UAE Study Abroad Education Market Update 2020

The education industry in the UAE continues to grow in both size and quality, making it one of the leading educational hubs in the world. The education market size in the UAE will further increase by 335 thousand enrollments during 2020-2025. The UAE has a relative young population; 22% are under the age of 24. This report offers an analysis of the market based on end-user (K-12 education and higher education) and ownership (private education and public education).

Quick facts
- Education: 14 year compulsory
- Academic year: August - September

Education quick facts
- enrolments in secondary education: 442,000 (2019)
- secondary education enrolment rate: 96%
- enrolments in university education: 160,000 (2019)
- university enrolment rate: 80%

Education at primary and secondary levels is universal and compulsory up to the ninth grade. This takes place in a four-tier process over 14 years:

- 4 to 5 year-olds attend kindergarten
- 6 to 11 year-olds attend primary schools

Higher education
- Duration: 4 – 7 years
- Access to higher education: 80% (2019)
- Abu Dhabi: 23 universities, Ajman: 5 universities, Dubai: 62 universities (including overseas campuses)

Latest UAE Higher Education Study Abroad Data (source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2020)
- UK - 4,069
- USA - 2,941
- India - 1,121
- Australia - 850
- Malaysia - 368
- Germany - 354
- Saudi Arabia - 237
- Canada - 210
- Ireland - 151
- France - 129
- Morocco - 107
- Spain - 92
UAE Education System

Education Categories
The UAE education system is divided into three categories, i.e. public schools, private schools, and higher educational institutions.

The public schools follow the Arabic curriculum while the private schools follow 15 different curriculums. Schools that follow national curricula from the U.K, U.S, India, and the Ministry of Education (MoE) cater to a total of 90 percent of the private school student population.
Other curricula’s include International Baccalaureate (IB), French, Canadian, German, Japanese, etc.
General outlook of the education market
The increase in student enrollment is one of the primary growth factors for the education market in the UAE. With the continuous awareness and rising importance of education among the parents in the UAE, there has been a significant increase in student enrollments at various levels. Parents are increasingly willing to invest money as well as time to help their children get the best start in their lives and make them suitable for contending in the highly competitive global job market. The education market in the UAE is expected to accelerate at 5% through 2022.

- Strong government support over the past few years has led to the continuous growth of education sector by inviting private players to enter the market.
- Establishment of new schools, increase in use of ICT has enabled the curriculum to compete in the international market. The use of eLearning and smart classes is expected to spread in the education market as an effective medium of a more engaging and interactive learning in all levels of education.
- The vocational and technical education market in UAE is expected to witness a steady growth in revenues and enrollments in the future years. It will attract both male and female candidates as domestic participation in workforce improves.

UAE K-12 Education Market
The K-12 industry in the UAE comprises of kindergarten, primary, intermediate and secondary level of education where children in the age group 4 to 17 years obtain their basic level of education. The public schools in the country have witnessed slower growth in terms of number of enrollments as compared to private schools. The highest number of enrollments was in Cycle 1 (primary) level of schooling. It was followed by intermediate level of schooling. It was followed by KG level and secondary level of education. The K-12 education in UAE is quite evenly distributed in terms of male and female ratio. The number of Non Emirati students exceeds the number of Emirati students K-12 schools across UAE.

The K-12 education sector will account for the highest growth in the market due to the increasing number of enrollments in both the private and public sectors. Also, girls are increasingly being offered education from kindergarten to 12th grade. The report also provides an accurate prediction of the contribution of the various end-user segments to the growth of the education market size in the UAE.
UAE Higher Education Market
The higher education market in UAE has witnessed significant growth in its revenues in the past five years. The overall revenues have grown along with the number of enrollments in Higher Education Institutes at all level during 2018. Women pursuing their higher education in the country constituted around more than half of the total share.

Abu Dhabi being the largest Emirate and having the largest population along with number of higher education institutes had highest number of enrollments in 2018. Although the government is making efforts to promote higher education across UAE, Emirates like Umm Al Quwain, Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah are lagging behind. Enrollments were highest in business, economics and engineeringelor and master/post doc students. These programs are popular in the UAE because they are cost effective for students who want to enjoy the overseas experience while studying.

According to the latest UNESCO data (2018), students are enrolled predominantly at the undergraduate level—only 13.6 percent and less than 1 percent of students studied at the master’s and doctoral levels, respectively. The population-rich emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi have almost 60 percent of all students. The field of study most pursued in the UAE by far is business and economics, followed by engineering and education.

Number of students per region
Internet and social media usage in the UAE (source: globalmediainsights.com)

**Quick facts**
- population: 9.6 million
- internet acces: 99%
- active social media users: 9.5 million (99%)
- mobile users: 19 million (200%)
- active mobile social: 8.8 million (91%)
- annual growth social media users: 1.5% (140,000 per year)
- annual growth mobile social media users: 1.1% (100,000 per year)
- average daily time spent using social media: 2 hours 56 minutes

**Social Media usage**
facebook and Youtube have the largest market share in the UAE. Instagram is third but is making up a lot of ground, especially among the younger population. Twitter and Linkedin a mainly used by the 25 - 45 year olds.
Communicating with your audience in the UAE
The instant messaging platforms of Whatsapp and Facebook messenger have and the biggest reach and marketshare in the UAE. Skype is third with 45% coverage.

Scholarships for UAE students
• Scholarship Office (SCO) - Ministry of Presidential Affairs
• TRA scholarship programme - info for ICT programs/students
• EDAAD programme
• Masar programme for college scholarships
• Entaliq scholarship programme