

A Comparison of Stressors and Coping Strategies of Teachers in America and Saudi Arabia.

Carolyn Orange
The University of Texas at San Antonio

Clarice Golightly-Jenkins
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

ABSTRACT

Thirty female Saudi Arabian teachers (approximately 25-35 years old), enrolled in a university in the United States, participated in the study. Responses from a comparative, convenience sample of about 200 hundred teachers from across America who were participating in a televised teacher town hall “Education Nation” (Williams, 2010), to discuss the challenges of today’s educational system, also were used in the study. Phenomenological inquiry was used to analyze the responses from the apriori, responses of the Education Nation teachers. These responses also served as the basis for developing interview questions for the Saudi teachers’ in-depth interviews. Stressors were analyzed using qualitative methods and descriptive statistics. Coping strategies were discussed for both groups, providing a repertoire of approaches that teachers could use, should they encounter similar stress situations.

Keywords: teacher stress, coping with stress, sources of teacher stress

INTRODUCTION

Many teachers would agree that there is an irrefutable degree of stress that is inherent in the teaching profession. When one teacher, is given the charge of managing the behavior and learning of many children, taking into consideration that children have personal desires, attitudes and motivations that are not necessarily in concert with the teachers, friction, resistance and stress become palpable residents in many classrooms. There are many stressors that can plague a classroom on any given day, anywhere in the world where teachers and children interact. It is imperative that teachers learn to manage their stress to avoid physical or psychological harm to their students or themselves.

Perspective:

Stress may be defined as the negative feelings people feel when they are challenged or threatened. It is difficult to define stress (Selye, 1982). Stressors are a wide variety of stimuli, that may cause stress. Identifying sources of stress is important (Bernard & Krupat, 1994). Bernard and Krupat (1994) offer that stress involves an external and internal component, and an interaction between the two. Lazarus and Launier (1978) offer that perceptions of stress determines if an event is stressful for a person.

Teaching is a challenging, multidimensional job with multiple stressors from multiple sources that can cause teacher stress; sometimes chronic stress (Halim, 2006). McGee-Cooper and Trammell (1990) suggest that teachers either learn how to manage stress, endure stress or succumb to stress and leave the profession.

This study examines differences in Saudi Arabian and American teaching stressors. Saudi Arabia was chosen because their government is paying to send students to the United States to study American education. The distinct differences in cultural practices, policies, and beliefs, offer a fertile opportunity for comparison of teaching practices and other influences on teacher stress. Saudi Arabia is a Southeast Asian country of about 19 million people.

Objective:

This research seeks to answer the question: (1) are there differences in teaching stressors, origins of stress and coping strategies for Saudi Arabian teachers and American teachers? The teachers' responses to questions about teaching stressors were used to inform means of coping with teacher stress that have relevance for Saudi Arabian and American teachers. Revealing how and why teachers in one country may respond to an event as stressful and the teachers in the other country may not, will help to inform possible strategies for coping with stress for both groups.

METHOD

Participants

Thirty female Saudi Arabian teachers (approximately 25-35 years old), enrolled in a university in the southwest, United States participated in the study. Comments from a

comparative, convenience sample of about 200 teachers in America, made possible by a televised teacher town hall “Education Nation” (Williams, 2010) that brought together teachers from across the country to discuss the challenges of today’s educational system, were used in the study. The latter will be referred to as EN teachers (Education Nation).

Mode of Inquiry

The research design employed two techniques from phenomenological inquiry, a form of in-depth interviewing that is grounded in phenomenology or lived experiences and ways of understanding those experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Responses from a priori in-depth interviews of EN teachers were used to develop interview questions for interviewing Saudi teachers. The EN teachers experiences, opinions and practices depicted a fairly, accurate portrayal of American Education. The two techniques, phenomenological reduction, and structural synthesis was used to cluster or “reduce” the data into themes to determine the essence of teacher stressors identified in the responses and to explore patterns, meanings and divergent perspectives emerging from the teachers’ responses and then deductively categorized them into five themes, respectively. These emergent themes of sources of teacher stressors follow: instruction, classroom management, policy, external forces and personal factors. The five themes were further reduced to 33 subcategories, that provided the basis of the 33 interview questions, designed to examine possible sources of teacher stressors (see appendix A). Using these questions for the Saudi interviews ensured that both groups were responding to comparable stimuli.

RESULTS

The categories/subcategories guided the analysis of the similarities and differences in teacher stressors for Saudi and American teachers (see table 1). Table 1 delineates the “reduced” responses of the EN teachers into categories and subcategories of perceived sources of stress. The percentages show that EN teachers reported feeling more stressors than Saudi teachers. EN teachers claimed being stressed on 21 of the 25 stressors compared to Saudi teachers that only claimed 13 stressors. A summary of findings for each category/subcategory follows the table:

Table 1

Percentages of Subcategories of Stress Sources Identified by Saudi Arabian and American Teachers

Category 1: Instruction							
Instruction	Felt Stress	Curriculum	Help Seeking	Teacher Evaluations	Qualities of Teacher Effectiveness	Pedagogy	Student Differences
Saudi	2/6=30%		X	X			
American	6/6=100%	X	X	X	X	X	X
Category 2: Classroom Management							
Classroom Management	Felt Stress	Discipline	Teaching Load Class Size and Time	Financial Support	Teacher Accountability	Professional Development	
Saudi	2/5=40%	X				X	
American	4/5=80%	X	X	X	X		
Category 3: Policy							
Policy	Felt Stress	Special Needs	Student Retention	Teacher Voice	Administrative Support	Reform	Testing
Saudi	5/6=66%	X	X	X	X	X	
American	5/6=66%	X		X	X	X	X
Category 4: External Influences							
External Influences	Felt Stress	Role of Gender in Teaching	Job Location	Societal Pressures			
Saudi	3/3=100%	X	X	X			
American	1/3=33%			X			
Category 5: Personal Factors							
Personal Factors	Felt Stress	Job Security	Teacher Image	Compensation	Burn Out	Teacher Absence	
Saudi	1/5=20%					X	
American	5/5=100%	X	X	X	X	X	
Total	Categories						
Saudi:	13/25=52%						
American:	21/25=84%						

DATA SOURCES

Category 1: Instruction

Curriculum. American teachers have more stress-generating variables, such as teacher effectiveness, use of pedagogy and managing student differences. Saudi teacher's experience less stress because the curriculum is set and there is very little deviation from it, a Saudi teacher says, "they just teach from the book".

Help-seeking. Not all teachers are confident enough to ask for help. Saudi teachers may not seek help to avoid stigma. A Saudi teacher says "In my opinion if I'm a good teacher I will ask, because I want to improve myself, but some teachers are afraid because "if they ask others for help, those others may think they are a bad teacher and say 'ok what do you want? Why don't you just read from the book?" An EN teacher stated that "the best feedback comes from colleagues." Both groups agree that teachers may be penalized for asking for help.

Teacher Evaluations. American EN teachers oppose linking teacher evaluations to student test scores. An EN teacher contends, "Teacher evaluations should be an improvement process, not a means to the end of someone's career." A Saudi teacher reports, "Sometimes they just discuss 'How can I solve the problem instead of telling me what I can do to work better.'" The Saudi teachers agreed that most Saudi teachers are evaluated the same, that is, administrators observe them, then say "you did very good job and that's it."; they give the teachers their grades at the end of the year. Both groups see criticism as a stressor.

Qualities of Teacher Effectiveness. Another cross-cultural similarity is our definition and value of a "good teacher". Despite language and cultural differences, it is commonly understood that a good teacher is someone who relates the material to the backgrounds and interests of their students, who consistently checks for comprehension, and who genuinely cares for the success of each individual student. An EN teacher suggested there are four components of good teaching "pedagogy, expertise, content knowledge and classroom management". A Saudi teacher acknowledges "If she did her job, like explain the curriculum very well for the students and make the students understand really well, this is a good teacher. American teachers realize if students cannot transfer learning to real life, or score well on standardized tests, society often blames them.

Pedagogy. Strategies of instruction are also referred to as pedagogy. Pedagogy also may be the work of a teacher or style of instruction. The limited pedagogy of Saudi teachers namely, lecturing directly from the book, might restrict student engagement and result in a loss of constructive, meaningful learning for students. According to a Saudi teacher, "We don't have to worry about standards, differentiated instruction, situated learning or the like, they only expect you to follow the curriculum." Teachers in America must be concerned with standards, differentiated instruction, situated learning, best practices and so on.

Student Differences. Some teachers experience varying degrees of frustration when dealing with different types of children. An EN teacher strongly contends, "Teachers come from different backgrounds, places and so on, but they must adapt to where they are and to whom they

are teaching.” Saudi teachers don’t experience as much frustration with student differences as American teachers seem to experience. Saudi teachers don’t have to deal with students with backgrounds that are very different from their own. A Saudi teacher proclaims of student differences, “Not in our country, the children are all of the Kingdom, not very different like here, in America.” Class however is a very important factor in Saudi Arabia, it limits children’s exposure. Saudi teachers don’t find this stressful.

Category 2: Classroom management

Discipline. When asked how do you handle classroom management if children are misbehaving? A Saudi teacher responded, “For middle school or high school, we will call their parents or the teacher might talk to the student with the bad behavior and say, ‘you know you are a good student, I want to see good behavior and I love you’ to motivate them and prevent the problem.” Not every teacher is loving and encouraging according to A Saudi teacher said, “sometimes they hit the students they make them stand for one hour or two. One time they made my sister stand in the sun and it made her sick for two weeks, but now everything’s changed. Today, schools are stricter with their rules.” A Saudi teacher explains that that fighting does happen at times, “I take the student to the administrator and they ask them to bring their mother. But in schools, that just have all women or all men, there is no fighting. An EN teacher believes that “society should treat all children as if they are their own.” Unfortunately, some teachers may interpret this as physical spanking, or other forms of punishment, whereas other teachers interpret it as being as loving and concerned as the parent. For teachers under stress, the latter is less likely to be true. EN teachers contend that disciplining students is where one is likely to see stress escalate into adversity or violence.

Teaching Load. There are significant differences in the two educational systems’ physical arrangements, such as class size. In the United States it is not uncommon to have a class of 24 or less, whereas in the Saudi Arabian Kingdom, teachers are routinely called upon to maintain instruction and oversee the behavior of up to 35 students in their public schools. “Every class has thirty five- thirty students.” A Saudi teacher explains, but not in private schools, there are about 20. She did not think that the amount of work Saudi teachers have to do makes them feel stressed. EN teachers say, extra time is often expected: early arrival for tutoring, staying late for latchkey and tutorial program;, a stressor compounded by no additional pay.

Supporting Classrooms. In Saudi Arabia, private schools are more accommodating to their teachers in terms of providing them with tools and supplies to facilitate the teaching process. A Saudi teacher explains, “Yes, sometimes they provide supplies in my schools, but in public schools, if teachers want to do something special, they do it by themselves, or ask the students to bring it. Saudi teachers, however, may provide supplies only once or twice. In contrast, frequency is an issue for some American teachers they frequently have to spend their own money to provide resources. One EN teacher professes, “Poverty causes intractable problems; there are no resources to accommodate the problems. Sometimes cuts make teachers have to do more with a lot less.” American teachers are paid a lot less than Saudi teachers, yet they willingly spend their money on supplies and rewards for the benefit of their students.

Teacher Accountability. In the United States, there is significant pressure to acknowledge and rate student achievement using state mandated standards and standardized testing programs. EN teachers agree that accountability does generate fear and other negative emotions for some, especially when it involves circumstances beyond the teacher's control. Recently in California, a teacher committed suicide because a new measure of accountability called value-added assessment of teachers, which uses student test scores to evaluate teacher effectiveness, rated him less-effective than average, and made it public in the newspaper (Lovett, 2010). Public accountability may result in extreme stress and anxiety for some teachers. EN teachers agree accountability generates fear and other negative emotions, especially when there are circumstances beyond the teacher's control. In Saudi Arabia, however, there are no required standards. A Saudi teacher explains, "I think some new teachers are accountable, but other teachers who have been teaching for 50 years are not."

Professional Development. Saudi teachers are thwarted by an inability to move beyond direct instruction. "We want to follow globalization, technology, but in my country, it's just one way, teach to the book, acknowledges A Saudi teacher. American teachers have ready access to professional development. However, a possible downside is that for many schools professional development is mandatory and the commitment may be stressful.

Category 3: Policy

Special Needs Children. Until recently, Saudi Arabian special needs students had their own schools (Education, 2005). However, in recent years, they are slowly adopting a more westernized model of mainstreaming special needs students into general education classrooms. Saudis, like EN teachers now must deal with inclusion and mainstreaming special needs students. Many have said it is stressful because they lack the requisite skills to teach some students with special needs.

Retention or Detaining Students. Saudi government restricts student retention, a major stressor for Saudi teachers. A Saudi teacher states, "It's not easy to fail students in elementary school before third grade. If a teacher feels they need to fail a student, they have to bring in an administrator and another professional to prove it." American teachers have more control over retaining students and consequently less stress about this matter.

Teacher Voice. Saudi teachers say there is virtually no voice in government schools. In private schools, teachers have some voice. A Saudi teacher feels her voice is heard by her administration, "Because I taught at a private school they would listen to our concerns because they want to improve the school. American teachers feel they have limited voice.

Administrative Support. A criticism of Saudi school administrators is that they lack an approach of continuity, partnership, responsibility and objectivity (Nasser, December 2009). In spite of that criticism, Saudi teachers feel safe and supported at work for different reasons. A Saudi teacher works in a private school and acknowledges that she gets a lot of support, "Yes, in my school we are provided a library so I can get information, some schools have internet now." A Saudi teacher admits there is safety in being able to change schools, "Teachers have a choice; if they don't feel comfortable in a school, they can change the school because they work

for the government. The hiring process is that they can present their certificate that they are a teacher and then they can work anywhere.” Education Nation teachers feel like some administrators are supportive and some aren’t; it depends on the school.

Educational Reform. Saudi teachers are commitment to educational reform. Many are motivated to further pursue their education in the United States, which will empower them to promote more meaningful instruction for their students and revolutionize Saudi Arabian curriculum and traditional educational process. Researchers believe that higher education can no longer be limited to national contexts (Hamza, 2010). For the first time, Saudi women see obtaining a degree a necessity. Although it is clear that Saudi Arabia must give more power to women to progress socially and economically, there will be slow progress in making reforms to women’s education (Mills, 2009). Saudi Arabia has embarked on an ambitious mission to reform higher education. They have tripled their higher education budget since 2004. Reformers want to change what and how information is taught and are modeling western-style higher education (Krieger, 2007). A Saudi teacher is an example of this effort. “In fact, in my country this is what we feel now, we want to change. I’m here on scholarship because they now realize our problem in our curriculum in our system of education. We want to change.” American teachers also are affected by educational reform (Fullan, 1993).

Testing. American EN teachers complain that, there is too much focus on standardized test preparation . EN teachers agree, “there is too much focus on standardized test preparation”; The stakes are very high, (Nichols & Berliner, 2007); “If scores don’t rise, teachers may lose their job.” Testing is barely a blip on the Saudi teachers stress radar. A Saudi teacher articulates, “In my country, every grade has tests. If the student passes the test they go forward. For every grade, they study the book and that’s it; High school and middle school. A Saudi teacher admits that maybe something like standardized tests are needed in Saudi Arabia, “maybe our country will get to standardized testing at some point but not now.” Saudis don’t give Standardized tests.

Category 4: External Influences

Role of Gender. Restrictions on females is a source of stress for Saudi teachers. Limited degree options and a feminization of the profession are stressors. Teacher A concurs, “We have separated schools for boys and girls. In my country, 80% of jobs for women are as teachers” Saudi schools feature a separate curriculum for boys and girls (Sedgwick, 2001). Prior to the 1960’s only males received formal schooling (Education, 2005). Gender is not a significant stressor for EN teachers, because there are coeducational schools, separate boy’s and girl’s schools and teachers are free to teach schools of their choice.

Job Location. Saudi teachers fear being hired far away from their home. A Saudi teacher laments the seriousness of this predicament, “In my county there is only one thing that may stress teachers. The government hires them in villages, but when they have enough teachers, they will hire them for schools that are far away. Teachers get hurt or killed in car accidents because they have to go so far, and in our country women do not drive cars. They hire someone to drive maybe six women at a time because it’s difficult for their husbands to drive them every day. It’s very dangerous and teachers die all the time. American teachers usually find a teaching

position reasonably, near their home. There are no stressful, life-threatening consequences of trying to go to work.

Societal Pressures. American teachers experience undue pressure from society to improve achievement of students. They are sometimes threatened with poor evaluations; they are dismissed, rewarded, and publicly exposed to incentivize them to raise student scores. Teachers are often blamed for most of society's problems, as if they can fix them all. EN teachers admitted to feeling attacked and feeling like scapegoats. Several of them acknowledged that trying to do everything that society expected of them was very stressful. A Saudi teacher says there is some pressure from parents. A Saudi teacher has had some personal experience with parents. "Sometimes the parents will come to me and ask me about the students, saying he is not understanding this very well. My child doesn't learn because you don't explain very well." Yes, the whole community feels education needs to improve that's why I am here in America, it's the first step to change."

Category 5: Personal Factors

Job Security. Another contrasting difference between the two educational systems is that public school educators in Saudi Arabia are hired by the government; their jobs and positions, therefore, offer great job security. A Saudi teacher explains, "they work for the government so their job is safe. Administrators have no say in whether a teacher stays or leaves, but the teacher can change schools if she has a problem with administration. If the teacher does something bad, they can be fired. A Saudi teacher says, "As a private school teacher they will not fire you, but after the school year ends they will not rehire you. In America, teachers are always aware of the lack of job security, due to budget cuts, dismissal or school closings. It is not uncommon that many teachers constantly struggle, from one school year to the next, to maintain their positions within their schools and districts.

Teacher Image. American teachers expressed their concern that teachers have a poor image. An EN teacher declares, "Teachers are often vilified, or portrayed as lazy and incompetent." These concerns emerged in the wake of the movie, "Waiting for Superman" that has been accused of some negative portrayals of teachers (Guggenheim, 2010). Such criticisms are very stressful for teachers, EN teachers argue, "The solution is to support teachers in lieu of criticizing them" and "It takes everyone working together to make education work." In contrast, Saudi Arabians regard their teachers highly. A Saudi teacher says, "We are raised to respect anyone who takes the time to teach us a lesson, no matter how small." Saudis value education and it's facilitators as integral and very significant contributors to their communities, culture and religion.. In Saudi Arabia, teachers may appear complacent because they have no choice but to follow the book.

Teaching compensation. All of the Saudi teachers agreed that teachers are paid well in their society. A Saudi teacher agrees heartily, "Yes its good, especially teacher in public. They make more money than private schools. A Saudi teacher gives an example. "a 1st year teacher's salary is 42,000-45,000 Saudi Riyal or \$155,400 – \$166,500 US dollars. (1.00 Saudi Riyal = approx. \$3.70 in US dollars). Teachers get a 5% increase yearly. American teachers are often underpaid; starting salaries range from 35-45,000 dollars, varying by state.

Burnout. Burnout, a byproduct of too much stress, is a common complaint among American teachers (Maslach, 2003). A Saudi teacher admits that their teachers are rarely stressed.

Teacher Absence. American teachers limit absences because absences are part of teacher evaluations and they are penalized for them. Saudi teachers will not be fired; because they are hired by the government, they can be absent and nothing will happen, their salaries will not be affected.

DISCUSSION

During the interviews, Saudi and EN teachers revealed some coping strategies for most of the stress areas identified in the study. Teachers can remedy the stress associated with instruction by teaching highly engaging lessons and minimizing volunteering. To be effective, teachers can develop an understanding of children's developmentally appropriate behavior and tailor instructional and discipline strategies accordingly. Teachers should solicit administrator, other teachers and student feedback to correct areas of weakness before scheduled teacher evaluations. Inexperienced teachers that feel they lack adequate teaching skills should get a mentor or a coach. To be prepared for whatever pedagogical problem that might arise, teachers should develop and test a repertoire of research-based strategies and techniques.

For more effective discipline, teachers could collaboratively set up rules with their students. To increase administrative support, teachers could schedule a face-to-face meeting to discuss their needs. Saudis would do well to use peer feedback and suggestions. The social cultural and religious tethers that keep Saudi women in a minimal sphere of influence will be difficult to change (Somers & Caram, 1998). Reform is not likely to come quickly or easily (Hamdan, 2005). Saudi teachers can stop their administrators during formal evaluation and ask for the final grade at that time, rather than wait until the end of the year.

More professional development may be the solution for alleviating the stress of teacher accountability. The more skills a teacher has, the better able she is to handle the variety of demands in a classroom. Avoiding self-defeating beliefs and behaviors and focusing on delivering the best possible instruction for every class taught should alleviate much evaluation apprehension. Teachers should ask parents for help with student supplies. An additional degree usually gains a pay increase for American teachers.

When teachers start to feel overloaded with work, responsibilities, or expectations they should say just say no, and become comfortable with help-seeking.

Significance: It is important to identify stressors in different cultural contexts to broaden teachers perceptions of stressors. Such knowledge may offer new perspectives of stressors and stress reactions of other people that could facilitate coping with personal stressors. Hearing others' stress management strategies, provides a repertoire of approaches that a teacher could use, should that teacher encounter a similar situation. Finally, teachers may learn to appreciate their personal circumstances after weighing the pros and cons of teaching stressors in another culture.

Stress overload can easily translate into a distressed body state that is more susceptible to myriad health disorders. Establishing a healthy line of defense is imperative for teachers to avoid the negative consequences of stress. A physically fit, emotionally stable, instruction- savvy

professional is well-equipped to weather the stress storm of teaching under the worst teaching conditions. Unfortunately, most teachers fail to meet all of these conditions and are therefore vulnerable to the ravages of stress. Some stress in teaching is inevitable, but fortifying oneself by eating right, avoiding stimulants, exercising and getting quality sleep, can minimize the effects of stress. Alcohol, caffeine, drugs, even prescription drugs can have an effect on a teacher's cognitive abilities and should be avoided or used only as needed or prescribed. Exercise increases strength endurance, and releases feel good chemicals like serotonin and endorphins that can minimize stress. Adequate, restful sleep is necessary to avoid the brain fog of sleep deprivation, that can interfere with a teacher's ability to deliver quality instruction.

Being aware of stress is making oneself vigilant about internal and external conditions that are not conducive to one's well-being such as anxiety, insomnia, obsessing at night, and depression.

Most of the stress areas associated with instruction can be remedied by teaching engaging lessons; minimizing volunteering for before and after school activities. Long range planning would help to avoid uncertainty. Teachers would experience less reactive stress by developing an understanding of children's developmentally appropriate behavior, instructional strategies, and discipline strategies. Solicit administrators and students feedback before time for evaluations and correct areas of weakness. Develop and test a repertoire of strategies and techniques that are research-based to be prepared for whatever pedagogical problem that might arise.

To increase administrative support, schedule a face-to-face meeting to discuss your needs and expectations and the administrators assessment of how she feels she can best accommodate your needs. Seek alternative solutions from the administration, for needs that she feels she can't meet. Such a meeting brings down the curtain of uncertainty. Saudi teachers have the opposite problem, administrators that lack adequate education to give feedback. They would do well to use peer feedback and suggestions.

Teachers that identify and structure their core beliefs to accommodate positive perceptions and attitudes will create less stressful learning environments that are nurturing for themselves and their students. Teachers that finance student supplies and activities out of their own pockets may experience the creeping stress of will this ever end, and how much is this costing me? Businesses are starting to recognize that teachers have ever-mounting out-of-pocket educational expenses and some are trying to do something about it. A national office supplies chain has a program to reduce teacher expenditures. If teachers seek assistance from these types of programs they may minimize their financial stress, although it will not address the problem of low pay that some teachers stress over. In the global market, they certainly trail Saudi Arabia which offers the highest level of entry level salary. Following some of these suggestions should bring stress levels down to manageable levels for teachers. Also, teachers can achieve a measure of hope and serenity by being mindful that teaching skills are like shells that are left on the beach after the tide recedes, they can always be picked up. Every morning is a new opportunity.

REFERENCES

- Cuban, L. (1984). *How teachers taught: Constancy and change in American classrooms 1890-1980*. New York: Longman.
- Education, M. o. (2005). Role of Women from www.moe.gov.sa
- Fischer, K. (November 14 2008). Saudi Arabia and Canada Lead in Pay for Faculty Members, Study Finds. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(12), A35.
- Guggenheim, D. (Writer). (2010). *Waiting for Superman*. United States.
- Hamdan, A. (2005). Women and education in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and achievements. *International Education Journal*, 6(1), 42-64.
- Hamza, A. (2010). International Experience: An Opportunity for Professional Development in Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14.
- Krieger, Z. (September 14, 2007). Saudi Arabia Puts Its Billions Behind Western-Style Higher Education.
- Lovett, I. (2010, Wednesday November 10). Teacher's Death Exposes Tensions in Los Angeles. *The New York Times National*.
- Maag, J. W. (July 14, 2008). Rational -Emotive therapy to help teachers control their emotions and behavior when dealing with disagreeable students. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 44, 52-56.
- Mills, A. (August 3, 2009). Reforms to Women's Education Make Slow Progress in Saudi Arabia.
- Nasser, F. M. A. (December 2009). Effectiveness of institutional performance of public schools in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia from the perspective of schools administrators. *College Student Journal*, 43(4), 1228-1237.
- Orange, C. (2008). *25 Biggest Mistakes Teachers Make and How to Avoid Them* (second ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Corwin Press.
- Orange, C. (2008). *25 biggest mistakes teachers make and how to avoid them* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Sedgwick, R. (2001). Education in Saudi Arabia. *World Education News & Reviews*, 14.
- Somers, P., & A.Caram, C. (1998). Veiled delusions: gender, education, and employment in Saudi Arabia. *Initiatives (Washington, D.C.)*, 58(4), 49-58.
- Williams, B. (2010). Education Nation Teacher Town Hall. from Educationnation.com

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions on Teacher Stress in America and Saudi Arabia

1. What are some other stressors for Saudi teachers and what are some ways they cope?
2. Do Saudi teachers feel their voices are heard by their administration? Is this a source of stress?
3. What kind of support is provided for Saudi teachers? Is this a source of stress?
4. Are teachers ever portrayed negatively in your country (such as lazy, incompetent)? Is this a source of stress?
5. Are Saudi teachers comfortable asking others for help? Do they ever fear that other teachers will speak badly of them if they ask for help? Is this a source of stress?
6. Do Saudi teachers feel that just teaching by the book or by the curriculum is stressful?
7. Are any Saudi teachers ever aggressive or violent towards students? Is this a source of stress?
8. How are special needs students educated? Is this a source of stress?
9. What classroom management strategies do you use if students are misbehaving? Is this a source of stress?
10. Do you know of Saudi teachers who say they are stressed?
11. What do they do to minimize their stress?
12. How do Saudi teachers react to criticism? Is this a source of stress?
13. Do you think the workload of Saudi teachers makes them feel stressed?
14. Do Saudi teachers ever have to buy supplies for students? If so is it stressful?
15. Do Saudi teachers have any protection (like tenure) that would allow them to speak out against school administrators? Is this a source of stress?
16. Do Saudi teachers experience pressure from society to improve the achievement of students? Is this a source of stress?
17. What qualities do Saudi teachers value in a “good” teacher?
18. Do Saudi teachers ever express that they feel targeted or attacked by society or parents? Is this a source of stress?
19. Are Saudi teachers held accountable for their work? Is this a source of stress?
20. Do Saudi teachers experience stress from standardized tests or something similar?
21. Do Saudi teachers express frustration with dealing with certain types of children?
22. How are Saudi teachers evaluated? Are all Saudi teachers evaluated the same way? Is this a source of stress?

23. Do Saudi teachers use instructional strategies such as differentiated instruction? Is this a source of stress?
24. Under what circumstances will a Saudi teacher be fired or dismissed? Is this a source of stress?
25. Do Saudi teachers have to deal with students with backgrounds different from theirs? Do they find this stressful?
26. Are much are Saudi teachers paid? Is this a source of stress?

Note: Questions are based on Comments from Town Hall Meeting “Education Nation” 2010