

## **How do Arab students at higher education institutions perceive the role of the Arab principal in Israel in leading the school to excellence?**

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### **Abstract**

*In the last two decades, the role of school principals has become more complex regarding school performance and growth toward excellence. While educational researchers and practitioners have largely agreed on the potential impact that principals have on school success, most of the extant literature is limited to Western countries. In the Middle East, and the Arab sector of Israel in particular, little is known regarding how Arab principals lead their schools to excellence. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the role of the Arab principal in Israel in leading the school to excellence. To understand the study problem, mixed-method research was used. Suitable data on the topic was collected from Arab students at higher education institutions from across the Arab sector. A total of 381 Arab students at higher education institutions participated in the survey questionnaires and 69 of them took part in individual interview sessions. Findings from survey responses with 381 students, in addition to insights from interview feedback from 73 students from across the Arab sectors showed that Arab principals have a central task of supporting their schools and ensuring they become successful. The principals lead their schools to excellence by initiating and implementing relevant curricula. In addition, principals lead schools to excellence by influencing decision-making regarding effective teaching and learning. Another important observation was that Arab principals create school excellence through collaborative school, family, and community engagement. Despite these findings, principals experience hurdles that might hinder their efforts to lead schools to excellence. Part of the challenges includes a lack of sufficient resources like learning materials, libraries, financial allocation, and lack of workshops. Also, there are inadequate opportunities for professional and skills development to ensure Arab principals have relevant leadership qualities that enable them to lead their schools to excellence. Keywords: Arab students at higher education, school excellence, Arab principal,*

### **1. Introduction**

What is an effective school? How does a principal create and maintain an excellent school? What are the leading components that comprise school excellence? These are some of the fundamental questions being asked today across the Arab sector of Israel regarding the role of a principal in leading schools to excellence. With globalization, increased competitiveness in the education sector, and changing information and technology, the topic of leading schools to excellence is at the forefront of educational research (Abu-Asbah, 2017). That is, principals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century face the daunting challenge of ensuring

schools across the Arab sector of Israel are high-performing and develop globally competitive students (Agbaria, 2015; Barrera-Osorio et al., 2020). Low student achievement is one of the main challenges that principals seek to address by ensuring they have led their institutions to schools of excellence (Volansky & Friedman, 2022; Wang et al., 2013).

While Israeli public education has long been the focus of reform efforts, acceptable levels of scholastic achievement have not been reached across the Arab sector of Israel.

These challenges continue to be reported among education stakeholders key among them, school principals. The Center for Education Reform reported that “our system of public education leaves us still very much a nation at risk” (Abu-Asbah, 2017). The Urban Institute reported that even though continued reforms in the last two decades have been hailed as a bipartisan success and a promising way to promote student performance and eliminate achievement gaps, only 68% of those who enter high school graduate in four years with a diploma (Ministry of Education, 2021). These findings indicate a largely unrecognized crisis in high school completion largely as principals struggle to lead their schools to excellence (Ministry of Education, 2021). Moreover, a 2020 report by the Ministry of Education raised an alarm that about one-third of all public high school students fail to graduate (Ministry of Education, 2021).

As expectations for school excellence in the Arab sector of Israel continue, principals need to collaborate for continuous school improvement and excellence (Arar, 2012). Innovative change is needed to meet the changing needs of students where principals should ensure appropriate curriculum and instruction delivery to facilitate high performance among students (Volansky, 2021). Michael Fullan’s change theory (1993) identified various inhibitors to school excellence, such as the human tendency to avoid change due to vulnerability and fear, high stakes accountability, parent pressure and, maintenance of the status quo (Fullan, 1993). Lack of competency and transformative leadership skills have also been cited as potential threats to innovation and transformative practice focused on school excellence (Shapiro & Gross, 2016). Both Robert Marzano (2004) and Kathleen Cotton (2003) reported that innovative principal practices and transformative behaviors are associated with student learning and academic performance.

However, there is a need to extend their findings to understand the impact of principal behavior has in ensuring leaders propel their schools to centers of learning excellence, especially in the Arab sector of Israel.

Demand for school excellence has created a dynamic that impacted the principal-teacher relationship in public schools (Sorenson & Goldsmith, 2016). School excellence is characterized by having a vision that ensures every student is successful. Also, school excellence focuses on ensuring and prioritizing that parents and the community are a priority (Smith & Piele, 2016). School excellence is also influenced by the need to implement great curriculums that improve student learning; practicing inclusion of individuals with disabilities as much as possible, creating a learning environment welcoming to students of different backgrounds, and sharing leadership responsibilities to involve various stakeholders (Shkedi, 2020). Adding to the existing pressures imposed upon schools by parents, school boards, and communities with high expectations, along with the weight of standardized testing, an Arab school principal is under increased pressure upon a school's ability to produce high-performing students.

Increasing students' success in school has recently become an issue that arouses interest in all relevant factors in education. Students' success depends not only on themselves but also on other factors, especially the principal of the school, whose supporting and communicating role significantly affects the success of students (Shaked & Schechter, 2017). The principal is the one who with his leading role creates better conditions and opportunities for students' freedom of choice (Shahar & Magen-Nagar, 2020). The principal's reward for students' success and their achievements increases considerably the motivation and the sense of self-confidence of students, thus creating prerequisites for the best achievements of students (Sammons, 2022). The commitment of the school principal in increasing the school's success consists of supporting the initiatives, cooperation, communication, and constant motivation of students and teachers.

A growing body of literature is in consensus that principals are key to success in students' achievement (Rouhana, 2017; Sammons, 2022). The purpose of this study is to understand the role of the school principal in increasing students' success from the Arab Students at higher education institutions perceptions. For this study, we used quantitative

methods combined with the qualitative and semi-structured interviews, and the techniques used for the implementation of research were: semi-structured questionnaires, recordings with multimedia tools, and structured questionnaire surveys. The results show that the principal of the school collaborates with teachers and students, and supports them in increasing success at school, but not at a satisfactory level. Based on past study findings, it may be argued that if school principal increases their cooperation and supports teachers and students, students' success will be at a greater level.

### **1.1 The Problem of the Study**

Most students across the Arab sector public school districts are failing to reach even the basic educational levels (Rouhana, 2017; Sammons, 2022). The problem is how a school principal may best resolve this deficit so that Arab students obtain a high school education. Thus, the research problem led to the research questions: “What are the leadership behaviors and practices of a principal in an effective high school in the Arab sector of Israel?” and “How does the principal influence school excellence?” The purpose of this dissertation was to build upon Powell’s Five Domain-Theory (2004) on principal leadership in at-risk schools in the Arab sector of Israel and to further explore the leadership characteristics of a principal in effective, high-performing, and excellent schools. The conceptual framework of this study postulated that: *principal leadership contributes to school effectiveness through the direct influence of the principal on the learning community.*

### **1.2 The Importance or Significance of the Study**

The literature identified shows that principals play an important role in influencing school success, or in leading their organizations into schools of excellence. Principals impact the success or failure of schools (Marzano, Walters, & McNulty, 2003). In the 1970s during a time when the focus on school success was on the brink of shifting from examining and affirming the role of the principal as school manager to the principal as the instructional leader, the findings of effective schools research (Purkey & Smith, 1983) indicated that the educational leader (principal) possessed a greater influence on education than any other factor. These findings have been supported in the last decade where researchers confirm that a school principal remains the single most influential person in

contributing to school excellence (Raz & Ratner, 2021; Resh & Dar, 2012). Given the perceived importance of school leadership and its impact on school success, one would expect abundant research on the topic since the 1970s. However, this is not the case; there is a paucity of research on this topic especially in the Arab sector of Israel.

Therefore, undertaking this study is important to fill this knowledge gap. That is, the findings of this study seek to understand how the principals create a vision, mission statement, goals, and objectives geared towards leading their institutions to centers of school excellence. Second, undertaking this study seeks to address potential concerns on strategies that principals adopt to ensure the curriculum is implemented effectively, thereby leading to high-performing schools of excellence. Third, undertaking this study intends to examine how principals make decisions that are connected to teaching and learning to ensure school excellence within the Arab school of Israel. Fourth, findings from this study will help establish an understanding of how principals in the Arab sector of Israel facilitate school personnel, staff, and students to work with families and communities towards the primary objective of school excellence. Fifth, insights from this study will further help top management and education stakeholders understand effective principal management practices that are central to leading schools to excellence. Sixth, another important observation from this study is the identification of the principal's leadership characteristics key to propelling any Arab school to high high-performing organization in the future. Finally, the study will help identify potential barriers hindering principals in their efforts to lead schools to excellence and formulate strategies to address the identified hurdles.

## **2. Materials and Methods**

### **The Study Methodology**

A mixed research methodology was used in this study to collect relevant data for research. According to Creswell (2017), a mixed research methodology combines qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, such as interview questions and survey surveys. To begin, the advantages of quantitative research informed the study's use of it. Hennink and Kaiser (2017) noted that quantitative research enables larger studies with a larger sample size, which improves the generalizability of the findings. Saunders et al. (2017) emphasized that because quantitative research employs a large number of

instances and few variables, it ensures the reliability and validity of the produced results. However, qualitative studies also have some shortcomings when used to conduct primary research. Alasutari, Brickman, and Brannen (2015) shared that qualitative studies use a small sample size and this makes it difficult to generalize findings to other research settings.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### Management Practice that Contributes to School Excellence

Table 1 presents the obtained findings on management practices principals use when leading their schools to excellence. Key effective practices include creating clear curriculum goals ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ), developing school plans with teachers ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ), using assessment data to inform instruction ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ), and support positive discipline in school premises ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). Principals also ensure effective management via appropriate discipline plan ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), address the individual academic needs of students ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and continued support for student learning throughout the school day ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ).

*Table 1: Principal Management Practices and School Excellence (n = 381)*

| Variables   | Disagree/ Strongly Agree |      | Agree/ Strongly Agree |      | Effect size | p-value |
|---|--------------------------|------|-----------------------|------|-------------|---------|
|   | M                        | SD   | M                     | SD   |             |         |
| 1. Formulate clear curriculum and staff development   | 2.72                     | 1.33 | 2.54                  | 1.15 | 0.43        | 0.001   |
| 2. The principal and staff together develop the school plan   | 2.82                     | 1.34 | 2.21                  | 1.01 | 0.54        | 0.003   |
| 3. Teachers use assessment data to plan instruction   | 2.91                     | 1.10 | 2.25                  | 1.06 | 0.56        | 0.005   |
| 4. The principal supports the discipline plan   | 3.23                     | 1.14 | 2.21                  | 1.03 | 0.40        | 0.000   |
| 5. Teachers address the individual academic needs of students   | 2.85                     | 1.32 | 2.29                  | 1.09 | 0.43        | 0.000   |
| 6. Students are on task throughout the school day   | 2.94                     | 1.31 | 2.45                  | 1.01 | 0.26        | 0.005   |
| 7. The principal provides teachers with enough supplies, books, and materials to deliver instruction. | 3.21                     | 1.10 | 2.66                  | 1.03 | 0.43        | 0.001   |
| 8. There is a feeling of respect among and between staff members and students.                        | 2.96                     | 1.15 | 1.88                  | 1.08 | 0.44        | 0.006   |
| 9. Students in this school understand and follow the discipline plan for behavior                     | 2.63                     | 1.13 | 2.00                  | 1.10 | 0.48        | 0.001   |
| 10. The school vision sets the stage for how the staff proceeds with instruction                      | 2.72                     | 1.10 | 2.37                  | 1.09 | 0.26        | 0.005   |
| 11. Teachers are encouraged to participate in decision-making   | 2.88                     | 1.16 | 2.30                  | 1.09 | 0.37        | 0.003   |
| 12. Teachers frequently assess students on objectives   | 3.01                     | 1.19 | 2.67                  | 1.09 | 0.38        | 0.004   |
| 13. The staff makes decisions with the principal concerning teaching and learning.                    | 3.22                     | 1.23 | 2.20                  | 1.12 | 0.40        | 0.002   |
| 14. The culture of the school is conducive to learning.   | 3.22                     | 1.09 | 2.72                  | 1.01 | 0.26        | 0.002   |
| 15. The school develops a plan to ensure all students are successful.                                 | 3.06                     | 1.18 | 2.00                  | 1.08 | 0.42        | 0.003   |

Principals also create a sense of safety and respect in school settings between staff members and students ( $M = 2.96$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ,  $p = 0.006$ ), encourage learners to follow the discipline plan for behavior ( $M = 2.63$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), and create processes that help stakeholders align with school objectives ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ). Management also supports everyone to make contributions related to how best to enhance learning ( $2.88$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), and there are effective frameworks for examining student objectives ( $M = 3.01$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ,  $p = 0.004$ ). Leadership is also participatory as the staff makes decisions with the principal concerning teaching and learning ( $M = 3.22$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Further measures ensure that the school culture is conducive to learning ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ), and school management develops plans to ensure all students are successful ( $M = 3.06$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ).

### **Management Practice that Contributes to School Excellence**

Table 1 presents the obtained findings on management practices principals use when leading their schools to excellence. Key effective practices include creating clear curriculum goals ( $M = 2.72$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ), developing school plans with teachers ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ), using assessment data to inform instruction ( $M = 2.91$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ ), and support positive discipline in school premises ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ). Principals also ensure effective management via appropriate discipline plan ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), address the individual academic needs of students ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and continued support for student learning throughout the school day ( $M = 2.94$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ).

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### School Leadership Characteristics that Influence School Excellence

Table 2 presents the obtained t-test results on participants' responses regarding leadership characteristics that contribute to school excellence. A key leadership characteristic was honesty and openness when managing school budget (M = 2.61, SD = 1.91), and can overcome most obstacles that their staff and students experience (M= 2.79, SD = 1.30). In addition, good leaders command respect (M = 2.74, SD = 1.30), and excite followers (M = 2.63, SD = 1.26) thereby making them motivated and committed in their job. Arab students also agreed that principals as leaders, are obligated to make staff feel and act like leaders (M = 2.81, SD = 1.17), giving staff a sense of overall purpose for its leadership role (M = 2.55, SD = 1.15), and lead others by "doing" rather than simply by "telling" (M = 2.45, SD = 1.39). These leadership attributes largely enable Arab principals to steer their schools to excellence.

*Table 1: Principal Characteristics that Influence School Success on Facilitating Staff Engagement with Families and Communities*

| Variables  | Disagree/<br>Strongly<br>Agree |      | Agree/<br>Strongly<br>Agree |      | Effect<br>size | p-<br>value |
|--|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|----------------|-------------|
|  | M                              | SD   | M                           | SD   |                |             |
| 1. Has effectively managed the school budget   | 2.61                           | 1.19 | 2.12                        | 1.17 | 0.28           | 0.001       |
| 2. Has both the capacity and the judgment to overcome most obstacles.  | 2.79                           | 1.30 | 2.32                        | 1.18 | 0.46           | 0.001       |
| 3. Commanded respect from everyone on the faculty.   | 2.74                           | 1.14 | 2.14                        | 1.20 | 0.23           | 0.002       |
| 4. Excite the school with visions of what we may be able to accomplish if we work together as a team.        | 2.63                           | 1.26 | 2.34                        | 1.20 | 0.60           | 0.000       |
| 5. Made the school members feel and act as leaders.  | 2.81                           | 1.17 | 2.36                        | 1.02 | 0.45           | 0.002       |
| 6. Given the school a sense of overall purpose for its leadership role.                                      | 2.55                           | 1.15 | 2.36                        | 1.01 | 0.61           | 0.000       |
| 7. Led by "doing" rather than simply by "telling."   | 2.45                           | 1.39 | 2.28                        | 1.06 | 0.67           | 0.001       |
| 8. Symbolized success and accomplishment within the profession of education                                  | 2.84                           | 1.27 | 2.21                        | 1.11 | 0.27           | 0.002       |
| 9. Provided good models for employees to follow.   | 2.98                           | 1.15 | 2.14                        | 1.19 | 0.32           | 0.002       |
| 10. Provided for our participation in the process of developing school goals.                                | 3.13                           | 1.19 | 2.28                        | 1.04 | 0.43           | 0.003       |
| 11. Encouraged staff to work toward the same goals.  | 2.61                           | 1.24 | 2.26                        | 1.10 | 0.58           | 0.001       |
| 12. Used problem-solving with the staff to generate school goals.  | 3.00                           | 1.36 | 2.29                        | 1.15 | 0.62           | 0.002       |
| 13. Worked toward the whole consensus in establishing priorities for school goals.                           | 2.83                           | 1.40 | 2.33                        | 1.18 | 0.29           | 0.001       |
| 14. Regularly encouraged staff to evaluate our progress toward the achievement of school goals.              | 2.57                           | 1.26 | 2.21                        | 1.14 | 0.52           | 0.002       |
| 15. Provided extended training to develop the knowledge and skills relevant to being a member of the school. | 2.90                           | 1.32 | 2.29                        | 1.11 | 0.68           | 0.000       |
| 16. Provided the necessary resources to support my implementation of the school's program.                   | 2.60                           | 1.25 | 2.28                        | 1.08 | 0.33           | 0.002       |
| 17. Treated me as an individual with unique needs and expertise.   | 2.81                           | 1.30 | 2.29                        | 1.12 | 0.57           | 0.002       |



|     |  |      |      |      |      |      |       |
|-----|--|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 18. | Take staff opinion into consideration when initiating actions that affect my work.       | 3.04 | 1.34 | 2.17 | 1.02 | 0.37 | 0.000 |
| 19. | Behaved in a manner thoughtful of personal needs.  | 2.56 | 1.31 | 2.16 | 1.09 | 0.62 | 0.001 |
| 20. | Challenged staff to reexamine some basic assumptions I have about my work in the school. | 3.10 | 1.26 | 2.23 | 1.04 | 0.46 | 0.003 |
| 21. | Provided information that helps staff think of ways to implement the school's program.   | 2.44 | 1.30 | 2.36 | 1.08 | 0.32 | 0.002 |
| 22. | Insisted on only the best performance from the school.                                   | 2.53 | 1.18 | 2.25 | 1.17 | 0.60 | 0.002 |

### *Interview Findings*

The current section presents data findings from interview responses with 69 school leaders from across the Arab sector of Israel. Thematic analysis identified 7 themes related to the topic regarding the role of the Arab principal in Israel in leading the school to excellence.

| No. | Themes  |
|-----|---|
| 1   | Theme 1: Principals create a vision, mission, and value towards school excellence                           |
| 2   | Theme 2: Principals initiate implementation of relevant curriculum  |
| 3   | Theme 3: Principals influence decision making regarding effective teaching and learning                     |
| 4   | Theme 4: Principals create school excellence through collaborative school, family, and community engagement |
| 5   | Theme 5: Principals use various indicators to assess progress towards school excellence                     |
| 6   | Theme 6: School excellence is determined by principals with exemplary qualities                             |
| 7   | Theme 7: Arab principals experience diverse hurdles when leading schools to excellence                      |

### *Discussion*

Over the years, a growing body of literature has shown that principals have a substantial influence in leading schools to excellence (Kidder, 2015; Knapp et al., 2016). While educational researchers and practitioners have largely agreed on the potential impact that principals have on school success, most of the extant literature is limited to Western countries. In the Middle East, and the Arab sector of Israel in particular, little is known regarding how Arab principals lead their schools to excellence. In the light of this knowledge gap, there was a need to undertake this study to understand how Arab principals lead their schools to excellence.

In elaboration, findings showed that the principals are largely at the center of idea creation and objective formulation regarding school excellence. Key among the principals' influences includes facilitating the creation of a clear vision of how to achieve school excellence. Upon the development of a clear vision and objectives, principals take

proactive measures towards achieving their goals. For example, principals engage in supporting teachers' professional development goals to align their competencies with the relevant teaching goals of the school. These findings align with past observations where principals play a leading role in availing of training opportunities, workshops, seminars, and conferences for teachers to enhance their professional skills (Rouhana, 2017; Sammons, 2022).

Despite their efforts to support teachers' professional goals, findings showed that principals often lack similar skills development opportunities. In some cases, there are no courses on leadership development, inadequate support from employers, or available opportunities that are too expensive for most principals to enroll in professional growth opportunities. In light of these potential challenges, principals are not able to fully steer their schools to excellence. Kouzes and Posner (2017) cautioned that despite principals playing a central role in leading their schools to excellence, there is a need for constant training to empower them with relevant knowledge about changing school dynamics, especially in the Arab sector of Israel. These observations echo findings observed during the intervention program where leaders improved in their school management skills after taking part in a 5-month intervention program on leadership development.

Underwriting the above considerations, it may be noted that effective leadership skills in instructional coaching not only help principals educate teachers about curriculum but also accelerate the primary objective of leading schools to excellence. In elaboration, principals are in a position to test scores of students to evaluate a teacher's performance, and professional development gaps give teachers the autonomy to choose their instructional techniques and ensure that the teaching skills of the staff are always improving. According to Marzano et al. (2015), principals who have such competencies are better positioned to lead their schools to excellence and long-term achievement. According to Hopkins (2022), competent principals always present new ideas to teachers and parents on appropriate teaching methods, are in a position to check for mistakes and errors in administrative procedures and reports, and resolve challenges that may hinder progress towards excellent schools like lesson planning and timetable scheduling.

Individual management skills were also identified to influence efforts towards leading schools to excellence. According to Nir (2022b), the curriculum needs to determine the type and frequency of staff development. Effective management relies on how the principal and staff together develop the school plan towards excellence. Inclusive management would ensure principals embrace the vision for school success. Osswald et al. (2020) asserted that management reinforces academic and instructional delivery, where principals promote a collaborative approach to learning. In the process, principals remain committed to ensuring differences in student performance are closely managed and attributed to factors under the schools' control. Moreover, administrative behavior, policies, and practices are aligned with long-term goals of achieving school excellence. As noted by Rabia (2013), principals who attain effectiveness have adequate instructional skills and balanced management in their school settings.

Additionally, findings indicated that Arab principals inspire excellence in their schools by developing and implementing relevant curricula. This objective is accomplished in a variety of ways, including ensuring resource availability, motivating teachers, guiding students, allocating resources, developing curriculum, and allocating additional time to cover the syllabus. Additionally, principals influence decision-making regarding effective teaching and learning. The findings indicated that this influence is achieved by allocating time for classroom courses and lesson plans, as well as by ensuring instructional rigor and student engagement. According to survey and interview findings, an Arab principal fulfills the vision of effective school education through the triad of people, tasks, and collaboration. Principals recruit like-minded faculty and staff and foster a shared vision, family culture, and positive climate at their schools (Arar & Abu-Romi, 2016). Furthermore, Arab principal values their followers and instill in them a sense of love, appreciation, value, and care within the school setting. Additionally, successful schools result when an Arab principal engages families and the larger community in achieving the vision of leading their schools to excellence. When the principal collaborates with and shares leadership with faculty and staff, they demonstrate transformational leadership key to achieving schools of excellence.

## Conclusion

Findings from this study show that principals play a central role in influencing school excellence. The obtained results align with past study findings where school performance is determined by principal leadership skills and styles (Arar & Abu-Asbah, 2018). Competent principals develop a goal, vision, and mission for their schools and put in place relevant measures to achieve desired outcomes. In the Arab sector, principals coordinate students, teachers, and families towards a common goal of high achievement and school success. As such, an Arab principal is instrumental in keeping the school moving toward the goal of providing an excellent, competitive education that equips students for successful careers (Arar et al., 2021).

Insights from surveys and interviews show that an Arab principal, being a school leader, realize the vision of effective school education through the triad of people, task, and collaboration. Principals enlist like-minded faculty and staff and cultivate a common vision, family culture, and positive climate (Arar & Abu-Romi, 2016). Also, an Arab principal appreciates the followers and makes them feel loved, appreciated, valued, and cared for within the school setting. Successful schools also result when an Arab principal involves families and the greater community in reaching the vision of leading their schools to excellence. The principal was dedicated to transformational leadership when they freely collaborated with and shared leadership among the faculty and staff.

In leading schools to excellence, therefore, Arab principals believe that a school is more than a friendly family; it remains an organized high school that focuses on preparing students for college, career, and life. Successful schools emerge when school leaders attend to the task aspects of an effective high school by ensuring the curriculum and classroom instruction are appropriate, on target, and implemented fully. The Arab principals enhance their requisite management skills by surrounding themselves with well-qualified and highly competent professionals including deputies, heads of departments, counselors, mentors, and board members. As a result, an Arab principal creates needed ingredients for continued commitment towards leading their schools to excellence.

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