I, Fawzeyah Alawadhi, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Studies.

It is entitled:
Oral History of Women Educators in Kuwait: A Comparative Model of Care Ethics Between Noddings and Al-Ghazali

Student’s name: Fawzeyah Alawadhi

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: Stephen Sunderland, Ph.D.
Committee member: Vanessa Allen-Brown, Ph.D.
Committee member: Marvin Berlowitz, Ph.D.
Oral History of Women Educators in Kuwait: A Comparative Model of Care Ethics Between Noddings and Al-Ghazali

by

Fawzeyah Al-Awadhi

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ABSTRACT

In a constantly expanding and globalized world, the voice of Kuwaiti women teachers and their perception of their cultural identity is burdened with adapting to new educational trends mainly from the West, and accommodating an increasing student populations. This creates a disconnect between the basis where educators learn/gain their ethic of care and what's expected of them to perform. This dissertation sheds some light on the severity of this disconnection and the origins of the manifestation of the ethic of care in Kuwaiti women educators. The major findings of this study are the existence of an 'anchor relationship' the narrators had, and a strong familial foundation that served as an ‘anchor relationship’ for some narrators. Other findings indicate the necessity of revamping the teacher preparation program (T.P.P.) in order to ameliorate the current gap in embracing the Kuwaiti cultural codes.
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To my parents, my dear husband and children
who walked with me throughout this struggle
to reach the finish line of this long journey.
Preface

Spending five years teaching high school girls in Kuwait within a changing educational system was a powerful personal experience for me. In the beginning it felt like depression. It led me a deep sorrow and made me question my choices and myself: “Why am I here? Why did I choose this profession?” It took me another seven years to be able to crystallize my answer. What kept me in the educational profession was my desire to lift my students' good hearts, to nourish them, and to help them cultivate stronger and better hearts and minds. Could good teachers transform the hearts of students through their education in Kuwait? For the answers to this question, let us begin with a story.

A new teacher walks into her classroom on her first day. She’s intimidated and has many questions: "What if they don't like me? What if I fail in building a connection with them? What if I prove myself wrong? I am still young and inexperienced, as everybody’s telling me. Should I give a stern first impression? At least that way I can get the students’ respect; there won't be chaos in my classroom. That would be good in the eyes of the senior teacher, principal, and the supervisor. But would it be good in my eyes?

“It is my first year and I need to establish myself. Therefore, I will not let those kids ride over me and make me appear to be the weak link in the department. The others are far more experienced than I am. I suppose it won't do me harm if I follow their advice.”

The teacher walks into a classroom, and 30 pairs of eyes look her over top to bottom. She thinks, "I should’ve shined my shoes a bit more," and then greets her class.

“Good morning ladies.”
The class greets back.

"Sit down," she says, thinking she will begin the lesson. But the students try to test her out and see if she can handle stress. They ask her where she was from originally. They ask if she
always wanted to be a teacher. They ask if she ever taught in some of the urban high-society schools.

She feels confused. "Should I answer them? Should I show them some transparency into my soul? Isn't it too early for that? Honesty is a good thing, but will it lead down the wrong path?" The teacher’s head is full of so many voices—of other teachers, relatives, principals, career advisors, and authors of articles about class management—but none can be heard distinctly from the other; it is a wild noise in her head. She starts getting agitated about the continuous questions of the children, and their staring at her. She succumbs to her first impulsive reaction, and quickly says, "Silence!"

The teacher takes the easy way and follows her superiors’ traditional advice. And so on she goes for the first hour of her semester. She begins to lecture, expecting her faithful students to jot down notes and not question what is being said simply because it is coming from her—a teacher.

In the class, a student sitting in the middle feels a question rising in her head. The teacher goes on lecturing. The student thinks politely that she will wait until the question and answer phase of the teachers’ lecture comes when it would be her right to ask her questions.

Two weeks pass and the third week begins. The teacher ends her lengthy lecture and then asks the question that she was instructed to put down in her daily planner, and for which she received a check mark on the teacher review questionnaire. It says: "Teacher follows up with students’ questions during class: ‘Any questions?’"

The student in the middle is eager to find an answer. She stretches up her arm, but the teacher calls on someone else.

The student in the middle is eager to find an answer. She stretches up her arm, but the
teacher calls on someone else. Her, and for which she received a check mark on the teacher review questionnaire notes and not question what is being said simply because of her preferred students for whom she can predict what type of question they might ask. The student waits for another chance and raises her hands once more. The teacher picks one of the students in the back rows, just to show how "inclusive" she can be. The student asks a terribly wrong question, which infuriates her. The teacher sees this as her inability to connect with her students, yet she does not want to admit this shortcoming; she resists this feeling. She cannot be a failure. The teacher then takes a five minute break to patronize the entire class on how hard she's been working to plan these lessons and how unappreciative they are toward her efforts.

The student feels her voice and her desire fading. This time she raises a finger, wishing that the teacher would pick her now. The teacher decides not to take any more questions as a punishment and decides to expand that punishment by giving the whole class an extra reading/homework. The student is puzzled with the amount of work that was just piled on top of her regular duties. The voice in her head starts to discuss which task to start with, despite the monotonous sound of the teacher in the background. The student is still trying to find an answer. “Maybe in the next segment, it’ll get clearer,” the voice tells her. But the teacher moves on to another heavy-with-facts lecture. The student’s inner voice is not only confused. It is silent.
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

I am a doctoral student who has been impressed with the concept of the philosophy of care after my introduction to the "ethic of care" by Nell Noddings\(^1\). I was also deeply touched by the work of Middle Ages Muslim education philosopher Abu-Hamid Al-Ghazali.\(^2\)

I am an educator from Kuwait, teaching high school girls for five years in Kuwait. I have started on this journey to better my teaching and the education in my country. I want to do this as a result of how the "the Ethic of Care" has deeply touched me and impacted my way of thinking, especially about education for girls and young women. I want to understand care as a philosophy of education that I will use in the future. At a personal level, this educational philosophy will help me construct my own philosophy and practice.

I have explored the ideas of Nell Noddings, the philosopher who developed an educational concept of the "ethic of care." The importance of this philosophy to me is that it uniquely faces the questions of what teachers should be doing to reach the goal of connecting with students to effectively voice their concerns in a constructive way. In Kuwaiti culture, there is a concept of teacher authority that confounds caring participation by both teachers and students. I believe that a new way, a new culture of teaching and caring can be created. Moreover, I believe that a caring philosophy has a direct connect with Islamic philosophy. The main goal of this dissertation is to construct a shared reality of care ethics between the West comprised with contemporary philosopher Nel Noddings and the Middle East Islamic world,

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\(^1\) I was first introduced to Nell Noddings in my first graduate studies year, (A. Hemmings, Personal communication, March, 5, 2006)

\(^2\) I came across al-Ghazali when reading *The History of Philosophy in Islam* by Boer (1967).
comprised in the 12th century Muslim philosopher Al-Ghazali. This reality can be transformed into the guiding educational philosophy in teacher preparation programs. It would equip teachers with better skills in connecting within their own cultural contexts and with the current and/or emerging theories and applications of the modern world that is mainly produced in the West, without any sense of estrangement or alienation.

The structure of the Islamic identity in the global education world nowadays is weakened due to the academic dependency Muslim countries that not only rely heavily on western research but also blindly trust in their untested-potential success (Al-Atas, 2010). This dependency creates a framework that assimilates important characteristics such as cultural codes that determine identity formation. Al-Attas (2002) suggested that to fight this dependency, scholars must consider further investigating in the intellectual traditions and cultural practices of their own people, in order to mitigate this dependency based on a solid foundation of identity formation. Furthermore, Nasr (1990) provides an explanation with this clearly crafted statement, “For most Muslims, all of their other relations and concerns are intertwined with their understanding of their religions as a reality inseparable from these other relationships” (p. 79). “Emphasis added.”

Islam is not only an ideal but a reality a Muslim lives. In his book about Traditional Islam in the Modern World, Nasr (1990) draws an historical and philosophical map of the transition of traditional Islam into modernity. An important element to the subject of this study is Nasr’s explanation of the interpretation the Islamic world had facing West ‘domination’: In order for the Islamic world to overcome this Western domination, the “message” (p. 81) of the faith

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3 To introduce Al-Ghazali in my dissertation, I used several resources in Arabic and English. My main resources in Arabic were first al-Ghazali’s Book of Knowledge which is the first book of the first quarter in his masterpiece, Iḥyā’ ʿulūm al-dīn (The Revival of the Religious Sciences). I have used the online e-book addition from www.ghazali.org, I based most of my readings from Badawi’s Al-Ghazali’s Works, 1977; Dr. Mushhad al-All’af’s, Books and Thematic Apocryphal Message to the Imam Al-Ghazali That were attributed to it which are not His, 2005. For English books related to scholars who studied Ghazali, I mainly founded my research on Montgomery Watt’s translation of Ghazali’s autobiographical work, The Faith (Or the Deliverer from Error).
needs to be modified to adapt to fit in with the modernity surrounding it.

In a study conducted on Kuwaiti managers examining their application of Islamic ethics, the authors, Ali, & Al-Kazemi (2007) highlighted the tension existing between Kuwait cultural identity and the prevailing European thought as wealth started to pour in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Kuwait in particular. This brought with it social anxiety (Nasr, 1990). Forming one’s identity in such friction is alarming. Tamir (2006) defines the politics of identity formation as “membership in cultural, linguistic, and national communities” (p. 502). He argues that for the sake of saving the identity of a group of people estranged from a healthy interaction of the basic elements of identity formation, an “educational revolution” is needed in order to reconstruct curriculum and teacher training among others (p. 502). Thus, the need to empower teachers to connect with their inner voice is not only beneficial but also necessary. Authority in the classroom, based on a peaceful identity lies within the hands of the teacher (Tamir, 2006). The teacher can sense the vitality of engaging and connecting with one’s original cultural codes.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the states’ goals in the education strategy plan of 2005-2025 and the 1979 Emir's decree of embracing culture and welcoming the new trends in fields of knowledge, many teachers in the Kuwaiti educational system face a severe contradiction between their theoretical and highly intellectual teacher preparation program and the actual reality of teaching in the field. This huge gap that most teachers fall into has not been filled or resolved yet. During the teacher preparation program teachers are morally charged to nurture the mentalities of their students. Yet there is no roadmap provided on how to do so. Hence, the dilemma of disconnection takes place, which not only impairs their moral judgment but also creates a double standard for the teachers to adapt inside and outside the classroom.
Disconnection becomes common between the students and their teachers. In order to resolve conflict, the first step should be forming a relationship in order for teachers and students to communicate, while not breaching the ethical code and school culture. The story discussed earlier provides an example of a teacher’s ethical and moral struggle in the context of an old-fashioned educational system patterned after the traditional British model. The late 19th Century the British Empire completed 'The Marine peace treaty' with the Gulf States. This resulted in an ongoing relationship between Kuwait and Great Britain to the turn of the 20th Century. Mubarak the Great decided in 1913 to put a limit to the Ottoman influence by signing a treaty with the British. Communication necessitated the use of English language. Therefore, the introduction of systematic education was introduced to Kuwaitis by sending delegations to learn the language in Britain, or designing a school system following the education organization of Great Britain in 1950 (Al-Bader, Yousif, 2007, p.4-8; Zahlan, 1989). On a different note the sudden yet booming economic prosperity in Kuwait in the first half of the 20th Century, for a small population has opened doors for the importation of modernity that caused a major friction in the ‘traditional’ society. Abbas J. Ali, Ali A. Al-Kazemi, (2007) "Islamic work ethic in Kuwait", Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, Vol. 14 Iss: 2, pp.93 - 104

It is difficult to start a conversation under the constraints of the authority protocol (meaning, for example, the oldest person starts first). Consequently, the disconnection process between teacher and students takes place gradually. Hence it is imperative that the teacher acts from a moral understanding of what is her role in building this bond if she wants to be true to herself and transcend traditional customs in order to connect with her students.

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4 Al-Mhelby, A., Al-Muqate, H., Al-Dhafiri, M., (2004) in a study that examined the role of school educators in promoting student thinking in Kuwait, found that misused authority, hinders the creativity of both the teachers and the students.
With relative scarcity in the field of educational ethics in Kuwait, this study is significant especially in the current times and conditions of political and religious confusion in the world in general, and in the Middle East in particular. It is advocates a combination of new methods and a philosophy of education necessary to explore the connection between Western and Middle Eastern philosophies of education. The literature on Kuwaiti teacher moral behavior is sparse but I have reviewed a few studies investigating Kuwait moral behavior (Al-Ansari, 2002; Al-Hooli, 2009; Al-Rumaithi, 2008; Al-Shehab, 2002; Gillien, 1992; Tannir & Al-Hroub, 2013) that range from kindergarten students to Ph.D. scholars. However, these studies used Kohlberg, L. (1971), who pioneered the revolutionary cognitive moral development theory, as its backbone theory to define how “moral” these participants’ actions were. Some of the published studies used The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSS, 1989) while the majority used the DIT (Defining Issues Test) developed by Rest (1979). Al-Shehab (2002) argues that the participants in his study did not respond “in terms of human intuition about fairness, but in terms of being faithful to divine revelation” (p. 817). Therefore, they scored lower than their North American counterparts. This suggests the incompatibility of such quantitative tests to measure morality and ethics due to the difference in culturally defined moral scales between the West and the Middle East.5

Consistent among several of the Kuwaiti studies (Al-Ansari, 2002; Al-Rumaithi, 2008; Al-Shehab, 2002) that utilized the DIT test to measure the moral patterns norms of Kuwaiti students are findings that the scores reported were lower than the scores by the original creator/founder of the test (Rest, 1979). It also states that this low score conforms to other studies conducted on Muslim Arab students. It is imperative, henceforth, to establish a unique method

5 Gielen, Uwe. P. (1992) in the article, The Development of Moral Reasoning and Perceptions of Parental behavior in Students from Kuwait, actually stated in the conclusion that the DIT test may not be a valid test in an Arab culture.
that not only acknowledges the findings of the scholars of the West, but also acknowledges and incorporates the socio-cultural aspect of the Middle Eastern scholars.

There are several points of concern to address here. First, the Kohlberg stages of moral development represent a strong achievement in the field of moral development. However, it is an achievement that was constructed and fully informed by a Western culture. Second, Carol Gilligan (a person from the same culture as Kohlberg) criticized his theory that these stages of moral reasoning do not accommodate gender differences (Gilligan, 1982). Third, and most importantly, there needs to be a bridge to see if this theory of moral reasoning is compatible to a Middle Eastern culture. Hence, it is imperative to find philosophers in the field of ethics and education who have conducted their own philosophies in their own environments. This study is important because it will provide this bridge between two prominent philosophers: Nel Noddings of the 20th Century in the United States, and Abu-Hamid al-Ghazali of the 12th Century in Persia.

According to philosophers of education Noddings and Al-Ghazali, the teacher needs to care for and love her students as if they were her own children. Teachers and students may need to use a different approach to establish a sound relationship founded on trust. This is accomplished once the student feels and trusts that her teacher cares and will listen to their ideas, questions, and feelings. It is safe to ask questions, express feelings of confusion, and even make mistakes. The teacher demonstrates patience and listens to her student’s confusion. The student observes the efforts of her teacher to clarify the question. Hence, a cycle of trust builds where both acknowledge each other’s thoughts and feelings. This is roughly the cycle of a caring relationship from Noddings (2003).

6 Al-Ghazali listed in his educational theory eight ethical duties he needs to maintain to become a successful teacher; the first was to love his students as if they were his/her own (Al-Ghazali, 2003).
The student’s voice grows stronger. Furthermore, the teacher's self-awareness grows stronger. Both of them are at the same stage of beginning a learning relationship: both are eager for more interaction due to the good consequences they are sensing already. Mutual respect deepens. The teacher starts to understand the sides of her student better. The student appreciates her teacher more and figures out some important codes in communicating with her.

This connection, Noddings (2002; 2003) emphasizes, is an "engrossment." The teacher’s is giving full attention thus far to the student. Also, the teacher’s capacity to develop care about the student is kindled to provide better chances for her student to grow. The student is willing to participate further with her own education to provide both the teacher and herself with more insights into her learning experience.

For Al-Ghazali (2003), it is essential to form an interaction between the teacher and student because it is an act of love and relationship with God. In addition, the relationship fosters appropriate respect between the student and teacher. He considered the teacher-student relationship to be at a deeper level than the parent-child relationship, due to what the teacher can deliver for the student: knowledge that will lead to happiness in the afterlife, through knowing God and obeying him out of love rather out of fear.

I am excited about the common and central theme of "connection-engrossment" between a modern educational philosopher and a 12th Century educational philosopher. The seeds of educational reform may be in this positive and important connection.

The philosophy of caring can be explored in the roots of Islamic philosophy of education. I will look at a major philosopher in education and theology. He was called the person most

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7 Noddings indicated in her theory on Care that a caring reciprocal relationship between student and teacher can create an environment of care which would allow growth of positive traits for both parties, one of which is student self-confidence that results in, the student's voice will gain more strength.
influential after Prophet Mohammad (peace and blessing be upon him PBUH)\(^8\), namely: Abu-Hamid Muhammad Al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali was a 12th century Muslim philosopher and theologian who have embarked on his teaching journey in Nizameyah University in Baghdad in 1091 where his educational thought started to crystalize (Encyclopedia of Islam). He believed that the major aim of education was to provide people with the knowledge that would lead them to worship and know God better in order to live happily in this life and the afterlife (Asari, 1993; Nofal, 2000).

While Al-Ghazali did not explicitly use the word 'care', he used words that were associated with care and are deep concerned with truth and caring in the teacher-student relationship. I will show how words, such as "compassion," "love," "mercy," and "wisdom" are a part of his philosophy of care and how they can relate to the potential for a new caring connection between teaching and learning.

I will explore Al-Ghazali's philosophy of care in education in my literature review and in my interpretation of the data from the interviews. I will show the similarities and differences between these two major philosophers, Noddings and Al-Ghazali. I will shed a light on the common critical philosophical elements both Noddings and Al-Ghazali have that fit together to make caring an essential component of the teacher-learner relationship. This new combined philosophy could then form the basis of an educational foundation in the K-12 education and in the teacher preparation program in Kuwait.

This dissertation is a first step in my development of a deeper study of caring as a comparative educational analysis. Many Middle Eastern teachers face an identity crisis. Many people feel they are not listened to because they are not modern (Al-Tarrah, 2002) or because

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they are not connecting Islamic teachings with modern teachings (Nasr, 1987)\(^9\). I want my work as a Kuwaiti educator to have teachers feel a sense of peace and connectedness within themselves because they have understood both Western and Middle-Eastern philosophies. Therefore, teachers will not have to face ethical challenges in borrowing ideas from a different culture, while also taking a vital step for the progress of students.

In order to introduce the reader to al-Ghazali's work, I would like to offer a brief philosophical introduction. Al-Ghazali says we are in a constant state of reflection using the mirror of our knowledge. If we do not keep our mirror shiny it will grow dim and unclear due to the impurities that began to form. Therefore, a constant state of reflection is imperative in order to keep one's self in check and at peace from all of the “impurities” left in our souls from daily confrontations (al-Ghazali, 10/2003).

This state of reflecting will facilitate many things. For example, it will bond the person with their inner self/voice. This would only lead to a better understanding of one's own issues that might pose as a problem in connecting with students. Palmer (1998) explored the “heart” of the teacher and the effects of re-exploring it. He described the fact that some teachers become hindered due to a state of fear. Fear of failure can hamper the creativity and productivity of the teacher. Palmer wrote, “To reduce our vulnerability, we disconnect from students, from subjects, and even from ourselves. We build a wall between inner truth and outer performance, and we play-act the teacher’s part” (p. 17). This state of mind can be reduced and possibly eliminated by reflections over the objective of our choice to become teachers. It may help clear up any doubts and provide the teacher with a wider array of options when trying to retrieve a memory from an

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\(^9\) Nasr (1987) wrote about how the nature of the Islamic society's attachment to Islam transgresses the rituals of inseparable reality in their relationships. Islam is not juxtaposed with matters of life and affiliation, but it is the context through which a Muslim perceives these realities (p. 79).
experience with a suitable-strategy to plan or construct an answer to a conflict whether outwardly or inwardly.

As Skellie W. (1977) demonstrates in his dissertation, the implications of al-Ghazali’s philosophy, for the teacher are the following: once this data base is built in a person through a process of reflection, then they would be able to identify elements that trigger a congested state of mind, or a conflicted situation that comes from within the person herself. It will also slowly diminish the fear of “not-knowing.” Once confronted with a new situation, a grey area of not-knowing is created. Only through careful and thorough reflection can this grey area of ignorance be cleared so that fears can be diminished. Once these fears have been confronted, the person is able to act upon a sound judgment (Al-Ghazali, 2003; Nofel, 2000). Keeping the ignorance going will only make this mirror of the self (i.e., soul) foggier and dimmer.

Unfortunately, many teachers suffer from the lack—or in some cases the shortage—of reflecting on their own experience. As a result, the teacher’s voice is silenced and estranged. With an estranged voice, the teacher reacts to novel situations in a defensive manner due to the a shortage of compassionate responses. The difference in this case is that without the honest reflection process, there would not be a chance to retrieve a sound collection of memories to judge what truly happened. Eventually, the state of fear due to not-knowing will only grow bigger, and thus trigger more fear. Fear hatches a non-peaceful environment in one's soul.

With this state of non-peaceful actions, a teacher will find it difficult to be creative, and trust her own abilities. Her path is obscured by foreign elements that do not relate to her culture and identity. The person will not only lose the sound that is building the bond between herself and her inner voice, but also, even if she tries to communicate in a process of reflection, the
Therefore, when I provide the teacher with terminology *not* foreign to her in constructing or building the foundations of the teaching profession, the teacher then may be more able to relate to these terms on a personal level. Once, the teacher is grounded in the basics of her profession, the new terminology from the western culture and western philosophy will not have a strong toll on estranging the teacher’s cultural identity. On the contrary, it will fortify her willingness and desire to receive new ideas because then the teacher will be able to discern the core of the borrowed philosophy without any fear of disturbing her inner peace.

This leads to the central theme of the philosophy of care based on the two influential philosophers, Noddings and al-Ghazali: bringing peace back to the souls of teachers. I will provide definitions of care by these two major philosophers first by Noddings then by Al-Ghazali. I will base my definitions on interviews with five Kuwaiti teachers on their experiences of care in their educational careers and life. I will analyze these five narratives based on the concept of care in the educational culture. The dissertation will conclude by recommending specific reforms in Kuwaiti education and questions for future study.

**Kuwait's Demographics and Education System**

The state of Kuwait is located to the northeast of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and southwest of Iran, and to the south of Iraq. Since its independence in 1961, the State of Kuwait has placed a great emphasis on the education of its citizens to cultivate educated and active

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10 Al-Attas, S. M. N., (1980) in his opening statement, *The Concept of Education in Islam*, he stated that the human being is a rational animal, by translating ‘rational’ term into Arabic, according to him, it renders the meaning speech, which means to articulate words in a meaningful pattern through one’s intellect or ‘Aql.’ This ‘aql’ signifies a kind of withholding, “it is an innate property that binds and withholds objects of knowledge by means of words.” (p.2) To grasp the meaning of things he contends, is through, “the recognition of the place of anything in a system.” (p.4) Therefore, for a teacher to know she must understand the meaning of what her experiences represent in her reflection process. If the terminology used to do so were ‘foreign’ to her understanding then it would form another obstacle in her process of deconstructing her fear.
members in the society in order to protect its national identity (World Data on Education, 2010-11, p. 1). Such emphasis is understandable given that Kuwait is located between three large powerful countries.

In Kuwait, education is a right to every citizen. It is compulsory for children from first grade (i.e., age six years) to fifth grade (World Data on Education, 2010-11; The National Report: Development of Education in the State of Kuwait, 2004-2008) Also, education is free to every Kuwaiti citizen from K-12. In 1979, the decree issued by the Emir (i.e., Prince and ruler of Kuwait) defined

“the objective of the ministry (of education) as the development of the Kuwaiti society and the upbringing of its young within an integrated scientific, spiritual, moral, intellectual, social and physical framework, in the light of the principles of Islam, the Arab heritage and of contemporary civilization” (World Data on Education, 2010-11, p.2-3).

It is obvious that the objective of the ministry of education revolves around the necessity of cultivating active members in the society, which fits the current affairs of Kuwait's position. Furthermore, the importance of putting the Kuwaiti culture in perspective is evident in the education strategy of the 2005-2025 plan where it stated, "contributing to the achievement of the interaction with the current age requirement...without conflict with the cultural identity of the society" (World Data on Education, 2010-2011, p. 2).

According to a change that happened in 2003, the educational ladder is comprised of five years of elementary education, four years of intermediate and three years of secondary educations. Education is under the executive direction of the Ministry of Education for K-12 stages and the Ministry of Higher Education for after-secondary education. It supervises the main
two public institutions: Kuwait University and the Public Authority of Applied Education and Training (PAAET), which provide two and four year programs in various fields. Both institutions offer teacher-preparation programs. These programs are monitored under the ministerial decree of the General Education Department in the Ministry of Education. The only other free public institutions that offers a different yet, somewhat similar structure to the teacher preparation program at Kuwait University and the PAAET, is the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. This institution provides a program for those interested in Islamic studies, starting from age fourteen for both girls and boys. The curriculum focuses on Islamic studies, literature and basic mathematics and sciences, and Arabic language and history (World Data on Education, 2010-11; The National Report: Development of Education in the State of Kuwait, 2004-2008).

**Teacher preparation programs in Kuwait.**

The state of Kuwait’s pioneering launch on educating its people in order to render active member in the society, has begun since 1930’s following the discovery of oil that necessitated the presence of educated personnel knowledgeable to manage the country’s newly discovered assets. (Al-Jaber, Z., 1980; Al-Bader, Y., 2007) However, this leap in the modernization of the country has resulted in creating a gap of the Kuwaiti national cultural identity that is derived from the cultural codes of the society, and the modernization system that was brought in from the modernized countries, to catch up with the modernization and development strides. Consequently, this has impacted the teacher preparation program on different scales.

The ministry of education in the State of Kuwait opened the first teacher preparation program in 1949 but was closed in 1951 due to insufficient applicants. A teacher career was not a coveted one hence, the five institutions that were opened between 1953-1975 were closed. This has signified a problem, due to the general perception Kuwaiti citizens had about teaching
profession- the people were distressed believing that the changing wave coming not only from foreigners, but also by nonindigenous teachers is eroding their cultural identity (Al-Jaber, Z., 1980, p. 4) It was not until after the establishment of Kuwait University in 1966 that a call for forming a college preparation program for teachers in all levels, primary, middle and secondary. The college of education was established in 1979. (National Report on Education, 2004-2008; World data on Kuwait, 2010-2011)

Changes to the teacher preparation program occurred since it started in 1966 with the commencement of Kuwait University and the first two colleges were The College of sciences, arts and education and the university college for women. In the 1975-1976 the student-teachers in their second year of enrollment would train at the intermediate level and in their third year they would train at the secondary level. They were required to take on the teaching tasks fully once a week at a school under the supervision of method instructors from Kuwait university or the department of education. (Al-Ahmad, A. A., 1978)

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the origins of the manifestation of an ethic of care in Kuwaiti women educators and its impact over their teaching and educational philosophy. Furthermore, the study is aimed at investigating the connection and disconnection between the teachers and their inner voice. The methodology used is oral history. The data is collected from five Kuwaiti women educators. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What factors encourage an ethic of care among Kuwaiti teachers?
2. How do the qualities of a caring teacher influence the teacher-student relationship?
3. How do educators who practice an ethic of care respond to the expectations of parents and a conservative Muslim society such as Kuwait?
Summary

In summary, the purpose of this introduction was to explore the origin, development and maintenance of an ethic of care for Kuwaiti women teachers in Kuwait. As noted above the educational policy of Kuwait clearly states that their primary goal is to “care” for the young and protect it from physical and moral abuse (World Data on Education, 2010-2011, p. 1). This indicates the heavy weight placed over teaching morals via various fields of knowledge.

The following chapters will discuss this study in detail. Chapter 2 will provide a review of the literature on how effective ‘care’ is in a Kuwaiti educational system in addition to the place of moral education in the Kuwaiti educational system and whether its requirements are met in the teacher preparation program. Chapter three will discuss the methodology chosen for the implementing this study. Chapter four will list the narrative of the narrators, as they will be discussed in chapter five alongside the implications and suggestion for future research.
Conceptual Framework

For an insight on the conceptual framework of this research, the following figure (figure 1.) will explain further.

![Conceptual Framework Diagram]

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

The illustration in figure 1. describes my conceptual framework by incorporating the
ethic of care theory of Nel Noddings alongside the educational theory of Abu-Hamid al-Ghazali. Both philosophers based their ethics’ theory on a relational model that shapes the boundaries of the relationship between teacher (i.e., one-caring) and student (i.e., cared-for). As members of a community, both teacher and student retain a collection of caring memories, where one was cared-for or was the one-caring. In the lifelong process of constructing an ethic of care, one retrieves these memories in order to construct a code of conduct based on his/her value system. This code of conduct informs one’s actions and the paths he/she choses in life. For this study, the focus is on the teacher’s evolving ethic of care and its implication over their relationships with their students.

**Definitions of Terms**

The following terminology was used in the study and listing with proper definition will only aid the reader in getting a better grasp of how they are used here.

*Care*: The term “care” is a very hard term to define. Throughout history the term was used to refer to “concern”, (Reich, 1995), “burden”, or “anxiety”. It is contextual and depends on the elements that coexist with its emergence. Here, “care” refers to the expression of concern, respect, and compassion in verbal and non-verbal actions.

*Cared – for*: The student.

*Engrossment*: A complete attention in the relationship between the one-caring and the cared-for.

*Ethic of Care*: Is based on an ideal model of relationship between teacher and student that includes relatedness and receptivity to each other, where one reasons a problem by concretizing the problem. Natural caring exists within all human beings. It is fortified by practice and supported by "I-must care” from the Ethical Ideal. (Noddings, 2003) Ethical Ideal helps the
natural care reach full cycle by providing practice and using memories and reason to go back to care for the cared-for. Hence, ethic of care is our inclination to naturally care and provide a practice when we are not as committed to the cared-for due to tiredness or displeasing reflections. This Ideal, it is based on a set of memories of caring that we regard as our manifestation of our best selves.

*One – caring:* The teacher.

*Moral Education:* In the context of this study, moral education is looked upon from the perspective of relational ethics, where a value frame of reference is constructed and maintained through relationships and interaction with ones’ surroundings.

*Motivational Displacement:* Reaching a level of care where the welfare of the cared-for is included fully in the shape and design of our goals.

*Narrator:* The participants who shared their stories with the researcher.

*The National Report: Development of Education in Kuwait:* This is a report that was administered and conducted by a committee chosen by one of the most controversial authorities in education in Kuwait and also was concurrently the minister of education in Kuwait who sought to research the faults of her ministry and act upon systematic solutions rendered through research.

*Relational ethics and relationships:* How ethics originate and develop in relation to human interaction with the world, thereby, leading to a path of moral maturity.

*Relatedness:* "Relation is our basic existence towards each other as human and the caring relation is ethically basic” (citation needed here). Also, “The psychic relatedness lies at the heart of Ethic of care" (Noddings, 2003, p. 2). An action from a caring relationship is complete when the cared-for senses and acknowledges our actions of care towards him.
Sufi: A mystic Muslim or as in Meriam-Webster’s online dictionary (2014), “a member of a Muslim group of people who try to experience God directly especially by praying and meditating.”
CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

In this literature review, I discuss how Noddings' philosophy of education relates to caring’s major elements that serve as a foundational pillar for my discussion of a merger of Western and Middle Eastern philosophies of education. I consider the contributions Noddings made to clarify how teachers can manifest a caring ethic through connecting with their cultural codes and establish a caring relationship with their students.

I then discuss the work of Al-Ghazali as it relates to his philosophy of compassion and care. I include his philosophy on care as it relates to the student-teacher relationship, and the cultivation of a teacher's ethic of care and integrity in the educational process.

**Noddings’s Ethic of Care and Education**

Nel Noddings is one of the foremost professionals advocating for an ethics of care. In her arguments, she recognizes that caring is about the relation a person forms with another person or being. Noddings (2003) asserts that caring is a foundation of ethical decision-making. She views care as basic in human life and that everyone wants to be cared for. She also notes that our will to care is derived from our sense of obligation to do so exemplified in the “I-Must.” She distinguishes the state of “natural caring” from an “ethical ideal.” The “ethical ideal” is when we do not care much about the person who is considered the cared-for. On the other hand, “natural caring” is a result of the attachment of the carer to the cared-for. In other words, natural caring does not require motivation through an ethical effort. Therefore, natural caring is a moral attitude that arises out of the experience of being cared-for. On this basis, she refers to ethical caring as a “state of being in relation, characterized by receptivity, relatedness and engrossment” (Noddings, 2002, p. 11).
In terms of schooling and education, Noddings (2003) perceives education as the foundation for caring in society. She says education is “a constellation of encounters, both planned and unplanned, that promote growth through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, understanding and appreciation” (p. 283). Noddings also emphasizes the role homes play in education and that this calls for reorientation of social policy. Homes are where the moral values are honed out of natural caring. Noddings (2007) refers to Aristotle’s thinking that “moral life grows out of the practices in our communities and the demands these practices make on us” Here, Aristotle insists that children should be trained in morally appropriate modes of conduct. This corresponds with Noddings’ call for reorientation of educational policy and including the home culture within the school culture policymaking.

The arguments of Noddings are related to Nancy Chodorow’s (1978) arguments in that children are shaped by the society surrounding them. According to Chodorow, the profound social differences between boys and girls have the root in their different psychosexual development. She argues that boys are unable to relate deeply with others because of their separation from their mothers. However, he is also prepared for work, which requires single-minded efficiency, a business attitude, and competitiveness. However, the girl's close relationship with the mother increases her relatedness capacity. Thus, the role of parents plays an important role in the character of their children when they grow up. Noddings (2003) suggests that the moral fabric of children is shaped at home and that social policy should be reoriented to consider this.

Carol Gilligan (1982) is of the view that boys and girls perceive caring differently and blames teachers for not encouraging children on the subject of care. Gilligan explored the limitations in various developmental psychology theories. Predominantly, Gilligan criticizes
Kohlberg’s moral development which he presented in terms of stages. Gilligan, through a feminist perspective, concludes that Kohlberg’s stages of development do not accord sufficient expression to the experiences and concerns of women. Gilligan advocates for an expanded adulthood view that would be a result of the incorporation of the “feminine voice” into the theory of development. In her advocacy, Gilligan perceives men as pursuers of justice and women as upholders of care through empathy. One of Noddings highlights -- in her ethic of care -- of a sound path for a teacher to understand and receive the voices of her students is via empathy.

**Relationship.**

Noddings (2003) approaches her caring philosophy from a relational standpoint. She emphasizes the importance of the initiation of a relationship that is characterized by reciprocity where the two parties are fully participating in the nurturing of it. As a result, Nodding’s theory of care resides around two major parties, the one caring (in this case the teacher) and the cared-for (i.e., the student). Acts of care are initiated from the one caring towards the cared-for and acknowledged by the cared-for. For example, a student can acknowledge care from the teacher by sending positive or negative feedback to the teacher, who in turn starts to have a stronger bond with the student and a deeper desire to form stronger bonds of care. The student on the other hand receives the action of care through verbal and nonverbal communications. The student gives comments and shares feelings of how he or she perceived these actions of care and if he or wishes to receive further actions of care. The teacher receives such responses from the students, and then decides whether to form future objectives on the premise of the students comments and shared feelings.

**Engrossment.**

The reciprocal nature of Noddings’s (2003) relationship not only brings in feedback—
whether positive or negative—for both the teacher and the student, but it also helps in fortifying the engrossment on both sides in this relationship. Engrossment, according to Noddings (2003), is “is this state of mental suffering […] to be in a burdened mental state, one of the anxiety, fear, or solicitude about something or someone […] To care may need to be charged with the protection, welfare, or maintenance of something or someone” (p. 9). In other words, engrossment is part mental state. She further discusses the term by explaining how to put it into action. Actions of care are an expression of the one caring towards the cared-for. These actions form a sort of commitment in the relationship. This commitment would devalue any false perfunctory interest into the relationship. Through reciprocity, the caring commitment expressed through actions of care grows into engrossment.

Engrossment has been under attack by many scholars as an alienating factor to the teachers. The reason behind such criticism is the misinterpretation of how engrossment functions. Engrossment need not be as Noddings described it, i.e. as a “painful mental status.” However, the presence of it is vital for the nourishment off the relationship. Noddings (2003) states, “at bottom, all caring involves engrossment. The engrossment need not be intense nor need it be pervasive in the life of the one-caring, but it must occur” (p.17).

**Motivational Displacement.**

Once the reciprocal relationship is established, the teacher’s efforts are acknowledged and the voice of the student is heard. The caring commitment crystallizes into engrossment on both sides. On the teacher’s side, it is engrossment concerning the welfare and well-being all of her students. On the student’s side, it is enhancing the teacher’s knowledge of the student’s reality and his/her needs. The relationship elevates into a new level of commitment-based reciprocity, or “motivational displacement.” Motivational displacement functions as a state of
goal formation toward the benefit and welfare of the cared-for and toward the self-actualization. Motivational displacement also functions as a buffer against inactive engrossment. Inactive engrossment is when, for example, a teacher might be concerned for the welfare of one of her particular students but she does not act upon it (Noddings, 2003).

Nel Noddings (2003) has shown that there is both a theoretical and a practical part of the ethic of care. In order for the theory to be realized, it has to be both practice and skill. Noddings says

I have not used the term “practice” lightly. There is a dimension of competence in caring. I have not dwelt on it in previous chapters, because it is, theoretically, derivative. My engrossment and motivational displacement push me to acquire skills in caretaking. But it important to recognize that there are skills. Girls often quite naturally learn these skills by close and continuing apprenticeship to their mothers; boys often fail to learn them because they are diverted to more impersonal and abstract worlds. Thus, although the pursuit and acquisition of skills in caring are theoretically derivative, they are instrumental to its actualization (Noddings, 2003, p. 122-123).

Noddings clearly identifies the practical aspect of care, subsequently acknowledging that ethics of care is not merely a theory but a palpable reality and a thread of our daily lives.

Al-Ghazali’s Educational Philosophy

“For their part, Sunnies were ready to respond to a theologian, who was able to give magisterial definition of their faith, and he was called the most important Muslim since the prophet Mohammad. Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (Died 1111) […] wrote] his masterpiece, *Ihya Ulum Al-Din*, (The Revival of the Religious Sciences) [and] it became the
most quoted Muslim text after the Quran and the Ahadith” (Armstrong, K., 2000).

Abu Hamid Mohammad al-Ghazali was a 12th Century Muslim scholar and philosopher. Under the auspices of his patron, The viser Nizam al-Mulk,\(^{11}\) he became a prominent college instructor at Nizameyah College in Baghdad.\(^{12}\) Al-Ghazali started his education at the hands of a sufi. His education led him to be a pupil of Imam al-Jwaini, a prominent scholar in the late 12th Century-until he passed away in 1087. Al-Ghazali then began traveling to Jerjan, Nisapur, and then Baghdad where he met with Nizam al-Mulk who was enthralled with the young scholar’s brilliance in the debates of Nizameyah. He then became a lecturer in Baghdad and his reputation grew with his position. He wrote one of his important books, \textit{Tahafut al-falasifa} (\textit{The Incoherence of the Philosophers}). This book became the primary resource for many scholars of his time and beyond such as the famous 14th Century Jewish philosopher, Maimonids (Zonta, M., 2007).

Al-Ghazali faced a spiritual crisis at the peak of his worldly success. As a result of doubt with his relationship with God, he went into a two-month physical and spiritual paralysis, from which he sprang, determined to embark on his own journey of self-exploration. As a result of this journey, he wrote his masterpiece, \textit{Ihya Ulum Al-Din} (\textit{The Revival of Religious Studies}) about the day to day ethical conduct treaties for any Muslim to follow in order to be able to live in the shoes of the prophet’s morals and modesty.

Al-Ghazali died in 1111, leaving behind a plethora of books that have impacted the Muslim mind through today. His educational thoughts were borrowed, copied, re-constructed in the Islamic

\(^{11}\) A revolutionary educational reformer and installer of Persian culture and language into the Seljuk’s Nomadic Dynasty in in the 12th Century Muslim world. He established Madrasahs in several cities, such as Baghdad, Nishapur, and encouraged the scholars to spread religion and history, in particular to refute his opponents, the Ismailies who wanted to claim power and dominance (Hamudah, 2012).

\(^{12}\) A school system that provided the common man a chance to seek knowledge. It was called Nizameyah after its founder Nisam al-Mulk (Hamudah, 2012).
world and beyond since the 12th Century until the current times. He was the first Muslim philosopher and thinker who wrote a detailed theory about philosophy of education (Asari, 1993). From this masterpiece, I chose the book of Knowledge (i.e., his first book in his collection of *Ihya Ulum Al-Din*. “The greatest achievement in the opinion of man is eternal happiness and the most excellent thing is the way which leads to it. This happiness will never be attained except through knowledge and works, and works are impossible without the knowledge of how they are done.” (Al-Ghazali, 1269/2003, p. 51). To al-Ghazali the excellence of the path to knowledge is a route of gaining happiness since it is the route to the afterlife. Therefore, it is happiness that we are –in essence- seeking in education.

It is important to note that al-Ghazali did not look philosophically at every angle of science, such as mathematics, physics, logic etc. He focused on metaphysics. Therefore, according to Sulaiman Dunya (1965), it is imperative to clear our heads from all other philosophical denominations in order to be able to fully understand his standpoint in his educational philosophy and the ultimate objective of his educational philosophy, which is seeking the eternal happiness in the afterlife. He emphasizes the importance and vitality of the teacher’s role in a student’s life such that it surpasses even the roles of parents. Parents care and nurture for their child, and ground him/her in morality in the beginning of his/her life, providing a platform to teach them independence. However, teachers go a step further and provide the platform to cultivate the soul and spirit of the student to earn the afterlife through submission to the teaching and will of God.

That being said, first I must present the definition of al-Ghazali’s of education that truly best fits my arguments here. It was presented by Alavi (2007) in his article on al-Ghazali educational thought:
Education is a kind of wise *interaction* between teacher and learner, that proceeds slowly, continuously and developmentally throughout a person’s life in order to, cultivate harmoniously and conclusively all that God has created in the student for his or her happiness and spiritual benefit (p. 312).”Emphasis is added.”

Al-Ghazali used reciprocal action as a way of writing about the establishment of a relationship between the teacher and the student. This in turn highlights one the focal points in al-Ghazali’s philosophy: relationship. The idea of having a teacher-student relationship was so important to him that he devised ethical codes of conduct for both the teacher and the students. In order for the educational process to go smoothly, al-Ghazali insisted on creating a “learning” atmosphere where the student would only be concerned with the cultivation of his knowledge via his strong “ethical” relationship with his teacher (Al-Ghazali, 2003; Alavi, 2007; Gunther, 2006; Nofal, 2000).

To understand al-Ghazali, it is imperative to shed a light on his historical timeline and understand the state of the affairs in the Islamic states then. Al-Ghazali mentioned in his autobiography that he has reflected upon his career as a teacher in Baghdad. This reflection has affected his ability to transcend his relationship with God and be connected to worldly pleasures such as finances, status and position. His autobiographical work, in al-Minqith Min Al-Dhalal (*The Faith*) indicates the importance of reflection upon his philosophy of education and his philosophy of life, in general (Watt, 1953).

Al-Ghazali (1269/2003) states that he found himself after exploring the literature of Sufism. He then reflected upon his goals and his choice of a profession as a teacher at the university in Baghdad. He discovered that his goals were purely materialistic: seeking position and status escalation. He found himself teaching not useful sciences according to his
This highlights the importance of the reflection process for the teacher in two ways. First, one must be able connect with the inner voice of the self. Second, a teacher needs to have this self-exploration in order to reconnect with one’s ethical foundations and how they came to being. Al-Ghazali called upon teachers to purify their objectives in seeking the teaching profession. Teaching should not be intended for status or worldly gains, Al-Ghazali states. On the contrary, it should be sought to learn about one’s self and teach others the path to happiness that resides in their establishing a strong relationship with God (Al-Ghazali, 2003; Nofal, 2000). Therefore, the reflection process is important as well as fortifying the connection between the soul and the voice of the teacher. As a result of the self-exploration and uniting with one’s voice, teachers can reach peace within themselves and embark on a more confident road to impact and educate their students.

**Common Themes**

The main goal of this dissertation is to construct a common reality of care ethics between the West, based on contemporary philosopher Nel Noddings, and the Middle East Islamic world, based on the 12th Century Muslim philosopher Abu-Hamid Al-Ghazali. Both philosophers confirm the importance of the existence of a ‘relationship’ between the teacher and the student. A healthy relationship is marked by certain qualifications that both philosophers, Noddings and al-Ghazali, agree upon. I will list the common themes between both of them in the context of relationship.

It is important to establish a relational bond, or connection, to facilitate the teaching and education process. It is natural for a human being to seek connection, according to both Noddings and al-Ghazali. As a result, they describe how this relationship manifests, and will
inform future collaborations and communication. Every mechanism has to have its own rules and regulations, hence, these two philosophers studied the manifestation this relationship. Noddings (2003) stated that, Noddings aborations and communication. simply means that we recognize human encounter. As we examine what it means to care and to be cared for, we shall see that both parties contribute to the relations; my caring must be somehow completed in the other if the relations is to be described as caring.” (p. 4).

These common themes that both al-Ghazali and Noddings share are, establishing a relationship between teacher and student is the basis for a sound education. This relationship needs to be guided with, as Noddings has termed it, ‘roles’ (2003, p. ) and codes of behavior as al-Ghazali has detailed in his book of knowledge. They also, stressed the importance of family and parents in not only instilling the initiative of learning but also providing the milieu for proper education. In addition of course, to the building caring and loving memories in the student-teacher relationship in order to build a reservoir of caring memories which will help uphold the “ethical ideal” of the teacher as Noddings has called it, and the awareness of the teacher toward the students’ needs. Finally, they both contended the importance of creating an environment suitable for learners to acquire their knowledge within.
CHAPTER 3—METHODOLOGY

The foundation over which both philosophers Noddings (2002) and Al-Ghazali (2003) build their educational philosophies upon is relationship. Following this guiding thread, I chose a method of investigation that uses relationships, particularly between the researcher and participants, in its infrastructure, namely oral history. This chapter is a report of the research procedures I used to collect data, in order to answer my research questions, theoretical frameworks, purposeful sampling, and present a profile on the individuals that participated in the research study.

Research Inquiry

Oral history has a strong relational aspect to its core application. It can help elicit a socio-philosophical underpinning from the data in this study. Furthermore, it can help construct a bridge of a joined philosophy.

Why Oral History for This Study?

The study used semi-structured interviews based in oral history to collect data from five Kuwaiti women. This method was considered the best option for two reasons: semi-structured interviews allow for focused, yet conversational two-way communication; and oral history methods provide for the formulation of a relationship between the narrator and the researcher where trust and safety can be built (Yow, 2005; Portelli, 2004). The relational aspect of oral history facilitates the path of exploring a topic that deals with relationships. James (2000) spoke of the merits of oral history in constructing an idea of the reality in which his narrator forged her personality and decided what her actions would be. He wrote about how personal stories of his narrators are “cultural constructs that draw in a public discourse structured by class and gender
conventions” (p. 124). Similarly, Al-Ghazali described a mirroring process, which is central to this argument about how we construct our own perception of our surroundings. He explained how the process of knowledge comes by utilizing the senses to record images that are stored in our memories. Once recalled, the stored reality combined with the senses of the holder produces an interpretation. This interpretation is the person’s attempt to make sense of the reality being retrieved. If the person adds logic into the equation then he or she is simply rationalizing preexisting conditions that helped construct that mirrored reality.

Another reason why I chose oral history as a method for a study that involves Middle Eastern female educators is that the relational aspect is highly valued by women from that region. A comparative study conducted to understand the caring of nurses between American, Australian, and Jordanian nurses rendered an important finding that is relevant to this study (Marmash, Lily R, Hamdan-Mansour, Ayman M, Elian, Rana M, Hiarat, Saba Y. 2012). While American and Australian nurses rated their instructors in favor of a full demonstration on how to perform a certain task, the Jordanian nurses rated them based on the relationship they formed with the instructor and the respect they shared for each other. This sheds a light on the socio-cultural nature of the participants from the Middle East. They place a great deal of importance on the subject of relationships, using it as a parameter of the quality of instruction.

Therefore, I chose to implement this oral history method for its relevance to the core purpose of this study—connecting a method based on relationships with the combined philosophies from the Middle East and West on ethics of care. The relational aspect of oral history is intriguing and provides me with the tools that aid the research through a trusting relationship with the narrators. Reciprocal interaction allows both the researcher and the narrators to weave in memories shared in an autobiographical manner and present them in the
clearest way possible. Both the narrators and the researcher benefit from this process due to two factors: First, see a panoramic view of their experiences and second, they are able to reconstruct their realities. It is an empowering experience to see the canvas of memories painted. It gives it a life of its own. Noddings (2002) states, “Moral education is devoted to the understanding of self and the others” (p.15). When individuals are able to reconstruct the realities they lived in a pattern they come to understand their experiences in a way that provides meaning both to them and the researcher.

Dialogue is essential in the caring relationship. Noddings emphasized the practice of caring skills through dialogue as a powerful outlet: “A participant may pause to remind the other of her strengths, to reminisce, to explore, to express concern, to have a good laugh, or otherwise to connect with the other as cared-for. Dialogue, thus, always involves attention to the other participant, not just to the topic under discussion” (2002, p. 17). Using oral history incorporates the important tool of dialogue and conversation.

On the application level, some of the major benefits of oral history interviews include being less intrusive. The interview is a reciprocal interactive communication, providing opportunity for mutual learning, and the likelihood of discussing sensitive issues easily. Interviews help the researcher to become acquainted with the narrator and optimize the strengths of both researcher and narrator.

The research process begins by identifying the research problem, followed by laying down the research aim and objectives, development of the research question, literature review, setting out the research methodology that will be effective in answering the set research question, collecting information from the field using qualitative research techniques, and finally data analysis using appropriate methods. In this type of data collection, general questions are
formulated ahead of time, but most of the questions are created during the interview in the form of probing. This allows the narrator and the researcher to discuss issues in wider perspectives, and also be open to a mental network that provides rich data. This study contains seven main steps: (1) the first step was to gain entree through building trust and rapport between the researcher and the narrators. This can happen for example via disclosing existing common ground, such as my previous career background and experiences as a former teacher in the Kuwaiti public education system. (2) Next, I transcribed the interviews and produced scripts to be analyzed. (3) Then I shared the transcripts with the participants for ethical reasons, and to gain authenticity to the collected data. (4) I then wrote a narrative of each of the narrators’ interviews to draw upon passages that highlights their care-based teaching practices, cultural elements, and estrangement process. (5) Then, I analyzed the data selected from the interview transcripts using grounded theory tools and extrapolated themes using inductive and deductive techniques. (6) Finally, I discussed the findings to manifest an understanding that there can be a joined philosophy of caring education between Western and Islamic thinking that can be utilized in the teacher preparation programs in Kuwait. (7) I concluded by offering suggestions for future research.

**Research Questions**

This study began with an attempt to answer these research questions:

1. What factors encourage an ethic of care among Kuwaiti teachers?
2. How do the qualities of a caring teacher influence the teacher-student relationship?
3. How do educators who practice an ethic of care respond to the expectations of parents and a conservative Muslim society such as Kuwait?

The impact of memories was used to explore the experiences of the narrators’
evolvement of an ethic of care. This has aided me to understand how the narrators were able to
grasp the origin of their ethics of care, thereby providing a road map of their past memories to
shape their future educational goals. These factors helped me in framing my conceptual
framework. They allowed me to attempt to answer the research question about the origins of the
ethic of care. These factors also address the transcendence into the teacher’s philosophy of
education and their application of such philosophies in their relationships with students.

**Research Approach**

**Qualitative research approach.**

The difference between quantitative and qualitative research is a methodological issue.
Qualitative and quantitative approaches differ in several areas: types of research question,
analytical objectives, data collection methods, types of data obtained, and flexibility of the study
design. As such, the choice of a given methodology is based on its suitability to answer the posed
research questions (Bryman, 2001). Qualitative research focuses on discovery of the way social
meanings are built, and investigates the relationship between the participants and the topic of
study. Qualitative research is a naturalistic approach concerned with understanding the meaning
people attach to something within their social settings (Bryman, 2001).

Qualitative research approach is appropriate for answering “how and why” questions
about the phenomenon under study. Its importance is particularly evident as a contextual
approach whereby information is collected over a long period of time in real life situations that
allows the researcher to gather more views and opinions. (Bryman, 2001) Accordingly, I have
used this research approach (i.e., oral history) to accomplish the aims and objectives of the
current research through deeper theoretical analyses (i.e., grounded theory analytical strategies).
The qualitative research approach provides a clear picture of the actual issues surrounding ethic of care in the field.

Deductive and inductive research approaches. Deduction is described as moving from general issues to the specific issues, while induction begins with specific and moves to the general. Deductive research generally uses arguments based on laws, rules, and accepted principles. This type of approach can be conceptualized in terms of a waterfall. The researcher begins with a formulated theory or theories from which hypotheses are created. The researcher then goes ahead with observations and then confirms the theories and hypotheses based on the observations made. The inductive research approach works in the reverse manner to the deductive research approach: the researcher works from specific observations to generate broader generalizations. In inductive arguments, observations are used. The investigator collects data from the field in order to develop a theory. The research approach is shaped by the data gathered from the field. In this regard, the inductive approach is sometimes referred to as the bottom-up approach (Saunders, M, Lewis.P and Thornhill.A., 2003).

These two methods of reasoning are very distinct when used for conducting research. The inductive approach is more open-ended and exploratory, particularly at the beginning. The deductive approach is narrower in nature and focuses on testing or confirming hypotheses. Most times, social research involves both types of reasoning processes at some point in the research project. The research can begin with the deductive approach, but somewhere in the process the researcher finds it necessary to include inductive research. For example, the investigator might observe some patterns that lead to development of new theories.
Oral History Method

The oral history method has the advantage of asking personal questions that other methods of data collection cannot afford to ask. It is evident from the explanation of Yow (2005). Oral history reveals the daily life that is not in the public domain. It can also reveal the informal rules of socialization; the social ties that are not on public record can be revealed by in-depth interviews. The work by Yow suggests that oral history is the best method to “dig up” those unofficial social ties that are difficult to know. This is particularly significant for interviewing women. Women usually lost connection with their voice as they grow up because of the nature of the patriarchal society and its expectations of women. Gilligan’s (1982) explains how disconnected women become from their voice through their usual day-to-day life events. Hence, it is imperative to listen to the undertones that are not articulated yet they are so obvious in their statements. (Miller, J.; Striver, I., 1997)

The narratives composed through oral history provide vital insight into the “hidden levels of discourse” (Grele, R. 1998, p.45). This is in agreement with Yow’s (2005) assertion that oral history is important for collecting “unofficial data” not available in public records. More of this unofficial information can be given willingly by the narrator if she is given ample time to do so without rushing (Grele, R. 1998). Grele further advise that the interviewer should allow the interviewee to set the pace, regardless of whether it seems slow. These sentiments are echoed in Gilligan’s (1982) arguments where women should be given the time to give their views.

The hallmark of oral history is that it is a collaborative work between the interviewer and the narrator. The interpretation of events may change with the impacts of succeeding events. The method is subjective; the researcher assigns meaning to past and present events. The narrators tell their stories, so they choose what information to reveal. They provide the context in which
they understand themselves\textsuperscript{13} but it also helps me, the researcher, to develop sympathy. Portelli (2004) states “the documents of oral history are always the result of a relationship, of a shared project between the interviewer and the interviewee, who are involved together, if not necessarily in harmony” (p. 70). This is not a mere fact sheet about a person but it is deliverance of a mutual attempt to understand a human condition by means that better represent them in their essence.

**Grounded Theory as an Analytical tool:**

Kathy Charmaz (2006) specifies two stages of coding in grounded theory: Open coding. Then Focus and selective action of organizing and sorting out the codes and integrating codes into categories. The usefulness of this method is that it helps to make the wheel of analysis move on and overcome writer’s block. Furthermore, there is also the distinction and uniqueness of utilizing this method to create an individual category and deriving definitions from the data itself instead of through a preconceived set of codes and categories. This tool will only help in constructing a frame in which I can analyze my data. Coding permits re-envisioning the incidents we have lived through this interview process with our narrators.

**Sampling and Data Collection**

Five women educators were interviewed for this study. The sample population was derived from various schools. The researcher asked the Ministry of Education in Kuwait to send an announcement about the study to the school districts through circulation notices. Five participants responded from which all five were interviewed. The narrators were requested to participate in semi-structured interviews involving 5-10 topics; each produced multiple pages of transcripts. There were 1-2 sessions of interviews with each of the narrators.

\textsuperscript{13}Noddings emphasized that the virtue of telling stories not only evokes sympathy but also induces self-understanding (Noddings, 2002).
The five participants shared many elements in demography; they are all native born in Kuwait. All five have graduate from one of the teacher preparation programs in Kuwait, whether Kuwait University of the College affiliated with PAAT. Three of the five are/were married. Four of the narrators had over fifteen years of experience, while one had 11 years and the youngest narrator had an experience of 8 years.

**Validity, Reliability, and Triangulation**

The application of validity and reliability are common in research. Since reliability and validity are rooted in positivist perspective they should be redefined for their use in a naturalistic approach. Qualitative research is considered as naturalistic, ethnographic, and participatory (Davis et al., 2002).

Reliability is used to find out whether the research findings are reproducible and/or repeatable. In this case, studies carried out by other researchers under similar conditions must generate the same results. Otherwise, the study has not fulfilled the requirements of retestability. This will be further discussed in the future implication section.

In this study, the researcher requested copies of the participants’ annual reports and portfolios. Annual reports state the areas of strengths were the educators have excelled over their colleagues and the portfolio provides a glimpse of their yearly plan and extra curricular activities. Hence, the portfolio would function as an extension of the annual report in drawing a picture of the narrator. in order to triangulate the data with the interview transcripts. The researcher used direct quotes from the transcripts alongside the studies in order to analyze the collected data.
Ethical Considerations

Studies of human behavior present many ethical challenges to researchers. There are many bodies that have been formed to guide researcher’s behavior in the field. The researcher is expected to meet certain standards. It is the responsibility of the researcher to seek ethical permission from the relevant authorities for ethical clearance. Having satisfied all the requirements, the investigator can then continue with the investigation into the field. The three main moral principles that researchers must observe in the field include falsification of data, informed consent, and deception (Verdugo, 1998). In addition, participants’ confidentiality is ensured by not revealing their identities and names in the transcripts. The transcripts saved in encrypted digital files on a computer and cannot be accessed by anyone but the researcher.
CHAPTER 4—RESULTS

Narrative Findings

One reason for the direction of my analysis was self-evident: I found my narrators’
testimony of great interest. Yet, this was not primarily the reason I interviewed them. The
testimony, which came to long pages of transcripts, is a rich, multilayered, often puzzling
narrative. It contains passages that add considerably to an understanding of teacher-student
relationships that I wished to document and understand better. Yet it provides ample evidence of
the centrality of the term “relationship” and its importance in the success of the educational and
learning process. The theme of relationship is abundant in the narrators’ testimonies, each
distinguished in its particular way, supporting the theoretical implications of al-Ghazali and
Noddings on how ethics exist as a natural thing.

The data collected provides ample evidence of how these five narrators are able to call
forth their caring ethics from their concept of their relationship with their surroundings. Mrs.
Salha, the retired veteran teacher, for example, describes her family’s influence in the cultivation
of her ethics and her vocational choice to be a teacher. The relationship Mrs. Salha had with her
principal had an empowering impact over her performance as a teacher and mentor to the extent
that when Miss Ferial retired she followed her footsteps, “Because my relationship with the
principal was so strong, when she retired, I retired with her. That was the reason I quit the
profession because I said, “I cannot stay in teaching without Miss Ferial” (Trans., Line: 587).

On the other hand there was her strong sense of relationship with Allah: “From this
standpoint, of a teacher who puts Allah (God) before me always before making decisions and
especially ones related to my students…So, a teacher with caring ethics can be vital and effective
everywhere. My impact as a mother has enhanced my expertise as a caring teacher” (Trans., Line 491). The spiritual underpinnings of Mrs. Salha’s ethics are well articulated here, which shows her strong relationship with her spirituality as a reservoir of where she derives her values.

In a similar way, Miss Soad speaks about her strong awareness of the presence of Allah, and how her relationship with the Creator makes her fair to others at her job: “Even Allah (Praised be He) ‘and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah (Praised be He). For is well-acquainted with all that ye do,’ which means that even if you don’t like his behavior that doesn’t give you the right to, you know, to deal with him differently or her. You have to be fair with him okay no matter what his deeds are because his deeds, is um done by him and should be judged by God, okay” (Trans., Line 737).

As the women related their difficulties in preparing for their teaching careers, their shared experiences, handling the bureaucracy in the educational system, and how they came to develop professionally, their wisdom can be helpful for current teachers and those to come.

**Common Themes**

All five participants had two common themes that are deeply rooted in my theory of caring teaching: “an anchor relationship” and “a strong strong foundation.”
Anchor relationship.

Why have I called it an anchor relationship and not an anchor person? First, because my research focus is on the relational ethics of human nature in connection with the outside world, and in particular, the school culture. This connection is not established to only connect human beings with other human beings, but makes forming alliances possible with other beings. These relationships provide the person connected to them with a “safety net” that can be counted on, or in many cases is the reason behind life decisions.

Mrs. Salha’s teaching career was not her first choice; that is the same case with our youngest narrator, Miss Farah, and Mrs. Zeina, the middle-aged narrator. Furthermore, these three ladies shared many aspects with each other. They all come from big families; they all have three or more sisters, and for both Mrs. Salha and Miss Farah the majority of their sisters are in the educational field as well. All of them shared the influence of an anchor relationship in a significant way. This will be further explained in the following section.

Mrs. Israa and Mrs. Soad, on the other hand, exhibit a range of effective elements and people that impacted their course of thinking and action, yet they shared the same childhood dream of becoming a teacher. There were similar anchor relationships, but in addition, the shared value of spirituality and their inner beliefs. They resorted to it for comfort or simply referred to it as their belief system: “...But since I believe that we have to be sincere as our religion orders us, and we have to seek Allah’s satisfaction in everything that we do, I was not going to let that affect me” (Mrs. Israa’s transcripts, line:332).

“...His Royal Highness the prince would salute [her in the graduation ceremony]...And thanks to Allah, who is the benefactor.” (Mrs. Zeina’s transcripts, line:506).

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14 Noddings (2003) explained further in her book that those “cared-for” also included animals, plants and ideas.
“So, I told him, “you should... fear Allah from the things that you are doing”...from...a teacher who puts Allah before me always and before taking decisions and especially ones related to my students” (Mrs. Salha’s transcripts, line: 489).

“And thank god when they interviewed us I was the first and thank God I entered the college of education” (Mrs. Souad’s transcripts, line: 129).

This relationship became the backbone of the data collected from the transcripts as well as the memorabilia presented by the narrators. The varying nature of the relationship does not deny its essential part in anchoring these women in their career as educators. Moreover, relationships are by far the connecting tissue between the two philosophies of Noddings’ and al-Ghazali’s caring education. The centrality of establishing a relationship between the teacher and the students can only be realized when a person exercises such attachments in real life outside and inside the school culture.

In the following discussion I display a picture of each narrator and the impact of both her anchor relationship and strong familial relationship over her teaching career and teaching philosophy.

**Strong familial foundation.**

Another common theme found among the narrators was their strong sense of family and the presence of strong family ties. Mrs. Souad painted a beautiful family portrait with her words, “For recreation and everything it is a family activity event, I insist that everything should be inside our family and with my family we go swimming together, we for shopping together, we sometimes…we plan to be lazy one day together” (Transcript, 241).

Mrs. Zeina expressed her strong relationship with her parents, and in particular her father various times throughout the interview: “My parents loved education…They were also active in
PTA at school...they used to participate in all the PTA... If I have a complaint against a teacher or someone else they make sure that I get my rights, which made me feel supported and left alone” (Transcript, line:1933).

Miss Farah also spoke highly of her mother’s follow ups in the PTA, and her efforts to maintain a balanced system in her life that made high academic achievement feasible to her:

There are many normal daily things such as my mom’s dedication to plan our excursions together on a set time in the calendar, and [pushes us to] be of outstanding academic performances, but what interested [my mom] most especially when she asked about us in parent conferences at the school and if we had a good reputation, ethics, and morals, more than our academic achievement, that concerned her more (Transcript, line: 561).

Mrs. Israa described her family unity on several occasions, especially when she described the house of care she lived in with her aunts and her parents, and how she was engulfed with care and was surrounded by “unmatched care” (Transcript, line: 36). She gave special attention to her mother at one point and said:

Our mother used to care for us like nobody else! For example she used to take care of our disabled brother...another example she bought a lot of audio equipment and a full studio for my brother who was known for his good voice and that supported him and developed his talent” (Transcript, line: 16).

Estrangement theme.

In Miss Farah’s estrangement factor it was clearly obvious in a curricula that is constructed around the 19th-20th Century educators of the west, she disclosed the following in this regard,
“F:…What about the contribution of your college education [courses] to the formation of ideas and to the formation of opinions, did it contribute to the crystallization of your thoughts?

Farah: No, not at all! To the extent that we see no benefit from studying many of the courses offered...” (Transcript, line: 811).

This would support the notion that the Western Liberal Arts Model of education does not fit the Kuwaiti culture structure. That being said, it is imperative to be aware of the innovations in the field of education from any resource, because it will enrich both the theoretical and vocational aspects of education in Kuwait.

Mrs. Souad supports this thought in her disapproval of the teacher preparation program, “As for the preparations, I mean the program that we have taken in colleges, umm, in my opinion they were not enough…I mean three months [i.e. field training] is not enough to prepare you for this career.” (Transcript, line: 276)

She continues later in the interview to express her distress about the teacher preparation program at the college of education in Kuwait University, “I mean first of all, you need to do something about the program…you know, re-enforce the good qualifications…the whole program of teaching program needs to be reformed” (Transcript, line 322, 332).

In the case of Mrs. Souad, it is a more complicated situation, she did not only express her concern and call for a teacher preparation program reform only, but she also used English as her medium to communicate that particular point. It is a complex issue. On one end, Mrs. Souad is calling for reform due to the non-compatibility of the program. Yet again, she articulated her opinion of English. This estrangement with the program was juxtaposed with her estrangement from the image she saw of herself as an intelligent person. This added more weight to how
important it was for her to be well-connected with her background and be perceived as who she really is.

Moreover, Mrs. Israa expressed the similar opinion about the teacher preparation program:

I think that our educational systems lack many things in regard to achieving the caring goals and fostering excellence in our students; like, furthermore, we should have more classes that help the educator become a better teacher and a good example for his/her students. I also, think it is important to educate our educators about many other aspects of life and help them understand…the society which will be useful for them and for their students” (Mrs. Israa’s Transcript, line: 38)

In breaking down this important narration by Mrs. Israa, we have to bear in mind one thing: she was the only one to mention that educators needed to be educated about society. This points to the important fact that the teacher preparation program in Kuwait does not address local societal issues and structure in a productive way. This is supported also by her emphasis of the need of more courses, which indicated that the 4-year teacher preparation program does not cover the ‘required’ amount of theoretical and intellectual knowledge provided for the student teachers.

Mrs. Salha, however was the only one who declared that the teaching program she received was conducive to a skillful teacher. We have to remember the age discrepancy among the narrators. Mrs. Salha the oldest of the narrators, was employed in 1975. Where the college of education entertained different set of regulations and structure, that seemed—according to her testimony—suitable for the need of the society:

15 Al-Sahel (2005) and Al-Sharaf (2006) indicated the necessity to look over the content and structure of the teacher preparation program. They highlighted that there are only two programs in Kuwait and they are not conducive to the market demands due to the homogeneous nature of its structures and accordingly, its outcomes due to the limited access of students to a diverse teacher preparation program in Kuwait.
**F:** calling to what degree do you think that the program of the college of education prepared you as a teacher who cares?

**S:** hundred percent!

**S:** explain?

**S:** calling because we spent a whole entire year learning techniques on how to teach school students... As for the field practice it was not like the way you ladies did it, for half a year only, on the contrary they allowed us a whole year to train to become teachers (Transcript, line: 210).

The amount of training Mrs. Salha received was by far the longest among all the narrators. According to the complaint Mrs. Souad and Mrs. Israa's presented in their narrations the student-teacher’s field work is not enough to provide the student-teacher with the proper skills. Hence, their suggestion, with the other two narrators -- indicated a need to prolong the field training-- for reform. As a result she received proper supervision,

*We had an assistant professor that used to evaluate our techniques, which are best and which were not wrong. Teaching us how to prepare our lessons, since my sister was already a teacher, I asked her to teach me how to prepare lesson she showed me the way. So I applied it and took it to our assistant professor, and she liked my work and told me that I was excellent how did I learn to prepare lessons in such a way? I explained that I had a sister who preceded me in the educational profession. She like my work and kept on training and helping me throughout my studies* (Mrs. Salha's transcript, line: 215).

Also, she received the time sufficient for her training in the field.

This only speaks to the fact that the estrangement aspect of these few ladies excelled their ability to connect with their cultural codes and ability to elicit their pedagogy and mannerism
from their environment and surroundings. Data that supports this notion is the input Mrs. Salha has given about the state of the teacher preparation program prior to the current one and its effective structure in producing skillful teacher provided with an environment of suitable vocational and intellectual abilities.

In the following discussion I will be displaying a picture of each narrator and the impact of both her anchor relationship and strong familial relationship over her teaching career and teaching philosophy.

Mrs. Salha’s Narrative

Mrs. Salha is the older narrator of the five. She exemplified a tendency to use storytelling with almost every question and incident in her life. As the interview was winding down, it became clear that her anecdotal style connotes her ethical standpoints and her moments of being at crossroads.

It was not my first choice to become a teacher, no. I wanted to become an air stewardess but since my oldest brother, who is a Kuwait Airways employee, reported to me the low social status of air stewardess… because it was against our traditions that a woman travels all alone several times. That’s why I chose to major in geography and later became a teacher (Transcript, line: 233).

She clarified the strong ties she had with her family starting with her mother.

Another example of my mother’s care, is when I was young. She made me enter the kitchen’s world... She taught me the intricate details of cooking and the kitchen world.

She made me the chef I am now (Transcript, line: 49).

She spoke fondly of her relationship with one of her brothers who was in the background of the camera. When I asked her if she had a caring relationship with her siblings, she said
I would also give them a full [care] scale. (She points at her younger brother in the room behind her) Faisal, (with a big smile) he’s my friend, my buddy. I consider him as my twin and a soul mate... every single activity, event, incident I had in my life, he was by my side, up front and center (Transcript, line: 58).

Her family’s influence in the enrichment of her ethics is evident. She received a rigid practical training from her mother.

She also taught me to be a proud person. When we used to visit others, people would serve hors d’oeuvres. My mother in advance would have instructed us not to touch food when we are served, because in our tradition, a child should not integrate in the adult’s atmosphere. Therefore, we were not supposed to touch anything or we would be considered rude. Once the hors d’oeuvres would arrive, she would only half glance at us for us to know that this is not allowed (Transcript, line: 43).

Her mother’s rules were not only made to be followed but also to imprint a moral code for her and her siblings. Her narration about how proud she was with her mother’s legacy not only indicated her actual pride but also that she is re-living the ethics and morals of her mother, the most important of which was care.

I haven’t seen them [maternal grandparents] but I have been heavily impacted by their legacy…through my mother! She has transcended her experiences with her parents [to us]. I know what my grandmother did with my mother and her husband’s children [she was a step mother]. How she raised them as if she had given birth to them, with kindness and love and no biases between us (as her mother’s descendants) and her biological children (Transcript, line: 66).

Her family atmosphere signified a living example for her to earn and practice her ethics
in old Kuwait. She slightly refers to the impact a strong community\textsuperscript{16} has on children in another anecdote about her friend who wanted to visit her relatives in a faraway area and how she and her brother Faisal, tried to help out.

Despite both of our family’s warning of leaving our homes...we went to a small store to buy drinks because it was too hot and we were thirsty. So the shopkeeper recognized us and inquired about our departure from our home and why we were there. So, we told him we were going to visit our neighbor’s daughter. So, he said, “Don’t worry about it I will take her to her grandfather’s home and you two go home”...we were all severely punished for disobeying the orders (Transcript, line: 120).

\textbf{Anchor Relationship.}

Mrs. Salha, being the highly social and moral person she is, found her anchor relationship in her career, through the caring ethics of her principal, Mrs. Fatima. This relationship had had an empowering impact over her performance as a teacher and mentor. Being a hard worker herself, it was hard not to notice a busy bee, like Mrs. Salha.

I always go to the administration room when I don’t have anything to do, I don’t like not working, so I sit downstairs in order to see if the principal would need help or anything to be done and I do it (Transcript, line: 272).

In another part of the interview she commented on her relationship with her principal, “I told you, I always joined her at her office when I’m free. I like to help out in her administrative tasks when she faces shortage” (Transcript, line: 369).

She described her as an “exceptional” educator and as a great support, and a source of learning for her. “I learned a lot from her, Miss Fatima” (Transcript, line: 373). When she retired,

\textsuperscript{16} Noddings (2002) speaks of the importance of providing a caring community in order for the children to learn the ethics of care and not only depend on the ‘agent’ in them to be mobilized in conflict situations.
Mrs. Salha followed her footsteps. “Because my relationship with the principal was so strong, when she retired, I retired with her. That was the reason I quit the profession because I said, ‘I cannot stay in “teaching” without Miss Fatima’” (Transcript, Line: 587).

Furthermore, there was the significance of her ‘relationship’ with Allah (Praised be he). From this standpoint, of a teacher who puts Allah (God) before me always before taking decisions and especially ones related to my students… So, a teacher with a caring ethics can be vital and effective everywhere. My impact, as a mother, has enhanced my expertise as a caring teacher17 (Transcript, Line: 491).

Mrs. Salha was at such an ease to narrate her stories and begin new stories. She dominated the conversation and began to provide context to all of her stories with relative historical data. This only added coherence to her narrations and to her anecdotes (Yow, 2005).

Educational Caring Philosophy.

Mrs. Salha’s educational philosophy depends on an important element in care ethics skills: listening. She listened not only in terms of the physical act of listening, but she listened through her heart.18 She absorbed skills and new ideas about teaching and school relationships through her listening. Due to the plethora of anecdotes she provided, there is ample information to show her self-consciousness as a story-teller. By not only sharing her stories with me but also putting them into context, she was able to see what they signify to her again. One example is her story about her geography professor. Mrs. Salha being the high achiever she is, stood up and drew the map on the blackboard that her professor used to draw at the beginning of every class. When he arrived and saw her perfect drawing, he asked, “Who is competing with me?” Mrs.

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17 This speaks directly to Noddings’ (2002; 2003) foundation of providing a base for moral education depending on basic feminine traits, such as “maternal factor” of nurturing and sustaining a relationship.

18 In al-Ghazali’s theory of knowledge he synonymously referred to the ‘heart’ as an abode for learning as well as the intellect (Asari, 1995).
Salha says, “So, I stood and said, ‘I do.’ So he encouraged me and praised my doing. Since that day, I draw maps skillfully for everyone who asked for it” (Transcript, line: 195). She clearly is aware of how this incident impacted her that she immediately told me about the technique she elicited from it. “Umm, the map example, I applied this technique with my students. I used to ask them to come and draw maps on the board. And praise them when they do a good job” (Transcript, line: 208).

She goes on to mention, how she was able to communicate better than her counterparts—as head teachers—with her staff and students because of advice from one of her teachers.

‘I would like our relationship to be an open book. Here are the things that I like and here are the things that I do not like, and whenever you need me, or need to ask about something, I’m here for you.’ She heavily influenced my teaching style and me (Transcript, line: 172).

Her acute awareness of the lessons she learned and how she applied them was refreshing to witness in person and while analyzing her interview transcript. There is a progression of her tone of voice from the little girl who defies her family to the wise mature woman. Her confidence renders a strong, successful woman who was able to connect to her teachers and students through her clear understanding and application of her ethic of care.

[I had] two teachers who were jealous from my special recognition/treatment of one of my teachers [their colleague]…and pay attention to the word ‘treatment.’ So they came and told me, ‘You are not fair with us,’ you wronged us by doing so. So I asked, ‘What do you base your claim on?’ So they said… ‘You give her [their colleague] more credit…’ I said, ‘You both, the second you enter the department room, you face each
other and talk… as for her, if I need anything, even a bit, she provides it… Surely, I will give her special treatment’ (Transcript, line: 247).

Her emphasis on drawing my attention to the word ‘treatment’ was a direct call for me to observe how her self-concept as a “fair” ethical person was and is still present. The connection she had with her teachers, and in particular the hard-working one, explains how she projects herself as a sound, wise senior teacher. She does this by saying to the two complaining teachers that she does not discredit them in their annual reports, but “if I wanted to give credit to someone, I do so, with my treatment not via grades. You understand me?” (Transcript, line: 260). Her question exemplifies her wish for me to listen and understand how this small incident signifies a huge block of her value system to ensure to me and herself that she did the right thing.

This engulfs the emphasis Noddings (2003) has placed on establishing a relational foundation in building one’s ethics and moral education. Also, it points to the importance both Noddings and al-Ghazali place on dialogue. Noddings (2002) dissects the topic of conversation as a tool for moral education: “Teachers simply must engage their students in ordinary conversation” (p.129). This is notable in Mrs. Salha’s style of conversation as she draws attention of the person she’s talking to using expressions like in the previous example, “do you understand?” She is calling you to listen and speak so she can listen and respond back, a sound ordinary conversation that can be the building block of moral education in our day and age of heavy social media interactions. It is essential to run fruitful conversations in order to have the desired outcome of the situation without scaring the other (Noddings, 2002). Mrs. Salha practiced this skill to its fullest potential.

**Miss Farah’s Narrative**
Through the iPhone camera, I was able to observe the tenderness of her character as she attended to her nieces and nephews in our breaks. She displayed her portfolio which she emailed copies to me later. The awards and prizes she had since elementary school were amazing. She kept excelling in every stage and in every activity she participated in. “I do not like to be a nobody” (transcript, Line:1164) she disclosed later in the interview, which exemplified a strong character with an active spirit for work. Her excellence could have secured her admission to Kuwait University. Yet, she was a graduate of the Girls College in Kuwait’s community college teacher preparation program.

We began by creating an understanding of who she is with the usual demographic questions. What caught my attention was her sudden change of mind at high school graduation. When her best friend was not able to score highly on the finals and consequently was not able to gain admission into Kuwait University, Miss Farah decided to change plans. She chose to join her friend at an institution that others considered of a lower quality than the public local university. “I registered in the community college to be with her.” (transcript, line 368) She explained her family’s opposition to her decision:

Despite the fact that the family was against my decision because my GPA was high enough to secure me admission in the university, even if I had decided to join medical school, especially my uncle who is a university professor. But I insisted on my mind. (Transcript, Line: 905)

She is clear about the importance of her friend’s presence at her life’s crossroads. However, she is very aware of the existing difference between them, and how that can unite them in a better sense: “If we were identical we would have been bored with each other. We complete each other
in a sense]. However we have many disputes but eventually we agree after a discussion” (transcript, Line: 435).

She states that she is not sorry for changing her mind at the last moment to become a teacher due to her friend’s career choice. Also, being the active achiever she is, boredom is an enemy she made absolutely sure she kept at bay. “But I am in favor of teaching for fear of boredom of career routine but there is a kind of renewal and the curriculums are changed and the classes one teaches also change” (transcript, line: 936). She elaborates on her relationship with her friend, yet when I ask her about any other friends or colleagues that she formed in her college-years or at work, she acknowledged the presence of colleagues but never mentioned one name. This highlights her disinterest in forming new alliances with other colleagues in school.

The fact that she Miss Farah projected a clear standpoint depicting the way society portrays boys’ education versus girls’ education in relation to their upbringing. According to Al-Tarrah’s (2002) study of women in Kuwait, a conservative society where the traditional (Arab) family structure is most prominent, the freedom provided for boys surpasses that of girls. In addition, the projected societal roles ascribed to girls, and long-held family traditions inhibit the women’s desire for upper mobility through her profession. This creates a fear of rejecting these traditions to seek her own career choices. Consequently this represents a serious challenge for any employee to challenge the system and follow her own unique philosophy of education that would not conform with the guidelines of the curricula and the current philosophy of education in the system.

**Educational caring philosophy.**

Miss Farah’s educational philosophy predominantly concerns one main theme, and that is ethical codes. It first appeared in her absolute resentment to a college instructor who acted
immorally. He asserted that they buy a book from a specific bookstore: “at the end of the course he would order the [entire class] to rip off the last chapter and give it to him so that future students would not benefit from the book” (Transcript, line: 622).

She is very aware about responsible and irresponsible actions throughout the interview: “when I was little I did not grasp the need for these exercises” (Transcript line: 113). Her code of ethics includes the following elements: respect, “In my opinion there must be a space of respect between the teacher and her students” (Transcript, line: 275); discipline, or organization, “because it is a must to discipline the class in the beginning” (Transcript, line: 262; understanding individual differences, “When a high achiever makes mistakes I ask her to revise her answer, and for the under-average I try to assist her...” (Transcript, line: 741); skilled in her domain of knowledge; affectionate, “I’ve always been affectionate...” (Transcript, line: 308); and innovation, “I am in favor of teaching for fear of boredom, of career routine...there is a kind of renewal and the curriculums are changes and the classes one teaches also change” (transcript, line: 938).

Miss Zeina’s Narrative

Anchor relationship.

“I truly felt when he passed away—may his soul rest in peace—I felt that I lost all of my supporters” (Transcript, line: 394)

With such a strong expression of her relationship with her father, I was compelled to look deeply into this amazing relationship she had with him. To Mrs. Zeina, her relationship with her father was by and large her anchor relationship that sustained her appetite for success and her determination to seek her dreams. When I inquired about her relationship with her parents, she was concerned about whether I was inquiring about her mom or her dad. It became clearer when
I looked at the transcript to find over five pages of transcript of her account of her father and less than two of her mother. “He [the father] was the only one who understood me a thousand percent, he understood me” (Transcript, line: 389).

She explained the rough climate she was born into, not only being a woman but also a women who was born and raised in the climate of a Bedouin culture, “Although my father comes from a very conservative family, we are Bedouins you know. This sector of the population, not all of them are educated or reached high levels in education, I am talking about my family in particular” (Transcript, line: 361).

Her awareness was striking of the status of women in her culture. She was alert to the conditions of women seeking a career, not only in Kuwait’s conservative environment but also in her ultraconservative Bedouin background. She then explained the importance of the little things her father has done for her in order to keep her focus on her education.

There was a sacred ritual that we must have every morning...I would wake up and find out that he has prepared me a [samosa] and there was a special kind of biscuits that I loved so much. He knew that if I did not find this biscuit that I would end up having a bad beginning of the day (Trans., p. 4, Line: 425).

In a patriarchal society like Kuwait, the society compels a woman to derive support from a male, such as a father or a husband (Al-Tarrah, 2002). In Mrs. Zeina’s case it was her father. This relationship has built in her a great deal of confidence. She is aware that being a Bedouin woman her status is fortified under the stewardship of her male companions. She explains it clearly in her responses and descriptions of her interactions with her father: “I did not feel that anyone did anything to help me [like my] father. He provided me with all the existing incentives” (Transcript, line: 419).
He used to meet all of my needs/dreams and gives me and reinforces my confidence. He always used to say, ‘She understands, she knows.’...[He treated me] as an equal and as an adult. He gave each one his rightful position (Trans., p. 4, Line: 445).

This remarkable shrewdness of the impact of her father’s support only made things clearer to her. It not only provided her with the incentives to seek her education but also empowered her with confidence that enabled her to meet her life goals and succeed as a worker: “What made me restless was that I wasn’t adding anything new” (Transcripts, p. 3, Line: 254). This highly conforms to Ethic Care theory pioneered by Noddings, where the emphasis is not on the agent but on the relationship, which promotes a moral life (Noddings, 2002). The caring environment she experienced resulted in her taking moral actions toward a productive career as a teacher.

Mrs. Zeina’s relationship with her father has come full-circle because of the friendship they had between each other: “Because I loved English so much he used to nickname me D.C. ...He used to call me ‘Washington’ at home” (Transcript, line: 581). He provided opportunities for her, as a seed is planted and nurtured. She gave her father all he wanted of life: “I made his dream come true” (Transcript, line: 513). She later explained:

He had a wish that he would have one of his children graduate from the university with distinction [on the honor list] and would be honored that his royal highness would salute her. And Thanks to Allah—who is the true benefactor—I was the only one of his children who was able to do so. (Transcript, line: 499)

This sense of pride of her achievement is extraordinary. She was not born into privilege to freely seek her education and career. She was supported by an open-minded patriarch who defied family and cultural customs for her sake: “We received a scholarship to France as an
educational exchange...He [her father] was the only one who supported and encouraged that I go for the month” (Trans., p. 3, Line: 379). This support raised her confidence and self-assurance and she considered it the epitome of what a caring relationship is and should be. Through this caring relationship Mrs. Zeina and her father transcended social and cultural custom. Her sense of pride was magnified due to the unusual setting both of them were born into:

I told you they came from the desert, let me tell you, I was the first one to enter kindergarten; the first to finish elementary; the first to finish middle school; the first to finish high school; then college. The first one to drive; the first in becoming a teacher! Look all of this development one after the other, because of Allah’s grace [upon me] and because of father’s support...and the encouragement of my father. (Transcript, line: 605)

Through the exchange and mutual caring between father and daughter, they reached the highest satisfaction of each other’s access to their highest goal in life. “Just as it is the duty of the children of one father to love one another and co-operate in achieving all their common goals, so it is also the duty of the students of one teacher to love and cherish one another” (al-Ghazali, 1269/2003., p. 138). This caring relationship nurtured and produced a strong compassionate woman who not only was able to obtain her dream but also surpass her personal goals and make her father’s dreams come true too:

He insisted on coming to the graduation ceremony and...the invitation would be in his name...he told my mom you are not going, I am going because this is my life’s work...He cried, that was the first time I saw my father cry...He told me, “May Allah bless you and grant you with more of his blessings, I want nothing from you all, but that you [keep me standing tall]. (Transcripts, Line: 517-564)
She goes further to describe her father’s happiness to witness the fruit of his caring relationship with his daughter, when he responded to her mother’s hesitation to attend the graduation ceremony, “Who told you that you were going? I am the one who is going! Basically, this right is mine, not yours” (Transcripts, Line: 571), and when her mother expressed her hesitation to attend the ceremony, he stepped in to celebrate her achievement, and not let her down “You [the mother] are not going; I am going because this is my life’s work” (Transcripts, Line: 52). This is not only a clear example of a caring relationship that geared a person to success, but also one of the best I have encountered in my research.

This exemplary relationship personifies Al-Ghazali’s notion how all children are born with primordial nature,19 and it is easy to shape their souls and characters. It is safe to say that Mrs. Zeina’s father made a deep impression on her.

**Educational caring philosophy.**

Mrs. Zeina’s main perception of an educational philosophy is based on her life principles. I deduced religious principles, because of the thirty plus times she thanked Allah or mentioned him as the one to trust. She also advocated for implementing change and care for society: “all of that makes me happy and was a factor in leaving the first job where I could not play a vital role in the society” (Transcript, line:1409). It puzzled me in the beginning, but she explained her conviction theoretically and vocationally: “The role of the teacher (in our education) was to give us the basics and we have to search the details and get back to him or her to evaluate our findings only” (Transcripts, line: 1241).

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19 “Fitra” is translated into primordial nature, which indicates that children are born with a clean slate and it is up their parents to shape them in the direction they wish them to follow. (Al-Ghazali, 2003) "The greatest achievement in the opinion of man is eternal happiness and the most excellent thing is the way which leads to it." (Al-Ghazali, 2003, *Al-Ghazali’s: The Book of Knowledge.*"
She also emphasized the necessity of interactive education when she expressed her view of what she did when she was a student: “You were supposed to research, you were supposed to do the worksheets and follow up with the assignments, and show your teacher that you have done extra work” (Transcript, line: 137). This was the relationship between the teacher and the student in her early frame of reference. It also indicates how ethical she was in her sense of obligation and responsibility: “See, this kind of pressure [doing house chores and homework too] is the reason why we are so capable of taking responsibilities” (Transcript, line: 922). She is principled and follows her principles to the letter.

Being religious as well puts her under the obligation of applying her knowledge for the benefit of society: “I desired a work place when I leave for home, I say to myself, ‘Yeah, I did something of use. I made a difference’” (Transcript, line: 261). Being a teacher impacting others was an important task she saw as the major purpose of her career choice. She explained why she changed career from an aspiring political career to teaching: “What I was doing, probably any other employee can do” (Transcript, line: 286). The idea of being dispensable, of having a job but not making a difference, was the key to her decision to change career and become a teacher, following her religious principles of doing something that matters. “But these kinds of jobs are not real jobs! It is honorary and I did not feel that I am adding anything to anyone’s life” (transcript, line:1352).

She goes further and narrates another principle she gained and follows, “I was looking for another place to work...to be there for real” (Transcripts Line:1367). Being present in her job as a teacher entails investing in the lives of students, starting and maintaining lasting relationships. Even outside the school, “I have some students who are not distinguished academically, but they
have accomplished many things in their social lives, and I was a part of their achievement”
(Transcripts Line: 1402).

The main elements that shaped her ethics of care are responsibility and punctuality. “My
dad’s mother...she showed us the importance of time and elderly people” (Transcript, line: 1836).
In addition, she values respect\textsuperscript{20} of elders and the usefulness of their wisdom. “She was the
source of wisdom and people resorted to her for resolving their issues and problems”
(Transcripts, Line: 1841). al-Ghazali pointed out to the importance of wisdom to both the student
and the teacher: “Wisdom, therefore, is the aim of every believer; he seizes it wherever he finds
it, and is under obligation to anyone who imparts it to him, no matter who the person may be.”
(al-Ghazali, 1269/2003, p 123).

I can safely say that to Mrs. Zeina’s being on time, present, use of wisdom and respect,
and interacting with her students formed her care ethic in and outside school grounds. She is
crystal clear about the importance of these aspects to fulfill the tasks of her job as a teacher who
strongly believes in the nobility of her profession and in the necessity of proper acquisition of its
skills. As al-Ghazali has indicated in his treaties of \textit{The Book of Knowledge}, “the noblest of all
sciences is the science of knowing Allah, His angels, Books and apostles as well as \textit{that of
knowing the path which leads to these sciences}. Seek, therefore, nothing else and treasure
nothing besides.” (al-Ghazali, 1269/2003, p. 130) “Emphasis added” He also meets Noddings\textsuperscript{21}
in the importance of mastering skills in order to progress in one’s studies to obtain success, and

\textsuperscript{20} Both al-Ghazali and Noddings emphasized the virtue of 'respect'. To Noddings respect not only pertains to the
student's conduct but also to the teacher's approach and method, which must fit the student level of need and to
Ghazali according to the student's 'perception' (Noddings, 2003; al-Ghazali, 1269/2003).

\textsuperscript{21} Amrein-Beardsley, A. (2010, May 4). In an interview with Noddings at Arizona State University, she disclosed
her stance over advancing students to upper levels, which resonated with al-Ghazali’s standpoint in connection to
advancing students to higher levels and acknowledging individual differences. \textit{Inside the Academy} video interviews
eventually happiness. Hence join the knowledge and vocation of care in her terms, to show respect and being present and punctual, to exercise wisdom, to organize her affairs in a schedule and then, we will not only have the thought of a teacher but actually a personified practicing one.

**Mrs. Israa’s Narrative**

“[A teacher] is a teacher everywhere, he is a teacher at school, with kids, and with his friends too” (Trans., p. 3, Line: 113).

With this utterance I figured I could understand what Mrs. Israa, a religious Islamic studies teacher, was all about: providing and establishing a morally sound community. She spoke about her passion for helping students change for the best: “What I yearn for is to influence my students’ behavior and make them better students...By being close to them I can be a role model for them, which helps me achieve that goal” (Transcript, line: 106). This does not exclude difficult students from the equation; on the contrary, being the role model was her way to cope with the delinquent actions she faced from some of her students. “All of this leads me to confusion about the best ways to deal with them and try to change their tough habits to good ones” (Transcripts, line: 102). This quote speaks directly to what Noddings (2003) clarified about the sense of obligation that we naturally have built in us; yet when we are faced with barriers and conflict, we resort to our ethical-ideal in order to act morally in the situation given.

Going back to Mrs. Israa’s description of her familial background, her notion of role model became clearer. “I was raised in an amazing home, where I was surrounded by unmatched caring” (Transcripts, Line: 36). She goes on describing her family structure: “One of my aunties took care of me since birth. Another auntie taught me from my early childhood” (Transcripts, Line: 37). With both of her parents living with her aunts at the family home, she was surrounded by a community of nurturers. He mother and her two aunts worked as teachers and have
influenced her deeply. “I was raised in a family full of educators...I do believe that education runs in my blood and is a part of my genes” (Transcripts, Line: 24). From Mrs. Israa’s upbringing, this group of role models surrounding her has undoubtedly affected her perception of having a role model, and later on in life, becoming one herself. This can explain her relational take on her philosophy of education in care. She discloses her objective in life and in her career as trying to live up to being a role model for her students, her children, and for her friends.22

As a natural result of such a caring and nurturing atmosphere, she became inspired to teach. The way she narrated her memories in connection to her favorite childhood pastime, role-playing, was captivating. She is present in the image she is drawing for me. This has greatly helped me envision her as the teacher she became:

I used to feel a special relationship with the chalk, and used to draw and paint on my home’s walls where I grew up. My students used to listen to me attentively and enjoy my class. I still recall my writing and drawing on the walls, which reminds me of my dream in my childhood about becoming a teacher. I was using my home walls as a blackboard and used to imagine I am teaching some students even though I was alone (Transcript, line: 18).

Disclosing this somehow intimate relationship with the materials any teacher uses shows an admiration for this job and through her role-play it depicts her deep passion for pursuing this career. The confident tone she expressed herself with only showed how comfortable she was with parting with such information and in opening a big window for me, not to peek, but to gaze

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22 Al-Ghazali (2003) emphasized the importance of family upbringing in the early years to form a strong foundation of morals and learning skills. Noddings’ (2002; 2003) ethic of care is based primarily on the relational aspect of building a community fit for our children to become moral.
upon her memories. This revealed the inner peace and contentment she had with her decision in choosing a teaching career.

**Anchor relationship.**

Mrs. Israa’s relationship with her models in the education field matured through her relationship with a new role model, her principal. “My principal taught me to be perfect, and she trained me to be responsible. She gave us a great example in humbleness” (Transcript, line: 65). Hence, it is safe to say that Mrs. Israa’s anchor relationship is not only spiritual, depicted in her frequent use of Allah’s grace and blessing on her in her narration, but also material, exemplified in her principal. When describing her good relationship with her principal she said, “My relationship with her is not limited to implementing her orders...rather than that it is a broad relationship that covers social relationship, advising and continuous support. It is a real sisterhood relationship.” (Transcript, line: 68) This is a direct link to her observation of the female educators in her family.

She goes on describing how effective her principal’s role was in establishing her good reputation at work:

> My principal Om Youssuf, gives me plenty of gifts, and thanks me in front of all of my colleagues, and praises me in all of her professional circles...and she consults with me and asks for my brainstorming whenever she needs great ideas when dealing with her superiors (i.e. the Director). (Transcript, line: 216)

This collaboration has benefitted Mrs. Israa professionally after a remarkable job in coordinating a grand event for the Director.
The director told my principal to put me on the top of the list of people who will be honored in the next year. He called my name and gave me a Christian Dior watch as an appreciation for what I have done. (Transcript, line: 231)

However, as in any relationship there are connection and disconnections. Mrs. Israa faced a disconnection with her anchor relationship that hampered her productivity for a good while, “We had a very hard time and we were hopeless and we were let down! It was hard for me [in this period of disconnection with the principal] to get up, move, and go to work” (Transcripts, line: 339). The pain this disconnection caused her is obvious. It not only translated in a low-spirited state, but also in a lethargic physical state.

In such a disconnection from the material anchor relationship in her life, she sought resort in the second part of this anchor relationship: her spirituality. “But since I believe that we have to be sincere as our religion orders us, and we have to please Allah in everything that we do, I must not let that affect me and our efforts...and she stands up with us because of our sincerity” (Transcript, line: 332). To keep her sanity she mentioned resolving her issues living what she teaches: “It is very important for me to practice what I preach in front of my students and be the best role model” (Transcript, line: 125). Both Noddings (2003) and al-Ghazali (1269/2003) have indicated the importance of being true to ourselves. Noddings speaks of the ethical ideal where we endeavor to derive a sound moral judgment over a person we are at a conflict with. On the other hand, al-Ghazali (1269/2003) insists that a teacher lives what s/he teaches or preaches. “He who possesses knowledge but does not practice it is like a notebook, which itself being

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23 Noddings explained that as natural caretakers, we care for people we intuitively care about. However in cases of conflict we retrieve our ethical ideal to make 'I-Must' functions, (i.e., make ourselves care for that person) (Noddings, 2002, Noddings, 2003).
unintelligent, nevertheless serves as a medium of transmission of the knowledge that its pages contain” (Transcripts, Line: 137).

**Educational caring philosophy.**

By inspecting the resume of this significant teacher, one thing comes to mind: success is paramount to her. From the trophies of appreciation to the gratitude certificate presented to her by her colleagues, superiors, and even students, it is obvious that she has reached a point of success in becoming the connectable person in her educational center. Mrs. Israa’s narration about role models reveals her major concern in being a caring teacher that is being fit to become a role model.

When asked her favorite part of being a teacher, her answer yielded an important element in caring teaching, making change! In Noddings’ (2003) terms it is called motivational displacement, in al-Ghazali’s (Gunther, 2006) words it is passing on enduring values. She said, “I appreciate the ability to influence people and to transfer ideas and information” (Transcript, line: 30). She further expressed her desire to pass on the care she was nurtured in to her beloved students. The medium by which she is able to do so is the vital factor both Noddings and al-Ghazali spoke about, respect. “The first thing that I try to show to them is respect. By respecting them, I hope that I will be able to influence them and help them become great students and great people in the future” (Transcript, line: 47). With this statement she affirmed the most important element in teaching with care, i.e. building a relationship.24

Mrs. Israa stressed that teachers should be sincere and self-observant; concepts that both Noddings and al-Ghazali pointed out in their philosophies. Al-Ghazali emphasized the noble

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24 Both al-Ghazali (2003) and Noddings (2003) looked upon teacher-student as two vital parties with roles for each that facilitate their medium of learning and that is within the framework of a relationship.
profession of teaching should not be taken lightly and Mrs. Israa’s philosophy resonates with this notion wholeheartedly.

Mrs. Souad’s Narrative

**Anchor relationship.**

“Even if my experience is 21 years now in education, 21-22 years, but I still remember good teacher(s), are still there in my mind” (Transcript, line: 207).

I found it hard to describe the anchor relationship with Mrs. Souad. Maybe because I was looking for an exemplar person who not only had a history of being a role model, but was currently fulfilling that role. I was looking for how she could relate to the longtime impact of mentoring. After much time spent on scrutinizing the interview transcripts with her, I was able to define her anchor relationship based on her memories of two teachers she had in middle school and in high school.

Her middle school English teacher, Mrs. Nahid, was an effective personality on her decision to become a teacher, moreover to become an English teacher. The amount of care this teacher has exerted and surrounded her students with has deeply affected Mrs. Souad. She said:

Mrs. Nahid was very clever because she knew the good students and she was responsible for the English club and that is why the English club in our school existed... she always took our portfolios when we wrote anything and told the principal, "See what my children did!" (Transcript, line: 198)

In Mrs. Nahid we see a teacher who calls her students “my children.” This brings to mind an important aspect of both Noddings and al-Ghazali. Noddings (2003) elaborated on care ethics based on the maternal factor. Al-Ghazali (1269/2003) emphasized how a teacher should perceive her students as her own.
To this day, she still looks up to this amazing teacher, even as she is following in her footsteps and performing the administrative role of principal in a caring way. The idea of creating a portfolio started with her experience with Mrs. Nahid. In a later part of the interview, where I asked about her view of evaluating her teachers and reform at the time, she replied,

“Look…this subject, assessment, is very critical if we want to make real reform. Everything should be change(d)…should be more comprehensive…it should be something that we call alternative assessment, which includes portfolios and so on” (Transcript, Line: 963). She earlier said in connection to the issue of teacher assessment, “I may use a different kind of assessment depending on teachers’ portfolios…such portfolios…will give you a good idea about her…her standards if she is good or not.” (Transcript, Line: 374)

What drew my attention to the importance of these two teachers' impact over her personality was not only her tone of voice—which was very passionate—but her immediate response to another question I asked, "Do you have a favorite teacher? Tell me about her." She responded without hesitation: "I hated my mathematics teacher." (Transcript, p. 5, Line: 154) It seemed that she needed to divulge her feelings about her negative experiences to clear the way for her positive ones. This only indicates how heightened her senses were toward the subject of "favorite teacher." That led me to think that she really cares about her previous teachers. When I went looking into the transcripts for her description of her teachers there were several, but the most notable and elaborate ones were the English teacher and her sports teacher.

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25 Studies rendered that the evaluation process in the ministry of education in Kuwait places greater emphasis over the administrative functions rather than teaching abilities and capacities. (Al-Sahel, 2005, p. 480)
Her description of these two particular teachers was like drawing an outline of how the interview went later on. She spoke of how she is using portfolios to help her determine the annual reports for her teachers. The only time she mentioned portfolio in the interview was in connection to Mrs. Nahid. In addition to that, she also spoke about her sports teacher and how she follows up with them still after their graduation. She did acknowledge the effect and impact of that caring leadership: "When in secondary school look, even since we graduated she still asks about us. So that affects me a lot. I mean…when she sees anyone who knows me or anyone who knows any of my friends she says, ‘Say hello to Souad” (Transcript, line: 207). She followed her teacher’s footsteps in establishing a sound relationship with her staff members and students. In several places in the interview she was proud to have been a caring leader as her sports teacher had been to her:

I mean it is very simple very easy in order to take to make things go smoothly. OK, you have to take the best of everyone and you have to tell them that “You are good in that better than me” that’s why thank God, thank God all through my career I never quarreled with any one [i.e. teacher.] (Transcript, Line: 485)

**Educational caring philosophy.**

“The purpose of education is to make life easier as a person” (Transcript, line: 580). It is evident that she believes that the way she expresses care is through this continuous act of learning and how it can put her in the shoes of the other person. “Sometimes the teacher will be my teacher” (Transcript, line: 484). She insisted on the importance of knowing the person from the inside, “[As] a leader…I put in my mind that in order to work with me successfully I have to see them from the inside.” (Transcript, line: 479)
Mrs. Souad's philosophy of education in caring consists of several important intertwining elements. Care is definitely on top of it, followed by respect, cooperation, and collaboration by community members. Included also was the parents’ role into the educational process, based on her relationship with her father and the noticeable impact it had on her:

I can still remember my father till he died (May Allah rest his soul), he was playing with us. Period. I mean when my father died I was twenty-five years old, we were adults, but he still when we go outside he still playing with us and so on. He listens to us...such kind of a family bounds relationship...This shows you that kind of charming and caring warmth which a child needs all through his life till he dies. (transcripts p.24, line: 870)

She reiterates this notion again in another part of the interview when she says, “Education is for life.” (Transcript, Line: 584) The learning process is a lifetime work.

She then highlights an essential factor in both Noddings and al-Ghazali’s philosophy of caring education and that is to ‘love’ and ‘enjoy’ what you are doing. “I think that education is…if you like it, you like it you will think of good things to make it better.” (Transcript, Line: 442)

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26 Al-Ghazali (2003) spoke about the importance of loving your work in order to excel in it following the teachings of the prophet and that is, “Whoever wants to perform a task, then let him do it well” (page number).
CHAPTER 5—DISCUSSION

The data collected from the five narratives rendered two common themes: anchor relationship and strong family ties. This has formed a nurturing environment where the narrators
began to shape their understanding of who they are and what they want to become via their relationship with their parents and their families. Their childhood ‘caring’ experiences showed them an understanding of their reality as cared-for(s) and provided them with the practical and intellectual training of who what profession they chose to join and whether, in their professions they would act as caring individuals or not. Murray (2003) described narrative as a sea of stories where we: “swim in a sea of stories that seep into our consciousness and into our very identity” (p.98), to which, I find great relevance with the narrators experiences and the interpretation of their own history.

This research experience has allowed both ends, the narrators and the researcher, to explore how society, family structure and individual aspirations weave into the ‘filter’ we construct to interpret our experiences and our stories. The way Mrs. Salha was so self-aware of the skills she learned from various teachers she admired, portrayed not only the quality of teachers she was lucky to have, but also, drew attention to her ability to restructure her stories and life’s major events in a way that made sense to her audience. Whether she intentionally intended it to be that way or not is not the focus of this study. What this study focuses on is the manner in which these teachers were able to construct their own ethics from their past experiences and their practicing it in empowering them to become who they are.

Mrs. Israa was well aware of the impact her family had over her ideology to become a ‘role model’ and how that seeped into her psyche and turned into the incentive that keeps her going in her teaching. She provided a vivid image of how important it is to find a support network of people who shared similar philosophies in education and probably in life, to keep nurturing that ethic. She also exemplified a state of disconnection and reconnection with core participant in her support network, to which she has suffered from both psychologically and
physically. Mrs. Israa’ major contribution to the discussion was that she reminded us about our human frailty and how we need to maintain a support network so as to rebound from such conflicts.

Miss Farah’s striving to excel in her teaching profession as she did as a k-12 and college student highlighted the impact of her mother’s care over her life objectives and style in approaching and fulfilling tasks. Her mother’s emphasis over her moral behavior at school, affected her to a great deal. It showed Miss Farah that ethics and academic excellence is not only analogues but interchangeable. This has developed her moral lenses from which she projected her actions and philosophy of education as we all see others from.

Mrs. Souad’s perception of ethic was primarily based on her religious ethics and her interpretation of herself as the religious-principal. With only two life-long friends and strong family ties, she seems to be attempting the livelihood of a beginning Sufi. Where she tries to live day by day according to her ethics and believes without being bothered by the outside world. This notion is supported by her declaration of favoring staying at home, which was contradictory to her resume, achievements’ list, portfolio, school trophies, and appreciation letters. This contradiction depicted a desire to excel in what she does and that is teaching and being a leader, with a desire to minimize her relationship with the outside materialistic world. This in turn, heightened her ethical analysis of life events. Notwithstanding, she has held her original source of moral teaching close to her still and that is her family.

Mrs. Zeina found in teaching an extension of her relationship with her caring father. Her description to her father’s care rendered a zealous and enthusiastic person. However, there was a period of muffled voice in her first career as a politician. Her voice resurfaced as she changed careers. Teaching provided her with the medium to nurture and grow her caring ethics through
her relationships with her students. However, there seemed to be a struggle between her caring memories and professional expertise. She was selective in her discourse as she explained the hurdles of being a caring teacher. Despite the fact that she said she continued to maintain her relationships with her students, she provided brief accounts to her support network and family connection. The prominent two relations she was passionate about were her father’s and her connection to God. These apparently constructed her oasis in times of conflict.

**Limitations:**

In this study, the researcher faced many limitations. The rapport established between the researcher and the narrators formed different relationships between them. The relationship had a different response with each person. The data rendered different sets of themes that have differed between interviews. In addition, the researcher was conducting the interviews with participants from overseas, and conducting it over the phone or the iPhone application *face-time*. Through the camera, I was able to monitor some physical interactions between the narrators and their surroundings that enriched the data collected. Yet, this resulted in a limited exposure to the narrators’ physical language compared to a traditional in-person interview. In one case, a narrator insisted on doing the interview over the phone only with no cameras involved.

Another limitation the researcher faced in data criteria was the age discrepancy between the five participants. Two were in their 40s, one in her 30s, one in her late 20s, and one in her early 60s. Consequently there was a discrepancy in their span of experience. Furthermore, the sample rendered no more than five participants, which would make the result hard to generalize.

**Biases**

In the study, I have faced several personal biases with the participants:

1. I am a female.
2. I am a Kuwaiti citizen.

3. I have been a Kuwaiti teacher in an all-girls public school.

This resulted in building rapport between the interviewees and me. Based on the common ground we all share as female Kuwaiti teachers, rapport was easy to manifest. This rapport facilitated the relationship between the researcher and the narrator, which is essential in the context of my research. This has resulted in much admiration toward my participants. Therefore, I have followed up the interviews with a thorough course of reflection, in order to interpret the data in a realistic way (Yow, 2005).

This realization was predicted prior to conducting the interviews. Therefore, so as not to follow the “goodwill advocacy” to paint the narrator’s experiences with a favorable color, I printed out the interview guide and it accompanied me in every interview to remind me had I left something unasked. The relationship built between the researcher and the narrators has led to mutual benefit. It enriched the process of self-knowledge and knowledge of the other. Throughout the interview, what is called “conversational narrative” became available through this oral history project. It is a process where mutual consciousnesses of how the narrators’ stories occurred and how they make sense to the researcher. Due to the previously mentioned bias points, being a female Kuwaiti educator, I was able to connect with these teachers and understand how some events took place as a natural consequence of the environment we in which we live and the educational policies that shape our school culture. Furthermore, it yielded the data in a more subjective context due to the empathy I gained easily with the narrators’ backgrounds and stories (James, 2000).

Analysis

During the analysis process, many factors or themes were noticed, although not among
the five unanimously, but it reoccurred among over half of them depending on the theme in question. One of which I found very prominent was the authority tone of communication between the narrators and myself. It differed based on the experiences and ages of the narrators. Mrs. Salha, being the eldest, provided ample examples of her maternal inclination through the interview and at the same time, provided opportunities for the researcher to ask questions and benefit from her wealth of knowledge. There were always these motherly expressions, “I am going to tell you but don’t tell my sister-in-law because it was regarding her mother, because my English teacher also taught my sister-in-law’s mother (Chuckles).” (Transcript, line: 143) Even when she referred to her stories with her students, the way she communicated with them and how it resembled a mother-daughter relationship, she said, “…once there was a student who came with a gift for me. I asked her, “What is this sweet child?”” (Transcript, line: 354) Even when she declared at the beginning of the interview of her happiness of contributing to this dissertation, as soon as I disclosed the reasons behind this interview and what it would be used for, she said “Absolutely, I would love to help in these arenas (Transcription, Line, 12). She seemed to show obvious joy at the prospect of reaching out and helping other students, especially younger ones, to reach their goals.

On the other hand, there was also evidence that the women held back some of their deepest feelings. Miss Farah, the youngest of the narrators, did not elaborate on her answers. Being a math teacher, I suspect she is used to giving brief answers due to the nature of her job. On the other hand, I sensed there was an issue of power she may have suffered from throughout the interview. “I don’t remember” (Transcript, line: 1587) and other expressions that represented the same meaning got repeated four times in the interview. There was also her emphasis on affirming that she is a changing person and that she will change her class management
techniques from now on. She seemed to be preoccupied that there will be a misconception about her classroom skills, so she went on several times about her intention of changing her conduct with the students:

Because in the past, I used to deal with them less seriously [inferring humor] which [resulted in] actions by them, showing impoliteness with their teacher. In my opinion there must be a space of respect between the teacher and her students. Therefore, in the last two years, I decided to change the way I deal with them.27 (Transcript, line: 269)

It struck a chord when she repeated what she said in a different part in the interview, when I asked her about her relationship with her students:

“Every year I used to start with a kind of leniency and tolerance…I can warn my students, in the event of a failure on their behalf, my technique will be dry and I will be the kind teacher, in the case that they fulfill the duties required of them completely.”

(Transcript, line: 1330)

This has caused me to suspect her intention of talking to me as if I was the expert and she the novice! Another example from Miss Farah’s interview is the following,

“F: What type of car[ing education] did you receive in [the] college that you joined?
Farah: It was (i.e., going to college) confined to my lectures and my friend, even in our going out.” (Trans., Line: 749).

Data

The data collected through voice- and image-sharing technologies was limiting. Despite all the merits technology provides, one narrator showed her distrust in the more sophisticated technology and chose to resort to the traditional phone calls when conducting the interview.

27 Johnson and Lubomudrov (2002) found that there are various moral facets of teaching, classroom rules is but one example that fall into the world of moral judgment.
A common theme became salient, which is the tone of the narrators. It took a while for me to gather my wits around it, but it became more prominent as I was analyzing the interviews transcripts. There is a common factor among all of my participants in the limitation section, in the way they decided to carry themselves throughout the interview. However, each one has conducted this in her own particular method. The future scholar impressed me as potential competition or possibly a future connection. The retired veteran treated me as a novice freshly blazing her way in her educational career and as a result, coated her stories with motherly attention. Mrs. Farah, the youngest of them all, seemed to think of me as “the expert,” and polished her truths striving to sound more intellectual. She provided practical responses as the dedicated person and employee who she is, based on that presumption. When I probed her about the duality of personality she carries inside her for each grade she teachers (fifth and second grade) she negated any duality in her spirit and went on talking about the curriculum and her point of view of how the curriculum informs her perception of her communication with her students and not vice versa:

F: What makes it easy? Is there a particular process you follow?

Farah: Children need a lot of effort to include them and help form their personalities. As for fifth graders the effort is more focused on the material itself [in the curriculum]. Because first grade curriculum is basic you are teaching them classroom skills in addition to the curriculum.” (Transcript, line: 1224)

At a different point, she reported to me her future classroom management plans, the way a teacher would report to her senior teacher:

This year I have changed my style with them. I used to start every year with a kind of leniency and tolerance. So, I informed my students that I will be changing my style of
communication this year so I cam warn my students that, in the event of any failure of
them the consequences will be severe (unaffectionate treatment)...

Moreover, there was Mrs. Israa with whom I enjoyed great rapport and vice versa. She
chose to continuously provide brief answers presuming my awareness of the background
information that informed her experiences, which led me to more probing than usual.

F: Tell me about the relationship between your educational goals and care ethics?

Israa: As I said earlier. (Chuckles)

F: Can you elaborate? (Transcript, line: 105)

The tone of Mrs. Zeina indicated her careful selection of her answers due to her current
post as a principal, henceforth; she resorted many times to office jargon instead of translating the
conflict and its impact on her into words that might have contextualized it in a more accessible
form. “The challenges I faced as a caring teacher is that there is no communication present
between the enterprises which leads to the nonexistence of privileges for the principal.”
(Transcripts, line: 2004) The opposite happened to her tone of voice, picking up when she spoke
about her relationship with her father.

Mrs. Salha, the oldest of my narrators, has provided her tale of becoming a teacher. She
was very attentive and showed her graceful acceptance to be part of this study. She believed it
important to understand a teacher’s journey to aid future new teachers understand what teaching
is really about. The range of her storytelling could have been the sole subject of a degree paper
due to the richness of its data. She had no hidden fears, and expressed herself at the beginning
that she was happy to be of any assistance for a new scholar to earn her degree:

F: This interview will yield data for a Ph.D. dissertation...

S: Absolutely, I would love to help out in these arenas.” (Transcript, line: 10)
Every person has an ambition and in Mrs. Souad, it formulated in her transformation from Arabic to English. Her usage of the English language at the onset of the interview has baffled me. She requested, “Do you like me to speak in English? It is no problem.” (Transcript, line: 5) I answered positively thinking that she might wish to facilitate our discussion and later on the process of transcription. But as the interview process unfolded, several aspects highlighted her sense of obligation to prove to me, as the researcher coming from the Western country,\(^{28}\) that she is of a respectable level of education and in order to be interviewed she had the proper credentials.

Throughout the interview, she resorted back to Arabic sporadically whenever she felt frustrated trying to deliver a particular message that was not feasible in the English language, which I considered to be natural, since English was her second language. But what further raised my doubts happened at the end of the interview when she reverted to 100% Arabic to speak about her favorite character in education: her mentor and college professor. She certainly valued him greatly. Her description of his conduct, his mentorship and his ethics was eye-opening. She found space in her native language to express her feelings and thoughts about her favorite teacher, a man who has influenced her deeply for learning to follow her wish and desire to pursue her education even after she retired from her career as an educator in a public school.

She was able to voice her ideas better in her native language. This has raised my doubts as to whether she resorted to the English language to help a colleague understand, or to try to forge a link between her consciousness about her holding a respectable degree and whether she

\(^{28}\) Due to the academic dependency and the impact of “modernizing” the GCC states in the Middle East, it is safe to assume that Western-earned degrees rank higher than locally earned ones (Al-Attas, 2002; Al-Thawdi, 2013).
can communicate intellectually and intelligibly with a potential college instructor.\textsuperscript{29} The fact that she used the adjectives \textit{smart} and \textit{clever} a total of 16 times in describing her favorite teachers and characters only supported this rising doubt. Using the English and Arabic languages interchangeably was the key to understanding whether Miss Soad was at peace within herself, or in the heart, as al-Ghazali has indicated in his philosophical debates and theory of knowledge.\textsuperscript{30} Al-Ghazali used heart synonymously with intellect; which indicates according to him, that aql is not the only venue from we perceives and comprehend, but also, through our heart (i.e., one’s essence that perceives and knows) (Asari, 1993; Al-Ghazali, 2003). On the other hand, Noddings (2003) discussed the emotions of happiness and joy in her caring philosophy.

Mrs. Soad’s educational caring philosophy includes one of many important elements that constitute her personality and has informed her experiences and vice-versa. One major element noted from the data was mastering strong leadership skills that does not scar the others around her, whether staff or students. “If you are a good leader, for their strengths and their ability and sometimes for their emotions which is the most important.” (Transcript, line: 549) She asserts this notion again in another part of the interview, “all through my career I never quarreled with any one, Thank God, except if (s)he’s not good I am very strict at that time.” (Transcript, line: 487)

\textsuperscript{29} Murray (2003) explained how narrative structure helps forge links to make sense of the stories we hear in such settings, and the cultural impact, “In any culture there such plots that we can draw on to shape our interpretation of events.” (p. 98)

\textsuperscript{30} Al-Gahzali's theory of knowledge basically defines the merits of the intellect which can be one of three, the heart, the spirit, or the psyche. He describes the interconnectedness of the body senses and how daily experiences are mirrored in our memory reservoirs. When these images are recalled they reflect our perception and interpretation of the actual experience. The mirroring process is performed in relation to the context in which it occurs. The result is having knowledge, which means learning. al-Ghazali's explanation is relative to Nodding's focus on the relational aspect of morality instead of focusing on the ‘agent’ only (Asari, 1993).
Conclusion

Both Noddings and al-Ghazali shared the relational foundation of forming ethics, despite the fact that they come from different cultures and centuries. This commonality suggests that a philosophical connection between the West and the Middle East is possible. However, this connection cannot be fully successful if adapted by a person who is not at peace with him/herself.

The data collected rendered an important factor: a caring family upbringing does positively shape the person’s tendency to become caring, compassionate, empathic, and positive. This also supports the fact that embracing healthy cultural practices and intellectual traditions aid in forming a sound identity. Teachers who exemplified such identities projected a deep satisfaction with oneself and contentment in career.

Moreover, using the oral history method may prove to be valid in investigating an ethic of care for Middle Eastern educators. The open-ended interview lead to a plethora of data that could not easily obtained in the case of questionnaires. Establishing a relationship with the narrators provided a safe and comfortable environment to contribute their life stories, especially, where they implicitly and explicitly learned their care ethics. Therefore, this study is maybe significant in that it leads to a stronger, more confident, and more peaceful teacher. Constructing a teacher preparation program using the insights of Noddings and al-Ghazali maybe a key to a deeper and better Kuwaiti program.

Implications for Future Research

Future studies can incorporate larger numbers of narrators to be able to generalize some findings accordingly. Also, future research might seek to find participants from a lower familial secure background in order to investigate the development of morality in harsh environments.
Since the main two institutions that produce educators in Kuwait are Kuwait University and the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, there is possibly an element of homogeneity in the outcomes. In other words, the experience the narrators may have had were likely shaped by similar settings that secure the production of similar results. This can be resolved by conducting national and transnational studies between Kuwaiti local teachers, and Kuwaiti teachers and student teachers studying abroad whether in Western countries or other Middle-Eastern countries.

Moreover, future research can incorporate male teachers’ versions of the efficiency of teacher preparation programs and whether it upholds its main objectives. According to the Ministry of Education national report about education they are the ability to acquire: knowledge, pedagogical practices and professional skills necessary to help the student learn., These objectives should also be considered in collaboration with the other goals stated in the same report about the continuity of the learning process for both the teacher and student, a factor that strongly is relevant to the ethic of care and caring teaching.

Future research can also involve a thorough investigation on how to incorporate the ethic of care into teacher preparation programs from a standpoint of the cultural codes that the preparation program pertains to. Also, researchers can look into the feasibility of applying the philosophy of care in the refreshing training courses provided by the Ministry of Education (National Report on Education, 2004-2008).
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A
The Interview Guide

Demographics

Name  Adam

When were you born? 1970

Where were you born?  Kuwait City

Where did you grow up? (From birth-18)  Kuwait City

Have you lived in other places in Kuwait?  No

Have you lived outside of Kuwait?  No

Family Background

Tell me about caring in your family.

1. With Parent’s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low care</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>High care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

a. Give one example of a caring incident.

i.  Adam

______________________________________________________
ii.  

iii.  

2. With siblings

Low care  

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | High Care |

a. Give one example of a caring incident.

i.  

ii.  

iii.  

3. With Grandparent’s

Low care  

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | High Care |

a. Give one example of a caring incident.

i.  

ii.  

iii.  
Parent’s Education level

Mother_________________ Father______________________

Tell me about your Siblings

How many siblings do you have?

Males__________________ Females____________________________

Educational level of siblings

(1)______________ (2) _____________ (3)_________________

(4)______________ (5)_____________ (6)_________________

Were (are) any of your family members teachers? Yes/No

Tell me about their teaching, was it caring? Yes/No

Where did (do) they teach?

What did (do) they teach?
What did they tell you about being a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care?

Childhood Years (6-12)
Tell me about your three of the most caring experiences in your childhood.

Did you have a favorite teacher? Tell me how he/she was caring.

What was an important caring incident at your school?

K-6

7-12
College

How do you think these caring experiences influenced you as a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care?

Adolescence Years (13-18)

Tell me about your caring adolescence experiences.

Did you have a favorite teacher? Tell me about him/her.

How do you think these caring experiences influenced you as a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care?
Higher Education

Tell me about your most caring experiences in college.

Did you have a favorite professor? Tell me about what was caring about him/her.

How well do you think your program prepared you to become a caring teacher?

Work Experience

Before becoming a teacher, did you have other jobs? If so, tell me about them?

How long have you been a teacher?
Why did you decide to become a teacher?

What did your family tell you about teaching with an ethic of care?

How did your relationship with your family affect your understanding of teaching with an ethic of care?

In your career, in how many schools have you worked?

What grade levels have you taught?
Teaching experience

Tell me what you value most about teaching?

Tell me about your relationship with your students.

Do you think you exhibit an ethic of care? How so?

Tell me about your relationship with your co-workers.

How does [insert name] inform your ethic of care in the classroom?
Tell me about your relationship with your principal(s) or head.

How does your ethic of care inform your work in the classroom?

What challenges, if any, do you face as a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care?

Philosophy of Education

Purpose

What is the relationship between your purposes of education and the ethic of care?
What is the role of a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care in the community?

Students and Learners

What are your caring goals for your students?

Do you believe all learners have something to contribute about caring, or is this the role of teachers only?

Do you believe that boys and girls learn about caring differently?

If so, how?
How does that affect your principles as a teacher who exhibits an ethic of care?

What role, if any, should parents play in teaching their children about care?