
**THE ROLE OF KUWAITI PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN DEVELOPING
THEIR PRIMARY SCHOOL - CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN READING
ENGLISH STORIES**

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ABSTRACT: *The researchers explored the activities that Kuwaiti parents used with their children to develop their English literacy. It was investigated what are the most important factors that affected parent involvement and attitudes and children's attitudes towards reading. The study used quantitative data for answering research questions. A random sample of 120 parents was used for the study (86 mothers and 34 fathers). The results show contrary to expectations derived from the Literature, that Kuwaiti parents provide more supportive literacy environment to their children than expected. Secondly, a positive attitude of the parents toward children practicing reading from early age. In addition, the study findings carry a positive indication on the parental enhancement on their children in term of helping children become interested in reading English stories or materials. Finally, the study reported that most of the demographic variables have no significant roles in the three dimensions of the study.*

KEYWORD: Children's literacy, Parents involvement, reading activities, English stories, Kuwait

INTRODUCTION

Parents are involved in their children's literacy education in many cultures around the globe. Parent's involvement in their children's reading activities received a great deal of attention in literature (Anderson and Morrison, 2007; Trivette & Keith, 1995; Pins & Monnet, 2015; Chaudhery, 2014; Chazan- Cohen, *et al*, 2012; Hindman & Morrison, 2011). These studies established positive relationship between parental involvement in their children's reading capacity and their achievement level in school. Some studies reported that parents' involvement in teaching specific reading and writing skills at home was directly related to other early literacy skills; predicting correlation between reading performance at the end of grade one and children's reading skills at the end of grade three (Senechal & Lefevre, 2002).

An area of parental involvement that has not been sufficiently explored is the parental involvement in reading of English as foreign language learning. This is probably due to the overwhelmed literacy programs in Western countries such as USA and Canada that target programs in English speaking environment for immigrants (Barton, 2007). Learning English language became an important subject in school curriculum in many

parts worldover as the numbers of children studying English is rapidly increasing (Nunan, 2003; Graddol, 2006). Meanwhile, in the Arab world in general and in Kuwait English language is a major subject studied from the first grade in Kuwait government schools as a foreign language whereas classical Arabic language is studied as first language—used as medium of instruction. The parental involvement in children’s English language learning is an important topic for investigation especially in a Kuwaiti context. It is also understood that storytelling is a viable means in the instruction of English language. The purpose of this study is to investigate parents’ involvement in reading English stories with the aim of improving and helping their children to learn English language.

Statement of the Problem

Parents’ involvement in their children’s literacy and children’s academic achievement has widely been discussed. However, researchers have paid no attention to the role of parents in developing foreign language literacy generally in Arab countries and especially in Kuwait. This research addresses this shortcoming; as we tried to explore those activities that Kuwaiti parents tried to use with their children to develop their English literacy. In this study, we also examined those factors that affect parents’ attitudes toward reading English language books and developing positive reading attitudes among children.

Research Questions

Several research questions guided this study. These were as follows:

1. Do Kuwaiti parents provide opportunities to develop children’s interest in reading English stories?
2. What attitudes do the children have towards reading English language books?
3. Do the parents practice reading themselves and how often do their children see them reading books in general and English language books?
4. To what extent do the variables of gender, age, income, level of education and English language reading skills explain the positive effect of a supportive home literacy environment and parents’ attitudes and practices in reading?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parents can play a role in the development of language skills in their children, especially reading (Evans, Show & Bell, 2000). Parenting activities such as reading to children and playing games in which verbal interaction takes place have been linked to children’s vocabulary growth (Goodman, Dale, & Li, 2008, Frijters, Barron, & Brunello, 2000, Raikes et al., 2006). In this research, we are concerned with the role of Kuwaiti parents in developing their elementary children’s English reading skill at home through reading English stories. Krashen (2004) claimed that there is evidence from several areas in the last few decades showing a relationship between recreational reading or voluntary reading and better development in reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. He emphasized that this relationship happens in both L1 and L2 acquisition for both children and adults. Eskey (2005) pinpointed that reading for second language learners “maybe both a means to the end of acquiring the language, as a major source of comprehensible input, and an end in itself, as the skill that many serious learners most need to employ” (p. 563).

Parents can provide children with three broad types of literacy experiences when they read a story to them: 1) experiences in which children and adults interact in writing and reading situations, 2) experiences in which children discover print by themselves, 3) experiences in which children notice literacy behaviors by adults (Teale and Sulzby, 1986). In this study, we concentrated on the last two categories of experiences. Thus, shared book reading and its two types will be studied in this paper.

Shared book reading Senechal (2006) noted that reading is an activity that parents and children do to enjoy the language, the content of the stories and even the illustrations. Through shared reading, several things can be achieved towards successful reading development. First, the language used in the books is more complex than that typically used during regular conversation, a thing that can improve language complexity in children. Second, children get undivided attention of their parents who can explain, define and guide them through the story reading to reinforce new knowledge. Third, books and stories can be read repeatedly over and over, a thing that can provide children with a great opportunity to comprehend and understand new language or information. Fourth, shared reading facilitates development of emergent literacy skills which are developed before children start to read and write such as recognizing the structure of story, knowing how to hold a book, turning the pages and realizing the correspondence between written and spoken language (Isbell, Sohol, Lindarer and Loweance, 2004; Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2006; Grain-Thoreson, Dhalin and Powell, 2001; Senechal, LeFevre, Hudson and Lawson, 1996; Senechal and LeFevre, 2002). There are two mean types of shared reading in literature and they are:

Reading aloud to children

Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002) identified three styles of reading aloud and they are: (1) a read-only, (2) a performance and (3) an interactive style to explore which one of them is the most effective in language development and literacy skills (vocabulary and comprehension). They found out that the interactive style is the most effective style while the least one is the read-only style. As Mckeowm and Beck (2006) defined learning as a process that requires more than exact exposure to information; rather, it requires “attention to incoming information, connection of pieces of information and integration of new information and prior knowledge” (p.283). This is exactly what a caregiver or teacher can achieve with children when they read aloud to them interactively. Listening to read-aloud provides children with a great chance to acquire new vocabulary, forms, and information. Plus, it can familiarize children with the story structures and literacy conventions (cultural literacy) which are both important elements in reading comprehension. It builds listening and speaking skill by developing phonological VS phonics skills (orthographic skills) and vocabulary development. Most importantly, it creates pleasure and fun; which can, in turn, create a strong bond between the child and caregiver or teacher. Lastly, it connects the literature to their children’s world and it teaches them about different notions and topics (Cochran-smith, 1984; Needlman, 2004; Rippel, 2006; Gibson et al., 2007; Palmer, Leiste, James and Ellis, 2000; Chou & Cheng, 2015; Senechal, Lefevre, Thomas and Daley, 1998; Morrow, 2001; Freppon, 1991; Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2006).

This is the case with even English language learners in foreign contexts, Al-Masour and Al-Shorman (2011) investigated the effect of storytelling aloud on the reading comprehension of 40 Saudi elementary students after an intervention that persisted for

a whole semester. The experimental group outperformed the control group and they concluded that reading aloud has a significant positive effect on learners' reading comprehension.

Dialogic reading

It is one form of shared reading in which there is a basic shift in the roles of reader and listener in the sense that adults usually read and children listen. In dialogic reading, the child becomes the storyteller and the caregiver plays an active role in listening, asking questions and discussing the story (Whitehurst and Lonigan, 2006). The most important factor in this type of reading is the role of the adult in making the child develop in their utterances by praising, repeating, and asking more challenging questions. Green, Lilly and Barrett (2002) listed five different types of children's responses to books in dialogic reading and they are: literary language, concept acquisition, book-related dramatic play, affective associations and book-related activities. These categories can benefit children in developing their languages as well as their knowledge as they are provided with a good chance for discussing different aspects through a dialogue in a shared-reading context. Chow, MacBride-Chang and Cheung (2010) found that dialogic reading can develop phonological awareness in both L1 and L2 through possible linguistic transfer from English (L1) to Chinese (L2). In addition, they found that dialogic reading increased children's interest in reading (Chow, MacBride-Chang and Cheung & Chow, 2008).

A very important aspect in the previous two types of shared-reading between parent/caregiver and a child is the type of emotional relationship that goes between them. Researchers emphasized the quality of reading interaction between parents or siblings and children by observing parents' comments and actions such as the use of positive affect, scaffolding techniques, physical closeness, and appropriate pace in parent and child interaction. They found out that the affective quality was a significant predictor of children's motivation of reading. However, they reported some aspects in the home literacy environment that can also affect the development of literacy skills such as: frequency of shared-book reading, earliest of age of picture-book reading, number of children's books in home, number of trips to the library, children's requests for shared-reading as well as parents' own personal reading habits. In this study, we tried to shed light on some of these variables in figuring out both the most frequent types of activities used by parents in supporting literacy of their children, children's attitudes and parents' attitudes towards reading plus their personal reading habits (Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002; Landry et al, 2001; Landary and Smith, 2006; Bus, 2006).

Children attitudes towards reading and the role of parents in their children's attitudes

Gardner and Lambert in 1959 (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993) first studied the relationship of attitudes and motivation to achievement in second language. They were interested in studying the effect of many affective variables in second language learning; however, attitudes and motivation were their primary considerations (Gardner, 1985). In his famous book, *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*, Gardner (1985) discussed two main types of attitudes: (1) educationally relevant attitudes toward learning the language and (2) socially relevant attitudes toward the other language community. The salient conclusion

was that “this focus on relevance leads to a consideration of the specific role played by attitudes and the conclusion that they are important primarily as support for motivation” (p. 14). Also, Wang (2000) corroborated that if children have no desire to read or have negative attitudes toward reading, this can hinder their development in reading.

Parents play a big role in developing their children’s positive attitudes towards reading in early ages before even joining schools (Kush, 1996; Rena, Abedalaziz & Leng, 2013; Roman & Pinto, 2015; Martini & Senechal, 2012). Roman and Pinto (2015) discussed the transfer of social statuses, beliefs and values from parents to their children which helps in guiding parents’ and children’s behavior. The researchers believed that parents should support their children’s affinity for reading to develop positive attitudes toward reading in their children rather than leading them towards viewing reading as mandatory. Kush and Watkins (1996) also stressed the role of parents or caregivers in home-literacy practices before formal school entry. They revealed a consistent decline across elementary school years in children’s attitudes about reading. They suggested that two possible approaches can help prevent such decline to continue and they are considering classroom activities and teaching methods and emphasizing the importance of home literacy practices and parental attitudes towards reading. Rena, Abedalaziz and Leng (2013) also noted the effect of parents on children’s attitudes towards leisure time reading when they found that authoritative parenting style best predicted students’ attitudes towards leisure time reading. Martini and Senechal (2012) investigated Home Literacy Model and tried to widen the narrow interpretation of HLM which views parent teaching as the explanatory power of early literacy in children. They viewed that parent teaching as well as parent’s expectation and children’s interest play a role in developing early literacy in children in complementary ways.

Child-Parent Interactions

Although the child-parent interaction plays a powerful role in the shared-reading, equality of parental input may influence the outcome. Vasileva and waterfall (2006) had premised that the language skills of children are connected to the linguistic features of parents’ speech; especially the sophistication and the length of utterances. However, this parental input can be moderated by many variables such as SES, level of education of parents, age, level of English proficiency and gender of parents. Vasileva and waterfall (2006) pinpointed that there is a relationship between the socio-economic status (SES) of parents and the type of linguistic experience they provide to their children. Many studies have noted that there is a clear variability in spontaneous parental speech, amount, and frequency of reading as well as variability in the literacy level of children across different SES groups (Fletcher & Reese, 2005; Hart & Risley, 1995; Heath, 1990, Korat, Klein and Segal-Droai, 2007). Cunnigham (2008) interestingly found that economically at-risk children “had more negative attitudes toward reading and writing than students who were not considered at risk for school failure based on SES” (p. 28).

In addition to SES, the educational level of caregiver plays a role in the variability among students in their language development. Vasilyeva and Waterfall (2006) observed that parents with higher level of education have more diverse vocabularies, and their sentences tend to be longer and more complex than those of parents with a lower level of education. Wambiri and Ndani (2015) reported the notion that three

factors were positively correlated with parents' involvement in children's reading development and they are: parents' level of education, parents' role definition and the average household income. Another variable that may affect parents' involvement is their English language proficiency. Vera et al. (2012). found that parents of EL learners who are less proficient in English language skills were less likely to involve themselves in their children's everyday activities such as routines in home, reading with them and talking about school experiences. Conversely, Petchprasert (2014). reported no relationship between children's lexical development in a dialogic reading program and parents' English competence. As for gender variable, Burgess (2011) found that maternal reading behavior and ability was consistently related to a variety of HLE opportunities whereas paternal reading behavior and ability was not found to be significant. Hence, Burgess referred to English ability of parents too.

In this study, all three variables of socioeconomic status, educational level and English language proficiency of parents are covered. However, two other variables of parents' involvement related to age and gender of parents were not covered as there were noted to be insignificant.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, we examined if Kuwaiti parents have a positive effect in developing their children interest in reading English stories. This study used descriptive design; gathering g quantitative data from the participants.

Participants: A total of 120 parents (86 mothers and 34 fathers) participated in this study. A random sample was picked from the parents of 500 children in grade levels 1-5 studying in the following elementary schools: with diverse socio-economical level were. Profile of participant parents is provided as first section of the results section.

Research Instrument: Since a questionnaire is one of the most common methods of collecting quantitative data in educational research, it was used in this study to collect information about parents' involvement in developing their elementary level-children's interest in reading English stories. The questionnaire used in this study was patterned after two studies. The first study is for Burgess (2011) and the second study is for Senechal, Lefevre, Thomas and Daley (1998). However, we modified the questionnaire by adding some questions and deleting others to suit the Kuwaiti environment and culture especially that English is learnt in government schools as a foreign language. Parents were requested to complete the questionnaire about a single child in the family (See Appendix 1).

A pilot study was used to examine the feasibility of the researcher-adapted questionnaire and check the length, layout and item sequence since no previous research had been found in the context of Kuwait. After administration of the questionnaire in the pilot study was conducted in order check reliability and validity. PASW Statistics (SPSS version 18) software was used for conducting Cronbach's alpha internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire. According to reliability statistics, the questionnaire yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.819, revealing indices for satisfactory internal consistency and reliability. This added to the soundness and integrity of data.

RESULTS

Profile

The participants of this study were diverse in income and educational indices. Regarding income, their distribution was as follows: less than 500 KD (n=5); 501-1000 (n=18); 1001-2000 (n=17) and 2001 KD and above (n=20). It implies that a majority had an average income. Their age distribution was as follows: 6.7% had (18-24) years, 33.3% (25-34) years, 33.3% (35-44) years, 12% (45-54) years and 6.7% (55-64) years. Their distribution for the highest educational qualification was as follows: 1.7% had lower than high school, 10.3% had completed high school, 51.7% had completed 3-4-year college (bachelor or equivalent) and 36.2% had completed post bachelor. with regard to parents' number of children, distribution was as follows: 1 child (16.7%); 2 children (23.3%); 3 children (31.7%); 4 children (15.0%); 5 children (8.3%); 6 children (1.7%) and 7 children (3.3%). This analysis reveals that a typical participant had an average income, was middle-aged, had a college degree, and parented 2-3 children. It may depict the profile of an average Kuwaiti parent.

English Language Proficiency

Based on the nature of this study, it was pertinent to inquire about parents' perception about their English language proficiency. It was found that 11.7% rated it adequate; 60.0% as good; and 28.3% as outstanding. For answering research questions, descriptive statistics were used to examine the relationships among the variables. We used Person Product Moment correlations to measure linear associations between these pairs of variables. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe Post Hoc were used to find out if Kuwaiti parents' involvement in developing their elementary level-children's interest in reading English stories differed by any of the following variables of age, number of children, monthly income, level of education and English language reading skills. First research question was whether Kuwaiti parents provided good opportunities and activities to develop their children's interest in reading English stories. Supportive home literacy environments dimension of questionnaire was found to be useful for answering this question, using descriptive statistics were. The instrument contained 12 statements. We have presented mean scores and respective frequencies for each category. Statements' frequency scores and percentages are also given in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for supportive home literacy environments dimension.

<i>Supportive home literacy environments dimension</i>	<i>Descriptive statistics</i>	
At what age in months did you begin to read to your child?	Mean (20.88)	SD (15.413)
% Has your child ever been to the library?	Yes= 75%	No= 25%
% Do you have a set time of day to read to your child?	Yes= 55%	No= 55%
% How often does your child go to the library?	Daily= 1.7%	Every other day= 3.3%
	Weekly= 20.0%	twice a month= 23.3%
	Monthly= 23.3%	Never= 28.3%
% Does your child have her/his own library card?	Yes= 38.3%	No= 61.7%
% Does your child have her/his own books at home?	Yes= 85.0%	No= 15.0%
% Does she/he like to buy English books?	Yes= 80.0%	No= 20.0%
How many English books does your child own?	Mean (31.40)	SD (66.377)
How often do you play rhyming games (e.g. nursery rhymes) with your child?	Mean (3.07)	SD (1.947)
How much television/videos does your child watch per day?	Mean (2.87)	SD (2.587)
% Do you think that your child is more motivated toward reading when you read to him/her stories of his/her interest?	Yes= 85.0%	No= 15.0%
% Do you choose books that are of your child's interest for shared reading?	Yes= 85.0%	No= 15.0%
% Are you comfortable read in aloud to your child?	Yes= 71.7%	No= 28.3%

It was found, based in the results of Table 1, that Kuwaiti parents provide a supportive literacy environment to their children to some extent. For example, a child begins to read at an early age; (Mean=20.88; SD=15.413). 75% of parents indicated that their children had been to the library and 55% of parents reported that they had a set time of day to read to their children. In addition, 85% of the parents indicated that their children had their own books at home, Eighty percent indicated that their children liked to buy English books at a rate of 31.40 books (SD= 66.377), parents play rhyming games with their children (Mean= 3.07; SD= 1.947) and their children watched visual presentations per day (Mean= 3.07; SD= 1.947). Besides, 85% of parents indicated that they chose books of their child's interest for shared reading and 71.7% indicated that they were comfortable to read story books aloud. However, it was noted that only 23.3% of parents reported that their children visited libraries monthly and 28.3% of them never went to libraries.

Children Attitudes about Reading

The second research was about children's attitudes towards reading? Children's Attitudes toward reading dimension of questionnaire were devoted towards answering this question, descriptive statistics were used. Table 2 shows results for this dimension.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for children's Attitudes toward reading

<i>children's Attitudes toward reading dimension</i>	<i>Descriptive statistics</i>	
% Did your child have any difficulty learning how to read?	Yes= 20%	No= 80%
% How often do you, or other members of the family, read to your child in a typical week at bedtime?	Zero= 20.0%	One= 20.0%
	Two= 16.7%	Three= 8.3%
	Four= 11.7%	Five= 11.7%
	Six= 5.0%	Seven= 6.7%
% During a typical week, how often does your child ask to be read to?	Never= 8.3%	Seldom= 11.7%
	Sometimes= 36.7%	Often= 31.7%
	very often= 11.7%	
% Did you ever feel that your child is willing to read him/herself a story aloud and shift the roles from listener to a reader?	Yes= 63.3%	No= 36.7%
How often does your child ask to read him/herself a story to you?	Mean (3.03)	SD (2.107)
% During shared reading, does your child show him/her interest in reading by asking questions or being eager to answer your questions based on the story?	Never= 5.0%	Seldom= 11.7%
	Sometimes= 31.7%	Often= 23.3%
	very often= 28.3%	
% During shared reading and child-parent interaction, do you or your child practice any of the following?	Sitting close to each other= 30.0%	
	Smiling to each other= 15.0%	
	showing reactions to the story events= 41.7%	
	encouraging your child to respond by praising or repeating= 13.3%	
% Does your child read or recognize "stop" on a stop sign, brand names and other familiar prints?	Never= 13.3%	Seldom= 8.3%
	Sometimes= 30.0%	Often= 31.7%
	very often= 16.7%	

As is evident from Table 2, 80% of parents noted that their children had no difficulty to read. Regarding frequency of reading, it was found that 16.7% of them read books twice a week while 11.7% read books 4-5 times a week. Further it was noted that 31.7%

of the parents frequently children to read while 36% did it sometimes. By asking parents about their children's desire towards shifting their roles from listener to reader during shared reading, 63.3% of the parents had the desire for shifting roles. To identify children's actions and reactions during shared reading—such as asking questions—31.7% indicated that their children did these actions sometimes while 28.3% indicated that this happened often. We also examined child-parent interactions during shared reading—particularly practiced actions--30% indicated that they sit close to each other and 41.7% indicated that their children reacted to the story events.

Parents' Reading Practices

The third research question pertained to parents' reading practices themselves and how often did their children find parents reading books for pleasure in general and English materials in specific. Table 3 displays findings with mean and SD scores in addition to respective frequencies.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for Parents' practices in reading dimension

<i>Parents' practices in reading dimension</i>	<i>Descriptive statistics</i>	
How many books for pleasure do you read per month?	Mean (2.12)	SD (1.733)
How many books for pleasure does your spouse read per month?	Mean (2.97)	SD (1.697)
% How often does your child see you reading a book?	Daily= 25.4%	every other day= 13.6%
	Weekly= 33.9%	twice a month= 3.4%
	Monthly= 10.2%	Never= 13.6%
% How often does your child see your spouse reading a book for pleasure?	Daily= 16.9%	every other day= 8.5%
	Weekly= 18.6%	twice a month= 6.8%
	Monthly= 18.6%	Never= 30.5%
% How often does your child see you reading English materials (newspaper, magazine, etc.)?	Daily= 35.6%	every other day= 11.9%
	Weekly= 13.6%	twice a month= 6.8%
	Monthly= 13.6%	Never= 18.6%
% How often does your child see your spouse reading English materials (newspaper, magazine, etc.)?	Daily = 39.0%	every other day= 5.1%
	Weekly =11.9%	twice a month= 3.4%
	Monthly= 11.9%	Never= 28.8%

As is shown in Table 3, that the number of parent who read books out of perceived pleasure was small and did not exhibit much variation among parents. The number of books fell in the range of mean scores of 2.12- 2. 97.. It was perceived that25.4% of children indicated that see them reading daily while 33.9% had weekly frequency.

About the perception for seeing of one parent seeing his/her spouse reading a book, 16.9% indicated that they read it daily whereas 18.9% were perceived to be reading weekly. Assessment or reading English books specifically, 35.6% had reported a daily occurrence. With regard to observance of spouses reading English language book, 39% indicated a daily activity.

ANOVA Test for Differences in Reading

As for the fourth research question: To what extent do (Gender, age, income, Degree level of education, English language reading skills) explain the positive effects of Supportive home literacy environments, Parents' Attitudes toward reading and Parents' practices in reading? An analysis of variance, ANOVA, Scheffe Post Hoc were utilized.

Table 4. *F* & *p* values for (Gender, age, income, Degree level of education, English language reading skills)

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Degree level of education</i>	<i>English language reading skills</i>
<i>Supportive home literacy environments</i>					
At what age in months did you begin to read to your child?	.049 (NS)	1.444 (NS)	0.735 (NS)	1.638 (NS)	0.505 (NS)
Has your child ever been to the library?	1.326 (NS)	1.196 (NS)	0.304 (NS)	2.142 (NS)	0.290 (NS)
Do you have a set time of day to read to your child?	0.039 (NS)	.887 (NS)	0.238 (NS)	0.410 (NS)	0.550 (NS)
How often does your child go to the library?	0.073 (NS)	3.234 <i>p</i> <0.001 for (25-34)	1.045 (NS)	3.560 <i>p</i> <0.001 for college	1.256 (NS)
Does your child have her/his own library card?	0.079 (NS)	2.848 <i>p</i> <0.05 for (25-34)	0.296 (NS)	0.724 (NS)	1.248 (NS)
Does your child have her/his own books at home?	8.491 <i>p</i> <0.001 for female	0.561 (NS)	0.127 (NS)	2.707 <i>p</i> <0.05 for college	2.349 (NS)
Does she/he like to buy English books?	1.298 (NS)	0.650 (NS)	0.457 (NS)	1.680 (NS)	0.694 (NS)
How many English books does your child own?	0.703 (NS)	0.571 (NS)	1.139 (NS)	1.164 (NS)	2.779 <i>p</i> <0.05 for Good
How often do you play rhyming games (e.g. nursery rhymes) with your child?	1.021 (NS)	0.839 (NS)	3.626 <i>p</i> <0.05	0.639 (NS)	2.200 (NS)

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Degree level of education</i>	<i>English language reading skills</i>
			for (2100 and above)		
How much television/videos does your child watch per day?	0.168 (NS)	2.389 (NS)	1.063 (NS)	0.555 (NS)	0.129 (NS)
Do you think that your child is more motivated toward reading when you read to him/her stories of his/her interest?	3.992 $p<0.005$	1.241 (NS)	1.158 (NS)	0.156 (NS)	0.105 (NS)
	for female				
Do you choose books that are of your child's interest for shared reading?	3.992 $p<0.005$	0.826 (NS)	0.915 (NS)	0.483 (NS)	3.972 $p<0.05$
	for female				for outstanding
Are you comfortable read in aloud to your child?	0.165 (NS)	0.019 (NS)	1.82 (NS)	0.876 (NS)	0.737 (NS)
<i>children's Attitudes toward reading</i>					
Did your child have any difficulty learning how to read?	0.179 (NS)	0.917 (NS)	0.676 (NS)	0.477 (NS)	0.149 (NS)
How often do you, or other members of the family, read to your child in atypical week? at bedtime	6.179 $p<0.01$	1.260 (NS)	0.468 (NS)	0.356 (NS)	7.201 $p<0.01$
	for female				for outstanding
During a typical week, how often does your child ask to be read to?	0.019 (NS)	1.193 (NS)	0.153 (NS)	0.737 (NS)	4.472 $p<0.01$
					for outstanding
Did you ever feel that your child is willing to read him/herself a story aloud and shift the roles from listener to a reader?	5.290 $p<0.05$	1.577 (NS)	0.069 (NS)	1.213 (NS)	0.469 (NS)
	for female				
How often does your child ask to read him/herself a story to you?	0.794 (NS)	2.158 (NS)	0.794 (NS)	2.049 (NS)	3.044 $p<0.05$
					for outstanding

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Degree level of education</i>	<i>English language reading skills</i>
During shared reading, does your child show him/her interest in reading by asking questions or being eager to answer your questions based on the story?	0.069 (NS)	0.668 (NS)	0.304 (NS)	0.077 (NS)	3.316 $p < 0.05$ for outstanding
During shared reading and child-parent interaction, do you or your child practice any of the following?	0.166 (NS)	0.414 (NS)	0.548 (NS)	0.373 (NS)	3.144 $p < 0.05$ for outstanding
Does your child read or recognize "stop" on a stop sign, brand names and other familiar prints?	1.400 (NS)	0.358 (NS)	1.332 (NS)	0.023 (NS)	8.348 $p < 0.00$ for outstanding
<i>Parents' practices in reading</i>					
How many books for pleasure do you read per month?	.000 (NS)	8.477 $p < 0.00$ for (55-64)	3.295 $p < 0.05$ for (2100 and above)	1.493 (NS)	2.448 (NS)
How many books for pleasure does your spouse read per month?	1.590 (NS)	0.228 (NS)	0.129 (NS)	0.134 (NS)	3.189 $p < 0.05$ for outstanding
How often does your child see you reading a book?	1.080 (NS)	0.206 (NS)	0.085 (NS)	0.208 (NS)	3.676 $p < 0.05$ for outstanding
How often does your child see your spouse reading a book for pleasure?	.104 (NS)	0.852 (NS)	0.472 (NS)	0.081 (NS)	1.889 (NS)
How often does your child see you reading English materials (newspaper, magazine, etc.)?	0.565 (NS)	0.671 (NS)	0.885 (NS)	2.150 (NS)	5.005 $p < 0.01$ for outstanding

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Degree level of education</i>	<i>English language reading skills</i>
How often does your child see your spouse reading English materials (newspaper, magazine, etc.)?	0.431 (NS)	1.782 (NS)	0.364 (NS)	0.355 (NS)	0.272 (NS)

It seems from table (4) that: Gender, age, income, Degree level of education, English language reading skills don't play roles in all the aspects of the three dimensions of the study (Supportive home literacy environments, children's Attitudes toward reading and Parents' practices in reading). As for gender, it shows that it does not play a role in the supportive home literacy dimension except in: Owning books at home ($p < 0.001$), motivating toward reading when they read stories of their interest ($p > 0.0050$); and choosing books that are of their children interest for shared reading ($P > 0.005$) all in favor to females. As for the effect of gender on the second dimension which is Children's attitudes towards reading, it shows an effect only on two aspects: reading to their children in atypical week at bedtime ($p < 0.05$) and feeling that their children are willing to read a story aloud and shift the roles from listener to a reader ($p < 0.05$) in favor to females. However, gender shows no statistical significance on the third dimension of the study which is parents' practices in reading. As for the role of age in the supportive home literacy environment, the questionnaire items aren't significant statistically except: in going of their children to the library ($p > 0.01$) and owning library card ($p > 0.05$) in favor of parents between 25 and 34 years old. No statistical significant effect was shown of age on the second dimension of the study which is the children's attitudes towards reading. While, the age showed effect ($p > 0.00$) only on one aspect of the third dimension of the study which is parents' reading books for pleasure in favor to parents between 55-64 years old. As for the role of income, the questionnaire items aren't significant statistically except in two aspects of two dimensions of the study: playing rhyming games according to the first dimension of supportive reading environment ($p > 0.05$) and reading books for pleasure ($p > 0.05$) of the third dimension in favor to parents with 2100 KD and above of income. As for the level of education, it showed that it does not play a role except in the first dimension of supportive reading environment in two aspects: going with children to the library ($p > 0.001$) and owing of their children for books at home ($p > 0.05$) in favor to parents with college level. Finally, the English language reading skill of parents showed to have an important role to some extent to all the three dimensions. As for the first dimension of supportive reading environment, it shows an effect on in owing English books by children ($P > 0.05$) in favor to parents with good English skill and choosing books that are of their children's interest for shared reading ($p > 0.05$) in favor to parents with outstanding level in English. As for the second dimension of children's attitudes towards reading; the parents' English language reading skill showed an effect on reading to their children in atypical week at bedtime ($p > 0.01$); number of books asking their children to be read ($p > 0.01$), showing interest in reading by asking questions or being eager to answer any question ($p > 0.05$); practicing different reactions during shared reading ($p > 0.05$);

reading "stop" on a stop sign, brand names and other familiar prints ($p > 0.00$) all in favor to parents with outstanding level of English language reading. As for the third dimension, English language reading skill of parents showed an effect in three aspects: number books for pleasure parents read ($P > 0.05$), number of times children seeing their parents reading a book ($p > 0.05$) and number of time their children see them reading English materials ($p > 0.01$) all in favor to parents with outstanding skill.

DISCUSSION:

There are Four main findings in the current study. The first is that, contrary to expectations derived from the Literature. This study examined to which degree the Parental involvement in providing opportunities & interest to their children reading English stories. The study results indicated that Kuwaiti parents provided more supportive for literacy environment than we expected. Indeed, such results showed early parental involvement from early age. This finding consisted with earlier studies which found that interactive reading style to be the most affective reading style (Barbham and Lynch- Brown, 2002). In fact, it has been reported that parental involvement can provide children with three types of literacy experiences: First, interactional experience in writing and reading situations. Second, experience in which children discover print by themselves. Third, they will notice behavioral literacy by adults (Teale& suzby, 1986) (Tale & Suzby, 1986).

Although the current study found a positive parental involvements and positive attitudes toward reading, it is important to consider the type of parental involvement. In some studies, parental pressure to learn a foreign language was considered a type of involvement (e.g. Sung and Padilla, 1998). In others, involvement was described as teaching learning strategies (Xuesong, 2006). Yet for others, involvement was described as teaching children the non-academic aspects of a language, such as parents teaching children about traditions (Lawton and Logio, 2009). From over all, such variables were found among the Kuwaiti parental involvements in this study.

Early involvement by Kuwaiti parents with their children, helped in term of interest in reading English stories. This finding was reported in a previous study by Chou and Cheng(2015) who reported that there were a positive effect of quality time environments and skills needed during mother- child shared reading.

The second finding of the current study there is a positive attitude of the parents toward children practicing reading from early age. This finding consisted with a previous study. children's decision to read is taken by their attitudes towards reading. (Kush, 1996; Rena, Abedalaziz & Leng, 2013; Roman & Pinto, 2015; Martini & Senechal, 2012) Wang, 2000). In addition, parents are children's first and most important language and literacy teachers, yet not all parents have the capacity to establish an adequate early literacy foundation (Sloat, E et al, 2015). Sometimes due to the parent's proficiency level they have a strong believe that English language is very important for their children literacy skill, however parents lack the tools to develop this skill effectively (Brand et al., 2014).

The third main finding of the present study was related to whether Kuwaiti parents Practice reading were observed by their children. The study reported that more than

half of the sample indicated that their children saw them reading either daily (25.4%) or weekly (33.9). These findings carry a positive indication on the parental enhancement on their children in term of helping children become interested in reading English stories or materials. Research into traditional read-aloud interactions among identified Western groups illustrates that such interactions can provide a predictable routine and format to help develop emerging literacy skills in pre-school children, aged between two and four years. As well as helping to develop good comprehension skills (Dooley, 2010). In addition, parental involvement is seen as contributing significantly to the advancement of a child's literacy development (Anderson et al., 2010; Barton, 2007; Hasan, 2009). Other researchers like Roman, & Pinto (2015) pointed a quite interesting concept which is the transfer of social statues, beliefs and values from parents to their children. They explained that this transfer is important in guiding parents' and children's behavior. As they believed that parents can support their children's affinity for reading to develop positive attitudes toward reading in their children.

Meanwhile, early elementary years, provision of educational resources in the home has been positively related to achievement (Wu & Qi, 2006; Zadeh et al., 2010). The fourth and last main findings of this study related to what extent do demographic variables explain the positive effect of supportive home literacy environment in practicing reading. Our study reported that most of the demographic variables (Gender, age, income, parent education level, and parental proficiency in English) have no significant roles in all three dimensions of the study (Supportive home literacy environment's, child's attitudes toward reading and parental practice in reading). This finding contradicts with results in other studies. For example, studies have shown that literacy-rich environments are less likely to be found in the homes of children who are English language learner and whose parents are undereducated and have low family incomes (Gonzalez and Uhing, 2008; Snow et al., 1998).

Indeed, several factors could prevent parents from having a positive influential on their children literacy especially for the English as a foreign language in Kuwait government schools. For example, the lack of time that parents should spend with their children due to work duties & social commitments and perhaps most importantly the lack of knowledge of English language (Chi and Rao, 2003), and the parents are focused on their children academic achievements in English due to the test oriented curriculum. In addition, it could be that, home learning experiences vary significantly based on multiple factors such as household income, parent's education levels, and parental literacy practices (Topping et al., 2012). In a recent study by Jaynes(2017) who studied parental involvement and academic achievement and school behavior of Latino school children found that parental involvement and academic achievement existed but not for school behavior. Hemmerchts & et al (2017) on a sample of 10 western European regions, studied parental literacy activities with the child socio-economic status(SES) and reading literacy. They found that students with lower SES have lower reading literacy than students with higher SES.

In contrast, Xuesong's (2006) study of a group of upper-class students from urban China studying in Hong Kong revealed the strong role played by parents in students' English learning. As the students explained, their parents used different strategies to support their English learning, such as instilling a positive attitude towards learning

English, providing English TV programs and movies, and financing private tutors for English language school subject.(work on it)

Another factors which explain this finding in our study could related to Boivin et a (2014) and his colleagues who studied the parents' engagement in social multi-literacy practices with their children. They found that whilst most parents were very interested in helping with their children's English social literacy learning, they lacked knowledge of how to do so effectively. While, pre-school children who engage in shared storybook reading can also increase a range of language skills, including oral skills and phonological awareness, vocabulary development and print awareness (Brand et al., 2014).

CONCLUSION

Review of the literature indicated that parents play a positive role in developing children's reading skill. The study results afford us a level of explanatory power for examining macro level issues that affect parent's involvement in literacy support for their children to read English for pleasure rather than achievement, researchers like Roman, & Pinto (2015) believed that parents can support their children's affinity for reading to develop positive attitudes toward reading in their children. The study revealed multiple lenses for understanding and addressing reading in English as a foreign language in Kuwait.

The most important lens is that Kuwaiti parents are highly motivated to share reading with their children in English, but they lack the tools and the appropriate ways to provide it due to many constrains: social commitment, work duties, and mostly the parent's low proficiency level. In fact, motivation differs across contexts. For example, in Hong Kong, parents were found to be aware that English proficiency is linked to material success and prosperity in society (Choi, 2003; Evans, 2008, 2011), so there was a strong motivation to help their children to acquire English language. One of the most common ways in which Hong Kong parents do this is by enrolling their children in afterschool English classes and hiring tutors (Bray and Kwok, 2003).

The next critical lens to our current findings is that parental history of reading difficulties appears to have more effect on the child vocabulary than their reading, and that, while externalizing behaviors predict difficulties in both language and literacy. Through the above, the study results should be looked within the context of some constraints as the following: the sample of the study were parents from Kuwait government school only. Social bias should be considered in term of the degree of parent's involvement in reading English materials& their proficiency level. Also, conducting the questionnaire in English language – with the availability of the interpreter – might have affected the parent's involvement in answering the questionnaire. It is recommended for future research to expand the scope of the study to include digital reading materials (e- books, iPad or social media reading activities). In addition, the study sample can be expanded in a longitudinal research to study the types of parent's involvement on children readings from preschool stage, kindergarten children throughout the primary level.

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