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KINDERGARTEN IN KUWAIT

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty
of Social Sciences

of

Durham University

by

Sawsan E.M. Al-Tarkait

For the degree of Master
of Arts in Education

1987

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14 SEP 1988

DEDICATION

To my life companion, my husband
Salah Al-Ali I dedicate this work.

AKNOWLEDGEMENT

The completion of this study is a result of the encouragement and support of many friends and individuals who have provided professional direction and friendship during the time of this research.

First I give thanks to God "ALLAH" who gave me the courage to fight for my education and has helped me in many ways until I completed my study.

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ABSTRACT

This research is concerned with the development of kindergarten education in Kuwait, especially with the modernisation of its curriculum which has been undertaken with the aim of making it more suitable, easier and convenient for teachers to use and more enjoyable and comprehensible for children, thus aiding their development.

Consequently, this study seeks to identify problems currently facing preschools and to suggest solutions. To determine an appropriate solution, two strategies have formulated for tackling the problems. First, a structure questionnaire was drawn up and distributed to each of the sample of 84 teachers. Next, a case study was made of two kindergarten schools, one in an old city inhabited mostly by rich parents, and the other in a new city inhabited mainly by poor and polygamous parents. The intention was to cross-check the questionnaire results with those of the case study. This was placed in the context of a close examination of the development and operation of preschools in some Arabic countries.

From the research, it was found that although the Kuwaiti kindergarten system of education is not inferior compared to those of other Arab countries, its continued progress is handicapped by a number of factors. Among these factors are an inadequate curriculum, lack of essential educational materials, lack of trained and or qualified teachers and overcrowded classrooms.

As a result, it is recommended that the government should equip the Kuwaiti teaching institutes to prepare teachers for a professional career in kindergarten schools; employs more trained teachers and modernises the old schools to cope with overcrowding; motivates kindergarten teachers and finally redesigns the preschool curriculum so that it attains the highest standards and is flexible enough to enhance the creativity of the teachers and the knowledge of the children.

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Chapter 1

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in the education of preschool children and the curriculum used in school to increase the children's experiences, which we wish them to gain in their childhood to prepare them for future life. While there appears to be no universal agreement on a standard curriculum to be used for the preschool child any where in the world, it is widely recognized that early educational experiences are of essential importance for children. If preschool programmes are available children will be:-

1. Receive the proper nutrition required to meet the basic physical demands of attending school;
2. Prepared for the primary school;
3. Introduced to the social behaviour that will be expected from them in later learning situations;
4. Prepared to be receptive to new concepts they will encounter.

This research is concerned with the development of kindergarten education in Kuwait and in particular the invitation made to the Curriculum Research Centre to develop the kindergarten curriculum in Kuwait in order to modernise it, make it more suitable and easier for the teachers to use and for the children to understand.



1.2 Objective of the study

The major objectives of this study are to investigate:

1. The need for a fixed curriculum to be set for Kuwaiti teachers by the Education Department.
2. The development of kindergarten education in Kuwait and its aims.
3. The effort made to develop the kindergarten curriculum including the final programme model which has been followed in the Kuwaiti kindergarten.

1.3 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been developed for testing:

1. There is a great need for the kindergarten teachers in Kuwait to follow a standard curriculum.
2. Teachers have no strong motives for choosing to work with young children.
3. Kuwaiti kindergarten are overcrowded with children and have few teachers.
4. Some kindergarten in Kuwait lack the rich environment and the necessary equipment to facilitate the education process provide good opportunities for both the children and teachers.

1.4 Structure of the study

This thesis is presented in nine chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 contains a short introduction to the research,

and a statement of the objectives of the study and the hypotheses.

Chapter 2 presents an overall view of Kuwait with general information about its past, present and the people's life and work. There is an assessment of the government's role in developing health, housing and education and this introduces the next chapter.

Chapter 3 deals with the development of education showing its evolution from the beginning to the present time in the context of the struggle of the people and the government to provide their children with a good education in a difficult period. The role of girls is considered in some detail and every level of education in Kuwait today are discussed briefly.

Chapter 4 gives an overall view of the general meaning of preschool education and its role in developing young children. The chapter also discusses the meaning of curriculum and its importance.

Chapter 5 provides a general description of kindergarten education in Kuwait and its development. The development of the curriculum and its objectives are also examined.

Chapter 6 gives an outline of kindergarten in some Arabic Countries describing their problems, the type of kindergarten they have and the role of the government. The kindergarten in some Arab countries are discussed in some detail.

Chapter 7 deals with the research design and the methods utilised in this research. It describes the sources of information and the procedure for the collection of data, and discusses the methods employed for analysing data and presenting the results. It also presents the graphs which have been prepared as a result of the questionnaire.

Chapter 8 presents a case study of two selected schools in Kuwait with particular reference to their location, age, and the social composition of the area.

Chapter 9 presents the results obtained from the questionnaire, the problems which are revealed and suggests some solutions.

Chapter 10 summarises the conclusions derived from the previous chapters and makes recommendations.

Chapter 2

CHAPTER TWO

KUWAIT: PAST AND PRESENT

2.1 Introduction

The prime objective of this chapter is to provide a general review of the state of Kuwait, and its past and present socio-economic setting.

The chapter contains five main sections. The first provides some general information about Kuwait. The second briefly describes the historical background of Kuwait. The pre-oil era is examined in the third section. This involves a discussion of the occupations of the people before modern Kuwait was created. They included trading, pearl-diving and boat building. Other topics considered include the 1899 Treaty Peace accord between Britain and Kuwait. Part four is concerned with modern Kuwait including agriculture, health services, education and housing. The fifth part draws some conclusions.

2.2 General Information

The state of Kuwait occupies the north western corner of the Arabian Gulf. It is bordered in the south-west by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in the east by the Arabian Gulf and in the north-west by the Republic of Iraq. Due to its geographical location Kuwait is the veritable gateway to the Arab peninsula. Its area covers 17,818 sq.km. The country's surface slopes down gently from west to east (including several islands which are

scattered in the Arabian Gulf) and most of this land is desert.

Kuwait lies between latitudes 28,45' and 30,05' to the north of the equator and between longitudes 46,30 and 48,30' to the east of Greenwich. This location determines the typical weather of the Sahara region. There is little rainfall, but a wide variation in temperatures; in the summer the temperature may rise to 51C and in the winter it may drop to 3.3C.

As for the demographic characteristics of Kuwait, in 1986 the Annual Statistical Abstract published by the Ministry of Planning Central Statistical Office showed that Kuwait's population totalled 1,790,515 and was estimated to be 2,142,600 in 1990. Figures also revealed that of the total only 712,257 were Kuwaitis. Kuwait's population growth rate is 3.79% (3.84% for males and 3.75% for females). For non-Kuwaitis the growth rate is 5.10% (4.78% for males and 5.62% for females) (see Table 1).

According to the 1980 census, the majority of the country's population are immigrants; Arab nationals constitute the majority of immigrant manpower with 72.5%, while Asians constitute 25%, the next group are Europeans. Africans and Americans make up the remainder. Kuwaitis form a low percentage of the work force for three principle reasons: women are not encouraged to work, some of the population are not included in the figures because they are classed as being of independent means and a large proportion are under 15 years of age. Kuwait has realised that

if these young people are educated properly they could provide the answer to future labour problems and could decrease the country's dependence on expatriates (See Table 2).

2.3 Historical Background:

Kuwait was founded with the arrival of the Utubi, a clan of the Anza tribe of north-central Arabia, who settled in Kuwait in the eighteenth century (1710) seeking land and water. Among them were the ancestors of the AL SABAH family which today rules Kuwait. In 1756, the number of these settlers had reached 10,000 and they made their livelihood mainly from fishing and pearling. Having found water, the families decided to settle in the area, and the country's name is thought to have been derived from the Arabic diminutive of KUT, or fort, as one was certainly built to protect the early settlers. As a result of the need of some form of government to settle their disputes as well as to provide them with security from attack by neighbouring tribes, SABAH AL AWEL was elected as leader or shiekh, and this line has continued unbroken until today(1).

2.4 The Pre-oil Era:

2.4.1 Trading;

The geographical location of Kuwait at the north-west tip of the Gulf has shaped its history in the past as an important trading centre between west and east. Its merchants owned the ships that carried cargoes of dates and grain from Iraq in the

west to India in the east and to the eastern coast of Africa. On their return route their ships carried wood, tea, rice, spices, cotton, cotton yarn and various other goods. This journey back to Kuwait lasted about nine to ten months and a large part of these goods were re-exported by land to Baghdad, Saudi Arabia, and Aleppo (Syria) (2).

2.4.2 Pearl-Diving:

Due to the fact that Kuwait had poor soil, a shortage of water and that the climate was unsuited for agriculture, pearl-diving developed as one of the major economic activities. The pearl-diving season started on 15th of May and ended on 15th September. During this period the pearl-diving boats restricted their activities to the Gulf region. In the winter a few pearl-diving boats extended their activities toward Srilanka where the climate is not as cool as in the Arabian Gulf. The whole operation was open to a high degree of risk:

"Pearling is a dangerous and arduous occupation in which pearl-ers always faced danger. Sometimes they were attacked by wild fish, other times the dreadful stories of the sea and its surprises were enough to get them scared of the sea. Many times they were afraid of the legendary men and women who lived deep in the dark bottom of the sea among its caves and rocks. Furthermore, when the man who pulled the pearler up was not aware of the pearler's sign, the pearler might lose his life; not to mention the storms and the need of drinking water or falling behind pearling quotas" (3).

In 1904 Kuwait possessed more than 500 vessels. More than 460

boats were engaged in pearl-diving, each pearling ship carried a crew of forty to forty-five pearlers. There was a division of labour among them. Firstly, the head of the ship was called the "NAUKHIDA" and was usually the owner of the pearl-diving ship whose orders had to be obeyed by his crew. Secondly, there were the pearlers who handled the whole process of pearling, using simple and traditional diving equipment such as a small knife for protection which was made of wood or bone and was called "FETTAM", and a basket to collect the oysters. Thirdly there was the "SAIB" who usually stayed on the deck helping the diver by letting him down into the sea and pulling him up from the sea bed. Finally there were the young boys who were sent by their families to gain their first experience of diving.

"The conditions of the diver were very hazardous in the beginning of Kuwait. His income was limited and his life difficult. His staple diet was year-old dates, called Al-Hawil, fish and only two meals of rice a week. He did not use dishes but spread his food on sifrah. On that dirt was piled up and he would wash his sifrah only once a week. Then his life began to improve because of the increase in the prices of pearls. He could use dishes to eat instead of sifrah and began to eat rice for dinner with some butter. Diving continued to improve until most of Kuwait's wealth was earned from it and the number of diving DHOWS in the days of Mubarak al-Sabah (1896-1915) reached 812. The income from diving reached 6 million rupees (Kuwaiti currency at that time) in the diving season alone, which is only four months a year"(4).

As a result of the international depression of the 1930's pearl-diving went through serious difficulties, especially when the Japanese started to compete in the world pearl market by introducing a synthetic pearl, and with the discovery of oil in the 1940's in Kuwait the pearl diving industry finally collapsed.

2.4.3 Boat Building:

Besides pearl-diving and trading, a boat building industry flourished and helped to provide the different kinds of vessels required by merchants. Kuwait became the boat-building centre for the whole Gulf. On an annual average, the Kuwaiti shipyards built more than 50 ships (5), of different types and sizes including orders from other countries. In 1931, which was not a good commercial year, the Kuwaiti yards produced 25 large pearling boats and 30 small fishing craft. It goes without saying that in good years the Kuwaiti yards were able to produce many more. The average capacity of the seafaring ships ranged from 150 to 300 tons. In 1931 Kuwait was able to produce 4 cargo ships of an average of 170 tons at a cost of Rs 35,000 each. In 1932 they built a yacht of European design which measured some 80 feet in length (6).

The Kuwaiti historian ABD AL-AZIZ HUSAYN summarized the development of boat construction in Kuwait:

"Kuwait imported her first ships from other countries in the Gulf or from India. Then they began building ships themselves and became experts in this industry until it became one of the most important industries in Kuwait. The Kuwaiti ships had a great reputation at sea. They began innovating in this industry and created the well-known kind of ship called "BOM" which is derived purely from the experiences of the Kuwaitis at sea and proved to be the best in the oceans to India and the eastern coast of Africa. All the wood which was used in building ships and all the instruments that were needed were imported from India. Ships for fishing, ships for

pearling and ships for long distance travel were all built in Kuwait. Each one of these professions had its special ships. The year was divided into two parts: in the summer people worked in diving for four months and in the winter they travelled on the big commercial ships for five months" (7).

Located in a desert zone, life for people in Kuwait was not easy: the scarcity of fresh water, which is an essential human requirement, posed a strong challenge for survival. Before 1950, Kuwait depended on two sources of water; these included poor scattered shallow wells and supplies from the Shat-Al-Arab River located in Iraq. The water was at that time distributed in skins carried by donkeys.

2.4.4 British and Kuwait Treaty in 1899

British intervention in the Gulf was, at first, entirely naval. Fear of growing Wahabi power in Arabia, the Wahabi capture of the port of Qatif in 1800, and their control of the Arab coast from Qatif to the Trucial coast, and increasing tension between Britain and Turkey were the main reasons for British naval action in the Gulf, although the pretext was piracy. In 1805, the first British expedition entered the Gulf and co-operated with the Sultan of Oman in a naval action in the Gulf against the Persian port of Bandar Abbas and Qasimi ships in anchorage at Qishm. Between 1807-08, a British squadron was stationed in the Gulf. In 1809 the British sent a major naval and military expedition to the Gulf that wiped out Arab fleets all along the Persian and Trucial coasts and captured Ras Al-Khaima, the Qasimi stronghold (8).

At different times during the nineteenth century Kuwait tried to obtain British support to maintain its independence from the Turks and various powerful peninsula tribes, including the Ibn Rashids and the Wahabis. In January 1899, Sheikh Mubarak Al-Kabeer "the great" signed a secret agreement with Britain pledging himself and his successors neither to cede any territory nor to receive agents or representatives of any foreign power without the consent of the British Government. The British in return agreed to grant an annual subsidy to support the Shiekh and his heirs, and to establish a United Kingdom's office in Kuwait.

From then until 1961, Kuwait enjoyed special treaty relations with the United Kingdom, whereby foreign affairs were handled by the British (9). In June 1961, the 1899 treaty was revoked and Kuwait became an independent state. In 1963, Kuwait became a member of the United Nations and of the Arab League. The election of a parliament on 23rd January 1963 was a great step forward towards the creation of a democratic state (10).

2.5 Modern Kuwait

The turning point in Kuwait's modern history started when a concession was made to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), now British Petroleum, in 1911. On December 13th 1943, Sheikh Ahmad Al Sabah, the ruler of Kuwait, signed a concession with KOC (Kuwait Oil Company) for oil exploration. KOC was granted the right to develop and market any oil found within 6,000 sq.miles

of land and its surrounding territorial water for a period of seventy-five years. In 1951, the concession was amended and extended for another seventeen years. In 1962, it was amended once more, and as a result, the company relinquished 9262 sq.kilometres.

The first oil well was drilled at Bahra in May 1936, and it turned out to be dry. However oil was discovered in February 1938 in the Burgan field 28 miles south of Kuwait. This field is still recognised as the world's largest oil field. The wells were plugged in 1942 due to the outbreak of World War 2 and production was resumed in 1946 when the first commercial shipment of crude oil was exported from Kuwait at Mina Al Ahmedi. In that year the production of crude oil was about 8000 tons which increased to seven million tons two years later. The evolution of the modern state of Kuwait began when the production of oil on a large scale integrated Kuwait rapidly into the capitalist world economy. A rapidly increasing G.N.P., earned from oil revenues, has not only made the per capita income in Kuwait the highest in the world, estimated at K.D.1800 = \$5500, but has also created rapid changes in all aspects of life (11).

A drastic change in the structure of the Kuwait economy took place after the inflow of income from oil exports (see table 3). Due to the small size of the economy and the rapid increase in the oil revenue in 1946, oil became the leading sector and a substitute for many traditional activities which began to decline or vanish. The growth of the economy has appeared in the

dramatic increase of imports, population and government expenditure.

Imports expanded rapidly and made clear the country's dependence on foreign-produced goods. Because of the great increase in national income, the availability of funds, and the need to set up new economic projects Kuwait attracted a great deal of foreign labour to build a new Kuwait. This was because skilled labour of the required quality and quantity was not available in the country. The population in 1946 was estimated at 120,000 and it reached 206,473 by 1957 when 45% were non-Kwaitis. The expenditure of Kuwait's government on social security began in 1955 through financial aid to Kuwaiti families. The amount spent in this way reached almost KD 20 million annually and this aid continues to the present time.

In the 1950's, the major source of government expenditure was the land-purchase programme. The government purchased the inner-city land to build new roads and public facilities. The purpose of this programme is to achieve a just distribution of the oil income among all Kuwait's people.

Kuwait always has a shortage of fresh water. After the increase of the oil revenue, the government began to turn to the Arabian Gulf for its fresh water supplies by using the desalination method. From the beginning, plans were made to meet the expected water demand up to 1990 to supply the rapid growth in population, industry, housing and agriculture.

2.5.1 Agriculture

The Kuwait government has been trying to create an experimental agricultural sector on a 100 acre farm which grows winter and summer vegetables. From this farm Kuwait now produces 46% of its local consumption of vegetables, 18% of eggs, 45% of milk, 34% of chicken meat, and 99% of fish. All other food is imported. Due to the infertility of the soil, the water scarcity, the inappropriate climatic conditions, and the lack of a well-trained labour force for agricultural work, the agricultural sector plays only a small role in the Kuwait economy. The total area of the country is 17,818,000 donums, of which 440,410 donums is non-cultivable land. In the cultivable land only 33,527 donums is cultivated with vegetables and crops, 22,210 donums is trees, and 17,179,100 donums is pasture (12). In brief, the expansion in the agricultural sector has been limited and the range of farming activity is still very restricted.

2.5.2 Health Services

The picture of Kuwait today is dramatically different from that of the past, in such matters as health, education and public housing. As with many other developing countries in the area, Kuwait has suffered greatly from desert diseases, especially small-pox and tuberculosis. Many people have died from influenza owing to the shortage of health services. There were no health services until Dr. Stanley Mylrea opened the American Mission

Hospital in 1912. The Amiri was the first government hospital with 110 beds which was opened in 1949 (13). In less than a decade after the first oil revenue, health services were free for all the people living in Kuwait. In 1985 the Kuwaiti government had 16 hospitals and sanitoriums and 62 clinics with a total of 5,479 beds. The number of doctors increased from 45 in 1949 to 2,805 in 1985.

2.5.3 Education

Progress in education has been recognised as the major socialisation agent in Kuwait. Before the oil era the Kuwaiti government's contribution to education was very small. Expenditure on education increased from KD 83,800 in 1946 to more than 387.7 million in 1986. All Kuwaitis are offered free education which was seen as a measure for providing better economic opportunities for their future. The university was founded in 1966, with 418 students and less than 150 teachers and staff. Today, there are more than 16,359 students and more than half of them are female (9,004). The Kuwait university system is designed to produce competent and qualified Kuwaitis (14).

2.5.4 Housing

The traditional houses of Kuwait were very simply designed. The Kuwaitis tended to build their houses close to each other for greater protection from heat and sand storms. The old houses were characterised by the the thickness of the walls,

the use of wood for roofing and the embellishment of windows and doors. Throughout Islam, the Mosques presented a unique architectural beauty. The decorated dome and minaret can be seen throughout the old city of Kuwait. Today , the Kuwaiti government is committed to a policy of providing housing for low and even medium income groups.

A recent survey conducted by an International Business Publication concluded:

"The Kuwaiti seems to consider the basic right of citizenship to be not the right to vote, but the right to a government provided house"(15).

Since 1953 the government has been providing its low-income citizens with homes. This has been Kuwait's commitment to the lower-income Kuwaitis and to the desert dwellers .

The National Housing Authority is committed to the construction of 5800 low-income units a year. The house consists of a flat-roofed, two level building with a special high-walled garden. It contains seven large rooms besides the kitchen, bathroom and garage. The family will only pay 2.50% to 5% of their income in repayment and they will own the house after paying only a fraction of the real cost, but not before ten years. In the case of poverty or death the repayment is adjusted. In spite of all the efforts made by the government, the housing distribution system will be a problem for many years. For the past thirty-three years, the number of

applications from low-income families who needed houses has increased annually. In 1979, 30,000 houses had been built by the government, but 20,000 people were on the waiting-list. This will leave Kuwait with a large-term commitment in the construction field.

2.5.5 Society

There have been dramatic changes in the last few years; nevertheless, the mixture of Islamic principle and Arab pragmatism has remained as the basis for business, private life, and government. Generally speaking, Kuwaitis have maintained most of their traditional values and customs and have remained stable and unshaken. The power of the family as a social and economic unit is still the most important. The typical Kuwait family is much like any other: husband, wife and children (admittedly, the more children the better). Some Kuwaiti parents still arrange their sons' marriages which appear to work successfully, but may seem curious to those used to western conventions. A well-informed Kuwaiti has stated:(16)

"Unlike most Arab societies, Kuwait society was a compact, united, and classless society. Classes in the economic (Western) sense or the social (Oriental) sense never existed in Kuwait. The whole population, to all intents and purposes, constituted one big family. Even the wealthier members of society could not, and did not, attempt to separate themselves from the rest. This aspect could be attributed to many factors:

- (1) The size of the city of Kuwait where people are living, the country's only urban centre.
- (2) The small size of the population which has forced people to be restricted with their limited friends and companions.

- (3) The absence of non-Arab influence in Kuwait which has rendered the class concept incomprehensible.
- (4) The absence of agriculture and, therefore, land ownership.
- (5) The nearest Kuwait had reached to developing a class system was at the peak of the pearl-diving era. However, the decline of diving prevented its further development.
- (6) Due to tribal connections, coupled with tribal pride, even the poor elements of society refused to allow money and property to be their main motivation.
- (7) Money had no place in considering marriage questions. Some families associated with less superior tribes, who had accumulated wealth, tried to link themselves with superior tribes by marriage, but failed to do so. Hence, a class system, with all its traditions and conventions, never developed in Kuwait".

One of the most important changes has been in the role of Kuwaiti women. They now occupy significant positions in most government services such as education, commerce and the professions. Yet this has come about without any fundamental revision in common law. The Kuwaiti woman seems to achieve her goals within the boundaries of Islamic thought and Arabic customs. In daily life, segregation at all time exists between the sexes. Cinemas, restaurants, sport areas and government schools are single sex, and even though Kuwait University is co-educational it has a separate college for women. Diwania is a male social gathering place where men meet in the evening to drink bitter Arabic coffee, play cards, socialise and have some fun.

2.6 Conclusions

To many people, the name Kuwait conjures images of oil and tremendous wealth. Kuwait has achieved in a generation the sort of progress that many nations struggle to achieve in a century.

It is worth emphasising that due to the shortage of human resources in Kuwait, education is considered the pivotal basis on which viable socio-economic development can take place. Therefore, the Kuwaiti government has committed itself to providing education for both sexes, and eventually a society of educated Kuwaiti mothers will emerge. The Kuwaiti government has shown a keen interest in kindergarten education since it was first established in 1954. The development of education in Kuwait will be discussed in the following chapters with special stress on kindergarten education as the major issue of this study.

TABLE 3 Growth of oil production and revenues, 1946-77

| Year | Crude Oil Production | | Government Oil Revenues | |
|------|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | (Million US Barrels) | (Annual Increase %) | (Million \$US) | (Annual Increase %) |
| 1946 | 5.9 | — | 0.76 | — |
| 1947 | 16.2 | 174.0 | 2.07 | 172.3 |
| 1948 | 46.5 | 187.0 | 5.95 | 187.4 |
| 1949 | 89.9 | 98.0 | 11.52 | 93.6 |
| 1950 | 125.7 | 39.0 | 16.09 | 39.6 |
| 1951 | 204.9 | 63.0 | 18.00 | 11.8 |
| 1952 | 273.4 | 33.0 | 57.00 | 216.6 |
| 1953 | 314.6 | 15.0 | 169.00 | 195.6 |
| 1954 | 349.7 | 11.0 | 194.20 | 14.9 |
| 1955 | 402.7 | 15.0 | 281.70 | 45.0 |
| 1956 | 405.5 | 0.6 | 293.70 | 4.2 |
| 1957 | 424.8 | 4.7 | 308.00 | 4.8 |
| 1958 | 522.4 | 23.0 | 356.00 | 15.5 |
| 1959 | 525.9 | 0.6 | 419.40 | 17.8 |
| 1960 | 619.1 | 17.7 | 445.80 | 6.3 |
| 1961 | 633.3 | 2.2 | 467.40 | 4.8 |
| 1962 | 714.6 | 12.8 | 484.40 | 3.6 |
| 1963 | 765.2 | 7.0 | 513.80 | 5.7 |
| 1964 | 842.2 | 10.0 | 554.40 | 7.9 |
| 1965 | 861.5 | 2.3 | 567.50 | 2.4 |
| 1966 | 907.2 | 5.3 | 598.30 | 5.4 |
| 1967 | 912.4 | 0.6 | 648.80 | 8.4 |
| 1968 | 956.6 | 4.8 | 736.70 | 13.6 |
| 1969 | 1011.7 | 5.8 | 690.20 | -6.3 |
| 1970 | 1090.6 | 7.8 | 784.00 | 13.6 |
| 1971 | 1116.4 | 2.4 | 963.00 | 22.8 |
| 1972 | 1201.6 | 7.6 | 1650.00 | 71.3 |
| 1973 | 1102.5 | -0.8 | 1795.20 | 8.8 |
| 1974 | 929.3 | -15.7 | 7094.90 | 295.2 |
| 1975 | 760.7 | -18.2 | 8641.20 | 21.8 |
| 1976 | 785.2 | 3.2 | 9802.80 | 13.4 |
| 1977 | 718.0 | -8.5 | 8963.10 | -8.0 |

SOURCES: 1 I. Najjar, *The Development of a One Resource Economy: A Case Study of Kuwait*, 1969. An unpublished dissertation, Indiana University.
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Chapter 3

CHAPTER THREE

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN KUWAIT AND ITS OBJECTIVES

3.1 Introduction

This chapter specifically concerns itself with the examination of the development of education in Kuwait and the objectives of such development.

The chapter contains seven parts. The first discusses the historical development of education in Kuwait while the second examines the extent of government involvement in education.

Girls' education is discussed in part three, while part four examines the Adrian Vallance Report on education.

In part five, the beginning of modern education in Kuwait is the focus of discussion whilst modern education since 1956 is treated in part six.

Part seven looks at the schools - kindergarten, primary and private schools. It also examines intermediate and secondary stages of education, special educational institutes, teacher training institutes, and the University. Finally, there is a conclusion.

3.2 Historical Background

In the past, the people of Kuwait grew up governed by a

system of very strict Arabic and Islamic religious customs and traditions. Their duty to Islam was of primary importance to them and the whole concept of learning was based on gaining deeper understanding of the Islamic religion. All instruction and learning was then centred on reciting the 'Suras' as part of a daily prayer and also on the reading of the Koran.

In the Mosque, the lecture given by the 'Immam', the person responsible for leading the people in their prayer, was considered as the main method of instruction (1). This instruction was based upon the following guiding principles:

- (1) An understanding of the need for daily prayer, which ought to take place five times a day. A belief in God and the Prophet Muhammad. The need for fasting, the importance of "Hajj" and the puritive tithe "Zakat".
- (2) An explanation of those Suras in the Koran, which are most commonly used during prayers.
- (3) An explanation of the 'Hadith', the words of the Prophet.
- (4) A familiarity with the story of Muhammad and his friends(2).

There were, however, further developments in the field of education in the year 1887, when Mullah Kasim and his brother Mullah Abdin arrived in Kuwait. They were responsible for opening the first school to teach reading and writing. A number of more fortunate children were taught by a self-styled teacher at his home. This kind of school was called 'KUTTAB'. This method of education took place in an open-air classroom, which

was usually located next to the home of the Mullah or the Muttawa (teacher). Along with the study of religion and memorizing the Koran, the skills of reading and writing were also taught. At that time there was a lack of even the most basic of classroom materials such as writing paper, so the children daubed clay on a block of wood and made inscriptions with a stick. According to AL-NOORI, a well known Kuwaiti historian, the main characteristics of the Kuwaiti education system prior to 1912 were as follows:

- (1) The curriculum was both narrow and shallow; it did not extend beyond the rudiments of reading and writing and the study of the Koran and perhaps a little arithmetic.
- (2) The teacher 'Mullah' assumed a tyrannical roll and his authority was absolute. Discipline was typically maintained by the threat and use of corporal punishment. Although the punishments were severe, this did not diminish the element of competition between pupils in the classes, as the majority of them strove to be recognised by the Mullah as the best scholar in the class. Each Mullah also strove to find the best scholar in his class. The most common method of achieving this was by holding a handwriting competition which was usually judged by the merchants. The effects of this were two-fold, firstly, it indicated who was the best scholar in a particular KUTTAB and it also indicated the quality of the Mullah's teaching (3).

- (3) The learner was viewed as a passive recipient who had to sit still and repeat whatever the Mullah read over.
- (4) Attendance was often irregular and many boys would rather roam the streets than attend Kuttab which seemed more like a prison than an educational establishment.
- (5) Education was not the responsibility of nor under the supervision of the government (4).

From the fees collected from the pupils, the Kuttab was able to function as a school. These fees differed according to their kind and the occasion. They were as follows:

- (1) Entrance Fees: the amount which was collected from the parents of the pupils; this depended on the financial circumstances of the parents.
- (2) Al-khammeseyah Fees: the money which was paid every Thursday. If the student was unable to pay in cash, then he would usually pay 3 or 4 pounds of dry rice, corn or dates. The Mullah would normally tell the children to remind their parents on Thursday morning that payment was due.
- (3) Al-Nafillah Fees: the money which was paid during the various religious festivals.
- (4) Al-Fitrah Fees: the money which was paid during the last two days of Ramadan; again depending upon the financial circumstances of the parents, 6 pound of wheat, dates, or dry rice could also be paid instead of money.
- (5) Al-Eideyah: the money which was paid either during or after the feast.

- (6) Al Joza: the money paid when a part of the Koran had been learned. The Koran consists of 30 parts. The students were required to learn 13 parts, which were examined and every student was required to pass every part. The exact sum to be paid was determined by the financial situation of the parents.
- (7) Al-Khatimah: upon finishing all 30 parts of the Koran, the students were required to pay between 20 to 100 Rupees (\$1 = 4 rupees). If the student came from a wealthy family his father would give the Mullah the traditional Kuwaiti dress. In the case of those parents who were not so well-off and could not afford to pay, the student would be dressed in new clothes, known as the "BISHT" an Arabic robe worn over his long dress and would carry a sword. He would then visit the houses of merchants, chanting slogans and verses in order to collect money which was then handed to the Mullah (5).

Some parents chose to make certain arrangements with the Mullah prior to the child attending school. These arrangements usually meant that the parents would pay the total amount after the reading of the Holy Book. If they made this arrangement then they would not pay the above mentioned fees (6).

Due to the geographical location of Kuwait a high proportion of its population were merchants or travellers. Most of these people were illiterates, as a result of the lack of proper schooling. Their illiteracy increased their dependence on

a large Indian workforce, who assisted in matters where a certain degree of literacy was involved (7). In the year 1893, Ali Bin Amar arrived in Kuwait to work in the financial department of the government. He volunteered to open a special Kuttab to teach arithmetic, so he was the first arithmetic teacher in Kuwait. Obviously, the need for commercial and business knowledge attracted many merchants and other people to this school.

This development signalled the growth of private schools, where English and more commercially orientated subjects were taught. The main reason for this was the growth of internal trade, along with a rapid increase in trade with India and East Africa. A final contributory factor was the expansion of pearl market trading. Thus, it was at this time that the people of Kuwait recognized the importance of better schools. The new "private" schools or the "advanced Kuttab" were able to offer an education relevant to the needs of the business community. This was obviously not the case when students were taught in the ordinary Kuttab. On the whole, however, education in the private sector tended to be more expensive than the education offered by the ordinary Kuttab. The most famous private kuttab was the "Mullah Murshed School" which was opened in 1926 with just one teacher and 50 pupils in its first year. Education in this school consisted of four basic stages: the first stage was spelling and counting, the second stage was the study of the Koran with more reading and dictation. The third stage covered some arithmetic, history, and Koranic studies. The final stage

involved more advanced study of the Koran, Arabic language, book-keeping, and the English Language. The number of students in Mullah Murshed School reached 500 in 1945 and the funds came from the two Rupees the students paid every month (8). The private schools continued to exist until 1956, and were famous for their teaching of English and book-keeping.

A further educational establishment worth mentioning was the "DIWANIYAH". It was here that people would gather and acquire both general and religious knowledge in an informal manner.

Thus, it is true to say that there were three main educational sources in the early stages of the development of education: the Mosque, the Kuttab and the Diwaniyah. However, it is also true to say that education was very basic at that time with regard to methods of instruction and the curriculum. This being the case, it must also be said that it was successful in achieving its aim, which was to give some basic knowledge of reading and writing to the children. It was during a religious festival, celebrated in the Diwaniyah, that the idea of opening the first formal school emerged. Amongst those gathered was Mr. Yaseen Altobtabaee who in an address stressed the importance of an improved educational system. He saw the need for the people of Kuwait to work closely together in the field of education for the well-being of both the general public and the nation itself (9). Sheikh Yusef Bin Essa saw the value of this proposal and began collecting donations from the wealthier merchants who

were in agreement with the idea. He opened the donations himself. A house at the centre of the city was also donated by a rich family as a building for the school. The total money reached 785,000 Rupees, which encouraged the supporters to build a large school at a cost of 16,000 Rupees (10). The surplus money from the donations was invested in a pearl-diving ship. A further important source of money for funding the venture came from the students' fees (see Table 4). This money was used to pay the teachers' salaries and to buy the much needed books and equipment.

Table 4:

The Number of Students and the Fees in the First Five Years of Al-Mubarakiyah School

| Number of Students | Year | Amounts in Rupees |
|--------------------|------|-------------------|
| 245 | 1912 | 3580 |
| 346 | 1913 | 3820 |
| 332 | 1914 | 4700 |
| 304 | 1915 | 2600 |
| 341 | 1916 | 3420 |

Source:

Shehab, Saleh. 1985. "The History of Education in Kuwait and the Gulf". p. 559.

On the 22nd December, 1911 the first formal school was opened. This school bore the name of the then ruler of Kuwait, Sheikh Mubarak Al Sabah; the school was known as the Al Mubarakiyah School. Sheikh Yusef Bin Essa was the first director

of the school and three well respected people were appointed to the financial council (11). As the school was funded by money obtained from the people themselves, the curriculum was based upon what the parents felt their children should learn. The school curriculum was also adapted to suit the needs of the society, and included the study of Islam, the Arabic language and Islamic history. These were all considered to be very important for the children. A further addition to the curriculum was the study of geography; its inclusion was due to the continued increase of external trade. There was also a greater need for people with knowledge of book-keeping and commerce. Consequently, the subjects of arithmetic and business correspondence were introduced (12). Besides Kuwaiti teachers, other teachers were recruited to the Al Mubarakiyah school from India and other parts of the Arab world such as Alhassa in Saudia Arabia and Bagdad (13). The general methods of instruction in the new school were not too far removed from the Kuttab. Corporal punishment was retained and attendance was still irregular at the formal school (14).

In 1917, when Kuwait was ruled by Sheikh Ahmad Al Jaber an American Mission came to the country and an English Language school was opened for the first time in 1913. The initial problem encountered by the school was the difficulty in obtaining students(15). However, once the merchants realized the benefits which could be gained from learning the English language, more students were encouraged to attend the American Mission School.

The school operated both in the morning and in the evening (16). The opening of the English language school led to a reduction in student numbers at the Mubarakiyah school. The result of this was a discussion between Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber, the ruler of Kuwait and the Sheikh Essa Bin Qinai about the educational standards of the Mubarakiyah school. The introduction of English into state schools was proposed as the study of English was viewed as being beneficial for the future of Kuwait. However, this proposal was rejected by those in charge of the school (17). A new school was built, where English and other new subjects could be taught. This did not affect the Mubarakiyah school at all as it remained as before. Sheikh Al-sabah welcomed the idea of a new school and he donated the yearly sum of 2,000 Rupees; he also donated the land on which the school was built. Funds for the new school were raised as they had previously been raised for the first formal school(18).

In 1921, the second formal school was opened. This was named Al-Ahmadia in honour of the Sheikh and his work on behalf of the school. The curriculum of the second school did not differ greatly from that of the first school. The exception to this was the inclusion of English and book-keeping; the former was taught on a daily basis and the latter twice daily. The general teaching methods remained the same as those employed in the Kuttab (19).

The children would sit on the floor with their books and the teacher on his chair with a small blackboard. This system

continued until Sheikh Muhammad Al-Karash came from Egypt. He was installed as headmaster of both schools and he introduced the idea of setting a time for lessons and allowing a ten minute break between each class. He adopted the idea of giving students a desk and no more than one teacher for each class(20).

It is notable that education in Kuwait at that time was purely theoretical and included no vocational studies which could assist the pupils in their commercial work. This was due to the Kuwaiti view of manual and handicraft workers, and also because there was no manufacturing industry to attract them (21).

It is true that the enthusiastic role played by the merchants resulted in the setting up of both schools. However, switching education to the private sector was not totally advantageous. This becomes apparent when we note that there was a certain amount of resistance to reform. A second disadvantage could be seen in the area of finance; due to the fact that continuation of the institutions depended largely upon council members and other supporters being in a strong financial position, consequently they suffered due to the economic situation at the time. Firstly, Kuwait was affected by the world slump and great depression. Secondly, the development of the cultured pearl market in Japan caused the market for Kuwaiti natural pearls to shrink dramatically. Between 1931 and 1936 the two schools were in a state of being almost non-operational due to a lack of funds (22).

The main characteristics of the schools until 1936 were as follows:

- (1) There was no direct state involvement in either funding or supervision; the schools were a totally private venture.
- (2) The choice of subjects offered at the public schools depended very much upon meeting immediate local needs.
- (3) Attendance was very irregular; in one case it declined from 400 pupils at the beginning of term to 160 in the pearl-diving and trading season.
- (4) A high percentage of pupils did not complete their education. For example, the first grade intake was about 400 pupils but higher up in the school the classes totalled only about 10 pupils.
- (5) Until 1937, the education of girls had been largely ignored and had been left to the Kuttab. It was not until 1937 that the first girls' school was opened in Kuwait (23).

3.3 Government Involvement in Education:

The year 1936 marked a turning point in the development of the education system. It was then that a proposal for the government to take charge of educating the young was put forward. At the time of Sheikh Al-Qinai Diwaniyah the conclusion was drawn that if education was to develop and not to remain static then it required the input of regular funds from outside along with organised professional help. This could only come from a government body.

Government revenue was obtained in those days by means of a 4.5% tax on imported goods, which the merchants voluntarily agreed to raise to 5%. The extra 1/2% duty was for educational funds (24). The government now found itself responsible for educating the population and so in order to fulfil this duty, a committee was created in October 1936 by a decree promulgated by the ruler. This decree created a council for education, which was made up of six elected members with Sheikh Abdullah Al Jaber as chairman of the committee. A department of education was responsible for the administration and finance of the existing, Al Mubarakiyah and Al-Ahmadiyah schools.

With the expansion of the oil industry and exploration for oil in Kuwait at that time, the education council saw the need for Kuwaitis to receive a professional education in order that they would be able to work within the oil companies in Kuwait. To assist in the realisation of this aim and to create an educated generation of Kuwaitis, teachers were brought in from Palestine and many other Arab countries. In 1936 Captain G. Degaury worked in the Gulf as the British Political Agent. He commissioned a report on the Kuwaiti educational system and drew the following conclusions:

- (1) There were 50 Kuttabs, 2 formal schools and an American mission which taught the English language and gave instruction in the Bible.
- (2) Kuwait could not improve her educational standard without the assistance of other Arabic teachers and an advanced curriculum.

(3) Because there was no vocational study in Kuwait, it was recommended to the ruler that the students should be assisted by the British Political Agent to study abroad.

(4) The oil companies should train the Kuwaitis to enable them to work in the companies.(25)

On the 10th of November 1936 the first educational mission came from Palestine; it was the Palestinian Government which paid for the journey. The Kuwait Government paid for accommodation and food. The teaching team consisted solely of young Palestinians, who had not completed their secondary school education. None of them was a qualified teacher, except for one who possessed a higher degree from an Iraqi University (26). It was he who was invited to occupy the position of headmaster at both the Al-Mubarkiyah and Al-Ahmidiah schools. He implemented the first Law of the Department of Education (27). He also instituted a system through the head of the Department of Education, whereby a fixed curriculum was introduced in schools and tests were conducted to evaluate the students' educational levels. The result of these tests determined the level into which a student was placed (28). As many pupils tended to be older, a division was made between the classes for younger and older students. An additional grade was started every year which increased the elementary stage to six years. In 1937 a secondary school class was started at Al-Mubarkia School and the first pupils graduated in 1943. Two additional

schools were opened in 1938 called Al-Sarkia and Al-Quibliyah (29).

The curriculum was modelled largely on in the Iraqi school curriculum, although some slight changes were implemented which brought it into line with the Palestinian curriculum. Some new subjects were introduced such as History, Geography, Geometry, Health Education, Arts and Handicrafts and English Language. There were a number of reasons for using the Iraqi curriculum. Firstly, it was used because Iraq was a developed neighbouring country and was on friendly terms with Kuwait. Secondly, because of the geographical proximity of Iraq, many Kuwaiti pupils were able to continue their studies in Iraq on completion of their elementary and secondary schooling. The first Kuwaiti scholarship students were sent to Iraq in 1938/1939. Finally, the head of both schools in Kuwait had graduated from an Iraqi University, a fact which obviously influenced his choice of curriculum (30). Iraqi textbooks were used in the schools, along with a small number of English books published by the Oxford University Press; these had been brought to Kuwait by the Palestinian teachers. A number of students were offered educational scholarships and given the opportunity to study in Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon and Bagdad on completing secondary school in Kuwait (31).

There was an increase in the number of schools which correspondingly increased the need for a qualified teaching staff to work in these schools. The Department of Education recruited

staff from Egypt by requesting the Egyptians to bring an educational mission to develop the Kuwaiti education system. In 1943 there was a switch from the Palestinian based curriculum to the Egyptian curriculum, with some alterations which made it more appropriate to the needs of Kuwait in terms of History and Geography (32). The textbooks used in schools were also changed and Egyptian books were used. There was also an increase in the number of Egyptian headmasters and teachers employed in Kuwait's schools. It was also proposed that the Egyptian Ministry of Education should accept Kuwaiti secondary school graduates. As a result of this Egypt sent two experts to look in detail at the Kuwaiti education system. They made certain recommendations so that the Kuwaiti graduates should be eligible for acceptance into the Egyptian Universities (33).

The following are the outlines of the main characteristics of the education system in Kuwait from 1936 to 1943:

- (1) Recruiting large numbers of teachers from abroad meant that there were a number of different teaching approaches, due to the variety of educational backgrounds of these teachers. There was to be an increase in supervision of the teaching staff in order to harmonise the teaching methods of teachers from abroad.
- (2) There was a diversity in curriculum, this was due to the curricula being derived from other Arab nations. They did not necessarily correspond to the needs of the students and their communities.

- (3) Strict control of external examinations was maintained by a central body which was represented by inspectors.
- (4) It was then fashionable to use teacher-centred teaching methods (34).

3.4 The Education of Girls

Boys began their formal education in 1911/1912, girls, on the other hand, did not begin modern formal education until 1938. Prior to this, girls had studied in the Kuttabs. It was forbidden for strangers to see the female members of a family. A woman had no right in the choice of her husband and marriage generally took place within a family. She was regarded purely in the traditional role of caring for the children and keeping the house; she was therefore offered no opportunity to share in building the nation outside the home (35). A woman had no freedom whatsoever and consequently the education of girls was considered to be unimportant. The "ABC" of women's education in Kuwait revolved entirely around learning the Koran and some basic reading and writing. In 1926, the semi-primary schools for girls were known as "MUTTAWAH" (36). Al Muttawah was the name of the elderly woman who had mastered the Koran. Her classes were not dissimilar to those given to the men in the Mosque (37); she instructed in the Koran and answered questions on it. Al Muttawah usually sat in the middle of a separate room in her house and used a long stick to maintain discipline within the class. The girls would sit around her wearing long dresses

and veils to cover their hair; these veils would reach the knee (38). Each girl brought her own drinking water in a special bottle called a "karsha" (39). This was due to the high price of water and the difficulty in obtaining it in those days.

Two teaching methods were employed in the Muttawah Kuttab. The first method was to repeat the Koran; this meant that the girls did not necessarily have to be able to read or have any knowledge of the alphabet. The main reason for the use of this approach was that mothers demanded that their daughters return to their household duties as soon as possible. The second teaching method entailed reading the Koran and studying grammar in order to understand the structure of the Koran (40).

Mrs. Aisha AL-Azmiri who was called "Mullayah" (41), was in charge of the second Kuttab, where girls were taught reading and writing along with some arithmetic, sewing, knitting and embroidery. The result of this schooling was that some girls were encouraged to open their own schools to pass on what they had learned. These schools were responsible for educating girls until the first formal girls' school was opened in 1937/1938.

The American Medical Mission invited Mrs. Aisha Al Azmiri to give tuition in Arabic in the school they were planning to open in order to help spread the English Language and Christianity. Mrs. Aisha rejected their invitation because she did not accept these aims (42). Her classes were divided into three; the new girls occupied the front rows, those with some knowledge of

reading and writing sat in the middle in front of the cleverer girls who were about to graduate (43). Studying in the Kuttab continued up until the 1950's, although the first girls' school had been opened in 1937/1938. This was due in the main to parental resistance to the new curriculum and teaching methods.

The first girls' school, opened in 1937/1938 (44), was housed in a small rented building and about 100 girls attended. The education council recruited two Palestinian women as teachers. They were sisters called Rafah Audah and Waseefah Audah. They were qualified teachers who held Higher Matriculation Certificates, which was a higher qualification than that which could be obtained from high school. They agreed to come but envisaged problems travelling without a male relative, which was strictly against the traditions of the day. The council overcame this by inviting a brother to accompany them in the capacity of bodyguard (45).

They began teaching in the new school which was known as the AL WOSTTA school. The curriculum used in the girls' school was not dissimilar from that of the boys' schools, with the exception of nursing, first aid and hygiene being taught and English being excluded. Knitting, sewing and embroidery were taught in the girls' schools but not in the boys' (46). There were no fees payable at the government schools and books, writing materials, food and school uniforms were provided by the government. Money was given to the poorer students. 1955 was the year when the first female students were sent abroad for completion of secondary school studies.

3.5 The Adrian Vallance Report

Adrian Vallance was an expert on education in the Gulf; he worked in Iraq and arrived in Kuwait in May 1939. He wrote a report on the education system in Kuwait in which he put forward certain recommendations to the authorities which were the first of their kind (47).

3.5.1 Schools and Pupils:

The actual school buildings were found to be in a good state of repair and were clean and orderly, although some desks and chairs were in need of repair. The students' appearance was good and they were enthusiastic about their schools and classes, a fact which was proved by their regular attendance at school. Health provision came in for some criticism. It was recommended that a doctor should carry out regular medical checks, and that special attention should be paid to the pupils' eyes. The introduction of hygiene classes and a better relationship between doctor and students was also recommended. The idea of students being forced to wear European style uniform in school was also criticized. This, according to the report, revealed a lack of respect for their own traditions. The report suggested that the pupils should be encouraged to be proud of their country and customs. Class-size was also criticized: the teachers sometimes mixed a large group of older and younger pupils together which had a detrimental effect upon the younger pupils in their formative years. Consequently, teachers were encouraged to divide

the classes substantially according to age, so that the younger pupils could be placed in separate classes or schools such as kindergarten or nursery schools.

3.5.2 The Curricula:

The Vallance Report analysed the curricula employed in the Kuwaiti schools, especially in the fields of History, Arithmetic, English and Writing. As regards History, he criticised the lack of history text books and that the fact children were studying the history of their teachers' country of origin, which was Palestine. He recommended that history books be written specifically about Kuwait. These books should be written in a simple style in order to make them easily understood by the pupils.

In the area of arithmetic teaching he highlighted the fact that the pupils studies were not directly relevant to the needs of the government, oil companies and smaller businesses. He recommended a substantial improvement here. English was taught at Al-Ahmadiyah school. However, in order to obtain good results and enable the students to obtain employment with the oil companies, it was recommended that a British national should be employed to teach English in the high level classes. In the teaching of writing, Vallance noticed bad handwriting in both the Arabic and English languages. The students mainly learnt writing from what they actually saw written on the blackboard. It was therefore recommended that the students carried special hand

writing notes to assist them in improving their handwriting. Vallance also emphasised the need for ink to be used when writing. Studying abroad was also regarded as essential for students planning to work with the oil companies, so it was recommended that they should be sent to Bahrain to study at its industrial college.

3.5.3 Teachers

The report confirmed that the Palestinian teachers carried out their teaching duties well and enthusiastically and had contributed greatly to improving the standard of education in Kuwait. Vallance therefore recommended that the Department of Education should employ teachers who had been educated in Palestine, where they obviously had been trained in using the best available educational methods.

3.6 Early Forms of Education Stages

The education system in Kuwait has taken great steps forward and has kept in line with world wide educational progress. This has been particularly marked after the discovery of oil and the consequent development of the oil industry. Oil revenues were used in order to improve the general standard of living in Kuwait, this included considerable spending on education. The general opinion in Kuwait society is that expenditure on education is an investment that can bring large dividends; the more spent on education, the more it benefits the population and the country as a whole.

The developments in the economic and social fields in turn led to an increased demand for a better qualified workforce. Consequently, new types of schools were created. The following is a comprehensive list of new educational establishments (48):

3.6.1 Education at Kindergarten level

To facilitate the transition process of the under sixes from home life to school life, kindergarten were introduced in 1954 when the first two kindergarten were established in Kuwait. The teaching atmosphere in the schools and the curricula were designed to ensure that the children were given a sound base on which to begin their education. The children's physical and mental well-being were stressed at this stage of education (49).

3.6.2 The Religious Institute

Islamic culture and Arabic studies formed part of the responsibility of the Department of Education. 1947 saw the creation of the Religious Institute, which aimed at preparing students to follow further education courses at AL-AZHAR or DAR AL-ULUM in Cairo. The Institute was designed to give students a good basic general knowledge along with instruction in the Koran, Islamic tradition, Arabic Language, History, Islamic Jurisprudence and Law. There were three levels; primary, intermediate and secondary and each level lasted for four years (50). The number of students attending the three Religious Institutes in 1984 totalled 1153, with 132 specialist teachers (51).

3.6.3 Commercial Secondary School for Boys

In response to the increase in economic and business activity the Department of Education created the School of Commerce in 1953. This school was designed to train future accountants, administrators, clerks, and secretaries to be employed by government departments as well as private establishments and companies. The entry qualification was the General Intermediate School Certificate (52).

3.6.4 The Secondary Technical Schools for Girls

The Secondary Technical School was founded in 1952 by the Department of Education. The aim of this school was to offer opportunities for girls to play a role in both the economic and social development of Kuwait. After completion of the intermediate level of education, girls could continue their studies at the government created Secondary Technical School. The courses offered lasted for four years and the girls could study secretarial and commercial subjects along with social and domestic orientated subjects (53).

3.6.5 The Technical College for Boys

Kuwait's economic development was accompanied by rapid industrialization, this increased the demand for people possessing technical skills and knowledge. Consequently, the Technical College for boys came into being in 1954. It offered six year technical courses. A requirement for enrolment at the

school was that the boys should have completed the first two years of intermediate education. The course consisted of two phases; the first phase involved studying for the Technical Intermediate Certificate. During the second phase students studied for the Technical Secondary School Certificate. Successful students were recommended to continue their technical studies abroad. There were four major subject areas covered in the Technical college curriculum :

1. Mechanics
2. Electronics
3. Construction and building
4. Carpentry (54).

Economic development highlighted the need to the authorities for corresponding improvements in the field of education. Greater flexibility and provision for periodic modifications when necessary were introduced into the school system. After being subject to a great deal of change, the educational system was eventually divided into three levels. A further two year co-educational level was added for children under the age of six, which was called "BASATEEN" (garden). The following table outlines the different levels within the education system in 1954 (55):

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------|---------|
| Basateen (nursery) | age 4-6 | 2 years |
| Kindergarten | age 6-9 | 3 years |
| Primary | age 9-13 | 4 years |
| Secondary | age 13-18 | 5 years |

3.7 Modern Education in Kuwait From 1956 to the Present Day

In 1955, two prominent Arab education experts, Mr. Ismel Qabbani, the former Egyptian Minister of Education, and Dr. Matta Agrawi, the Deputy director of Education at UNESCO carried out research into the educational requirements of Kuwait on behalf of the Department of Education. Their recommendations were responsible for shaping the present Kuwaiti education system. They recommended that education should consist of 3 stages and a four yearly pattern (4/4/4) was introduced as follows (56):

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Kindergarten (co-educational) | optional | 2 years (4-6) |
| Elementary | compulsory | 4 years (6-10) |
| Intermediate | compulsory | 4 years (10-14) |
| Secondary | optional | 4 years (14-18) |

Source:

Department of Education. 1957. "Annual Report". pp.21-22.

Mr. Qabbani and Dr. Agrawi outlined educational objectives for education in Kuwait:

- (1) Eradication of illiteracy among the young and adult sections of the population.
- (2) Disseminating Islamic Religion and inculcating Arabic cultural traditions of freedom, courage, generosity, respect for the law and truth-seeking.
- (3) Strengthening adherence to Arabic nationalism in general and to the Arab-Islamic heritage of religion, language and literature.

- (4) Improving equality and democratic concepts of individual rights and communal co-operation.
- (5) Spreading sound health and sanitation through knowledge about nutrition and the prevention of disease.
- (6) Motivating individuals toward productive manual labour and the utilisation of craft-skills in improving the conditions of life.
- (7) Developing and encouraging free self-expression and the spirit of creativity, especially in the Fine Arts.
- (8) Three principles should guide the development of education in Kuwait:
 - a. Providing compulsory general education until the age of 14.
 - b. Launching a comprehensive campaign to combat adult illiteracy.
 - c. Providing adequate educational opportunities for Kuwaitis on the basis of equality for both sexes.(57)

1955 was thus a starting point for the implementation of concrete improvements. 1962 saw the re-naming of the Department of Education, which then became known as the Ministry of Education. Government funding for the Ministry of Education was increased from RS.4,770,209 in 1949/1950 to RS.91,212,962 in 1955/1956. Spending on education reached its high point in 1983/1984, due mainly to a vast building programme which was undertaken in that year. The total input of funds for education reached 223,84 million KD.in 1983/1984 (see Table 5)(58).

Table 5

The Expenditure on Education in Rupees

| School Year | Expenditure in Rupees |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1942/1943 | 415,054 |
| 1946/1947 | 1,117,076 |
| 1947/1948 | 1,904,506 |
| 1948/1949 | 3,437,385 |
| 1949/1950 | 4,770,209 |
| 1950/1951 | 9,462,092 |
| 1951/1952 | 24,126,389 |
| 1952/1953 | 32,000,000 |
| 1953/1954 | 37,000,000 |
| 1954/1955 | 51,000,000 |
| 1955/1956 | 91,212,962 |

\$1=4,76 Rupees.

Source:

Ministry of Education. 1957. "Annual Report" pp.11

3.7.1 Compulsory Education

Mr.Qabbani and Dr. Agrawi stressed the importance of compulsory education in Kuwait. This recommendation was legally implemented by the Ministry of Education in 1967. Education from then onwards was based on the following guidelines:

- (1) Education should be free and compulsory for both sexes from primary school until the end of intermediate level. The government should bear the responsibility for building schools and for recruiting teachers as well as for designing the curricula.

- (2) Children must begin school at the age of six.
- (3) Parents bear the responsibility for their child's education. The exception to this was if the child was handicapped. In this case he or she would attend a special school.
- (4) All children should attend state schools unless otherwise stated by the government. In certain cases children could attend a private school if permission was granted by the government (59).

3.7.2 The Objectives of the Compulsory Education Act

- (1) To ensure the correct development of each child and assist in the formation of proper attitudes and habits for protecting his or her health.
- (2) To encourage the social advancement of the child as a future member of the community. This involved instilling in him or her an awareness of his rights and responsibilities and duties as a citizen of the country. It also furnished him with the ability to protect his or her rights and encouraged him to act in a responsible way within the community.
- (3) To foster the spiritual awareness of the individual in order that he can follow his religion and be guided in his private and public life by its values and rules. To improve the emotional condition of each individual, to encourage and build self-confidence in each person.
- (4) To furnish the child with adequate knowledge about

the society in which he or she lives in order that he or she can gain a deeper understanding of the Arab world and its relations with the rest of the world as a whole. The purpose of this was to give a young person insight into the development of the country and the problems associated with this development. It should also develop a sense of patriotism within a young person which in turn would encourage him or her to share in the country's further development.

- (5) To provide a firm educational framework within which a person could develop freely. Children were to be taught to use language correctly, they were also to be taught arithmetic and scientific skills. Further qualities to be instilled into young people involved developing an ability to observe and to listen and criticize in an objective and reasonable manner.
- (6) To give instruction in a foreign language in order that the student may pursue studies in further education and also if he or she wished, to choose vocational studies in later life.
- (7) To assist a person to form good habits in order that he could make the best use of his leisure time, so that he or she will be able to appreciate the fine arts and use his leisure time profitably (60) (see Table 6).

Table 6:

The Increase in Enrolment in the Compulsory Cycle
(Primary and Intermediate Grades).

| Year | Enrollment |
|---------|------------|
| 1965/66 | 37,172a |
| 1966/67 | 80,011a |
| 1967/68 | 87,245a |
| 1968/69 | 93,132a |
| 1969/70 | 97,455a |
| 1970/71 | 104,479a |
| 1971/72 | 113,256a |
| 1972/73 | 121,640a |
| 1973/74 | 128,885a |
| 1974/75 | 138,819a |
| 1975/76 | 152,007a |
| 1976/77 | 178,841b |
| 1977/78 | 192,14b |
| 1978/79 | 202,31b |
| 1979/80 | 214,809b |
| 1980/81 | 225,732b |
| 1981/82 | 238,065b |
| 1982/83 | 241,936b |
| 1983/84 | 244,922b |

Source:

- a. Zalatio, F. " Development of the Education System in Kuwait since 1961" p.83.
- b. General statistical abstract p.294

3.7.3 Adult Education

A large number of the older generation had not received any formal education and needed to catch up on what they had missed. As a response to this need the Ministry of Education opened a number of evening centres, which were staffed by well-qualified teachers who used a specially designed curriculum.

These centres catered for illiterate adults of Kuwaiti nationality and non-Kuwaiti nationals. Adult illiteracy showed a rapid decrease; from 68% in 1955 to 28.9% in 1980 (see Table 7).

Table 7

The Percentage of Illiteracy among Adults 10 Years and over in Kuwait 1955 to 1984 for both Sexes, Kuwaiti and Expatriate.

| Year | % Illiteracy |
|------|--------------|
| 1955 | 68% |
| 1957 | 57% |
| 1961 | 45.7% |
| 1965 | 47.6% |
| 1970 | 49% |
| 1975 | 36% |
| 1980 | 28.9% |

Source:

Ministry of Planning. 1984. "Annual statistical abstract". pp.45-48

Figures for 1984 show that in that year there were 156 adult educational establishments, with a total of 38,454 students (61).

There are three phases in the adult education programme:

- (1) The primary stage; this lasts for two years.
- (2) The intermediate stage lasts for four years, and the students leave after sitting the School Certificate Examination.
- (3) The secondary stage also covers a four years period and leads to the Secondary School Certificate.

The adult education system operates on a purely voluntary basis and there is no charge for tuition and teaching materials. Teachers usually have some experience in teaching adults and are recruited from day-time teaching staff in state schools. Teaching is part-time and salaries depend on teaching responsibility and teaching load. They are expected to carry out administrative and some supervision duties (62).

3.7.4 School Buildings

In order to provide the present and future generations with the best education possible, the Ministry of Education has built a number of up-to-date schools and is responsible for welfare services, such as the provision of clothing and food. Medical care and transport are also under the Ministry's jurisdiction and are provided free of charge. Design experts who design schools in Kuwait are employed by the Ministry of Education and the most modern kindergarten buildings are constructed with the best facilities possible in order to encourage parents to send their children to the kindergarten. Thousands of pupils are catered for in the newly constructed secondary schools (63). These schools offer numerous play areas, bathing facilities, assembly halls and swimming pools (See Table 8). The International Bank Commission of 1965 claimed that:

"Most of the school buildings are magnificent in construction, size, equipment and other facilities. They compare favourably with the best modern schools anywhere. In fact, perhaps simpler and more functional structures would serve better, or at least as well.

There is a centralized system of purchasing and supplying, where every school in the state has the same facilities regardless of its size, location or level" (64).

Audio-visual teaching methods were introduced into the schools in 1956. A department responsible for developing the use of audio-visual aids was created in the same year. This department offered such aids as pictures, film strips, stuffed animals and graph flowers, tape recorders, television and language laboratories as well as other aids which are in daily use in the schools (65).

Table 8

The Development of School Buildings during the period 1965/1967 to 1975/1976:

| Year | Boys' Schools | Girls' Schools | Co-Educational | Total |
|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------|-------|
| 1965/66 | 70 | 56 | 36 | 162 |
| 1966/67 | 69 | 55 | 36 | 160 |
| 1967/68 | 76 | 55 | 41 | 172 |
| 1968/69 | 84 | 60 | 43 | 187 |
| 1969/70 | 86 | 66 | 44 | 196 |
| 1970/71 | 88 | 69 | 43 | 200 |
| 1971/72 | 97 | 77 | 45 | 219 |
| 1972/73 | 105 | 89 | 49 | 243 |
| 1973/74 | 113 | 94 | 53 | 260 |
| 1974/75 | 124 | 104 | 52 | 280 |
| 1975/76 | 138 | 117 | 52 | 307 |

Source:

Kuwait Ministry of Education. 1975/76. "Educational Statistical Abstract". p.6

3.7.5 The Schools' Curricula

The year 1955 saw the first real review of school curricula.

Until 1955 the curricula used in schools were based on those used in Iraq, Palestine and Egypt. It was considered necessary by the Department of Education to form a special committee to investigate curricula used in schools. This committee was set up on 12th October 1955 and was responsible for modifying and revising the curricula (66). The main points noted by the committee with regard to the curricula were as follows. There was too much repetition at each stage of education, this resulted in boredom. There was also too much emphasis placed on the past in schools. The main difficulty associated with any attempt at introducing new curricula into schools stemmed, at that time, from the apparent lack of general and specific objectives. This led to a lack of enthusiasm by the students for their studies.

Kuwait held a National Educational Conference in 1972 in order to discuss school curricula. The conference consisted of a working party which produced some 37 proposals. The most important recommendations to come out of the discussions were as follows:

- (1) To set out detailed aims in the field of education in order to shape future educational policies.
- (2) To highlight areas of practical application and conceptual learning within the curricula.
- (3) Special provision was to be made for brighter children as well as handicapped children.
- (4) Vocational guidance in secondary school curricula was to be introduced.

- (5) Special groups with responsibility for assisting in curricula revision and modification should be formed.(67)

3.8 The Schools

3.8.1 Kindergarten

In Kuwait the education of the under sixes is voluntary and no payment is required. It is worth noting that a UNESCO study showed an increase in the number of kindergarten and children attending them (68). Kuwait appears to be the only Middle-Eastern country where pre-primary education falls under the jurisdiction of the authorities and where there is a constant increase in the number children who are enrolled at kindergarten.

The first two kindergarten were officially opened in 1954 with some 376 children attending. Within a period of four years the number of kindergarten and children attending had risen to 9 and 2,574 respectively. Education at this level was co-educational. As regards the actual routine for the children at kindergarten in the early years, a large proportion of the day would be spent in school, the children would arrive in the morning and remain at school until late afternoon. They were however allowed one and a half hours per day to sleep and during the course of any day two meals would be given (69).

The most important objective of the kindergarten teacher was to provide a suitable environment for the children to grow and develop both mentally and physically. The system has changed over

the years and these days children normally commence school at 7:30 a.m. and return home before 1:00 p.m.

In pre-school education the following areas are emphasised:

- (1) Instruction to Islamic values and ideals taken from the Koran.
- (2) The development of a feeling of belonging to the nation of Kuwait and a feeling of patriotism.
- (3) The development of free-expression and creativity in a healthy atmosphere.
- (4) Guidance in order to form proper habits of hygiene and cleanliness in daily life (70).

3.8.2 Primary School

Six is the normal age of entry to primary schools and this phase of education lasts for four years, regardless of any previous education at a kindergarten. Figures for numbers of children attending primary school in 1984 are as follows: boys 64,619 , girls 62,987 , with 127,606 pupils (boys and girls) and 7,323 teachers (men and women) and a ratio of 17.4 students for each teacher (71).

The following are the main goals of education at primary level:

- (1) The principles and values of Islam should guide a child's spiritual and mental growth and character.
- (2) The three R's should be adequately taught; these are Reading , Writing and Arithmetic.

- (3) Sport and health education should be used to assist in the child's physical development.
- (4) Arts and craft subjects should not be neglected.
- (5) A child should be given instruction in the responsibilities and duties which are expected of a future member of the community.
- (6) An awareness of the idea of belonging to a community and a nation should be instilled in the child through history courses (72).

The teachers employed at this level of education hold a two year teacher-training qualification gained after secondary education.

3.8.3 The Intermediate Stage

This stage takes place after the successful completion of primary education. Figures for 1984 show that the number of schools had reached a total of 151, which included 80 boys' schools and 71 girls' schools. The total number of pupils attending was 117,306 and the number of teachers was 8,314, making the ratio of 14.1 students for each teacher (73).

Teachers are usually experienced primary school teachers who have some experience in teaching subjects such as Science, Mathematics and Foreign Languages. They have normally graduated from either Kuwait or other Arab Universities.

During this stage of education the following can be considered as guiding principles:

- (1) By teaching the following subjects, the Arabic Language, History, Geography, Basic Science and a Foreign Language (English), the child should gain a deeper understanding of his life and the national character.
- (2) Guidance to enable the students to pursue courses at the secondary stage of education.
- (3) Offering an opportunity to those who wish to gain experience in technical and manual work; this includes lessons in Mechanics, Electronics, Woodwork and Crafts (74).

3.8.4 The Secondary Stage of Education

Secondary schools for boys were first established in 1938, whereas the first girls' secondary schools came into existence in 1946. This sector gradually increased in order to accommodate the growing numbers of pupils who came from the intermediate level schools. In 1983, there were 80 secondary schools (boys 41, girls 39) with 62,683 pupils and 6,724 teachers, making a ratio of 9.3 students for each teacher (75). This phase of education lasts for a four year period and prepares the students for the National Secondary School Certificate Examination. During the first two years the student receives a basic general education followed by a choice in the second two years of either a scientific course or an arts course.

3.8.4.1 The Main Aims of Secondary Education in Kuwait

- (1) To develop maturity within the student along with self-

respect, pride and an understanding of his or her position and importance within the community.

- (2) To equip a student with the necessary skills and experience to enable him to support himself and his family, and to be a responsible member of society.
- (3) To develop an awareness of the importance of the family as an institution within society and thus enable him to benefit from a proper family life.
- (4) To show the student how best to profit from leisure time, to improve his health and develop recreational, aesthetic and intellectual interests.
- (5) To instill in a student the ideals of democracy, duty and responsibility and equip him to work with the best interests of society at heart.
- (6) To prepare a student for future study (76).

3.8.5 Special Educational Institutes

Kuwait has made great steps forward in the provision of education to meet the needs of those children who suffer from either physical or mental disabilities. The first children to receive specialist education were the blind. Kuwait's first special educational institute was established in 1955. Following this further such institutes were gradually created for deaf, dumb and spastic children. In 1984 the number of special education schools reached a total of 26, with 1,069 students. These establishments receive a great deal of support and are provided with equipment and teaching aids in order to deal with

the special problems encountered by disabled children. Teachers in these institutes are trained specialists who provide academic and vocational guidance in a variety of subjects. These teachers are encouraged to gain further qualifications by means of a scholarship scheme. Kuwait's Ministry of Education takes part in international conferences where issues in the education of handicapped children are discussed (77).

3.8.6 Private schools

As one of the main aims of the Ministry of Education was to uphold the idea of equality of opportunity in education, a system was introduced in 1967 whereby private schools and educational establishments could be supervised. Uniform, curricula and entrance for state examinations were dealt with. This was a direct attempt at ensuring that the private sector met the standards required in the public sector.

Figures show an increase in student and teacher numbers. In 1979 the number of private schools was 60 with 59,424 students and 2,829 teachers. By 1984 this figure had increased to 79 schools with 86,615 students and 4,223 teachers (78).

3.8.7 Scholarships Abroad

The first group of students to study abroad was sent in 1939, followed in 1943 by a group of 17 students who attended an educational establishment in Cairo and who were sent by the Department of Education. In 1944 the number increased to 40

students. Since the opening of the University of Kuwait in 1966, scholarships abroad have been mainly limited to those students whose subjects, mainly in the area of science, are not covered by Kuwait's further education establishments or for the best students to continue towards higher qualifications. The following figures show the numbers of male and female students studying abroad in various countries. In 1970, 559 men and 103 women were sent abroad, while in 1983, 2,682 Kuwaiti students were studying abroad, with a total of 2,438 men and 244 women (79).

3.8.8 Public Authority for Applied Education and Training

Established in 1982 as the third government organisation responsible for education in Kuwait, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training encompasses eight different colleges and training centres, namely: The Teachers' Training Institute, The Health Institute, The Commercial Institute, The Institute for Applied Technology, The Civil Aviation Institute, The Telecommunication Training Institute, Shuwaikh Industrial Training Centre and The Water and Electricity Training Centre.

Teachers' Training Institute

In order to meet the 1973 UNESCO recommendations with regard to a teacher's education, the Ministry of Education issued a decree which stated that:

"The Teacher Training Institute shall not admit new students without a high school diploma and the course of study shall be a two years degree instead of four years after the intermediate"(80).

The aims of a teacher training course were mainly to offer a general education and to study the cultural background. Further, it was important to improve the potential in teachers' ability to instruct others and highlight teachers' responsibilities. An awareness of this would enable teachers to teach and set examples which are important for social, cultural and economic progress.

Currently there are two post-secondary Teacher Training Institutes, one for males and the other for females. Candidates must pass an interview before being accepted at the Teacher Training Institutes. Graduates are equipped to teach in kindergarten and primary schools only. Figures for 1984 show a total number of 2456 students, including 1066 boys and 1390 girls(81).

3.8.9 University

The final part of Kuwait's educational framework came into being in 1966 with the opening of Kuwait University. In general the university had some 600 students and two colleges " The Science and Arts College" and " The Girls' College". By 1986 the number of students had increased to 17,000 and the number of colleges risen to eight. Projections for 1999 estimate that some 40,000 students both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti will then be attending the University (82).

As regards conditions of entrance, prospective students may enter the University if their average achievement marks in the Secondary Education Examination are adequate. Those students

with higher than average results are preferred and the lowest limit in order to enrol at the University is 70%.

Scholarships are offered on a yearly basis to students from the Gulf, Palestine, Africa and the Far East. These students undertake a course of study in Arabic and Islamic culture.

In 1982, 1577 students, both male and female, graduated from the University of Kuwait. Figures for 1983 show a teaching staff of some 868, including 144 women. Students are not usually accepted at the University of Kuwait if they have studied in the private sector unless such schools are approved by the Ministry of Education.

Kuwait University has its own objectives and mission. The objectives are broadly divided into two categories, namely,

1. To contribute to the social development, and
2. To advance human learning.

3.8.9.1 Contribution to Social Development

In pursuit of the development of Kuwait society the university has the following objectives:

1. To train young people, and prepare them for leadership roles, and create national consciousness among the youth.
2. To propagate knowledge and preserve the cultural and traditional values of Kuwait.
3. To foster the socio-economic development of the country.
4. To promote scientific research designed to solve the nation's technological and industrial development problems.

3.8.9.2 Advancement of Human Knowledge

To promote learning and enrich human knowledge the University of Kuwait,

1. Maintains scientific, social and cultural relationships between and among Arab and Islamic institutions on the one hand, and other international institutions on the other.
2. Promotes Arab and Islamic civilisation.

3.8.9.3 Mission

The university has a mission. It aims to :

1. Design courses and methods of teaching aimed at developing and improving students' analytical and practical skills.
2. Provide adequate facilities for sports, health services, counselling, art, cultural and moral development.
3. Formulate admissions policy and guidelines, taking into consideration the students' potential talents, interest, ability-while at the same time linking such policy with the social, economic and industrial requirements of the country.
4. Encourage personal development by providing external courses, seminars, short-term education and training courses, etc, to the public at large.
5. Encourage staff development aimed at improving the teaching skills, productivity and administrative efficiency.
6. Update the university curriculum to fall in line with international standards.

7. Propagate knowledge and promote literacy across a large section of the community (83).

3.9 Conclusions

The review of the development of education suggests that Kuwait seems to have rapidly developed in education. This may be attributed to the government efforts and determination to ensure educational progressiveness in Kuwait. In other words the government was deeply involved in education. This led to the commissioning of Adrian Valance Report in 1939, which eventually resulted in the revision of the education system in Kuwait.

Further research for improvement in the Kuwaiti educational system was carried out in 1955 by Ismael Qabani and Matta Agrawi. Their report led to further revisions including compulsory education. However, compulsory education without trained teachers may not be totally effective. Consequently, the government set up the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training to cater for the training of teachers for schools and colleges. Kuwait University was also found to have remarkably improved over the years. In the following section we shall examine kindergarten schools in Kuwait in detail.

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Chapter 4

CHAPTER FOUR

AN OVERVIEW OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to review the literature on preschool education generally. The rationale is to have an overview of preschool education before getting down to specifics, and concentrating on kindergarten education, which is the focus of this research. The chapter is arranged in sections. Section one addresses the concept of preschool education. In section two, we examine the meaning of preschool and the interpretations which have been attached to it. Among the types of preschool examined are kindergarten, nurseries, and day-care centres.

Section three explores the role of preschool education in the development of children. The importance of the preschool curriculum is the focus of the discussion in section four, and the definitions of the term 'curriculum' are examined. Finally conclusions are drawn.

4.2 The Concept of Preschool Education

"Every week-day morning, hundreds of thousands of parents leave their young children in the care of relatives, friends, preschools, day-care centres or day-care homes. The proportion of parents who rely on others to care for their children has grown rapidly. The number of day-care centres and day-care homes tripled between 1967 and 1975, from 35,000 to 116,000. During the same period, the proportion of children enrolled in preschool programmes increased by more than 50 per cent"(1).

The preschool education movement was launched in 1657 (about 330 years ago) by Comenius. According to Comenius (2),

"The first schooling should be at home—a sort of 'school of the mother's knee'—where during the first six years of life, children would be taught by their mothers so that when they reached school age they possessed simple facts and skills that prepared them for more formal learning".

Later Johann Pestalozzi (a Swiss educator) introduced preschools for younger children. This was largely the result of his profound love for children. He was always concerned about children's growth both spiritually and physically and felt it might be endangered or threatened by such factors as factories, industrialised cities and working parents' neglect. Pestalozzi believed in encouraging children to observe things around them (for example, the number of steps in a staircase, the number of panes in a window, the number of horns possessed by a bull, etc). According to Braun, and Edwards (3),

"Such attentiveness (attention generated by such observations) would lead to heightened awareness in a child, promoting academic skills".

In 1842, 'Children's Garden' or what is now popularly known as 'kindergarten' was introduced by Fredrick Froebel (a German). The major objective of the 'children garden' was to serve as a sanctuary for children, 'where the pressures of the family and the school could not enter'. Among the activities introduced in the kindergarten were singing, dancing, painting, cutting papers, sewing, marching and so forth. No reading, writing or use of any

materials (for example, books, pencils, pens, etc) were allowed.

Emphasis was particularly placed on play; Froebel stated that:

"The work of young children was play; it was from play that they were to learn"(4).

Originally, the kindergarten education was costly and could only be afforded by rich families. It is worth mentioning here that kindergarten schools were all privately run institutions. However, with the increasing understanding of the important role of kindergarten in society, public funds were available for building kindergarten for all children. The important roles kindergarten play in society are:

- a. Provide pre-primary education for the children.
- b. Promote the physical and spiritual growth of young pupils.
- c. Minimise pressure on the families.

4.3 The Meaning of Preschool

Preschool is a term that can be used for the schools which prepare or look after children from about the age of one to seven and does not include any formal education or teaching. There are many different kinds of preschools throughout the world. In this study three major ones will be discussed. These are, kindergarten schools, nursery schools and day-care centres.

4.3.1 Kindergarten School

A kindergarten is a form of preschool often concerned with

the education of children around the age of five. Kindergarten can be privately owned (for example by religious or missionary institutions, private individuals, etc), or publically owned (by regional or federal governments). Rules, regulations and guidelines are normally drawn by the Ministry of Education or by the Ministry of Health, under whose to which these kindergarten fall.

Initially, most of the rich families send their children to kindergarten schools paying fees. The reason why the parents send their children to private schools is that it is very convenient, as the mother becomes free whether for work or other activities. Recently, some countries have made available free kindergarten education for their children. In these countries kindergarten are no longer restricted to the children of the upper class. Kindergarten are also no longer restricted to the cities. They can now be found in towns and villages and in some countries the children are taught free.

Todd and Heffernan, in their book 'The Years Before School' (5) find that the educational objectives of preschools depend to some extent on the relationship of the school to other parts of the educational system. These objectives are presented in (Table 9).

Table 9

Preschool Groups Auxiliary to Other Schools

| School connection of preschool group | Educational purpose of the preschool group |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Elementary school | To provide education and care for preschool children in families of working parents, disadvantaged families, and in families wanting to enrol. To help parents guide children. |
| Adult education programme | To help parents in observing and guiding their children. |
| Elementary school; Junior high school | To give upper-grade pupils experience with small children. |
| Secondary school | To give babysitters and prospective and actual parents an opportunity to understand and guide children. |
| Junior college; college; university | <p>To provide observations and laboratory experience for students in behavioural studies.</p> <p>To prepare students for teaching and other work with children.</p> <p>To further the development of teachers and others in service with children.</p> <p>To provide care for preschool children of married students.</p> |

Source

Todd, v. and Heffernan, H. 1977. "The years before school". Macmillan publishing co. New York, 3rd ed. p.14.

4.3.2 Nursery School

Kent and Kent (6) define a nursery school as:

"An establishment for the care of babies or young children (mostly under two years of age) all day; it is registered with the local health authorities and usually under the care of qualified nursery nurses".

Thompson, defines nursery schools as:

"Nursery schools are schools specially designed and built for children under five. They have their own head teacher, specially trained nursery teachers and nursery assistants with a National Nursery Examination Board qualification. Children can be admitted from two to five years old"(7).

4.3.3 Day-Care Centre

Day-care is a form of preschool planned to provide full-day care for children of all ages. In America it also includes provision for after-school care for primary school children. Day-care centres have developed in modern societies because many married women now do full or part-time work and leave their children in a day-care -centre while they are working. The increase in the rate of divorce and separation and in the number of single parents has meant an urgent need for the children to be in a full-time day care centre while the single parent can work or even study.

In conclusion, kindergarten, nursery and day-care centre have some common objectives. These are to :

1. Provide adequate care for the children and
2. Prepare the children for formal primary or elementary education.

4.4 The Role of Preschool Education in the Development of Children

Preschool education is the education of young children from the time of informal learning at home, through the period of first contact with other children, to the time they start formal primary or elementary education. Preschool education also has ethical importance. This derives from beliefs as to what constitutes 'good experiences' or 'good life' for the pupils. For example, while some parents lay the main emphasis on training their children upon firm religious and cultural foundations, others tend to take a laissez-faire attitude and simply concern themselves with the provision of sound knowledge for their children. This may help to explain why some parents insist that their children must receive their education in a particular preschool. In some Arabic countries, for instance, parents insist that their children must be educated in an Islamic school or must receive a Koranic education before proceeding to formal primary education.

Smith and Connolly in their work 'The ecology of preschool behaviour' (8) pointed out that:

"The preschool is an important behaviour setting for many children, and it is a setting in which observation combined with experimental manipulation are at least relatively easy to carry out".

They declare:

"Much is going on in the preschool. There are the fleeting friendships, the early tussles, the beginnings of cooperation and hostility in social interaction. There is a high rate of general physical activity. There are a variety of toys, tasks, and equipment to challenge the child's intellectual skills and curiosity".

It is their opinion that:

"The amount of skill development between two and five years is enormous. In language, simple two or three word utterances give way to a close approximation to adult speech. Socially, the child moves from predominantly solitary play to cooperative play with several other children. Both general motor coordination and dextrous manual skills show great improvement".

Todd and Heffernan explain the creative development the child gains from preschool as:

"In the preschool a child is free to develop creatively. The preschool is carefully planned and administered to provide an atmosphere of love and a rich environment in which a child is free to develop unique aspects of his personality and to create, in words and in space, experiences of his thoughts and feelings. The preschool provides an environment which makes optimal the self-development of each child"(9).

The above quotations are important to this study because they have highlighted the important role of preschool education in the development of children in our society. Preschools are invaluable for promoting the development of children both physically and intellectually for preparing them for the formal primary or elementary schools. The next section will discuss the

importance of the curriculum on which the development of preschool children largely depends.

4.5 The Importance of the Preschool Curriculum

4.5.1 Definitions

Hess and Groft (10) define a curriculum as:

"A schedule of planned activities for the classroom. By 'planned' we mean that activities are selected in advance, the necessary materials are obtained, the sequence in which activities will be presented is worked out (through it may be changed if necessary), and the planning is accomplished with the characteristics of and needs of children in mind".

Similarly, Todd(11) describes the curriculum for preschool children as:

"An experience curriculum....The preschool and elementary school curricula should both be child-centred. What the child is able to do at his age level in his community determines what is especially important for the school to do with the planned experience at each age".

4.5.2 The Preschool Curriculum

The provision of a wide variety of experiences is important to the all-around development of the child. The definition of curriculum strongly suggests that curriculum in any preschool, kindergarten, nursery, or day-care centre is central to the development of a child socially, culturally, physically and mentally. Frost (12) points out that:

"Kindergarten is a great adventure for a child. It is usually his first experience away from home. It is his first experience with a large group of children for a whole day or half-day on a regular basis. It is his first experience on a large scale of being accepted by others, not because he is part of a family, but because of who he is and what he does. Kindergarten is his first experience in learning away from home".

Kent (13) identifies the following elements which should be incorporated to ensure an enriched curriculum:

(1) Language

- Discussion; Stories and poetry; Reading and recording.

(2) Mathematics

(3) Materials

- Water; Mud; Clay; Sand; Dough; Paint and variations.

(4) Bricks

(5) Woodwork

(6) Music

(7) Environment

Todd and Heffernan (14) support the use of materials when they stress that:

"in developing a preschool curriculum, consideration should be given to models..".

According to Piaget's developmental theories:

"The rate of development is in substantial part, but certainly not wholly, a function of environmental circumstances. Change in circumstances is required to force the accommodative modification of schemata that constitute development. Thus, the greater the variety of situations to which the child must

accommodate his behavioral structures, the more differentiated and mobile they become. Thus, the more new things a child has seen and the more he has heard, the more things he is interested in seeing and hearing. Moreover, the more variation in reality with which he has coped, the greater is his capacity for coping" (15).

Croft and Hess (16) contend that:

"Planning the curriculum implies that the teacher knows what children need, how they learn, and a great deal about each individual child. The teacher matches preplanned tasks to the children's interests and abilities".

They believe that if a curriculum is effectively and efficiently planned, the following benefits will emerge:

- (1) A well-planned curriculum supplies the structure and direction necessary for an effective programme. It requires cooperative planning, discussion and consultation among staff, who together will determine how to present a certain experience to the children.
- (2) A planned curriculum provides clear direction and makes the teacher feel that she is in control of her class.
- (3) A planned curriculum helps the teachers clarify the purpose of the activity they are teaching and the goal they wish to achieve.

Frost (17), maintains that:

"Learning is not a passive process. It is an active process".

A good curriculum should recognise this fact by allowing for creative activity, play, dramatisation, first hand observation, experimentation, and the use of the child's five senses.

This exploration of the importance of the curriculum is particularly essential because one of the major objectives of this study is "to determine whether or not Kuwaiti kindergarten need a certain written curriculum for the teachers to follow".

4.6 Conclusions

It seems clear from the review of preschool education that there is a great need in our modern society to introduce new, and improve upon existing preschools.

Children need love. Children need to be accommodated in a convenient and comfortable environment. However, with the increasing number of married women at work, and with the increasing number of broken families-divorced or separated-many children are likely to be denied the much needed love and a caring environment at this tender age. In other words, the 'love-gap' and 'away-from-home-gap' are likely to be created. Nevertheless, to ensure the children maintain their physical, intellectual and social growth in our society, the above gaps must be closed. This is why the establishment of new preschools and the improvement of the existing ones are greatly needed. So, to ensure that the benefits of preschools are maximised, the preschool curriculum must be carefully thought out, and time must be taken to make sure that it meets the preschool children's needs.

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Chapter 5

CHAPTER FIVE

Kindergarten in Kuwait

5.1 Introduction

Early childhood is considered to be one of the most important stages of human development. During this period, the child's personality is being shaped and every experience might have a crucial effect on his future (1). Over two thousand years ago, Plato initiated the pre-school education of children, emphasizing its vital role. He also considered that children should be taken from their homes at an early age and be supervised by people specially trained in the care and education of young children (2). Much later, in 1657 the Czech writer Comenius, in his book, "The Great Didactic" again recognised the importance of preparing children for formal learning during their first six years of life. His idea was that this schooling should be done at home, by the mother, and he later published a picture book to support and supplement his ideas with a curriculum of plant names, colours, parts of the body, and animals, as well as religious and moral education (3).

A later educationalist, from Switzerland, Johann H. Pestalozzi, in 1801 put forward ideas on pre-school education which arose from his concern for children growing up in industrialised societies where over-worked parents had little time to attend to their spiritual and emotional development (4).

In 1939, an international educational conference, expressed concern about child care especially during the pre-school years. Recommendations were made concerning curricula, aims and objectives and even buildings (5).

The first actual "Kindergarten" or "Children's Garden" was opened by one of Pestalozzi's students from Germany, Frederick Froebel, in 1842. He had similar ideas to those of his teacher and regarded the school as a safe place for children to seek refuge from the harsh outside world, learning through play and different activities which did not remotely resemble formal school work (6).

The idea of helping children to escape the harsh realities of the modern world began to be accepted throughout Europe and the U.S.A, but even so kindergarten education essentially remained a luxury accessible only to the wealthy(7). However at the beginning of the twentieth century this situation was changed by the feminist Maria Montessori, who worked with children between the ages of 2-7. Her first "Casa Del Bambini" was opened in 1907, with the aim of keeping children occupied during the day while their parents were out at work. Montessori herself designed materials that concentrated on the development of motor skills (8).

The first pre-school in London was founded in 1911 by two sisters, Rachael and Margaret MacMillan, with the purpose of taking care of the children of the uneducated poor. Their

programme amongst other things encouraged good diet and health care under a strict set of rules (9).

This brief summary indicates that the early kindergartens seem to have sought to take care of the child at a young formative age and to have used various methods of teaching in order to develop the children's speech, skills and ability to protect them as much possible from the harsh life in a safe environment. Modern thinking represents a combination of the traditional educational goals together with the aim of formulating the most practical way to help young children to develop all their capacities for growth. The generally recognised aims and principles of the kindergarten at present are:-

- 1- Early learning should foster self-awareness and contribute to the development of a positive self-image.
- 2- Behaviour appropriate to group living should become functional when group living is encountered.
- 3- Readiness is a state of being and a process of becoming; therefore, skills of self-realization, human relations, and cognitive development should serve the child now as well as prepare the child for his future life.
- 4- Communication consists of verbal and nonverbal behaviour; therefore, language learning is important for interpreting and expressing thoughts and feelings.
- 5- The earliest manifestation of cognitive development appears in the child's sensory perceptions and motor activities.

Therefore, sensory-motor development is a prerequisite to abstract thinking.

- 6- Cognitive constructs are formed by deriving meaning from perceptions; teachers of young children can assist in this derivation (10).

5.2 Development of Kuwaiti Kindergarten

It was not until 1954 that the first Kuwaiti kindergarten opened, but their aims were more or less the same as those quoted above. They sought to promote the education of children below school age in matters of health, diet and integration into society. The first two kindergarten that were opened were Al Muhallab in the district of Al Shark, and Tareq, in Al Kibla district. These kindergarten were very popular and soon became vastly over-subscribed as parents saw how much the children gained by attending them. The facilities included an abundance of high standard equipment for play both inside and outside, a nutritiously balanced meal each day, and regular comprehensive medical check-ups. The children were also given an introduction to basic arithmetic and Arabic as well as some moral and religious training (11).

By 1955/56 it had become necessary to open two more schools, Al Mansour and Al jabriyah, bringing the number of kindergarten up to 4, employing 41 teachers and with 833 children enrolled (12). Over the next 32 years the number of kindergarten in

Kuwait increased even further and by 1985-86 the number of government kindergarten had increased to 94, with 27,480 children of both sexes (see Table 10). In the annual report for 1957 the education department stated that:

"The department decided to increase the number of kindergarten due to the great success of the four schools. As a result extra classrooms were built to accommodate the enrolled children"(13).

The kindergarten concept was gaining in popularity due to its success in educating young children in the arts of social graces, dressing, cleanliness, and also in the importance of rest (14).

Table 10

The Development of the Number of Kindergarten in Kuwait

| School Year | No.of Kinder- garten | No.of classes | No.of children | No.of teachers |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1954/55 | 2 | 11 | 376 | 17 |
| 1955/56 | 4 | 24 | 833 | 41 |
| 1956/57 | 4 | 29 | 1032 | 57 |
| 1957/58 | 6 | 46 | 1711 | 77 |
| 1958/59 | 9 | 70 | 2574 | 103 |
| 1959/60 | 15 | 108 | 3947 | 171 |
| 1960/61 | 20 | 155 | 4543 | 192 |
| 1961/62 | 24 | 180 | 5782 | 255 |
| 1962/63 | 24 | 200 | 6614 | 299 |
| 1963/64 | 30 | 237 | 8029 | 367 |
| 1964/65 | 30 | 259 | 8806 | 395 |
| 1965/66 | 36 | 272 | 9759 | 477 |
| 1966/67 | 41 | 328 | 11162 | 502 |
| 1967/68 | 44 | 478 | 11500 | 577 |
| 1968/69 | 43 | 391 | 11902 | 715 |
| 1969/70 | 43 | 422 | 12915 | 742 |
| 1970/71 | 43 | 480 | 12977 | 846 |
| 1971/72 | 46 | 505 | 12970 | 915 |
| 1972/73 | 49 | 546 | 12911 | 958 |
| 1973/74 | 53 | 573 | 11924 | 1064 |
| 1974/75 | 52 | 558 | 12542 | 1001* |
| 1975/76 | 51 | 568 | 14522 | 1003* |

Continue...

| | | | | |
|---------|----|-----|-------|--------|
| 1976/77 | 54 | 614 | 15086 | 1138* |
| 1977/78 | 56 | 646 | 15378 | 1196* |
| 1978/79 | 57 | 630 | 16000 | 1167* |
| 1979/80 | 60 | 654 | 16814 | 1228* |
| 1980/81 | 61 | 664 | 17770 | 1269* |
| 1981/82 | 73 | 750 | 19762 | 1432* |
| 1982/83 | 79 | 803 | 21287 | 1541* |
| 1983/84 | 77 | 819 | 22346 | 1606* |
| 1984/85 | 79 | 828 | 24742 | 1580** |
| 1985/86 | 94 | 942 | 27480 | 1917** |

Source: "Silver Jubilee of Kindergarten" 1979, p.11.

* "Annual Statistical Abstract" 1986.

** "The Institute of Child Development" 1986. p.20.

Furthermore, the schools were well scattered to cover most of the areas in the country. (see Table 11 which shows their distribution in the year 1984-85).

Table 11

Kindergarten Distribution Around the Country in the
School Year 1984-85

| District | No.of Kinder- garten | No.of classes | No.of children | No.of teachers |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Capital and Hawalli | 59 | 599 | 16870 | 1142 |
| Ahmadi | 11 | 129 | 4319 | 246 |
| Jahra | 9 | 100 | 3553 | 192 |
| Total | 79 | 828 | 24742 | 1580 |

Source:

"The Institute of Child Development in Kuwait"
1986, p.22.

5.3 Health and Social Services

An important aspect of kindergarten since their inception has been the provision of social and health care for the children and their families. Each kindergarten has a resident doctor who attends for two or three days a week and who gives the children regular check-ups as well as a complete medical examination in the school's clinic. There is also a nurse attached to each kindergarten who inspects the children daily for any physical or mental problems, and refers any child needing treatment to the clinic. Record cards are kept on each child enrolled and are continually up-dated. These include information on the child's health and progress as well as information about the educational, social and economic level of his family. Contact with the family is considered vital, and mothers are encouraged to discuss their childrens' progress with the teachers on a daily basis. Open days are also arranged and on these occasions parents can visit the kindergarten for an entire morning and see for themselves how the school is run and how their child adapts to the new environment. The resident social worker also watches the child's ability to adapt to different situations ,and meanwhile liaises constantly with teachers, medical staff, and the family.

There is an increasing body of research to suggest that if an interest in books starts in the school library, it can last throughout life. Before the opening of any kindergarten a library should be included. The number of books available in the kindergarten is at present 1,300,000 (15).

Until 1975 only children in the four-to-six age group were accepted in the official kindergartens; however the pressure from parents, especially from the increasing number of mothers at work or those involved in education, forced the kindergartens to open their doors to children from the age of three and a half years. Apart from the demand by the parents this was largely due to the fact that there are no official nurseries for children under the age of four. In view of this situation, the Department of Education decided to admit children from three and a half years of age. Table 12 shows the distribution of the three age groups in the capital and Hawalli district schools in the year 1984/85.

Table 12

The Distribution of the Three Age Groups in The Capital and Hawalli District

| The stage | The year | No.of classes | No.of children |
|-------------|----------|---------------|----------------|
| Stage one | 3-4 | 135 | 3907 |
| Stage two | 4-5 | 209 | 6048 |
| Stage three | 5-6 | 255 | 6878 |

Source:

Al-Figgi, Hamid. 1986. "The Situation of Kuwaiti Child before Primary School". Institute of Child Development" p. 15.

This table shows that children in the first stage of age 3-4, composed 23% of the enrolment in these two districts. Some problems were encountered with this as the youngest children study the same curriculum as the older groups, causing difficulties for the teachers. This curriculum includes too

much generalisation for children of ages 2-4 who are in the stage of "mental and symbolic growth" in the Piaget classification of mental growth and its characteristics in young children (16). The child in this age group is at the stage of language enrichment and uses symbolic and imaginative play. He or she also learns by imitation and so requires more personal attention from the teacher(17). Building a system of official nursery schools for children under four could help the child develop and relieve the parent of some of the responsibility involved in the first three years of the child's life.

5.4 The Development of the Objectives

At first, there were no specially devised curricula in the Kuwait kindergarten. Teachers had to rely on their own abilities until 1957 when the first directives for the aims of kindergarten were issued by the Department of Education. These were as follows:-

- a) Allowing the child some freedom.
- b) Teaching by using music, songs and stories.
- c) Encouraging self-initiated activities and enthusiasm.
- d) Education in health, morality and the appreciation of beauty.

The directives did not discuss the curriculum or even perceive its importance at that time. The teachers selected from the first and second grade curricula what they considered would suit the kindergarten (18).

Ten years later, in 1966/67 different objectives were formulated by the Department of Education in their annual report for the Kuwaiti kindergarten (19). These were:

1. To develop the child's character.
2. To educate the child socially to fit into society.
3. To develop bodily awareness and the ability of the child to use his body well.
4. To develop mental and sensory awareness.
5. To allow the children to achieve their own methods of attaining their goals.
6. To provide an atmosphere of freedom where the children could learn to be self confident and independent.
7. The entire curriculum of every kindergarten should be designed to achieve these aims (20).

In 1978 a committee was set up by the Department of Education to develop the objectives of and curricula for kindergarten education in Kuwait. The terms of reference of the commission were to determine the most suitable experiences and programmes for children under the age of six within the framework of the aims for their stage of development and its philosophy. In addition another committee was appointed to examine the best way of training the teachers in the methods of using the educational materials and evaluation systems. In addition a teacher's handbook was prepared giving guidance on how to put the theoretical aims into practice (21).

There were some basic principles which the committee adopted when producing the general objectives for education in Kuwaiti kindergartens. These principles are common to all education in Kuwait. Examples are that education should be based on Kuwaiti society and its religion, philosophy and customs (see appendix 4). and that the curricula should not only be based on sound modern educational theories but also must be suited to the learners' requirements and characteristics (22).

From these criteria, in February 1980 the committee was able to determine the objectives of Kuwaiti kindergarten education as the first step towards organising the appropriate experiences and curricula (23) These aims were as follows:-

1. To help the children understand their Islamic religion, and create a positive feeling towards Islam and its customs.
2. To help the children understand the meaning first of their relationship to a family, to Kuwait as a country and to the Arab Gulf as part of our Arab society, and secondly their relation to the whole of Arab Islamic society.
3. To help the children have a positive understanding of themselves.
4. To help the children feel independent and accept the demands society makes on them.
5. To help the children develop the right attitude towards beauty and nature, engendering respect for the environment and discouraging its abuse.

6. To help children understand their bodies' needs and to help them develop good habits in playing, resting, sleeping, breathing, eating, and drinking. Also to make them aware of safety precautions, customs, and regulations whether they are at home, in the street, or in the kindergarten.
7. To help the children develop their senses and to use their bodies correctly with self confidence.
8. To help the children gain some basic skills for their life in society as a whole.

From this, three developmental areas emerge as the major sections of concern in the Kuwaiti kindergarten (24). These three areas are:-

- 1- The Affective domain, which includes the emotional, social and moral aims along with some traditional customs and attitudes, and the appreciation of good and beautiful things.
- 2- The Psychomotor domain, into which category fall the activities which promote motor skills and self-control of the body and the nerves.
- 3- The Cognitive domain. The aims that come under this category stress the importance of all knowledge whether ideological, conceptual or factual.

5.5 The Development of The Curriculum

Before discussing in detail the kindergarten curriculum in Kuwait, the committee considered carefully various aspects of

the general needs of the children in order to help determine the specific curricular aims. These aspects are as follows:-

1. A child's education can not be satisfactory unless we take care of his bodily needs, by giving him nutritionally balanced meals and by paying attention to matters of personal hygiene.
2. The need for constant contact between children and adults is important. Children learn from direct and indirect contact, and in addition they can enrich their language by learning from correct speech.
3. Surrounding the children with a positive emotional atmosphere in order to give them confidence in themselves and in other people.
4. Satisfying the children's needs in a way which helps in developing their maturity.
5. Encouraging the children to feel free to explore and discover their environment.
6. The treatment and guidance of children should be consistent in order to help them achieve a balanced character, so that they do not hesitate to give their own opinion even in unfamiliar circumstances. To achieve this, all kindergarten teachers should discuss and agree on the correct way to handle the children.
7. Helping the child to know what is going to happen next is essential. The school timetable should be fixed so that a child is informed about the meal times, playing times and resting time. If the curriculum is planned with

comprehensive experience in mind it will help the children to gain more confidence in themselves; if this can be achieved the children will start to set their own aims.

8. The curriculum should offer the child well-defined educational experiences.
9. The school should never reject the child's own language (mother tongue) which he/she learns at home.
10. It is advisable that the classroom should be full of toys which support the development of the senses related to movement. These toys need not be expensive, the emphasis must be on the educational benefits the child can gain from them.
11. The child should be provided with an environment suitable to his level of development. If the experience we give to the child is correct for his age and his mental, emotional and behavioural levels, we will achieve the main aim of the kindergarten, which is to teach the child how to teach himself to enjoy it and to feel happy (25).

Looking at these factors the Department of Education was able to lay down specific aims for the curriculum (see Appendix 4). Knowing the type of behavioural pattern they wanted Kuwaiti children to follow, the next step was to determine the kind of educational activities to be provided in kindergarten, and the type of educational experiences which would be of benefit (see Table 13).



Table 13

The Final Educational Experiences Programme of the Kuwaiti Kindergarten

| NO. | First stage | Second stage | Third stage |
|-----|---|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | a-my kindergarten | my kindergarten | my kindergarten |
| 2 | b-my toys a-who I am b-I depend on myself | who I am | who I am |
| 3 | a-my family b-our house | my family, relatives and my neighbours | people working |
| 4 | a-my health and cleanliness b-my safety | my health and safety | my health and safety |
| 5 | a-my clothing b-my sleep | food, water, air | food, water, air |
| 6 | a-sounds b-colours | sounds, colours and shapes | sounds, colours and shapes |
| 7 | a-supermarket b-shops | supermarkets | supermarkets |
| 8 | a-our car b-telephone, radio, T.V. and video | transportation | transportation |
| 9 | my country "Kuwait" | my country "Kuwait" | my country "Kuwait" |
| 10 | a-animals b-plants and gardens | animals and plants | animals and plants |
| 11 | desert | desert | desert |
| 12 | sea | sea | sea |

Source:

Ministry of Education. April, 1986. "The Annual Report for the Development of Kindergarten Educational Experiences". Curriculum and School Books Management. p.23.

Each experience should take two weeks at each stage with the exception of the special occasions such as the Festival of Aleid (after Ramadan, and after alhajj), also the Birthday of the prophet Mohammed and the international day should take less than one week depending on the stage of the class and the teacher's wishes. It is worth mentioning here that due to the huge number in each class a learning centre is being used to make sure that each child is having his chance of equal opportunity of learning. This small group activity is essentially one in which each of several children has access to the teacher's guidance in learning at his own rate and at the level of development of which he is capable. Such timing in learning is not possible for all the children in a teacher-centered large-group situation; it is expensively achieved in an individual learning situation. Small-group activities make it possible to pace a child as he learns at his own rate when he is ready for learning. The advantage of the learning centres appear in four ways:

1. When the children are learning about an activity that is new to them.
2. When children need frequent assistance in a difficult activity.
3. When making some object of interest to the children but too difficult for them to do unaided.
4. Talking with children as they examine objects new to them.

Alongside with the learning centres the Kuwaiti kindergarten tend to use the whole experience as a basis in their teaching for

the children. It consists of having one experience such as "Kuwait is my country" and making this topic as the main subject to introduce the language skills, the physical well-being, social development, emotional health and enhancing creativity.

It is worth mentioning here that Kuwait has lead many Arabic and Gulf countries in taking care of developing and financing the official kindergarten (see Table 14).

Table 14

Kindergarten in the Arabic Gulf

| Country | No. children | No. teachers | Teacher/ children | No. classes | Average children number | School number |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| U.A.E | 5333 | 278 | 19.2 | 198 | 26.9 | 20 |
| Bahrain | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Kuwait | 17770 | 1269 | 14 | 664 | 26.8 | 61 |
| Saudi Arabia | 3531 | 238 | 14.8 | 176 | 20.1 | 33 |
| Iraq | 76507 | 2593 | 29.5 | 1798 | 42.6 | 387 |
| Qatar | — | — | — | — | — | — |

Source

"The Educational Report for the Countries of the Arabic Gulf, 1980/1981". 1984. The Arabic Education office. pp.39-62.

From this table it appears that Kuwait is at the head of all the Gulf states except for Iraq in the number of official kindergarten, the number of the children, teachers, classes and the average of the number of pupils in each class. It also clear that some Arabic countries do not have government kindergarten and depend on the few private ones.

5.6 Teachers' Training

As we discussed in the previous chapter, a training college with a four year course was opened in 1957, for girls who had completed the intermediate certificate. Unfortunately, most of the students who enrolled were either academic under-achievers in the regular schools, looking for short cuts in order to complete their education, or were poor, and entered the college in order to benefit from student grants given by the government as an incentive to enrol. Furthermore, the college was set up to train elementary rather than kindergarten teachers.

Many teachers who graduated from university undoubtedly had the ability to teach in kindergarten, but were not given the correct level of training. Most teachers formerly trained at this level are non-Kuwaiti, mainly Palestinian, Egyptian, and Lebanese.

Many students who graduate from the secondary schools are not willing to enrol in the university for many reasons, such as having a low grade, or because their families may be against co-educational institutions.

The college founded in 1957 was closed by the Ministry of Education, and another was opened for girls on completion of their secondary education. No special department for training kindergarten teachers was opened until 1977/78 (26). It was then recognised that training students to teach at kindergarten level could benefit the children, and also the teachers. In May 1986,

the college started running four year training courses, in order to provide more qualified and highly trained teachers.

5.7 Conclusions

The overall review of the kindergarten education in Kuwait reveals that the main determinants of an effective kindergarten education comprise:

- (1) The development of clear, simple and specific objectives. These objectives must be developed in line with the current needs and wants of the children.
- (2) The development of a workable curriculum. Workable in the sense that a school curriculum must be carefully thought out, diligently planned and efficiently and effectively implemented for the benefit of the children, teachers, parents and the public at large.
- (3) The selection, recruitment, and training of the right teachers to care for the right children in the right environment.

The following chapter will examine the kindergarten schools in some selected Arab countries.

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Chapter 6

CHAPTER SIX

Kindergartens in the Arab World

6.1 Introduction

The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the kindergarten schools in the Arab World. The chapter is divided into seven parts. The first looks at kindergarten education in the Arabic World in general with some reference to the importance of kindergarten education and examines the Arabic families and their role in children's education. The second part examines kindergarten education in Bahrain. Kindergarten in Saudi Arabia are explored in part three. The fourth part focuses on preschools in Oman, while the system of kindergarten education in Libya is treated in part five. Part six considers kindergarten education in Morocco. The final part is the conclusion.

6.2 Some Evidence on Kindergarten Education in the Arab World

The first six years of the child's life is an essential period, and all human societies insist on caring for the child during this time. Arabic Islamic society was a leader in the field of child care; it recognised the child's rights and the need to educate him well.

The great Islamic educator was the Prophet Mohammed who always emphasised to educators that they should "Teach the child and not punish him because the teacher is better than the

administrator of punishment." He also encouraged children to play with sand, which all modern educators stress is beneficial for small children(1).

"Ibin Al Mokafaa", an old Arabic thinker, described the child as a seed which cannot grow unless we give it water; in the same way the child needs education and knowledge in order to survive successfully in this life.

In recent years educating young children has become important in Arabic countries for many reasons:-

(1) Social reasons:

A. The disappearance of the extended family which has now become a small nuclear family with the parents and their children only, especially in the cities.

B. The fact that mothers now work and study, which has left the child with no immediate family to take care of him(2).

(2) Children leaving school:

In many countries children go to school at the age of six; many of them leave the primary school because they are not prepared for it emotionally or because they do not like the idea of leaving their parents. This increases the need for pre-school education(3).

(3) Developing the Media and Communication:

This has led educated parents to desire the same pre-schools for their children as they read or hear about in other countries.

Research done by the Arabic Institute for Education and Science, in 1983, revealed that the percentage of children to the number of all the Arabic population reached 23%, which makes 28 to 30 million children living in Arabic countries. Such a large number of children necessitates substantial or increased attention and care from their society. This being the case we would like to describe what Arabic countries offer to their children before the age of six.

It is worth mentioning here, that the circumstances of Arabic families are such that(4):-

- (1) 42% of the Arabic population has a very low income, ranging between 300-400 pounds annually.
- (2) 50% of the population is illiterate; illiteracy is very common, especially among women. In some countries the percentage is even higher, reaching 80% in Oman, 85% in Saudi Arabia and 87% in North Yemen (see Table 15).

Table: 15

The percentage of people who are illiterate in the Arab World

| COUNTRY | PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE WHO ARE ILLITERATE |
|--------------|---|
| JORDAN | 30 |
| U. A. E. | 79 |
| BAHRAIN | 50.6 |
| TUNIS | 45 |
| ALGERIA | 63 |
| SAUDI ARABIA | 85 |
| SUDAN | 80 |
| SYRIA | 47 |
| SOMALIA | 40 |
| IRAQ | 72 |
| OMAN | 80 |
| QATAR | 79 |
| KUWAIT | 40 |
| LEBANON | 32 |
| LIBYA | 50 |
| EGYPT | 56 |
| MOROCCO | 72 |
| MAURITANIA | 83 |
| SOUTH YEMEN | 73 |
| NORTH YEMEN | 87 |

Source:

International Bank "A report on the growth of illiteracy in the world" 1980.

- (3) The death rate of young children is very high due to poor conditions of health, the poor diet and polluted water and the type of area they live in.
- (4) There are large numbers of nuclear families which include just the parents and their children and which have seven or more members. This kind of family makes up 44% of the population in the Arab world(see Table 16). In such a

situation the child loses his independent start in life in his family, because he has to share a room with at least more than two members of the family.

Table 16

The size of the family in some Arabic countries

| COUNTRY | PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES OVER THE NUMBER OF SEVEN |
|---------|---|
| JORDAN | 30.8 |
| BAHRAIN | 44 |
| TUNIS | 27.8 |
| SYRIA | 40.7 |
| IRAQ | 37.2 |
| KUWAIT | 39.6 |
| LIBYA | 21.2 |
| EGYPT | 25.6 |
| MOROCCO | 35.2 |

Source:

United Nations. "Compendium of Social Statistics," 1977.

- (5) The health services are very poor in most Arabic countries; for every doctor there are 3712 people to take care of, and there is one bed for 598 persons. In comparison in the United Kingdom there are 760 people for every doctor and 110 people for every bed.
- (6) There are few specific Arabic books or newspapers for children under the age of six. They have English stories translated into Arabic, which will deprive the child of the opportunity to read about his society and will incline him adapt to other countries' customs and habits.

- (7) Radio and television programmes for children under the age of six are very rare totalling 2.64% of radio programmes per day and 10.31% of television programmes.
- (8) Most of the toys suitable for children between 0-6 years in Arabic countries have been made in foreign countries and are very expensive.
- (9) The number of kindergarten in all Arabic countries reaches almost 3000, with 350,000 children and 10,500 teachers(see Table 17).

Table 17

The Number of Kindergartens and Children in the Arab World

| COUNTRY | YEAR | NO.KINDERGARTEN | NO.CHILDREN |
|--------------|------|-----------------|-------------|
| JORDAN | 1979 | 200 | 16.000 |
| U.A.E. | 1979 | 30 | 9.792 |
| BAHRAIN | 1979 | 13 | 1.514 |
| TUNIS | 1979 | 269 | 20.702 |
| SAUDI ARABIA | 1979 | 151 | 22.744 |
| SUDAN | 1979 | 905 | 43.426 |
| SYRIA | 1979 | 354 | 33.445 |
| SOMALIA | 1977 | 17 | 1.645 |
| IRAQ | 1979 | 258 | 70.418 |
| OMAN | 1979 | 15 | 812 |
| PALESTINE | 1977 | -- | 11.086 |
| QATAR | 1979 | 11 | 1.600 |
| KUWAIT | 1979 | 108 | 27.354 |
| LIBYA | 1979 | 41 | 7.136 |
| EGYPT | 1977 | 363 | 73.546 |
| YEMEN | 1978 | 18 | 4.743 |

Source:

Al-Shatawe, A and Al Ahmar, M. 1983, "The situation of Arabic Children before School". Tunis.

Note:

The number of kindergarten includes both the government and private kindergarten.

(10) The ratio of teachers to children is very high and may reach 40 children to each teacher or even 52 children, as in Egypt (see Table 18).

Table 18

The Number of Teachers and the Ratio of Teachers to Children in some Arabic Countries

| COUNTRIES | NO.TEACHER | NO.OF CHILDREN TO EACH TEACHER |
|--------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| JORDAN | 600 | 26 |
| U.A.E. | 201 | 48 |
| BAHRAIN | 126 | 12 |
| TUNIS | 764 | 27 |
| SYRIA | 1.073 | 31 |
| SOMALIA | 104 | 15 |
| IRAQ | 3.079 | 22 |
| SAUDI ARABIA | 788 | 28 |
| OMAN | 49 | 16 |
| QATAR | 40 | 40 |
| KUWAIT | 1.785 | 15 |
| LIBYA | 357 | 19 |
| EGYPT | 1.399 | 52 |

Source

Al-Shatawe, A. and Al-Ahmar, M. 1983. "The situation of Arabic Children before School. Tunis.

6.3 Kindergarten in Selected Arabic Countries

6.3.1 Kindergarten in Bahrain

Modern education in Bahrain started in 1919 with the opening of "Alhidaya AL Kalifiya" primary school. Twenty years later a secondary school was opened. Education in Bahrain was and is still free for all Bahraini children, from the age of six.

Children under the age of six can attend private kindergarten schools because there are no public kindergarten. In 1982/83 the number of pupils attending these schools was 5053, comprising 2636 male and 2417 female students (5). Those children go to a number of kindergarten, and there were only 13 such schools in 1979.

Most of the kindergarten in Bahrain seem to be located in the cities, while only 15% of them are in the rural areas. This may be due to the following reasons:-

- 1- In the city more women go to work and need to leave their children in a safe place .
- 2- People in urban areas have higher incomes and a higher standard of living, so they find it easier to send their children to private kindergartens than do the poorer rural dwellers.

6.3.2 Kindergarten in Saudi Arabia

Nurseries and kindergarten in Saudi Arabia represent the earliest stage of education and are characterized by tender treatment and child oriented teaching. In 1979 the number of kindergarten in Saudi Arabia reached 151 with 22.744 children and 788 teachers making a ratio of 28 children for each teacher. It is worth mentioning here that not all the kindergarten fall under the control of the government; only 6.32% of them belong

to the government while 93.68% belong to the private sector (6). With all the kindergarten located in the cities, children living in the rural areas lack the opportunity to learn and to adapt before going to school at the age of six.

In 1974 the objectives of kindergarten in Saudi Arabia were established and these are(7):-

- (1) "Nursing the instincts of the child and looking after his moral, mental and physical growth in a natural environment similar to his family environment and complying with the requirements of Islam.
- (2) Developing the child's religious inclination on the basis of belief in the unity of God and in conformity with the child's instincts.
- (3) Teaching the child good conduct and helping him to acquire the virtues of Islam and correct habits by setting him a good example at school.
- (4) Familiarizing the child with the school atmosphere, preparing him for school life and transferring him tenderly from the stage of self-centralization to the joint social life with his schoolmates.
- (5) Supplying the child with an abundance of correct idioms, easy fundamental principles and information that suits his age and is related to his surroundings.
- (6) Training the child in bodily exercises, teaching him sanitary habits and cultivating his senses and training him to use them properly.

- (7) Encouraging the child's imaginative thinking, refining his taste and opening the doors for his energies to blossom under guidance.
- (8) Catering for the child's needs, making him happy and educating him, all without spoiling or burdening him.
- (9) Protecting the child against dangers, treating the early signs of bad conduct and facing childhood problems in an adequate way".

6.3.3 Kindergarten in Oman

The story of education in Oman is very recent. With the expansion of many kinds of education, kindergarten education seems to be not included in the planning of the government because all kindergarten in Oman fall under the control of the private sector. The number of kindergarten schools reached 15 in 1979, with 812 children and 49 teachers making a ratio of 16 children to every teacher. All the schools are located in the cities because they are private and care more about having rich children than educating the poor (8).

6.3.4 Kindergarten in Libya

The kindergarten education in Libya seems to be at its embryonic stage. Only a few public and private kindergarten schools have been established, mostly in the capital Tripoli. The kindergarten curriculum in Libya seems to be flexible, where

children are preoccupied with dancing, singing, and playing with toys. However, there are also formal sessions for organised and supervised play, games, and reading classes. The selection of the teachers is based on three main criteria:

- a. Good Conduct;
- b. Interest;
- c. Education and teaching experience (9).

6.3.5 Kindergarten in Morocco

Preschool or kindergarten is one of the three pre-primary schools established in Morocco. The other two are nursery and Koranic schools. Kindergarten are run privately, Table 19 shows the private organisations operating kindergarten schools in Morocco.

Table 19

Private organisations operating kindergarten schools in Morocco.

| Organisation | % of Kindergarten Owned |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Universal French Cultural Mission | 26% |
| Private Arabised | 17.5% |
| Ittihad | 4% |

Continued...

| | |
|---|-------|
| Others (Roman Catholic Schools and other Private Modern Kindergarten) | 52.5% |
| Total | 100 |

Source:

Naguib, Zakia. 1986. "The Development of Education in Morocco: Trends, Initiatives and Problems"
M.A Thesis. Durham University. pp. 51-55.

The Moroccan kindergarten schools were established to achieve the following objectives:

- a. To prepare the children for formal primary education;
- b. To provide valuable guidance;
- c. To stimulate their minds and imaginations and
- d. To encourage and motivate them to work creatively (10).

6.4 Conclusions

The analysis of kindergarten schools in the Arabic World indicates that kindergarten schools in the countries we discussed have some common objectives. One major objective common to all, is that of preparing preschool children for formal primary education. However, in almost all the Arabic countries, kindergarten education seems to be not completely supported financially by the government. As a result the private sector took over the preparation and organisation of the kindergarten education in order to meet the needs of the society.

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Chapter 7

CHAPTER SEVEN

Research Methodology

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters two periods, the pre-oil era and the oil era in the development of Kuwait were reviewed, and the development of general education in Kuwait was examined.

This chapter and the following ones are devoted to the design and methodology of the field study, the analysis of its findings, and the final conclusion and proposals. This present chapter consists of five parts. Section 7.1 describes the research design and methods employed in this study. Section 7.2 presents the field work procedure. Section 7.3 deals with data preparation and computer analysis. Section 7.4 studies the replies from the teachers. Finally, conclusions are drawn in section 7.5.

7.2 Research Design and Methods

The steps which characterised this study are, as follows:-

- 1) Literature Review
- 2) Personal Interview
- 3) Case Studies.

7.2.1 Literature Review

In this chapter the writer is chiefly concerned with

literature dealing with the development of kindergarten aims and curricula, a case study of Kuwait.

To assist in conducting the above study, the following materials have been analysed:-

- a) Official statistical documentation from the Ministry of Education in Kuwait(in Arabic).
- b) The research done by the Education Research Centre (in Arabic) and by the Centre of Curriculum Research in the Ministry of Education.
- c) Arabic books and references which specifically deal with the development of general and kindergarten education in Kuwait.
- d) English periodicals which report research conducted on and studies related to the development of education in the Arab Gulf. Attention has been principally concentrated on gathering information about Kuwait as a case study for this thesis. Most of these periodicals are located in the India Office in London.
- e) English books and references which deal with kindergarten, their history, development, aims and the appropriate curriculum for pre-school children.

7.2.2 Personal interviews

These include both structured and unstructured interviews with teachers, headmasters and the director of the Curriculum Research Center. There are problems of systematizing

information derived from open discussion and data collected through personal interview is subject to bias derived from the investigator and subjects, personalities, attitudes and expectations (1).

7.2.3 Questionnaire Aims

The aims of this questionnaire are to evaluate the Kuwaiti kindergarten in the areas of its staff, facilities, and curriculum.

The first part consists of gathering general information about kindergarten teachers such as:-

1. their nationality;
2. their qualifications;
3. their year of commencement;
4. the educational levels at which they previously taught ;
5. the kind of training programme they received in the area of kindergarten education.

This will give an overall view of the 84 teachers we have chosen, enabling us to see whether their qualifications and background make them suitably qualified to teach the preschooler.

The second part examines the size of classes in the kindergarten; also it examines the facilities in each kindergarten and their ability to provide good educational materials as follows:-

1. the number of the children in the kindergarten;
2. the number of children in each class;
3. whether there are adequate facilities and if not, where the deficiency lies.

The next part of the questionnaire investigates the teachers' knowledge of:-

1. the major ways of helping the child to develop normally;
2. the objectives of the kindergarten.

The fourth part deals mainly with the teachers' opinion about the new curricula and whether:-

1. they would like the kindergarten department to standardize the curriculum for all the schools;
2. they need help from the head teacher only;
3. they feel they are well enough trained;
4. they think the curriculum is too difficult;
5. they want the new curricula, and whether it will help them;
6. whether the new curricula will restrict their creativity.

The following section seeks to find out the reasons of the teachers for working in a kindergarten:-

1. failure to obtain a university degree;
2. good career prospects, aptitude for teaching and the freedom to organize their own work.
3. the long holidays and the short working hours with a high salary;

4. pressure from the family and a reluctance to work with men.

The sixth part deals with the teachers' knowledge of the new curricula:-

1. the groups which should have the curricula;
2. whether the new curricula is beneficial for them;
3. their opinion about whether they need in-service training;
4. what kind of in-service training they prefer.

Before reaching the final draft of the questionnaire, several steps were needed to eliminate unclear and unnecessary questions and still cover the six main areas quoted above.

7.2.4 Case study

(see chapter eight).

7.3 Field Work Procedure

Social surveys are generally time-consuming, and unless one has a carefully prepared strategy can take a disproportionate amount of time and effort. The period chosen for the execution of the field work for this thesis was the penultimate month of the school year, that is, starting in late April. The reason for selecting this period was that by this point most of the teachers are familiar with the new curriculum.

For the above reasons the field work procedure was as follows:-

- a) obtaining government permission and financial support.

- b) printing and photocopying the necessary number of questionnaires containing a mixture of fixed, alternative and open-ended questions. These were printed in Arabic and comprised six pages. Ninety copies were made three weeks before the commencement of the survey.
- c) Selecting the kindergarten in contrasting districts. Two criteria were taken into consideration in choosing the kindergarten:-
- 1- Location (scattered in different areas).
 - 2- That they had the new curricula .
- d) The field work and data collection was carried out between April 26th and May 29th in 1986. A letter from the Ministry of Education was obtained permitting the questionnaire to be distributed to the staff of the kindergarten, this was requested by the headmasters of all nine schools. Some teachers answered the questionnaire immediately. The time taken, including an explanation of unclear data and questions was approximately one hour. The remaining teachers chose to take their questionnaire home and return it by post. This resulted in many phone calls being made to remind them of the urgency of sending back the completed forms.
- e) Translating the questionnaire into English.
- f) Coding all the questionnaire (see Appendix 1).

7.4 Data Preparation and Computer Analysis:

7.4.1 Coding

The completed questionnaires were analysed and edited in the data service department of the Computer Center. The information gathered was put in coded form as illustrated below:-

- a) "yes" response is represented by figure 1
- b) "no" response is represented by figure 2
- c) A failure to answer is represented by figure zero.

This coding form was then entered into the computer (see Appendix 2) . Where several alternative answers were offered to the respondent, each of these was represented by a figure, as in the example below :-

For the question about the numbers of children in the different kindergarten, the answers were given the following figures:-

- a) Those having between 150 and 250 children enrolled were represented by the figure 1.
- b) Those having between 260 and 350 children enrolled were represented by the figure 2.
- c) Those having between 360 and 450 children enrolled were represented by the figure 3.
- d) Those having over 500 children were represented by the figure 4.

For using the data, three fairly common category values have been assigned:

- a) The most commonly assigned value is that of "blank" or '0', in other words no value.
- b) The use of a constant such as "-g" which has no legitimate value as a response.
- c) The assignment of a number or digit longer than the maximum response value acceptable (2).

For this thesis, the first example, that is, the "0" value assignment to missing data has been adopted.

7.4.2 Code Book

The code book contains information on all the variables, including a description of their meaning, their associated codes and a brief headline of reference (see Appendix 1).

An example to illustrate the information held on each variable would be:

- a) Description of variable.
- b) Variable name for input for SPSSX.
- c) Coding scan, if any.
- d) Missing value code or codes.
- e) Column range in the data set (3).

7.4.3 Computer Analysis

After the completion of this stage of the procedure, the

powerful package SPSSX (4) available at Durham University Main Computer MTS (5) was used to analyse the data. This process consists of two principle operations:

- a) To describe the data to the programme.
- b) To specify the required analysis.

In this case the Frequency Statistical Programme was utilised as it gives accurate percentage results.

Subsequently, the results had to be set out in an easily comprehensible format. To achieve this aim GIMMS (6) was used because it is a plotting programme with the ability to draw barcharts, line graphs, scatter diagrams, and pie charts. Of these, barcharts and pie charts were selected as being the most easily comprehensible for a wide range of readers.

7.5 General Findings of the Questionnaire

This section aims to describe the result of the questionnaire given to 84 teachers.

The first questions were asked to acquire general information about the kindergarten and the teachers, while the remaining ones looked in more detail at crucial issues. Table 1 shows the names of the kindergartens, their locations and the number of questionnaires which were distributed to the teachers in each school.

7.5.1 General Information

A. Name and Location

Table 20 shows the names of the schools selected for the purpose of this study as well as the locations and the number of questionnaires involved. Nine different schools were selected. Two criteria were taken into consideration in choosing the kindergarten i.e.

- 1) Location (a wide spread was aimed at)
- 2) Those schools(Alsanabil, Albalabil, Osama Bin Zaid,Almorog) which had experience of using the new curricula during the year 1985-86 were preferred.

Table: 20

Names and Locations of the Kindergarten Chosen for the Questionnaire

| NAME OF KINDER- GARTEN | LOCATION | NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRE | % |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| AL-JABRIYA | JABRIYA | 10 | 11.9% |
| AL-BALABIL | SABAH AL- SALIM | 9 | 10.7% |
| HASSAN BIN THABIT | ALOTHAYLIAH | 10 | 11.9% |
| AL-JADAWEL | SOLAYBIKAT | 10 | 11.9% |
| OSAMA BIN ZAID | SABAH AL SALIM | 6 | 7.1% |
| AL-MOROG | SABAH AL SALIM | 10 | 11.9% |
| JELEBSHUEK | JELEBSHUEK | 9 | 10.7% |
| AL-SANABIL | SABAH AL SALIM | 11 | 13.1% |
| ALSINDIBAD | ALSALMYAH | 9 | 10.7% |
| TOTAL | | 84 | 100.0% |

B. Teachers' Nationality

Figure 1 shows the nationalities of the teachers. 78.6% have Kuwaiti nationality, while only 21.4% have different nationalities. Figure 2 shows the various nationalities involved.

C. Teachers' Status

66.7% of the respondents are married, the remaining ones are single (see Figure 3).

In order to reach any conclusions and make suggestions in regard to the development of teaching methods in the Kuwaiti kindergarten, it is essential first to find out whether the teachers have good experience, adequate teaching qualifications and appropriate training programmes, which will help in applying modern and appropriate teaching methods in kindergarten schools. As a result, several interrelated questions were asked in the questionnaires. Among them were:

D. Teachers' Age Group

Teachers were asked to tick one from the options giving their age group (see Appendix 3).

Figure 4 shows that 28.6% of the respondents fall into age group 1 (under 24), 42.9% of the respondents fall into age group 2 (between 25 -30), 7.1% of the teachers fall into age group 3 (between 31-35), and 21.4% of the respondents fall into age group 4 (over 36).

Figures 3 and 4 show whether the teacher is a parent or not and her age group .

7.5.2 Teachers' Qualifications

Teachers were also asked to state their present (if any) qualifications. We found that 58.3% of the teachers have a teacher's diploma (not necessarily all in the kindergarten section). On the other hand, 26.2% of the teachers have university degrees (see Figure 5).

7.5.3 Training Experience

Surprisingly, half (51.2%) of the teachers in our sample did not have any training , 48.8% of them did have training of some kind (see Figure 6).

As a follow-up question and further investigation into this matter, they were also asked to specify the type of training they had (see Figure 7).

Figure 8 shows the year(s) of commencement of teacher training.

Teachers were also asked to state the level at which they had previously taught. Surprisingly, 47.6% of the teachers had graduated and qualified to teach other levels than the kindergarten (see Figure 9).

7.5.4 Motivation

It is generally supposed that a positive attitude to teaching encourages the teacher(s) to perform their job effectively. On this point, the questionnaire consists of the following questions:

1. Whether the teacher likes working with children:

- a. 72.6% of the teachers do like to work with kindergarten pupils (see Figure 10) whereas 27.4% of the respondents would rather teach older levels for the following reasons (teachers were allowed to state more than one reason if they wished)
- b. 6.0% just want a change
- c. 10.7% said kindergarten teaching is very hard work
- d. 10.5% said because they were bored
- e. 1.2% gave health reasons (see Figure 11).

2. General Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Career:

Respondents were asked to tick and to grade the most and least important reasons for choosing the teaching profession. (The respondents were allowed to tick more than one answer)

Surprisingly, the percentage ticking "short working hours" as the most important reason for choosing the teaching profession was 92.9% , "long holidays" was selected by 89.9% while only 16.7% of the respondents said that the most important reason for choosing the career was that they had an aptitude for teaching (see Figures 12,...21).

7.5.5 Teachers' Knowledge

If we are to describe what teachers seek to achieve and how effective they believe themselves to be in achieving their objectives with young children, we need some insight into their goals and aspirations. What do they think the preschool child should gain from the kindergarten? In the study the teachers were asked about their ways of looking after children and how they could help them develop normally (see Figure 22). The highest numbers of responses (38.1%) stated that their main aim was building the child's character in the three areas; mentally, emotionally, and sensorily through teaching good habits.

They were also asked about what they believed to be the objectives for the kindergarten (see Figure 23).

31.0% of the teachers gave the highest score to preparing the child for the next educational stage.

7.5.6 School and Class Size

It is important to have a small class size, so the teacher can give adequate attention to each child. It is recommended that kindergarten classes should not be overcrowded and 15 children in each class appears to be a reasonable number (7).

For this reason, a question about the size of the school was included. Figure 24 shows that 42% of the kindergarten schools have between 150 and 250 children while only 10.7% have over 500 children. On the other hand, when the teachers were asked about the class size it emerged that 54.8% of the kindergartens have

more than 30 children in each class which makes it difficult for the teacher, the children and the whole process of education (see Figure 25).

7.5.7 The Appropriateness of the Facilities

The use of the environment ought to form a vital part of the curriculum. Although learning is a natural, inescapable part of human experience, appropriate educational material is essential for kindergarten children for their discovery, learning and coping with other children. For this reason the question of the appropriateness of the facilities in the classroom was raised.

Figure 26 shows that 58.3% of the teachers have sufficient educational material in their classrooms while 41.7% do not have these important facilities, a situation which might harm the childrens' learning.

Figure 27 shows the lack of educational facilities.

7.5.8 The Curriculum

A curriculum is a schedule of planned activities for the classroom which is selected in advance. This programme planning is adjusted during the year to accommodate the progress of both children and teachers. In our study we asked the teachers about the new curriculum which the kindergarten department in Kuwait is now testing in some schools. Figure 28 shows the teachers' opinion about the curricula. Interestingly, 47.6% of the

respondents said they welcomed the new curriculum and considered that it should be compulsory, while the same percentage said that there was no need to standardise the curriculum.

In another question teachers were asked whether they thought that the new curriculum would limit their creativity. 67.9% of the respondents said that they believed it would limit their creativity (see Figure 29).

Figure 30 shows that 85.5% of the teachers thought it would be necessary to make an evaluation of the new curriculum twice a year for the benefit of the educational operation.

The majority (67.9%) of the teachers said they approved of the new handbook (see Figure 31).

Surprisingly, 38.1% of the teachers answered 'yes' when they were asked whether they use curricula designed for other levels in teaching kindergarten children (see Figure 32).

Five different statements were put to the teachers and they were asked to tick whether they agreed with them or not (see Figures 33,...37). Interestingly, 22.6% of the teachers do not mind using in the kindergarten hand-books designed for other levels. Only 38.1% of them agreed that the handbook is a complete educational experience.

7.5.9 In-Service Training

Teachers were asked whether they felt they needed in-service training to enrich their knowledge. They were also asked the

kind of in-service training they would like to have. Figure 38 shows that 33.3% felt that they do need in-service training, whereas 66.7% prefer not to be involved in such a programme. Concerning the type of in-service training for those who are interested, Figure 39 shows that 10.7% preferred field work, 10.7% preferred visits to other kindergarten, and only 4.8% wished to have courses in teaching methods.

7.5.10 Changing the Career

The question was put to the teachers whether they would like to change their schools if the Ministry introduces the new curriculum in just a few schools. Answers to that question indicated that 16.7% would wish to change; on the other hand, 83.3% said they would not (see Figure 40).

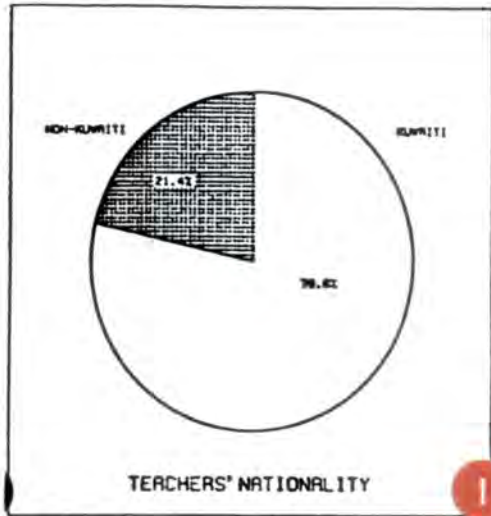
7.6 Conclusions

Research methodology can be the bridge between the literature review and the actual field work. Thus, this methodology appears to provide us with a clear idea as to how the entire research was planned and carried out. The results of the structured questionnaire administered to 84 teachers shows that although about 58% of the teachers have the teachers' diploma, they did not necessarily obtain this diploma in the kindergarten area, suggestive of the fact that most of the teachers did not receive formal training in kindergarten education.

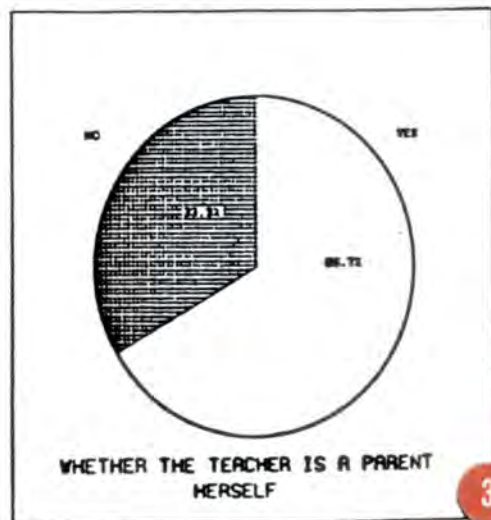
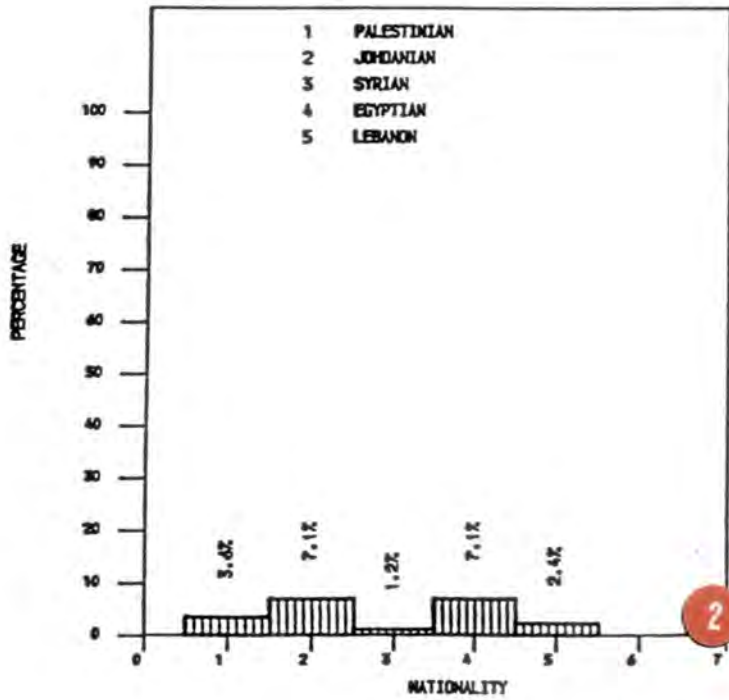
Further, it was found that although about 73% of the teachers

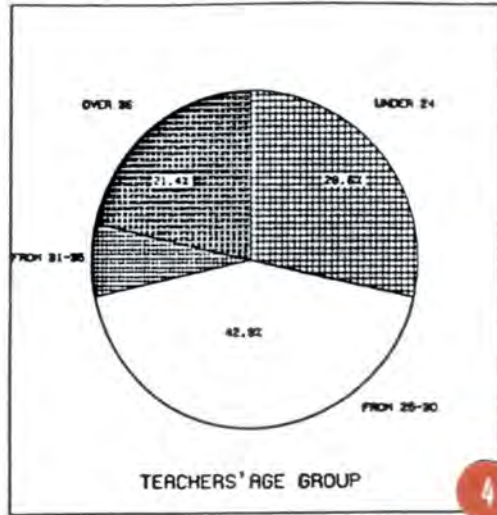
said they liked to teach in kindergarten school, in reality, most of them were motivated to choose the teaching career for non-vocational reasons, namely to enjoy the advantages of the long holidays and shorter working hours in the kindergarten schools. There is still a divided opinion between and among the teachers as to whether or not the kindergarten curriculum should be explicit or implicit.

Nevertheless, about 68% of the sample approved the use of the new school curriculum. However, they suggested that the new curriculum be evaluated twice in a year in order to measure its effectiveness. The following chapter will present the case study of two schools in Kuwait.

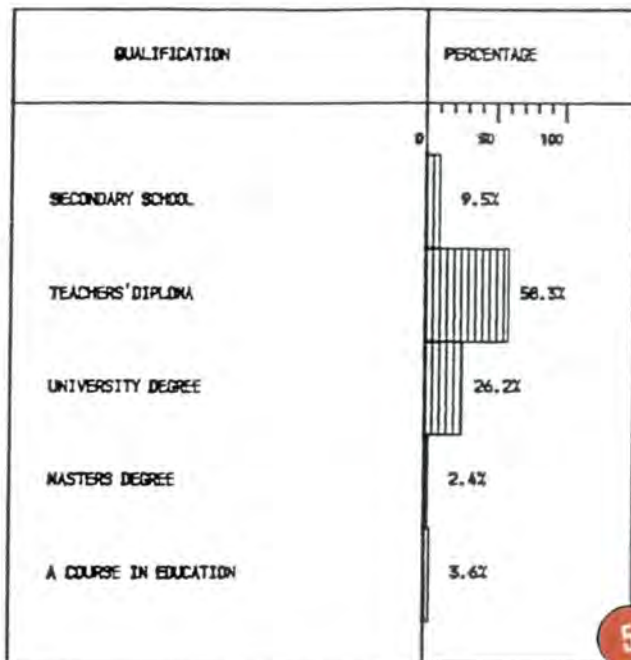


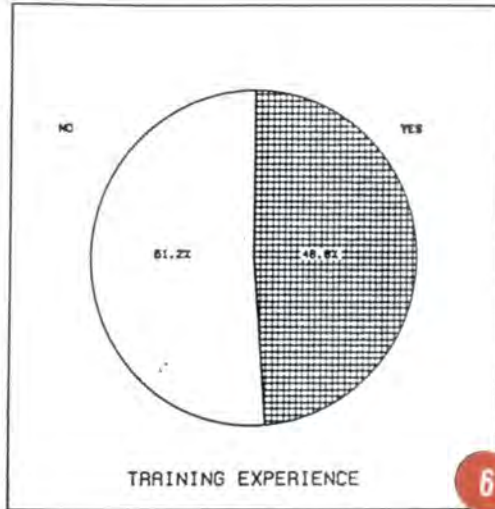
NON-KUWAITI NATIONALITY



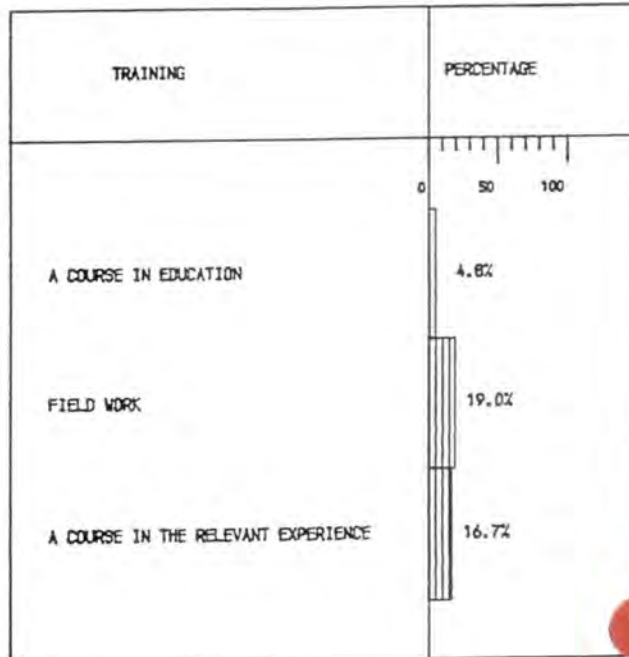


TEACHER QUALIFICATION

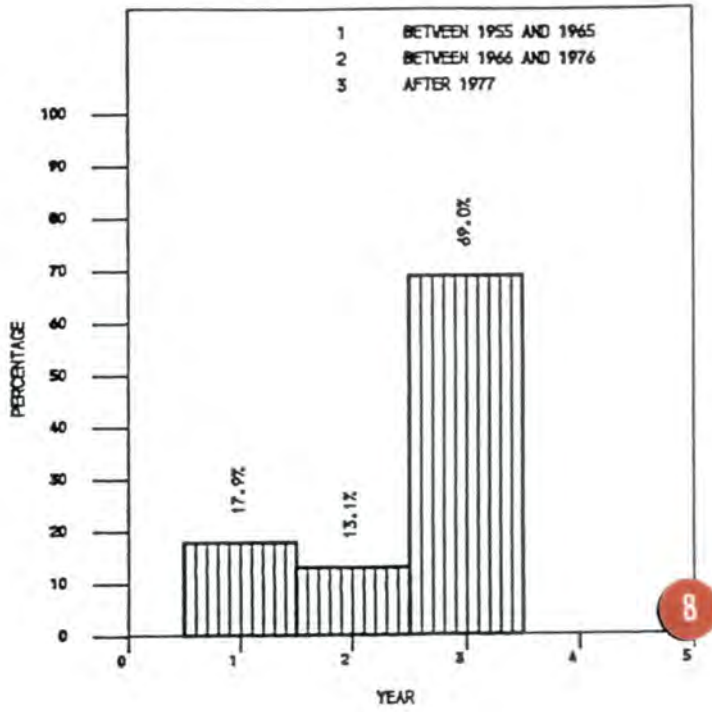




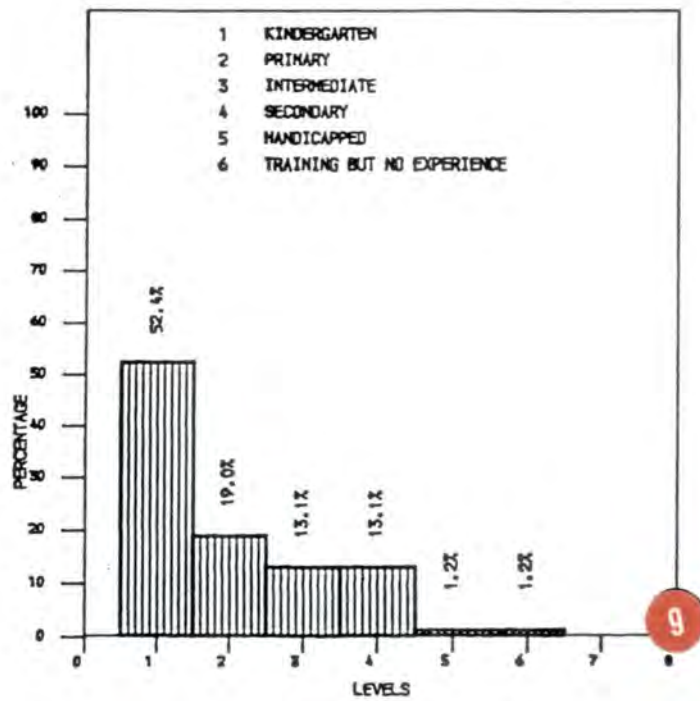
TYPES OF TRAINING

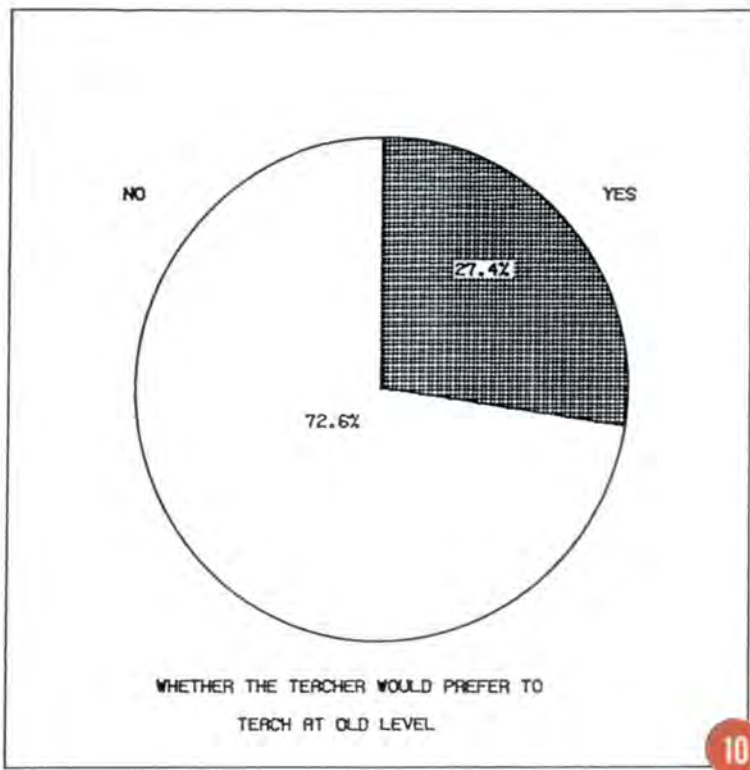


YEAR OF COMMENCEMENT



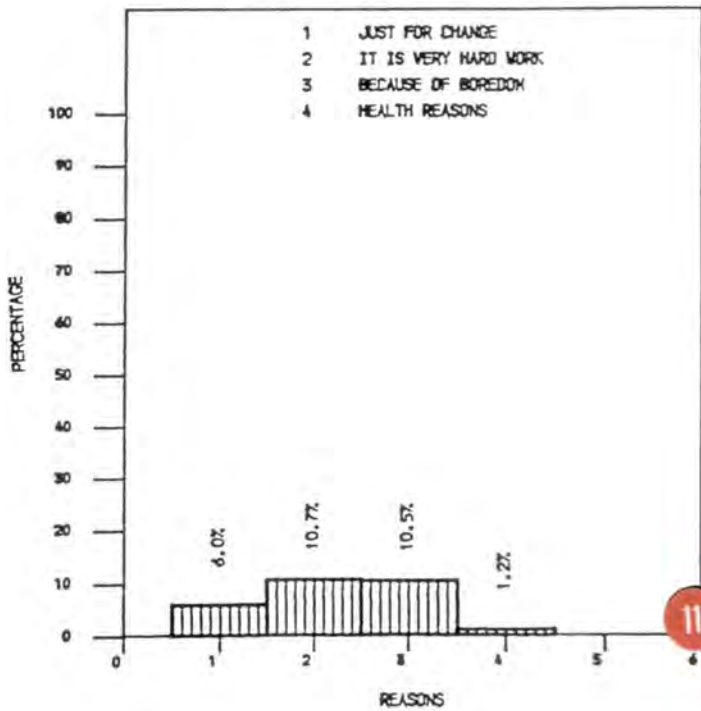
TEACHING EXPERIENCE



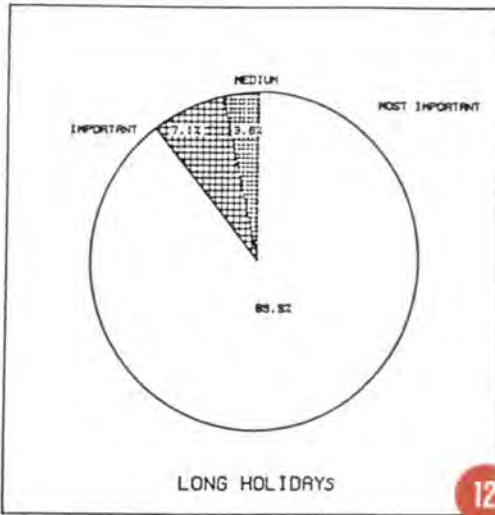


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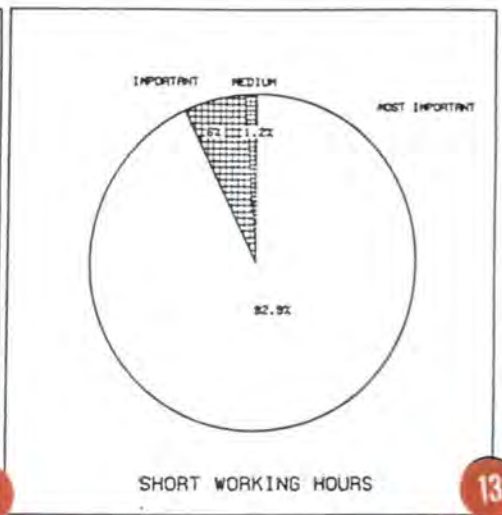
REASONS FOR CHANGING THE PRESENT TEACHING LEVEL



11



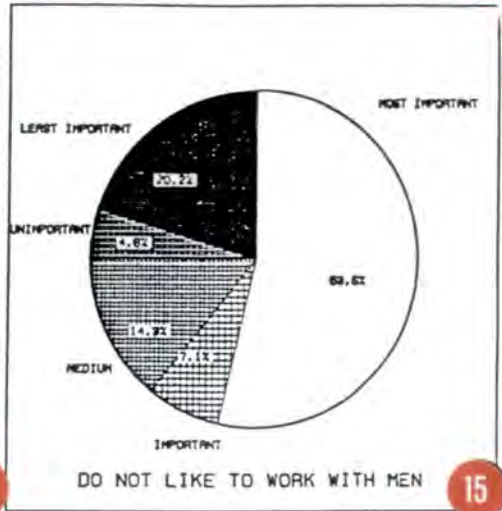
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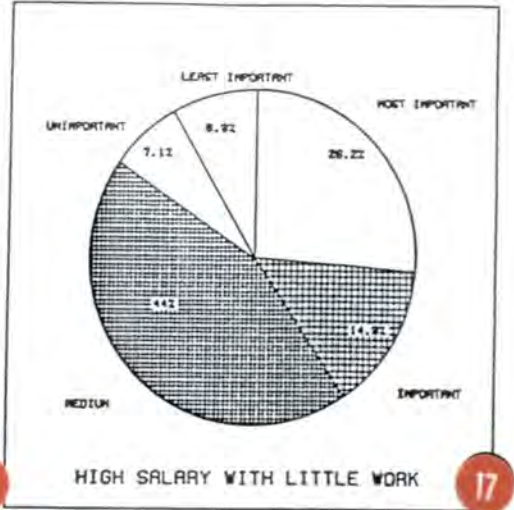
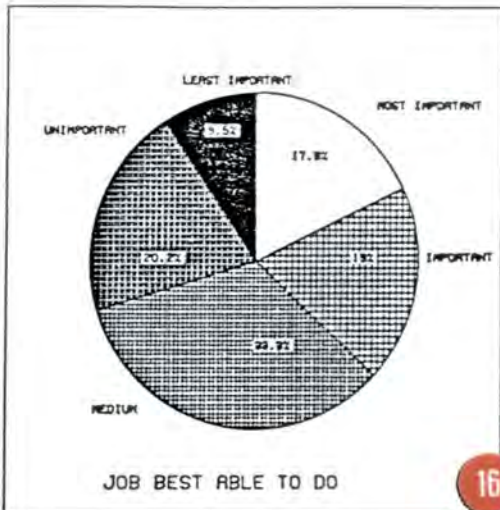
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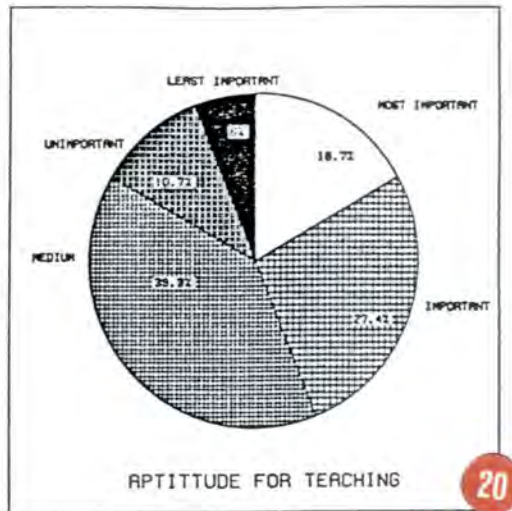


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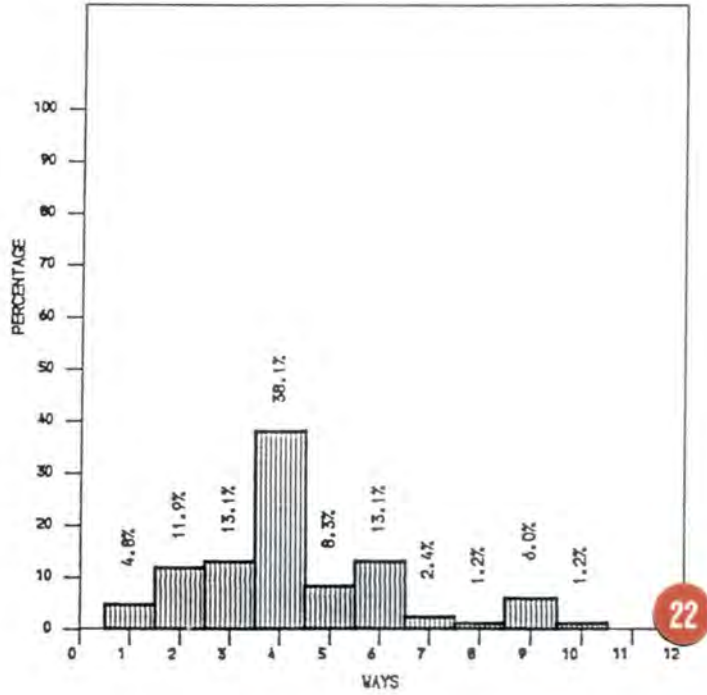


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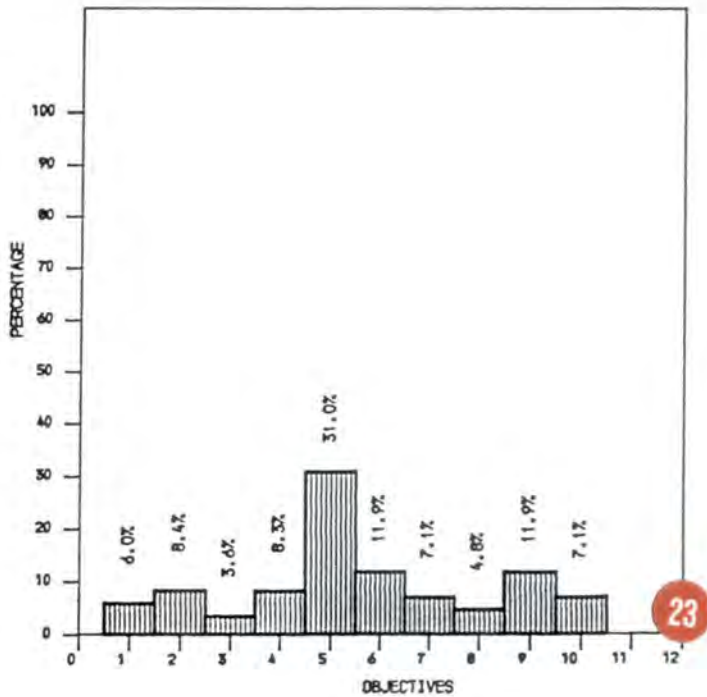


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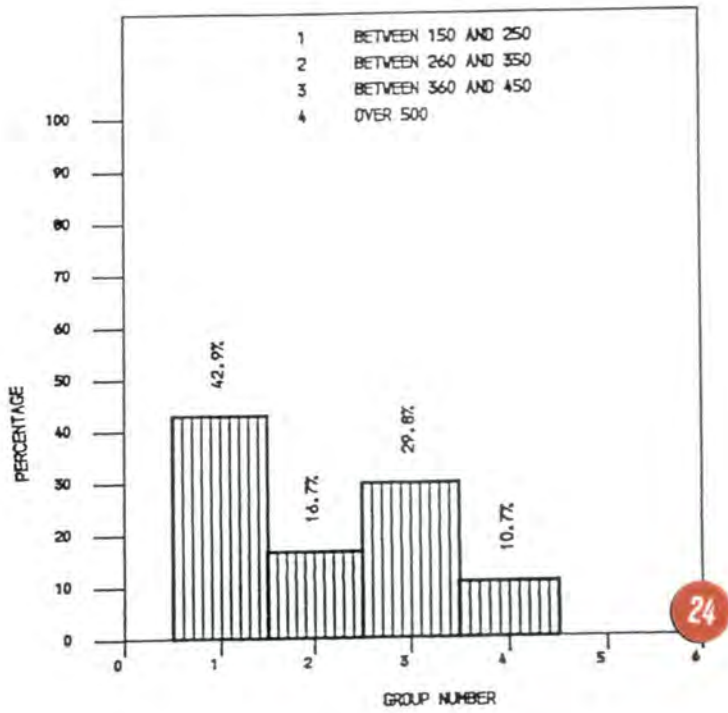
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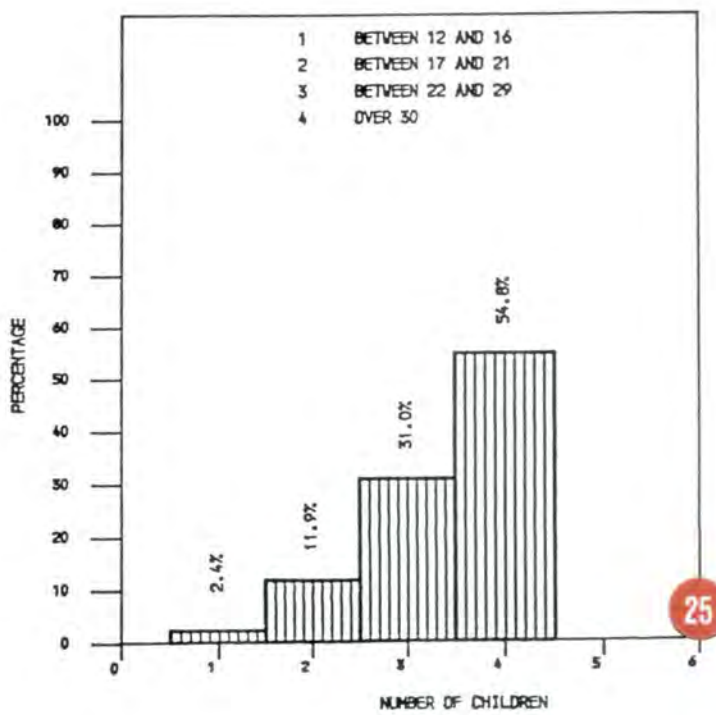
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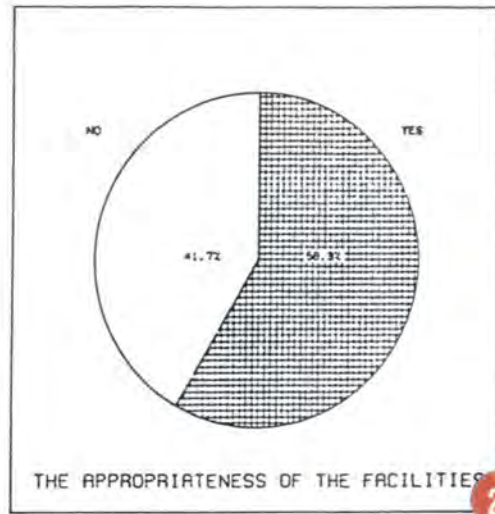


NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOL



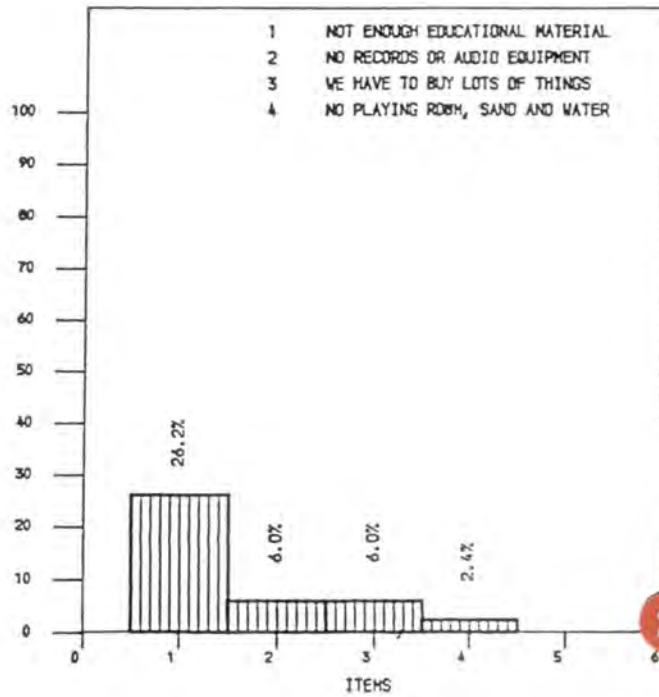
NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN CLASS





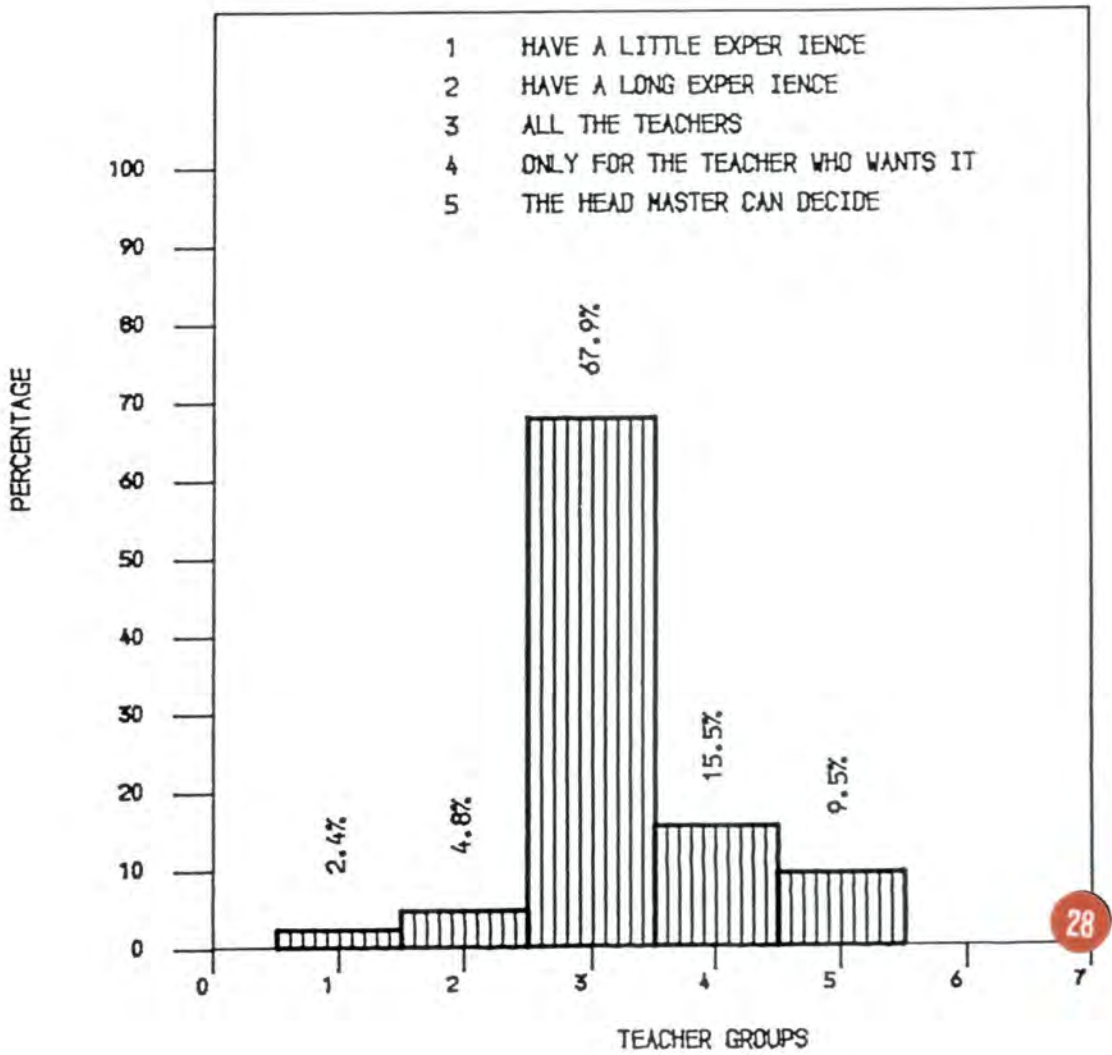
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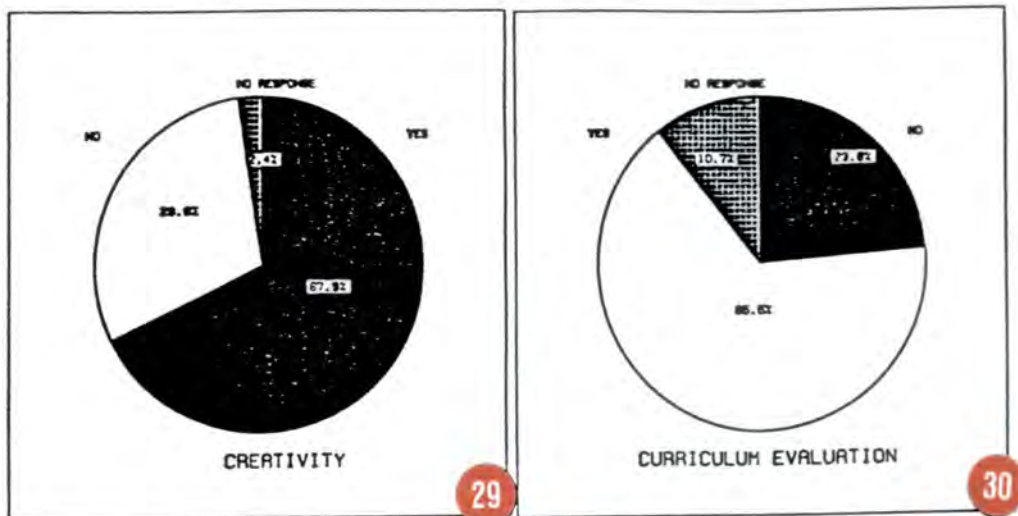
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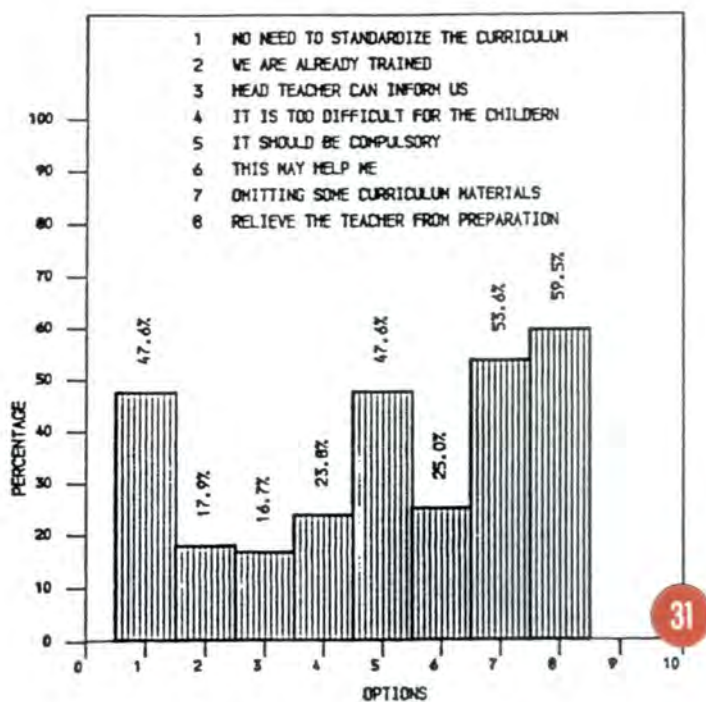
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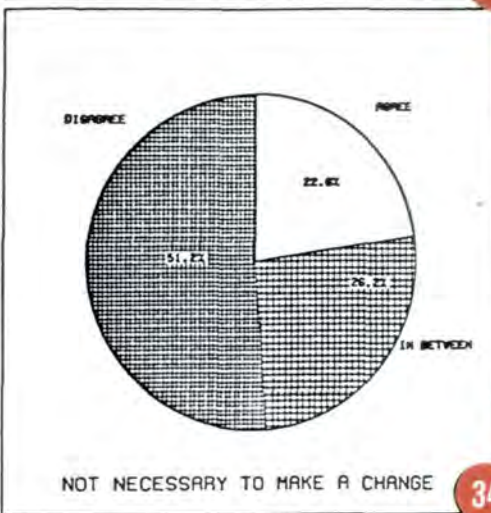
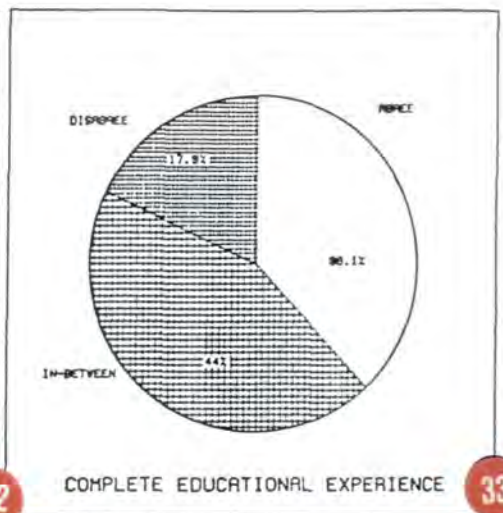
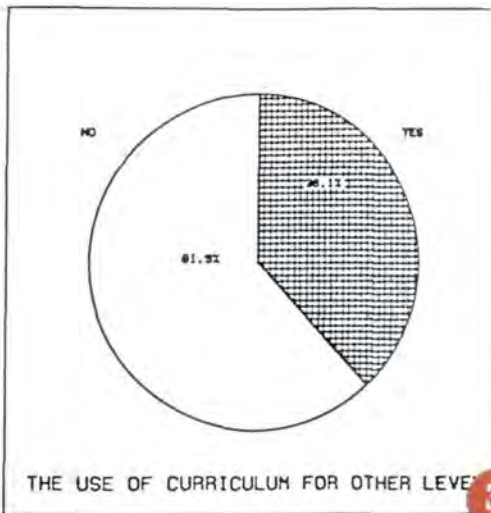
TEACHER GROUPS IN NEED OF HANDBOOK





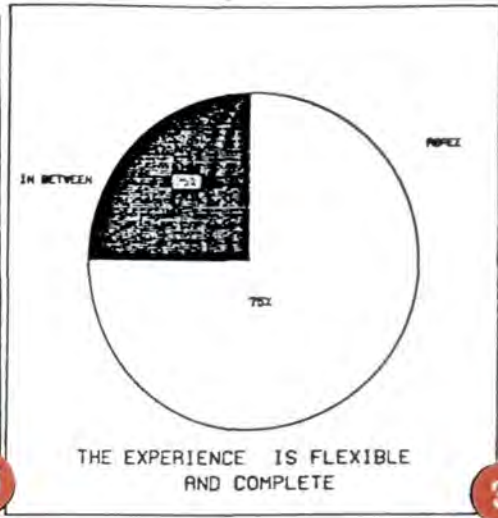
TEACHER OPTIONS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM



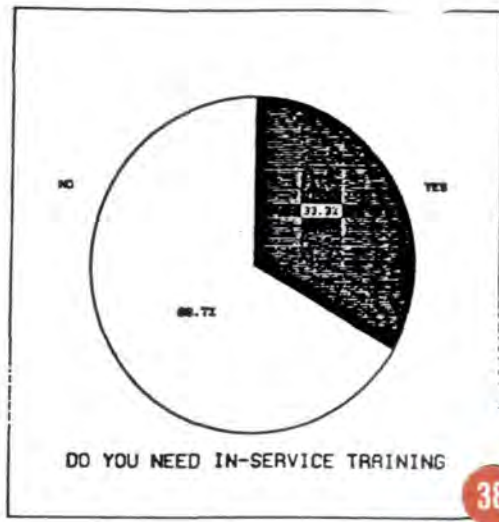




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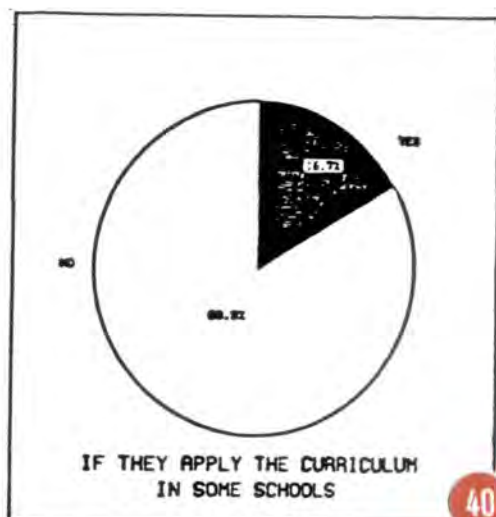
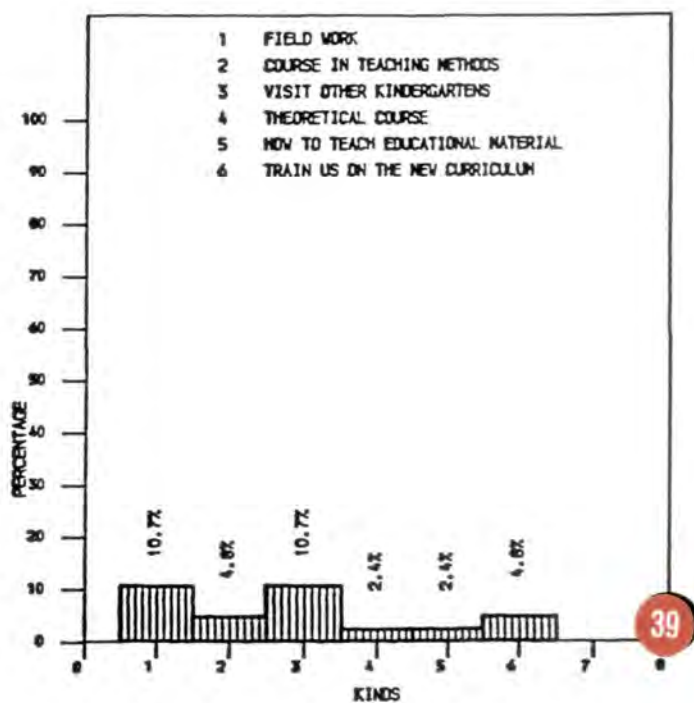


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KINDS OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING



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Chapter 8

CHAPTER EIGHT

Case Study

8.1 Introduction

The selection of the two kindergarten to be interviewed and studied in detail was to some extent influenced by the location and the age of the school. The headmistresses of the selected kindergartens (Osama bin Zaid and Al-Sanabil) were contacted by telephone. The motives and details of the proposed research were explained and a request was made for an interview. The two schools were willing to co-operate.

In the interview some specific questions dealing with points not covered by the questionnaire were asked. One hypothesis was that the inner city school, with richer and better educated parents, would provide a higher standard than the one in which these things were lacking.

Al-sanabil and Osama bin Zaid Kindergarten

8.2 Location and the Age of the Schools

Al-sanabil school which is located in Sabah AlSalim area, was opened in the school year 1982-1983. It is worth mentioning here that this area belongs to the government ministry which is called the National Housing Authority (see Chapter One) and which distributes these houses to low income people.

In contrast, Osama bin Zaid kindergarten is located in Alshaab area. This area is an old city and falls under the capital district. The school was opened twenty years ago in 1967.

8.3 Parents' Status

Most of the people living within Sabah Alsalim area are Bedouin, poorly educated and poor; polygamy is common and more than 6-10 children per woman is not unusual. One teacher revealed:

"It is common to have 3-5 children of the same age from the same father in this school."

This being the case, parents of the children coming to this school have little interest in their childrens' progress and how they are coping in the school. The main reason for the parents sending their children to school is to give the mothers a rest and to let their children play. They regard the kindergarten as a day care centre for their children. Parents come to school only on special occasions when they are invited, such as on open day or when there is a problem. One teacher revealed that a mother who was invited for an open day to discuss her child's progress was shocked when she saw her son dancing, singing, and his daily work such as painting, his good behaviour in the class and most of all his intelligence. The mother thought that her child was still a baby and could do nothing and the only reason that she sent him to school was to play in a safe place.

It was found that the lowest scores in intelligence, tests, vocabulary and scholastic attainment were recorded by children whose parents were the least concerned, while those children who obtained the highest scores came from families where the parents were most interested (1).

Parents of children who live in depressed areas are not usually anxious to help in the school. This may be due to former unhappy school experiences which result in these parents feeling uncomfortable in the school environment (2).

Teachers of Al Sanabil kindergarten are expected to know about the resources available to parents and to make every possible effort to create opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's education. Also teachers should prevent negative interaction between themselves and the parents in order to keep the parents coming to school and enquiring about their child, so they should handle their meetings with sensitivity and good judgment. It is generally agreed that the good school should become an extension of the child's home or family rather than a substitute for it, and therefore it should co-operate positively with the parents. If a lack of understanding and communication arises between the home and the school, children will probably perform poorly in their school life.

Osama bin Zaid kindergarten is situated in the old city, Alsaab. This area is full of old generation people who own their own houses, live in an extended family, who are rich and

most of whose children are well educated. As a result, the number of their children is smaller, resulting in fewer numbers of children in the schools located in the area.

One teacher said that they always encouraged mothers to visit the school and as a result they do feel free to visit the classroom whenever they like. In general, it does not seem that there is a lack of understanding between parents and teachers. It is obvious that the informal educational environment provided in the home can have more of an impact on the child's total educational development than the formal education system (3).

8.4 Number of Pupils

Table 21 shows the number of children in both schools with the number of the teachers and the classes:

Table 21:

The Number of Children, Teachers and Classes in Osama Bin Zaid and Alsanabil Kindergarten

| School Year | Children number | | Class number | | Teachers number | |
|-------------|-----------------|-----|--------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| | A.S | O.Z | A.S | O.Z | A.S | O.Z |
| 1982-83 | 222 | 200 | 12 | 10 | 18 | 20 |
| 1983-84 | 373 | 209 | 12 | 10 | 18 | 20 |
| 1984-85 | 438 | 224 | 12 | 10 | 18 | 20 |
| 1985-86 | 455 | 230 | 12 | 10 | 18 | 20 |
| 1986-87 | 441 | 248 | 12 | 10 | 18 | 20 |

From this table we can see that in Al Sanabil kindergarten for every teacher there are approximately 37 children to be taught and if the numbers continue to rise without more staff, the children, teachers and their education will suffer greatly,

especially if we consider the background of the children and that there is no other place for them to learn. In Osama bin Zaid kindergarten it can be seen that the pupil-teacher ratio is lower than the average, which is suggested should be 15 children per teacher (4). This means that they have an educational advantage over other students. It is the responsibility of the government to give the Kuwaiti children an equal educational service.

In Osama bin Zaid school each class has two teachers all the time helping each other to create better conditions and teach even more effectively. In Al sanabil kindergarten children never have the opportunity to experience this kind of teaching.

It is worth mentioning here that the class size differs from one school to another due to the movement of population towards certain residential areas, and the preference of parents to put their children in the nearest school.

8.5 School Time-Table

The first noticeable thing in both schools is that no bell is rung between each class which is beneficial for both the children and the teachers.

Teachers are expected to reach the school no later than 7:30 in the morning to prepare themselves for the open classroom "individual session" at 7.45 which lasts for 25 minutes. In this session teachers encourage children to look into the mirror to see if they are "neat" and ready for school; if not they help

them to be so by brushing their teeth if they did not do so at home, combing their hair or cleaning their shoes. After that the teacher spends a few moments with each child to reassure them that they will have a good time at school and asking them if they feel sad or happy and the reason for this feeling. By doing this the teacher gets to know each child's moods for the day so she can be aware of what might happen during the day.

At 8.10 a.m all the children go to the playground with their teachers to raise the flag and sing together; this lasts 30 minutes every day.

At 8.40 the first session of the daily four sessions begins which lasts for 40 minutes . The first two classes will have subject teaching which includes simple lessons in language, maths, science and religion. The second two classes will have free activities such as story time, gymnasium, going to the library, art class or the music class.

A wide variety of nutritious foods is eaten to encourage conversation and understanding of differences such as colour, texture, taste and shape.

8.6 Their Buildings and Classes

" The physical environment of the classroom is not the determining factor in children's learning, but it can enhance or limit learning "(5).

The only difference in the buildings of two schools is that when the government built Osama bin Zaid, as with many other

kindergarten 20 years ago, they planned for 10 classes in each school, while the new buildings each contain 12 classes. The school is ideal for a kindergarten in Kuwait. It was built by the government along with many similar schools. The school contains 12 classrooms all on the first floor for the safety of the children. Each one is 7x10 metres, every class has its own storage, toilet, and balcony. The floor area of the classes is carpeted except the balcony which is not because there spills are most likely to occur from the sand or the water stands so a hard, non-skid, easy to clean surface is best. The windows in the classroom are situated so that children can easily see out and are equipped with drapes for easy darkening of the room during film periods. Walls are painted in light shades to provide a pleasant background for children's paintings and teacher's work on the weekly theme. The classrooms have a large open carpet space where children come together so that new material and games can be explained and demonstrated for them.

The outdoor play area is located near the kindergarten restaurant but far enough from the classrooms so the children are not disturbed by the noise. It is also near the water fountain but there are no toilets for the children near the playground so they have to go to the classroom. All the playground equipment is well designed for children to climb, swing, stretch, slide, dig, and explore. Some teachers in both kindergarten have their own independent facilities and their own gardens. This shows the dedication of the teachers and their willingness to do the best they can for their classes.

The classrooms in the kindergarten are arranged in learning centres, interest centres, and corners. In each class there are five corners in which 7-8 children can sit for a certain time during the class and children move from centre to centre during the session. The teacher spends a certain time with each group trying to give as much attention as possible to all the children. However in the crowded classes whatever the teachers do they cannot fully achieve the class aims. One of the teachers working in Alsanabil kindergarten said:

" Every day a group of children is left behind without giving them enough attention or helping them the way the teachers wish."

Once again it is the crowded classes that retard the educational progress of the children. It is up to the government to build more schools in these particular areas because they have more children than any other areas in Kuwait, to open new classes in the same kindergarten and to increase the number of teachers.

8.7 Teachers' Qualifications

Al Sanabil kindergarten has 18 teachers holding the following qualifications;

Table 22:

Teachers' Qualifications at Al-Sanabil Kindergarten

| Number of Teachers | Kind of Qualification |
|--------------------|--|
| 2 | Masters degree in Philosophy and Psychology. |
| 6 | University degree but no one with a specialist degree in kindergarten studies. |
| 2 | Secondary school graduation. |
| 8 | Diploma in Education with kindergarten major. |

From the questionnaire it was possible to identify all the teachers who had graduated after 1977. Further questions revealed that 10 teachers had graduated between 1983 and 1986. This being the case, it is essential that these teachers should devote considerable time to adjusting to their job. Also the other teachers should help them from their knowledge. The children, particularly those from a background of inadequate knowledge will suffer from this situation. It is again the government's responsibility not to employ the newly graduated teachers in a crowded, new school.

In Osama bin Zaid kindergarten the teachers all held the Diploma Degree in Education with a kindergarten major. About 12 teachers of the school had had more than six years experience of working with young children .

8.8 Educational material in the schools

Curriculum content is affected by the selection and utilization of materials and equipment, so the preschool classroom needs to have a wide variety of materials. Because of the importance of the educational equipment, the government has supplied the kindergarten with all the essential material which can help the teachers in their classes. Even so the material is not always adequate and some teachers need to buy further equipment themselves. In Al Sanabil school there is no photocopier for the teachers to make copies of educational pictures or other material, they have to go to one of the schools nearby.

8.9 Conclusions

The analysis of the case study suggests that Osama Bin Zaid kindergarten school enjoys better facilities than Al-Sanabil kindergarten. This may be explained by the fact that the Osama Bin Zaid school is older and is situated in an old city where the rich people with a smaller number of children live. Consequently, their children are better cared for than those of the Al-Sanabil school which is situated in a new area where poor people mostly live.

The population explosion in Sabah Alsalim where the Bedouin people live has meant that the Al-Sanabil kindergarten is very overcrowded. There are currently about 37 children to one teacher, compared to 15-17 children to one teacher in Osama Bin Zaid school. This means that teachers in Al-Sanabil may be overworked. This may result in reduced efficiency and productivity. In turn, the child may be less well looked after. Consequently, the children may lack some enrichment in both physical fitness and intellectual knowledge. The following chapter will analyse the problems of this study and suggest solutions.

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Chapter 9

CHAPTER NINE

Problems and Eventual Solutions

Before any solution can be suggested, the relevant problems need to be systematically analysed. This section is a synthesis of the previous chapters and deals with further significant points.

The curriculum means the educational experiences which are presented to children in school. Planning the development of experiences for young children is a complex task. In Kuwait the Kindergarten Department in the Ministry of Education is making a great effort to improve the curriculum to make it more appropriate for Kuwaiti children.

There are those who still consider that a "curriculum", either written or implicit, is inappropriate during these early stages of education. In this study we are trying to determine whether or not Kuwaiti kindergarten need a written curriculum for the teachers to follow, and the reasons for the importance of such a curriculum are discussed. Our questionnaires were distributed to nine schools in Kuwait with 84 teachers. We did consider the location and whether the kindergarten had introduced the new curriculum. For the background information teachers were asked whether they were parents or not, their age group, and the year of completing their study (see Figures 3, 4 and 8 in page no 140, 141, and 143).

9.1 The Teaching Career

The goal of education in general is the formation of understanding, judgement, wisdom, foresight and culture. As far as kindergarten education is concerned this picture of education fits appropriately. Consequently the objectives of kindergarten education include a programme for the development of the teachers themselves as responsible women who care for the new generation and who will serve their society through a high standards of teaching.

9.1.1 Teaching

"Teaching is one of the jobs where you have the opportunity to choose how you are going to do things. In your classroom you are free to experiment with new ideas which may be the result of research findings and you are free to use your own judgement within a framework about how you teach various subjects. In another words it is the kind of job where the responsibility for the work you do is left to you"(1).

The choice of a profession is without doubt a very serious matter which deserves careful consideration. Before being committed to the arduous course of training to become a fully trained and qualified teacher, it is imperative that the student should fully understand what this will involve for her. Unfortunately in most cases, especially with regard to kindergarten teaching, students' decisions seem very haphazard and may not be their own. They make their decision because being a teacher at kindergarten means fewer working hours than teaching in the secondary stages of education (see Figures 12, 13

in page 145). The working hours for the teachers in kindergarten extend from 7.45 a.m to 12.30 p.m while secondary school teachers normally have to stay at school until 2.30 p.m. The salary paid by the Ministry of Education is based on the degree the teacher holds irrespective of the stage at which she is working (see Figure 17 in page 146).

In addition, if the student has failed to obtain grades to qualify for university she may choose the teaching institute as a quick way to graduate leading to an occupation where the salary is high and the work is not demanding, thus gratifying her desire of improving herself in society(see Figure 18 p.146). Non-motivated students who are simply looking for a degree may find teaching to their best advantage. Also, some students are pushed by their families (see Figure 14 p.145) who encourage their daughters to proceed to higher education and at the same time insist that they study in a college where there are no boys attending the same classes(see Figure 15 p.145),regardless of the wishes of the young women themselves. This explains why some teachers have no clear aptitude for teaching and little determination to work well (see Figures 16 and 19 in page 146,20 and 21 page 147). Both teachers and children suffer as a result.

The students should not really be blamed. Comparatively, little about kindergarten teaching is taught in secondary school. While considerable efforts are devoted to the study of Mathematics, Physics, Science, History and Geography...etc, students usually arrive at the teacher training college with

little or no experience of communicating with young children and teaching them. This deficiency is exacerbated by the luxurious life-style of the students who do not even have much communication with their own brothers and sisters or even with their own children, as they leave them with baby-sitters while they are busy studying and socialising. Also the curriculum offered at the secondary school stage is inadequate, lacking relevant topics such as a study of children and parents, communication, drawing and sport which would be very valuable to those wishing to become teachers of young children. This is made worse by the lack of careers information related to the teaching profession (lectures, seminars, films, visits) which would enable students to develop an interest in the profession. Similar information dealing with other professions should also be provided in order to develop students' willingness to know more about their eventual future careers. The example of some comprehensive schools in England is commendable. Students at the age of fourteen are asked to spend a week in a professional office or organisation of their choice representing their interest in the corresponding profession. This option helps the student to obtain a clear image of his or her future profession and if he/she finds he is not interested he can consult his classmates for information about other careers.

It is the responsibility of each student to attempt to learn about the kindergarten world and develop an interest in it before entering the teaching institute. However the students

still need to be motivated and given preliminary information on the subject. This will increase their curiosity and encourage them to take personal steps by contacting the headmistress of the kindergarten or even the teachers to know more about the profession. They can also do some preparation while they are still at school by reading about child psychology and learning what might interest the children and how they can communicate more easily with them. If possible the student should work with children in the summer clubs or childrens' gardens which the government opens every year for children to spend time playing and learning together.

Among the desirable personality characteristics for individuals who wish to work in the preschool field are pleasure and interest in working with young children, flexible personality, concern for the welfare of others regardless of ethnic or religious differences or economic status, good health, enthusiasm, verbal facility, warmth, sense of humour, imagination, responsibility, and patience. In addition to these important personal qualities, the preschool teacher should have a good foundation in general education as a basis for an appropriate professional curriculum, including a knowledge of human growth and development, child nutrition and health care, social problems, mental health, community relations and family relationships. The prospective teacher should have experience of observing and recording child behaviour. Her specialization should include studying and using modern methods and teaching

materials suitable for the preschool curriculum, including music, rhythmical activities, creative art experiences, children's literature, physical education, science and mathematics, and social studies. Her preparation should also include experiences in holding meetings with parents concerning the problems and the development of children, school aims and policies. Unmotivated teachers wish to change their job for various reasons of which boredom is one (see Figures 10 and 11 page 144). Teachers who do not like working with children and do not have a motive to do so, never work efficiently.

9.2 Class Size:

The maximum size of groups and the ratio of staff to pupils are both generally agreed to be age-related: the younger the children, the smaller the size of groups and the higher the staff / pupil ratio (2). It is recommended that the number of children in a group never rises above 15 per teacher in any one class (3).

From the questionnaire we distributed to the schools we found that the total number of children in almost all the schools is appropriate to the size of the schools and the playgrounds. However, as far as individual classes are concerned 54% of the schools have more than 30 children in each class. The teachers' responses showed that the minimum size of their classes was 36-40 children (see Figures 24, 25 page 149). The average number of

teachers is 1.5 teachers per class of 36-40 children. Thus for three classes containing 90-120 children altogether there are only three teachers, one for 30 children. With such large classes and with lessons of 40 minutes duration three or four times a day, the quality of the teaching is bound to be impaired.

The sheer joy of a shared experience helps to reinforce a positive and happy relationships between teacher and child. Because of the small teacher/child ratio in the kindergarten the frequent spontaneous outings to visit different places is more possible than with groups of older children. The safety of children is a major responsibility and with the three to five year olds one would expect one adult to accompany five children, with one adult for each group of ten children if they are six year old.

During the study, an interview was carried out with Dr. Diane Coulopoulos, a professor of Psychology in Simmons College at Boston, who visited Kuwaiti kindergarten as part of her research. She noted:

" The classes are too crowded for the children to relax and learn; this decreases the immediate contact between the teacher and the child".

Because, during the early years, much of the child's opinion of himself will be determined by his relationship with friends and teachers, it is essential to have small classes in kindergarten. Due to the fact that many classes in Kuwaiti kindergarten are oversized there is little emotional relationship between teacher and child, and an important factor

in promoting growth and learning is lost. The teacher needs to enjoy being with the children, respecting each child and his special uniqueness. She needs to be able to accept each child, neither exaggerating nor ignoring his weaknesses, nor overstressing his strengths. She lets the child know these feelings indirectly by her tone of voice, her facial expression and her words. She must be alert to sense each child's need of her and respond to that need by giving herself willingly and freely. Her face, her movements and her actions show her feeling towards the children. With classes too crowded to control and with one teacher for more than 30 children, it is not possible for the Kuwaiti teacher to form this positive relationship with each child in her class.

The number of pupils supervised by one teacher has much to do with the safety of the children. When the teacher has no more than fifteen three or four-year-old children during her forty-minute session, she will find it possible to have a few minutes of intimate rapport with each child. She can keep each child reminded of her love and appreciation for him as an individual. She can give him a security that makes him feel his self-importance, keep him in sympathy with her suggestions for his safety, and help him to keep himself safe. But when that same teacher has more than fifteen children in her class she may no longer be able to give each child the time and attention he needs.

Whenever a new activity is introduced in a preschool class, it is presented to a few children at a time. In this way, teachers can be sure of what each child has learned. This method takes more time at first, but it is safer and saves time over a period of weeks. The children learn the right way of carrying out the activity and have no poor habits to correct later (4).

In order to best decrease the teacher / child ratio and increase the teacher / child relationship it is recommended that every class should have two teachers working together. The new curriculum is based on allowing two teachers to teach in the same class, to improve the teaching process and to enable the teachers to have more contact with the children, limiting the teacher / child ratio to 1:15.

9.3 Teachers' Qualifications:

There can be seen to be some justification for regarding with suspicion the widely-held view that training and qualifications of persons entrusted with the care of very young children need not be as extensive and intensive as is generally considered necessary where older children are concerned. On the contrary they may need to be more so (5).

Professor Halsey in 1972 showed that 'intelligence', as measured by intelligence tests, can be increased significantly as a result of pre-school education. This being so, no one can deny the importance of the proper provision of preschool education,

'proper provision' being a blanket term which should take account of the needs of the 'whole child' and its total environment. This implies the need for a highly-qualified, well trained body of teachers (6).

Jessie Stanton once wrote a humorous report of the qualifications which should be required of every student who intends teaching young children:-

"She should have a fair education, by this I mean she should have a doctor's degree in psychology and medicine. Sociology as a background is advisable. She should be experienced carpenter, mason, mechanic, plumber, and a thoroughly trained musician and poet. At least five years practical experience in each of these branches is essential" (7).

Once the secondary school cycle in Kuwait is over, students who pass the entrance test enter the teaching institute facing a variety of learning processes. As training comes before the professional life, the curriculum is intended to play an important role. It consists of guiding students in the acquisition of a wide range of general and technical knowledge, skills and judgement as a means to stimulate and enrich personal, social and professional growth during and after the training.

The study of teaching institute programmes shows that the content of an early childhood education curriculum embodies the following knowledge:-

(1) General Knowledge

1. Religion: Islamic Culture, Social Integration in Islam,

Worship which deals with children.

2. Language: Reading and Precise, Foreign Languages, Library and research, Arabic Language, Dictation and Handwriting.
3. Mathematics and Science: physics, Principles of Mathematics, Algebraic Formulae, Biology.
4. Social Science: Social Development, Introduction to Education, World Contemporary Problems, Social Change in the Arabic World.
5. History of Kindergarten
6. Music, Art, Sports, Health Education, Free activities.

(2) Professional Knowledge

1. Psychology: Developmental Psychology, Teaching Strategies, Educational Psychology, Art Education, Psychology of Individual Differences, Psychology of language and Children's Literature.
2. Educational Material: Teaching Aids, Art Education.
3. Children's Study: Child Health and Nutrition, Kindergarten Education, Curriculum and Methods of Teaching in Kindergarten.
4. Practical Education by visiting and teaching in different kindergartens.

Although this curriculum seems to have many fundamental subjects, it lacks essential topics such as the co-operation with parents and teaching the disadvantaged child. Such topics even when tackled, do not always include the expected content.

Teachers graduating from teaching institutions have enough information to make them fully qualified teachers if they have the motive to be one. But 41.7% of the teachers working in our sample schools do not hold the Diploma of a Teaching Institute. It is a mistaken policy to put them in a sensitive place such as a kindergarten to work with young children who need to form the basis of their future information and of their lives from teachers whom they trust (see Figure 5 p. 141). Even those teachers who hold the Diploma do not all specialise in early childhood education (see Figure 9 p. 143). It appears that 51.2% of the teachers had no training experience in early childhood teaching (see Figures 6 and 7 p. 142). A total of 38.1% of the teachers find it acceptable to teach children under six years of age a curriculum appropriate to other educational levels. This is because they do not know what else to do with their classes.

It is not only that a high percentage of the teachers are not fully qualified, but also many of the Teaching Certificate holders are as ineffective as the ones with low qualifications. Owing to the teaching methods in the teaching institutions which are largely based on lectures with dictation students rely extensively on the teacher's prescriptions. Consequently, the student's capacity for creativity and for self-learning is very limited. Other methods of teaching are completely non-existent and should be introduced (e.g. discussions, seminars, more involvement in the library and more research). Reading should not be limited to those books the institute supplies the student

with at the beginning of each course. Students should be encouraged to read widely and to explore the literature of the subject for themselves.

So, teachers at the teaching institutes should have as well as understanding of the subject they teach, the ability to help the trainee teachers to develop their intellectual and vocational knowledge in a simple and intelligent way.

It is worth noting here that in the academic year 1984/85 the number of kindergarten teachers reached 1,580 including 1,207 Kuwaiti teachers and 373 non-Kuwaiti. Table 23 shows the varieties of qualification the teachers held.

Table 23

Teachers' Nationality and Qualifications

| Qualification | Kuwaiti | Non-Kuwaiti |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Old teachers institute | 204 | 221 |
| Two years deploma | 15 | 19 |
| Diploma in literature or Science | 92 | — |
| Diploma in kindergarten | 441 | 1 |
| University degree in psychology | 374 | 1 |
| University degree in Arabic language | 4 | — |
| Social studies | 47 | 1 |
| Geography | 16 | 3 |
| History | 11 | 4 |
| Business | 2 | 2 |
| Secondary school | 1 | 121 |
| Total | 1207 | 373 |

Source:

Al-Figgi, H. 1986. "The Situation of the Kuwaiti Child before Primary School". An Institute for Arabic Child Development. p.24.

In our questionnaire which included 9 schools 21.4% of the teachers were non-Kuwaiti (see Figures 1 and 2 p.140). This makes it more difficult for the child to learn the language bearing in mind the different accents and vocabulary of non Kuwaiti teachers and the very strict discipline which they enforce.

9.4 In-Service Training

Surrey Educational Research Association defined in-service training as follows:-

"In-service training is taken to include all those courses and activities in which a serving teacher may participate for the purpose of extending his professional knowledge, interest or skill (9)".

The importance of training for pre-school teachers can be traced to Froebel, the McMillan sisters and Maria Montessori. They all stressed the importance of training courses, in order to update the teachers' knowledge, stimulate their interests and develop their pedagogical skills. This is particularly important because preschool education seems to be a vital in a child's development. It is the foundation in which a child's life and career is built. If the child is given an inadequate education at this stage, he may be disadvantaged throughout his entire life. The provision of adequate education and training of teachers of this stage is of the utmost importance.

Indeed, one can argue that it is the teacher who 'moulds' a child's career, rather than the parents. For example, teachers have the responsibility to monitor and keep records of

childrens' psychological behaviour. Based on records of children's behavioural patterns and reinforced by their education, training and practical experience, teachers can increase their understanding of children's behaviour and thus learn more efficient and effective ways working and coping with children in kindergarten schools. By doing so, teachers will be better able to increase awareness of the characteristics of children at particular age levels and to use their awareness as a basis for improving the curriculum for the children (10).

Therefore, one can say that teachers' skills, attitudes, and professionalism are probably the most important determinants of the quality and standard of education. We maintain that teachers have an important role to play in promoting and improving high quality in our society.

This means that great importance must be attached to in-service training. In Kuwait for instance, many of the teachers were trained some 10 years ago. Others received little or no professional training. Inded, in some cases, teachers were trained in areas not related to their jobs. Their practices are now not only out-of-date and should be changed but also a regular in-service training must be provided for all the teachers.

From the questionnaire results it appears that only 33.3% of the teachers feel the need for some form of in-service training (see Figure 38 p.154 and Figure 39 p.155), while Figures 6 and 7 in page 142 show that 51.2% of the teachers have not received

any kind of kindergarten training and do not wish to have it. The remaining 16.9% of the teachers were teaching other levels of curriculum (see Figure 32 page 153).

Because of the importance of in-service training the Department of Education provided an in-service training programme starting from the school year 1982/1983. It was intended to prepare the trainees professionally, theoretically and educationally. The aims of these in-service courses were to train the teachers in kindergarten educational experiences covering the following:

1. The general aims of Kuwaiti kindergarten.
2. Translating the aims into behavioural activities.
3. The educational experiences and their distribution throughout the three age groups of the kindergarten.
4. How to structure these educational experiences including:
 - * The basis on which they should be built.
 - * How to control the experiences.
 - * A consideration of the customs, values, and the skills through which these experiences should develop.
 - * Evaluation of these experiences.
5. The Planning ,preparing and working on the experience.

These in-service programmes extend for five weeks, three days of each week. In the morning the trainees visit a particular kindergarten and they discuss the theoretical parts in the evening. The trainees are: headmasters, headteachers; the new graduate teachers and teachers holding a university degree with less than three years experience.

Although in-service training is important, it is nevertheless not the only technique by which teachers can be trained. Television programmes, packaged programmes (e.g. taped lectures, documentaries..etc) can also be effectively used to disseminate information. It is not, however, suggested here that television and or other packaged programmes should replace in-service training. The principal objective should be to use these other methods to complement in-service training so that maximum benefits can be achieved (11).

9.5 Curriculum and Contents:

An important component in the process of learning is the meaning attached to curriculum as a general term.

"Curriculum is all of the specific features of a master teaching plan that have been chosen by a particular teacher for his or her classroom. Curricula may vary wildly from school to school, but each curriculum reflects the skills, tasks, and behaviour that a school has decided are important for children to acquire" (12).

The definition of curriculum which perhaps best fits the kindergarten is:-

"The number of aspects of school policy and activity where there is a strong inter-relationship between all these aspects. For the young child, language, art, movement and physical activity, music and mathematics are indivisible ways of exploring his environment and developing emotionally, socially, physically, and intellectually" (13).

The above definitions appear to suggest that although curriculum may differ from one kindergarten school to another, it

is always necessary to have thorough planning, organisation and control aimed at helping children to enrich their knowledge, stimulate their thoughts, develop their practical skills and improve their cultural, social, and physical growth. This means that there must be a match between children's needs and what they are taught. In turn, this implies that teachers must monitor, and record, as well as take mental note of children's behaviour and potential. The curriculum can then be formulated to explore the children's potential and promote their educational development. Hence, it is argued that:

"The more carefully a teacher plans, the more progress children make"(14).

Teachers in Kuwaiti Kindergarten often find themselves responsible for designing effective curricula, drawing up a recording and reporting system, and formulating the daily plans bearing in mind the unique needs of children and the objectives and goals of the kindergarten. All this could be accomplished if all the teachers working in the kindergarten were fully qualified. But a large proportion of the teachers hold various degrees and some half of them have never had any training for the area in which they are working (see Figures 5,6, and 9 in pages 141, 142, 143). In these circumstances the Curriculum Research Center undertook the responsibility of designing a curriculum which all kindergarten teachers could follow if they wished.

In the absence of a national curriculum, the teachers should know how to select opportunities for the children's

learning and how to modify and adjust the plans they are making. They should be able to decide on general and individual goals for the programme and be able to use these goals to direct the activities appropriate for the children, the programme and their own values.

It is clear that the teachers who know what it is they wish to accomplish and how they will do it are much more successful than those who have only a vague idea of what they wish to do and why.

An attempt has been made out to investigate the teachers' opinions concerning the suitability and quality of the new curricula for the improvement of teaching young children. In our study, respondents were asked to select one or more of the eight options provided in the questions (see Figure 28 p.151). The majority of the teachers (59.5%) considered that the introduction of this curriculum could make their teaching more effective. However, (47.6%) of the respondents were opposed to standardising the curriculum. Consequently less than half of the teachers (47.6%) supported the compulsory introduction of the curriculum into the kindergarten.

A related investigation was conducted to examine the teachers' views as to which teachers would be most benefitted by the introduction of the handbook. Interestingly, (67.9%) of the teachers supported the use of the handbook for all teachers without exception (see Figure 31 p.152).

As far as the evaluation of the curriculum is concerned, 85.5% of the teachers find it helpful to evaluate the curriculum twice a year in order to correct any existing deficiencies (see Figure 30 p.152).

The teachers in the sample were asked about the proposed unification of the curriculum. 22.6% of the teachers did not feel it necessary to change the current curriculum while 26.2% of them had no real preference (see Figure 34 p.153).

Another question sought to discover whether the teachers thought that the new curriculum provided a complete educational experience for the children or whether it was just a set of guidelines issued by the Department of Education to help the unqualified teachers. Only 38.1% of the teachers agreed that it was a good complete educational experience while 61.9% of the teachers disagreed or made no response (see Figure 33 p.153). A similar question was included concerning the flexibility of the experiences; 75% of the teachers reported positively (see Figure 37 p.154).

Many teachers were happy to see the new curricula applied in Kuwaiti kindergarten because they believed that it would help the teachers (see Figure 36 p.154).

9.6 The Teachers Role in the Kindergarten

"The ability and attitude of the teacher appear to be the most important factors in the success of an integrated programme" (15).

Teachers are the essential resource in any school. Their professionalism, capability and attitude are factors contributing to efficient and effective kindergarten programmes. There are common characteristics that can be identified among kindergarten teachers.

First, there is an understanding of the concept of the kindergarten curriculum. Second, the best of the kindergarten teachers have been trained to understand and record children's behaviour, identify children's needs, strengths and weaknesses, and design short- and, medium-, and long-term programmes to solve the problems of the children. Third, preschool teachers tend to have patience to deal and cope with an individual child's behaviour, as well as to develop a close relationship with these children to communicate or interact effectively with them. Fourth, most teachers do recognise the important role of parents in the upbringing of every child.

The question which sought to establish what role the teachers themselves thought they should play in developing children in their kindergarten schools, generated a variety of answers. Whereas some said their role was to prepare the children for formal primary school education, to teach the child discipline, and to socialise with the children; others believed that their role was to teach them how to play with toys, teach them Arabic language and Islamic religion, culture, customs and traditions. A few, however, stated that their role was to ensure that the pupils acquired a sound background knowledge and to help them

grow physically healthy. The responses showed that teachers had no opinions on such important values as:-

1. Promoting the emotional development of children by providing opportunities for them to talk freely.
2. The place of creativity and playing where the child can create his own plan for the day or the class with the support and encouragement of his teacher. (See Figures 22 and 23 p.148).

This may be related to the fact that some of the teachers lack professional and adequate training. There is, therefore, an urgent need to unify the school curriculum for all kindergarten teachers while stressing the right of all teachers to use the curriculum creatively in ways which they feels beneficial for a particular class. In (Figure 29 p.152) 29.8% of the teachers did not like the idea of a uniform curriculum because they thought it would limit their freedom to introduce the children of the material in the handbook. It is worth mentioning here that the Education Department leaves the teachers free to decide whether or not to adopt the suggested plan. In one of the questions teachers were asked their opinion about the aims of the kindergarten and whether it is possible to specify precise aims from them. The main objective was to assess the teachers' knowledge of the aims of the curricular aims and determine whether they had specific aims for their class or whether they simply followed the general aims for the kindergarten.

It appears that 44.3% of the teachers find it difficult to separate specific aims from the general ones. This again indicates an urgent need for the Kuwaiti kindergarten school to be provided with new curricula in which there are set out both the general and specific aims for these teachers to follow.

It is clear that attitudes will be crucial in deciding whether or not the new curricula are accepted in the Kuwaiti kindergarten. This factor was tested, and the results show that only 16.7% of the total teachers would leave the school if the curriculum was made compulsory. (see Figure 40 p.155).

9.7 Environment and Educational Material

The environment in which a child lives, studies and plays, has a crucial role in his or her development. H. Musinger, states categorically that:-

"It has long been recognised that the psychological influence of the environment on the behavior and development of the child is extremely important"(16).

A good environment helps parents and teachers to look after the children well. An aesthetically decorated classroom, for example, tends to keep both the children and their teachers happy and to maximise their giving and taking from each other. The striking feature when entering a Kuwaiti kindergarten class is the crowded, teacher-made material hanging on the wall designed to impress the children and the visitors. This has been a point of criticism of both the teachers and the kindergarten by Dr.

Diane Coulopoulous who revealed:-

"So much material in the class does not mean that the teacher can have enough time to describe them all to the children keeping in mind that these materials should be changed every week when a new experience is introduced. If the teacher thinks that she has the time to do so, she does not know what she is doing".

In our questionnaire, teachers were asked whether the facilities and educational material in their schools were sufficient. not. Only 58.3% of the teacher felt that they had all the material they needed and further enquiry showed that the majority of these were concentrated in the older schools. 41.7% of the teachers complained about the inappropriateness of the facilities in their classes. The main deficiencies which they identified were; lack of appropriate educational material, lack of audio equipment and records and no sand or water for the children to play with. Some teachers added that they were driven to buy materials from their own money (see Figures 26 and 27 p.150).

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Chapter 10

CHAPTER TEN
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

10.1 Summary

This study is specifically concerned with the development of kindergarten education in Kuwait and the determination of the right curriculum to be followed by teachers in Kuwaiti kindergarten. A general view on Kuwait is given in Chapter Two which looks at the past and present economic situation in Kuwait. Firstly, general information on Kuwait and its historical background is provided. Then the pre-oil era which encompasses different occupations is treated. Among the occupations discussed are trading, pearl-diving and boat-building. Next, the British and Kuwait Treaty of 1899 is considered. In the context of the historical past of Kuwait, we turn our attention to modern Kuwait. In modern Kuwait, we first examine the agricultural sector. Health services and education are then discussed. Finally, the housing system, and the Kuwaiti social setting are examined.

The development of education in Kuwait and its objectives are central to the discussions in Chapter Three. Firstly, we provide the historical background of the development of education in Kuwait. Armed with this, the Government's involvement in education since 1912 is examined. We also felt that it was important to discuss the education of girls in our society.

In search for a better educational system in Kuwait, Adrian Valance was commissioned to undertake a detailed survey of the educational system in Kuwait and provide a report. This is briefly discussed. Next, the early forms of education in Kuwait are presented. The important issues discussed under 'Modern education in Kuwait from 1956 to the present day' are: compulsory education and its objectives, adult education, school buildings, schools' curricula and the stages in the modern Kuwaiti system up to the highest educational stage in Kuwait, which is the university.

In pursuit of both of our major research objectives, this dissertation gives in Chapter Four a general review of the literature on preschool education and the concept and the meaning of preschool education are explored. Kindergarten, nurseries, and day-care centres are among the preschools examined in this section. Next, the role of preschool education in the development of children is discussed. Further, we examine the importance of the preschool curriculum.

Kindergarten education in Kuwait is discussed in Chapter Five. Firstly, we examine the kindergarten educational system in general. This involves a close inspection of the development of kindergarten, including the attendant objectives. Next, we explore the 'development of kindergarten' objectives and curriculum in Kuwait. After a careful consideration, five Arab countries were selected for study. They are: Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Libya, and Morocco. An overall view was taken of all Arabic countries kindergarten including Kuwait.

Chapter Seven is concerned with the methodology used for the research. Firstly, the methods of gathering data are outlined. Three main methods were used. They were literature review, personal interview and case study. Next, we outline the field work procedure. The preparation of the data collected, and the methods of analysing the data are then explained. The graphs and a report of the findings of the structured questionnaire is also given in Chapter Seven.

Our field study is divided into two. The first part is a structured questionnaire, the second is a case study. The rationale is to reinforce our structured questionnaire findings by the results of the case study. Consequently, Chapter Eight presents the case study to exhibit the difference between two kindergartens in Kuwait. Some of the problems of this research are identified and possible solutions suggested. These are presented in Chapter Nine. Finally, Chapter Ten summarises the overall study and draws conclusions based on the literature review and the research findings.

10.2 Conclusions

It is clear from the overall review that Kuwait has had a remarkable history of nation-building. Compared with other developing countries, Kuwait appears to have achieved in a generation what has taken other countries centuries to accomplish. This may be ascribed to Kuwait's tightly-knitted culture and values which have been traditionally preserved and

maintained. Kuwait's political structure has also been stable. This has enabled it to plan ahead without disruption, thus accelerating its political, cultural and economic advancement.

There has also been a noticeable advancement in the education sector. This is manifest in the rapid progress made in both higher (e.g. university) and lower (e.g. secondary, intermediate, primary and even kindergarten) educational institutions. The realisation of the important role of women in Kuwait society is also worthy of note. Since the opening of Kuwait University in 1966, the number of female students has doubled. Women now occupy some important positions in both the private and public sectors of the economy. In our study the role of Kuwaiti women is of special importance because without women education in general and kindergartens in particular would never have progressed and reached its present position. Because women have a deep concern for children's education they are struggling to improve and develop it. The following section will examine the development of education in Kuwait.

In the education sector, our findings suggest that Kuwaiti women are increasingly taking up the opportunity to teach in kindergarten schools and as a result reducing the nation's dependence on non-Kuwaiti teachers. Even though the non-nationals have good qualifications, their accents are different and their vocabulary is difficult for the children to understand. Many of the teachers, about (58%), were found to have appropriate qualifications. But more than half, (51.2%), of the sample investigated did not have any formal training.

Further, although the great majority of the teachers, (73%), preferred to teach in kindergarten schools, we were surprised to find that the major reasons for taking up the job was non-vocational. In another words, there was an apparent lack of professional motivation in the sample investigated. For example, (93%) of the respondents took up the job because of shorter working hours, whilst (90%) chose to teach in kindergarten schools because of the long holidays. This may help to explain why (67%) of the respondents did not want to undergo any in-service training. It was also found that more than 30 kindergarten children were taught in one class, compared with the officially recommended number of 15. This may create teaching problems for the teachers. These findings seem to support our third hypothesis.

There appears to be a division of opinion on the question of the use of the new curriculum, currently being tested by the Department of Education responsible for kindergarten education in Kuwait. Whereas (48%) of the teachers supported the new curriculum, (48%) were opposed to it. Although (68%) of the sample approved the introduction of the new curriculum handbook in their schools, they nonetheless believed that it might limit the creativity of the teachers. There is clearly support for the old, unorganised system and changes in attitude will be necessary before the new curriculum will be fully adopted.

The study of both Al-sanabil and Osama bin Zaid kindergarten reveals some similarities and some dissimilarities. Firstly, the

educational materials for both schools were found to be inadequate. Secondly, Al-sanabil school seems to suffer from a lack of experienced and formally trained teachers. In Osama bin Zaid for example, each class has two teachers at all times to assist each other and thus create better conditions to increase efficiency and productivity. This situation was found to be wanting in Al-sanabil school. In another words, children at Alsanabil school may not have the full care they require.

Osama bin Zaid appears to have better facilities than Al-sanabil school. This may be related to three factors. Firstly, Osama bin Zaid school is older than Alsanabil school, having been built in 1967, compared with Al-Sanabil kindergarten which was founded in 1982. Secondly, most people living in Sabah Alsalim area where Al-sanabil school was built are poor families, probably resulting from the polygamous nature of life in this area. Thirdly, Osama bin Zaid kindergarten is built in the old city of Alshaab where many rich people live. Consequently, this school is better maintained than Al-sanabil school. Hence our hypothesis that 'the inner city school, with rich and better educated parents, would provide a higher standard than the one in which these things were lacking' is strongly sustained.

Based on the literature reviewed and the analysis of both the questionnaire results and the case study of a sample of two schools, the following problems have been identified:

(1) Most teachers choose to teach in kindergarten schools not

necessarily on the basis of dedication and aptitude, but because of reasons quite unrelated to the principle objectives of kindergarten education. The reasons include shorter working hours and longer vacations. This suggests apparent lack of motivation; thus lending weight to the second research hypothesis.

- (2) Some of the people who go to the teaching institute are those who fail to meet the university entry requirements. Thus some people regard teaching as simply a quick way to graduate and get a well-paid job.
- (3) The curriculum offered at the secondary school stage appears to be inadequate. It tends to lack relevant topics such as the study of children and parents, effective communication, drawing, sports, etc. all of these topics would be valuable to those wishing to become teachers of young children.
- (4) There seems to be an apparent lack of career information relating to the teaching profession in Kuwait (e.g.lectures, seminars, films/video, visits, etc) which would enable students to develop an interest in the teaching profession.
- (5) The teacher-pupil ratio is far too high.
- (6) Some teachers have degrees and diplomas but some of these qualifications are unrelated to the kindergarten system of education in which the teacher will be working.
- (7) Although the curriculum of the teaching institutions contains some relevant basic subjects, it nevertheless lacks other subjects essential for effective teaching of

disadvantaged children and for encouraging co-operation between teachers and parents.

- (8) A high percentage of teachers are not fully qualified. For example, about (42%) of our sample teachers had no teaching institute diploma certificates. Even some of those who did have a Diploma had not specialised in early childhood education. Such specialisation is very important if they are to be fully effective in promoting the development of young children.
- (9) Teaching methods in the training institutions are inadequate. In many cases the lecturers simply dictate notes to the students. This tends to make the students heavily dependent on the teachers' words. Consequently, students ill prepared to promote creativity and independent learning in their pupils.
- (10) Some teachers lack the knowledge to achieve the effective translation of the children's specific needs into day to day activities.
- (11) Many respondents had nothing to say on such important issues as creativity or the creation of healthy and emotionally stable children when they were asked to state their role in the kindergarten schools.
- (12) The relationship between parents and teachers was found to be weak.
- (13) Inadequate use of educational materials was observed in some of the kindergarten, thus supporting our fourth hypothesis.

- (14) Two schools of thought still exist among Kuwaiti teachers about the kindergarten curriculum. Whereas some believe that the kindergarten curriculum should be structured others support the view that it should not be standardised. This suggests the need for the development of a uniform curriculum. This especially urgent when we consider the unqualified teachers, the crowded classes, and the inadequate materials. If this is generally agreed, then our hypothesis one is confirmed.
- (15) Overcrowding was evident in some of the kindergarten schools. This supports the third research hypothesis.

10.3 Recommendations

Based upon all the identified problems, the following recommendations are made:

- (1) A formalised procedure should be formulated whereby the government of Kuwait should encourage those who have the aptitude to make a career teaching in kindergarten schools. These people should be strongly motivated. Therefore care must be taken when selecting form among those who have failed to qualify for university who often use the teaching institutes as an easy way of achieving graduate status.
- (2) The secondary school curriculum should be redesigned to include drawing, effective communication and the study of both children and parents. It is hoped that this will go a long way to preparing students for a teaching career.

- (3) To minimise the problems of lack of career information, it is recommended that what the practice in some comprehensive schools in England should be introduced. That is to say, students at the age of 14 should be required to spend at least one week in professional offices or organisations of their choice. Attempts should be made to ensure that this reflects their interest in a chosen profession. In this way, the student will be able to have a clear idea of his/her future profession. This will enable the student to make the right choice at the outset of his/her career. The students also require appropriate counselling at this stage. Consequently, it is suggested that a counselling office be established in the Ministry of Education to advise students on career services.
- (4) In selection of preschool teachers, it is suggested that the selectors should ensure that a prospective preschool teachers possesses all or a combination of the following characteristics:
- a. Pleasure and interest in working with young children.
 - b. Flexible personality.
 - c. Concern for the welfare of others, regardless of ethnic or religious differences or economic status.
 - d. Good health;
 - e. Warmth, enthusiasm and sense of humour;
 - f. Sense of responsibility;
 - g. Good appearance and verbal facility;
 - h. Creativity, imagination and initiative;

- i. Patience;
 - j. Trustworthiness.
- (5) Teaching institutes should be equipped to prepare preschool teachers adequately. Preschool teachers should be given an excellent foundation in general education as a basis for coping with a professional curriculum which may include the following:
- a. Human growth and development;
 - b. Social problems;
 - c. Mental health care;
 - d. Community relations;
 - e. Family relationships.
- (6) Creativity, the creation of a healthy and emotionally stable children as well as discussions, seminars, student-library involvement and detailed research about children's behaviour should be incorporated into the school curriculum. These must be designed to suit both individual or group needs and the needs of children.
- (7) The relationships between kindergarten schools and parents should be strengthened. In this way, mutual understanding will develop between teachers and parents. Similarly, parents will feel a sense of belonging. Consequently, parents will contribute effectively to the welfare of the school in general and the children and teachers in particular.

- (8) The government should ensure that all schools have adequate educational materials to ensure the optimisation of preschool resources as well as the maximisation of knowledge.
- (9) Attempts should be made to ensure that each class of children should not exceed the recommended number of 15. By doing so, teachers will be able to give the children the attention they need particularly at this early stages and thus promote the children's growth socially, physically and intellectually. This is supported by Dr. Diane Coulopoulos's study, which shows that "Kuwaiti kindergarten classes are too crowded for the children to relax and learn; this decreases the immediate contact between the teacher and the child". With the current ratio of more than thirty children to one teacher in Kuwaiti kindergarten schools, it has become difficult indeed to establish any meaningful educational contact between the teacher and the children.
- (10) It is also recommended that every kindergarten class should have two teachers working together at the same time. This derives from the new curriculum which is based on allowing two teachers to teach in the same class, in order to improve the teaching process and enable teachers to have more contact with the children, and to limit the teacher-child ratio to fifteen.
- (11) The Kuwaiti Curriculum Research Centre should attempt to develop a standard but flexible curriculum to be used by

all teachers throughout Kuwaiti preschools. A 'Standard' curriculum would minimise the existing problems of:-

- a. Poor recording and reporting system;
- b. Poor design of individual school curriculum;
- c. Lack of effective translation of children's needs into kindergarten day to day activities;
- d. Flexible, in the sense that teachers need not necessarily follow all the provided curriculum, they must be given some degree of freedom to use their own initiative and creativity in teaching the children.

(12) This study proposes the use of both structured and unstructured curricula. The structured system is intended to solve the above problems. The unstructured curriculum will give the teachers the opportunity to use their creative, and imaginative ability.

(13) Kindergarten teachers should be adequately motivated. The existing system of paying kindergarten teachers by academic qualification alone is rejected by the findings of study as inadequate and improper. Academic qualification is only one of the factors to be taken into consideration when selecting and recruiting kindergarten teachers. Experience is of particular importance to an effective kindergarten education. Overall, we recommend that both factors be taken into consideration when selecting, recruiting, training and re-training kindergarten teachers. In this way, teachers' efficiency and productivity will be increased, child care improved, and the aims and objectives of kindergarten education achieved.

Appendices

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1-2 | CASEID | CASE IDENTIFICATION | 1-84 |
| 3 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 4 | CCHOONAM | NAME OF THE SCHOOL | 1'ALJABRIYA' 2'ALBALABEL' 3'HASSAN BIN THABIT' 4'ALJADAWEL' 5'OSAMA BIN ZAID' 6'ALMOROG' 7'JELEBSHUK' 8'ALSANABIL' 9'ALSINDIBAD' |
| 5 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 6 | AGEGROUP | THE TEACHER AGE GROUP | 1'UNDER24' 2'FROM 25 AND 30' 3'FROM 31 AND 35' 4'OVER 36' |
| 7 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 8 | YOPARENT | IF THE TEACHER PARENT HERSELF | 1'YES' 2'NO' |
| 9 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 10 | YONATION | THE TEACHER NATIONALITY | 1'KUWAITI' 2'NON KUWAITI' |
| 11 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 12 | WHANATIO | IF NOT KUWAITI WHAT IS IT | 3'PALESTINIAN' 4'JORDANIAN' 5'SYRIAN' 6'LEBANESE' 7'EGYPTIAN' |
| 13 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 14 | HOLDQUAL | THE TEACHER QUALIFICATION | 1'SECONDARY SCHOOL' 2'TEACHER'S DIPLOMA' 3'UNIVERSITY DEGREE' 4'MASTERS DEGREE' 5'A COURSE IN EDUCATION' |
| 15 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 16 | SPETRAPR | IF THE TEACHER HAD SPECIAL TRAINING | 1'YES' 2'NO' |
| 17 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 18 | IFYESSPA | THE FIRST ANSWER | 3'A COURSE IN EDUCATION' 4'FIELD WORK' 5'A COURSE IN THE TOTAL EXPERIENCE' |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|---|--|
| 19 | IFYESSPB | THE SECOND ANSWER | AS ABOVE |
| 20 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 21 | YEARCOMM | YEAR OF COMMENCMENT | 1'BEFORE 1954' 2'BETWEEN 1955 & 1965' 3'BETWEEN 1966 & 1976' 4'AFTER 1977' |
| 22 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 23 | TEALEVBA | THE FIRST LEVEL TAUGHT BEFORE | 1'PRIMARY' 2'INTERMEDIATE' 3'SECONDARY' 4'TEACHER'S INSTITUTION' 5'HANDICAPPED CHILDREN' 6'TRAINED TO TEACH ONLY AN OLDER LEVEL' |
| 24 | TEALEVBB | THE SECOND LEVEL TAUGHT BEFORE | AS ABOVE |
| 25 | TEALEVBC | THE THIRD LEVEL TAUGHT BEFORE | AS ABOVE |
| 26 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 27 | PREFOLDC | PREFER TO TEACH OLDER LEVEL | 1'YES' 2'NO' |
| 28 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 29 | ANSWERYA | FIRST SPECIFY REASON | 3'JUST FOR CHANGE' 4'IT IS VERY HARD WORK' 5'BECAUSE OF THE BOR- ING DAILY PREPARATION' 6'HEALTH REASON.' |
| 30 | ANSWERYB | SECOND SPECIFY REASON | AS ABOVE |
| 31 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 32 | USEOTHPA | USE OTHER LEVEL CURRICULUM | 1'YES' 2'NO' |
| 33 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 34 | EASYWORK | IF WORKING WITH CHILDREN EASY | 1'YES' 2'NO' |
| 35 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 36 | CHILDNUM | THE GROUP NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN SCHOOL | 1'BETWEEN 150 & 250' 2'BETWEEN 260 & 350' 3'BETWEEN 360 & 450' 4'OVER 500' |
| 37 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|---|---|
| 38 | MANYCHIL | NUMBER OF CHILDREN | 1 'BETWEEN 12 & 16' 2 'BETWEEN 17 & 21' 3 'BETWEEN 22 & 29' 4 'OVER 30' |
| 39 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 40 | FACILITE | ARE THE FACILITIES APPROPRIATE | 1 'YES' 2 'NO' |
| 41 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 42 | IFNOSPEA | THE FIRST SPECIFY LACK IN THE FACILITIES | 3 'NOT ENOUGH EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL' 4 'NO RECORDS OR LISTENING AUDIO' 5 'WE HAVE TO BUY LOTS OF THINGS' 6 'NO PLAYING ROOM OR SAND' |
| 43 | IFNOSPEB | THE SECOND SPECIFY LACK IN THE FACILITIES | AS ABOVE |
| 44 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 45 | MAJWADEA | THE FIRST MAJOR WAY TO HELP THE CHILD DEVELOP | 1 'STRESS ON THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE' 2 'MAKE A HEALTHY CHILD.' 3 'TEACH THE CHILD SOME GOOD CUSTOMS' 4 'DEEPEN THE FEELING BELONGING TO ISLAM AND ARABS' 5 'PREPARE THE CHILD FOR THE NEXT EDUCATIONAL STAGE' 6 'TEACH THE CHILD DISCIPLINE' 7 'TEACHING HIM SOME SIMPLE EDUCATIONAL MATTERS' 8 'SOCIALIZE WITH OTHER CHILDREN' 9 'TEACH THE CHILD HOW TO SHARE HIS TOYS' |
| 46 | MAJWADEB | SECOND MAJOR WAY TO HELP THE CHILD DEVELOP | AS ABOVE |
| 47 | MAJWADEC | THIRD MAJOR WAY TO HELP THE CHILD DEVELOP | AS ABOVE |
| 48 | MAJWADED | FOURTH MAJOR WAY TO HELP THE CHILD DEVELOP | AS ABOVE |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|---|---|
| 49 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 50 | OBJECTVA | FIRST IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IN KINDGARTEN | 1'LET THE CHILD EXPRESS HIMSELF IN THE WAY HE LIKES' 2'KEEP IN MIND THE CHILDREN'S DIFFERENCES' 3'PUT SOME RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN HIS BEHAVIOUR' 4'PREPARE THE CHILD FOR THE NEXT EDUCATIONAL STAGE' 5'TRAIN THE CHILD IN THE DISCIPLINED AND STABLE LIFE' 6'HELP HIM DEVELOP HIS PERSONALITY' 7'LET HIM SOLVE SOME PROBLEMS' 8'HELP THE CHILD MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY' 9'GIVE THE CHILD WHAT HE NEEDS FOR HIS SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL LIFE' |
| 51 | OBJECTIVB | SECOND IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE | AS ABOVE |
| 52 | OBJECTIVC | THIRD IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE | AS ABOVE |
| 53 | OBJECTIVD | FOURTH IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE | AS ABOVE |
| 54 | OBJECTIVE | FIFTH IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE | AS ABOVE |
| 55 | OBJECTIVEF | SIXTH IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE | AS ABOVE |
| 56 | ***** | ***** | ***** |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|--|---|
| 57 | AGREEMNA | NO NEED TO STANDARDI- ZE THE CURRICULUM | 1 'TICKED' 2 'NOT TICKED' |
| 58 | AGREEMNB | WE ALREADY TRAINED | AS ABOVE |
| 59 | AGREEMNC | HEAD TEACHER CAN DECIDE | AS ABOVE |
| 60 | AGREEMND | IT IS DIFFICULT FOR CHILDREN | AS ABOVE |
| 61 | AGREEMNE | IT SHOULD BE COMPULSORY | AS ABOVE |
| 62 | AGREEMNF | THIS MAY HELP ME | AS ABOVE |
| 63 | AGREEMNG | OMITTING SOME EXPERIENCES | AS ABOVE |
| 64 | AGREEMNH | RELIEVE THE TEACHER FROM PREPARATION | AS ABOVE |
| 65 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 66 | FREECREA | TEACHERS WILL STILL BE CREATIVE | 1 'YES' 2 'NO' |
| 67 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 68 | EVALUATO | MAKE TWO EVALUATIONS YEARLY | 1 'YES' 2 'NO' |
| 69 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 70 | REASONA | FAILURE TO OBTAIN UNIVERSITY DEGREE | 1 'MOST IMPORTANT' 2 'IMPORTANT' 3 'MEDIUM' 4 'UNIMPORTANT' 5 'LEAST IMPORTANT' |
| 71 | REASONB | GOOD CAREER PROSPECT | AS ABOVE |
| 72 | REASONC | FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE MY OWN WORK | AS ABOVE |
| 73 | REASOND | APTITUDE FOR TEACHING | AS ABOVE |
| 74 | REASONE | LONG HOLIDAYS | AS ABOVE |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|---|---|
| 75 | REASONF | SHORT WORKING HOURS | AS ABOVE |
| 76 | REASONG | PRESSURE FROM THE FAMILY | AS ABOVE |
| 77 | REASONH | HIGH SALARY WITH LITTLE WORK | AS ABOVE |
| 78 | REASONI | JOB I CAN DO BEST | AS ABOVE |
| 79 | REASONJ | DO NOT LIKE TO WORK WITH MEN | AS ABOVE |
| 80 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 81 | HANDBOOA | FIRST GROUP IN NEED FOR THE HANDBOOK | 1'HAVE LITTLE EXPERIENCE' 2'HAVE LONG EXPERIENCE' 3'ALL THE TEACHERS' 4'ONLY WHO WANTS TO HAVE IT' 5'HEADMASTER CAN DECIDE' |
| 82 | HANDBOOB | SECOND GROUP IN NEED OF THE HANDBOOK | AS ABOVE |
| 83 | HANDBOOC | THIRD GROUP IN NEED OF THE HANDBOOK | AS ABOVE |
| 84 | ++++++ | ++++++ | ++++++ |
| 85 | STATMENA | HANDBOOK IS A COMPLETE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE | 1'AGREE' 2'IN BETWEEN' 3'DISAGREE' |
| 86 | STATMENB | NOT NECESSARY TO BE DIFFERENT | AS ABOVE |
| 87 | STATMENC | EXPERIENCES ARE FLEXIBLE AND COMPLETE | AS ABOVE |
| 88 | STATMEND | IT IS HARD TO HAVE SPECIFIC AIMS | AS ABOVE |

| COL-UMN | VARIABLE NAME | VARIABLE DESCRIPTION | CODE & MEANING |
|---------|---------------|---|--|
| 89 | STATMENE | NEW CURRICULA IS AID FOR TEACHERS | AS ABOVE |
| 90 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 91 | MINISTRY | IF THEY PUT THE CURRICULA IN SOME SCHOOLS | 1 'YES' 2 'NO' |
| 92 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 93 | INSERVIC | DO YOU NEED IN SERVICE TRAINING | 1 'YES' 2 'NO' |
| 94 | ***** | ***** | ***** |
| 95 | IFYESSPY | FIRST KIND OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING | 3 'FIELD WORK' 4 'A COURSE IN TOTAL EXPERIENCE' 5 'VISIT OTHER KINDERGARTEN' 6 'TAKE A THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL COURSE' 7 'A COURSE ON HOW TO TEACH THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL' 8 'TRAIN US ON THE NEW CURRICULUM' |
| 96 | IFYESSPN | SECOND KIND OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING | AS ABOVE |

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

عزیزتی المدرسة :

انه من الواضح ان المدرسات العالمات في ريان الاطفال قد اتفنن على
الهدف الرئيسي لريان الاطفال وهو الوصول الى احسن مستوى عقلي و صحي في مراحل نموه
الاولى . ولكن الصوء ال الرئيسي يبقى و هو هل جميع المدرسات يتفنن على هذه الاهداف و
يعملون بها و هل يرغبون بتطبيق الخبرات الجديدة في مجال حصصهم الخاصة بهم ، و اذا اتيح
لهم المجال هل يعملون بها اختياريا ام يفضلون عدم اتباعه و ترك حرية الاختيار لما تراه
كل مدرسة و ما تعتقد انه يلائم اطفالها .
ارجو قراءة الاستفتاء جيدا و الاجابة على جميع الاسئلة ان امكن بقدر ما تستطيعين
حتى يتسنى لنا معرفة النتائج الصحيحة والمرجوه .
اذا كان عندك اى اقتراح او راءى تودين الابداء به فارجو عدم التردد و كتابة ما تودين
بخصوص نظام المناهج اللذ سيطبق في ريان الاطفال بالكويت ، و بخصوص اكتفاؤ الريان
بالاطفال .

(١) اسم الروضة التي تعملين بها _____

(٢) اى مجموعه من الاعمار تنطبق عليك :

- تحت ٢٤ سنة
 من ٢٥ - ٣٠ سنة
 من ٣١ - ٣٥ سنة
 من ٣٦ و اكثر

(٣) هل لديك اطفال

- نعم لا

(٤) جنسيتك

- كويتي غير كويتي

(٥) اذا كنت غير كويتي الرجاء اعدادك جنسيتك بالتحديد :

(٦) ما هو موعدهك التربوي

- ثانويه عامه
 معهد المعلمات
 جامعه

_____ موهلات اخرى

(٧) هل حصلت على تدريب تربوي خاص فى مجال رياض الاطفال

- نعم لا

(٨) اذا كانت اجابتك بنعم وضحى المجال :

(٩) متى حصلت على شهادة التخرج

- قبل سنة ١٩٥٤ م
 بين ١٩٥٥ = ١٩٦٥ م
 بين ١٩٦٦ - ١٩٧٦ م
 بعد سنة ١٩٧٧ م

١٠) قبل التدريس فى ريان الاطفال هل درست فى احدى المراحل الاتيه :

ابتدائى

متوسط

ثانوى

_____ مراحل اخرى

١١) هل تفكرين الان فى تغيير وظيفتك من مدرسة ريان اطفال الى مدرسة فى مرحلة اخرى

لا

نعم

١٢) اذا كانت اجابتك نعم فما هى الاسباب : _____

١٣) هل تطبقين بعض ما تعرفين من مناهج المراحل الاخرى على طفل الريان فى فصلك

لا

نعم

١٤) هل صحيح ان التدريس فى ريان الاطفال مريح و لا يحتاج الى مجهود

صحيح

غير صحيح

١٥) كم عدد الاطفال فى روضتك

١٥٠ - ٢٥٠

٢٦٠ - ٣٥٠

٣٦٠ - ٤٥٠

اكثر من ٥٠٠

١٦) كم عدد الاطفال فى فصلك

من ١٢ - ١٦

من ١٧ - ٢١

من ٢٢ - ٢٩

اكثر من ٣٠

١٧) هل امكانيات التدريس فى مدرستك كاملة

لا

نعم

١٨) اذا كانت اجابتك لا، وضحى _____

(١٩) كمدرسة لرياضة الاطفال ما هي واجباتك الرئيسية في بناء طفل سوي تحت ٦ سنوات

(٢٠) في رايك ما هي الاهداف الرئيسية لرياضة الاطفال في الكويت :

(٢١) اختار رى احدى العبارات التي تتفق مع رايك، بما مكانك اختيار اكثر من عبارة :

- ١ - ليس هناك سبب واضح لوضع وحدات و خبرات موحده لجميع رياضي الاطفال ، لان المدرسة تستطيع ان تدرس ما تعتقد انه الالم و الامل للطفل .
- ٢ - لقد تدرنا على طريقة التدريس في ايام الدراسة و هذا يكفي .
- ٣ - المشرفه الفنيه تستطيع ان توجهنا في عملنا بدون حاجه الى الخبرات الجديده .
- ٤ - من الواضح ان الخبرات الجديدة الموحده صعبه على الطفل و ستكون فاشله .
- ٥ - ان الخبرات الموحده ضروريه و يجب ان تطبق اجباريا على كل الروغات .
- ٦ - انا لم احصل على تدريب تربوي و احتاج الى هذه الخبرات الجديدة لتساعدني .
- ٧ - بعض الخبرات و الوحدات يجب ان تحذف من المنهج لان الطفل لا يستوعبها .

(٢٢) نشاط الانشطه و الخبرات الجديد سيريح المدرسه من عناء التحضير :

صحيح

غير صحيح

(٢٣) هل تعتقد ان انه اذا طبق نظام الخبرات الجديد في مدرستك في العام الدراسي القادم

سيكون للمدرسة مطلق الحرية في الابتكار و اتخاذ اساليب و استخدام تقنيات تربوية لا تكون بالانشطة و ستكون مشجعه من الادارة على الابداع و الابتكار و التجديد .

لا

نعم

(٢٤) من الضروري وضع تقويم شامل للجوانب المشتركة في جميع الخبرات ، ومن المستحسن

ان يطبق مرتين سنويا .

لا

نعم

(٢٥) اى من الاسباب شجعتك على اختيار مهنة التدريس ،الرجاء وضع ترتيب للجمل الاتية

حسب الاعميه التى ترينها لكل واحد متبعه التسلسل الرقمى من ١ - ٥ :-

١ - اكثر اعميه

٢ - قليل الاعميه

١ - الغش فى الحصول على درجات عاليه للملاتطى بالجامعه .

٢ - مهنة شريفه و محترمه .

٣ - الحريره فى تنظيم عملى و فطلى كما ارغب .

٤ - عطله طويله .

٥ - ساعات عمل قصيره .

٦ - ضغوط من العائله .

٧ - الراتب قوى بدون عمل مجهد جدا .

٨ - عمل يمكن اداه افضل من اى عمل اخر .

٩ - لا احب العمل مع الرجال .

١٠ - اى اسباب اخرى .

(٢٦) اهميه دليل الرياض يرجع الى المدرسات

قليلى الخبرة

قديمى التدريس و الخبرة

الجميع

من ترغب

من ترى الاداره انها بطاه اليه

للاسترشاد بهذا الدليل للتامل مع مختلف جوانب الخبره و نشاطه المتعلقه

باداء المعلمه او انجازها لمهام معينه فى اوقات محدده وفقا لبرامج الروضه و على نحو

يفمن التاكيد على جوانب الخبره من المفاهيم ، الميول ، الاعتبارات ، العادات ، الاتجاهات

والقيم المتعلقه بكل خبره .

(٢٧) ضعيفاً ما محدد له لكن عبارته بحيث العبارة التي تعتقد ان لها اكثر صواباً تاخذ

اعلى رقم ، والاقصى صواباً تاخذ الاقل كما يلى :

٣ صحيح جداً

٢ صحيح

١ غير صحيح

١ - دليل معلمه الريان الذي سيتبع في ريان الاطفال في الكويت يمثل دليلاً للخبرة التربوية المتكاملة و ليس منهجاً موحداً حيث ان طبيعته هذه المرحلة و خصائص نمو الطفل في الريان لا يتطلبان كتباً تعليمية خاصة بالطفل . _____

٢ - ليس من الضروري ان يختلف دليل معلمه ريان الاطفال من حيث طبيعته و فلسفته و اهدافه و محتواه عن ادله المعلم لمراحل التعليم الاخرى . _____

٣ - تتمم الخبرات في مراحل ريان الاطفال بالمرونة ، التنوع ، التكامل ، الترابط ، و تحريز على تحقيق التوازن بين جوانب النمو المختلفة . _____

٤ - اذا اخذنا خبرته حتى و سلامته كمثال فانه ليس من المهم ان تعطى للمستويات الثلاثة كلها . _____

٥ - يجب ان تراعى كل خبرته تدرج المفاهيم و الاهتمامات و الميول و المهارات و العادات و الاتجاهات المتعلقة بالخبره في كل مستوى من المستويات الثلاثة . _____

٦ - اذا قسمنا الخبرات الى موضوعات رئيسيه فانه من الصعب وضع اهداف خاصه لكل خبرته او موضوع . _____

٧ - ان دور معلمه الريان في تكوين شخصيه الطفل الاولى واضح و حريتها في التفكير و الابداع في انشطة الخبرات المختلفة موعده و ان نظام الخبرات الجديده المرافق لكراسات التطبيقات و كتب الطفل ما هو الا مساعده لها و وسيله لاعطائها امثله تسترشد به سواء بالنسبه لانشطه او التقنيات التربويه او التطبيقات . _____

(٢٨) اذا قررت الوزارة تطبيق نظام الانشطه الجديد على بعض المدارس فقط ، هل تفكرين

بالانتقال الى روضه اخرى لا يجرى تطبيق هذا النظام بها .

لا

نعم

(٢٩) هل تعتقد انك بحاجة الى دورات تدريبية لتزيد من خبرتك فى مجال التدريس .

لا

نعم

(٣٠) اذا كانت اجابتك نعم ، فالى نوع من التدريب تفضلين : _____

شكرا لتعاونكم

مقدمة البحث سوسن ابراهيم التركيت

جامعة درهام (بريطانيا)

INTRODUCTION

Kindergarten teachers have reached the conclusion that the overall aim of children's education should be to provide normal and healthy growth in the child. A central question remains: do teachers in Kuwait agree upon the goals, objectives and purpose of education in the Kindergarten and do they agree on a uniform curriculum for all kindergartens?

The following questionnaire will be given to head teachers, deputy head teachers and other teachers for completion in certain kindergarten, the choice of which depends on their location. Those asked to complete the questionnaire will be both Kuwaiti nationals and non-Kuwaitis, who will have varying qualifications, training and length of experience.

Thank you for your co-operation.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

(1) Name of Kindergarten_____.

(2) Into which age group do you fall?

Under 24

From 25 to 30

From 31 to 35

Over 36

(3) Are you a parent yourself?

Yes

No

(4) Your Nationality?

Kuwaiti

Non-Kuwaiti

(5) If you are not a Kuwaiti, please state your nationality

_____.

(6) Which of the following qualifications do you hold?

Secondary school

Teacher's Diploma

University degree

Others_____.

(7) Have you had a special training programme in Kindergarten teaching?

Yes

No

(8) If your answer is Yes, please specify: _____

(9) Year of commencement of teacher training

Before 1954

Between 1955 and 1965

Between 1966 and 1976

After 1977

(10) Which level have you taught before?

Primary

Intermediate

Secondary

Other _____.

(11) Do you prefer to teach at an older level rather than
Kindergarten?

(12) If your answer is Yes, please specify reasons: _____

_____.

(13) Do you use any part of the curricula for older children in
teaching Kindergarten children?

Yes

No

(14) Is it true that teaching in Kindergarten is easy and does
not require hard work?

Yes

No

(15) How many children are there in your Kindergarten?

150 - 250

260 - 350

360 - 450

Over 500

(16) How many children are there in your class?

Between 12 - 16

17 - 21

22 - 29

Over 30

(17) Are the facilities at your school appropriate for teaching young children?

Yes

No

(18) If your answer is No please specify: _____

_____.

(19) As a Kindergarten teacher, what 'in your opinion' are the major ways of helping a child under the age of six to develop normally, please specify:

_____.

(20) In your opinion, state the most important objectives of education in the Kindergarten, please specify: _____

_____.

(21) Which of the following statements do you strongly agree with: (you can choose more than one)

- a) There is no need to standardise the curriculum in all the Kindergartens, the teacher can teach whatever she thinks is best for the child.
- b) We have already been trained in the best teaching methods in college and that is sufficient preparation.
- c) The head teacher can keep us informed of the best teaching methods without the need for the new curriculum.
- d) It is obvious that the new curriculum will be very difficult for the children and many are going to fail.
- e) The standardised curriculum is necessary and should be compulsory for all Kindergarten.
- f) I didn't have any special educational training and I think that the new curriculum could help me.
- g) Some of the curriculum should be omitted because of its difficulty.
- h) The new curriculum will relieve the teacher of the labour of the daily preparation of lessons.

(22) Do you think that the new curriculum would give the teachers the freedom to be creative in educational ways?

Yes

No

(23) Is it necessary to do an evaluation for the curriculum twice a year?

Yes

No

(24) For which of the following reasons did you choose the teaching profession. Please show the order of importance you would give to each one. Use the following scale of 1 to 5.

(1) Most important

(5) Least important

- a) Failure to obtain grades for university entrance.
- b) Good career prospects.
- c) The freedom to organize your own work as you wish.
- d) An aptitude for teaching.
- e) Long holidays.
- f) Short working hours.
- g) Pressure from within the family.
- h) The salary is high with not much work.
- i) A job that you can do well.
- j) Don't wish to work with men.
- k) Any other reason _____.

(25) The new Kindergarten teacher's handbook is necessary for those who have:

- a) Little experience
- b) Long experience
- c) All the teachers
- d) Who ever likes to have it
- e) The headmaster can decide

(26) Please tick in the appropriate box according to whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- a) The handbook for Kindergarten teachers which is going to be used in Kuwait's Kindergarten schools is a handbook for a complete educational experience and not just for a uniform curriculum.
- b) It is not necessary for the Kindergarten handbook to be different in its contents, philosophy and aims, from the handbooks for other levels of teaching.
- c) The experiences in the Kindergarten can be described as flexible, complete, coherent and they ensure a correct balance for the child's growth in all directions.
- d) It is hard to have specific aims for each experience.
- e) The teacher's role in helping the child's personality is clear, and she obtain her freedom in thinking and creativity. The new curriculum and books are only an aid for her.

(27) If the Ministry of Education decided to apply the new curriculum just in some Kindergarten, would you consider changing to one where the new curriculum was not in force?

Yes

No

(28) Do you feel that you need in-service training to enrich your knowledge?

Yes

No

(29) If your answer is Yes, which kind of in-service would you prefer? Please specify: _____

Appendix 4

The basic principles which the committee relied upon in producing general objectives for Kuwaiti kindergarten were:-

(1) The aims and objectives of general education in Kuwait and the variables which affect these aims, which are:-

- a. The objectives to be based on Kuwaiti society, its religion, philosophy and customs.
- b. The objectives should be in accordance with modern educational theories.
- c. The objectives should be in accordance with the learners' requirements and characteristics.

(2) The aims and objectives for the curriculum in the Arab Gulf and the Arab World which derive from:-

- a. The Islamic and Arabic education with all its traditions, its modern problems, and its view of the future.
- b. The socio-economic situation and the need for development in the Arabian Gulf.
- c. The requirements of modern life and their relation to Islamic-Arabic education and customs.
- d. The personal needs of the individual in the Arabian Gulf.

(3) The general basis which determines the aims of Kuwaiti kindergarten:-

- a. The ideological basis, which derives from Islamic

education, the belief in democracy and the belief in one Arab nation.

- b. National needs and the country's concern with all the present day problems in the world.
- c. The socio-economic basis of all the changes which have taken place in Kuwait, the most significant being economic growth, and the resulting growth of social institutions, with their effect on educational development.
- d. The philosophical basis, according to which experience is considered the basis of education; this experience in the kindergarten depends a great deal on the five senses through which children can learn about their environment.
- e. The emotional factors, taking into account all the careful co-ordinated work with the kindergarten children and ways in which their characters can be formed in these early years. The curriculum should be drawn up directly from the research done in these areas.

(4) In the philosophy of kindergarten education in Kuwait they determined that the theories should be derived from:-

- a. The roots of Kuwaiti society.
- b. The nature of the social change that has been taking place in Kuwait.
- c. The changing needs of Kuwaiti families.
- d. The nature of pre-school children and their needs.
- e. Modern methods of education for pre-school children.

(5) Research on kindergarten development.

The committee has also laid down certain criteria which affect the general aims of Kuwaiti kindergarten:-

1. The aims should be constructed with regard to the emotional nature of the children, taking Kuwaiti society into consideration.
2. The aims should fulfil the general educational aims in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf.
3. The aims should embrace all aspects of child development.
4. The aims should be clear, coherent and comprehensible.
5. The aims should be flexible in order to allow renewal and development with changing times and situations.
6. The aims should be realistic and easy to implement. At the same time, they should be a source of inspiration for the development and creation of new ideas.
7. The staff of kindergarten should decide on the aims and have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

The Curriculum Specific Behavioural Aims

Appendix 5

The specific behavioural aims which the Department of Education wishes to implement through the curriculum:

| First: The socio-emotional side | |
|---|--|
| Affective Domain | |
| The general aim | The specific behavioural aims |
| To gain a positive feeling toward religion, country and self. | |
| <u>RELIGION</u> | A - Increase their faith in God and the prophet B - Show the children God's infinite ability, by making them look carefully at their surrounding world, and all the different forms of creation. C - Let the children understand that God is always with them. D - Let the children acquire the Islamic behavioural code, such as helping other people, truth, honesty, patience, co-operation, justice, etc. |
| <u>COUNTRY</u> | A - Enable the children to understand the meaning of Country (Kuwait, the Gulf, Arabic World, and Islam). B - Increase the feeling of belonging to the country by using songs, stories and films. |

- C - Enrich the customs and the traditions of the Kuwaiti people.
- D - Respect the flag and know how to recognise it.
- E - Know the enemies of the Arabic countries.

SELF

- A - Shape self-image
- B - Increase confidence in themselves.
- C - Be independent.
- D - Co-operation with other children and adults.

Inform the child about the roles of family, kindergarten, society.

FAMILY

- A - Help them understand the role of the family and its importance in the society.
- B - Help to create positive, respectful feelings towards parents, each child knowing his or her own responsibilities.

Kindergarten

- A - Help to create positive feelings towards their school by giving them love, which will in time make them enjoy coming to school.

Society

- A - Create a positive feeling towards belonging to traditions and history.
- B - Introduce the children to the different jobs and encourage them to respect people working in different occupations.
- C - Respect other people's possessions.

Enable the child to have emotional stability.

- A - Make the children familiar with all the emotional aspects of a human being.
- B - Know the reasons for these emotions.
- C - Involve them in other people's problems, so that they can feel for them in grief and joy.

Second: The Cognitive Domain

To increase the child's attention span and his intelligence.

- A - Encourage the children to choose one specific activity out of a variety of activities.
- B - Concentrate on one activity for a limited amount of time.

Follow-up

- A - Know the difference between living and dead objects.
- B - Recognise the whole after seeing a part of it.
- C - Recognise single, double, and combined sounds.
- D - Know the relationship between places.

Remember

- A - Memorise some of the short surras in the holy "QURAN".
- B - Remember their parents, brothers and sisters' names, and their own address and telephone number.
- C - Tell a story.
- D - Count to ten.

Understand the
different concepts,

*Time concept

A - Know the difference between day and night and what we do in each.

B - Know the difference between past, present and future.

*Place concept

A - Know the parts of their body.

B - Understand the meaning of directions, distance and different places.

*Counting, length and weight concepts

*Concept of life and death

Language skills

A - To enjoy looking at a picture book.

B - To enjoy listening to a story and telling one.

C - To know the meaning of some words and prepare the children for learning to read and write each according to their own ability.

Third: The Psycho-motor Domain

Control and
coordination of
the large muscles.

*Control of the whole body

A - Walking along a narrow board.

B - Running toward a certain point.

C - Climbing a small ladder.

*Balancing on the floor

A - Jumping on two feet and on one.

*The ability to move some of the parts of the body

*Coordination between eyes and legs, eyes and hands.

Control and
coordination of
the small muscles.

*The coordination between fingers

A - Use the fingers in activity such as drawing,
cutting with scissors and plaiting.

*The coordination between hands and eyes

Increase the
five senses.

Seeing

A - Use the "size" game, "memory" game, "what's
missing?" game.

Hearing

A - Repeat the rhythm and know the kind of
instrument used.

B - Hearing and remembering.

C - Following the sound.

Touching

A - Finger painting.

B - Feel and draw.

Smelling

A - Smelling different things while their eyes are
shut.

Testing

A - Choosing different substances to taste with
their eyes closed.

Source: Bahder, S. 1978, "The general educational aims for Kuwaiti Kindergarten and how to translate them to behavioural aims." Ministry of Education, Curriculum Research Centre. Government Press.

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