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Predictors of Reading Comprehension and Attitudes Toward Reading in Basic Education Cycle (1-4) Sultanate of Oman

د. سيف بن ناصر بن سيف العزري

أستاذ مساعد – كلية العلوم والآداب – جامعة نزوى – سلطنة عمان
saifnasser@unizwa.edu.om

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to uncover factors that consider as predictors of student reading comprehension, and attitudes toward reading. The study sample was (300) students of the 4th –grade, who were selected from (15) government schools of three Educational Governorates in Oman. In collecting the data, five instruments were used. Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs had the most contribution, the beta weight was β = (.249), P<.001 followed by parents' involvement in reading β = (214), P<.001 and teachers' attitudes toward reading β = (-.120), P< .005 while, students' attitudes toward reading had the lowest prediction, it beta weight was β = (.081), P<.005. It also revealed that parents' involvement in reading had the most contribution in predicting students' attitudes toward reading, the beta weight was, β = (.425), P<.001 followed by teachers' attitudes toward reading β = (.190), P<.00 and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading β = (.114), P < 001 sequentially.

Keywords: reading comprehension, attitudes toward reading, self-efficacy, predictors of reading.

ملخص:

كان الهدف من هذه الدراسة الكشف عن المتغيرات التي تعد متنبئات لمستوى الطلاب في الفهم القرائي. بلغت العينة (300) طالبا من الصف الرابع الأساسي تم اختيارهم من (15) مدرسة حكومية في سلطنة عمان. استخدمت الدراسة خمس أدوات بحثية. توصلت نتائج الدراسة إلى أن قناعات المعلمين الذاتية في تدريس القراءة كان المتنبئ الأقوى حيث بلغت قيمة بيتا (.249) = β، P<.001 تليها مستوى اندماج الآباء في التربية اللغوية الوالدية (214) = β، حيث بلغت قيمة بيتا P<.001 تليها اتجاهات المعلمين نحو فقد بلغت قيمة بيتا (.120-) = β، P< .005 وكانت اتجاهات الطلاب نحو القراءة هي الأقل تنبؤا بقيمة بيتا بلغت(.081) = β ،P<.005. وفي المقابل أشارت النتائج إلى أن اندماج الآباء في التربية اللغوية الوالدية كان المتغير الأقوى تنبؤا باتجاهات الطلاب نحو القراءة؛ حيث بلغت قيمة بيتا = β (.425)، P<.001 تليها في التنبؤ متغيرات اتجاهات المتعلمين نحو القراءة فقد بلغت قيمة بيتا = β (.190)،P<.00 وكان متغير قناعات المعلمين ومعتقداتهم حول تدريس القراءة الأقل بقيمة بيتا بلغت= β (.114)، P < 001.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفهم القرائي، الاتجاه نحو القراءة، الكفاءة الذاتية، متنبئات القراءة.

Background and Problem of The Study

Basic Education in the Sultanate of Oman, which began in 1998, seeks to provide students with knowledge and skills that will be useful for them throughout their lives (Ministry of Education 2006a, Ministry of Education 2009a, Ministry of Education, 1999). Learning Arabic is one of the main goals of Basic Education. Arabic is the language of the Holy Quran, the language of prayer, and the essential tool of learning in schools. Without this tool, students cannot learn other subjects (Fadlallah, 1998; Ministry of Education, 2006a; AL-Halak, 2010; Ministry of Education, 1999; Madkoor, 2002). In addition, the National Sixth-Five Year Plan (2006-2010) in the Sultanate, aimed to develop good educational outputs, and student achievement in the Arabic language was one of the outcomes that were required to be developed (Ministry of National Economics, 2005).

Moreover, as mentioned by the Ministry of Education, one of the goals for teaching Arabic in Basic Education is to provide students with useful tools to study, to acquire knowledge and to communicate with others; thus, reading comprehension skills become tools which enable students to make personal judgments and evaluate what they read (Ministry of Education, 2004a). Furthermore, the Basic law of the Sultanate, which was issued by royal decree No, 101/1996 mentioned that one of the aims of education in Oman was to promote and develop students' thinking skills and encourage them to use scientific and critical skills (Ministry of Education, 2002). Reading comprehension skills as indicated by many researchers are considered to be a kind of thinking skill (Madkoor, 2002 and Rubin, 2002).

Furthermore, since the first stage implementation of Omani education system in 1998, the teaching of Arabic in the educational system has been re-designed by reforming the Arabic language curricula, the learning methods, and in the way it is assessed (Ministry of Education, 2006a ; Ministry of Education, 2007).

However, despite the improvement efforts that have been implemented to develop the performance of Basic Education students in the Arabic language, and the larger time periods that have been allocated for teaching Arabic language in Basic Education, plenty of evidence has been found by Omani researchers (e.g. Al-Huraizi, 2005; AlFoori, 1999; Al Maskari, 2004) which indicate the deficiencies of Basic Education students in Arabic reading in general, and specifically reading comprehension. This was confirmed in 2003 when the Omani Ministry of Education started to evaluate the outputs of the Basic Education System, especially for Cycle One, grades 1-4. This evaluation showed that Basic Education students were weak in reading comprehension skills, and it was recommended that different factors may relate to this weakness be studied (Ministry of Education, 2006a).

In addition, the Ministry of Education in the Sultanate of Oman acknowledged this problem when carrying out a study in 2005. This study found that Basic Education students in Cycle One, which ranged from grade One to Four were very weak in reading comprehension skills based on the results of the reading comprehension test that was used to measure them. The study relied on the views of teachers, supervisors, principals and parents who had children in Basic Education and recommended that some other factors that may influence the performance of students in reading comprehension be studied. These factors were Arabic language textbooks, the school environment, students' families' economic level, students' attitudes toward reading, students' health status, parents' involvement in supporting their children in reading and Arabic language teachers' beliefs in teaching reading (Ministry of Education, 2005a).

Moreover, educational reports issued by Arabic language supervisors and the principals from several educational regions in Oman have also shown that the performance of Basic Education students in Basic Education is still below expectation. It has been recommended that some school variables and non- school variables such as parental involvement in reading, which is related to students' reading ability and their attitudes toward reading, be studied (Ministry of Education, 2007).

In the same way language development committees which were formulated by Ministerial Decree no (105/2006) have indicated that Basic Education students need more emphasis in developing reading comprehension, and a study of different factors related to parental involvement in reading or Arabic language teachers' attitudes toward reading or teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading that may influence reading comprehension acquisition by Basic Education students in Oman was recommended (Ministry of Education, 2006a).

Besides this, the recommendation to study the relationship between parental involvement in reading, students' and teachers' attitudes towards reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading were indicated in some Omani studies such by Alsiyabi, (2004) and Almaskari (2004). The review of studies on reading comprehension in Oman has found that Omani researchers were more focused on studying either the performance of students in reading comprehension, such as the study by Alfoori (1999) and Omani Ministry of Education in 2005 or the effects of some learning strategies on developing students' reading comprehension (such as the studies of Alsyabi, 2004; Alhuraizu, 2005; Alkindi, 2007). This focus has created a gap in the need to study the affects of the home and school literacy environment as important variables which effect student language ability in general including their reading comprehension performance and attitudes toward reading.

As a result, this study is seeking to fill this gap and to address other factors that have not been studied by the Ministry of Education in Oman since 2005 and other Omani studies. Although the Ministry of Education have studied certain factors; they are still other factors that are related to student reading comprehension performance which need to be addressed such as student and teacher attitudes towards reading, teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, as well as parental involvement in reading.

Furthermore, because it has been 10 years since the implementation of study by the Ministry of Education in 2005, it is necessary to conduct a new study to investigate factors such as students' and teachers' attitudes toward reading, parental involvement in reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading as predictors of student performance in reading comprehension.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of this study consisted of (4100) students in Grade 4 who enrolled in the schools of three governorates in the Sultanate of Oman during the Academic Year 2016/ 2017 The governorates involved Al-Dakhliyah, Al-Dahirah and Al-Buraimi. These governorates were chosen for the following reasons: (a) they had large numbers of schools, and (b) they were located within diverse environments and in a variety of locations in the Sultanate. The population of the study also consisted of (380) teachers who thought Arabic to those students, and the parents of those students. The reason for choosing students in Grade 4 was that students in this grade are in the final stage of the First Cycle of the Omani Basic Education System (before they move into the Second Cycle). Student performance at this stage therefore represents the cumulative performance of the First Cycle.

Study Sample

It is important in any study to set a sample that represents all members of the population. In the current study the participants were chosen from the population by applying the cluster sampling method. Cluster sampling is convenient when the population is very large or spread over a wide geographic area (Gay and Mills, 2009). The cluster sampling method of this research is discussed in the following paragraphs.

First: the sample was chosen by taking 30% of the Basic Education schools, grades 1-4 from each Governorate. According to Babbie (2005), a sample of 20-30% is acceptable when the population is less than 500 and 10-20% is suitable when the population is greater than 500. Based on the total number of 137 First Cycle of Basic Education schools (137 schools < 500), the study examined 30% of the population of the study = 42 Basic Education schools from the First Cycle schools, grades 1-4.

Second: One fourth grade classroom from each school was randomly selected using a assigning a number to each classroom and selecting numbers from a table of random numbers.

Third: in cluster samples for each Basic Education class involved around 20 students as decided by the Ministry of Education (2006a & 2007) The number of the cluster samples equals the sample of the school, the classrooms and the sample of Arabic language teachers. (15 schools = 15 classrooms = 15 teachers × 20 students in each classrooms = 300 students = 300 parents). Therefore the sample of this study consisted of 300 students with there parents and 15 teachers of Grade Four from First Cycle. Table 1 shows the sample of First Cycle schools, involving grades one to four.

Table 1

Sample of the First cycle schools, grades 1-4 in each Educational Governorates

Educational Governorate	Total Number of School	Sample Percentage (%)	No. of Schools Involved
Al-Dakhliyah	30	30	9
Al-Buraimi	13	30	2
Al-Dhahirah	17	30	4
Total	60		15

Research Instruments

The following five instruments were employed to collect the study data

1. The Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) developed by Colleague and Author (2009) to measure student reading comprehension performance.
2. The Parental Involvement in Reading Questionnaire (PIRQ), which was developed by the researcher to measure parental involvement in reading.
3. The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) developed by McKenna & Kear (1990) to measure students' attitudes toward reading,
4. The Teachers' Attitudes towards Reading Scale (TATRS) developed by Saleh Al-Nassar (2000) to measure teachers' attitudes towards reading,

5. The Reading Teacher Self- Efficacy Scale (RTSES) developed by Haverback (2009) to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. Appendix (A) contains the English language version of these instruments.

The Validity of the Instruments

The content validity of the adapted and developed instruments was acquired by having the instruments examined by some experts in the field of teaching the Arabic language in the Basic Education, Measurement, Evaluation Department of the Sultan Qaboos University, and the Ministry of Education in Oman.

The Reliability of the Instruments

This study applied five instruments; four of which were imported from reliable instruments: The Reading Comprehension Test developed by Colleague and Author (2009) to measure student reading comprehension performance, The Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) by McKenna & Kear (1990) to measure Basic Education students' attitudes towards reading, The Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Reading (STATR) devised by Saleh a-Nassar (2000) to measure Arabic language teachers' attitudes towards reading, and the Reading Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (RTSES) provided by Haverback (2009) to measure teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. Only one of the instruments was developed by the researcher: The Parental Involvement in Reading Questionnaire (PIRIQ).

In order to test the reliability of the five instruments, the researcher conducted a pilot study among 100 students of 4^{th} –grade; 50 males and 50 females and their parents; 25 fathers and 25 mothers from two Basic Education schools in Al-Dahirah Governorate.

The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were used to assess the reliability of the Elementary Reading Attitudes Survey (ERAS), Scale of Teachers' Attitudes toward Reading (STATR), Reading Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (RTSES), and the Questionnaire of Parental Involvement in Reading (PIRIQ). Table 2 displays the coefficients of internal reliability by Cronbach alpha. On the other hand, the same randomly sample of (50) students were used to extract the reliability of Reading Comprehension Test by using a Kuder-Richardson Formula 20 which showed that the reliability of this test is (0.77)

Table 2

The Coefficient Reliability for ERAS, STATR, RTSES and QPIR

The instruments	Alpha
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS)	.849
Scale of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Reading (STATR)	.80
Reading Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (RTSES)	.93
Questionnaire of parents' Involvement in Reading(QPIR)	.896

Results of the Study

Multiple regressions with simultaneous analysis was used to examine the prediction of combination's predictors: students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading on the total score of reading comprehension test. It also was used to examine the prediction of combination's predictors: parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading on students' attitudes toward reading.

Multiple liner regression looks at the relationship between one dependent or outcome variable and one or more predictors or independent variables (Muijs, 2004). According to Leech, Barrett & Morgan (2005) "multiple regression aim to predict an interval or scale dependent variable from a combination of several interval/scale and or dichotomous independent/predictor variables."(p.91). The researcher had no prior ideas about which factors would predict more than others, therefore, in this case the simultaneous regression was used to test the prediction.

(*R2*) was used to measure how well the model of predictors is likely to fit in the population. **(*R2*)** is the amount of variance in the dependent variable explained by all the predictors together (Muijs, 2004). The significance of predicted variables **β** coefficients were tested by using t-statistic comparing **β** weights, which were employed to determine the predictive power of the independent variables on dependent variable. The significance level of .05 was used.

Four assumptions must be tested before doing the multiple regressions: (a) Normality, and Multicollinearity. Mean and Standard Deviation with skewness and kurtosis were used to measure the normality distribution of these variables. It is clear from the Table: 4.32 below that the measures of total score of reading comprehension performance were (M= 15.6992, SD = .96625); skewness was .830, and kurtosis .058. Students' attitudes measures were (M= 3.4252, SD = .10944); skewness was .151, and kurtosis -.640. Parents' involvement in reading measures were (M= 3.5994, SD = .24048); skewness was .859, and kurtosis 1.691. Teachers' attitudes measures (M= 3.6606, SD = .53594); skewness was -.607, and kurtosis 753. Teachers self-efficacy beliefs measures were (M= 3.7364, SD = .50104); skewness was -.264, and kurtosis -.371. It is clear from this presentation that all dependents and independents variable have skewness and kurtosis between 1 and -1 which indicates to the normality distribution (Coakes, Steed and Ong, 2010), Thus, the assumption of normality was met.

Multicollinearity happens when there is a high correlation among the independent variables. This assumption identified by examining the correlation matrix, and Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) between the independent variables involved in a study (Fah & Hoon, 2009).

The two-tailed relationship between variables was used to test the strength of the relationship. Moreover, the scale of Davis (1971) which indicated the strength of the relationship was used to interpret the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. This scale consists five points (Negligible = .00 to .09; Low =.10 to .29; Moderate = .30 to .49; Substantial = .50 to .69; Very Strong = .70 to 1.00).

The correlation matrix which presented in Tables 4 and indicates that the correlation coefficients indicate that students' performance in reading comprehension was significantly and positively correlated at low level with all dependent variables (students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading). Reading comprehension was lowly correlated with students' attitudes toward reading (r = .179**, P < .001) and with parents' involvement in reading (r = .189**, P = .001). Reading comprehension performance also had a low correlation with teachers' attitudes toward reading (r = .108**, P < .001) and also with teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading (r = .189**, P < .001).

Students' attitudes toward reading had a significant and positive association with their parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading with low to moderate level as presented in Table 4.33. It was associated moderately with parents' involvement in reading (r = .485**, P < .001) and with their teachers' attitudes toward reading (r = .399**, P < .001). On the other hand, students' attitudes toward reading had a low correlation with teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading (r = .169**, P < .001). All the pervious explanation indicates that the relationship between dependent and independent variables was not too high, it was ranged from low to moderate level, which means that the assumption of Multicollinearity was met.

According to Muijs (2004) Tolerance is the amount of variance in the individual variable not explained by the other predictor variables; it varies from 0 to 1. The acceptable limit of tolerance levels must be closest to 0.1 and VIF below 5.0 (Cohen et al., 2003). The presented data in Tables 3. and 4. indicate that the assumption of multicollinearity was not violated.

Table 3
Descriptive analysis for the independent and dependent Variables (N=300)

The Variables	N	M	SD	Variance	Skew	SE	Kurt	SE
Reading nprehension	300	15.6992	.96625	.934	.830	.084	.058	.169
Students' Attitudes	300	3.4252	.10944	.012	.151	.084	-.640	.169
Parents' involvement in reading	300	3.5994	.24048	.058	-.007	.084	.427	.169
Teachers' Attitudes	15	3.6606	.53594	.287	-.607	.084	753	.169
Teachers' Self-Efficacy	15	3.7364	.50104	.251	-.264	.084	-.371	.169

Table 4
Correlation between dependents and independents variables (N=300)

Variables	Reading Comprehension	Students' attitudes
Reading Comprehension	–	
Students' attitudes	.179**	–
Parents' attitudes	.189**	.485**
Teachers' attitudes	.108**	.399**
Teachers' self efficacy	.189**	.169**

Results of the Study

Do the combination of students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and their self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading predict the students' performance in reading comprehension?

As shown in Table: 5 the combination of students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading was significantly predicted the total score of reading comprehension test, $F(4,83) = 20.054$, $p < 001$

Table 5

ANOVA for Combination Predicted Variables on Total Score of RCT and Model Summary of the Variability in RCT Based on the Predictors

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	69.815	4	17.454	20.426	.000[a]
Residual	713.510	835	.855		
Total	783.324	839			

The model summary in Table 6, shows that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) by using all the predictors simultaneously is .299 (*R2* = .089) and the adjusted *R2* is .085 which means that only .

Table 6

Model Summary of the Variability in RCT Based on the Predictors

Model	R	R Square	Adjust R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.299[a]	.089	.085	.92439

09% of the variability in the total score of reading comprehension test was a accounted for by the factors of students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. According to Muijs (2004) (*R2*) give us a measure of how well our model is likely to fit in the population. Therefore, based on his guide, this is a poor fit model ($0.09 < 0.5$).

As displayed in Table: 7 below, the four factors: Students' attitudes toward reading, parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading significantly predicted the students' performance in reading comprehension.

Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs had the most contribution, the beta weight was B= (.249), P<.001 followed by parents' involvement in reading B= (214), P<.001 and teachers' attitudes toward reading B= (-.120), P< .005 while, students' attitudes toward reading had the lowest prediction, it beta weight was B = (.081), P<.005.

Table 7

Coefficients of the Predicted Variables on Total Score of RCT

Model	Unstandardized Standardized Coefficient Coefficient					Collinearity Statistic	
	B	SE	Beta	T	P	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	9.143	1.039		8.804	.000		
Students' attitudes	.719	.349	.081	2.062	.039	.699	1.430
Parents' involvement	.858	.164	.214	5.220	.000	.651	1.536
Teachers' attitudes	-.217	.077	-.120	-2.806	.005	.594	1.684
Self-Efficacy	.481	.076	.249	6.291	.000	.694	1.440

The results implied the presence of significant relationship between students' performance in reading comprehension and their attitudes toward reading (β = .081, p =.039). The teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading (β = .249, p =.000), and parents' involvement in reading (β = .214, p =.000) were found more significantly related to students' performance in reading comprehension followed by teachers' attitudes toward reading which has had a significant negative impact on students' performance in reading comprehension (β = -.120, p =.005). It is clear from the results that students' performance in reading comprehension associates positively and lowly with their attitudes toward reading, their parents' involvement in reading, and their teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading.

A negative low relationship was only found between students' performance in reading comprehension and their teachers' attitudes toward reading.

Do the combination of parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and their self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading predict the students' attitudes toward reading?

The combination of the three factors; parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading was statistically significant, F (3.83) =119.933, P<.00 as presented in table 4.38 below. Meaning that the combination of predictors: parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading had significantly predicted students' attitudes toward reading.

Table 8

ANOVA for Combination Predicted Variables on Students' Attitudes toward Reading

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.024	3	1.008	119.933	.000[a]
Residual	7.025	836	.008		
Total	10.049	839			

The model summary in Table 9, below shows that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) for all predictors simultaneously is .549 (*R2* =.301) and the adjusted *R2* is .298, which means that 30% of variance in students' attitudes toward reading was accounted for by the factors of parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. According to Muijs (2004) this is a moderate fit model. (*R2* =.301 between 0.31-0.5).

Table 9
Model Summary of the Variability in Students' Attitudes toward Reading Based on the Predictors

Model	R	R Square	Adjust R Square	Std.Error of the Estimate
1	.549[a]	.301	.298	.09167

As displayed in Table 10 the three predictors (parents' involvement in reading, teachers' attitudes toward reading, and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading) contributed significantly to students' attitudes toward reading. Parents' involvement in reading had the most contribution, the beta weight was, β = (.425), P<.001 followed by teachers' attitudes toward reading β = (.190), P<.00 and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading β = (.114), P < 001 sequentially.

Table 10
Coefficients of the Predicted Variables on Students' Attitudes toward Reading

Model	Unstandardized Standardized Coefficient Coefficient					Collinearity Statistic	
	B	SE	Beta	T	p	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.495	.056		44.379	.000		
Parents' involvement	.193	.015	.425	12.990	.000	.783	1.278
Teachers' attitudes	.039	.008	.190	5.131	.000	.613	1.633
Self-Efficacy	.025	.008	.114	3.302	.001	.703	1.422

The results showed that students' attitudes toward reading had a significant and positive association with their parents' involvement in reading (β = .425, p =.000), teachers' attitudes toward reading (β = .190, p =.000) and their teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading (β = .114, p =.000) with low to moderate level as presented in Table 4.40. It was associated moderately with parents' involvement in reading, and lowly with teachers' attitudes toward reading and their self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. It is clear from the result that the students' attitudes toward reading more associates with their parents' involvement in reading than with their teachers' attitudes toward reading and self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading.

Discussions and Recommendation

These results demonstrated that students' attitudes toward reading, parental involvement in reading and teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading are good indicators of student reading comprehension performance.

Student attitudes toward reading were the best predictor, followed by parental involvement in reading and self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading. However, teachers' attitudes toward reading were not considered to be a predictor of student reading comprehension performance.

The fact that students' attitudes toward reading is the strongest predictor of student reading comprehension performance as revealed by the study could be due to the fact that the correlation between students' attitudes toward reading and their reading comprehension performance was high. Again this result shows the Omani Ministry of Education, parents, and all educators who work in the field of Education the importance of improving students' attitudes toward reading as an effective approach to improving their students' reading performance.

Therefore, the Ministry should work to improve students' attitudes toward reading and their reading performance.

It is not surprising that parental involvement in reading was the second predictor of student reading comprehension performance. We know that there are no benefits for any programs provided by schools to raise student academic performance without support for these programs by parents. This means that the role of teachers in school and parents at home to improve student performance in general and reading comprehension in particular cannot be separated. This result also demonstrated that students and their homes are the foundation for developing school academic achievement.

The position of self-efficacy beliefs as a third predictor shows the importance of this factor for students in improving their reading comprehension performance. This finding is supported by Moran and Hoy (2001) who reported that "teachers' efficacy beliefs have a strong positive link to their students' performance". A possible explanation for this finding is that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are directly related to their classroom practice in teaching reading. This view point has been supported in the literature review by many researchers; for example, Hall (2004) mentioned that teachers' beliefs influence their decisions about what to teach, and how to teach it, how to approach the curriculum with their students, dictate teachers' actions in the classroom, shape knowledge and create a filtering effect through which new ideas or knowledge are processed and then interpreted. Barkley (2005) reported that teachers with high self-efficacy gave more appropriate instructions for their students than those teachers who possessed low efficacy beliefs.

Therefore, this finding also reflects the influence of teachers' beliefs about their ability to teach reading, and is consistent with those of Baccus (2004) and Tyler (2006), who indicated that there was a relationship between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their students reading comprehension performance.

The findings which related to teachers' attitudes toward reading revealed that the contribution of this factor on the prediction of reading comprehension came in a low position after teachers' self-efficacy and parental involvement in reading. In fact, teachers' attitudes toward reading were not a predictor of student reading comprehension performance. This means that Arabic language teachers, based on their classroom practices do more than just highlight their love of reading.

This result is highlighted by comparing the contribution of self-efficacy beliefs and the attitudes toward reading in the prediction of the student reading comprehension performance. Self-efficacy beliefs play a bigger part in developing student reading comprehension performance than teachers' attitudes toward reading. Based on the results, **the study recommend the following recommendations**:

1. The Ministry of Education might pay closer attention to the concept of promoting family literacy environment at home by implementing programs to improve reading ability of Omani parents and great awareness of parental involvement in improving reading performance of their children.
2. The educational authorities should encourage Arabic language teachers in the First Cycle of Basic Education to involve parents in discussing their children's reading problems.
3. Ministry of Education through school administrators should establish periodic meetings between Arabic language teachers in the First Cycle of Basic Education and parents to share their information and experiences on their children's development and student reading ability, as well as developing their students' attitudes toward reading.
4. Students' attitudes toward reading influence on their reading comprehension performance .Therefore, it is recommended to the Omani the Ministry of Education to provide students and their teachers with the reading materials they need based on their reading interests.

5. Since teachers' self-efficacy is a predictor of student reading comprehension performance, the Ministry of Education should continue to create a positive climate for those teachers by encouraging them.
6. Since the parental involvement in reading was the second strongest predictor of students reading comprehension performance, and the first predictor of students' attitudes toward reading, the Ministry of Education with the cooperation of other agencies should pay more attention to literacy programs and be aware of the importance of reading.
7. Since the relationship between student reading comprehension performance and their teachers' attitudes toward reading was negative, the Ministry of Education should study this problem and discovers the reasons for this.
8. Due to the correlation between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs about teaching reading and their attitudes toward reading, the Omani Ministry of Education should perform an evaluation for their teachers every academic year.
9. The Educational Evaluation Departments in the Ministry of Education should be equally concerned with assessing student reading comprehension performance and their attitudes toward reading.
10. Because teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have a strong effect the student reading comprehension performance, teachers need to develop their teaching skills and discover increased self-efficacy about teaching reading by using modern learning tools.
11. The results revealed that parental involvement in reading was the most important predictor of students' attitudes toward reading, Arabic language teachers in Basic Education should implement training programs for parents to demonstrate effective ways of implementing home reading activities.

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