their leader:

Teachers create a major pressure group because they form the base of public sector and this [teachers unions' growing strength] scared them. When political leaders found that the UCC is becoming strong, political parties, March 8 and 14, agreed to work together to defeat the former president. He was the voice of justice who cannot be bought or sold and he was not a follower of any political figure. Unfortunately, teachers conspired against themselves and joined under the banner of governing authorities and said that the former president did not get anything for teachers.

Another active union member in public secondary school (AS1) described the extent of the influence that political parties have on elections. Respondent AS1 stated that she was an independent candidate running for a union representative position in the last election in her secondary school. Although this respondent possessed union expertise and was nominated by her colleagues, she faced difficulty in the last elections. The political party that had influence in her district did not approve of her running and sought to replace her with an affiliated member. However, her fellow teachers, who belonged to that same political party, refused the political party's decision and helped her get elected as a union representative. Respondent AS1 also conveyed her concern about the extent to which political parties have control of union leaders.

She noted that the league's current condition creates a feeling of hopelessness for union members. Respondent AS1 stated:

In the leagues, they distanced independent union leaders and the former president because he is an important union leader. Unfortunately, the executive committees in the leagues became representatives of political parties. Political parties divided the league's positions amongst themselves. They [union leaders] want us to follow what political parties say...The challenge is confronting the governing authority that is forcing us to be submissive. These executive committees follow what authorities want, which is not to give us our rights. It wants to take our rights away...When you want to defend your right which is the simplest right, which is to live decently, their response is against whom? There is no council of Ministers, no parliament, and no president. Against whom? The submission of teachers to their political parties led us here...We are all currently depressed because the league is not doing anything. It is doing whatever Minister Z says. They distanced the former president not because of his personality, but to harm the Public Secondary School Teachers League because it was leading the unions in Lebanon... Even though our situation is difficult, rank and file members are against what their league is doing. This is making us clash. We cannot do anything if our league's administration does not call on its members to take a stance. With respect to the current league, the decisions we take in general assemblies are not taken into consideration.

Also, another secondary school active union member (AS4) emphasized his concern over the political party leaders' attempt to confiscate teacher leagues and to prevent these leagues from raising teachers' demands. He conveyed this matter through the following statement:

The union has to take an independent role from the agenda of political parties. We, as teachers, have a major challenge facing leagues and union. This challenge is to have independence despite the presence of members who belong to political parties. Currently, this is not happening. The Public Secondary School Teachers League leaders should have made political parties support its demands and have a role to improve education.

However, political parties believe that leagues should not demand anything for the time being. The league's role is to be committed to the interests of teachers, regardless of their political, sectarian, and religious affiliations. I do not know if we can overcome this challenge with the current situation in Lebanon.

Lack of Respect of Teaching as a Profession

Teacher unions in Lebanon face challenges related to the current features of teaching as a profession, which alters the view of the community about teaching. There were eight union leaders and five active union members who discussed the lack of respect towards teaching as a profession. The absence of respect is because teaching is viewed as a blue-collar profession, as a feminine profession, and as a profession that pays low wages.

View of teaching as a blue-collar profession. Three primary union leaders stated that the teaching profession was previously viewed as a white-collar profession. Those who joined the teaching profession in the past were valued and highly respected in society. Union leader UP5 pointed out that, similar to a notary public, teachers were previously considered to be a reference in the community, and would be consulted on matters related to reading or writing. Today, according to union leaders, society views the teaching profession as a blue-collar profession. In addition, teachers are treated with disrespect, even in their own classrooms. These disrespectful

acts and inferior views push teachers to forego the teaching profession. As a response, primary union leaders emphasized the importance of preserving the dignity of teachers. For example, one primary union leader (UP3) raised this issue when he said:

In private schools, even though they have enough money in mutual funds, social security refuses to allow retired teachers after the age of 64 to join social security, even though the union will pay for them. The last meeting was held between a representative from the union and a representative from social security. The representative from social security linked the fate of teachers to those of taxi drivers. He said that if taxi drivers are able to join after the age of 64 then teachers should be able to join too. Teaching and teachers are viewed as inferior, which is negative. We are afraid for the future of education in public and private sectors. This results in a person choosing teaching as a career only if compelled. If a person finds an alternative, he will forego of teaching as a career. We live in a country where we will soon export teachers from outside like we do with housemaids.

Another primary leader (UP2) described the disrespect that teachers face inside and outside the classrooms:

We are against violence against students. However, a student is treated as if he is the teacher's boss. We can't even talk to students. We support modern education but we also want preserve the teacher's dignity...It is necessary to place limits on such matters. The dignity of teachers is violated under several slogans and conditions.

Feminizing teaching as a profession. Teaching as a profession has been regarded as feminized because women join the teaching profession more frequently and in larger numbers

than men. A feminized profession is viewed as less prestigious than other male-dominated occupations. One primary union leader and one secondary active union member described the dominance of female teachers as compared to male teachers in schools. These respondents discussed the impact of feminization of the profession on both teachers and students. An active union member (AS4) portrayed the situation in the following statement:

Why is the percentage of female teacher reaching approximately 90% in public primary school, while the percentage for male teachers is only 10%? This is because a male considers that teaching does not allow him to create a family or to secure the demands for his family. In addition, men's reluctance to join the teaching profession allows private school administrators to control female teachers who teach in their schools.

The primary union leader also expressed his concern about the dominance of the female gender in the teaching profession. The respondent stated that students are less exposed to a fatherly figure or male role model they can relate to. However, the interviewee did not deny the importance of a female presence in the teaching profession and expressed a need for a more balanced gender distribution in the teaching staff in schools.

Low salaries. The public's perception of teaching as a feminine profession has not only affected the social prestige of teaching but it has also influenced teachers' pay. Seven primary union leaders in addition to the current and former union leaders of the Public Secondary School Teachers League and five active union members stated that the low salaries that teachers receive in compensation for their work is a challenge for teacher unions. This negative characteristic of the teaching profession has caused union leaders and union members to focus more on the

improvement of the economic status of teachers. The former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League emphasized that salaries have not changed in the past twenty years. Although market prices have increased, an adjustment for the cost of living was not granted. The respondent mentioned the difficulty in convincing teachers to prioritize educational issues above economic concerns. He said, "If you ask a teacher to come and philosophize he will tell you before doing that, I want to eat." The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League also discussed teachers' financial standing. He noted:

The most important thing is the wage condition. When you want to attract teachers, you want this profession to allow a person to live from it. Our situation is bad. For the past four years until now, we have been demanding an increase, and since then no one has answered us. This year is our fifth year. Teachers' salaries have not changed since 1996. This means that from 20 years until now, it has only increased by 500,000 Lebanese Lira at a time where the living cost increased, I believe, by 150%. We requested an increase of 121% in the beginning of 2012 on the 1996 salary. This has been a challenge. All politicians promise us and leave.

Not only are wages too low to attract teachers to the profession but these earned salaries are not sufficient to support a family to live decently. A primary union leader (UP6) explained:

A teacher teaches 24 hours in a school and does not have any more time. The amount of money given to him for his work is not sufficient for him and his family. Strikes occurred last year and the year before for salary and scale increase, and it was not issued yet and it will never be issued. The league decided that we will not perform strikes and continue to teach no matter what...The salary and scale increase is a challenge. The league could not

have it executed and it will not be able to execute it. There are a lot of promises. We meet with the Minister who tells us that there is nothing that can be done.

Another primary union leader (UP2) stressed the inadequacy of salaries that force teachers, especially male teachers, to work more than one job to secure their families' needs. The respondent expressed his perspective by stating the following:

Strategies at the level of teacher concerns are to secure a decent living. Today, a teacher gets paid one of the lowest salaries given to employees. In the sixties, last century, a teachers' salary was equivalent to the salary of a minister. Today, the best teacher who has served 40 years in the education sector, his salary reaches a maximum of \$2000...the first salary I was paid was 447,000 Lebanese pounds. This is a disgrace. This does not happen in other countries.

As for active union members, they considered that the salary and scale issue has become more of a right due to the high cost of living. A secondary active union member (AS4) stated:

For the past four years, teachers' salaries have declined, which is unbearable. For this reason, I was one of the teachers who supported the strike for the salary and scale increase because it is not acceptable to leave salaries' value to decline in this manner for the new generation of teachers. For this reason, we have focused on union movement in strikes, demonstrations, and on the refusal to proctor exams to shed light on teachers' deteriorating situation.

Administrative Corruption in Schools

Almost all respondents agreed that the prevailing corruption in public schools poses a major challenge to union work, especially when it comes to improving the quality of education.

All seventeen union leaders stated that a major challenge for union leaders is the administrative corruption that exists within public schools, that hinders the development and advancement of public education, and to achieve educational goals. Similarly, nine active members and nine inactive members stressed that administrative corruption in public schools poses a major challenge to union work. Most respondents attributed the prevalence of corruption to the interference of political leaders in educational issues and in decision-making. Respondents emphasized that political interference causes 1) the appointment of incompetent personnel 2) the misuse of resources and 3) the absence of accountability.

Appointment of incompetent personnel. Currently, the corruption that exists in public schools is attributed to the appointment of incompetent personnel. Twelve union leaders, eight active members, and nine inactive members stated that sectarian and political leaders interfere in educational decisions and use *wasta* to have their followers recruited in public schools. In many cases, these individuals are not competent enough to get recruited to teacher or principal positions. Some teachers are hired without degrees or with degrees that are different than what they were appointed to teach. These political interferences impede teacher unions' work and their attempt to improve the quality of public education. A secondary school union leader (US8) stated that the power struggle between political leaders negatively affects education. This respondent described the appointment process of contractual teachers, committees, and principals as biased. Union leader US8 explains this political interference:

There is continuous interference from political authority to hurt union work and education through interference in appointment of principals... contractual work is also a challenge because it transformed from an educational process to a political bazaar...A minister

would say I was able to employ 50 principals, and then Minister Z tells you during the school holiday, I was able to employ 50 to 60 principals in Mount Lebanon ... Selection of members on committees is done based on political affiliations and sectarianism. This person is important to us, that position is for the Shiite sect, and the other is for the Druze sect... The chemistry examination committee looks at how many Sunnis or how many Shiites there are. This is political interference... sectarian quotas and clientelism have replaced competence.... Sectarianism has now entered our daily lives and is entrenched in the simplest details of secondary schools. How? Through appointments... contracting appointments and limiting competition, they [political leaders] lowered the quality of education.

Similarly, primary union leader (UP3) agreed that the appointment process is biased. The respondent also highlighted the influence of political parties on public schools' recruitment process. Respondent UP3 mentioned the effects of *wasta* that lead to the weakening of the public schools, specifying that there are no criteria to appoint administration. Respondent UP3 states:

Within the challenges are also the methods with which principals are appointed.

Appointment of principals is not done based on experience or competence. First, if a person is going to be appointed in a Shiite area, he or she must be a Shiite. If he or she is going to be appointed in a Sunni area, then he or she has to be a Sunni. In Beirut, you cannot appoint a Shiite even if he has a doctorate and his opponent is a teacher who has only a *brevet*. The priority is for the sect and the unification of the sect.

Another part of recruitment where corruption has increased is in the appointment of contractual teachers. A primary union leader (UP6) described the political interference in the contractual

work of teachers that has resulted in the appointment of incompetent personnel. According to UP6, many contractual teachers enter the teaching profession because they were not able to find another job. As a response, the respondent emphasized that education is not a simple occupation but rather a profession that contains a mission. Respondent UP6 suggested the removal of these incompetent personnel:

First, in primary education, there are 25,000 teachers. Approximately 12,000 teachers are above the age of 60, which means that they soon will retire. Very few teachers are new. The government brought in the fad of contractual work, and not all contractual teachers are competent. This is a situation that we should get out of, but we are unable to because politicians hire teachers to get them off his back, and employs them in education.... Politics destroyed education. At last, a decree was issued that every person who holds a degree and wants to be a contractual teacher has to undergo an interview with professionals, but there are 15,000 to 20,000 contractual teachers who are not eligible to teach because education is a mission and not just about the degree...Let me tell you if there are 20,000 contractual teachers, almost 3000 are competent and the rest should be removed. These people entered contractual work because they are in need of money and there is no other work opportunity, but they are not eligible to teach. This is the mistake we are trying to fix.

Although a new decree imposes interviews for contractual teachers before they get hired to ensure that they are qualified, the committees formed remain to have sectarian and political sectarian loyalty and thus are submissive to their political sectarian leaders' decisions. Primary

union leader UP3 shared the conversation that occurred between him and a manager in the Ministry of Education:

The Minister has his people in the committee. Who appoints the general manager? The decision comes from a political group. The consultant of the Minister comes from a political side. They pick up the phone and call a representative in the committee, 'I am a representative from political party X, take care of this person.' In the committee, there are others from political party Z and another from political party W. There is a big disaster in Lebanon. It is not like we got over sectarianism and regionalism and merely look for competence. It is not the case at all. In this country, it is not like that at all.

As for inactive members, they also emphasized that corruption exists within public schools through the use of wasta that bypasses recruitment policies. These respondents discussed how political leaders have created a tense sectarian environment in schools, where teachers feel injustice within the recruitment and promotions processes. Inactive members described the situation inside the public schools:

You feel from the interaction inside the school that there are coalitions. There is always a tense environment... Things are always done, not according to the interest of the student or the interest of the teacher, but according to the interest of the political party. How much is my quota and how can I get more? This negatively affects education in general and public education specifically. The committees that created curriculum were formed based on sects.

Active union members also discussed the interference of politics in education.

Respondent AP5 mentions:

Inspection is also politicized. Even guidance is politically appointed. It is clear how things in this country work. You have to be a follower of a leader to succeed. Everyone is a follower. Even training sessions are mandatory and are done for profit. They make a teacher go through training sessions so that the trainer gets paid because someone supports this trainer. I have seen few teachers who benefited from training and applied to something new. Teacher unions should demand that those conducting the training to be competent as well. Even in administering official exams, those hired must have administrative experience like a school principal. They place a person as a head of center but this person is not able to perform his or her responsibilities and does not have enough experience...In most cases, they are regular teachers who are supported from someone in the educational sector to get paid more.

Misuse of resources. Participants viewed the misuse of resources by public officials in the education sector as part of administrative corruption. Five union leaders and three active union members discussed how the misuse of resources affects teacher union work. Union leaders are concerned about the resources wasted for personal gain, the absence of school mapping,¹⁰ and the excess amount of contractual teachers being recruited to the teaching profession. The former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League gave an example of how resources are used by ministers for the purpose of personal gain:

¹⁰ School mapping is a set of techniques and procedures used to identify future needs in education at the local level and to plan for measures to be taken to meet them

When a minister has low votes in a certain town, he opens a public school to increase his popularity in the town without considering if the town needs of a school or not. There are some schools that only have 25 students in them.

The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League also agrees about the misuse of resources. However, the president only focused on the surplus in the number of contractual teachers that are available in schools. He noted:

Two teachers sometimes teach one class. For example, if a class is given in 5 hours, a contractual teacher teaches two hours and a full timer teaches 3 hours to please a certain person [supporter of contractual teachers or the wasta person].

Similarly, a primary union leader (UP8) added that there is an excess amount of contractual teachers available in schools due to political interferences. In fact, Political leaders waste financial resources to please their followers and to obtain their votes. Union leader UP8 added:

Contractual work is a big problem...We have 19000 teachers, maybe a bit more, in the cadre. There are 3000 teachers in the cadre who do not practice teaching. Those teachers work in departments with ministers and parliamentary representatives. There is the same number of contractual teachers as full-time teachers in the cadre, but they do not work the same hours as full timers. This is why they compete with us. They say that a full-timer teaches two hours. This is not true.... Today, full-time teachers take the average of 20 hours. Of the 23000 contractual teachers that are in contractual work, 2000 or 3000 would be sufficient for all schools. I will give you an example. In my school, I have a teacher who calls himself a teacher but who teaches only 3 hours. I have another teacher who

teaches 12 hours. I also have a subject that is taught by two teachers due to political interference.

Union members were also concerned about the waste of resources in contractual work that is due to political interferences and described this excess in contractual teachers as disguised unemployment. Active union member AS3 expressed this view through the following statement:

Why do we have contractual teachers to begin with? Why don't we place those people who worked hard and put an effort directly in the cadre?? Why don't we professionally develop those contractual teachers? Those contractual teachers, that the public schools need, the schools can keep and those that are not needed, they should dismiss. Why do I keep 10 unneeded contractual teachers? We have disguised unemployment. This is happening because contractual teachers vote for political leaders and then they visit them and request favors from them. These are parts of the group that get hired in teaching. We are 35 contractual teachers and 19 full-time teachers in the cadre. In reality, we can be enough with 5-6 extra teachers. There is a disguised unemployment that politicians benefit from. Also, there is a lot of waste in resources, which makes no sense.

Moreover, one of the primary union leaders (UP3) expressed a concern about the absence of a sense of belonging of contractual teachers to their schools. Respondent UP3 stated that “you cannot ask a contractual teacher to strive educationally, when financially the contractual teacher is not able to suffice himself, so how is he going to be devoted to educational work in general?”

Participants further criticized the hiring process by shedding light on the corruption and the bias that exists. As an example, a secondary school union leader (US8) discussed the extent to

which political leaders have control over the hiring process and use this process to push for their followers to get hired:

First, selection is based on a sect, and then they choose the person who is most obedient and who can be controlled. Those people are hired as principals. Same thing goes for supervisors. These people are chosen closely similar to the process of picking lentils. Then, they place them in the position... This nepotism and clientelism replaced competence.

Also, another primary union leader (UP4) showed the misuse of the power of ministers in public schools. Ministers use their authority to enforce transfers and move teachers from one school to another, leaving principals to deal with the consequences:

The Minister misuses his power and ruins union work and the Ministry of Education, specifically because he uses politics inside his ministry... For example, a teacher who teaches a major subject gets transferred using *wasta* to another school, he is counted as a surplus in the new school. When he transfers, sometimes he teaches a different subject than what he is trained to teach.

Moreover, an active union member (AS5) also mentioned another method of misusing power. Respondent AS5 described how principals use their positions and abuse their power to hire their own people:

Everything in this country is based on politics. They opened the door for contracting this year and 3000 persons entered as contractual teachers. The principal brings in a person he or she wants to hire as a contractual teacher. This principal will take two or three hours from one of the teachers and will give them to a new teacher. The principal fixes the

teacher's class hours. Some teachers get fired because of the principal and it seems like this tactic was used for intimidation.

Absence of accountability. Two primary union leaders and three active union members (two primary and one secondary active union member) emphasized the absence of accountability in public schools and in Lebanon, which oftentimes resulting in increased corruption. This absence in accountability also reflects on student learning and creates an obstacle for teacher unions, and as such teacher unions find difficulty working to improve education.

An active union member (AS5) explained how the absence of accountability lowers the educational standard, especially because it allows incompetent teachers or teachers who do not perform up to educational standards to remain within their positions. The absence of accountability also wastes financial resources that could have otherwise been reallocated and placed to better use. The respondent noted:

Teachers should be screened. Those who are in the cadre, no one can remove them or hold them accountable...those full time teachers who teach Syrian refugees... Teachers come and tell me that they sit around and get paid \$10 an hour. There is no heating system there, no chalk, and no competent teachers teaching students. This is all done for profit.

Teachers also feel that there is an absence in accountability. According to two active union members (AP5 and AP6), inspectors do not perform their roles properly. One of the active union members (AP5) described the inspectors' current role:

They need to enhance the role of supervision. Sometimes a year passes and we do not see an inspector in the school. If an inspector comes, he might come for a day or two days

only. He sits in the administration and looks at financial matters. The inspector does not assess the effectiveness of the curriculum, if the teacher is playing their role appropriately in school, if or how this program is distributed, or if teachers are treated unfairly. There are some teachers who get comfortable at the expense of other teachers. The inspector's utmost concern is that the balance sheets are correct...we request that teacher union is granted authority to perform supervision. It can create a committee that visits schools and performs supervision just like inspectors to preserve the right of teachers and students because even inspection is politicized.

Lack of Trust among Teachers in the Effectiveness of Union

The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League, ten active members, and nine inactive members do not trust in the leagues' ability to achieve teachers' demands. Union members believe that the union is politicized and that their leaders, whom are affiliated with political parties, work according to their political leaders' agendas. The current president recognized that the league's biggest challenge is to regain the trust of its members. The president stated:

In the situation that we are in now, we have a lot of problems. We have internal issues, which means we need to work to preserve the unity of teachers. Poverty causes problems. The experience that the league passed through during the past four years and this fifth year in demanding for salary and scale increase... and until now we did not get anywhere due to the governing authority that is not concerned with anyone. There is no doubt that this has resulted in a bit of misunderstanding with officials and in demanding... What should we do? If we perform strikes, even teachers are not convinced of strikes anymore.

If we protest, only 300 teachers join and only a few schools close, while others continue to teach. Secondary teachers strike, public schools all strike, private schools do not. We face conflicts with one another because of this subject [salary and scale increase]. There is no one that responds to us.

Union members showed doubt in the effectiveness of their leagues. For example, a primary active union member (AP7) voiced his distrust in the union's effectiveness, stating that the old administration of the league was more effective than the current administration. Respondent AP7 stated:

The current league is not effective. The politicians broke the old league and kept gashing at it until they were able to divide it. Although they are teachers, these union leaders, are each followers of a political party...and they work according to their parties, which means recommendations that come from political parties are applied. Now rise or now be quiet. During the former president's days as a leader, it was stronger and more united. Now it has politically oriented goals.

Another primary active union member (AP2) also agreed about the public school teacher league's ineffectiveness and emphasized the need for union leaders to be independent from political parties to gain the members' trust and to achieve union goals:

In the last elections of leagues, the UCC that united issues was struck down. They brought representatives from political parties. Those [union leaders] do not belong in union because when a person is part of a union it means he or she has a union conscience...Today, unions do not exist. They are ineffective...it is such a shame that so few are free and practice what they preach. How can I reach educational reform, political

reform, or apply policy, if I am not free? ...there should be unity in the achievement of union goals. Each union members should be free and be able to see that in the end these politicians need to be changed. Employees need to wake up.

Also, a secondary school (AS5) explained that members' lack of trust in their union is a result of the loyalty of union leaders to sectarian and political leaders and the absence of a united position.

Respondent AS5 noted:

They even politicized our leagues. Each leader is a follower of a political leader.

Members believe that if union leaders are affiliated to political parties, it means they won't get us our rights. The problem in the leagues is that each person works by himself.

Today, sectarianism and political matters is still in our blood...a league, should not be politically affiliated. For example, the salary and scale increase, they are working on it but where is it? There is nothing because they do not have a united position.

Inactive members had similar thoughts about the lack of trust in the league. The respondents believed that current teacher leagues are politicized and do not fight for teachers' rights anymore.

Before the interference of politics, the leagues defended our rights, but after politicians interfered, they minimize the leagues' efforts...the governing and political authority work to split the league and bring in a league that is loyal to it.

The story of a primary union leader (UP3) exemplifies a key concern for teacher unions. Similar to his colleagues, he pointed to the lack of trust of some union members in their unions' ability to get their demands. However, the respondent emphasized that for many union members, the personal demands have become so urgent that they choose to abandon union work and to use that time to increase their income. The respondent tells the following story:

The teachers who do not have national awareness or do not trust national work in general would ask, why should I participate when I can go to another school and teach extra hours and get paid more? I can solve my own problem at the expense of others. I am one of those people who had to leave union work and national work, in general. Since brevet, I have been engaged in union work and political work. When one of my sons entered the American University of Beirut and the other one entered St. Joseph University, what should I have done? I had to work in a second school and give private lessons to be able to pay for my family's expenses and my children's education. No one else would pay for your children's education. They will say that this teacher is a failure. He went to work in union and forgot his family. I distanced myself from all union work for 5-6 years and did some private work. Also, regular teachers who do not have other financial support, it is natural that they go in this direction. Therefore, this is when work condition demands become more important than educational issues.

Lack of Unity among Union Members

Two union leaders (one primary and one secondary union leader) and five active union members (three primary active union members and two secondary active union members) described the conflict that has occurred between secondary teachers and primary teachers. Currently, according to participants, teacher leagues have conflicts between two teaching levels, primary and secondary. There are also internal conflicts that occur inside the leagues, which result in the lack of unity as reflected in teachers' strikes and decisions.

The study revealed that one of the conflicts is exhibited when teachers from secondary schools believe that they need to maintain the level of scale difference between them and primary

teachers. Therefore, secondary school union leaders and members reject the proposed salary and scale increase because it reduces the scale difference between them and the primary teachers.

Primary union leader UP5 who newly appointed noticed and communicated this lack of unity.

The interviewee also reflected on the performance of the union and stated that the union has not functioned properly in practice.

Active union members were able to see the disunity more than union leaders. A primary active union member (AP2) noted the lack of a unified position between primary and secondary leagues. The union member stated that the league was united in the past. Today, the government divided the leagues when it created separate salary and scales for primary and secondary levels:

When we had one league, not secondary and primary leagues, it was able to create an impact. The government, immediately, I don't know which year, separated salaries and scales. They created a salary and scale for secondary and one for elementary and intermediate and then eliminated the intermediate sector. It became elementary, which is primary, and secondary. They created a division between them. They became two powers. Now, if we decide to strike they support us and if they decide to strike we support them. We used to have one stance.

Another primary active member (AP7) noted the conflict between primary and secondary school teachers. The member conveyed the superior view that secondary teachers have in comparison to primary teachers and the injustice that primary teachers feel:

There is a lack of unity. There is a division between primary and secondary. Even before the current league, there was this division. Even though they demand teachers' rights, there is a gap. When you go and tell secondary teachers that we want to close this gap

between secondary and primary, they refuse. Even in their demands, they want to preserve the difference between primary and secondary, even though secondary teachers have a degree and primary teachers have a degree.

In addition, a secondary active union member AS5 discussed the subdivision inside the leagues and the contractual committees, which creates further disparity in views and stances. The union member also discussed the division inside the secondary league and mentioned the conflict between the UCC and Public School Teachers League. She stated:

Even the league [secondary] is divided in two. There are those who support former president and others who support current president [of secondary league]. Also, there is the UCC on one hand and Public Secondary School Teachers League on the other hand. We have the [contractual teachers'] Primary Committee on one hand and Secondary Committee on the other. Why do we have all these divisions? Too many cooks spoil the broth.

Lack of Support of Union from Parents and the Community

Two primary union leaders, two active members, and nine inactive union members indicated that the parents and community do not support teacher unions. Participants discussed how union decisions in strikes, protests, and refusal to proctor exams, and school closing result in this lack of support.

Union leaders stated that there is a misperception about leagues that is made visible to the community. In a formal field interview, two primary union leaders (UP7 and UP8) recognized this misperception about leagues working to increase their members' wages. One of these union leaders (UP8) noted:

I am telling you from that perspective if you watched this television show with the Minister. The host stated that yes all unions talk about is the increase in wages. This is the perception we want to modify.

This view that teachers are only concerned about their salaries also angered parents and students. A primary active union member (AP5) revealed that when teachers refuse to correct official exams until they receive the salary and scale increase, parents and students felt outraged and perceived teachers as self-centered individuals:

A challenge is the stalling of government and its fake promises. Last year, the minister said that he will solve the issue of certificates. He advised teachers to proctor official exams and to avoid the correction of exams if our rights were not granted. He stabbed us in the back. Parents blabbered about us not correcting exams. We refused to correct the exams and listened to him, but he still issued certificates. Even students blabbered. This is another issue that made parents feel as if we worked against their children's benefit, especially those waiting to send their children to universities.

Inactive union members also acknowledged the parents' opinion about teacher unions. The community and parents do not support teacher unions because parents believe that teachers jeopardize their children's education when schools are closed because of protests and strikes:

There is pressure from parents. They say that our children are in public schools and have the right to learn. Another challenge is when the government does not communicate with us. Parents do not support us. All society stands against teachers.

Severe and Deeply Rooted Problems in Public Education

One primary union leader, three active union members (two primary active union members and a secondary active union member) and all nine inactive members stressed the severity of the problems that public education faces. Participants noted that the public no longer trusts the government nor its effectiveness due to the government's long history of neglect. Participants pointed out that the current curriculum is outdated, textbooks contain many errors, and the government does not secure teachers. This neglect has increased and reflected a negative climate in the school. There are many children who have social and psychological problems and do not have the professional staff of psychologists and counselors that can help them. One of the primary union leader (UP3) described the climate in school stating that these students with psychological problems have affected their fellow classmates and the learning environment.

Children from the lower impoverished classes go to public school. If you conduct a study in public schools, you will see a large percentage of students whose parents are divorced, whose dad is married to another woman, whose dad and mom are in dispute, whose [the parents] social condition is bad and whose placed the child in an orphanage since the parents have 10-12 children.

The distrust in public education showed a misconception that public schools are only for the children of citizens who come from low socioeconomic background. Inactive members have mentioned the students' difficult social conditions:

We, in the public education, are part of a social reality, which has many challenges because no one places their children in public schools. Public education is mostly for

people who cannot afford private schooling... In addition, the students who enter public schools are from a deprived social group. These students do not have enthusiasm to learn. This distrust is the consequence of the government's neglect of public schools. A primary active union member (AP5) pointed out to the problems related to the quality of the curriculum. Despite the fact that teachers have informed those in authority positions and have asked them to correct mistakes, the respondent explained that the curriculum has not been updated for around eighteen years and textbooks are reprinted with errors:

The last curriculum that was implemented was supposed to be a five-year experiment. If there was an improvement they will continue to use them and if not, they would remove them. It has been 18 years and they have not changed the curriculum. It has a lot of mistakes. We communicated this problem with them a hundred times. Every session we do on refining of books, they end up leaving the same mistakes that we have previously highlighted.

In addition, another problem mentioned was the shortage of qualified teachers. Respondents said that in many schools, subject matters are not offered until the middle of the school year due to the ministry having not finalized teachers' appointments. Respondents highlighted that the delay in securing teachers affects students' learning and erodes the trust of parents and the larger community in the public school system.

A secondary active union member (AS4) summed that this neglect has eroded the public's trust in public schools and even among public school teachers themselves:

The community asks: why don't public school teachers place their children in public schools? We would like to say that when curriculum is up to the same standard in

quality as in private schools, we would place our children in public schools. Save the amount of school scholarship and strengthen the public school curriculum, we will place our children there. Make the quality in education the same as in private schools. The government wouldn't want this because they have private schools of their own.

Lack of Security in the Country

Another challenge mentioned on the national and regional level is the political insecurity that prevents teacher unions from achieving their goals. Four primary union leaders and five active union members (three primary and two secondary) stated that the lack of political security in Lebanon is a major challenge for teacher unions in Lebanon. This political instability adds to the feeling of insecurity among respondents who describe the political situation in the country as a “paralysis that reflects on every detail of our lives” (interview with UP6). Respondents stated that Lebanon has no president and members of the parliament have extended their own terms. The current government is only allowed to process paper work and is not able to issue any laws or decrees, and thus cannot act on any of the union's demands. In addition, respondent UP3 mentioned that the representatives of the parliament do not plan properly and disregarded educational issues. This political situation makes it difficult for union leaders to reach out to policy makers in order to achieve their goals. Furthermore, the sectarian conflict in the region has created tension among the Lebanese people, as well as their neighboring countries. This conflict has had a negative effect on the country's economy. A primary union leader (UP6) explains:

Today, everything in country is standing still. Our demands have accumulated and nothing is happening. We have programs that have stopped. If we haven't yet achieved previous goals, how would we set new goals? Why? Because the country is in a standstill.

No parliament to execute, no council of ministers to make decisions. A project needs decrees from the Council of Ministers and legislation from the House of Representatives. Thus, it does not work. If there are no parliament meetings; then there is nothing. The union is proposing a project but you need someone to respond to it. Developing programs is an important step. For many years we heard that they wanted to print books. Where are they? There is nothing. Last Thursday, the Minister stated that they are working on the matter. Where is it? He said that he wants to go see where he can secure the funds.

The political instability in the country is not the only problem. Primary union leader UP2 discussed the problem of Syrian refugees, which is an additional burden on public education in the country. He stated:

Today, the issue of Syrian refugees is affecting the quality of education and the teacher's condition. It [Syrian refugee issue] is causing problems when mixing Syrian students with Lebanese students. Also, there are some teachers who taught Syrian students last year but have not been paid until now. They get paid through installments. The Minister said that the money is available in the Central Bank, but there is a problem in spending. The problem is in the government's meeting. Also, the representatives of parliament are not meeting.

Active union members also identified the regional wars as resulting in additional burdens on the country's economy. These conflicts have posed new challenges on union members. One primary female active member (AP1) stated:

The situation in the region is another challenge. The regional war also influences our country. Lebanon is linked economically to Syria. For example, when roads closed

between Syria and Lebanon, the economy stagnated. There is not much tourism like before. Also, sectarian fanaticism exists, which puts people against one another.

Lack of Supportive Conditions Needed to Facilitate Union Work

According to participants, teacher unions in Lebanon do not possess the supportive conditions that can help strengthen it. Two primary union leaders and four active members (one primary and three secondary active union members) discussed the lack of specific conditions that facilitate union work. The conditions mentioned by participants include 1) the absence of time allocation for union work 2) the absence of union centers for teachers to conduct union activity 3) the lack of union experience of union leaders and union members and 4) the lack of funding available for training.

Absence of time allocation for union work. One primary union leader (UP3) discussed the limited time that a teacher union leader has to work on the many union issues that arise. The respondent discussed this challenge in the following statement:

Union members, even the president of primary and secondary leagues, are committed to schoolwork hours. Subsequently, he or she follows up on union work. If there was an overlap in the work hours of the union and the school, then the priority is for schoolwork. These conditions, in union work, make a person seek priorities. I am currently in front of a curriculum that needs improvement. This improvement might take many years to achieve or I can go for scale increase for teachers of a level or two that takes months or few years. Thus, they make us choose our combats and set our framework.

Absence of union centers for teachers to conduct union activity. Teacher leagues expressed a need for union centers for their members to conduct union activities and to enhance

their skills. Two union leaders indicated that although there is a decree issued to establish centers for teachers' leagues, there has been a long delay from the government to execute this decree. The center for teachers is seen as necessary for communication and collaboration purposes.

Primary union leader (UP3) explains its importance:

The absence of union work is a result of the absence of the center for teachers' leagues. We have a decree from the government since the year 1982 to establish a house for teachers. It is a center created in each governorate similar to the military club. It has several specifications that can enable teachers to perform union activities and interact with one another.

Another primary union leader (UP5) also described the interior setting of the center to be established:

We wanted to create a house for teachers so that we can have a big center that contains a library and a conference room. The follow-up and communication should not be done through lectures. We need to act on them...Not having a center is an obstacle that prevents union from achieving its goals.

Lack of training for union leaders and union members. The lack of training is also another challenge that hinders union work. One primary union leader and three active union members stated the union leaders' lack of experience and union members' incompetence have impeded the development of union work. Primary union leader (UP3) indicated that the experience of union leaders derives mostly from their political background. In addition, most union leaders are almost at the retiring age. These experienced union leaders do not conduct

training sessions to prepare new leaders to lead teacher leagues in the future. Respondent UP3 revealed the problem:

There is no trade union facility time. There is always change in the union and in union representatives...Also, those who have knowledge of union work are from political party backgrounds, and they bring their personal experiences with them...Those who understand union work have all reached the retirement age. We, in a couple of months, are going to finish our service. In these two years, there might be a few people who are still here, but after that all leaders will be new in union work. These challenges are not easy at all. Leagues have not developed or stored experiences, which will not allow people who come later to benefit from this knowledge.

Similarly, some active members noted that their leaders need more training. Respondents pointed that many union representatives are not aware of their role in the union. These active union members noted that the Independent Fronts, an organization led by former president of Public Secondary School Teachers League currently conducts training sessions. A secondary active union member (AS3) communicated this matter in the following statement:

There is also an internal challenge in the league. There are a lot of union representatives who do not have union backgrounds. There are people who get elected but they do not have previous union experiences. They [union leaders] are not conducting any union training sessions. They should conduct union trainings so that we know how to create improvements. They started doing this but it is still not enough. Two months ago we did training in Padova Hotel, a union training session that was satisfactory. We thank the League for participating in it with Friedrichs, a German organization. Currently, there is

Independent Front, an organization that is conducting sessions so that we are more informative about the union. We hoped that the league follow suit.

Respondent revealed that the absence of training was due to the lack of funding. For example, primary union leader (UP3) stated the reason why only a few union members are trained. Respondent UP3 indicated that raising funds is a big challenge for union training, and that the only resort is for the government to grant the union the needed funds.

There is no training capability or a center to train on union work. The government is not taking care of this matter and even international organizations are not placing the requested amount of effort to help us train. For five years, we have been saying that we have a large sector in education. We have 1800 representatives in Lebanon in the Public Primary School Teachers League. Most of those people lack the required experience. If we wanted to conduct union training for them, there is no funding. The government does not fund us. As for funding from members: if they give us 20,000 LL, they want us to show a lot of gratitude for that. They ask us, what are you doing with them? If you achieve a demand for the teacher, after a month the teacher forgets it. In 2012, we got teachers a raise of 4 scale levels and a half. This ranges between 300,000 and 500,000 LL. Now 20,000 L.L, they ask about it.

Ineffective Policy-Making Processes in the Ministry of Education

Fifteen union leaders (six primary and nine secondary), eight active union members (four primary and four secondary), and nine inactive members mention the ineffectiveness of the policy-making processes in the Ministry of Education. This issue creates a challenge for union work since it consumes time from union leaders and hinders collaboration with the Ministry of

Education, specifically in the achievement of educational goals. For this theme, participants mentioned 1) the lack of a strategic plan at Ministry of Education to improve public schools, 2) a lack of participation of unions in the decision making process, 3) a decrease in funding for education, and 4) the influence of international development agencies on education policy.

Lack of a strategic plan at the Ministry of Education to improve public schools.

Fourteen union leaders (five primary and nine secondary), six active union members (five primary and one secondary), and nine inactive union members stated that the source of many of the challenges faced by teacher union is the lack of a strategic plan at the Ministry of Education. The absence of a strategic plan in education keeps teacher unions' work reactive, and requires extra efforts, albeit with limited outcomes. Instead of collaborating with the Ministry of Education on shared goals, teacher unions end up consumed with basic demands for teachers such as securing the basic resources in schools. Additional challenges that were specified include the incoherence in education policies and the lack of educational resources.

One of the main problems seen, as related to absence of strategic planning, is the failure to secure the needed teachers at the beginning of each year. There are no competitions taking place yearly to recruit competent teachers to the cadre, and accordingly, contractual teachers are being sought every year. The current president explained:

It has been 5 years since they last hired teachers in the cadre. Each year there are teachers who retire. We worked with the Minister of Education and Higher Education on a previously issued decree and worked to execute it. This decree recruits 1223 teachers in secondary teachers' cadre. This is a very essential step that matches in its importance the monetary demand because secondary education began to empty from its teachers in the

cadre. They fill the places with contractual teachers...contractual teachers have helped us but they do not have a sense of belonging to their secondary school or schools. On the other hand, a teacher in the cadre goes through training sessions at Faculty of Education in Lebanese University.

Secondary school union leaders also mentioned a problem related to negligence in public schools. According to these participants, negligence is done deliberately to benefit the private educational sector. Secondary school union leaders stated that improvement programs that are adopted by the Ministry of Education do not meet the requirements of schools. Also, evaluations are not implemented based on a set plan that includes continuous follow-ups. In a focus group, secondary school union leaders discussed this issue:

The [improvement] programs and educational situation is a challenge. We have a problem in education. When they [Ministry of Education] say they want to customize programs and they end up installing programs, they create flaws in them that harm the public education, which benefits the private sector. The private sector has everything available to them. They have continuous training sessions, regular follow-ups, and regular evaluations. We don't have that. If they want to perform evaluation for us, it is done for one day. It is not beneficial.

In addition, there is a major delay in the improvement of curriculum that continues to lower the standards in public education. As an example, a primary union leader (UP2) mentioned that the curriculum has not changed since the year 2000 and that even history textbooks have not been updated due to political disagreement. Respondent UP2 stated:

The curriculum should be updated. In a respectable country, the curriculum is improved every two years. We changed the curriculum in the year 2000 and after that it has not been adjusted. We took the curriculum that France applies. In France, they reviewed it as a failure and they changed it. We still apply it here even though it needs adjustment. Also, imagine, we don't have a history book because of political disagreements...the history book is not updated and this is a big challenge. There is a delay in this matter. There is carelessness, which teachers are not responsible for. . Start from the top of political hierarchy, and then go down. These are the ones that are responsible.

Not only does the curriculum need improvement, but policies also need to be updated. One of the primary union leaders (UP3) mentioned that the absence of planning has caused incoherence in policies. Some of these policies have showed statements of contradiction, while other policies suddenly got removed without reason or consideration. These policies create injustice in schools, specifically among teachers. Teacher unions have faced difficulty in addressing such concerns. Respondent UP3 explains:

There are no reviews done to policies. There is no planning. They always issue a policy as a kind of reaction to a certain incident. This has been going on since Lebanon's intendance. If you review the Ministry's declarations, those related to the improvement and the strengthening of public schools, are just words spoken without planning...there are some policies that contradict one another. It is time that those policies get reinstated. They exist ever since 1943. There was a policy issued in 2001, which states that all those who hold a university degree in primary schools would be granted 4 levels as an increase. This increase would be divided across 16 years, every 4 years a level. In 2010, another

policy was issued for an increase of 3 levels, and thus they stopped the previous policy without issuing a new policy. Also, policy 223 was issued in 2011, which places a university degree holder in the 15th level, which is equivalent to 30 years of service. My son is now teaching. I hold a math degree and so does my son. I have been in teaching service for 40 years and we get paid the same amount. There is no justice and this created a lot of problems for us.

Active members also agreed with their union leaders. Respondents AP7 and AS4 recognized the absence of a national strategic plan and discussed its importance in order to use resources more efficiently. Respondent AP7 stated:

There is an absence of an educational plan in Lebanon and even in the political approach of the government.... The contractual teachers are aggrieved due to absence of an educational plan. They spent their whole life as contractual teachers and still the government does not look into their situation. In addition, there are no studies on the needs in schools. Also, there is a surplus in some specializations and a need in other specializations.

Lack of Union Participation in Decision Making. As part of ineffective policy-making process, participants mentioned the lack of union participation in decision-making. Eleven union leaders (eight secondary union leaders and three primary union leaders) and three active union members (one primary and two secondary active union members) discussed the absence of involvement of teacher unions in the decision-making process, especially when it comes to educational reform initiatives.

In fact, participants believed that the government intentionally marginalizes the union's role in education reform projects. According to primary union leader (UP3), one way the government marginalizes teacher leagues' role is through blocking leagues from being part of educational planning. Respondent UP3 highlights the reasons behind why leagues are not invited to important educational projects and are not given a participative role:

The Ministry of Education is not engaging teacher leagues in educational planning, in curriculum planning, or program planning. Teacher leagues do not even have a true participative role in regular issues such as internal regulation in the schools. Did D-RASTI [Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement Project, which is a USAID-funded project] send the leagues an invite? You will be surprised that they did not send us any invites. Also, we have a lot of questions around the D-RASTI project. The D-RASATI project came with 75 million dollars. Planning was set without the participation of teacher leagues or school administrations. Planning is developed and applied on teachers and in schools. This happens in educational development plans and in every funded projects that were implemented. Even in curriculums, when they were created in 1996, teacher leagues were not involved.

Participants also recognized that the Ministry of Education does not collaborate with teacher unions on educational development plans. One of the primary union leaders (UP5) showed the lack of collaboration between the Ministry of Education and teacher leagues and highlighted its importance. Respondent UP5 communicated his view:

The Ministry of Education and Center for Research and Development are working alone and are not coordinating with the union, excluding the union. The union is able to locate

successful and professional teachers and have them help Center for Research and Development. These teachers can assist in placing an action plan that can improve educational sector with the help of Ministry of Education.

Secondary school union leaders asserted the marginalization of their role when they said that their role was limited in terms of advising. Secondary union leaders wanted more involvement in the evaluation process and a participative role in the planning of the curriculum:

As a league, we face a challenge to be involved in curriculum planning, evaluation and follow-ups. The league does not have authority or a law that allows it to interfere in education reform. The league should have a role that allows it to veto and state whether a decision is acceptable or not. The league should not only be invited to visit and sit beside them [authority figures] here and there...Our role is limited to what is requested from us. It is an advisory role and not a reporting role.

Some secondary active members (AS2 and AS3) also noticed that the role of teacher leagues was limited. Yet, these respondents believed that it is union leaders' duty to pursue a role in education reform rather than to accept the current status quo. Respondent AS3 stated:

The current government, in its educational or political form, does not allow the league to perform its job and the league does not work to have a role in producing and improving education.

Decrease in funding for education. An additional challenge for teacher unions is the Ministry's decrease in funding for education. Six union leaders (five primary union leaders and former president) and three active union members (two primary active members and one secondary active member) discussed this decrease in funding. Through their responses, the

participants talked of two kinds of decrease in funds 1) the decrease in resources allocated for teachers' benefits and 2) the lack of funding for teaching resources and school facilities.

Decrease in resources allocated for teacher benefits. Some participants were displeased with the government's attempt to reduce or even retrieve teacher benefits. Two primary union leaders and former president and three active members (two primary and one secondary) indicated the decrease in resources in teachers' benefits. The former president gives a few examples:

We have faced a huge attack on our previously attained benefits. For our retirement, they removed 15% [they get paid only 85% of their salaries]. In cooperatives for civil servants, teachers would try to benefit from the coverage, but they receive fewer services. The government hires employees, however, the fund for cooperative for civil servants decreases which means there is also decrease in services granted.

Active members showed concern in having their benefits removed. This attempt to remove teachers' benefits has made union members seek ways to protect their rights. A secondary active union member (AS1) stated that authority figures attempt to remove previously acquired benefits, such as the increase of 60 % that was granted to teachers. According to the active union member:

We have received 6 scale levels, which are called an increase for teaching that equals to 60 %. This increase differentiates us from administrators. It was given because the government in the 1960s increased our work hours by 6, above 14 working hours that we get paid for. Thus, it gave us 60% increase. Today, when they placed a draft of the salary and scale increase, they removed 60%. All of the strikes and demonstrations that took place, from 2000 until now, were to preserve our previously acquired rights, whether

monetary or motivational...this salary and scale increase profits mostly from those who are retired. Similarly to how they have controlled social security fund, they are also thinking of controlling the retirement fund, which we pay each month for. Before we receive our salaries, fees for retirement and cooperative for civil services gets deducted. All the benefits we attained we have paid for from our pockets and they want to remove all these benefits from us.

Lack of funding for teaching resources and school facilities. In addition, funding for public schools was reduced. Six union leaders (five primary members and one secondary union leader) emphasized that the lack of funding for educational resources in public schools has become an obstacle for teacher unions in Lebanon. Participants believed that it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to ensure that the needed teaching resources are delivered to schools. Yet, the Ministry of Education has decreased the schools' allocated budget and could not meet all of the schools' requirements. The former president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League indicated that the budget that was allocated for the Ministry of Education was 21% before 1975. Today, the budget is only 6-7%.

In fact, currently, there is no alternative to funding the public schools other than the Ministry of Education. A primary union leader (UP3) shed light on the expenditures that the school is forced to pay for, noting that there is no other source to fund their schools.

There is a new policy that no longer allows the school to collect enrollment fees from students. This year even parents do not pay anything for their children; neither cost of books nor school supplies, nothing at all. It is great to give students free education, but where will the school get its funding from? It is required to pay 10% for teacher's mutual

fund and expenses such as cleanliness of the school, security in the school, government electricity, water, internet, telephone bills, and electricity generator.

Also, primary union leader UP3 explained that this decrease in the budget has caused teacher unions to spend a lot of time securing basic resources in schools and has drawn their attention away from other important union goals. Moreover, union leader UP3 mentioned the stiff bureaucracy that hinders the work in the schools. UP3 explains,

As for the books, last year the school paid for students' books and until today it didn't get reimbursed yet. The owner of the bookstore wants his money so he causes problems for the principal. Also, the owner of the gas station demands to be paid since the school bought fuel for its heating system for students. Instead of doing union work, we are working on securing basic needs for living. You enter the school and there is no electricity. If the school has \$10,000 or \$15,000 to buy a generator, they need to get the approval of the Minister first. You send the form to secure approval. It goes from the school to the educational administration in the area. Then, a committee is formed to check the quotations. If one supplier writes a local diesel tank and the other person wrote a diesel tank made in Lebanon, the committee considers them different.

Another primary union leader (UP4) confirmed that there is a lack of educational resources in schools. The respondent mentioned that the Ministry of Education places a lot of pressure on principals to secure all the necessary resources and to ensure the continuity of their school. The participant describes the situation:

We see that it is almost the New Year and the Minister of Education and Higher Education has not yet supported any of the schools...today, the principal has to proceed in his school although there is a shortage in teachers. Also, kindergarten classes are not equipped with all the necessary resources. This year, we met with the Minister in September and he said that he would secure all the equipment needed for the kindergarten classes. However, so far, he has not raised this issue; no equipment, no teachers, no contractual work...They let us struggle alone to resolve our problems, which negatively reflects on the school.

Primary union leader UP7 discussed the poor condition of the buildings of public schools. Respondent UP7 stated that some infrastructure is unsafe for students to study in, and revealed that some of the buildings damaged beyond repair. The interviewee emphasized that the budget allocated for education is insufficient.

If I want to improve education, then I need to build a supporting learning environment...my school is big enough and is able to get resources. However, the schools that do not have many students cannot afford to buy resources. Can we get heating systems and air conditioners for our school? No. The school fund does not have the sufficient amount. Today, the Ministry has to take care of these things.... They need to secure the money for the schools like they secure money for other things. People used to say that the educational sector is similar to farming. Yet, it does not produce anything. You want it to produce. This sector produces education and knowledge. You cannot allocate a budget of only 4% for the educational sector. They need to secure funds for all the schools.

Influence of international development agencies on education policy. Former president and four active union members (one primary and three secondary active members) feared the influence of international development agencies on educational policy. Participants attributed the negligence that occurs in public schools to neoliberalism implemented by international development agencies to privatize the educational sector. As an example of neoliberalism, the former president discussed Paris III conference. This conference set the conditions needed to promote economic reform through trade liberalization, privatization of the public sectors, and reduction in government expenditure. One of the conditions that Paris III specifies is contractual work, which in his opinion negatively influences public education. The former president shared his view:

We were fighting a project controlling the country. This project, which was part of Paris III and is related to World Bank and International Monetary Fund, is neoliberalism, the beast that has swept all third world countries. It struck the welfare state. Its aim is to privatize all the public services of the government. They did not leave any service without privatizing it and that includes water, electricity, media, education, and health. They handed all of the services to private companies including trash disposal. This trash crisis, which we are currently facing, is the result of privatization.

Also, a secondary active member (AS1) explains how the privatization trend negatively affects policy. She contends that in the process of receiving international funds, the public education sector is being swept by privatization. The respondent mentioned that contractual work, as a requirement to receive funds, is an example of privatization and neoliberalism.

. The member states the following:

They have privatized everything from electricity, water, and telephone. They sell them to private companies and then in the name of privatization they buy them, especially politicians who have money. Those same Ministers, who privatize the sectors of the government, and the rest of the governing authority figures, buy the sector. For public education to borrow money in Lebanon, there is Paris III. If we want to get a loan, we need to meet the conditions that are sent by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Among the conditions set is contractual work, which could handicap the government and privatize every public sector, including educational sector. Also, among the conditions of Paris III, schools should not hire new employees so that government could save money...We, throughout our strikes and demonstrations, try as much as possible to prevent implementation of all the conditions of Paris III, especially the privatization of public education and selling it to private companies.

Current Role of Teacher Unions in Education Reform

In this section, the current role of teacher unions in education reform is presented from the interviews conducted with union leaders and union members. In addition, a chart with frequency of the participants' responses shows the similarities and differences between union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members.

Table 9*Current Role of Teacher Unions*

Themes	Total Union Leaders (out of 17)	Total Active Union Members (out of 12)	Total Inactive Union Members (out of 9)
Advocacy Role	14	5	0
Improve Terms of Employment for Teachers	1	3	0
Recruit Competent Teachers to the Cadre	11	8	0
Open Pre-kindergarten Classes in Public Schools	1	2	0
Awareness Raising about Problems in Public Schools	9	1	0

Union leaders and active union members have identified two current roles for teacher unions. The first is an advocacy role and the second is an awareness-raising role. None of the inactive union participants were able to determine a role for teacher unions in education reform, and therefore there will be no responses from their part on the current role of teacher union.

Advocacy Role

Fourteen union leaders (five primary and nine secondary union leaders) and five active union members (one primary and four secondary school union members) discussed the advocacy role that teacher unions have played in contributing to education reform. Participants focused on four aspects, which include advocating for 1) improving working and employment conditions for teachers, 2) recruiting competent personnel to the cadre, and 3) opening pre-kindergarten classes in public schools.

Improve terms of employment for teachers. The former president and three active union members (one primary and two secondary active union members) pointed to the advocacy role as the union's contribution to education reform. According to them, teacher unions have played an active role in improving employment for teachers. Teacher unions have not only worked to improve salaries, but they have also attempted to remove contractual work and to reduce the presence of incompetent teachers in public schools.

Teacher unions have used mass demonstrations to object to the appointment of contractual teachers and advocated for open competitions to be frequently implemented. Teacher unions believed that the removal of contractual work benefits public education as a whole since it can be used as a measure of quality control. These calls were also made on the basis that contractual teachers do not engage in professional development activities since they are not required by the Ministry of Education to do so. In addition, contractual teachers lack the sense of belonging to the school. The former president added:

We had 90% of teachers were full-timers in the cadre and 10% were contractual teachers. Today, we have 50% in the cadre and 50% contractual teachers...we requested and placed pressure about academic and financial needs in the schools and we demanded teachers for procedural subjects. They develop projects but postpone its implementation. They hire a computer teacher who is a contractual teacher and not a full-timer. They don't make them full-timers so that they don't have to include them as part of the recruitment process...they depend on contracting to fill the [school] needs for teachers...On May 10, 2006, we performed a demonstration that consisted of 250,000 individuals to remove contractual work and to create stability at work. Contractual work was taken from the

conditions of Paris III conference. Political figures brought some money from there and sacrificed us in return.

A secondary school union member (AS1) also recognized the need to eliminate contractual work.

She stated:

We, teachers here at the secondary school...most of us are old and are close to retirement. This year, the Civil Service Council recruited teachers but less than what the schools need. This is part of the privatization plan. For this reason, we want to stop contractual work. They need to figure out a solution for the contractual teachers who are in schools. They can complete an exam and whoever passes, he or she can remain. Those who do not pass can be granted compensation.

Active member AS4, who was previously an executive committee union leader, stated that teacher union have advocated for the removal of contractual work and demanded fulltime employment policy that restricts teachers from teaching in more than one public school. Today, public school teachers, contractual teachers and full-timers, are allowed to teach in more than one school including in private schools. However, political authority rejected such a policy proposal.

The respondent conveys this:

The Ministry of Education does not set a future plan to secure the needs in schools. This plan would have allowed it to prepare to welcome new students who will attend its public schools...The absence of a vision in planning prompts the Ministry of Education to resort to contracting each year as a way to supply resources to the schools. We cannot deny the role that contractual teachers have played in public education. There were insufficient

teachers in the cadre to teach this generation of students. Teacher unions are working on a solution for the case of contractual teachers. It is demanding from the Ministry of Education to determine the schools' needs of teachers and to conduct competitive exams to recruit teachers... If the intention to raise the standards of education in public schools was there, the demand for reinstating a full-time employment policy that the union has been working for more than 25 years should have been accepted. This policy states that a full-time teacher should only teach in public schools and in only one public school. What did they do? Political authority refused this policy.

Recruit competent teachers to the cadre. Eleven union leaders (two primary and nine secondary union leaders) and eight active union members (five primary members and three secondary) recognized the advocacy role that unions have assumed to recruit competent teachers to the cadre. According to the former president, for the past 20-25 years, the Public Secondary School Teachers League was the only league that was able to attain, through advocacy, two open competitions to recruit full-time teachers to the cadre. These competitions allowed for the change of status for around 2000 contractual teachers who succeeded in the exams and eventually became full-timers. The current president of the Public Secondary School Teachers League also had a similar response. The current president added:

We, in this stage, worked on another issue because it has been 5 years since the government last recruited teachers to the cadre. There are many teachers each year who retire. We worked on a decree with the Minister of Education. The decree already existed, but we pushed for it to be executed. It allows the hiring of 1223 teacher in the secondary cadre. This step is just as important as the wage demand, because secondary teaching

body is being emptied from its full-timers. They replace full-timers with contractual teachers...A full-timer in the cadre has a sense of belonging because he exists in the secondary school. He does not have to be loyal to the principal, the Minister, the general manager, or politicians. He was recruited because of his knowledge and university degrees. From here and on, he can continue his educational mission.

Active union members indicated that teacher unions have advocated for open competitions and for the reactivation of the role of Teachers Preparation College (دار معلمين) that is known for its reputation in graduating qualified teachers. A primary active union member (AP1) expresses this matter:

We [teacher union] are demanding that the Civil Council Services recruits teachers each year so to increase standards in public school. It is also important that contractual work is removed...the league is requesting for the reactivation of Teachers Preparation College (دار معلمين) that prepares teachers and newly recruited employees...They can introduce a Faculty of Education and prepare teachers, and train them how to be professional teachers. This would be their responsibility instead of recruiting an inexperienced teacher.

Open pre-kindergarten classes in public schools. One primary union leader and two active union members (one primary and one secondary active union members) advocated for teacher union to found nursery classes in public schools as one of their contributions to school improvement. A primary union leader (UP3) explained:

We demanded to initiate pre-kindergarten classes in public schools. You cannot tell a child who is three years old that you can enter a private school but you cannot enter a public school. There is no place for you [three year old] in public school. Half of the

public schools do not have pre-kindergarten classes. We have around 1100 elementary schools in all Lebanon. Only 500-600 elementary schools have pre-kindergarten classes, but not all of them are fully equipped. In a pre-kindergarten class, you cannot set up the bathrooms similar to the bathrooms for older students in elementary classes. Even teachers and food for pre-kindergarten classes are different.

Moreover, the three respondents who raised this issue explained the stakes involved by pointing out that having pre-kindergarten classes will impact the enrollment figures in elementary schools.

The primary union leaders (UP3) stated:

Where will the parents go to register their child? If there is a close private school that has a pre-kindergarten classes and a public school that doesn't, where will my son go? ...to a private school. My son will spend KG1, KG2, and KG3 there, and then will I remove him from the private school? of course not. This is because the principal of the private school will facilitate or reduce my payment and convince me to keep my son in his school. This is what happens in reality...Not all schools have pre-kindergarten classes. This is one of the reasons for weakening of public schools.

Similarly, a primary active union member (AP1) described the importance of having pre-kindergarten classes in public schools. She stated:

The league supported the case for pre-kindergarten classes. There should be pre-kindergarten classes in public schools so that private schools do not remain the alternative to public schools. Previously, children who are four years of age can enter public schools. They did not have pre-kindergarten classes for the younger age like in private schools.

This issue was demanded by teacher leagues because they know that this elevates the public school since pre-kindergarten is the core of the school. The student who enters from pre-kindergarten usually continues in the school.

Awareness Raising about Problems in Public Schools

Nine secondary union leaders and one secondary active union member highlighted the awareness-raising role that teacher unions have played. The Public Secondary School Teachers League conducted educational conferences to raise awareness on the problems that occur in public schools and to provide solutions. After holding the educational conferences, the Public Secondary School Teachers League published five books about curricula, teacher preparation, evaluation methods, and professional development of teachers. The former president mentioned:

We conducted five educational conferences where we came up with suggestions and recommendations about the new curricula. We published five books. Concerning the new curriculum, we suggested that the government should create curricula without securing financial resources, logistics, and academics that they need to apply them in practice. The Ministry of Education had an allocated budget of 21% before the civil war, which has now been reduced to 6-7%. These curricula are perfect on paper, yet the ones who have the resources can apply them so some private schools benefit from them since they have the resources needed.

The rest of the secondary school union leaders mentioned their attempts to be involved in educational and developmental activities. Public secondary school union leaders communicated how they tried to play an active role on the curriculum committee:

We use pressure to be present in curriculum committees. We use pressure to create improvement in education. We use pressure to conduct revisions on school textbooks that were produced in 2001. Every three years, textbooks should be changed. These textbooks have been there for 15 years and they were not improved...our roles become limited when they request from us to play this kind of role. Our role is more of an advisory and not a reporting role.

Respondent AS4 was the only active member who was able to pinpoint the educational role of teacher union and the conferences that it held since he was previously a union leader in the executive committee. This participant stated:

Teacher unions did not only focus on increasing wages. It also looked at every issue related to improving curriculum. The Public Secondary School Teachers League conducted few conferences where it discussed how to improve the curriculum. Many educational figures were invited to the conferences. The league was discussing the needs of public education and it was organizing conferences for this purpose. It discussed the needs that are related to school buildings, equipment, setting a plan to improve teaching, and conducting training courses. These needs were present in the core of the demands of the Public Secondary School Teachers League.

Potential Role of Teachers Unions in Education Reform

This last section identifies the potential role that teacher unions can play in education reform from the perspective of the union leaders and active and inactive union members. Similar to previous sections, a frequency chart is presented to highlight the responses of the three groups and to compare responses.

Table 10*The Potential Role of Teacher Unions in Education Reform*

Themes	Total Union Leaders (out of 17)	Total Active Union Members (out of 12)	Total Inactive Union Members (out of 9)
Advocacy Role	12	8	0
Improve Professional Development of Teachers	10	3	0
Eradicate Sectarianism and Political Interferences in Schools	2	4	0
Ensure Social Justice in Education (Public Schools vs. Private Schools)	3	1	0
Raise Teachers' Morale	1	1	0
Use School Mapping to Reallocate Public Schools Based on Need	1	0	0
Set High Standards to Improve Quality Educational Services	3	4	0
Policy Development and Decision Making Role	12	10	4
Contribute to Enforcing Accountability in Public Schools	9	2	0
Assume a Role in Educational Decisions Related to Curriculum Improvement	13	10	4
Monitor Policy and Propose Policy Change	3	1	0
Lobby to Advocate for Union Work	0	1	0
No Role	0	0	5

Advocacy Role

Twelve union leaders, who include eight of secondary union leaders and four of primary union leaders and eight active union members, who include three primary and five secondary members, stated that they would expect teacher unions to continue to advocate for multiple aspects of education reform. Among the advocacy role, the participants mentioned 1) improving professional development of teachers 2) eradicating sectarianism and political interferences in schools 3) ensuring social justice in education 4) raising teachers' morale 5) building citizenship

in students 6) creating school map to reallocate public schools based on need 7) ensuring diversity in schools 8) improving school climate and 9) improving education quality.

Improve professional development of teachers. Ten union leaders (two primary and eight secondary) and three active union members (two primary and one secondary active union members) discussed the importance for teacher unions to advocate the improvement of teachers' professional development. Primary union leader from the North (UP4) mentioned that the training sessions provided by the Ministry of Education were not sufficient. Respondent UP4 also mentioned the need for teachers to be taught pedagogy in teaching. Primary union leader (UP2) revealed the need to motivate teachers.

To train teachers and provide them with motivation, union leaders tried to collaborate with the Center for Research and Development (CERD) to create the training sessions those teachers need. The respondent added that "if teachers, for example, do not know Excel, we request training sessions in Excel. Each year, a request is sent from the Ministry of Education on the training sessions needed. I once suggested a training sessions on Rahbani theatre and it was conducted." Secondary school union leaders expressed their views on the need to continue to advocate for professional development of teachers. However, their responses were mostly focused on secondary school teachers. These respondents expressed this view in their focus group interview:

We push to create professional development and to prepare teachers for secondary school.

When we push in this direction we would assume an essential educational role.

Eradicate sectarianism and political interferences in schools. Two union leaders (one primary and one secondary) emphasized the need for teacher unions to act as advocates for

preventing political interference in education, which can cause corruption in schools. Similarly, four active union members (one primary and three secondary) also agreed that teacher unions should play a role in the elimination of sectarianism and political interferences by distancing education from politics. The former president stated his vision:

Teachers have to liberate themselves from the pressures and intimidations placed on them through political interferences. Sectarianism has now entered our daily lives and is entrenched in the simplest details of the school, inside secondary school. How? Through appointments. We have schools with an educational system that implants seeds of sectarian conflict. This is the system of reproduction of the political class. It keeps producing submissive followers that have no citizenship or a sense of belonging. This is among our priorities.

Another secondary school active union member (US5) discussed the goal for teacher unions to ensure the selection of teachers and administrators based on competence and merit.

We need to talk to our league to ensure that during [contractual teachers'] interviews the candidate, who shows competence and is able to prove himself, gets recruited. The committee should ask the candidates questions that are related to the subject that he is teaching. The most important thing is to stop using *wasta*. My friend who took some of my hours in the school was going for a contracting interview. She told me that the person, who supported me to enter contractual work, had told her to call him if she faced any trouble in the contracting interview so that he can help her

In addition, another secondary school active union member (AS1) discussed teachers' desire to live in dignity without the interference of politics. Respondent AS1 stated:

Among its most important roles is the protection of teachers' interests, financial and morale. We care about teachers' morale more than the financial increase. We live in dignity when our salaries are sufficient. We live in dignity when there is no favoritism. If I want to be recruited to a school or I want to transfer to another school, it is disgraceful to go ask a political leader that I want to transfer to another school. For example, there is a teacher who drives 72 kilometer every day for 32 years to get to her school. She tried to request a transfer but did not succeed. She even requested from a political leader twice or three times to be reallocated but did not succeed because she is not affiliated with any political group. This is why we request the prevention of any political interference in education especially in recruitment and work reallocation.

Ensure social justice in education (Public Schools vs. Private Schools). Three union leaders (two primary and one secondary) and a primary active union member explained that teacher unions should advocate for social justice in education to raise the status and quality of public school education and to make it more competitive with private school education. The former president emphasized the importance of strengthening public schools to reduce the gap between upper and lower social classes. Respondents contended that it is students with middle and upper socio-economic level who usually receive a good education. Children with low socioeconomic level are forced to enter public schools and often receive poor education, due to the government's negligence. The former president expressed this injustice and the need to apply social justice in the following statement:

When public schools' education is as strong as private schools, then I have achieved the true meaning of education. When I, according to the constitution, am providing the citizen

with the right to choose the school that he or she wants, I need to present to him or her with choices that are equiponderant. When private school education is better than public school education, he or she has no choice. He or she is forced to choose private school. When competition exists between public and private education, then I am providing citizen with the opportunity to choose the school that he or she wants, and of course, he or she will choose public school because it is free of charge and provides the same quality of education. This is the problem in our country. There is no equal opportunity provided for students and children, despite their social background. It is not the child's fault if he or she was born in a poor family. Does this mean this child does not have the right to be educated? So does it mean a poor education for children of the poor and a good education for the children of the rich? Schools are now similar to hotels, 5 stars, 4 stars, or 3 stars, choose the school that you can afford.

Primary union leader (UP3) also believes that union leaders play a vital role in improving public schools so that they can compete with private schools:

Our ambition is to reach a stage where public schools are able to compete with private schools. They both need to compete to reach quality in education. Private schools have the financial resources to create big playgrounds, good buildings, and are therefore able to go to the US and receive the SETA accreditation, which is an accreditation granted for quality education...Public schools cannot withstand a comparison with private schools. Public schools, however, have to reach a certain level to be able to competitive with private schools. This will ensure democratic education is applied so that each child gets the same quality of education.

Primary active union (AP1) lamented that teacher unions have been working on improving public schools, but the government's neglect of public schools is contributing to the reproduction of the status quo and to keeping the current ruling class in power. Respondent AP1 conveyed this belief when she said:

Unfortunately, our government policies weaken public schools and strengthen private schools so that, they, children of the bourgeoisie, reach high positions in this country while the children of the poor remain absent. This is the state of politics in this country.

Raise teachers' morale. Responses provided by primary union leader and an active union member that one of the roles of the union is to raise teachers' morale, because a motivated teacher inspires students and improves their performance. A primary union leader (UP2) highlighted the importance of motivating teachers to drive them to teach effectively. Primary active union member AP4 indicated the need for teachers to educate in comfortable working environments in order to motivate them internally and externally:

The most important thing is for a teacher to be comfortable financially and to have high morale. Morale means that a teacher works in a supportive environment that assists him [or her] to develop in his [or her] career... A teacher sometimes works hard and attains good results yet he or she does not get recognized. I feel that this is sometimes unattended to. We do not know who is effective as a teacher and who is ineffective.

Use school mapping to reallocate public schools based on need. The former president mentioned the importance of advocating for the development of a school map for public schools. Developing a school map will allow the Ministry of Education to use its resources efficiently and effectively. These maps will allow the government to allocate schools in a location where

diversity can be achieved. For instance, students from various sects, social classes, and backgrounds would be given the opportunity to mix with each other. In addition, the education and knowledge that would be exchanged between students would become richer. The respondent conveyed this message through the following:

The school map and teachers' development is related to the quality of education. What does this school map mean? They found schools with very few students enrolled and that are very close to each other. Some schools sometimes have around 25 students. Schools are multiplying here and there. They should establish schools by taking available resources into consideration to be able to provide an adequate education. We also choose the location of the schools in a place where people can mix together. We don't want to people to be sorted according to sect. If you go to the schools now, you will see them sorted according to sect.

Set high standards to improve quality of educational services. Two primary union leaders and four active union members, who consist of one primary and three secondary active members emphasized, the advocacy role of teacher union in the improvement of the quality of education. Respondent UP6 stated that teacher unions should advocate for the setting of clear standards with the aim of improving the quality of educational services for all students. Respondent UP3 criticized public and private schools. The participant stressed the need to set the criteria for quality of education to raise the standards of schools:

We want real education in this country. We do not want the student to be considered a client. One reason for the weakness of public school education is that parents resort to private education. I used to teach in one the most reputable schools in Beirut. Its

enrollment fee amounts to thousands of dollars. There, a student is considered a client. This student spends \$5000-\$6000 in the school. This approach is not the educational approach. His [student's] feelings are prioritized to educating him and to raising his educational level. You raise him to the next class levels even if he is academically weak and does with the criteria set because they fear losing him. The school climate in public schools and treatment of student as a client in private schools are not sufficient to develop a proper student and a true educator. Also, private schools do not have one educational level across the board. This is the problem in education. To create competition between schools and to increase the quality of education, revisions need to be made and criteria need to be set.

A primary active union member (AP7) specified that teacher unions should advocate for new educational policies, a change curriculum and an improvement of textbooks. Respondent AP7 believes that the teacher union is able to monitor and to work on the improvement of the curriculum, which is the core of teaching.

A secondary active union leader (AP3) perceived that the role of teachers and its union is to set the vision for the students to advance the Lebanese society through the improvement of education. Respondent AP3 noted:

We need to be responsible for the development of our society. Despite the problems in our country, we can develop our curriculum, and we can develop ourselves. We can work safely with our students. These students are the future. We need to take care of them and educate them academically and socially inside our schools or else how will we develop our society? We, as teachers, have failed but we have hope in our students to lead us.

Policy Development and Decision Making Role

Twelve union leaders (four primary and eight secondary union leaders) and ten active union members (six primary and four secondary active union members) stated that they believe that teacher unions should assume a role in policy development and decision-making. The respondents stated that teacher union has to 1) contribute to the enforcement of accountability in public schools 2) assume a role in decisions related to curriculum improvement 3) monitor policy and propose policy change and 4) lobby for union work.

Contribute to enforcing accountability in public schools. Nine union leaders (one primary and eight secondary union leaders) and two primary active union members indicated that the role of teacher union should be to assist in the enforcement of accountability in public schools. Primary union leader UP5 discussed that, today, in public schools, supervision is performed using an inspection approach. A teacher is not involved in his or her professional development process. Additionally, participant UP5 suggests that teacher unions are able to pressure the government to create accountability even with those who perform supervisory roles. Respondent UP5 believed that teacher union's authority should be increased and should be treated like the Order of Engineers or the Order of Lawyers. Secondary school union leaders described the ways in which they worked to be present in committees, to perform supervisory role, and to assume a role that they are not allowed to perform as a union. Secondary school union leaders noted:

We use pressure to be present in official exam committees ...Teacher union has a role in supervision and guidance. However, the teacher union does not have a law that permits it to interfere in this matter. There is though work with those educational individuals in the

cadre that Public Secondary School Teachers League represents. It interacts with those individuals who are able to create improvement and development.

A primary active union member (AP6) stated that teacher unions should have an active role in the supervision of schools. Respondent AP6 transferred this message through the following:

They need to enhance the role of supervision. Sometimes a year passes and we do not see an inspector in the school. If an inspector comes, he might come for a day or two days only. He sits in the administration and looks at financial matters. The inspector does not assess the effectiveness of the curriculum, if the teacher is playing their role appropriately in school, if or how this program is distributed, or if teachers are treated unfairly. There are some teachers who are comfortable at the expense of other teachers. An inspector does not care about all of this. His utmost concern is that the balance sheets are correct...we request that teacher union is granted authority to perform supervision. It can create a committee that visits schools and performs supervision just like inspectors to preserve the right of teachers and students because even inspection is politicized.

Assume a role in educational decisions related to curriculum improvement. Thirteen union leaders (four primary and nine secondary), ten active union members (six primary and four secondary active union members), and four inactive union members indicated that teacher unions should play a participative role in educational decisions. In a focus group, secondary school union leaders discussed the following:

We face a challenge as a league to be involved in evaluation process and to participate in curriculum planning and follow ups. The league should have a role that allows it to veto and state this is acceptable and this is not.

The current President of Public Secondary School Teachers League portrays how unions can create a participative role and can collaborate with the Ministry of Education. He stated:

Of course the league can play a role in education reform since it brings together all the secondary school teachers. For example, if they [Ministry of Education] want to develop the history subject, we can bring the secondary school teachers who teach history and agree with them on a plan. Afterwards, they would go to collaborate with the Ministry of Education on this matter and represent the league. This is one of the major roles of the league. This process produces better results if the Minister is aware of the union role in this issue and if the Ministry is willing for the union to participate. It facilitates things for us to be involved rather than to impose ourselves on others. The Minister can tell the league that it is responsible for the teachers. There are also supervisors and professors in the Lebanese University who will participate with us. The Minister of Education and Higher Education has to be aware of the importance of the role of union in any educational matter.

Similarly, active union members believed that teacher unions should be involved in educational decisions. A primary union active member (AP1) stated that teachers know the most about what the schools need and can therefore help in the improvement of the curriculum, as well as any other school- related problem:

Teacher unions are the guarantee for teachers, schools, and programs. They know what the schools need and how they can help schools because they work inside the schools. For example, there are a few solutions that need to be applied from primary until university...Of course; it [teacher union] can contribute in adjusting programs and

determining programs that can strengthen the schools. It can participate in various things even in laws, regulations, everything because they have become ancient [have experience] in these things.

Another active union member (AP3) also believed that teacher unions should work collaboratively with the Ministry of Education where their roles are complementary rather than adversarial. The respondent added:

I believe teacher unions should meet with the Ministry of Education and work with it on everything including the Center for Research and Development, Supervision and Guidance, teachers, and the school administration. The more you create integration -, the more you can succeed. We, in the public Primary School Teachers League, raise this matter in our meetings. We are not only concerned with the improvement of wages. We are also concerned with the improvement of teaching conditions. We do want the schools that we belong to have good reputation because public school teachers in Lebanon deserves this. Teacher unions can play a role along with the Ministry through consultation and through complementing one another. No one can achieve anything by himself or herself, neither the school's administration, teacher union, or the Minister. There have to be roles that complete one another and there has to be continuous consultation.

Inactive members also stated a similar response to union leaders and active union members. These members stated that, as a first step, teacher unions should advocate for a change in the curriculum. Afterwards, these unions should collaborate with the Ministry of Education and should place an educational plan together:

Teacher unions can play a role and work with the Ministry on setting an educational plan. They can review European curricula and their implementation. We are using a curriculum that is old and that goes back to WWI...Teacher unions should pressure the government to develop a new curriculum. Teachers in the union are active. They interact with students and know the environment surrounding the student. As a first step, they need pressure the government so that we can have new curriculum that is up to date and that does not include memorization.

Monitor policy and propose policy change. Two primary union leaders and one primary active union member stated that teacher union should play a role in monitoring policy and proposing policy change. Respondent UP2 disclosed that teacher leagues work with the Ministry of Education on school regulation policy. However, union leaders have not managed to succeed in passing this policy:

The league can interfere in the Ministry of Education. It can look at what the teacher wants. For example, currently, the Ministry is looking at internal regulations inside a school. This school's regulations can only be passed with the approval of the league. The Ministry issues schools' regulations but we work so that the Ministry does not pass a policy that we do not want because we are the caretakers. We know what the school needs...we have not been able to pass our proposed school regulations but we are still working on it.

Active union member (AP7) emphasized the need for teacher unions to influence educational policy, to change curriculum and to update textbooks.

Lobby to advocate for union work. One primary active union member (UP2) believed that teacher unions should lobby for union work to affect the appointment of Ministers and the adoption of new educational policy. Respondent UP2 expressed her view:

There should come a time when a Minister is either a member of a union or is a supporter of union work. Also, there has to be a Ministry who supports work-related issues of teachers' rights. It can monitor what the government has accomplished in relation to this union issue and what it did not do. Therefore, this Ministry will exist to develop the administration. If it were doing its work correctly then its main focus would be the interest of the citizens...Teacher unions should lobby in politics. To do so, it should have its own lawyers who are experts in these policies that way its work becomes more effective.

No Role

Five inactive members (four primary and one secondary inactive union member) believed that teacher unions cannot play a role in education reform and that only the Ministry of Education can perform this role. Inactive union members conveyed this issue through the focus group:

A teacher union does not have a role in improving education. For as long as I can remember, for fifteen years, the curriculum has not been changed. Changing curriculum has not been seriously addressed. Teacher union might have only discussed it, and it is not their responsibility to do anything more. This is the responsibility of the Center for Research and Development (CERD). There were individual initiatives implemented concerning the development of the curriculum, but there were no decisions made. I also do not see a role for the union in education reform. Currently, the situation in the country

is bad, and therefore I only see individual initiatives being made...education reform is initiated by the teacher and is transferred from the teacher to the educational advisor. The educational advisor transfers teachers' perspective to the people responsible for educational development. I believe the opinion of teacher unions is not considered in education reform matters. Improving the teaching profession is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, in addition to improving or changing curriculum.

Summary

This research examined the perceptions of teacher union leaders and members of public schools in Lebanon about the challenges facing their union and its current and potential role in education reform. Most of the participants belonged to one of two unions, the Public Primary School Teacher League or the Public Secondary School League. Only four of the participants were contractual teachers; three of whom were inactive members. Many themes emerged as results after data were analyzed and categorized.

This study's findings showed that teacher union leaders and members recognized the primary purpose of teacher unions. The majority responded that teacher unions' function is to improve educational services and to protect their members' rights as related to their working conditions. However, most of the inactive members did not see unions in the improvement of education. A key aspect of the function that emerged from the study was centered on combatting corruption in the country. In addition, the results showed that primary union leaders specified a new goal for teacher leagues. This additional function is for unions to provide benefits to their members. One example of the services that they have given was the teacher discount card. As for the strategies that teacher unions used to achieve union goals, most participants mentioned the

use of meet and confer and various pressure tactics as tools to achieve their goals. Other important strategies were also mentioned such as forming alliances with other labor union, using modern communication tools, and creating networking opportunity.

As for the challenges facing teacher unions, all three groups (union leaders, active union members, and inactive union members) identified the following challenges: to the nature of union work, administrative corruption in public schools, and an ineffective policymaking process in the Ministry of Education.

Union leaders and active union members mentioned the lack of legal recognition of their unions as a major challenge. The unions in public schools are leagues and are therefore not allowed to act as unions according to several Lebanese laws and decrees. Another challenge that showed up frequently was the consistent failure of old union strategies. These members recognized the ineffectiveness of current strategies and the need for new tactics to be employed by the union. In addition, interference in the union decision-making process is another obstacle that most participants agreed on. Most union members, active and inactive, believed that their union leaders are more loyal to their political parties than their union work. On the other hand, union leaders declared that, although they are politically affiliated, they place union work as their priority. An addition hindrance consisted of governmental interference in union decisions. Participants revealed that the government has impeded the work of unions through instated decrees such as Decree 112 that prevented union members from participating in strikes, demonstrations, and protests. Yet, the challenge that participants emphasized was the irresponsiveness of the government to teacher demands. The government does not collaborate with the union on any kind of demands. Further, the current political situation in the country,

where there is no elected parliament or president, compelled union leaders, both primary and secondary, to look for achievable union goals such as servicing their members and strengthening unity among teachers.

Administrative corruption was another union challenge that participants indicated. All three groups discussed the corruption that exists in public schools in addition to the political interferences that causes most of this corruption. Most of the respondents identified that incompetent contractual teachers are present in schools because they were supported and hired by politicians.

An additional challenge that union members, both active and inactive, pointed at was the lack of trust amongst teachers in the effectiveness of their union. Most union members expressed disappointment in their union's inability to achieve its members' demands. These members did not trust their leaders since they believed that their leaders are incapable of making union decisions because of their political loyalties.

Finally, ineffective policymaking processes in the Ministry of Education were another challenge mentioned by most respondents in all three groups (union leaders, active members, and inactive members). Union leaders and inactive union members stated that the lack of a strategic plan in the Ministry of Education to improve public schools hinders union work. Teacher unions found difficulty in improving education in the absence of a strategic plan. Moreover, public secondary school union leaders discussed the marginalization of their role in reform projects. Rather than being involved in the decision making process, their role as a league has been limited to advising the Ministry of Education, upon the Ministry's request.

The current role that teacher unions assume in education reform is that of advocacy and of raising awareness about the problems in public schools. Teacher unions, according to union leaders and active members, played a role in ensuring that competent personnel are recruited to the cadre. The majority of union leaders who highlighted this role represent secondary schools. As for their role in raising awareness on problems in public schools, secondary school union leaders and members indicated that their league organized many educational conferences to help raise awareness on problems in education and public schooling. Some of these issues were related to an outdated curriculum, textbooks with errors, and the situation of contractual teachers.

Lastly, for the potential role that teacher unions can play in education reform, all participants stressed the importance of teacher unions having a participative role in educational decision-making, especially the in decisions related to curriculum development. This research also showed that active union members and union leaders identified that teacher unions should play an advocacy role in the professional development of teachers. On the other hand, union leaders and few union members believed that teacher unions should contribute in enforcing accountability in public schools. This response was recurrent because there is a perceived absence of accountability. A method with which teacher unions can enforce accountability, according to responses of participants, is to be present in evaluation committees. As for inactive members, who were mostly primary teachers, they believed that teacher unions cannot play a role in education reform.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study is to identify the purpose of teacher unions in Lebanon from the perspective of union leaders and union members. This study also examines the challenges facing teacher unions in Lebanon and their role in education reform. Results show that teacher unions in Lebanon have a unique profile. While some of teacher unions' functions, roles, and challenges were similar to the literature in the West and Arab region, others showed uniqueness related to the Lebanese context. The common functions of teacher unions include protecting teachers' rights, improving of educational services, voicing teachers concerns, and providing services to their union members. The unique functions that were identified and that are related to the Lebanese context consist of raising teachers' morale and combatting corruption in the country. Teacher unions were also found to play an advocacy role and to undertake an awareness raising role. Another role that was common among teacher unions was policy development and decision-making role in education. Furthermore, the common yet significant challenges that teacher unions encounter are legal challenges, the absence of trade union facility time, the ineffective strategies, the current status of the teaching profession, and the influence of neoliberalism project. As for the challenges that were related to the Lebanese context, consist of organizational challenges, political sectarian leaders' interferences, and the lack of unity among union members.

Common Functions of Teacher Unions

Teacher unions have various functions and roles that they assume to serve their members and society. Literature (Murphy, 1990; Peterson, 1999; Kerchner and Koppich, 2004) showed

that some of these functions are related to teacher unions being labor unions, while other functions are considered aspects of professional associations. In addition, teacher unions, similar to any labor union, have a political role that they assume or should assume in society to influence policy formulation and implementation. This section highlights these similarities by discussing the findings of this study in term of the functions and roles of teacher unions in the context of the international and regional literature.

Cater to Teachers' Social and Economic Welfare

A common function of teacher unions is to voice teachers concerns and to protect teachers' rights. This function is perceived to be one of the main functions of teacher unions in Lebanon and was shown in the international literature to be the current focus of primary and secondary union leaders. Teacher unions also seem to share similar obstacles to their effective functioning. In working to protect their members, Peterson (1999) warns that teacher unions might protect incompetent teachers and thus advocate for policies that retain these teachers rather than ensure teacher quality or establish teacher accountability that serves the greater good in schools. Similarly, findings showed that teacher unions in Lebanon focus mostly on protecting teachers' rights and improving their working conditions. However, upon further comparative examination with the Western and Arab context, it becomes clear that while teacher unions in the US and Finland consider protecting union members' rights as their main function, they do not focus solely on this function when organizing. Teacher unions in the US and Finland find a balance by catering to their members' needs and by improving the quality of education (OAJ, 2014; Bernstein, 2003; Murphy, 1990). The Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) also organizes to maintain quality in schools while ensuring the rights of teachers are granted (OAJ,

2014). Similarly, Cowen and Strunk (2014) showed that although the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) in the US work to inhibit unfair or violent acts towards teachers, to raise teachers' salaries, to improve the working conditions of teachers, these federations also work on improving education. This action is clearly reflected in the recent strikes that the Seattle Teachers Union (STU), an affiliate of NEA, conducted during the 2014-2015 school year (Cozzarelli, 2015). In fact, the STU has conducted a strike in September 2015, where it was able to achieve a salary increase, an extended recess time for students, appointment of the needed educational support staff in schools, the removal of standardized testing in teacher evaluation, and the formation of race and equity teams in schools (Cozzarelli, 2015).

However, according to the respondents, teacher unions in Lebanon seem to be falling short on voicing all of their members' concerns. This might be due to the social conditions in the country, the large number of union members they represent, or the lack of time as expressed by few union leaders. Also, it might be due to the inability of union leaders to mobilize and to organize their members around a unifying cause. Bishara (2014) revealed the UGTT gained strength in Tunis when they focused on voicing their members' concerns, especially with a large membership that allowed them to change the authoritarian regime in the country. Bishara (2014) believes that with a large well-organized membership, a labor union or federation can impose its presence on those in positions of authority, prompting them to seriously reconsider union demands (Bishara, 2014).

An additional area of similarity between teacher unions in Lebanon and around the world is to provide services to their members. However, the amounts of services differ among teacher

unions. Teacher unions in the US and Finland offer many services to their members, while teacher unions in Lebanon offer limited services to their members. For instance, some of the services offered to members of the NEA and the AFT include professional guidance and advice, insurance, legal and financial services, service discounts, and scholarships for continuing education of members and education support for their dependents (retrieved from http://www.vtoweb.org/why_join.html; retrieved from <http://www.leonclassroomteachers.org/lcta-benefits/>). On the other hand, teacher unions in Lebanon have started providing services. They have created discount cards for teachers.

The variation in the amount of services offered is due to the fact that teachers unions in Lebanon do not charge membership fees and hence do not have sufficient funds to supply the necessary services (interview with Respondent AP3). On the other hand, in the U.S. and Finland, unions charge a membership and have sufficient funds for union activities. In fact, the union membership fee in the U.S. is automatically deducted from teachers' salaries and received by the Federations (Liebermann, 2000). Several scholars, however, warn against labor unions adopting the service model of unionism as it may push the union to focus only on serving their members and to ignore their other functions and roles (Peterson, 1999; Fletcher and Hurd, 1998).

Improve Curriculum and Raise Teacher Quality

Most respondents mentioned that the improvement of educational services was also common function for teacher unions. Although this function was widely recognized as an important issue to be addressed, Lebanese union leaders indicated that there are no sufficient efforts directed at improving education. Literature in the West showed that this function was considered important in teacher unions' history (Kerchner and Koppich; 2004; Koppich, 2009

Peterson, 1999). It seems that the oldest of teacher unions, the Education Institute of Scotland (EIS) and the National Education Association (NEA), were established with the aim to improve education. While the NEA aimed to raise the status of teaching to a profession (Wesley, 1957, p. 30), the EIS aimed to “promote sound learning and advance the interests of education.”

Teacher unions who ignored this function received strong criticism from the community for focusing solely on their members’ interests and for ignoring their professional responsibilities. Some teacher unions after criticism sought to adopt new strategies that allowed them to improve public education. For example, the NEA and the AFT negotiated on aspects of education and included them in collective bargaining agreements, initiated reform projects such as Peer Assistance and Review and Teacher Union Reform Network (Koppich, 2009), and brought external funding to conduct professional development courses for teachers (NEA, 2013). In Lebanon, teacher unions sought to improve education through an awareness-raising approach that highlight on issues that impacted education and that raise awareness about problems occurring in public schools. However, the literature showed that union goals are not achieved by raising awareness alone. Teacher unions in different countries use many strategies to achieve their objectives. For example, the Educational International (2013) report showed how South African teacher unions worked to eliminate child labor. South African teacher unions worked on both union level and school level to organize against the presence of child labor. South African teacher unions drafted a union code of conduct to forbid child labor, worked with media to raise further awareness on the issue, collaborated with the community to make school more attractive, and played an advocacy role to create political pressure (retrieved from http://download.ei-ie.org/sitedirectory/childlaboureditorialgroup/doc/ei_2013_childlabour_brochure_en.pdf).

Although Lebanese teacher unions also played an advocacy role in improving education, the limited strategies that they have used did not allow them to achieve their objectives. For example, Lebanese teacher unions advocated to improve employment terms and remove contractual work, recruit competent teachers to the cadre, and open pre-kindergarten classes in public schools. The strategies they have used were mostly pressure tactics such as strikes and demonstrations.

Lebanese teacher unions did not succeed to remove contractual work, to prevent political interferences in public schools which caused employment of incompetent personnel, or to have all schools open pre-kindergarten classes.

Moreover, Literature in the Western context also showed the importance of advocating for continuous professional development for teachers to raise the status of teachers. Symeonidis (2015) concluded in his study that to raise the status of teachers, unions should advocate for continuous professional development for teachers based on teacher needs, students' needs, innovative practices, and constructive evaluation. Symeonidis (2015) stated that professional development should also be linked to career development and skill recognition.

Despite these practices, the role of unions in improving education in Lebanon remains limited. Results showed that Lebanese union members thought of teacher unions as a labor union whose sole purpose is to protect their members' rights and to cater to their members' needs. Lebanese union members might not have been aware of teachers' role in the advancement of education because they might not have been involved in the union. On the other hand, the respondents' lack of awareness might be due to the failure of Lebanese teacher unions in playing a more vital role in the improvement of education, as mentioned by some active members. Smith (1997) and Adelberg (2008) mentioned there could be communication problems between union

leaders and their members in teacher unions in U.S. Similarly, union leaders of public schools in Lebanon do not reach out to their members and do not make them feel more involved in the leagues.

Influence on Education Policy

According to international literature, teacher unions are expected to organize to influence education policy. The most important role teacher unions play is a participative role in policy development and decision-making related to education. Although teacher unions in Lebanon do not have any influence on policy, curriculum development, education reform projects, union leaders and members agreed that teacher unions in Lebanon need to be involved in educational decisions, especially ones related to curriculum development. To compare with the Western context, an empirical study showed that forty percent of education unions among seventy education unions have a moderate influence on education policy and reform, while thirty five percent showed a slight influence on education policy (Symeonidis, 2015). Similar to the results of this study, Symeonidis (2015) showed that those education unions who reported slight or no influence either did not have collective bargaining rights and/or faced difficulty in communicating with the government. More than half of the education unions were not involved in curriculum development decisions or pedagogical practices. Thus, Symeonidis (2015) revealed that the government's relation with education unions determines the extent of influence that education unions have over policy.

Common Challenges facing Teacher Unions

This section discusses the common challenges faced by teacher unions in Lebanon and in other countries, based on the responses of participants in this study and the literature. Some

scholars have identified the causes and solutions to these challenges, which will also be revealed in this section.

Legal Challenges

Teacher unions in Lebanon have struggled with government interferences and with decrees that have attempted to prevent teachers from unionizing legally. Similar to the case in Lebanon, the government in Egypt also used decrees to restrict workers from organizing and from performing union acts in 2013 after the revolution, fearing the consequence of collective actions. This restriction resulted in the appointment of more than three-fourths of Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) board members in 2013. Bishara (2014) indicated that the appointed pro-government ETUF leadership did not support their members during rank and file members' protests, which resulted in union members losing trust in the effectiveness of their union. The ETUF was soon controlled by the government, workers formed new unions in 2011 without legal recognition, such as the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions (EFITU) and the Egyptian Democratic Labor Congress (EDLC). Similar to teacher unions in Lebanon, these independent unions were recognized by International Labor Organization and Educational International. However, these independent unions are still considered illegitimate in Egypt and have faced legal actions (retrieved from <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/03/egypt-independent-trade-unions-battle-decision-law.html>).

Absence of Trade Union Facility Time

The lack of supportive conditions was another common challenge that was mentioned in this study. One of the conditions that resulted from this study was the importance of granting union leaders trade union facility time. Union leaders in Lebanon explained that union members

in Lebanon do not have enough time to cater to their union members' needs or even address educational issues. Mitchel, Coutinho, and Morrell's study (2012) found similar challenges of trade union facility time in the UK since the government reconsidered laws that fund trade union facility time in the public sector. These scholars' study showed that providing trade union facility time actually benefits both the organization and the union as it provides a framework to use in consultation and representation of employees during policy development and decision-making, encourages a collaborative culture in the workplace, stops problems in the workplace from escalating, and improves communication between employees and management and employees and their union.

Current Status of the Teaching Profession

Teacher unions in Lebanon and in other countries are influenced by the current status of the teaching profession as an inferior profession. According to Sykes (1999), this inferior view of teaching profession is the result of certain characteristics inherent to teaching that prevents it from achieving the status of a profession. These characteristics include the feminine nature of teaching, the trajectories of socialization and its lack of career path, and a competitive salary scale that attracts highly competent individuals. Sykes explains that these characteristics of teaching are partially a result of government policies and government treatment towards teachers and towards the teaching profession. In fact, teachers in Lebanon do not get the privileges observed in countries that took major leaps towards professionalization of teaching. Sahlberg (2009) and the OECD (2010) report that in Finland, the government's actions changed the status of teaching to a profession raising as a result community's views of teaching and teachers. As part of its reform strategy, the Finnish government changed salaries of teachers to be equal to

those in other professions, raised the entry level of teaching to a master's level, and improved teacher preparation programs. The government also provided continuous professional development for teachers, entrusted teachers in curriculum development and student evaluations, and involved them in educational policies to reaffirm that teachers are indeed professionals.

In contrast, this study found that teacher unions in Lebanon are found to be facing difficulty in communicating with the government on any kind of concerns, including educational concerns. Moreover, the lack of national strategic plan creates difficulty in aligning vision of teacher unions with that of the government, with a purpose for collaboration to improve the teaching profession as well as education. In fact, the government in Lebanon does not involve teachers in decision-making or consider the perspective of teachers in curriculum development, according to responses of participants.

Usage of Ineffective Strategies

Teacher unions in Lebanon are found to use pressure tactics such as strikes, demonstrations, and protests, tactics which are currently perceived as ineffective. In Argentina, for instance, Serdar (2012) found that general strikes used by Central de los Trabajadores de la Argentina (CTA) resulted in low union membership participation and failed to place pressure on the government to issue policies. The CTA moved to more successful strategies. They built alliances not only with other labor unions but also with non-labor community based groups and organize them. In another instance, strong unions, such as teacher unions in U.S., first used industrial style collective bargaining approach, which is considered a strong tool to negotiate on teachers' working conditions and to protect teachers' rights (Koski, 2012). When industrial style approach faced criticism, the NEA and the AFT moved to reforming collective bargaining

agreements to include instruction, curriculum, and teacher evaluation system after receiving criticism from the community. While teacher unions in the West used collective bargaining approach, teacher unions in Lebanon continue to use meet and confer, which leaves final decision to the Minister of Education and Higher Education, leaving

Influence of Neoliberalism Project on Policy Development

Scholars have pointed out the threat of the spread of neoliberalism as resulting from policies that aim to privatize public sectors to reduce government spending (Weiner, 2012; Campbell & Pedersen, 2001). Regarding public education, Weiner (2012) describes neoliberalism project as an “attack” that is caused by elites’ desire to exploit the educational sector. Teacher unions in different countries also communicated their fear of privatization of education in their countries. Symeonidis (2015) showed the perspective of seventy-five education unions, which revealed their concern about “excessive ongoing privatization practices in their countries and connected their negative effects to a recent decline in teacher status, arguing that competitive attitudes, precarious employment, and high-stakes evaluation demotivate teachers and create unstable working conditions” (p. 72).

In Lebanon, Traboulsi (2014) discusses the international development agencies in promoting privatization of public sectors when he stated that the “World Bank’s project to streamline government bureaucracies, hand over ‘extra’ government services to the private sector, reduce administrative and government budgets, halt government subsidies of foodstuffs and fuels and reign in social welfare and social redistribution” (p. 9). After the Paris III conference agreement, the Lebanese government promoted contractual work in educational public sector. Teacher unions believed that the increase in contractual work in public schools is

part of Paris III agreement to privatize education. Indeed, the increase of contractual work in public schools has had negative effects on teacher quality since incompetent teachers entered the teaching profession. However, there isn't enough proof to link international development agencies education reform projects to privatization of education in Lebanon.

Unique Aspects of Teacher Unions in Lebanon

Teacher unions in Lebanon have unique functions, roles, and challenges that are related to the context of Lebanon. In Lebanon, the sectarian system of governance has affected public education and has influenced the perspective of the union members on the role and challenges of union members in education. This section will discuss the unique functions of teacher unions and their implications on the role of unions in education.

A key function of teacher unions in Lebanon, according to union leaders and active members, is to combat corruption in the country. Traboulsi (2014) discussed rampant scandals and corruptions in the public sector, stating that Lebanon today has moved away from clientelism to a "mafocracy," allowing political sectarian leaders to exploit their positions for personal gain. These political sectarian leaders, also called *zuama*, use violence and legal cover-ups to achieve economic interests. Nongovernmental organizations have "attributed these corruption to sectarianism," which has endorsed these political sectarian leaders' actions. Teacher unions in Lebanon have addressed prevalent corruption at the national level in an attempt to seek funding for salary and scale increase.

Union members believed that their union should raise teachers' morale since the absence of accountability and transparency in schools and the existence of injustice is demotivating teachers in the public sector. Currently, teacher unions in Lebanon attempt to raise the motivation

of teachers through recognizing experienced teachers. Literature suggests that teacher unions can raise teachers' morale by advocating for professional development of teachers that is based on needs. Research also states that teacher unions can advocate for reformation of the teacher evaluation system to be similar to a performance based system and a peer review evaluation system (Koppich, 2009).

Unique Challenges facing Teacher Unions in Lebanon

Teacher unions in Lebanon face unique challenges. This section examines the organizational challenges that threaten to impede the work of unions. In addition, the impact of the interference of political sectarian leaders in union work and in public schools, added to the lack of unity among union members which will be discussed in this section.

First, in stark difference to any independent labor union, the organizational charts of the public school teachers leagues in Lebanon show that the Minister of Education and Higher Education is at the top of the leagues' hierarchy. Consequently, the Minister of Education and Higher Education is granted authority through decrees to administer the work of the public school teachers leagues. This unique feature results in a major conflict of interest whereby the employer, or in this case the Minister of Education and Higher Education, can stop union work. This hegemony undermines any negotiations that might occur at the teachers' level.

Second, the structure of Public Primary School Teachers League is heavily bureaucratic. The Public Primary School Teachers League has an extra level of leaders, which are the Communication Committee in the districts. This union level was established before the unity of the five leagues in governorates in 2009 and was kept in the current organizational structure due to the amended Decree 1553 that mentions this layer. Another challenge related to the

organizational structure of the leagues is the roles and duties that exist in the executive committees. Some of these roles do not align with the advocacy role of teacher union or a labor union. Rather, these positions in both public school leagues, such as secretary of sports committee, secretary of arts committee, and secretary of cultural committee represent positions in a social club. These positions might have been created to align with the legally stated functions of the union in the Lebanese context and to meet its instated role as a cultural league.

Third, teacher unions in Lebanon are affected by political and sectarian leaders' interferences in public schools, which has resulted in administrative corruption and has lowered standards of education. In a study conducted in Kenya, Amutabi (2003) showed that political interference in education, similarly to the situation of Lebanon, marginalized the role of teachers in educational decision-making, negatively impacted policy, and caused nepotism and corruption in schools. Amutabi (2003) also revealed the negative effect of political interferences in education, which increased violent acts committed by students and increased in students' dropout rate.

Fourth, the interference of political sectarian leaders in the work of union has caused union members' perception of their union leaders as pro-government and pro-political parties. Traboulsi (2014) showed how political sectarian leaders interfere to gain control and weaken union work. Traboulsi (2014) provides the division in CGTL as an example, whose leaders became submissive to the government's demands. When the CGTL was seen as active, demanding an increase wages and encouraging its members to stop voting for the political sectarian governing class, the Minister of Labor, who was also a leader in Syrian Social Nationalist Party "decided to usher in five new syndicates loyal to Berri and Hariri" to divide the

CGTL (Traboulsi, 2014, p.62). With continuous influence of political sectarian leaders, the CGTL weakened and later lost the trust of its members. The CGTL currently has 210 trade unions, but represents only 7% of workers. As a result of low representation, the CGTL has lost its collective bargaining rights and most of its collective bargaining contracts gained during Chehabist period (Traboulsi, 2014).

Fifth, political sectarian leaders in Lebanon have also affected union members' perceptions and their actions. According to inactive union members, union members in schools follow sectarianism system, create coalitions, division, and a feeling of tension in schools. Even during elections union members follow their political sectarian leaders and affiliated political parties to elect their leaders in line with those sectarian leaders' directives. To explain this phenomenon, Traboulsi (2014) examined the social class in Lebanon and states that this loyalty between class and sect is built on a relationship of "a complex network of interaction and disengagement, mutual influence and competition, on the grounds that both [sects and class] are frameworks for engaging in the battle for domination and the acquisition of the social surplus" (p. 100-101).

Finally, teacher unions in Lebanon suffer from lack of unity among their union members. The perception of a superior status accorded to secondary teachers over primary teachers creates disunity in union decisions between Public Primary School Teachers League and Public Secondary School Teachers League. While secondary union leaders work towards maintaining the pay scale difference between secondary teachers and primary teachers, primary teachers feel injustice being done to them since they also possess university degrees. In other countries, primary teachers and secondary school teachers are paid almost the same salary (retrieved from

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/facts_and_figures/salaries.pdf). Lavy (2007) recommends that pay should be based on performance, which can help to retain qualified teachers in schools and which identify teachers who are ineffective or need mentoring. A pay scale system that is linked to performance can also become an incentive for teachers and helps in raising teachers' morale.

Conclusion

After discussing teacher union's purpose and roles in Lebanon, it is visible that the model that members of the public school teacher leagues in Lebanon have adopted is a unique version of teacher unionism. First, the existing policies restrict the definition of unionism under the label of "leagues", places a lot of decision-making power in the Ministry of Education when it comes to the rights of teachers to have a union and the unionism they are permitted to practice.

Moreover, results have shown that the views of members and leaders of the teacher leagues on the functions and strategies that the Lebanese public school teacher leagues have adopted are aligned with aspects of the different models of unionism. For example, Lebanese public school teacher leagues are fighting for their members' rights, voice teachers' concerns, and provide services to union members. These are aspects of industrial unionism model that are related to teachers' economic and social well-being (Peterson, 1999). Also, there is evidence that Lebanese public school teacher leagues have also attempted to address educational concerns, which is an aspect of professional unionism model. Moreover, public school union leaders in Lebanon attempted to combat corruption in the country, which is related to both social justice unionism and other times social movement unionism according to the participants' responses. However, it seems that currently public school union leaders' conception is still similar to an

industrial unionism model. Despite their slight attempts to improve education, public school union leaders have strategically worked towards meeting the teachers' needs first and granting them economic and social security. While the rest of the world moves into instituting professional unionism, Lebanese teacher unionism cannot be considered to have succeeded in providing the basic needs to their constituents as specified by industrial unionism. There is a major challenge for the Lebanese teacher unionism to fully meet the basic needs for teachers since their existing leagues do not have the legal recognition that gives the league the right to collective bargaining and to represent their members. Despite these challenges, historically Lebanese teacher unionism has demonstrated promising initiatives that can well be considered success stories which the existing leagues can build on to establish a teacher unionism model that responds to their unique needs and that is able to improve the status of education in Lebanon. Moreover, as visible in the findings of this study, Lebanese public school teachers managed to work as members in the league to improve education. Teacher leagues have worked on raising awareness about the problems in the curriculum and in public schools, which scholars recognized is actually the responsibility of teacher unions (Kerchner & Koppich, 1993). In addition, Lebanese public school teacher leagues raised their voices and concerns about problems related to teachers' contractual work that resulted in decrease of teacher quality in public schools. Raising teaching standards was one of the elements that Kerchner and Koppich (2004) discuss in presenting the concept of professional unionism. Kerchner and Koppich (2004) also acknowledged the importance of shared decision-making in professional unionism model. However, Lebanese teacher unionism seems is not able to achieve shared decision-making in

education due to the absence of union recognition and the government's unwillingness to create a channel of communication.

One of the unique functions of Lebanese teacher unionism is the union's role in combatting corruption in the country. The "collective action frame" mentioned by Ross (2008) shows that Lebanese public school teacher leagues raised their concerns and stood their ground to expose corruption in the country. Lebanese public school teacher leagues joined strike in solidarity with civil society's issues that occur in the country, such as trash crises and the prices of public services to achieve their members' interests as teachers and Lebanese citizens also suffer from these struggles (retrieved from <http://www.albawaba.com/business/lebanon-public-sector-unions-vote-strike-join-demonstrations-740638>). However, the strategic repertoire that public school teacher leagues used to combat corruption in the country were limited to raising awareness on corruptions and to apply pressure tactics such as strikes, demonstrations, and protests. As such and in light of these results, Lebanese teacher unionism needs to include more effective repertoires that can stop corruption in the country.

Finally, Lebanese teacher unionism cannot address external challenges, such as the impact of neoliberalism, if leaders do not resolve their internal challenges that result in the lack of unity amongst their members and the absence of future successors for their leagues due to the lack of union training. Lebanese public school union leaders have reached a retirement age and therefore need to transfer their experiences to the new generation of leaders that will lead their public school teacher leagues.

The next section will provide recommendations for Lebanese public school teacher leagues to move towards advanced unionism models mentioned in the literature and adopt strategies that can resolve their current challenges.

Implications

This study has implications for both theory and practice. First, findings of this study increase awareness on the current role of teacher unions in Lebanon that are rooted in the views of teacher union leaders, teachers who are active members in the union, and teachers who are inactive members in the union. This study also provides recommendations on the potential role that teacher unions in Lebanon can play in educational reform. Second, this study shows the extent to which there are shared views on the union role among union members and their leaders, and if union leaders truly represent the aspiration of their members. Third, the results of this study provides union leaders with valuable information that can be used to further engage teachers who are active and reach teachers who are inactive members, and to increase their participation in teacher unions. Fourth, the results of this study can assist union leaders and policymakers in the development of new policies that can address not only teachers' needs but also issues concerned with education and the community. Finally, this study adds to the existing yet limited knowledge base in Lebanon and the region on unionism and teacher unions and is beneficial for other researchers who wish to conduct similar research on teacher unions in Lebanon or the Arab region.

Implications for Practice

To contribute to the effectiveness of teacher unions in Lebanon and to broaden their current role, this study propose the following suggestions: (a) form a legally recognized labor

union, (b) adopt newly effective strategies, (c) set criteria for union elections, (d) create educational workshops for teachers, (e) provide union induction programs and union training sessions, and (f) initiate education reform projects. This study can also inform policymakers in three areas: (a) adjust teachers' salaries and make them appealing, (b) engage teacher unions in educational decisions and policy development, and (c) develop a teacher evaluation system based on performance.

Form a legally recognized labor union. Public school teacher leagues must gain a legal status and must be recognized officially as a labor union. This step could help prevent government interference and could allow public school teacher leagues to better represent their members. As a labor union, teacher unions can then use collective bargaining rights. Collective bargaining in Lebanon is granted if the labor union represents a minimum of 60 per cent of workers. In addition, collective agreements must be ratified by two thirds of union members at the general assembly (retrieved from http://www.ilo.org/declaration/follow-up/annualreview/archiveofbaselinesbycountry/WCMS_DECL_FACB_LBN/lang--en/index.htm).

Adopt new strategies. Teacher unions need to seek new strategies that can be more effective in achieving their goals. Unions need to use new models of unionism (professional unionism, social justice unionism, or social movement unionism) to better address concerns related to education, the community, and even their members. Using an advanced model of unionism, teacher unions can engage their members more in union work while involving those who are young and inactive.

Teacher union should also work on strategies to strengthen their communication with their union members, create stronger ties with them, and resolve internal conflicts. Union leaders

can visit schools and hold discussion sessions with their members where they listen to their members' needs and concerns. Union leaders must seek ways to engage union members in union activity and in decision-making. Once rank and file union members are involved in union work, union leaders can mobilize them. Also, teacher unions can increase the use of social media and other modern communication tools that provide a two-way interaction to stay connected to their members. As for the conflict in the teaching body (primary vs. secondary teachers) that is caused by a pay differential, union leaders in both primary and secondary should meet and minimize their internal differences. In Finland, one of the aspects that made the OAJ strong is that it represented 95% of the teaching body. Therefore, teacher unions need to work on uniting the teaching body to strengthen their position as labor unions and to truly be representative of teachers.

Teacher unions must connect to the community, which includes not only labor organizations, but also non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parents, and students. Unions need to gain their trust and support. The community's support will enable teacher unions to have a stronger stance. Union leaders must also engage in research activities to stay updated on the latest studies in union field and initiate their own research to upgrade their union performance. Many public school teacher league leaders who were interviewed are French educated and currently suffer from English language as a barrier, which prevents them from being informed about many important studies conducted about teacher unions.

Set criteria for union elections. The election processes in public school teacher leagues was formed to achieve democracy. The process allowed any public school teacher from different parts of Lebanon to reach leadership positions. However, the election does not ensure that

competent leaders reach leadership positions. Therefore, teacher leagues must set conditions to ensure that future leaders have militancy experience and leadership skills. These conditions can reduce external influences to ensure that competent leaders will lead the public school teacher leagues.

Provide union induction program and union training sessions. When teachers are elected as union representatives and leaders, they need to be informed about their role and union expectations. Training is also essential for union leaders and representatives to advance their union and should be viewed as a major requirement for continuity of the public school teacher leagues. Through training sessions, public school leagues' leaders can prepare successors to be able to lead union in the future. Current teacher league leaders, due to their financial status, need to either provide training themselves or use their relations with other labor organizations to assist them in training their leaders. After the leagues become legal unions, union leaders should impose a membership fee to financially support their union activities. As for trade union facility time, Mitchel, Coutinho, and Morrell (2012) recommend that union leaders improve the understanding of facility time among management and colleagues, cover union officials who are granted union facility time, support and protect released representatives and those individuals who replace them at work, and show management that workloads are manageable.

Teacher unions should work on conducting educational workshops that can help their members professionally develop in their careers. The International Labor Organization stated that educational workshops can also strengthen unity of union members, which can benefit public school teacher leagues due to the lack of unity of its union members. Also, raising the professional standards of their members might help change the community's view of teachers

and win their support. Teachers need to show that they are professionals who care about students' needs and about raising the educational standards.

Engage teacher unions in educational decisions and policy development. Bascia and Osmond (2012) stated in her study that “all the evidence shows that successful education systems rely on strong self-confident teacher unions working in partnerships with governments on education policies.” The Ministry of Education needs to set a national strategic plan in collaboration with teacher unions. The government should see teacher unions as partners to improve education rather than as a labor union. Also, teacher unions can help the Ministry of Education see a new perspective in education reform projects. By involving teacher unions, implementing a new curriculum or a new reform project can be more effective.

Implication for Research

Several suggestions for further research emerged from this study. First, since this study was conducted on public school teacher unions in Lebanon, capturing the perspective of union leader and union members, it would be beneficial to perform a study with teacher union in the private sector. Second, it is important to conduct a study about teacher unions that includes the perception of key members of the Ministry of Education including the Minister. The Minister of Education and Higher Education can reveal why teacher unions do not get involved in educational decisions and give his perspective about the challenges and the roles of teacher unions. Third, future research can also examine the effect of teacher unions on students' learning in the context of Lebanon and the Arab region. Fourth, an action research study should be conducted to develop a plan for teacher unions in Lebanon to improve their union position.

APPENDIX A

PHASE I: PROTOCOL FOR UNION LEADERS' FOCUS GROUPS, FORMAL FIELD INTERVIEWS, AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Opening statement: In this focus group/formal field interview/individual interview, I would like from you to answer the following questions to create an understanding of your perspective as union leaders about challenges facing teacher union and its role in education reform.

1. From your perspective, what is the primary purpose of union? What are the functions and strategies that you use to achieve your union goals?

Possible probes: What are the goals of your union? In what ways have your union been involved in improving teaching toward becoming a profession?

2. What challenges are facing teacher unions in Lebanon?

Possible Probes: What are the goals that the union aimed for and didn't achieve? What is impeding the advancement of union in achieving their goals in your opinion?

3. From your perspective, what role teachers unions have/ or can play to contribute to education reform?

Possible probes: Describe the domains as well as the strategies where you believe unions contributed to educational reform. Think back, can you describe specific incidents where you consider that the union had a role in promoting educational reform? If not, do you see a future role for union where it contributes to educational reform? In what ways?

APPENDIX B

PHASE I: PROTOCOL FOR TEACHERS' FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW, FORMAL FIELD INTERVIEWS, AND INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Opening statement: In this focus group/formal field interview/individual interview, I would like from you to answer the following questions to create an understanding of your perspective as union members about challenges facing teacher union and its role in education reform.

1. From your perspective, what is the primary purpose of teacher union? What are the functions and strategies followed by teachers unions to achieve these goals?

Possible probes: What are the goals of your union? In what ways have they been involved in improving teaching toward becoming a profession? What do you value most about being a member of a teacher union?

2. What challenges are the challenges that are facing teacher unions in Lebanon?

Possible Probes: Do you feel your union is representing and advocating for you as a teacher? What is impeding the advancement of union in achieving their goals in your opinion?

3. From your perspective, what role teachers unions have/ or can play to contribute to education reform?

Possible probes: Describe the domains as well as the strategies where you believe unions contributed to educational reform Think back, can you describe specific incidents where you consider that the union had a role in promoting educational reform? If not, do you see a future role for union where it contributes to educational reform? In what ways?

APPENDIX C

PHASE 2: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR UNION LEADERS (INCLUDING CURRENT PRESIDENT) MEMBERS

Individual interviews will be conducted with two of the participating union leaders from focus groups. The aim of this interview is 1) to seek your reaction to the conclusions I reached after analyzing the data I collected during focus groups, 2) seek further clarification on some of the statements made by union leaders' responses to understand and clearly communicate their views, 3) conduct member checks of union leaders' responses, and 4) conduct triangulation. During the interview, I will present to you a list of your responses on the function of your union, the challenges it is facing, and its role in education reform. I will ask you to kindly comment on the responses and give further clarification to some of the statements presented during focus group interview. The duration of this individual interview will be around 60 minutes. The following list of questions will guide the interview:

1. In your opinion, what does your union do?

Possible probes: Can you describe the responsibilities/tasks that are required of your union?

2. What barriers impede teacher union's work that prevents it from achieving its goals?

Possible probes: What is blocking union from achieving success? Can you give examples?

3. From your perspective, do you see a role for teacher union in improving teaching as a profession? If yes how?

Possible probes: Do you believe that your union is able to be part of any education improvement acts (in your school or outside of school)? If yes, how so?

I will present next the results obtained from the focus group interviews with union leaders and teachers (active and inactive union members). The results include collective codes and initial categories that reflect the themes that emerged after analyzing data collected from focus group interviews.

4. Please comment on the findings concerning the categories previously generated by you, union leaders. Do you think the generated categories are representative of your own views on teacher union; its function, challenges, and its role in education reform?

5. Please comment on the findings concerning the categories generated by union leaders. How would you interpret such results?

6. Please comment on the commonalities and differences between teachers' and union leaders' responses that were generated from the findings of the individual interviews.

Possible probes: How would you interpret such results? What accounts for such differences/similarities? Can you make sense of the findings?

Concluding Question: Would you like to add anything? Do you think there is something that we have missed?

APPENDIX D

PHASE II: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR TEACHER MEMBERS

Individual interviews will be conducted with four of the participating active members and inactive members from focus groups. The aim of this interview is 1) to seek your reaction to the conclusions I reached after analyzing the data I collected during focus groups, 2) seek further clarification on some of the statements made by teacher responses to understand and clearly communicate teachers' perceptions, 3) conduct member checks of the teacher's responses, and 4) conduct triangulation. During the interview, I will present to you a list of your responses on the function of your union, the challenges it is facing, and its role in education reform. I will ask you to kindly comment on the responses and give further clarification to some of the statements presented during focus group interview. The duration of this individual interview will be around 60 minutes. The following list of questions will guide the interview:

1. In your opinion, what does your teacher union do?

Possible probes: Can you describe the responsibilities/tasks that are required of your union?

2. What barriers impede teacher union's work that prevents it from achieving its goals?

Possible probes: What is blocking union from achieving success? Can you give examples?

3. From your perspective, do you see a role for teacher union in improving teaching as a profession? If yes how?

Possible probes: Do you believe that your union is able to be part of any education improvement acts (in your school or outside of school)? If yes, how so?

I will present next the results obtained from the focus group interviews with union leaders and teachers (active and inactive union members). The results include collective codes and initial categories that reflect the themes that emerged after analyzing data collected from focus group interviews.

4. Please comment on the findings concerning the categories previously generated by you, the teachers. Do you think the generated categories are representative of your own views on teacher union; its function, challenges, and its role in education reform?

5. Please comment on the findings concerning the categories generated by union leaders. How would you interpret such results?

6. Please comment on the commonalities and differences between teachers' and union leaders' responses that were generated from the findings of the individual interviews.

Possible probes: How would you interpret such results? What accounts for such differences/similarities? Can you make sense of the findings?

Concluding Question: Would you like to add anything? Do you think there is something that we have missed?

APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR FORMER PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS LEAGUE

Opening statement: In this interview, I would like from you to answer the following questions to create an understanding of your perspective as union leader who has served few years as head of the Public Secondary School Teachers League to give an overview of the history of union by identifying challenges that faced in the past and are facing teacher unions today and whether you view a role that teacher union had/has/will have in education reform. The duration of this individual interview will be around 60 minutes. The following list of questions will guide the interview:

1. From your perspective, what are the major events that brought about a turning point in your union?

Possible probes: What were the challenges that faced you and your union in the past? How did you overcome it? In what ways was your union involved in improving teaching toward becoming a profession?

2. From your perspective, what is the primary purpose of union? What are the functions and strategies that you use to achieve your union goals?

Possible probes: What are the goals of your union? In what ways have your union been involved in improving teaching toward becoming a profession?

3. What challenges are facing teacher unions today in Lebanon?

Possible Probes: What are the goals that the union aimed for and didn't achieve? What is impeding the advancement of union in achieving their goals in your opinion?

4. From your perspective, what role teachers unions have/ or can play to contribute to education reform?

Possible probes: Describe the domains as well as the strategies where you believe unions contributed to educational reform. Think back, can you describe specific incidents where you consider that the union had a role in promoting educational reform? If not, do you see a future role for union where it contributes to educational reform? In what ways?

APPENDIX F RESPONSES OF UNION LEADERS

<u>Codes</u>	<u>Current President</u>	<u>Former President</u>	<u>Primary (out of 8)</u>	<u>Secondary (out of 8)</u>	<u>Total Union Leaders (out of 17)¹¹</u>
Primary Function of Teacher Union					
Protects Teachers' Rights	1	1	8	8	17
<i>Ensure Fair Wages and Improve Working Conditions</i>	1	1	8	8	17
<i>Combat Injustice or Violence Acts Against Teachers</i>	0	0	2	0	2
Improve Educational Services	1	1	7	8	16
Voice Teachers' Concerns	0	0	5	0	5
Provide Special Benefits to Union Members	0	0	4	0	4
Raise Teachers' Morale	0	0	2	0	2
Combat Corruption in the Country	0	1	1	0	2
Strategies Used to Achieve Union Goals					
Use Various Types of Pressure Tactics	1	1	8	8	17
<i>Demonstrations, Strikes, and Protests</i>	1	1	8	0	10
<i>Refusal to Proctor or Correct Official Exams</i>	1	0	0	0	1
Meet and Confer	1	0	6	8	15
Use Modern Communication Tools	0	0	5	0	5
<i>Mobile Application</i>	0	0	3	0	3
<i>Use of Media Coverage in Union Events</i>	0	0	1	0	1
<i>Social Media</i>	0	0	1	0	1
Form Alliances with Labor Unions	0	1	1	0	2

¹¹ The amount was reduced by one since former president of Public Secondary School Teachers League was present in the secondary union leaders' focus group

Create Networking Opportunity to Gain Support	0	0	1	0	1
Challenges Facing Teacher Unions					
Challenges Related to the Union Work	1	1	8	8	17
Lack of Legal Recognition of Unions	0	1	3	8	11
Repeated Failure of Old Union Strategies	1	1	2	8	11
<i>Increasing Need for Creative Tactics</i>	1	1	1	8	10
<i>Lack of Involvement of Young Teachers in Union</i>	0	0	1	0	1
Many Unmet Basic Teachers' Demands	0	1	2	0	3
Interference in the Union Decision-Making Process	1	1	8	8	17
From Government	1	1	4	0	6
<i>Punitive Decrees against Unionizing in Public Sector</i>	0	1	2	0	3
<i>Being Irresponsible to Teachers' Demands</i>	1	1	4	0	6
<i>Enforcing Authoritarian decisions by the Minister of Education and Higher Education on Union</i>	0	0	2	0	2
From Sectarian/Political Leaders	0	0	4	0	4
<i>Manipulation of Public's Perception of Teacher Unions using Media</i>	0	0	2	0	2
<i>Loyalty of Union leaders and Union Members to Political Parties</i>	0	0	3	0	3
Lack of Respect of Teaching as a Profession	1	1	7	0	8
<i>View of Teaching as a Blue Collar Profession</i>	0	0	3	0	3
<i>Feminizing Teaching as a Profession</i>	0	0	1	0	1
<i>Low Salaries</i>	1	1	7	8	9
Administrative Corruption in Schools	1	1	8	8	17
<i>Appointment of Incompetent Personnel</i>	0	1	4	8	12
<i>Misuse of Resources</i>	1	1	3	0	5
<i>Absence of Accountability</i>	0	0	2	0	2
Lack of Trust among Teachers in the Effectiveness of Union	1	0	0	0	1
Lack of Unity among Teachers	1	0	1	0	2
Lack of Support of Union from Parents and the Community	0	0	2	0	2
Lack of Trust in Public Education	0	0	1	0	1
Lack of Security in the Country	0	0	4	0	4

Lack of Supportive Conditions Needed to Facilitate Union Work	0	0	2	0	2
<i>Absence of Time Allocation for Union Work</i>	0	0	1	0	1
<i>Absence of Union Centers for Teachers to Conduct Union Activity</i>	0	0	2	0	2
<i>Lack of training of Union Leaders and Union Members</i>	0	0	1	0	1
Ineffective Policy Making Processes in Ministry of Education	1	1	6	8	17
Lack of Participation of Unions in Decision Making	0	0	3	8	11
Lack of a Strategic Plan at Ministry of Education to Improve Public Schools	1	0	5	8	14
Decrease in Funding for Education	0	1	4	0	6
<i>Decrease in Resources Allocated for Teacher Benefits</i>	0	1	2	0	2
<i>Lack Funding for Teaching Resources and School Facilities</i>	0	1	5	0	6
Influence of International Development Agencies on Education Policy	0	1	0	0	1
Role of Teacher Unions in Education Reform					
Advocacy Role	1	1	5	8	14
<i>Improve Terms of Employment for Teachers</i>	0	1	0	0	1
<i>Ensure Appointment of Competent Personnel</i>	1	1	2	8	11
<i>Open Kindergarten Classes in Public Schools</i>	0	0	1	0	1
Awareness Raising about Problems in Public Schools	1	1	0	8	9
Potential Role of Teachers Unions in Education Reform					
Advocacy Role	0	1	4	8	12
<i>Improve Professional Development of Teachers</i>	0	0	2	8	10
<i>Eradicate Sectarianism and Political Interferences in Schools</i>	0	1	1	0	2
<i>Ensure Social Justice in Education (Public Schools vs. Private Schools)</i>	0	1	2	0	3
<i>Raise Teachers' Morale</i>	0	0	1	0	1
<i>Use School Mapping to Reallocate Public Schools Based on Need</i>	0	1	0	0	1
<i>Set High Standards to Improve Quality Educational Services</i>	0	1	2	0	3
Policy Development and Decision Making Role	0	0	4	8	12
<i>Contribute to Enforcing Accountability in Public Schools</i>	0	0	1	8	9
<i>Assume a Role in Educational Decisions Related to Curriculum Improvement</i>	1	0	4	8	13
<i>Monitor Policy and Propose Policy Change</i>	1	0	2	0	3

APPENDIX G

RESPONSES OF ACTIVE UNION MEMBERS

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Primary (out of 7)</u>	<u>Secondary (out of 5)</u>	<u>Total Active Union Members (out of 12)</u>
Primary function of teacher union			
Protects Teachers' Rights	7	5	12
<i>Ensure Fair Wages and Improve Working Conditions</i>	6	4	10
<i>Ensure Gender Equity in Benefits</i>	1	1	2
<i>Combat Injustice or Violence Acts Against Teachers</i>	0	1	1
Improve Educational Services	5	4	9
Voice Teachers' Concerns	2	2	4
Raise Teachers' Morale	1	1	2
Combat Corruption in the Country	2	1	3
Strategies used to achieve union goals			
Use Various Types of Pressure Tactics	7	4	11
<i>Demonstrations, Strikes, and Protests</i>	7	4	11
<i>Refusal to Proctor or Correct Official Exams</i>	3	2	5
Meet and Confer	4	0	4
Use Modern Communication tools	0	1	1
<i>Social Media</i>	0	1	1
Form alliances with labor unions	2	2	4
Challenges facing teacher unions			
Challenges Related to the Union Work	6	5	11
Lack of Legal Recognition of Unions	2	5	7

Repeated Failure of Old Union Strategies	3	2	5
<i>Increasing Need for Creative Tactics</i>	3	2	5
Many Unmet Basic Teachers' Demands	0	3	3
Interference in the Union Decision-Making Process	6	5	11
From Government	4	4	8
<i>Having Punitive Decrees against Unionizing in Public Sector</i>	1	2	3
<i>Being Irresponsible to Teachers' Demands</i>	2	3	5
<i>Enforcing Authoritarian Decisions by the Minister of Education and Higher Education</i>			
on Union	0	2	2
From Sectarian/Political Leaders	6	4	10
<i>Manipulation of Public's Perception of Teacher Unions Using Media</i>	2	0	2
<i>Loyalty of Union Leaders and Union Members to Political Parties</i>	6	4	10
Lack of Respect of Teaching as a Profession	2	3	5
<i>Feminizing Teaching as a Profession</i>	0	1	1
<i>Low Salaries</i>	2	3	5
Administrative Corruption in Schools	4	5	9
<i>Appointment of Incompetent Personnel</i>	3	5	8
<i>Misuse of Resources</i>	1	2	3
<i>Absence of Accountability</i>	2	1	3
Lack of Trust among Teachers in the Effectiveness of Union	6	4	10
Lack of Unity among Union Members	3	2	5
Lack of Support of Union from Parents and the Community	2	0	2
Lack of Trust in Public Education	2	1	3
Lack of Security in the Country	2	3	5
Lack of Supportive Conditions Needed to Facilitate Union Work	1	3	4
<i>Lack of Training for Union Leaders and Union Members</i>	1	2	3
Ineffective Policy Making Processes in Ministry of Education	4	4	8
Lack of a Strategic Plan at Ministry of Education to Improve Public Schools	5	1	6
Lack of Participation of Unions in Decision Making	1	2	3

Decrease in Funding for Education	2	1	3
<i>Decrease in Resources Allocated for Teacher Benefits</i>	2	1	3
Influence of International Development Agencies on Education Policy	1	3	4
Current Role of Teacher Unions in Education Reform			
Advocacy Role	1	4	5
<i>Improve Terms of Employment for Teachers</i>	1	2	3
<i>Ensure Appointment of Competent Personnel</i>	5	3	8
<i>Open Pre-Kindergarten Classes in Public Schools</i>	1	1	2
Awareness Raising about Problems in Public Schools	0	1	1
Potential Role of Teachers Unions in Education Reform			
Advocacy Role	3	5	8
<i>Improve Professional Development of Teachers</i>	2	1	3
<i>Eradicate Sectarianism and Political Interferences in Schools</i>	1	3	4
<i>Ensure Social Justice in Education (Public Schools vs. Private Schools)</i>	1	0	1
<i>Raise Teachers' Morale</i>	1	0	1
<i>Set High Standards to Improve Quality Educational Services</i>	1	3	4
Policy Development and Decision Making Role	6	4	10
<i>Contribute to Enforcing Accountability in Public Schools</i>	2	0	2
<i>Assume a Role in Educational Decisions Related to Curriculum Improvement</i>	6	4	10
<i>Monitor Policy and Propose Policy Change</i>	1	0	1
<i>Lobby to Advocate for Union Work</i>	1	0	1

APPENDIX H

RESPONSES OF INACTIVE UNION MEMBERS

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Total Inactive union Members (out of 9)</u>
Primary function of teacher union			
Protects Teachers' Rights	5	4	9
<i>Ensure Fair Wages and Improve Working Conditions</i>	5	4	9
Improve Educational Services	1	3	4
Voice Teachers' Concerns	5	4	9
Strategies used to achieve union goals			
Use Various Types of Pressure Tactics	5	4	9
<i>Demonstrations, Strikes, and Protests</i>	5	4	9
Meet and Confer	5	4	9
Challenges facing teacher unions			
Challenges Related to the Union Work	5	4	9
Interference in the Union Decision-Making Process	5	4	9
From Government	5	4	9
<i>Being Irresponsible to Teachers' Demands</i>	5	4	9
From Sectarian/Political Leaders	5	4	9
<i>Loyalty of union leaders and union members to political parties</i>	5	4	9
Administrative Corruption in Schools	5	4	9
<i>Appointment of Incompetent Personnel</i>	5	4	9
Lack of Trust among Teachers in the Effectiveness of Union	5	4	9
Lack of Support of Union from Parents and the Community	5	4	9
Lack of Trust in Public Education	5	4	9
Ineffective Policy Making Processes in Ministry of Education	5	4	9
Lack of a Strategic Plan at Ministry of Education to Improve Public Schools	5	4	9

Potential Role of Teachers Unions in Education Reform

Policy Development and Decision Making Role	1	3	4
<i>Assume a Role in Educational Decisions Related to Curriculum Improvement</i>	1	3	4
No Role	4	1	5

APPENDIX I
Students of 21st Skills and Knowledge Needed

Mastery of core subjects	Flexibility and adaptability
Global Awareness	Initiative and self-direction
Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy	Social and cross-cultural skills
Civic, health, and environmental literacy	Productivity and accountability
Creativity and innovation	Knowledge in world languages other than English
Critical thinking and problem solving	Authentic Assessments
Communication and collaboration	21 st century reform professional development
Information, media, and technology literacy	Leadership and responsibility

Adopted from Valez (2012)

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