EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM TO PROMOTE READING FOR PLEASURE IN SAUDI ARABIA EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

SUMAYAH ABDULRAZZAQ ZAFAR

المستخلص باللغة العربية:

عنوان الدراسة: فاعلية برنامج تجريبي لتعزيز القراءة للاستمتاع في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة بالمملكة العربية السعودية:

اسم الباحثة: سمية عبد الرزاق ظفر.

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى تعزيز الدافعية الداخلية لدى أطفال رياض الأطفال للقراءة من أجل المتعة وذلك من خلال تقييم فاعلية تدخل تربوي قائم على خمسة مكونات رئيسية هي: استخدام أجهزة iPad، وإدخال "حقائب القصص" (Story Sacks)، وتوفير كتب ذات جودة عالية، وتوظيف المعلمات أسلوب القراءة الجهرية التفاعلية، وتعزيز الشراكة بين الأسرة والمدرسة في دعم ممارسات القراءة، وقد تكونت **عينة الدراسة** من 12 طفلًا تم اختيارهم عشوائيًا من ثلاثة صفوف دراسية (KG1، KG2، KG3) في روضة حكومية بمدينة مكة المكرمة، كما شارك في التدخل ست معلمات بالإضافة إلى أولياء أمور الأطفال، واتبعت الدراسة **منهجًا نوعيًا** في إطار تفسيريّ من خلال تصميم دراسة حالة مؤسسية. امتد البرنامج التدخلي لمدة 12 أسبوعًا، وشمل تنفيذ ورش تطوير مهني للمعلمات وورشة مشتركة مع الأمهات، إضافة إلى تطبيق الأنشطة القرائية داخل الصف وخارجه، واستخدمت الدراسة **أدوات جمع بيانات تألفت من:** الملاحظة الصفية قبل وبعد التدخل لتتبع التغيرات في سلوك الأطفال أثناء أنشطة القراءة، مقابلات مع المعلمات لاستكشاف آرائهن قبل وبعد التدخل حول ممارسات القراءة ودوافع الأطفال، قابلات مع الأمهات بعد التدخل لرصد التغيرات في الوعي والممارسات القرائية المنزلية، مقابلات مع الأطفال باستخدام أساليب مناسبة لأعمارهم لفهم توجهاتهم ومشاعرهم تجاه القراءة، وقد أظهرت **نتائج الدراسة** تحسنًا ملحوظًا في تفاعل الأطفال مع أنشطة القراءة وزيادة اندماجهم في القراءة الترفيهية باستخدام الوسائط المختلفة (iPad، حقائب القصص، الكتب المطبوعة). كما لوحظ تطور في ممارسات المعلمات التعليمية وارتفاع مستوى ثقتهن في استخدام القراءة الجهرية التفاعلية. وبيّنت بيانات أولياء الأمور أن ورشة العمل ساهمت في رفع وعي الأمهات، مما أدى إلى تعزيز ممارسات القراءة المشتركة في البيئة المنزلية ساهم في إشباع الاحتياجات النفسية الأساسية للأطفال (الاستقلالية، الكفاءة، والانتماء)، مما أدى بدوره إلى رفع مستوى الدافعية الذاتية للقراءة. وقد أوصت الدراسة بالاهتمام بتوفير بيئة تعليمية ثرية، وإتاحة حرية الأطفال في اختيار ما يقرأون، ووضعهم أمام تحديات مناسبة، مع وجود الدعم الاجتماعي للأطفال لتعزيز الدافع الذاتي للقراءة من أجل الاستمتاع في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الطفولة المبكرة- القراءة للاستمتاع — تعزيز الدافعية للقراءة — مرحلة رياض الأطفال بالمملكة العربية السعودية.

ABSTRACT

This study **aimed to** enhance the intrinsic motivation of kindergarten children in Saudi Arabia to read for pleasure by evaluating the impact of an educational intervention based on five key components: the use of iPads, the introduction of story sacks, the provision of high-quality books, the implementation of interactive read-aloud strategies, and the activation of a home–school partnership, The study was **conducted on a sample** of 12 children (balanced in gender), randomly selected from three classrooms (KG1, KG2, KG3) in a public kindergarten in Makkah. Additionally, six female teachers and the children's parents—particularly mothers—were involved in the intervention and accompanying training, **Methodology:** A qualitative approach was adopted within an interpretive paradigm, using an institutional case study design. The intervention spanned 12 weeks and included professional development workshops for teachers, a joint workshop with mothers, and the implementation of activities both inside and outside the classroom, **Data Collection Tools:** Classroom observations (pre- and post-intervention) to track changes in children's reading behavior and engagement, Semi-structured interviews with teachers (before and after the intervention) to explore their views on reading and motivation, Interviews with mothers after the program to assess changes in home literacy practices and awareness, Child-friendly interviews to explore the children's feelings and preferences related to reading. **Findings:** The results revealed that children became more engaged in reading for pleasure and showed greater interaction with reading activities involving iPads, story sacks, and print books. Teachers improved their read-aloud practices and reported increased confidence in using interactive strategies. The workshops also raised mothers' awareness, which led to more frequent shared reading practices at home, Drawing on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the study found that the enriched learning environment—offering choice, appropriate challenge, and social fulfilled children's psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and support relatedness), thereby strengthening their intrinsic motivation to read.

Keywords: Early childhood education, reading for pleasure, literacy motivation, self-determination theory (SDT), iPads in education, story sacks, interactive .read-aloud, school-home partnership, Saudi Arabia, early literacy intervention

Introduction

Previous studies have revealed that motivated readers are better readers, as the motivation is one of the critical elements that leads to a successful achievement of any learning outcome (Mitchell, 1992). A number of researchers have noted the important role of reading for pleasure or for personal and educational development. They have shown that reading for pleasure is significantly associated with reading attainment(Clark, Woodley, & Lewis, 2011), vocabulary development (Mol & Bus, 2011; Sullivan & Brown, 2013), comprehension (Abdullah et al., 2012), mathematics development (Sullivan & Brown, 2013), achievement in reading (Twist, Schagen, & Hodgson, 2007), a positive reading attitude (Guthrie & Alvermann, 1999), critical thinking (Aarnoutse & van Leeuwe, 1998), general knowledge (Al Aamri, 2016; Al Aamri, Greuter, & Walz, 2013) and future success (Kirsh et al., 2002).

Background and Context of the Study

In Saudi Arabia, some children in their daily life do not read for pleasure. This phenomenon has been highlighted recently by PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), which has investigated children's levels of literacy achievement. Alnassar & Mugidel (2010) argue that many students in Saudi Arabia only read to pass tests.

In the school context, a recent study by Humoud (2014) found that 70 per cent of students face difficulties in both reading and writing In the wider context, Al-Ashraf (2010) suggests three possible reasons for the lack of reading for pleasure in some Arabic countries. These are limited family support for reading, insufficient money to buy books and widespread illiteracy across the community.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of an intervention study that promotes reading for pleasure in a Kindergarten classroom. The study introduced a range of approaches to foster reading for pleasure, including using iPads and story sacks, providing a variety of high quality books, using an interactive reading aloud strategy and developing a school-home partnership.

Research Questions:

The study has two key research questions:

 The first question is 'What is the impact of a reading intervention, which introduced five 'elements' (iPads, story sacks, high quality books, interactive read aloud approach and the establishment of a home-school relationship) into the kindergarten classroom?'. This question focuses on the impact of an intervention project that included five different elements, which aimed to promote reading for pleasure. These five elements were identified from a review of the literature on reading for pleasure, and were as follows: using iPads; using story sacks; providing high quality books; using an interactive read aloud approach, and establishing a home-school relationship.

The second question draws on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002), which focuses on how individuals become motivated to act in certain ways. The question is, 'How did the project impact on children's self-determination in reading for pleasure?'.

Study Objectives:

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a multi component pedagogical intervention aimed at enhancing kindergarten children's intrinsic motivation to read for pleasure in the Saudi Arabian context. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine how the integration of five key elements—iPads, story sacks, high-quality picture books, interactive read-aloud practices, and school-home literacy partnerships—affects children's reading engagement and attitudes.
2. Explore how these elements contribute to the satisfaction of children's basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as defined by Self-Determination Theory (SDT).
3. Assess the impact of the intervention on both classroom practices (teachers' instructional approaches) and home literacy behaviors (parental involvement in reading).

This research is grounded in a constructivist paradigm and employs a case study methodology to generate rich, context-sensitive insights.

Terminology

It is important here to clarify exactly what is meant by the terms that are used in this research. First, it is important to justify what 'reading' means to children between the ages of 3 and 6. Whilst it used to be defined simply as relating to decoding skills, reading is now acknowledged to be wider than that for young children, as confirmed by Merchant (2008, p. 3) who referred to the child "learning how to act like a reader". In reviewing previous research on reading in early years (Arizpe & Styles, 2003; Levy, 2009a, 2009b, 2011), the reading of young children in Saudi Arabia can be defined in a number of ways, including looking at pictures, understanding not just the meaning of words but the sub-text, understanding that print moves from right to left in Arabic and making efforts to decode words ('pretending' to read before one is able to decode). Second, the term 'Reading for pleasure' is used in this research to refer to an individual reading something to attain satisfaction from the act of reading, as defined by Graff (1992). For very young children, who are not yet able to read independently, reading for pleasure includes being interested in books, being excited to engage with them and wanting to talk about them and/or play out the stories they hear. Thirdly, the definition of Kindergarten is given by Al-Khiribi and Ali (2004), which is a school where children between the ages of three and six enroll on three levels to develop various skills and practices for example, social, physical, mental, emotional, moral, linguistic and religious, which may lead to better preparations to the children for learning.

& Theoretical Framework: Review of the literature

Reading motivation:

There is a strong evidence showing that reading motivation and reading for pleasure are closely linked and mutually reinforcing (Henning&Crow,2023). With regard to the construct of 'reading motivation 'Cambria defined it as "the values, beliefs and surrounding reading for an individual", which can be explained as a strong emotion that a person can experience to help him/her engage in reading activities which may lead to achieving personal goals and developing values and beliefs related to   reading.

Both Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) postulate that reading is an activity, where children can be extrinsically or intrinsically motivated to read. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), intrinsic reading motivation is associated with the

pleasure that children attain when they engage in specific activities for their interest. The term "intrinsic motivation" has come to be used to refer to the desire to read because it is a satisfying or rewarding activity in itself (Schiefele, Schaffner, Möller, & Wigfield, 2012). A child can be motivated intrinsically because the topic or the activities are interesting. Morgan and Fuchs (2007) reviewed 15 studies and found that intrinsically motivated children read more and had better reading skills, while poor readers showed low motivation.

Children can be also extrinsically motivated to read. The literature states that extrinsic reading motivation relates to external reasons that motivate a child to read about particular topics and engage in reading activities (Ollila, 1977; Schiefele et al., 2012; Schulwitz, 1977). The worth of extrinsic motivation compared to intrinsic motivation continues to be debated. The debate is essentially based on whether the use of extrinsic rewards lessens intrinsic motivation, or not. This argument has been supported by some researchers (e.g.Cambria & Guthrie, 2010; Kohn, 1999). Cambria and Guthrie (2010) found that, in the long run, extrinsic motivation discourages reading achievement, since a student who reads just to get a high score, money or a prize often stops reading after gaining the reward. However, Schunk, Pintrich, and Meece (2008) reported that external rewards which lead to improvement in learning may help children increase their intrinsic motivation when the reward is suitably applied. In the early years, for example, a child can be intrinsically motivated to read simply to satisfy his/her curiosity and extrinsically motivated to read by getting literacy-related rewards, such as a book.

Considering the aforementioned discussion and based on the findings of PIRLS, it could be argued that Saudi children might be more extrinsically motivated to read and this is partially attributed to the practices of teachers and their family members of giving them money or gifts or through creating an atmosphere of competition for better grades. In this sense, the Saudis might lack intrinsic motivation.

Literacy-rich classroom environments support children's language development, especially through tools like iPads, story sacks, and high-quality books. iPads enhance independence and interaction (Holloway, Green, & Brady, 2013; Lee, 2015), while story sacks help connect stories to children's experiences and stimulate imagination and language (Barron & Powell, 2003; Dukes, 2007). Engaging read-aloud sessions with quality books improve vocabulary and comprehension (Albright & Ariail, 2005; Kerry-Moran, 2016; Mulyani, 2011).

Additionally, collaboration between teachers and parents is essential for fostering children's motivation to read (Pinter, 2006).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

This study is grounded in **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)** (Deci & Ryan, 2002), which is widely used to understand human motivation and engagement. SDT posits that motivation is enhanced when three innate psychological needs are met: **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**. These needs are universal across age, gender, and culture (Ryan et al., 1999; Ryan et al., 2005) and essential for psychological well-being, optimal functioning, and intrinsic motivation. This framework aligns closely with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, allowing for a holistic interpretation of children's behaviors in literacy contexts.

Autonomy refers to the sense of volition and psychological freedom (Vansteenkiste et al., 2010). In literacy, this need can be supported by providing children with meaningful choices (e.g., selecting books or expressing opinions about texts), which fosters ownership and engagement (Guthrie & Coddington, 2009). Despite growing attention to autonomy in education, research indicates that autonomy-supportive practices are often limited to offering choice alone, rather than deeply embedding student agency in learning (Stefanou et al., 2004).

Competence, defined as feeling effective and capable in one's environment (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Reeve, 2012), is best supported through structured, yet autonomy-supportive teaching. Effective strategies include offering optimal challenges (Clifford, 1990; Niemiec et al., 2014), providing positive feedback (Stroet et al., 2013), and linking reading tasks to real-life experiences (De Naeghel et al., 2016). Importantly, competence support must be coupled with autonomy to enhance intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000a).

Relatedness, the sense of connection and belonging, is also central to children's motivation. Warm and caring relationships with teachers, peers, and parents enhance students' sense of belonging and enjoyment in learning (Niemiec et al., 2006; Cox et al., 2009). When caregivers support children's psychological needs, children become more intrinsically motivated across activities (Deci & Ryan, 2014).

Despite the broad application of SDT in educational research, its integration into early childhood literacy remains limited. This study uniquely applies SDT to

explore how five literacy-promoting elements—**iPads**, **story sacks**, **high-quality books**, **interactive read-alouds**, and **home-kindergarten partnerships**—can satisfy children's basic psychological needs and foster motivation for reading for pleasure. Given the theoretical potential of SDT, this research aims to investigate how these elements can be implemented in ways that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thereby enhancing young children's intrinsic motivation and engagement in reading.

Methodology

Interpretive Paradigm

In the interpretive paradigm, knowledge is often produced in the form of rich narratives or case studies that describe the interpretations constructed as part of the research process. The descriptions provide an appropriate level of detail of both the context and the contribution of the participants (Hatch, 2002).

Qualitative research is usually associated with "more closely to a constructivist paradigm, which sees truth and meaning as constructed and interpreted by individuals" (Gray, 2013, p. 191). This research is conducted with an interpretive paradigm, as its focus is on the individual and is concerned with understanding how children can be motivated to read for pleasure. A diagrammatic overview of the whole research design is shown in Figure 1-1.
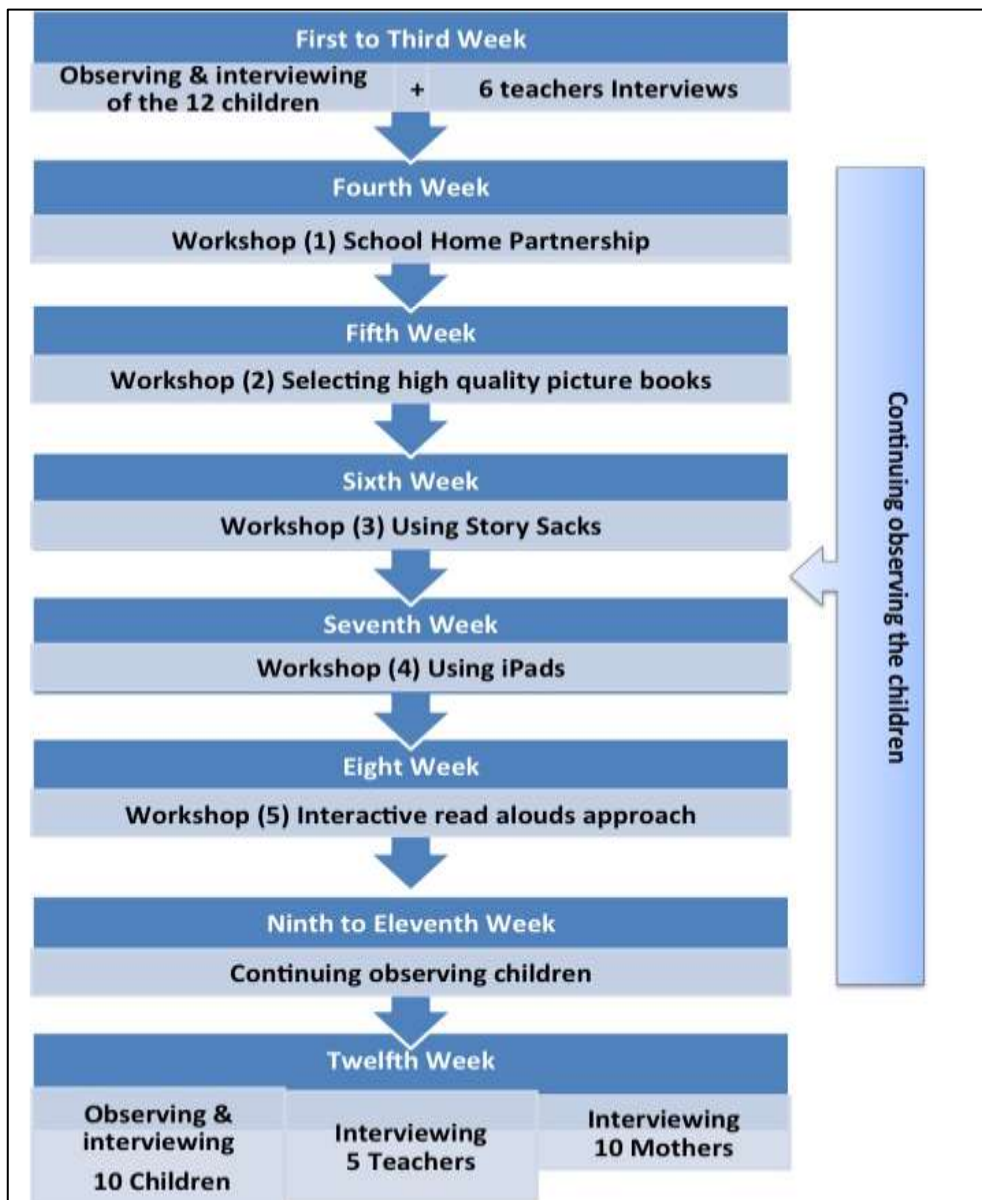
Figure 1-1 : A Diagrammatic Overview of the Whole Research Design

To address the research questions, an **'Organisation and Institution' case study design** was employed, involving the implementation of an intervention in a public kindergarten in Makkah to explore its impact on children's motivation to read for pleasure. The study used a **convenience sampling** method, which is

commonly applied in educational research when participants such as teachers and students are easily accessible (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Wellington, 2015). The researcher's existing relationships with kindergarten teachers facilitated access and the initiation of the project.

Participants and Implementation of the Intervention

This study was conducted in public kindergartens in **Makkah, Saudi Arabia**, chosen due to the researcher's familiarity with the city and ease of access. Public kindergartens were selected as they are state-regulated, aligning with the study's aim of exploring institutional literacy practices. The intervention spanned **three months**.

A total of **twelve children** (balanced by gender) were randomly selected from three classrooms for detailed observation. Prior to the intervention, these children were observed over a period of **three weeks**, and informal conversations were conducted to gather deeper insights. One child withdrew during the study due to relocation. Post-intervention, **parents of the remaining ten children** were interviewed. In addition, participating **teachers were interviewed both before and after** the project. The primary data collection methods included **observations and semi-structured interviews**.

The intervention included **five professional development workshops** for teachers, each designed around areas identified by the participants as needing improvement to foster reading for pleasure. An additional workshop was held jointly with **teachers and parents**, focusing on five areas derived from the literature review.

Designing and Implementing the Professional Workshops

The project involved a set of five workshops. As shown in Table 3-1, five were conducted with teachers, working on the areas that they had identified as needing improvement to promote reading for pleasure; one was conducted with parents working alongside teachers on five different areas, chosen following my literature review.

Table 0-1: The Five Workshops of This Study

Workshop Name	Was Conducted At …Weeks of the project	Participants
School-Home Partnership	Fourth Week	Teachers & Mothers
Selecting high quality picture books	Fifth Week	Teachers
Using Story Sacks	Sixth Week	Teachers
Using iPads	Seventh Week	Teachers
Interactive read alouds approach	Eighth week	Teachers

An outline of each workshop is provided below:

First Workshop: School-Home Partnership with Teachers (Day 1) for 150 minutes.
The definition of School-Home Partnership.
The importance of School-Home Partnership on children's reading.
Effective ways parents and school can work in partnership.
Ways to encourage parents with their children to read for pleasure at home.
Preparation for Mothers Workshop.

School-Home Partnership with Mothers (Day 2) for 150 minutes.
The importance of the early childhood stage and reading in children's lives.
Effective ways to support children's reading after school, such as using technologies (iPads) and reading- related activities.
The importance of shared reading between parents and their children.
Introducing interactive read-aloud approach.
Practical example of teacher reading aloud in front of mothers.
Displaying examples of high quality children's picture books.
Criteria for selecting high quality picture books.

Second Workshop: Selecting high quality picture books for 120 minutes.
Ways to provide a literacy-rich classroom.
The definition of high quality picture books..
Displaying examples of high quality children's picture books.
Brainstorming for teachers to provide criteria for selecting high quality picture books.
Criteria for selecting high quality picture books from reviewing the literature.
The quality and quantity of picture books in the classroom.

Third Workshop: Using Story Sacks for 120 minutes
What is a story sack?
What does a story sack contain?
Looking at examples of English versions of story sacks and have an open discussion about it.
Criteria to choose a story for a story sack.
The benefits of using story sacks.
Preparation for producing five Arabic story sacks.

Forth Workshop: Using iPads for 120 minutes
The advantages of using iPads in the classroom to support children's reading.
Effective ways to support children's reading with iPads.
Looking at different story apps, and choose ones that are suitable for children.
Criteria for choosing appropriate e-stories for young children.

Fifth Workshop: Interactive read alouds approach 150 minutes
Introducing interactive read alouds approach, its definition, importance, and advantages.
Interactive read alouds approach strategies.
Playing videos for teachers using this approach in the English language, with my translation to the Arabic language.

In all five workshops, the tools used were PowerPoint slides, flipcharts and flipchart markers. The workshops comprised a mixture of class discussion, group work, lectures, practical work, and hands-on tasks. The mothers were divided into groups to work together based on their children's age; this was intended to promote effective discussion as they had something in common.

Figure 1-2: The Researcher Special Library.

Creating An Arabic Version of Story Sacks

After the story sacks workshop, the teachers decided to create their own story sacks in the Arabic language, as story sacks were not available for purchase in Arabic.
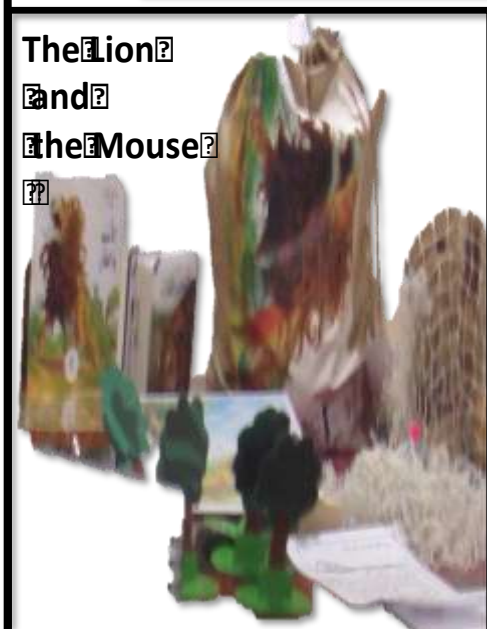
The Eid Gift

The Five Friends

The Caterpillar Khaddorh

The Lion and the Mouse

The Squirrel's Kite

Figure 1-3: The Five Arabic Version of Story Sacks

Reading Aloud Strategy

Reading Aloud Sessions' Structure Before the Intervention

Before the intervention, I observed six reading aloud sessions with teachers. Briefly, I will describe the ways teachers read aloud to the children prior to the intervention. Every time, teachers started their sessions by reminding the children of the rules that they should obey when listening to a story, which they called the "story rules". Teachers asked the children, "What are the story rules?" and then all the children answered together, "Looking with our eyes, closing our mouths, sitting in our places without moving until the end of the story." Then, the teachers started the session and the children looked at the teacher. Discussions occurred after reading the story when the teacher asked the children some questions about the story, which allowed some interaction by the children. This style of reading aloud, called performance style, is described as follows: 'teachers simply read the text and do not encourage discussions or interactions between the students and the stories' (Militante, 2006, p. 6).

Even though children's interaction in reading aloud is essential, the teachers did encourage discussions after they read aloud (Price, Bradley, & Smith, 2012). From my observations, about 25% to 40% of children responded to the teachers' questions after the reading aloud session. When teachers read aloud, they showed the children the pictures in the book and they read the stories without pointing to the text. Teachers read from different items other than books; for example, they read from pictures, or simply from memory, without any tools.

In response to the question about their frequency of reading aloud to the children before the intervention, all teachers stated that they read aloud to the children once or twice a week, depending on the timetable, which they received each month from the head teacher. With regard to what and when teachers read before the intervention, they read stories from the curriculum in the 'Last Gathering' period of the school day.

Conducting the Changes to Teachers' Reading Aloud Practices

Based on a review of the literature on reading aloud styles, I found that the interactive read aloud style has been widely researched and been shown to have great influence on children's achievements, vocabulary and reading skills.

However, it had not yet been researched in terms of children's motivation to read, which was the focus of this research project.

After three weeks of observing teachers' reading aloud sessions, I gave the teachers a brief introduction to the interactive read aloud style in informal one-to-one conversations and group discussions, and I proposed that they use it. At the beginning, teachers were not convinced by the new approach and were strongly opposed to using it with the children. They gave me reasons for their refusal, claiming that the teachers and children were used to the performance reading style and that the children were used to obeying the story rules, which do not allow children to interact during reading aloud sessions.

After long, intense discussions with the teachers at the reading aloud workshop, showing them several videos displaying the way of reading aloud by expert teachers in the English language and providing my translation into Arabic, teachers agreed to try to use the interactive read aloud style. Then, I explained it in more detail and described the way to manage children's behaviors and discussions during the interactive sessions.

Establishing School-Home Links in Reading

Mothers attended this workshop with the teachers and the researcher and the main focus was to promote the idea of mothers and children engaging in reading at home in enjoyable ways. The workshop topics were: the importance of childhood; the importance of reading in children's lives; ways to promote children's reading for pleasure; an explanation of the ways to promote reading for pleasure outside the kindergarten; and interactive shared book-reading techniques.

Research Methods

In this section, I will explain the methods (interviews, observation) which were used in the research. I used multiple methods from different types to enable me to triangulate the findings. Since all data collection methods have their individual weaknesses, triangulation helps researchers to balance and increase the validity of constructs (Gray, 2009), as well as improve accuracy (Denscombe, 2010).

Observations

Observation creates opportunities for researchers to study behaviours in real-world settings (Yin, 2014). After getting all the consent forms signed by children's parents and by the children themselves, ten children were observed in the classroom, in reading aloud sessions, and before and after the intervention. I adopted an 'observer-as-participant' role since I did not take any part in the academic activity and was known to the participants as the researcher (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Even though my role was observer-as-participant when I conducted the observations in the classroom, I engaged with the children in their play outside the classroom environment and developed a good relationship with them. Field notes were used as the data-gathering tool because, as stated by Gray (2013), that allowed me to document behaviours, speech, observations and personal reflections In the field notes I addressed "descriptions of contexts, actions, and conversations" (Hatch, 2002, p. 77) including note-worthy points (Patton, 2002). According to Patton (2002, p. 303) "field notes also contain the observer's own feelings, reactions to the experience, and reflections about the personal meaning and significance of what has been observed" since the "observation is a complex combination of our five senses and our perception, which we use to develop a picture and an understanding of the world around us" (Gray, 2013, p. 412). Therefore, writing my reflections was part of the observation process; I tended to write notes during the observation sessions, then immediately after the observation I spent time reflecting on the process and adding details to the field notes.

Interviews

 A semi-structured interview style .Interviews are used widely in social research was used. A pilot study allows researchers to test their interview procedures and identify any potential bias, and is a standard approach (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, the interview questions were tested by piloting them with three teachers and two parents and three children other than actual participants to make sure the questions designed were understandable, that they solicited the data needed and that the duration of the interview was appropriate. The questions were then revised accordingly in order to refine and amend the interview procedure. A digital voice recorder was used to record the interviews with the mothers and the teachers (participants confirmed their approval of this by signing a consent form).

Interviews with teachers were conducted before implementing the project with six teachers for around twenty minutes each, using semi-structured questions to understand teachers' viewpoints on the meaning of children reading for pleasure. This was in order to establish the current practices they used to promote children's reading for pleasure, understand the obstacles that teachers face and which prevent them from motivating children to read, and to get their recommendations on what should be included in the workshops regarding motivation and how to motivate children to read for pleasure in the professional training workshops. This understanding was essential in order to revise the workshops in the light of teachers' needs and their recommendations. It was important that teachers felt that their opinions and voices were reflected in the proposed intervention. After conducting the intervention, five teachers were interviewed again for approximately 20 to 25 minutes to discover how effective they thought it had been on children's engagement in reading, to identify the obstacles that they faced and to listen to any further suggestions they had to improve the design of the intervention.

 Interviews with children were also conducted. During the programme the children were asked how they felt about being involved in reading activities, what they liked the most, and, if they had started reading, why they read. Interviews with children were ideal as a tool to help me to understand children's attitudes, motivation and feelings during the intervention since the interview has been reported to be the most effective method in accessing participants' feelings (Chenail, 2011, p. 255).

Interviews with children's mothers were conducted on completion of the intervention to ask about any changes they had noticed in their children's reading behavior, motivation and attitude. They were asked if they (the mothers) had benefited from the parents' workshops in school and if they had made any changes in the home literacy environment and in home reading practices as a result. In addition, they were asked if their children were involved in reading activities out of school, to understand any external factors that might impact on the children's motivation and behavior. Ethical principles were applied at all stages of this research process.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used as a method of analysis, which is "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It organizes

and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 6). Once I had completed the analysis and determined the themes and sub-themes, I then selected the most significant examples to support each theme to address the research questions, in order to present my findings.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the changes observed in children's engagement with reading, drawing on classroom observations conducted before and after the intervention, as well as interviews with teachers, parents, and the children themselves. The findings suggest that the intervention contributed to **notable improvements in children's motivation and engagement** in reading for pleasure. These changes became particularly evident following the implementation of the five-element intervention.

Reading engagement is defined by Wigfield, Guthrie, and Kathleen (2004, p. 50) as "the interplay of motivation, conceptual knowledge, strategies, and social interaction during literacy activities." Several of these components were evident throughout the intervention and shaped the children's responses to reading-related experiences.

Although the intervention was structured around five distinct elements—**iPads, story sacks, high-quality books, interactive read-alouds, and home-kindergarten partnerships**—in practice, these elements often functioned interactively and simultaneously. Therefore, it is not possible to attribute changes in reading motivation and engagement to any single element in isolation. However, for the purposes of analysis and clarity, the findings are presented in relation to each element individually, based on the researcher's observations, participants' feedback, and interpretations supported by relevant literature.

iPads

This section explores the role of iPads in enhancing young children's engagement with reading. Following the introduction of three iPads into the Library Corner, observational data revealed a rapid increase in children's confidence and willingness to engage with the devices. Prior to the intervention, the Library Corner saw minimal use, with frequent instances of complete disuse throughout the school day. However, during and after the project, the space

became notably more active, particularly once iPads were made available. Children were observed actively seeking out e-book stories, demonstrating that access to digital reading platforms significantly boosted reading engagement. Data analysis revealed several key themes: increases in intrinsic motivation, curiosity, involvement, concentration, independent reading, and collaborative reading.

Intrinsic Motivation
Intrinsic motivation, defined as reading driven by personal satisfaction (Schiefele et al., 2012), was clearly evident following the integration of iPads. Teachers reported a marked rise in students voluntarily engaging with reading activities. The availability of digital stories through iPads encouraged children to read for enjoyment, both digitally and using print materials.

Curiosity

Curiosity, or the desire to explore topics of personal interest through reading (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), was significantly stimulated by interactive 3D stories on the iPads. The children's enthusiasm was evident in their repeated engagement with stories, driven by the freedom to choose and the appealing digital format [(Jones & Brown, 2011); (Clark & Rumbold, 2006)]. Similar findings have been observed among older adults using digital platforms, indicating a cross-age relevance of curiosity as a reading motivator (Østensen et al., 2017).

Involvement and Concentration

Involvement, described as enjoyment in engaging activities (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), was enhanced by the sensory-rich features of iPads. Compared to print books, iPads helped sustain children's attention through multimodal stimuli, including narration, movement, and dynamic visuals. This led to deeper engagement and reduced distractions during reading sessions.

Independent Reading
The built-in narrator function allowed children to engage with stories independently, even when adult support was not available. This feature promoted self-directed reading and enabled students to maintain literacy routines autonomously within the classroom environment.

Collaborative Reading

Children were frequently observed reading together using iPads, preferring shared story experiences even when multiple devices were available. These joint sessions fostered peer discussion and emotional connection with the stories, enhancing both reading quantity and enjoyment (Alhinty, 2014); (Beschorner & Hutchison, 2012); (Hutchison et al., 2012); (Sandvik et al., 2012).

These themes are consistent with findings from recent studies. Eppard et al. (2022) reported that iPads improved student motivation and focus in digitally enhanced classrooms, particularly benefiting students with learning needs through interactive and responsive content (Eppard et al., 2022). Similarly, Kaulanov and Kazimova (2024) highlighted how iPad-supported instruction increased student interest and motivation in secondary schools (Kaulanov & Kazimova, 2024).

Furthermore, Sakr (2019) found that tablets encouraged collaborative creativity in young children, supporting the present study's observations of enriched peer interactions during shared reading tasks (Sakr, 2019).

In summary, the integration of iPads into early reading environments demonstrates significant pedagogical value. When implemented thoughtfully, such tools can effectively foster motivation, independence, and collaborative learning among young readers.

Impact of Story Sacks on Promoting Reading

Teachers responded enthusiastically to the use of story sacks during training sessions, recognizing their pedagogical value. Data analysis revealed four emergent themes related to story sack impact: enjoyment, curiosity, comprehension, and story re-telling.

 Enjoyment

Children expressed high enjoyment levels when using story sacks, often naming specific favorites. The multisensory approach—touching props, handling puppets, and engaging with physical materials—enhanced the reading experience. Holding a character while listening or reading helped bring stories to life, reinforcing enjoyment through tactile interaction [(Kelly, 2015)].

In some cases, children re-enacted story events in real life. For example, inspired by a story sack titled "The Eid Gift," one child mimicked the storyline by wrapping herself as a gift and telling her parents, "I am your gift." This type of embodied re-enactment illustrates how deeply children connected with story content.

Curiosity

Aligned with Day's (1982) Zone of Curiosity—exploration, excitement, and interest—the story sacks prompted children to explore voluntarily. Their attractive design and diverse contents created a relaxed, discovery-oriented environment, encouraging exploration and engagement.

Story Re-telling

Story sacks supported children in re-telling stories in three distinct modes:

•Oral retelling: Children narrated story sequences after engaging with related materials. For instance, one child used a puzzle to sequence and then retell "The Eid Gift."

•Physical enactment: Children acted out narratives using the props. In one instance, a student mimicked the lion's capture and escape scene from "The Lion and the Mouse," with teacher participation.

•Puppet-based storytelling: Puppets from the sacks helped children re-enact dialogues and events. One child used character puppets and a story map to perform scenes from "The Caterpillar Khadoorah."

These examples show how story sacks promoted narrative comprehension, memory, and expressive language, contributing to deeper reading engagement.

While direct research on story sacks remains limited in recent years, studies have documented the effectiveness of similar approaches involving puppets, dramatic play, and hands-on interaction in enhancing children's reading outcomes. For example, puppet-based storytelling has been shown to improve children's narrative skills and motivation to read (Hakim et al., 2019). Likewise, learning environments that incorporate play and drama

significantly boost reading comprehension and reduce learning anxiety (Tekman & Yeniasır, 2023). Furthermore, interactive storytelling with puppets has proven effective for children with learning difficulties, fostering engagement and emotional expression (Karaolis, 2023).

Together, these findings reinforce the pedagogical value of story sacks as a tactile, story-driven tool for promoting literacy in early childhood settings.

High-Quality Books and Puppets.

Prior to the intervention, the Library Corner suffered from a lack of variety and renewal. Teachers seldom replaced books, and many available titles were outdated, limiting students' interest in voluntary reading. As part of the project, high-quality and age-appropriate books were introduced and thoughtfully distributed across learning areas, including a designated "Story of the Day" shelf. A borrowing system was also implemented. These enhancements led to a notable increase in students' curiosity and engagement with print materials.

The inclusion of puppets—both literary characters and familiar animals—significantly enhanced the emotional appeal of reading experiences. Observations indicated that children often sought out these puppets during reading time, using them to interact with the narrative. In one case, a child placed a bunny puppet on her lap while reading, seemingly gaining comfort and emotional security from the physical presence of the puppet. When puppets represented characters from the stories, students demonstrated heightened enthusiasm and deeper engagement, suggesting that the tactile component enhanced their connection to the texts.

These outcomes align with broader findings in the literature regarding the educational value of puppetry and physical storytelling tools in literacy instruction. Puppets have been shown to foster emotional investment, stimulate imagination, and support the development of oral language and narrative skills. Integrated into daily reading activities, puppets can create an immersive and motivating learning environment that enhances comprehension and expressive communication.

Recent research supports these observations. Karaolis (2023) found that puppets improve children's narrative abilities, emotional expression, and

comprehension, particularly in inclusive or therapeutic contexts (Karaolis, 2023). Similarly, Syafii et al. (2021) demonstrated that storytelling with puppets improves verbal fluency and storytelling engagement (Syafii et al., 2021), while Ishida and Kumada (2021) highlighted their role in developing theory of mind through dramatized narratives (Ishida & Kumada, 2021).

A systematic review by Yanac-Leon et al. (2021) further emphasizes that puppets enhance communication and language development by increasing children's attentional focus and expressive participation (Yanac-Leon et al., 2021). With regard to high-quality books, recent findings by Sun (2023) show that engaging illustrations influence children's book preferences and increase their initial motivation to read (Sun, 2023).

Collectively, these studies validate the integration of visually rich books and puppetry as effective, research-supported strategies for fostering young children's motivation, emotional engagement, and literacy development.

Reading Aloud Strategies

Teacher Development and Pedagogical Transformation
Prior to the intervention, teachers expressed initial hesitation about the efficacy of interactive read-aloud strategies. However, participation in structured professional development workshops and hands-on classroom implementation led to a significant shift in their attitudes and instructional practices. Observations revealed that student responsiveness played a critical role in enhancing teachers' motivation and engagement. Three core areas of growth were identified: increased motivation to engage in reading aloud, deeper enjoyment of the practice, and enhanced self-efficacy in literacy instruction.

Enhanced Motivation and Enjoyment in Reading Aloud
Following the intervention, teachers significantly increased the frequency of reading aloud—from only a few times a week to almost daily. This shift was not imposed administratively but resulted from teachers' observations of increased student interest and interaction. The dialogic and participatory nature of the read-aloud sessions fostered more dynamic teacher-student relationships. Additionally, access to a wider range of high-quality children's literature enriched the instructional process, contributing to higher levels of teacher satisfaction and confidence.

Growth in Teacher Self-Efficacy

Prior to the training, many teachers reported a lack of confidence in their ability to facilitate effective read-aloud sessions. Structured professional development combined with iterative implementation fostered substantial gains in teacher self-efficacy. Teachers reconceptualized their instructional roles as active facilitators of student comprehension and literacy development. These findings are supported by Ciyer et al. (2010), Loreman et al. (2013), and Posnanski (2002), all of whom emphasized the role of professional development in strengthening teacher belief systems and instructional capacities.

Recent empirical studies affirm these outcomes. For instance, Ceyhan and Yıldız (2021) reported that interactive read-aloud strategies not only enhanced student literacy outcomes but also improved teacher engagement and instructional effectiveness. DeJulio et al. (2023) found that pre-service teachers developed stronger pedagogical understanding and confidence when applying read-aloud practices in real educational contexts. Similarly, Yilmaz et al. (2022) noted that while teachers valued reading aloud, structured training was essential for translating this awareness into practice. Yang and Villanueva (2024) also emphasized the influence of school climate in shaping teachers' professional confidence, particularly in literacy-related tasks.

Children's Engagement and Interaction

The shift toward interactive read-alouds transformed children from passive recipients into active participants. Students transitioned into cognitively and emotionally engaged participants, employing prediction, inquiry, personal reflection, and physical enactment to construct meaning from texts.

"In a documented session, a teacher introduced a story by discussing the author, illustrator, and cover imagery. She engaged the children in predicting events, asked inferential questions during reading, and encouraged physical responses such as jumping like a story character. The result was sustained attention and high engagement throughout."

Teachers also utilized print-referencing techniques, such as pointing to words and sentences during reading. According to Zucker et al. (2009), these strategies are critical in helping children develop early print concepts and increase their awareness of text structure and function.

Literacy Outcomes: Alphabetic and Print Knowledge
The intervention demonstrated positive effects in two specific areas:

- **Alphabetic Knowledge**: Some children exhibited increased ability to recognize letters and associate them with sounds. A notable example is Fares, who identified discrepancies in text when read differently by an adult, indicating emergent decoding skills.
- **Print Awareness**: Many students began tracking text directionally, using fingers to follow lines, and demonstrating an understanding that printed words carry meaning. These developments are consistent with findings by Justice and Ezell (2002), who emphasized the role of print-focused read-alouds in fostering early literacy, including in Arabic-speaking contexts.

Emotional and Ethical Development Through Storytelling
Read-aloud contexts emerged as formative spaces for cultivating emotional literacy and ethical judgment. Children were encouraged to reflect on characters' emotions, share analogous personal experiences, and engage in moral reasoning about story events. Teachers deliberately integrated discussions on themes such as kindness, fairness, and empathy, leading to observable behavioral improvements, as reported by some parents.

Reciprocal Relationship Between Comprehension and Enjoyment
A bidirectional relationship emerged between comprehension and enjoyment: as children's understanding of stories deepened, their motivation and emotional investment increased. Similarly, students who enjoyed the stories were more likely to engage critically and meaningfully. These findings echo the work of Clark and De Zoysa (2011), who identified a strong correlation between reading comprehension and enjoyment, though without confirming causality. The present study suggests that effective teacher scaffolding can catalyze both processes.

Key Findings:

- Teachers demonstrated sustained improvements in reading instruction frequency, quality, and engagement.
- Interactive read-aloud strategies promoted dynamic student participation and critical thinking.

- Alphabetic and print awareness improved through intentional print-referencing practices.
- Reading aloud sessions became venues for emotional expression and ethical reflection.
- A reinforcing cycle was observed between students' comprehension and reading enjoyment.
- Empirical studies corroborated the observed benefits for both teachers and students, particularly regarding teacher motivation and instructional confidence.

The adoption of interactive read-aloud strategies yielded multifaceted benefits for both educators and learners. Teachers experienced increased motivation, professional satisfaction, and self-efficacy, while students showed substantial growth in literacy skills, emotional engagement, and moral reasoning. These findings underscore the pedagogical value of read-alouds not merely as a literacy tool, but as a holistic educational practice that supports cognitive, emotional, and social development. Future initiatives should continue to prioritize teacher training in dialogic reading strategies to ensure the sustainability and scalability of these outcomes across varied educational settings.

The Impact of School-Home Partnership

Enhancing Communication and the Borrowing Culture
The implementation of a structured book borrowing system significantly transformed the nature of the school-home relationship surrounding literacy. Initially, teachers expressed reluctance due to concerns over potential book loss and deterioration. However, as the system was adopted, these apprehensions diminished. Students returned books responsibly, and parental feedback—particularly from mothers—was positive and constructive. The success of the system encouraged all participating teachers to commit to its continuation, citing its efficacy in increasing student motivation and parental involvement in reading activities.

Engaging Parents Through Structured Training and Ongoing Dialogue
The parental workshop served as a critical catalyst in reshaping home literacy practices. Teachers demonstrated interactive read-aloud techniques, and a WhatsApp group facilitated sustained communication between educators and families. Prior to the intervention, many children entered kindergarten

unfamiliar with narrative structures, reflecting a lack of early literacy exposure. Interviews confirmed minimal paternal participation and a reliance on oral storytelling rather than reading printed texts.

Growth   in   Parental   Literacy   Awareness   and   Behavior
Post-intervention data showed considerable improvements in mothers' perceptions of and engagement with early childhood reading. The workshop significantly elevated their awareness of the developmental value of shared reading. This shift in mindset was accompanied by behavioral change: all mothers reported reading with their children after the intervention, and the majority adopted daily reading routines. These findings support prior research linking parental beliefs to child literacy development (Bojczyk et al., 2016; Weigel et al., 2006).

Emotional Dimensions of Reading Practices
Beyond literacy, the project contributed to strengthening the emotional bonds between mothers and their children. For example, Roaa's mother observed heightened expressions of affection during reading time. This relational development echoes findings by Knopf and Brown (2009) and Dexter and Stacks (2014), who emphasize the connection between shared reading quality and adult-child relational strength. In socio-cultural contexts like Saudi Arabia, where mothers typically manage large families with limited paternal support, shared reading offered a rare opportunity for focused, nurturing interaction.

Lasting Effects and Modeling Literacy Behavior
The intervention not only changed mothers' behavior toward their children but also prompted a shift in their personal reading habits. Several mothers began reading for pleasure independently, illustrating the reciprocal influence between shared reading and personal development. This mirrors studies indicating that children internalize literacy norms through parental modeling (Landry et al., 2012), and that parental enjoyment of reading enhances both the quality of shared sessions (Bus et al., 2000) and children's motivation (Baker & Scher, 2002).

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Key Findings:

- Teacher perceptions shifted positively toward book borrowing once children demonstrated responsibility and parents actively participated.
- Targeted workshops and digital communication enhanced parental awareness and literacy involvement.
- Mothers transitioned from minimal to regular shared reading, fostering child motivation.
- Reading together nurtured emotional closeness between mothers and children.
- Parental modeling of reading behaviors contributed to sustained engagement with literacy at home.

Supporting Evidence from Recent Studies:

- Kim and Riley (2021) demonstrated that dialogic reading partnerships with parents significantly accelerated children's language and literacy development, with effects sustained beyond the intervention period.
- Wu and Hindman (2024) found that parents' beliefs and awareness about literacy strongly influenced their involvement at home, which in turn impacted children's outcomes in preschool settings.
- Sahiruddin and Herminingrum (2021) reported that school-led literacy programs incorporating parent workshops and collaboration tools improved home reading practices and parent-teacher communication.
- Dong et al. (2020), through a meta-analysis of 59 studies, concluded that parental expectations and engagement had stronger effects on reading comprehension than merely providing books in the home.
- Teacher perceptions shifted positively toward book borrowing once children demonstrated responsibility and parents actively participated.
- Targeted workshops and digital communication enhanced parental awareness and literacy involvement.
- Mothers transitioned from minimal to regular shared reading, fostering child motivation.
- Reading together nurtured emotional closeness between mothers and children.
- Parental modeling of reading behaviors contributed to sustained engagement with literacy at home.

The intervention significantly improved the school-home literacy partnership by introducing a borrowing system and structured parental engagement. Teachers overcame initial resistance, while parents—particularly mothers—adopted new practices that enhanced their children's reading habits and emotional development. These findings affirm the importance of aligning home and school efforts to cultivate early literacy in culturally responsive and sustainable ways.

Interpreting Findings through the Lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

This section interprets the study's findings through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that human motivation is driven by the fulfillment of three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985b). When these needs are met, individuals are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation. The intervention described in this study supported each of these needs, contributing to children's increased self-determined motivation for reading.

Autonomy Support

Prior to the intervention, the classroom environment offered limited opportunities for autonomous engagement with reading. Children had few choices in reading materials or spaces, and instruction was characterized by a teacher-centered, directive approach. Such a context likely suppressed students' intrinsic motivation.

However, the intervention introduced meaningful choices through diverse reading materials—including books, iPads, and story sacks—and allowed children to choose their reading location and partners. These options cultivated autonomy-supportive learning environments. According to SDT, offering learners a sense of volition and control is essential for fostering intrinsic engagement (Guthrie & Coddington, 2009).

The introduction of a borrowing system further extended this autonomy by encouraging children to read beyond the classroom. Observations revealed children engaging in voluntary reading at home and in outdoor spaces, signaling increased ownership over their literacy experiences.

Supporting Competence

The study also revealed that children's sense of competence was enhanced through the structured support embedded in the intervention. Teachers provided clear, consistent guidelines for using story sacks and digital tools, enabling students to complete tasks successfully and independently. For instance, scaffolding techniques helped children use story maps and puppets to retell narratives, which built their confidence in managing reading-related tasks.

Instructional activities were designed to include optimal challenges. Teachers asked questions that ranged in cognitive demand—from factual recall to analytical and evaluative reasoning—ensuring that students were both supported and intellectually stimulated. This practice aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development, emphasizing the value of providing tasks that are appropriately challenging.

Positive and targeted feedback was another key component supporting competence. In one observed instance, a teacher's encouragement and guided questioning helped a student correct a sequencing error in a story task, reinforcing the student's belief in their ability to succeed. This kind of informational feedback aligns with SDT's emphasis on feedback that promotes self-monitoring and learning rather than control (Turner, 2014).

Fostering Relatedness

The third psychological need identified by SDT—relatedness—was also fulfilled during the project. Relatedness refers to the feeling of being emotionally connected to others. The intervention increased both the frequency and the quality of teacher-child, parent-child, and peer-to-peer interactions.

Teachers engaged in daily read-aloud sessions that were not only more frequent but also more interactive and emotionally responsive. Storytime became a shared, enjoyable experience rather than a directive activity. Peer collaboration also increased, with students working together using shared iPads, story sacks, or print books.

Parental involvement significantly expanded after the introduction of the borrowing system and parent workshops. Mothers, in particular, adopted daily reading routines with their children, contributing to a stronger emotional bond

and increased motivation for reading. These findings are consistent with SDT literature, which emphasizes the importance of emotional support and interpersonal connection for fostering intrinsic motivation (Niemiec et al., 2006).

The analysis demonstrates that the intervention successfully supported children's psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as outlined by Self-Determination Theory. The learning environment created by the project offered children choice, appropriate challenges, instructional support, and relational warmth. These elements collectively contributed to enhanced intrinsic motivation for reading. SDT provides a valuable theoretical lens through which to understand how pedagogical strategies and classroom environments can be intentionally designed to promote self-motivated, engaged readers.

Key Findings

This study aimed to explore two central research questions: (1) What is the effect of a multi-faceted reading intervention—incorporating iPads, story sacks, high-quality books, interactive read-aloud strategies, and school-home collaboration—on kindergarten children's motivation to read? and (2) How does this intervention influence their self-determined motivation for reading for pleasure?

The findings revealed a marked improvement in both the quantity and quality of children's reading engagement. The intervention successfully enhanced children's enjoyment of reading, increased their sustained focus during reading sessions, and expanded their participation in literacy both at school and at home. These outcomes suggest that a rich, multimodal, and socially embedded literacy environment can reposition reading as a rewarding and self-directed activity. Framed through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the results indicate that the intervention addressed three essential psychological needs:

- **Autonomy**: Children were offered genuine choices in reading tools (books, iPads, story sacks), content, partners, and locations (e.g., library, classroom, home). This autonomy allowed them to personalize their reading experience and engage more meaningfully with texts.
- **Competence**: Clear instructional scaffolds, purposeful challenges, and interactive formats enhanced children's skill development and confidence. Teachers modeled tasks, guided children through structured

story-based activities, and provided literacy tools that aligned with their developmental stages.

- **Relatedness**: Stronger social connections emerged as children read with teachers, peers, and family members. Shared reading activities, interactive discussions, and collaborative storytelling fostered emotional bonds and a sense of belonging in literacy contexts.

Together, these outcomes underscore that a multi-dimensional, SDT-informed approach to early reading can cultivate internal motivation and establish sustainable reading habits in young learners.

Limitations

Despite the promising results, this study faces several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single kindergarten, which restricts the generalizability of findings. Second, the 12-week timeframe limits conclusions regarding long-term effects. Lastly, as a qualitative case study, the research does not establish causal relationships. Nonetheless, methodological rigor—such as data triangulation, extended field engagement, and participant validation—was applied to enhance credibility.

Implications for Policy

1. **Professional Development**: Educational policymakers should implement structured training for early childhood educators that incorporates best practices in interactive and autonomy-supportive literacy instruction. Such training should emphasize the integration of digital tools and SDT-aligned teaching methods.
2. **Resource Allocation**: National education authorities should invest in equipping kindergartens with modern, culturally relevant reading materials—including story sacks, iPads, and interactive texts—to create enriched literacy environments.
3. **Scalability and Evaluation**: The intervention model should be piloted in diverse educational settings, with systematic monitoring to assess scalability, contextual fit, and long-term effectiveness.

Implications for Practice

To optimize literacy development, educators are advised to:

- Implement a blended model of digital and traditional reading tools tailored to children's interests and needs.
- Select books and materials that reflect children's cultural identities and social realities.
- Use dynamic read-aloud methods that prompt inquiry, prediction, and personal reflection.
- Foster self-regulation and agency through autonomy-supportive classroom routines.
- Strengthen school-home literacy continuity by encouraging family involvement and creating accessible reading take-home systems.

Recommendations for Future Research

- Extend the intervention duration and replicate it across multiple early childhood settings to evaluate its broader applicability.
- Analyze the discrete effects of each component (e.g., iPads vs. story sacks) using quantitative or mixed-method approaches.
- Explore teacher readiness and attitudes toward SDT-based literacy instruction in the Saudi context.
- Investigate sociocultural factors influencing parental engagement and child literacy behaviors in Arabic-speaking households.

Contribution of the Study

This research makes an original contribution to the field of early literacy by providing guided reading intervention in a evidence for the effectiveness of a multi-element, SDT Saudi Arabian kindergarten context. It bridges theoretical insights from motivation science with practical literacy strategies tailored for culturally diverse learners. The study offers a replicable model for designing literacy-rich, inclusive environments that key factors in nurturing a lifelong foster autonomy, competence, and social connection motivation to read. Furthermore, the study is distinctive in its integration of five iPads, story sacks, high-quality books, interactive read-alouds, complementary elements into a single, coherent intervention tailored to the local and school-home partnerships context. While these components have been individually studied in other contexts, their combined application, interpreted through the lens of Self-Determination Theory, represents a novel approach within the Arabic-speaking world. By aligning instructional design with children's psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, this research fills a critical gap in early literacy scholarship and provides a culturally grounded framework for future interventions in similar educational settings.

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