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Background paper prepared for the Arab States 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report

Migration, displacement and education:
Building bridges, not walls

INTERNATIONAL AND OTHER MIGRANT SCHOOLS IN GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

As the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries' economies have rapidly grown over the past half-century, they have consistently relied on migrant workforces to fill labour market shortfalls. In order to attract economic migrants, GCC countries have established education systems to support the educational needs of the children of these migrants. However, they have largely relied on private schools where access and quality are linked to a person's ability to pay fees. Today, students from migrant backgrounds comprise the majority of students in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, and they make up significant percentages of students in the other four GCC countries. This report explores the challenges of educating large numbers of non-citizens in a region where policies have been designed to ensure their residency is largely temporary.[1] It begins by providing a brief landscape of GCC demographics, and it then examines GCC education systems and how they impact the welfare of migrant children, families and the state. It next discusses the implications for the public education sector and concludes with an examination of challenges of having parallel education systems within a single country.

INTRODUCTION

While the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries[2] have significant wealth from oil and gas resources, they face shortages of indigenous manpower and are heavily dependent on migrant workforces. Unlike many other parts of the world, however, the term 'immigrant' is not commonly used in the GCC to refer to these economic migrants. Instead, governments in the region refer to non-nationals as 'foreign workers' or 'expatriates', reflecting policies that mandate limited-term stays, conditional upon contracts (Fargues and

[1] In recent years, several GCC countries have started to open paths to long-term residency for certain populations, such as investors, entrepreneurs, specialists, outstanding students, and children of national mothers (Reynolds and Badam, 2019; Nereim, Fattah, and Algethami, 2019; Toumi, 2018; Younes, 2018') . For example, in 2019 the UAE announced that approximately 7,000 individuals were qualified for a new five or ten-year visa (Reynolds and Badam, 2019).

[2] The GCC was established in 1981 to strengthen collaboration among its members across various sectors. The GCC member countries are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Brouwer, 2012, p. 241). However, many of these non-nationals have gradually become de facto immigrants, staying for generations, even though they are not formally citizens of the state[3] (Fargues and Brouwer, 2012).

With the exception of Kuwait, numbers of resident non-nationals have been increasing steadily in the GCC region over the past half century,[4] in large part due to economic growth and the resulting demand for labour. As of 2018, the percentage of non-nationals residing in GCC countries ranged from a high of 87 per cent in the UAE and Qatar to a low of 28 per cent in Saudi Arabia, as shown in Figure 1 (Gulf Labour Markets and Migration, 2018).

With regard to families, laws in the GCC prohibit migrants in the lowest salary brackets from bringing dependents with them. The minimum monthly salary required to sponsor a child ranges from approximately US$2,700 in Qatar to US$800 in Oman[5] (see Appendix A). However, despite these restrictions, there are still large numbers of migrant children living in the GCC. In 2017, there were over 3 million migrant children in the GCC states of Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Oman, comprising almost 25 per cent of all children in those countries (GCC-Stat, 2019).[6] From 2010 to 2017 in Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Oman, the number of migrant children grew by 20 per cent in comparison to the number of non-national children which increased by only 8 per cent over the same time period (GCC-Stat, 2019).

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[3] While the restrictions related to naturalization are country-specific, it is severely limited across the GCC states (Fargues and Brouwer, 2012, p. 254). The stay of migrants 'can only be temporary by law and with few exceptions [they] cannot be granted citizenship in their host countries' (Fargues, 2015, p. 12).

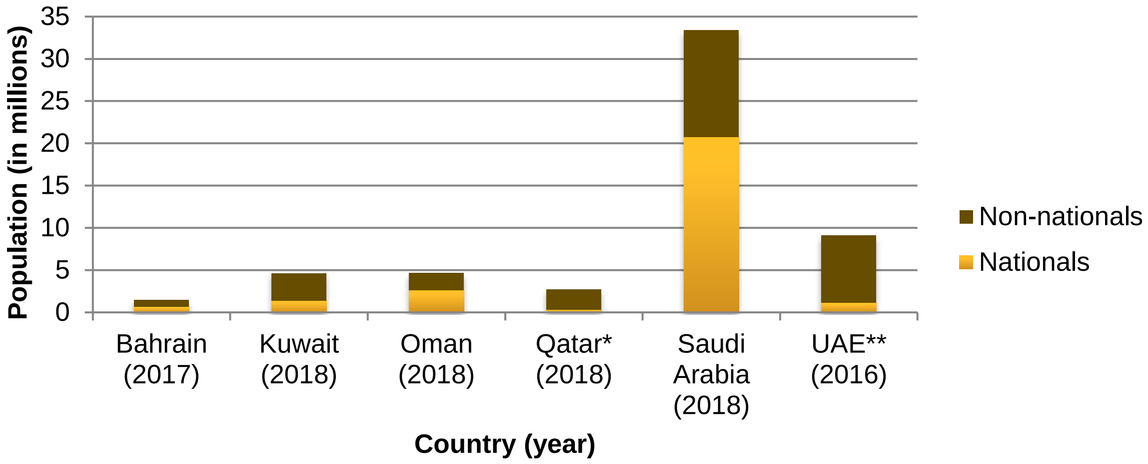
[4] Kuwait was an exception as many non-nationals left the country during and following the 1990–91 Gulf War. Between 1985 and 1990, the number of non-nationals also fell in Oman, but this decline has been attributed to inaccurate statistics (see Fargues and Brouwer, 2012 for more information).

[5] In 2017, Oman halved the minimum salary requirement from US$1,600 to US$800 as a means to increase spending within the country by families (Al Mukrashi, 2017).

[6] GCC-Stat figures were calculated using data on children aged 0−19 (GCC-Stat, 2019)[6]. GCC-Stat uses data provided to the GCC Secretariat from GCC member states. Data were unavailable for the UAE and Qatar.

Figure 1:

Total population and share of nationals and non-nationals in GCC countries (2016–18)



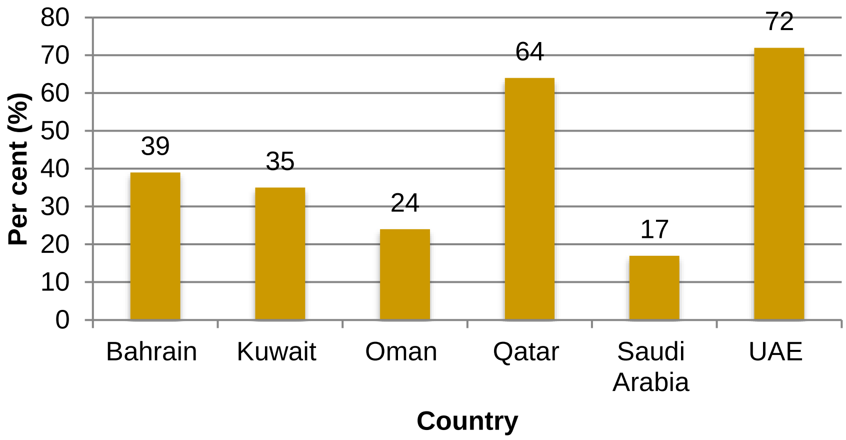
Note: According to the original source, * based on data available for 2015 and ** based on the Emirati populations estimate.

Source: Gulf Labour Markets and Migration (2018).

According to international assessment data compiled by the Global Education Monitoring Report (2018), in the UAE and Qatar, the GCC countries with the largest proportions of total migrants, students from migrant backgrounds aged 15 comprise the majority of students, at 72 per cent and 64 per cent respectively. Migrant children aged 15 also make up between 17 per cent and 39 per cent of students in the other GCC states, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2:

Percent of students aged 15 in the GCC that are migrants or from migrant backgrounds, 2015



Note: GEM Report team analysis was based on the 2006 and 2015 PISA and 2015 TIMSS and refers to 15-year-olds, including natives of mixed heritage.

Source: Calculated from *GEM StatLink*: http://bit.ly/fig3_4

In the context of large proportions of migrant students living in the GCC countries, this report examines the structures of education systems in the region and the implications of these structures on the well-being of children, migrant families and the countries themselves. It then discusses some of the implications for the public education sector and concludes with an examination of challenges of having parallel education systems where education is only available as a private good for large segments of the population.

REGULATION OF PRIVATE EDUCATION AND INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

While each of the GCC countries provide free education to national students, there are often restrictions, such as the imposition of school fees and quotas related to the enrolment of non-national students. All countries in the GCC allow non-nationals, to a degree, to attend public schools, provided these children can study in Arabic and meet any additional requirements. The regulations on entry to the system, however, vary according to the country and are briefly outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Fees and other information related to non-nationals in GCC public schools

Country	Fees for non-nationals	Other information	Source(s)
Bahrain	Free to both citizens and non-citizens	This is being debated in Bahrain (see Box 1 for more information).	Toumi (2017a)
Kuwait	If non-Kuwaitis are eligible and obtain approval for enrolment in government schools, it is free of charge.	Typically, non-Kuwaitis are prohibited from enrolling in public schools. However, there are exception for children of parents employed in specific occupations, such as public school teachers and health care workers.[2]	*The Daily Star* (2018); Saleh (2018); State of Kuwait–Kuwait Government Online (2018b)
Oman	Fees between approximately US$400 and US$520	Prior to 2018, public education was free for non-nationals and nationals.[1]	Al Mukrashi (2018); Qanoon (2018)
Qatar	Registration fee applies for non-Qataris, if there is space available for them to enrol	Priority is given to citizens and those from a select list. Non-Qatari admission is limited to children of parents working specific places (e.g. Qatar Airways).	Hukoomi (n.d.); State of Qatar (2019)
Saudi Arabia	Previously, non-national students had to pay. However, there are suggestions that the country is now providing free education, although unconfirmed (*Arab News*, 2010; Al-Sulami, 2016).	The Ministry of Education (MOE) prioritizes proximity for national students over expats. Non-nationals also have to present original educational equivalencies and have valid residence permits for at least two academic semesters.	*Arab News* (2010, 2014); Al-Behaijan (2017); *Khaleej Times* (2017); McKinsey Consultant in Saudi Arabia, personal communication

			(2019); Ministry of Education (2019); Al-Sulami (2016)
UAE	US$1,650 registration fee required.	Enrolment capped at 20 per cent for non-national students.	Government.ae (2018b); Pennington (2017)

1. When the Omani government decided to start charging non-national students, Al Mukrashi (2018) noted this negatively impacted Arab migrant students the most.

2. According to the Home Office (2014), there are also anecdotal cases of stateless children (see Box 2) who have been able to access education in Kuwait based on family connections.

Bahrain stands out as the only GCC country that has open access to its public system, and non-nationals comprise approximately 50 per cent of students in the country's public schools (Toumi, 2017c). Bahrain has not historically charged school fees or imposed any other restrictions on migrants' enrolment in public schools. See Box 1 for more information.

Box 1: Bahrain's provision of education for all children

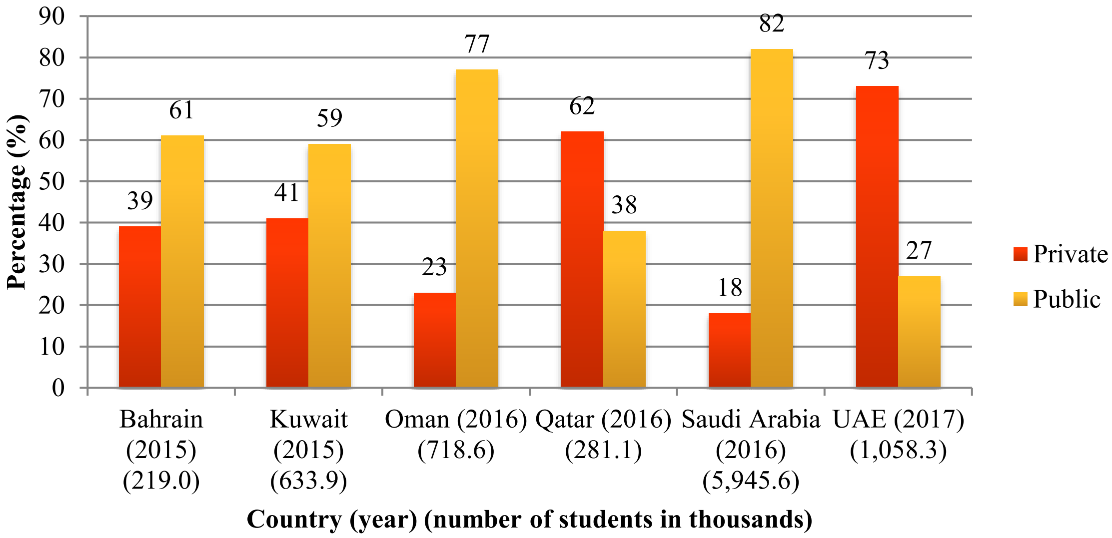
Bahrain is the only GCC country that provides free public education for nationals as well as non-nationals without any restrictions, assuming migrant parents meet the requirements to sponsor children in the country. However, there have been discussions around charging non-citizens approximately US$1,100 to attend public schools, with possible exceptions for students from countries where Bahraini children are eligible to receive free public education (*Al Bawaba*, 2018b; Toumi, 2017a).

In 2017, the Minister of Education in Bahrain rejected the proposal to implement fees for non-nationals, stating, 'Providing free education for foreigners is in line with the policies of Bahrain and its legal and international commitments to promoting education free of charge' (Toumi, 2017a, para. 4). The Minister also noted that children with Bahraini mothers but non-citizen fathers (approximately 4,000 children) fell into the category of non-citizen (Toumi, 2017a). The bill appears to still be under debate in the country (*Al Bawaba*, 2018b).

As a result of a lack of access to the public education sector for most migrant children, GCC policy-makers have had to make a concerted effort to ensure there are a range of private schooling options available for resident children of non-national workers. Across the region, approximately 30 per cent of all students are in private schools, with the largest proportions enrolled in the UAE (73 per cent) and Qatar (62 per cent)[7] (Hoteit, El Hachem, Erker and Farah, 2018). Saudi Arabia, the country with the largest total number of students (nearly 6 million), has the lowest percentage of students in private schools (18 per cent), as reflected in Figure 3.

Figure 3:

Percentage of private school students in GCC countries (and the total number of students per country, in thousands)



Note: These figures include migrant and national students.

Source: Adapted from Hoteit et al. (2018).

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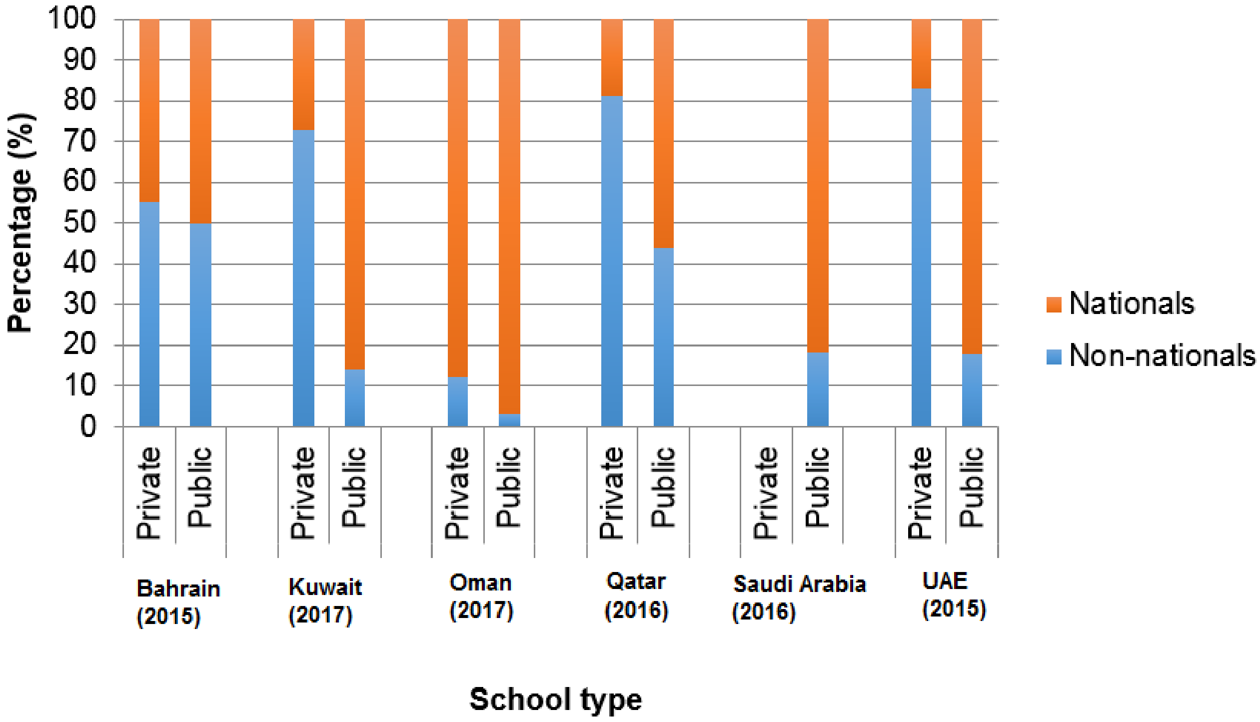
[7] The private education sector in the GCC region is viewed as a lucrative market. A report by the Boston Consulting Group valued the GCC region's education sector at approximately US$13.2 billion for 2016/17, predicting that it would almost double to US$26.2 billion by 2023 (Hoteit et al., 2018). The same report estimated that almost 40 per cent of this financial growth (US$5 billion) would come from tuition/fee increases (Hoteit et al., 2018).

While private schools in the GCC tend to predominately serve migrants, national students are increasingly enrolling in them (Central Statistics Bureau (2019; KHDA and Dubai FDI, 2016; *The Peninsula*, 2017). Oman is the only GCC country where nationals comprise the majority (88%) of private school students, as shown in Figure 4. The next highest proportion is in Bahrain where 55% of private school students are nationals. In the UAE and Qatar, where migrant students outnumber national students and private schools are more prolific than public schools, nationals comprise 17% and 19% of private school students, respectively.

Figure 4:

Percent of national and non-national students in private and public schools in GCC countries



Note: Data was unavailable for private school students in Saudi Arabia. However, the percentage of national students in private schools is expected to increase as a ban on Saudi nationals enrolling in private international schools was lifted and the government is encouraging private school enrollment under Vision 2030 (GFH, 2016; Hoteit et al., 2018).

Sources: Alayam (2015); Central Statistics Bureau (2019); National Centre for Statistics and Information (2019); Al-Sulami (2016); Statistica (2019); Toumi (2017c)

Private schools in GCC countries offer an extensive range of curricula options in line with their country of origin, including India, the United States (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK), among others. In Dubai alone, there are 17 different curricula on offer in the 194 private schools in the emirate (KHDA, 2018).

Local education authorities across the GCC region are responsible for regulating private schools. They oversee licences, fee increases and inspections to varying degrees in order to maintain the quality of private schools (see Appendix B for more information about these regulatory bodies). However, these bodies may be more focused on school quality as it relates to national students and less concerned for migrant students. There have been cases of private schools being declared unfit for national students but acceptable for migrant students. In the UAE, for example, in the 2018/19 academic year, the UAE MOE banned national students from enrolling at 47 low-ranking private schools, but these schools were still operational for non-nationals (Team KT, 2018).

As a result of separate schools and curricula, very few migrant students feel a need to assimilate to their host country. They are taught in the language of their home country, or in English, and use textbooks from the country where their school's curriculum originates. They also mostly mix with students who are also migrants. In general, there are not substantive efforts by ministries of education to integrate migrant children across the region as they are expected to be temporary residents like their parents. For example, in Saudi Arabia, Article 2 of the Foreign School Bylaw from the MOE makes it clear migrant children are expected to return to their country of origin: 'This Bylaw regulates foreign schools of expatriates residing in the Kingdom to provide adequate education for their children within definite regulations, in order for them to be able to continue their education when they return home' (Ministry of Education, n.d., p. 1).

As such, migrant children do not always feel a close connection to the country in which they may receive the majority of their education. However, there have been efforts by some countries such as Bahrain and the UAE (in particular in the emirate of Dubai) to ensure that all students in private schools are learning Arabic (to a good standard) and taught about the country through a common social studies curriculum (*Alayam*, 2015; KHDA, 2019a). While there has been limited research into teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers in the region, to date, there have been no studies specifically examining the impact of this in helping non-national students integrate (Ministry of Education, 2017; Sakho, 2012).

IMPACT OF THE STRUCTURE OF NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS ON EDUCATION QUALITY FOR DIFFERENT MIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN GCC COUNTRIES

As large numbers of migrant children must attend private schools in the GCC, the private education sector has flourished. GCC governments have actively encouraged the establishment of private schools offering a range of curricula catering to various migrant populations (Adly, 2018; Pennington, 2014; Strategic Gears Management Consultancy, 2018).). While there are non-profit schools operating in the region, sometimes backed by foreign governments, for-profit schools are the dominant type of private schools (American Community School of Abu Dhabi, n.d.; American School of Doha, n.d.; British School Muscat, 2019; ISYB, 2013). In the UAE and Qatar, approximately 88 per cent and 70 per cent of all private schools are for-profit, respectively (Ridge, Kippels and Shami, 2015).

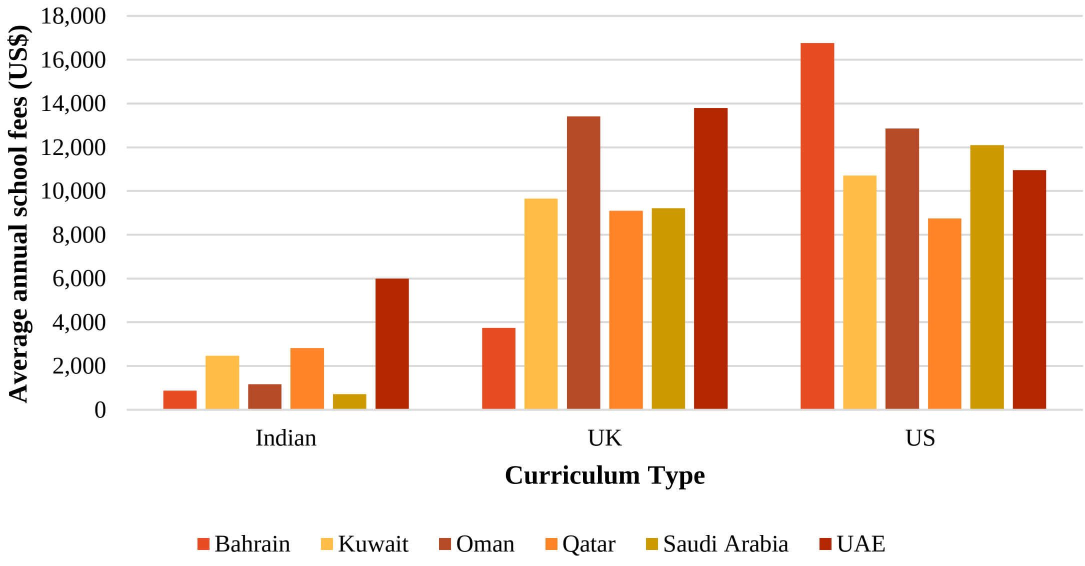
The largest of these private school companies operate schools at a range of price tiers and market themselves to families based on their abilities to pay. Sunny Varkey, the founder and chairmen of GEMS Education, the world's largest for-profit school chain that originated in the UAE, describes how private schools offer parents a choice through different pricing levels:

> Across the region, the private sector offers choices that are unavailable in the public sphere; and, in the tax-free Gulf States, why should it fall to governments to provide schooling for expatriates. Yes, schooling is a huge expense for many parents, but GEMS and other private school operators offer multiple price points to ease that burden. With private schools here charging as little as AED 6,000 [US$1,650] to AED 22,000 [US$6,000] up to even AED 100,000 [US$27,200], parents do have a choice. (Alpen Capital, 2018, p. 5)

However, the reality is that families only have a choice if they have the ability to pay. As Varkey notes, annual school fees can be as high as approximately US$30,000 per child. In 2015, a study in the UAE and Qatar found that for migrant parents in the lowest income bracket, school fees were the first criterion they considered when choosing a school (Ridge et al., 2015). Due to wage and occupation disparities by nationality in the Gulf (Hamza, 2014; Tong and Al Awad, 2014), low-fee schools often target the large numbers of South Asian students residing in the region as well as some migrant Arabs (Baldwin-Edwards, 2011; KHDA and Dubai FDI, 2016). Across the GCC countries, fees for Indian curriculum schools are, on average, much less than those for the UK and US curricula schools, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5:

Average annual private school fees (in US$) in the GCC, by curriculum and country



Source: Arabian Business (2014).

Research shows that children enrolled in high-fee schools receive access to better facilities and lower teacher-student ratios alongside higher paid and better trained teachers (Ridge, Kippels and Shami, 2016). In the case of private schools in Dubai, high-fee premium schools are more likely to be attended by children of Western migrants and other wealthier families, while at the other end of the spectrum, low-fee schools tend to be attended by children from India and Pakistan (Ridge et al., 2016).

Inequality between socio-economic groups is exacerbated in the private school system due to the fee structures and corresponding levels of quality. An examination of Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) rankings of GEMS schools and associated fees in Dubai revealed that higher fees are associated with higher rankings, and thus higher quality, and there is no reason to think this differs across the region (Ridge et al., 2016). Additionally, the dominance of for-profit providers in countries like Qatar and the UAE means that profit maximization tends to take priority over other issues such as student and teacher welfare (Ridge et al., 2015).

The financial impact on parents who have to pay for their children to attend private schools in GCC countries also disproportionately impacts low- and middle-income families. It is not uncommon for migrants in these income brackets to struggle with paying their children's school fees (Ahmed, 2010; *Arab News*, 2010; Nasir, 2018; Shaaban, 2018). Parents can end up spending large proportions of their income on private school fees in the Gulf, and this tends to impact certain nationality groups the most. A 2015 study in the UAE and Qatar found that Arabs and South Asians with children in private schools spent, on average, 22 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively, of their incomes on school fees, approximately double that of Westerners who only spent an average of 10 per cent (Ridge et al., 2015) (see Box 2 for the case of stateless children). Fees can be so burdensome that some families must take out loans to pay for their children's education (Dhal, 2013; National Bank of Kuwait, n.d.). In other situations, parents send children back to their countries of origin for schooling or decide to home-school them to reduce expenses (Bakshi, 2014; Issa, 2013; KHDA, 2014; Nasir, 2017).

Box 2. Education for stateless and previously stateless children

In the GCC, stateless and previously stateless residents may have difficulty accessing quality education. Although they are not nationals, in many cases these families have been residing in GCC countries for decades (Elgayar, 2014). In Kuwait, there are over 110,000 *bidoon*, or stateless people, who do not receive the same rights as citizens, including access to free public education (Elgayar, 2014; Weiner, 2017). Ineligible for public education, *bidoon* children in Kuwait typically go to private schools, which the government subsidizes the cost of, but parents still must pay up to 30 per cent of fees, and children may be denied entry if they do not have birth certificates (Elgayar, 2014).

Similarly, in other GCC countries, previously stateless individuals have been provided with passports from countries such as the Comoros Islands (Zacharias, 2018).[8] In the case of the UAE, these non-nationals may have been born and raised in the country but are not guaranteed places in public schools. Therefore, they often must pay for private schools or they may attend charity schools, which still charge fees but sometimes offer scholarships. These charity schools, typically operational at night, can be in high demand with long waiting lists. This is despite often being held in substandard facilities and taught by educators who typically teach in public schools during the day and thus are tired themselves (Ahmed, 2010; Nasir, 2017; *Which School Advisor*, 2017).

[8] In 2008, the UAE government started the process for obtaining Comoros citizenship for its *bidoon* population. Today, these Comoros passport holders are eligible for public school if they can afford to pay the US$1,650 fees. An estimated 40,000 people hold Comoros passports in the UAE (Abrahamian, 2018; Zacharias, 2018).

There are recurrent cases of out-of-school children whose parents are unable to pay for tuition at all (*Arab News*, 2010). In 2017, it was estimated that 20,000 Pakistani children were out-of-school in the UAE because their families could not find space in an affordable school (Khaishgi, 2017). Similarly, in the emirate of Ras Al Khaimah, UAE, in 2018, there were at least 460 children out of school because their parents could not afford to pay private school tuition (Shaaban, 2018). A further 2000 children are estimated to be attending the emirate's evening schools, which are funded by the local government. Other migrant children born in the GCC have never even attended school as a result of their illegal status, while still others are forced to leave school for failing to have valid documentation (*Arab News*, 2010; Sankar, 2018).

Even though historically the private schools have largely been comprised of non-national students, there has been a considerable growth in the numbers of nationals attending these schools, often in the, sometimes mistaken, belief that private equals better quality. In addition, the fact that in countries such as the UAE and Qatar the private sector is larger than the public sector also means that the private sector influences the public sector, which is explored in the next section.

EFFECT OF LARGE-SCALE MIGRATION ON NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN GCC COUNTRIES

In many ways, the private and public school systems in the GCC systems are two distinct, separate tracks. However, in addition to serving migrant students, private schools in the GCC also enrol national students. National parents often enrol their children in private schools as they have a belief that they provide higher quality education than the public schools[9] and are even encouraged by national governments to do so in some cases. In Qatar, the government provides Qatari children with school vouchers, and in the 2016/17 academic year, approximately 34 per cent of Qatari students were enrolled in private schools, as shown in Table 2 (*The Peninsula*, 2017; SEC, 2012). In Dubai in 2002, only 34 per cent of nationals were enrolled in private schools but that figure now exceeds 50 per cent in the emirate and the entire UAE (Hoteit et al., 2018; KHDA, 2012; KHDA and Dubai FDI, 2016). In support of private education, the UAE government provides private school scholarships to distinguished Emirati students (Government of Dubai, 2019).

[9] For example, in Dubai, half of national parents sending their children to private school reported that they did so because they believed it was better quality (KHDA, 2012).

Table 2. Per cent of national students enrolled in private schools (K–12)

Country	Per cent of national students enrolled in private school	Year	Source
Bahrain*	-	-	-
Kuwait	21%	2017/18	Central Statistics Bureau (2019)
Oman	14%	2016	National Centre for Statistics and Information (2019)
Qatar	34%	2016/17	*The Peninsula* (2017)
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-
UAE	56%	2018	Hoteit et al. (2018)

*While the per cent of all nationals enrolled in private schools in Bahrain is not available, in 2015, 33,219 Bahraini students were enrolled at private schools, comprising 45 per cent of all private school students (*Alayam*, 2015). The corresponding number of Bahraini students in the country or in public schools is not available.

Although public statistics are unavailable for the number of nationals in private schools in Saudi Arabia, the government there has also taken measures to encourage national students to enrol in private schools. Saudi Arabia has been actively seeking to increase the role of the private sector in its education system and removed quotas that previously restricted Saudi students from enrolling in private schools (Kerr, 2013). Aiming to increase enrolment figures in private schools, Saudi Arabia has simplified the process for opening private schools and set a target to increase total private school enrolments to 25 per cent of all students by

2020, representing a 7 per cent increase from 2018 (Hoteit et al., 2018; Kerr, 2013; Strategic Gears Management Consultancy, 2018).

It could be argued that the active push towards private education in GCC countries may be weakening their public education sectors, as resources that once would have gone to public schools may be directed to regulation and oversight of private schools where nationals are enrolled. There is also the possibility of brain drain, as the top students may be pulled away from the public sector to the private sector. In addition, the public education sector may be losing key advocates and champions since it tends to be wealthier parents who send their children to private schools. In the emirate of Dubai, where there has been an active privatization agenda over the past decade, the number of public schools has been steadily shrinking, and those schools that are left largely cater to poorer families (KHDA, 2011, 2019b).

The prevalence of private schools and the large numbers of migrants in the GCC are likely also influencing national curricula in the GCC in terms of language and focus areas. Many national curricula in the GCC have gone through stages of incorporating English, the language commonly used to communicate with migrants, sparking debates around fears of national children losing the ability to communicate properly in Arabic (Clarke, 2016). Various reforms in the UAE since 1994 have included teaching certain K–12 subjects in English (Kannan, 2008; Shaheen, 2010), and past reforms in Qatar have also included switching from teaching in Arabic to teaching in English (Nasser, 2017). In the UAE, in addition to teaching English as a second language, English also serves as the language of instruction for teaching the sciences and mathematics (Government.ae, 2019). Similarly, the GCC countries have been strengthening their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) industries and education, echoing global trends (Geronimo, 2018; *Times of Oman*, 2017; US Department of Education, 2019; Wiseman, Alromi and Alshumrani, 2014).

In regard to the long-term impact of private schools in the GCC, it would be beneficial to conduct additional research on the costs and returns for systems in the GCC when non-national students enrol in private schools instead of public schools. Similarly, the economic cost of private school oversight should also be examined. It would also be beneficial to better understand costs of the closure of for-profit schools when they do not meet investor expectations, which can result in out of school children or families leaving the region.

CONCLUSION

International and migrant schools in the GCC region cater to a large and growing number of students from a range of nationalities and income levels. In some states, such as the UAE and Qatar, these students significantly outnumber national students, and the private sector dwarfs the public sector. In the long term, however, as more and more nationals also enter the private sector, many questions emerge relating to the impact of this on the public education system and on national cohesion and national identity. As the majority of migrant children will never become citizens of the country they live in, but may still stay for many years, it is important that countries start to think about the norms and values that all schools are transmitting to the students that attend them. There are also legitimate concerns about the use of Arabic and it becoming a second rather than a first language of the GCC countries, in addition to issues around religion and culture. Finally, there are concerns about migrant and stateless students from the poorest families and access to education for these children, many of whom are out of school. Governments also need to think strategically about what this might mean in the future and how this can be mitigated. While great strides have been made in terms of developing mature public sectors and regulating the private sectors, it is clear that the two sectors will need to work in tandem in the years to come.

Appendix A.

Table A. Minimum monthly salary to sponsor spouse/child in the GCC countries

Country	US$ (approx.)	Source
Bahrain	1 100	*Al Bawaba* (2018a); Labour Market Regulatory Authority (2018)
Kuwait	1 500	*Gulf Business* (2016)
Oman	800	Al Mukrashi (2017)
Qatar	2 700	Mackie (2018)
Saudi Arabia	1 300 and only those working in specific professions	Proven SA (2016)
UAE	1 100 (or 800 with accommodation)	*Khaleej Times* (2018)

Appendix B

Table B: Regulation of K−12 private schools in the GCC countries

Country	K–12
Bahrain	MOE and the Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergarten Review (DPS) MOE oversees all kindergartens and schools. Established in 2008, the DPS is one of the directorates of the Education & Training Quality Authority. One of its core activities is to evaluate private schools and share best practices. School fee increases must receive approval from the MOE.[1] Joint committee of officers from the MOE and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs issue private school operating licences. *Sources:* Education & Training Quality Authority (2019); GFH (2016); Kingdom of Bahrain Ministry of Education (n.d.).
Kuwait	MOE–Kuwait Regulates school fees. A 3 per cent fee hike is permitted annually for private schools, and higher increases in fees may be implemented with approval. The Ministry of Finance issues a private school operating licence after receiving approval from the MOE, Council of Ministers and Ministry of Commerce and Industry. *Sources:* Administrator (2008); GFH (2016); State of Kuwait–Kuwait Government Online (2018a).
Oman	MOE Regulatory authority for pre-primary, primary and secondary education.[2]

	Approves tuition fees. If found to violate government policies, schools may have their tuition fees decreased. The MOE issues private school operating licences. *Sources:* GFH (2016); McKenna (2017); Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education (n.d.); Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Higher Education (n.d.).
Qatar	Ministry of Education and Higher Education and the Supreme Education Council (SEC) The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is the highest official authority. The SEC is the regulatory body overseeing education. School fees are regulated, and all private school fee increases require an approval from the SEC.[3] The Private Schools Office (PSO) set forth by the Supreme Education Council (SEC) issues private school operating licences. *Sources:* GFH (2016); Iqbal and Osman (2015)
Saudi Arabia	Education Ministry Established in 2016, the Education Ministry is responsible for education across schools and higher education institutions. Private schools are prohibited from increasing fees without its prior approval. The MOE issues private school operating licences. *Sources:* GFH (2016); Ministry of Education (1975).
UAE	MOE, Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), Education Zones, Sharjah Private Education Authority, Dubai Education Council (DEC) The MOE is the overarching federal education authority that oversees public and private schools. KHDA and DEC are responsible for policies and quality inspections at private schools in Dubai. KHDA oversees tuition increases in Dubai based on school rankings and the Education Cost Index.[4] ADEK is responsible for policies and quality inspections at private schools in Abu Dhabi. ADEK decides on the private education school fee using an assessment matrix.[5] The private school operating licences are issued by ADEK in Abu Dhabi and by the MOE in the rest of the emirates. Education Zones oversee private education in the Northern Emirates. *Sources:* GFH (2016); Government.ae (2018a); Sebugwaawo (2017).

1. In 2008, one school was allowed to increase its school fees by as much as 18 per cent (Administrator, 2008).

2. According to GFH (2016), the kindergarten school sector in Oman is dominated by private operators as there is a shortage of reputable public kindergartens.

3. In 2015, applications of more than 50 per cent of private schools seeking a fee hike were rejected, while schools incurring financial losses were permitted to increase fees by between 2 per cent and 10 per cent (Iqbal and Osman, 2015).

4. KHDA bases its school fee increases on the Education Cost Index which is used to examine schools' operational costs. In 2017/18, schools in Dubai were allowed to increase their fees by between 2.4 per cent and 4.8 per cent, depending on their inspection rankings (Nagraj, 2018).

5. In the 2017/18 academic year, 24 private schools in Abu Dhabi were allowed to increase their fees by 3 per cent (Sebugwaawo, 2017).

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