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PARENT – CHILD INTERACTION AND HOME READING

Exploring activities with children from pre-school to grade 4 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Parent – child interaction plays an important role in a child's language development in all aspects of life. Home reading activities (HRAs) such as reading a book, singing a song together, playing flashcard games together are reported as a most effective interaction activity (Kam Tse et al., 2017). These types of home reading activities support children not only in reading prior to entering school and during early grades, but also in fueling positive parent and child relationships which is a predictor of children's success in studying and in life. Frequent home reading activities have a positive impact on children's reading skills at school, critical thinking skills, and behavior positivity (Kam Tse et al., 2017)

This research investigates home reading activities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam among a sample of parents of children from pre-school to grade 4. The main purpose of this study is to find out the level of awareness among parents in a fast-developing city and to explore how active they are in home reading. By collecting data among parents, this work will provide information on which factors affect this practice.

Research results show that parents in Ho Chi Minh City have a general awareness of the benefits of home reading activities. However, parents still have a vague understanding of home reading activities regarding their method and specific benefit. The research also shows that the cultural and societal factors in Vietnam have a strong impact on the low frequency of home reading activities.

Keywords: Parent and child interaction, home reading activities, Ho Chi Minh City

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1 INTRODUCTION

Reading is viewed as an effective way to improve people's awareness and cognition. It especially supports children's learning.

Although parents in most societies are aware of the benefits of reading, few have a clear understanding about how to effectively support reading with their children.

My interest in conducting this study is to describe the situation in a Vietnamese city – Ho Chi Minh City and to explore the following key research questions:

- How aware are parents of reading's impact on children development?
- What activities are parents practicing for home reading with their children?
- What factors influence Ho Chi Minh City parents' reading practice in this context?

This paper consists of six sections. The first section is an introduction, while the second section is a literature review of the parent and child interaction role in child development and home reading activities. This section will also outline a key type of HRAs interaction – shared book reading.

The third section reviews the research context – Culture and Society of Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam. Section 4 presents the research methods and findings and the section 5 discusses the findings. Section 6 represents a conclusion with responses to the above key research questions.

2 LITERATURE BACKGROUND OF PARENT AND CHILD INTERACTION IN THE CONTEXT OF READING

In this section, the role of parent – child interaction in children development will be detailed. Specifically, it will review the context of home reading activities and pay particular attention to a key activity in the home environment - shared book reading. Parent – child interaction is one of the key aspects to support home reading activities. It is also suggested that home reading activities such as shared book reading is a key activity in support of children development.

2.1 The importance of parent and child interaction in early childhood

Child development can be understood as a constructivist process which is highly influenced by the parent or care giver. Parent – child interactions in childhood are a foundation to the process of child development.

Recent studies have shown that parent and child interaction support the child's opportunities to get know about the social world (D. Laible et al., 2004). These interactions comprise many society-related skills (D. Laible et al., 2004) such as emotional cause and consequence, emotional valuation, and behaviors that are acceptable. According to Meins et al. (2001), parent communication with a child supports child cognitive development. This support includes the development of social cognition skills (Meins et al., 2001), execution of functioning (Bernier et al., 2010), and behavior (Sharp & Fonagy, 2008). It is recommended by theorists that children not only gain from the direct experience of parental care, but also gain in a secondary symbol of experience, which are mediated by language and shape the relationship between parent and child throughout his or her childhood.

Furthermore, according to Bowlby (1988), the condition of children with psychological difficulties worsens under inconsistent care from the parent (Bowlby, 1988).

Furthermore, it has been proposed by Biringen et al. (2000) that children's capacity to express their troubled feelings or conflicts could be affected by restrictive parental communication between them and the parent, while a more open communication is effective to support children to express their

emotions and to get know about what they are feeling) . Researchers also suggest parental coding systems consist of two factors: parental language and parental behavior (parent language is a part of parent behavior). These two factors are the main contribution to parent and child interaction (Menashe & Atzaba-Poria, 2016); development in cognition (Kuhn et al., 2014), development of mind (Ensor et al., 2014), emotional skills (Ensor et al., 2014), development in conscience, ethical understanding (D. J. Laible and Thompson, 2000), and even supporting the structuring of children's brains.

In summary, in the early years of child development, positive interaction with a parent is an important foundation for children with the subjects below (Bakeman & Adamson, 1984):

- 1) Language and emotional domains;
- 2) skills of development in cognition and behavior; and;
- 3) experiences for communication.

2.2 Home Reading Activities (HRAs)

Research relating to home reading activities influence on children's language has been conducted by Yu Zhu, Hung Wai Ng, Shek Kam tse and Sau Yang Hui from the University of Hong Kong on 2017. Early home reading activities generally are activities which are engaged by a parent with children before they enter primary school. These activities primarily include:

- Reading a book,
- Telling a story,
- Singing a song,
- Reading together with a computer,
- Playing with alphabet toys,
- Playing letter / words puzzles,
- Writing letters / words,
- Watching TV relating to reading, watching videos with lyrics subtitles,
- Reading or singing aloud or playing puzzles with characters (Kam Tse et al., 2017).

Kam Tse et al. (2017) also suggested that home reading activities in general are observed by the activities below:

- reading to children aloud,

- listening to children reading aloud,
- sharing with children about what they have performed, what they have read on their own, or conversation about reading at school,
- taking children to library or a bookshop,
- sitting with children using computer or writing with children, encourage them to write” (Kam Tse et al., 2017).

However, reading as a task of homework nominated by teacher from school is not considered as HRAs in the context of this study. These activities especially at an early age before entering school have a positive effect on children’s language development skill both in a mother language and second language such as English.

2.3 Shared book reading at home

Relating to home reading activities, there is research (Mary Ann Evans & Shaw, 2008) noting strong benefits from parent – child interaction by shared reading at home according to some method of this type of interaction. Furthermore, it is suggested that shared reading book is an activity that brings together enjoyment, language, and literature.

It has been suggested by Hewison and Tizard (1980) that children who are read to by their mothers regularly have considerably higher achievement in reading more than those who are not read to by the mother regularly.

According to research about shared book reading from Debaryshe (1993), normally between 43% to 75% of preschoolers are being read to daily or more often (Debaryshe, 1993). In a study in Southwestern Asian countries including 659 parents, 475 (about 72%) stated they read with their children five or more day per week (Boyle et al., 1987). In the context of American low-income families, about 50% of children from 0 to 4 years old have parents reading to the child everyday (Evans and Shaw, 2008).

According to the research above, we can see a positive connection between reading to children and their development of skills relating to language as well as literature. This was highlighted in Meta-analysis research by both Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pelligrini (1995) and Scarborough and Dobrich (1994) which pointed out that about 8% of the variance in children’s reading

accomplishment are accounted for by time parents spend on shared reading with their children at home. It gave a strong effect on children' language development (Bus et al., 1995) (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994).

2.4 Parent – child interaction through shared book reading and its benefits.

The practice of shared book reading is a diverse but constructive process comprising many factors which can be grouped into three main domains: *when, what* and *how to read effectively*.

When – In this study context, we are looking primarily into when and at what age to start reading to children with the assumption that this is one of the more important factors effecting children's reading development. It is also assumed that what time of a day reading takes place is not as relevant since parents may read at times most convenient to them. The earlier, the better is the main assumption for this domain. It could be said that learning to read is a process influenced by many factors from very early in the life of children and before they enter official school (Mary Ann Evans & Shaw, 2008). The earlier children began to be read a book to by parent, the better they will be in phonemic awareness (a foundation skill for reading) and controlling for cognitive abilities (M A Evans et al., 2002). Children should begin reading with basic foundational steps such as phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge before entering school and continue in early primary grades to fuel later reading gains (Bishop & Adams, 1990).

What - According to a research of Mary Ann Evans and Deborah Shaw on 2008, Every type of what to read have each benefit depend on what stage the readers are being at. From beginning where the most important thing to do is get children absorb an encouragement to be pleased to read. Listening, especially in term of rhythm is suggested to be paid attention on first. The next level is textbook or picture book with repeated pattern. And only after these two activities, context of the book is taken into consideration to get children learn, and children development are steadily absorbed through step by step like this in the contribution from many factors: joys, new things, (Mary Ann Evans & Shaw, 2008)

The below illustration in a tree metaphor will show more detail about what to read, and how to interact with children in its connection with the benefits.

How to read effectively - To understand how to read effectively we should understand how reading works. For the purposes of describing the reading process, I use the metaphor of a tree. While other achievements regarding language, behavior and even all other subjects such as mathematics can be considered as apples in the tree. Apples come from a tree that is formed from strong roots. To understand how the process brings benefit to children, parents will need to know how to act accordingly through every step.

The reading process is detailed in the following diagram in three columns. The first column details aspects including developing the reading process. The second column relates to the growth of children's reading development respectively, while the last column outlines suggested activities to be practiced – what to read or what to interact between a parent and child

Table 1: Summary of reading process and its impact on children reading development



Reading process and its impact

	Movement	Parent - child interactions facilitate this skill
B	COMPREHENSIVE	to translate spoken words into print
Shared book Reading (Word recognition)	expected to have modest effects on word reading development language comprehension skills entailing vocabulary, syntax, background knowledge of facts and concepts; knowledge about print concepts and genres; and verbal reasoning skills	Parents invite non readers into the role of reader through books with predictable text in which the child "reads" on the basis of context and picture clues, previous knowledge, and familiar, recurring grammatical patterns. parents accord more of the reader role to their children and actively coach their children in decoding the print
Shared book Reading (Vocabulary Development)	Children are exposed to more linguistically complex language and varied vocabulary - more on acquisition new words than greater depth of meaning in words match written words as they decode them to words they have heard and know	Parents actively teach and test vocabulary whilst reading to their toddlers and preschoolers, and use more complex speech and cognitively higher-demand questions as children get older child was asked to repeat the words, retell the story, and/or engage in activities related to the words' meanings
A	DECODING	information relied on within the printed word to translate print into phonological representations or spoken
Alphabetic Knowledge (names and sounds)	Fluency in letter name and its sound, which facilitate learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences and decoding	Parents teach children to identify and practise letter names and sounds and how to print them, provide children with alphabet blocks, books, and friezes as frequently as reading them storybooks
Phonological Awareness (syllables, rhymes, phonemes)	better at rhyming tasks and later more successful in reading	Parents tell nursery rhymes to, read rhyming poetry to, sing songs with, encouraging them to fill in the rhyming words, - CHILD LISTENING

The reading process can be described according to main knowledge groups – “inside out” (Decoding) and in contrast, “outside in” (Comprehension) (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). Firstly, the basis as well as foundation of the process refers to information from and inside printed words to translate them to phonological reflection or spoken words (this can be described as the process of decoding). The second refers to the process of translating spoken words to print – “outside in” (comprehension). (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). The first – inside out (decoding) involves information from alphabetic knowledge (distinguishing between letter name and its presented sound respectively) and phonological awareness (the awareness and according capacity to reflect the sounds into spoken words). The second – outside in - refers to information helping readers explore what printed words mean, and how they are aware and understand about semantics as well as syntactic knowledge, narrative structure, and conceptual relates (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998).

These aspects of reading can also be referred to as underlying skills. Research in 2001 by McCardle et al. concluded similarly that skilled reading included two strands of underlying skills. One comprises skills relating to word recognition such as phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition of words. The other comprises skills relating to comprehension such as building vocabulary, basis knowledge, syntax, concepts and events; knowledge on print; and verbal reasoning skills (McCardle et al., 2001 page #?).

Shared book reading and word recognition.

In contrast to activities such as playing with toys, interaction at meals time, routine parental activities, and watching television, reading a story book supports children to reaching better linguistically complex language and varied vocabulary. It also strongly relates to perceptive vocabulary (Debaryshe, 1993); Raikes et al., 2006). It is also regarded as an effective and active way how parents can teach their children as well as test their children’s vocabulary. By performing activities in reading time such as reading to toddlers and preschoolers, performing more complex speech and cognitively higher-expected questions once children get older (Beals & Tabors, 1995; Sénéchal et al., 1995; Snow & Goldfield, 1983).

With pre-schoolers who have been introduced novel words in books, research has found a strong influence from this activity on their vocabulary achievements (e.g., Biemiller & Boote, 2006; Elley, 1989; Ewers & Brownson, 1999; Sénéchal & Cornell, 1993); despite the observation that this process focuses more on gathering new words more than reaching a deeper understanding of what the introduced words mean.

The following list outlines practices for reading to support increased recognition of novel words in a story book:

- Read one same book at least three time
- Each novel word appears multiple times in the book
- The novel word has good illustration by drawings and pictures along with parent or child point on the word
- These words are important in the text
- The meaning of these words is clear from the book story context, picture or from the explanation of parents
- Most of these words are noun
- The child was encouraged to repeat the word, retell the story, or play a game or take part in activities relating to the meaning of the words (Debaryshe, 1993), (Raikes et al., 2006)

The above listing offers clear instructions for parents in designing shared book reading to support vocabulary development (Mary Ann Evans & Shaw, 2008); (Tabors et al., 2001).

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Vietnamese social and cultural context

3.1.1 Characteristics of Vietnamese society

This study examines reading practices in Vietnam. Vietnam is a rapidly developing country with an average annual growth rate over the past two decades of roughly 6% ((Dang et al., 2020).

While there has been a recent movement of the population into cities, the majority still work in agriculture in rural areas. This sector accounted for nearly half of the working population (44%) in which, more than two thirds (about 68%) work as self-employed in agriculture (Dang et al., 2020).

Furthermore, gender inequality in Vietnam still high with men more likely to take part in formal work (42% of men are in wage employment while for women it is only 30%). As a result, it is common for woman to not work and stay at home working in the household and looking after their children. Even though the country has implemented universal primary school, more than half of children (53%) from ages 1 to 5 do not have the chance to attend childcare (Dang et al., 2020).

3.1.2 Impact of culture

In Vietnam, social status is still strongly reflected in education attainment. Education can be even more highly prized than wealth or success. Regarding education itself, the drive for high academic achievement directs individual and family behaviors. Therefore, parents can have the tendency of saving in their daily life in order to give support to their children's education. Commonly Vietnamese parents regard their responsibility to their children not only in feeding them, but also in getting them well educated (Hunt, 2005). Children also view a responsibility when growing up to take care of their parents and boys are expected as first born babies more than girls (Shin et al., 2006).

Hard work and high performance are emphasized in Vietnam. Vietnam also has a literacy rate of roughly 90 % (Hunt, 2005). In Vietnam, a connection can be observed between education attainment and respect from society (Hunt, 2005). Appropriate use of language and behavior are still regarded as proper in communication and expressing respect (Hunt, 2005). Parents expected

high performance especially in academic results from their children. This expectation puts significant pressure on children leading to a very competitive society. It also can be said that Vietnamese parents find it difficult when their children are not living up to their expectations.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 A qualitative approach

The approach used in this study is qualitative. Qualitative research methods support studies relating to behavior, psychology, history, and social matters. (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Similarly, qualitative research can be used when a researcher explores understanding in human behavior, and the social world of human beings (Morgan, 1983). A key aspect of the qualitative research method approach is the potential for a high degree of reliability or trustworthiness. (Bogdan & Taylor, 1990). And yet, this type of approach allows participants to express their own ideas, point of view or values which are difficult to account for in a quantitative research approach. In qualitative research, a clear research process is required. The researcher also must choose theory and research steps to perform so that the research can be understood, followed and translated to others (Silverman, 2016). This research utilizes a clear qualitative approach to explore the practices relating to reading interaction of parents in Ho chi Minh City for children from pre-school to grade 4. It is understood that this study will not be able to make wide generalizations since it will involve a small sample, however it will work to provide a targeted insight into the perception of a group of informants.

3.2.2 Qualitative content analysis

In order to describe the analysis section of this paper, researcher rely on Schreier research work on 2012. In summarize, qualitative content analysis is a systematic method which uses a coding frame and e same sequence of steps (Schreier, 2012). In qualitative studies, the researcher applies their own knowledge or understanding in and checks if these are consistent with data collected (Schreier, 2012). Qualitative content analysis also puts high value on the trustworthiness of the research.

As with many other qualitative methods, qualitative content analysis has a combination of two factors: linear as well as cyclic (Schreier, 2012). It is linear because it uses a sequence of steps to perform the process of research. It is cyclic as a process gone through by the researcher (Schreier, 2012). Qualitative content analysis allows a flexibility to this study by allowing for a targeted view of the data connected to the research question. Secondly, the process categorizes information into what is significant and what is not (Schreier, 2012).

3.2.3 Reliability of data analysis

Reliability is the consistency of research process. Research is considered as reliable when there are patterns found to repeat in answers from participants. Reliability comes in two forms: external reliability and internal reliability (Becker et al., 2012). External reliability is formed by the level of replication of the study, while internal reliability is formed by the quantity of observations members agree to in the same findings (Becker et al., 2012). In qualitative content analysis, it is considered that internal reliability is important when the coding frame is consistent. In qualitative content analysis, this matters not only on whether the coding frame is reliable, but also into what extent it is reliable because reliability is always a matter of degree (Schreier, 2012). In evaluating the reliability of research coding frame, we can make a comparison between person to person or time to time (Schreier, 2012). The research coding frame used in this study collects data from parents in the context. Interviewees were chosen from different ages and occupations to ensure a wider coverage. Respondents were free to answer questions without any leading or guiding.

3.2.4 Semi-structure interview

There are many ways to collect data in qualitative research such as ethnography studies, focus groups, and interviews. For the purposes of this study, data collection is in the form of interviews. This data collection method can be considered one of the most widely employed methods in qualitative research (Becker et al., 2012). Interviews are also attractive in qualitative research since the process can be flexible and semi-structured (Becker et al., 2012). This approach gives room for the voice of participants themselves. Semi-structured interviews were chosen in this research in order to ask key questions to collect data, while on the other hand, allowing room for each participant to express their deeper perspective, or clarify responses.

Data collection is performed through a survey (in Vietnamese) about parent- child interaction in Ho Chi Minh City. It was sent to 100 parents by email and personal Facebook pages. Thirty-eight parents responded. The survey provide data for a far view about the picture of Ho Chi Minh City parents interaction with their children. The survey results are summarized in the table 2 below.

Looking into this group of respondents, ten participants were invited to join a semi-structured interview. The age of participants ranged from 18-40 and were all parents of children from 2 years old to 12. The demographic information of the respondents is listed in Table 1 below. The study conformed to all ethical requirements for research, and all parents participating gave informed consent to participate. Participants d provided information relating to their HRAs classified into a group by questions.

Names of the participants have been changed in order to maintain anonymity. Participants were invited to a video call via facebook and spoke with the researcher in Vietnamese. The researcher asked questions relating to the questionnaire one by one. Between questions, interviewees were open to add to answers and could say more about his/ her reading practices.. Each interview lasted roughly 10 – 15 minutes. Interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the researcher took notes during interviews. Results below were translated by the researcher from Vietnamese into English.

Without prior selection, the group agreeing for interview were all parents with a university education. This sample represents a limit of this study since research results cannot be generalized for parents with education under university level.

Table 2 – Participants demographic information

Respondent	Age	Education	Occupation	No. of child	Gender of child	Age of child
1	37	University	Make up Artist	2	Male Male	9 years old 3 years old
2	28	University	Government PR Staff	1	Male	4 years old

3	36	University	Media Specialist	1	Female	7 years old
4	37	University	Chemical Engineer	2	Female Female	11 years old 6 years old
5	37	University	Quality Control Manager	2	Female Male	11 years old 2.5 years old
6	36	University	University Admin Staff	1	Female	6 years old
7	34	University	Secretary	1	Female	3 years old
8	35	University	University Exercise Trainer	1	Female	2.5 years old
9	27	University	Customer Service Staff	1	Male	3 years old
10	32	University	University Professor	2	Male Male	6 years old 4 years old

4 KEY FINDINGS

Table 3 – Parent and child interaction in Ho Chi Minh City;

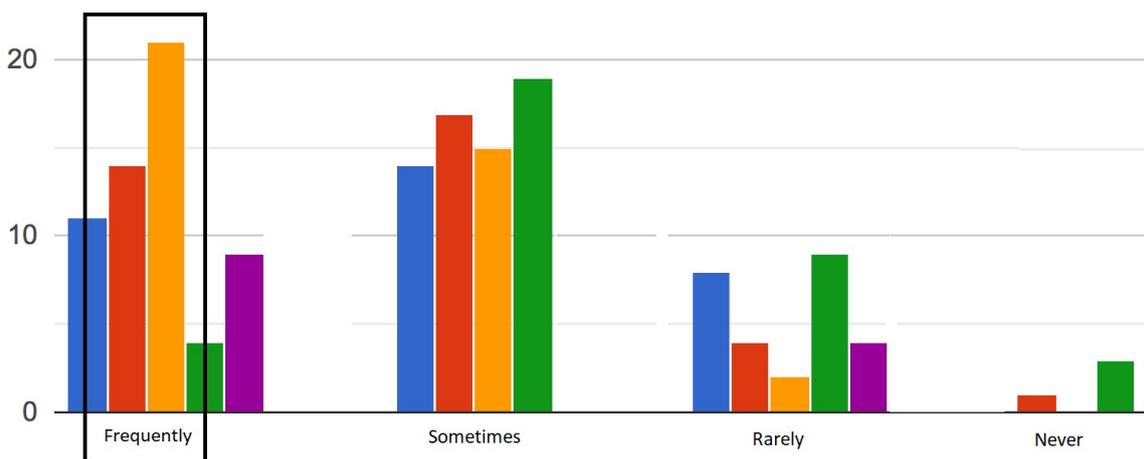
Colours present for activities: Blue is watching TV together, Red is reading, Orange is play together, Green is cooking together and some clean up the house in violet.

X axis presents for the 4 level of frequency from frequency to sometime, to rarely, and never. While the Y axis is number of people accordingly to activities.

How often are you interact with your child? (Frequency - Sometimes - rarely - Never)

What activities do you normally interact with your child at home amongs:

Watching TV Reading Play together Cooking Clean up house



In this table, we can see that the two most frequent activities for parent-child interaction was spending time together at home reading and playing together. And from this group, the study looked closer to see how they performed these activities in practice

Key results from analysis of data from the interviews are main patterns found significantly repeated through participant responses. They are grouped into 3 main subjects below:

4.1 Vague awareness about benefits and method reading

Although all participants replied that they regard reading as very important for their children development but when asked how that importance only 3 respondents could list from 2 to 4 benefits of reading properly to some extent. None of the respondents spoke clearly about the role of reading in child development with respect to vocabulary building or word recognition. For example, when I asked one respondent, “Do you think reading is important?” She replied, “yes – it is very important”. I then asked, how is that important? Her reply is: “Well, It helps children learn a new thing, new stories in society, and learns about ethics”.

Three of the 10 participants watched the development regarding reading development and other skills development in their child through reading, while eight participants replied they have not paid attention to watch if there is any movement. The general level of awareness not only on the benefit of reading, but also in a reading process was noted by all 10 participants when they started reading a book or telling a story. None of them have awareness about the process and the benefit of first level benefits of reading such as listening alphabet music or other types of phonetic awareness to build a root for a reading developing tree. Although they all replied there are other activities besides reading a book such as singing songs together, telling story, or playing a game. They engaged in these activities following the child’s situation and requests.

Nine out of 10 participants replied that it was the mother who interacted with children at bedtime by reading, singing a song, or telling story. One respondent replied that they rotate between the mother and father in interaction with child depending on who had time. This finding supports the notion of traditional Vietnamese family roles in which the mother has a stronger interaction with the child compared with the father.

Two of 10 participants replied that they did not separate home reading activities and home reading relating to homework assignments from school. One respondent – a chemical engineer with a university graduate degree replied that “yes” when asked “Do you read with your kids at home?” And then asked, “when do you read with them?” - , she replied: “um, I always sit with my daughter during every study time at night. We read and I check what she has done that her teacher’s assigned, if not that I will look over them with her until everything is done and then we go to sleep”.

4.2 Frequency of Home Reading Activities

All respondents replied that they believed that reading is important for child development. But when asked to detail specific actions such as how many times a week, and when to be asked how long for each time, no specific length was given by eight respondents.

Four respondents replied that they participate in reading activities frequently (in this context - twice a week), while four others replied they do read frequently, but did not have a routine with any frequency. For example, when one respondent was asked, “do you often read with your child?” She replied yes. Then she asked how many times is regarded as “often”. When told that meant twice a week, she replied that she was not sure, and she replied she could not remember to count how many times on average, and they read rarely sometimes when not having time or once a month or on the weekend. This is the same situation with other participants – they could not be sure about having routine reading activities. Only two of the four that said they regularly read on a daily basis.

Three of the 10 respondents replied that they started reading to their child while they were pregnant. And this group also replied that their child had a frequent or even daily reading routine with no reminders from the parent. In these cases, the child was asking to be read to. One additional point from this group related to those children who were read to from pregnancy or newly born to 2 years old – these three children liked to be read to from several books during every reading time. These children only went to sleep after being told to do so from the parents.

4.3 Limited availability of resources and environment for reading.

All respondents replied that they read using their own books bought by themselves from bookstores. In contrast, all participants replied that they did not bring their child to a library to read and 9 replied that there was no library with children’s books nearby. Only one participant was aware of the location of a library.

Seven out of 10 participants replied that their child didn’t have reading activities at school. One participant stated that her child was reading at school once a week, while two replied that they were unsure about reading or reading as one of the school lessons at school.

5 DISCUSSION

Compared with the research of Boyle et al (1987), the reading activities especially shared reading at home frequency levels in Ho Chi Minh City can be regarded as significantly lower.

Findings from this study suggest that culture, and parental awareness about reading benefits influence parents' involvement and practices in reading with their children. The environment plays an important role to encourage children to read, with the poor availability of books and reading environments such as libraries. Given the low reading frequency compared to western countries, for example in Finland, where we can find libraries through the country, Ho Chi Minh city in Vietnam in comparison has poor availability of reading material and environments. It is suggested that this context is in part responsible for low levels of shared? reading activities.

The study findings also highlight similar patterns as seen in the research of Mary Ann Evans and Deborah Shaw who state that learning to read is a process that starts much earlier in life and that is based upon a variety of foundational skills acquired before children enter formal schooling. Three respondents who started reading to their children early (in this context before 2 years old) replied positively to questions relating to current reading habits including the need for a high level of frequency and encouragement to read. Findings indicate that starting to read to a child in early year especially from pregnant or birth prior to 2 years old leads to the higher possibility of building success with reading from that age and later age on.

This research also points to parents associated reading for homework from school (in this context parents support children at home with the expectation that they can reach high grades at school) through home reading activities. According to research from Kam tse, Yu Zhu, Sau Yan Hui, Hung Wai Ng, these two activities are different in methods as well as benefits (Kam Tse et al., 2017)

6 CONCLUSION

Although there is recent research pointing out many positive effects from shared book reading at home (Mary Ann Evans & Shaw, 2008), there is still a lack of awareness among parents in this research about its benefit. This lack of awareness prevents parents from further supporting their children's efforts at reading. Parents still have a vague understanding of home reading activities regarding the method and specific benefit. This limited them in building routines to support their child in finding reading habits as well as in taking advantage of reading benefits.

Even though the sample in this study is small, we can propose from these responses that the practice of home reading is relatively low in Ho chi Minh City, especially as it relates to the sample of parents of medium and high-income families. Furthermore, it could be suggested that the low home reading situation and low availability of reading material leads to a low frequency of parent and child reading, which in turn can have effects on the overall literacy levels and education of families accordingly. Further research is necessary to confirm this hypothesis across wider and more diverse communities in Vietnam.

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