

NAVIGATING ECONOMIC CRISIS EFFECTS ON EDUCATION GOVERNANCE THROUGH AN EMPIRICAL LENS

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Abstract

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This study explores the profound impact of Lebanon's economic crises and the COVID-19 pandemic on its education system. The research problem addresses the exacerbation of educational disparities, resource shortages, and disruptions in learning caused by these crises. The purpose of this research is to analyze these impacts, identify key issues, and propose solutions to enhance Lebanon's educational sector. A quantitative approach was used, involving a survey of 300 parents affected by the crises. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) v.26 to examine correlations between parental education, school type, and employment conditions with educational challenges. The study finds that the crises have significantly disrupted education, leading to increased inequality, deteriorating infrastructure, and inadequate government policies. Recommendations include boosting government funding, investing in teacher training, improving digital infrastructure, and encouraging private sector involvement. These measures are essential for building resilience in Lebanon's education system and ensuring equitable access to quality education. The paper's relevance lies in providing practical insights and solutions to address the challenges faced by Lebanon's education sector amidst ongoing economic and pandemic-related difficulties.

Keywords: Education, Economic Crisis, Lebanon, Child Outcome

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1. INTRODUCTION

Lebanon has long been renowned for its robust educational system within the Middle East and beyond. However, the country faces an unprecedented economic crisis, compounded by high inflation and the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely impacted various sectors, especially education. This crisis has inflicted significant damage on the education sector, raising concerns about students' access to quality education and the overall learning environment.

This study examines the effects of Lebanon's economic turmoil, which began in 2019, on children's right to education and the quality of their learning experiences. The research aims to identify factors contributing to the decline in educational quality and to provide recommendations for improvement.

The study addresses several research gaps such as the long-term impacts of economic crises on education, the influence of parental occupation and education on educational challenges during downturns, the resilience of different educational systems in recovering from crises, and the effects of parental employment and financial stability on children's education during recessions.

Besides, the research aims to explore how socioeconomic factors such as parental education, type of work, and income and institutional factors (such as school type) influence educational challenges during and after economic crises. Key research questions include the impact of parental education levels, the relationship between school type and learning challenges, the effect of parental work conditions, and the influence of financial stability and salary distribution on educational obstacles.

The study's framework integrates these factors to examine educational challenges and governance responses during economic crises. Its relevance lies in addressing critical gaps in understanding the effects of such crises on education, with implications for policy-making, equitable access, and long-term institutional resilience.

Using a quantitative research design, the study surveys 300 parents with structured questionnaires covering demographics, educational challenges, school type, work conditions, income, and salary disbursement. The main findings reveal that higher parental education levels enhance support for children's education, private and foreign schools show greater resilience than public schools, remote work conditions benefit students' education more than on-site work, and financial stability alleviates educational challenges.

Overall, the paper aims to shed light on critical issues, inform policy-making, and propose actionable solutions to improve educational access and quality ongoing economic difficulties.

Thus, this paper is structured to provide a comprehensive examination of Lebanon's educational crisis and its broader implications. Section 2 includes a theoretical background that reviews relevant theories and contextual challenges affecting Lebanon's education system. Section 3 analyzes the methodology and details the quantitative research design, including the sample, data collection, and analytical methods used. Section 4 presents the results and presents key findings, highlighting the impact of parental education, school type, and parental work conditions on educational

challenges during and after economic crises. Section 5 discusses the findings. The final Section 6 offers recommendations for addressing these challenges and enhancing the resilience of Lebanon's education system.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted educational systems worldwide, and Lebanon is no exception. This literature review explores the multifaceted effects of the pandemic on Lebanon's educational sector, synthesizing current research and insights. By examining the evolving challenges, innovations, and policy responses, this review aims to illuminate the diverse ways in which COVID-19 has reshaped teaching, learning, and educational outcomes in Lebanon. Through a comprehensive analysis of scholarly literature and empirical studies, this section seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the pandemic's lasting implications on educational practices and equity within the Lebanese context.

Lebanon is witnessing successive crises, from wars to the financial crisis, through to the COVID-19 pandemic. We live in a time of crisis. As soon as a crisis ends, a new crisis begins, leaving serious impacts on individuals, threatening the ability of the government to meet the needs of the Lebanese population, and standing as an obstacle to achieving the 2030 sustainable development goals.

These crises deepened the educational disparities that deprived more than one million children of pursuing education due to the inability to access distance education or to pay outrageous school fees (Doll et al., 2022).

On the other hand, the coronavirus pandemic is among the crises that have had serious repercussions on the world's population, as it began spreading in China in 2019 and then turned into a global epidemic in 2020. The education sector in Lebanon has had a large share of the negative repercussions left by the virus while many students couldn't re-enroll in schools due to the economic repercussions of the pandemic and public schools closed their doors (Islam & Abiona, 2023).

All these factors have contributed to the decline in the level of education of students. In all cycles, most students are one to two years behind in their learning, according to specialists.

This research aims to shed light on the reality of the education sector in Lebanon and how it is affected by the crises it has been experiencing since 2019 until now. Several sub-objectives branch out from this goal: the primary objective is to identify the problems facing the education sector in light of various crises. It is crucial to understand how these crises impact the quality of education. Additionally, there is a need to examine the government policies implemented to address the negative repercussions of these crises. Finally, offering proposals that could contribute to enhancing the quality of the education sector is essential for its improvement and resilience.

The number of public schools in Lebanon is 1,235, with about 342,304 students, and about 40,796 teachers working there, including about 17,771 contractors (who receive their wages according to working hours), according to the latest statistics. On the other hand, the number of private

schools is 1,209 schools, with about 558,068 students, and about 51,215 teachers working in them, including about 19,209 retirees (Yaakoub & Badre, 2012).

As for the semi-free private schools, that is, those that receive financial support from the state, there are about 352 schools, with an enrollment of 133,441 students, and 7,468 teachers, including 1,642 retirees. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) recently published in its report that more than 700,000 children are out of school in Lebanon (UNICEF, 2023).

2.1. Hypotheses development

The hypotheses presented in this article concentrate on important elements that affect education during an economic crisis, such as the COVID-19 epidemic. These theories aid in the comprehension of how various aspects of the institutional environments and socioeconomic background influence educational difficulties in times of crisis. The following justifies each hypothesis:

H1₀: There is no relation between the group mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the education of parents.

H1: There is a relation between the group mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the education of parents.

- Parental education and student support: The level of education of parents often correlates with the amount and type of support they can provide to their children during challenging times, such as an economic crisis.

Higher-educated parents may have more resources, knowledge, and skills to help their children navigate educational challenges, including remote learning and managing stress.

- Socio-economic implications: Parental education is often a proxy for socioeconomic status. Understanding this relationship helps in identifying whether students from different socio-economic backgrounds faced different levels of challenges, which can inform policy decisions to address these disparities.

H2₀: There is no relation between the group mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the type of school.

H2: There is a relation between the group mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the type of school.

- Institutional differences: Different types of schools (public, private, international) have varying resources, infrastructure, and capacities to adapt to crises. For instance, private and international schools may have more financial resources to quickly implement remote learning solutions compared to public schools.

- Policy and governance implications: By examining the challenges faced by different types of schools, policymakers can better understand which institutions are more resilient and why, thereby improving governance strategies to support all types of schools during future crises.

H3₀: There is no relation between the group's mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the type of work.

H3: There is a relation between the group's mean of the challenges during COVID-19 and the type of work.

- Work environment and parental involvement: The type of work parents engage in (remote work, on-site work, or hybrid) can significantly impact their ability to support their children's education during a crisis. Parents working remotely might have more flexibility to assist with schooling, while those working on-site might face more challenges in doing so.

- Economic impact on education: Different work types are affected differently by economic crises. Understanding this relationship can shed light on how economic stress on parents translates into educational challenges for their children, informing targeted interventions to mitigate these effects.

H4₀: There is a relation between parent education and the group mean of the problems following COVID-19.

H4: There is a relation between parent education and the group mean of the problems following COVID-19.

- Impact of parental education over time: After the initial crisis has passed, adolescents' ability to handle lingering or ongoing difficulties may still be influenced by the parents' educational attainment. This can entail coping with persistent disruptions to learning or adjusting to new standards in the classroom.

- Sustained support and resources: Parents who have completed more education may be better able to offer their kids ongoing assistance and resources, which may lessen the difficulties they have in school after the crisis.

H5₀: There is no relation between the group's mean of the challenges after COVID-19 and the type of school.

H5: There is a relation between the group's mean of the challenges after COVID-19 and the type of school.

- Post-catastrophe adaptation: After a catastrophe, different kinds of schools may be able to bounce back and adjust differently. When it comes to addressing learning gaps and offering extra support, private schools might possess greater resources than public schools.

- Policy and governance strategies: Strategies to improve resilience and recovery in educational governance can be informed by an understanding of the variations in post-crisis issues among different types of schools.

H6₀: There is no relation between the group mean of the challenges after COVID-19 and the type of work.

H6: There is a relation between the group mean of the challenges after COVID-19 and the type of work.

- Persistent parental participation: The kind of employment parents do still has an impact on their capacity to assist with their kids' education. Students' ability to handle issues after a crisis can be influenced by the flexibility of remote employment or the rigors of on-site work.

- Economic stability and educational support: The nature of the work can also be a sign of economic stability, which is important in order to create an environment that is favorable for learning after a crisis.

H7₀: There is no relation between groups' mean of the challenges of financial crisis and type of work.

H7: There is a relation between groups' mean of the challenges of financial crisis and type of work.

- Work-related economic stress: Financial crises have varying effects on different kinds of work. Recognizing these differences makes it easier to determine which industries confront more difficult obstacles and how those obstacles affect student performance.

- Interventions in policy: This hypothesis' conclusions can direct actions to assist families in particular industries that are particularly susceptible to financial disasters.

H8₀: There is no relation between groups' mean of the challenges of financial crisis and income.

H8: There is a relation between groups' mean of the challenges of financial crisis and income.

- Income and economic resilience: Families' ability to weather financial hardships is greatly influenced by their income levels. Increased revenue can provide a safety net against sudden drops in the economy and offer stability for ongoing support for education.

- Socioeconomic disparities: By highlighting the differences in the educational obstacles that students from various income groups experience, this hypothesis can help shape fair policy initiatives.

H9₀: There is no relation between groups' mean of the challenges of the financial crisis and the way you took your salary during the crisis.

H9: There is a relation between groups' mean of the challenges of the financial crisis and the way you took your salary during the crisis.

- Methods of pay disbursement: Payroll distribution practices (such as on-time, late, or in-kind support) can have an impact on the stability of funds and, in turn, the capacity to fund education in times of financial difficulty.

- Financial management and stress: Various methods of paying employees can have an effect on family stress levels and financial management, which can affect students' ability to concentrate on their studies when facing financial difficulties.

H10₀: The number of children in a family cannot have significant effects on various aspects of family dynamics, including economic status, parental involvement, and the overall development of each child.

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- Number of children: The number of children in a family can have significant effects on various aspects of family dynamics, including economic status, parental involvement, and the overall development of each child.

Thus, this research indicates a focus on understanding how economic crises influence both governance and educational systems. The selected theories are pertinent because they examine how educational challenges are intertwined with socioeconomic characteristics, such as parental education and occupation type. They also assess the differences in institutional settings, including various types of schools, and their capacity to manage crises effectively.

These theories provide empirical evidence to support the development of improved policies and governance strategies aimed at enhancing the resilience of educational institutions during economic downturns. Additionally, they address both the immediate and enduring impacts of crises on education, considering a broad range of socioeconomic factors, including parental education,

job nature, income, and salary distribution systems. This approach offers valuable insights that can guide the formulation of robust policies and governance measures to bolster the adaptability and resilience of educational institutions in the face of economic challenges.

By addressing these theories, the research hopes to provide a thorough grasp of the complex problems encountered during economic downturns and suggest data-driven strategies for more efficiency.

2.2. The structural crisis of the educational sector in Lebanon

Tens of thousands of Lebanese students, in the middle and high school levels, live in great anxiety about their future, due to the crises that threaten the educational sector in Lebanon. This matter was finally demonstrated by the pressure exerted on the Ministry of Education to cancel the official exam certificates.

After about a year and a half of blended education, between in-person and remote, due to the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, the educational sector — which also includes tens of thousands of displaced Syrian students — began to face risks that threaten the quality of education, and even its continuity, according to many (Shuhayb et al., 2022).

The educational sector shares with various sectors the repercussions of the economic crisis, the first of which is the resounding loss of the Lebanese lira pound (LBP), as its black market trading exceeded the threshold of LBP 100 against the dollar (USD), in addition to the scarcity of fuel, the dissolution of the infrastructure, the erosion of the value of salaries, and the deterioration of purchasing power by more than 95% (Mercy Corps, 2024).

Consequently, the majority of mid-class families who used to enjoy economic and social stability have become incapable of buying their children's books and stationery, as a result of their prices increasing more than 10 times and are likely to rise. Some schools are also raising wildly their tuition fees, under the pretext of the deterioration of the value of the LBP, and even without allowing the family committees to practice their legal right to monitor the status of budgets (Mortimer et al., 2014).

On the other hand, the economic situation prompted the migration of about two thousand highly qualified male and female teachers after the crisis, and about 15% of the teachers of some schools emigrated after receiving tempting offers to work in foreign countries, especially in Gulf area, or with the aim of leaving the educational sector entirely.

In addition, the Beirut port explosion on August 4, 2020, damaged about 241 educational institutions in Beirut and Mount Lebanon, and its losses were estimated at more than USD 100 million. That explosion has doubled school crises, because economic difficulties make the cost of education greater than the value of salaries, including the cost of transportation to reach school, due to the scarcity of fuel and its high prices, in addition to the high cost of various logistical supplies for education (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2020).

The situation is even worse for contract teachers, who are not tenured. They don't have insurance and are only paid three times a year. Even before the crisis, transport costs were not covered.

As a result, 35% of contract workers have left their positions: some have not received a salary for years and many are afraid of resigning and losing their hours. On the other side, the teachers who remain must continue to work understaffed and bear more pressure (Chudgar et al., 2017).

The exhaustion and resulting resignations directly threaten the education of an entire generation. In 2022, more than 90 schools closed for budgetary reasons and, at least, one in five children no longer went to school in 2021, two numbers which must have increased since then. The current crisis has revealed that the educational sector is in a structural crisis, and is experiencing near collapse, due to several considerations.

First, the students and their families are found to be abandoned, not to mention the marginalization of a large segment of public-school students, which highly established the concept of “social class disparity”.

Secondly, teachers — as a result of economic and professional conditions — are facing the crisis alone. Some private schools largely cut back their salaries, while the salaries of public sector teachers have lost their entire value, and their average is equivalent to less than USD 80 per month.

Third, the governance of the educational system has given absolute power to the private sector, and most of its schools tend to increase their tuition fees without noticing the suffering of the people since most of them aim only for business profits.

Fourth, education in Lebanon faces the risk of a lack of effectiveness and feasibility, which exacerbates the phenomenon of school dropout, and some families of public school students need the help of their children to support them financially and for their living (UNICEF, 2023).

Fifth, during a year and a half of distance learning — and because a large percentage of children either did not learn completely or learned in a less than primitive way — a serious reading and writing crisis appeared among young ages.

As a result, the rates of displacement from private education to formal education are expected to keep increasing due to the economic crisis, especially since the previous period witnessed the displacement of about 60,000 students. In parallel, public schools are unable to receive new students, due to the limited number of school seats, the small number of teachers, and the absence of any educational strategy.

Consequently, educational sector employees are afraid that Lebanon lost its leadership position in education, as evidenced by the results of the international ranking because it did not keep pace with the needs of the times (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2023).

2.3. Uncharted challenges: An in-depth exploration

In the following, we will delve into additional challenges confronting Lebanon’s educational sector: the collapse of the public schools, insufficient policies by the Lebanese government, and the difficulties encountered by parents.

2.3.1. Public schools in Lebanon groaning under collapse

The interference of the political class in the education sector affects the education system in

Lebanon. It is time to separate the education sector from politics. Unfortunately, some of these interventions negatively affect the education system as a whole. Administrators, teachers, and employees in public schools must be hired based only on qualifications and experience, independent of any other criteria. The biggest challenge in public schools is the lack of funding. The necessary funds are not available to pay teachers’ salaries.

One other major problem is the shortage of books, prompting the consideration of making all textbooks available in PDF format to allow students to print them at lower costs. Additionally, there is a significant trend of teachers either being frequently absent or relocating to private schools where they are compensated in USD. This shift is contributing to a large number of students transferring from public schools to private institutions, largely due to the persistent threat of strikes by public school teachers. Furthermore, many school buildings are in a state of disrepair due to maintenance problems. Schools in need of major repairs, those operating in rented buildings, and those with a small student population should be closed to address these issues effectively (UNICEF, 2023).

2.3.2. A lack of effective policies by the Lebanese government

The heart of the problem goes back to investing in supporting private education instead of public education, given the control of political and sectarian forces over it, and that Lebanon is paying the price for the “commodification” of education, without developing any alternative emergency plan.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Education faces great criticism of its performance, and many considered that its decisions did not reflect the reality of the crisis and its pressures, such as insisting on non-cancellation of the official exams.

In this context, the Educational Center for Research and Development is aiming to develop a new vision for curricula, within the available capabilities, and to be based on consultation with all members of the educational family with the target of producing curricula that take into account developments in reality. Lebanese government should adopt a new approach to the educational sector and draw up a new social and educational plan, to ask what our priorities are.

2.3.3. Parental struggles

Parents all over the world were forced into unfamiliar territory during the COVID-19 lockdown, figuring out the complex workings of online learning platforms to make sure their kids maintained their education from a distance. The sudden shift required parents to become makeshift teachers and familiarize themselves with digital tools and instructional software, which was especially difficult for those with low technology proficiency (Shuhayb et al., 2022). The situation in Lebanon was made worse by an ongoing monetary and economic crisis. In addition to the difficult task of adjusting to the pandemic’s demands on their schooling, parents also had to deal with the burden of paying school tuition in USD. Since salaries are paid in the rapidly diminishing Lebanese pound, many find it impossible to afford these fees, which causes them

to worry about their children’s school prospects and experience additional financial stress. The combination of financial instability and educational adaptation has brought attention to notable differences and required quick and flexible fixes to assist impacted families and guarantee kids’ continuous access to school.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilizes a quantitative research design to investigate the impact of economic and pandemic-related challenges on education in Lebanon, employing a survey method for data collection. The research design involves using surveys to gather data, which allows for statistical analysis to identify correlations between various factors affecting education.

The sample population consists of parents whose children have been impacted by both COVID-19 and the economic downturn. A total of 300 parents were selected to ensure the data collected was both meaningful and reliable. Random sampling is employed to minimize bias and enhance the representativeness of the sample. Also, we can use an alternative method the stratified random method.

Data is collected through a structured questionnaire that addresses parental income, employment status, type of work, and the issues encountered during the crises. To ensure wide reach and privacy, the questionnaire is distributed both online using WhatsApp and Google Forms and offline. The duration of the data collection is from February 1, 2024, to February 25, 2024.

For data analysis, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) v.26 is used, providing comprehensive tools for both descriptive and inferential statistics. Ethical considerations are integral to the study, with participants being fully informed about the study’s objectives and their rights, and consent is obtained. Data confidentiality is maintained, and participants have the option to withdraw from the study at any time.

The study acknowledges potential limitations, including the risk of response bias if participants do not provide truthful answers and the challenge of generalization due to cultural and economic differences. Overall, this methodology offers valuable insights into the significant challenges faced by Lebanon’s educational sector and guides the exploration of these issues.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Demographics. The gender of the participants is as follows: 58% female versus 42% male, where 48% are between 31–41 years old, 36% of the participants are between 42–52 years old, 6% between 20–30 years old, and 9% for those who are more than 52 years old. The mean number of children is three. 35% of participants have a high school/professional, and 30% have a bachelor’s degree. On the other hand, 55% of the participants send their children to private schools versus 45% to public schools. Also, 41% of the participants are self-employed. Furthermore, 34% of the participants earn a salary in LBP, 33% in USD, and 33% in both LBP and USD. 98% of the schools switched to online or remote learning during COVID-19.

4.2. Detailed descriptive statistics

The challenges during COVID-19. Globally, the COVID-19 pandemic presented formidable obstacles to educational systems, and Lebanon was no different. Due to these challenges, comprehensive educational reforms in Lebanon are desperately needed. These reforms should include funding for public education, closing the digital divide, and creating laws that guarantee all students, regardless of socioeconomic status, equitable access to high-quality education.

Table 1. Results of the challenges during COVID-19

<i>Challenges during COVID-19</i>	<i>F/%</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Total</i>
Distance learning causes a lot of psychological and physical stress	Frequency	6	14	69	36	175	300
	Percent	2.0	4.7	23.0	12.0	58.3	100.0
Balancing work obligations with checking my child’s education	Frequency	12	42	132	61	53	300
	Percent	4.0	14.0	44.0	20.3	17.7	100.0
Not having access to the required technology (computers, internet, etc.)	Frequency	20	37	66	77	100	300
	Percent	6.7	12.3	22.0	25.7	33.3	100.0
Having trouble assisting my child with homework or other subjects	Frequency	6	38	99	69	88	300
	Percent	2.0	12.7	33.0	23.0	29.3	100.0
Controlling my child’s enthusiasm and participation	Frequency	38	50	106	79	27	300
	Percent	12.7	16.7	35.3	26.3	9.0	100.0
Low educational level	Frequency	14	15	58	64	149	300
	Percent	4.7	5.0	19.3	21.3	49.7	100.0

The results of the table above show the challenges during COVID-19, where 58.3% of the participants strongly agree that “Distance learning caused a lot of psychological and physical stress”, 20.3% agree that “Balancing work obligations with checking my child’s education”, 33.3% strongly agree that “Not having access to the required technology (computers, internet, etc.)”, 29.3% strongly agree “Having trouble assisting my child with homework or other subjects”, 49.7% of the participants strongly agree that educational level became lower.

These results conclude that the challenges during COVID-19 with the parents were very complicated due to the difficulties that face while

teaching their children. Once they were obliged to move to distance learning, they didn’t have any idea about technology and the programs used, in the same time, the majority of the schools were not equipped and ready for distance learning, or for any emergency case. In addition to that, also teachers didn’t have enough skills to proceed with online education. All of this led to a gap between schools even private or public and led to a decrease in educational level and the completion of the educational programs.

The challenges after COVID-19. After COVID-19, Lebanon’s education sector faced numerous challenges that further complicated

an already struggling system. Where they highlight the urgent need for comprehensive educational reforms in Lebanon, focusing on equitable access to quality education, investment in public

schools, and the development of a robust digital infrastructure. Without such reforms, the long-term prospects for the country's youth remain bleak.

Table 2. Results of the challenges after COVID-19

<i>Challenges after COVID-19</i>	<i>F/%</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Total</i>
Adapting learning models to in-person and distance education	Frequency	80	79	94	24	23	300
	Percent	26.7	26.3	31.3	8.0	7.7	100.0
Concerns about my child's safety at school	Frequency	17	20	66	89	108	300
	Percent	5.7	6.7	22.0	29.7	36.0	100.0
Helping my child catch up academically after a learning loss	Frequency	20	68	123	57	32	300
	Percent	6.7	22.7	41.0	19.0	10.7	100.0
Balancing work responsibilities with school-related obligations	Frequency	21	92	101	58	28	300
	Percent	7.0	30.7	33.7	19.3	9.3	100.0
Support my child's social and emotional well-being	Frequency	11	77	114	59	39	300
	Percent	3.7	25.7	38.0	19.7	13.0	100.0

The study findings also highlighted the challenges encountered post-COVID-19. It was observed that 26.7% of participants strongly disagreed with the statement "Adapting learning models to in-person and distance education", while 36% strongly agreed with concerns regarding their child's safety at school. Additionally, 41% expressed neutrality towards "Helping my child catch up academically after a learning loss", and 33.7% were neutral about "Balancing work responsibilities with school-related obligations". Furthermore, 38% indicated neutrality towards "Supporting my child's social and emotional well-being".

These findings indicate that, despite nearly two years of distance learning and the significant

parental efforts to support their children academically and monitor their online activities, parents were reassured by the fact that their children did not contract COVID-19 while learning from home. However, their apprehensions turned into fear upon the reopening of schools, which may explain the initially low attendance rates.

The overall impact of the coronavirus pandemic on your child's education. The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on children's education globally, including in Lebanon. The effects were wide-ranging, affecting academic progress, social development, mental health, and overall well-being.

Table 3. The overall impact of the coronavirus pandemic on your child's education

<i>F/%</i>	<i>Very negative</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Very positive</i>	<i>Total</i>
Frequency	160	53	43	16	28	300
Percent	53.3	17.7	14.3	5.3	9.3	100.0

The overall impact of the coronavirus pandemic on children's education is very negative.

Financial hardship during COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread financial hardship across the globe, impacting individuals, businesses, and economies in various ways, like job loss, salary loss, and financial strain (see Table 4).

Financial crisis. Financial crises present a range of challenges that can impact economies, businesses, and individuals (see Table 5).

The results from the challenges posed by the financial crisis indicate that 42.7% of

participants strongly agreed that they experienced "Loss of income or job instability", while 36.7% similarly agreed that they faced an "Inability to afford technology or internet access for distance learning". Additionally, 36% strongly agreed that they encountered "Difficulty paying for educational resources (books, supplies, etc.)", and 11.7% strongly disagreed with the statement about "Providing childcare or tutoring services". Furthermore, 59.3% strongly agreed that they struggled with "High school and transportation fees", and 65% agreed strongly that there were "Official school strike".

Table 4. Financial hardships during the COVID-19

<i>Have you experienced any financial hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic that have affected your ability to support your child's education?</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Yes	282	94.0
No	18	6.0
Total	300	100.0

Table 5. Financial crisis

<i>Challenges</i>	<i>F/%</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Total</i>
Loss of income or job instability	Frequency	27	48	32	65	128	300
	Percent	9.0	16.0	10.7	21.7	42.7	100.0
Inability to afford technology or internet access for distance learning	Frequency	16	56	39	79	110	300
	Percent	5.3	18.7	13.0	26.3	36.7	100.0
Difficulty paying for educational resources (books, supplies, etc.)	Frequency	13	45	35	99	108	300
	Percent	4.3	15.0	11.7	33.0	36.0	100.0
Providing childcare or tutoring services	Frequency	35	83	106	48	28	300
	Percent	11.7	27.7	35.3	16.0	9.3	100.0
High school and transportation fees	Frequency	3	40	28	51	178	300
	Percent	1.0	13.3	9.3	17.0	59.3	100.0
Official school strike	Frequency		34	27	44	195	300
	Percent		11.3	9.0	14.7	65.0	100.0

Simultaneously, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, an economic crisis ensued, exacerbating hardships for parents and schools alike. The LBP depreciated significantly against the USD, causing widespread job losses and salary devaluation, making it increasingly difficult for families to afford school fees. Meanwhile, teachers, particularly in the public sector, went on strike due to inadequate wages, resulting in year-long school closures. These combined challenges created significant disruptions in the education system, ultimately impacting the quality of education provided.

4.3. Results of hypotheses

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to test the hypothesis. With a significant level of 95%

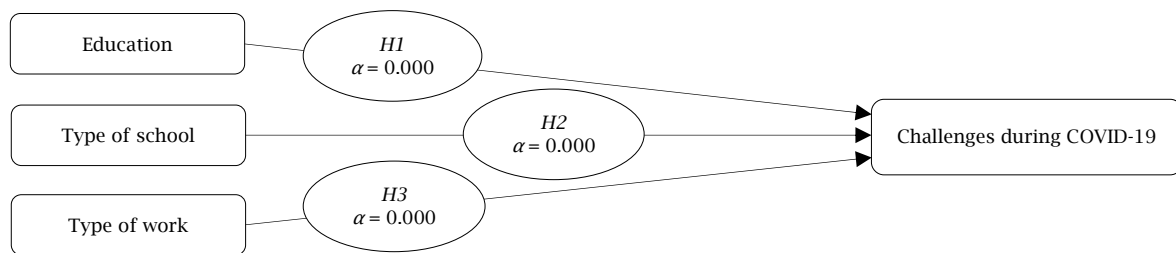
and a risk alpha 5%. In addition the Pearson correlation with an interval -1 and +1.

- *Education of parents*: Refers to the level of formal education attained by parents, and it has a significant impact on various aspects of their children's development and opportunities.

- *Type of schools*: Schools come in various types, public and private, each offering different approaches to education, curriculums, and environments.

- *Type of work*: Understanding the different types of work can help to navigate career options and find roles that align interests and skills, in our case if he is full-time employed, part-time employed, freelancer, entrepreneur, or contract worker.

Figure 1. The results of the first three hypotheses

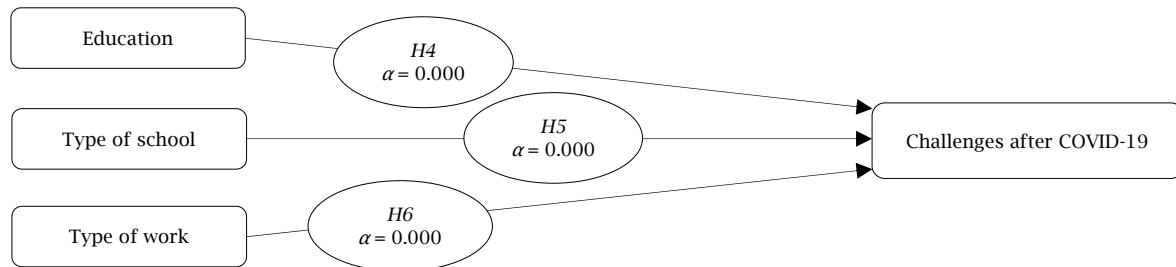


Source: Authors' elaboration.

The results of the first three hypotheses indicate significance, with $\alpha = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$).

Therefore, the alternative hypotheses are accepted, and the null hypotheses are rejected.

Figure 2. The results of hypothesis of second three hypotheses



Source: Authors' elaboration.

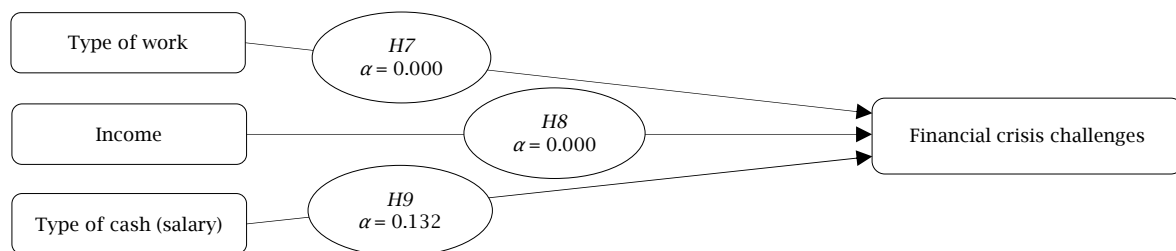
The results of the three hypotheses show that all are significant due to having $\alpha = 0.000 < 0.05$, so the alternative hypotheses are accepted, and the null hypotheses are rejected.

It's a critical concept in economics and personal finance and can come from various sources.

- *Income*: Income refers to the money or resources received by individuals or entities in exchange for labor, goods, services, or investments.

- *Type of cash*: Cash, in financial terms, refers to liquid assets that are readily available for use. It can come in various forms, each with different characteristics and uses. In our cases, we are asking if he gets paid in USD or LBP or both.

Figure 3. The results of the third three hypotheses



Source: Authors' elaboration.

The results from the third set of hypotheses indicate that *H7* and *H8* are statistically significant with $\alpha = 0.000$, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypotheses are accepted, and the null hypotheses are rejected.

Conversely, hypothesis *H9* is rejected with a significance level of 0.132, which is greater than 0.05. This suggests that the type of salary (USD/LBP) is not related to the challenges posed by the financial crisis.

Table 6. The results of the Pearson correlation

<i>Pearson correlation test</i>	<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Challenges during COVID-19</i>	<i>After COVID-19</i>	<i>Financial crisis</i>
Pearson correlation	1	0.235**	-0.072	0.179**
Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.213	0.002
N	300	300	300	300

Note: ** $p < 0.05$.

The results from Pearson correlation analysis reveal several relationships: there is a moderate positive correlation of 0.235 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) between the number of children and challenges during COVID-19, indicating these variables are significantly correlated. Additionally, there is a negative correlation of 0.179 ($p = 0.002 < 0.05$) between the number of children and the impact of the financial crisis, suggesting a relationship where more children may exacerbate financial difficulties. Conversely, there is a low negative correlation of -0.072 ($p = 0.213 > 0.05$) between the number of children and challenges post-COVID-19, indicating no significant relationship between these variables.

5. DISCUSSION

The collapse began in 2019 with a Lebanese revolution aimed at improving living conditions and the subsequent closure of the banking sector. Concurrently, the COVID-19 pandemic spread globally, causing the LBP to depreciate against the USD. These circumstances profoundly affected all sectors in Lebanon, particularly the education system, which was ill-prepared for such crises. Following the transition to distance learning, teachers' low incomes led to strikes, and parents, who suffered from frozen bank accounts and depreciated wages, struggled to pay school fees.

The Lebanese government is still struggling to recover economically, even though the banks are no longer paying back to depositors their money. The government tried to raise pensions and pay them in USD, especially to the public sector employees. Despite the challenges the country has faced, Lebanese citizens are endeavoring to return to normalcy, with incomes gradually improving in both the public and private sectors. However, parents continue to encounter difficulties in paying tuition and purchasing school supplies due to the constant increase in fees. Moreover, schools are striving to regain their position in providing high-quality education and bridge the gap that has emerged.

6. CONCLUSION

The devaluation of the LBP and inflation are considered the main causes of the repercussions of the crises in the education sector. Large numbers of students drop out of education under the pressure of the economic and social conditions. A high number of students preferred to move towards entering the labor market. In addition to many obstacles in ensuring continuity and maintaining the delivery of high-quality education to students while facing lots of challenges: reduction of student

and teacher attendance, difficulties in remote learning efforts, and psychological stress among students, teachers, and parents.

Despite these challenges, diligent efforts were made by schools to sustain educational activities during the economic crisis. They implemented various strategies such as flexible attendance policies, temporary housing arrangements for teachers coming from distant areas, and provision of food assistance to underprivileged students.

The principal research findings indicate that there is an influence on parental education. Based on the educational attainment of their parents, there were notable variations discovered in the educational obstacles that students had to overcome. Parents with higher levels of education were better able to assist their kids' schooling both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, which meant that kids faced fewer obstacles in school.

Besides, the type of school that students attended had a big impact on how difficult their education was. When compared to public schools, private and international schools were typically more prepared to manage emergencies and assist their students. With greater resources at their disposal, many schools adopted remote learning and other crisis management techniques more quickly.

Moreover, the conditions of parental work have a major impact. The kind of employment parents did — remote, on-site, or hybrid — had a big influence on the difficulties their kids had in school. Compared to parents whose jobs required them to be on-site, parents who worked remotely were able to give their kids greater support, which meant that their kids faced fewer educational obstacles.

In addition, to that, earnings and pay disbursement matter since during the financial crisis, financial stability — as demonstrated by family income and the way salaries were distributed — was essential in reducing the difficulties associated with education. Less difficulty in schooling was faced by families with more secure financial positions.

Last but not least, the challenges in education after the crisis on the long-term effects of economic crises on education are demonstrated by the persistent issues in education that remained after the acute crisis era, especially for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and public schools.

These results have implications such as consequences of the development of results policy. When creating interventions to support pupils during and after economic crises, policymakers should take socioeconomic characteristics like parental education, the nature of their jobs, and income into account. The differences in the obstacles

that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds face in their education can be lessened with targeted support.

Also, the allocation of resources since public schools need more resources and funding in order to be better equipped to deal with emergencies. This covers expenditures on digital infrastructure, instruction for online learning, and parent and student support services.

Creating parent support programs can help parents — particularly those with less education or less flexible work schedules — better support their kids' education in times of need. This can entail offering tools, direction, and adaptable work schedules.

Long-term planning: planning for the long term is necessary for educational institutions to deal with the lingering effects of economic downturns. This entails providing ongoing support for kids even after the current crisis has subsided, making sure that any learning gaps are filled, and offering mental health assistance.

On the other hand, the study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. Firstly, while the sample size of 300 parents provides valuable insights, a larger and more diverse sample could enhance the generalizability of the results. The focus on a specific population might not reflect the experiences of all demographic groups. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as false memory or social desirability, which could affect the reliability of the results. The cross-sectional design of the study, which captures data at a single point in time, limits the understanding of how educational challenges evolve during and after crises. Longitudinal studies could offer a more comprehensive view of these changes. Lastly, the study's geographic limitation to one location means the findings might not fully represent global experiences. Differences in educational systems, cultural contexts, and government policies across regions could influence the outcomes in ways that are not captured by this study.

For future research, several avenues could be explored to deepen understanding and improve educational outcomes during economic crises. Longitudinal studies should be prioritized to track the long-term effects of economic downturns on schooling. This approach would provide valuable insights into how governance strategies and educational challenges evolve over time. Additionally, comparative research across different nations and regions could illuminate how varying institutional and socioeconomic contexts impact the effects of economic crises on education. Such

comparisons could reveal effective strategies and approaches for managing educational difficulties globally.

Incorporating qualitative methodologies, such as focus groups and interviews, would offer a richer understanding of the personal experiences and perspectives of parents, students, and educators. This qualitative data would complement existing quantitative findings and provide a more nuanced view of the challenges faced. Intervention studies are also crucial; evaluating the effectiveness of specific programs designed to mitigate educational difficulties during economic crises could inform better support mechanisms for vulnerable students and families. These studies might involve piloting new programs or revising existing policies to address identified needs.

Expanding research to include broader socio-economic factors — such as housing stability, access to technology, and community support networks — would offer a more comprehensive understanding of the variables influencing educational resilience during crises.

In terms of practical steps to enhance Lebanon's education system, a multi-faceted approach is essential. Increasing government funding for education would improve access and resource availability while extending financial aid to families could alleviate the burden of school fees in the face of high poverty rates. Investing in teacher training and modern resources is crucial for raising educational quality, and enhancing digital infrastructure for distance learning is necessary, especially highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Encouraging private sector involvement could help bridge funding gaps, providing additional resources, partnerships, and scholarships. Government support should also cover transportation, food, and essential expenses for students and teachers, along with psychological support. Low-cost electricity for schools, a comprehensive local database for easy information access, and provisions such as meals and cash vouchers could incentivize school attendance and reduce child labor.

Additionally, emphasizing vocational education by increasing investments and integrating modern technologies can align with global trends and support labor market needs. These measures are vital for fortifying Lebanon's education system against future crises and ensuring equitable access to quality education. Addressing these issues comprehensively will enhance the resilience of Lebanon's education sector, providing a better future for its students and contributing to the nation's overall progress.

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