

Examining the Attitudes of Female EFL Learners at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait Towards Integrating the Project-Based Approach in EFL Courses

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Abstract

Investigating learners' attitudes is highly relevant to the improvement of teaching strategies and educational outcomes. The current study attempts to examine the attitudes of female EFL learners in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait toward the integration of project-based learning (PBL) in their English courses. The data was collected quantitatively using a questionnaire designed for the purpose of the study. The participants completed the questionnaire after experiencing PBL for about two months in their compulsory general English courses. The results revealed clear positive attitudes of these learners toward this student-centred method. The participants of the study have reported improvements in their English language skills, self-confidence, motivation, collaborative skills, and planning. These results can be used to improve the quality of English teaching in Kuwait and encourage the integration of PBL in all English classes in Kuwait's public educational institutions. It is hoped that by encouraging the adoption of these modern strategies, Kuwait can enhance the 21st-century skills among the graduates of its institutions and prepare them to be active and productive in their future careers.

Keywords: Learner's attitudes, project-based learning, English as foreign Language, student-centered methods, Kuwait

Introduction

English as a global language has been gaining significant attention around the world because of its strong connections to future educational and professional success (Alnwaiem, Alazemi, and Alenezi, 2021). Learners are now more aware of the importance of having an adequate amount of English if they wish to achieve a successful career. Being aware of the requirements of the new globalised world, Kuwait is one of the countries that gives special importance to improving the process of learning English among its citizens starting from a very young age (Alsafran, Al Ajmi, and Al Azmi, 2020; Assaf 2023). Although English is still taught as a foreign language in state-funded schools, the Kuwait Ministry of Education is exerting continuous efforts to improve curriculums to meet the latest recommendations in the field and encourage English teachers to adopt communicative teaching methods (MOE, 2015; MOE, 2016; Tryzna and Al Sahroufi, 2017). The main objectives of the English Language Teaching General Supervision in Kuwait focus on improving the learner's 21st-century skills, like critical thinking, problem solving, independence, and creativity (Tryzna and Al Sahroufi, 2017). In order to achieve the desired English proficiency by the time the students reach their tertiary level, the Kuwait Ministry of Education has integrated English language as a compulsory course to be taught in all state-funded schools starting from grade one to grade twelve. Students in these schools receive about 45 minutes a day of English language instruction five times a week. The MOE (2016) expects learners to meet level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by the time they graduate from grade twelve.

In spite of the well-designed English curriculum and the efforts to constantly improve the pedagogical practices, public school graduates continue to struggle at their college-level education due to their low English proficiency (Al-Nouri, 2019; Alsafran, Al Ajmi, and Al Azmi, 2020; Tryzna and Al Sahroufi, 2017). According to Alsafran, AlAjmi, and AlAzmi (2020), many graduates of public schools in Kuwait suffer from this issue, which consequently causes them to lack motivation and self-confidence. The scholars suggest that this problem could be the result of the traditional teaching methods that learners might have been exposed to during their prior college education. In her investigation of this issue, Al-Nouri (2019) emphasises the above-mentioned problems and highlights some points that might have resulted in them. Among these reasons are the negative attitudes that the majority of the participants in her study exposed towards learning English. These attitudes are linked to the belief that learning English is not important, as it is considered a waste of time, and it could affect their national identity. Moreover, the participants showed a notable preference to adopt Arabic as the language of instruction in their tertiary education and

considered that to be more beneficial to their future and identity (Al-Nouri, 2019). One of the factors that seem to be effectively leading to the negative attitudes of EFL learners in Kuwait about learning English is the use of old traditional teaching methods that centre mainly around teachers as knowledge providers, while the role of learners is usually limited to receiving that knowledge and applying it in some out-of-context exercises (Al Rubaie, R., 2010, Assaf, 2023). Although the importance of implementing a student-centred approach in English teaching is highly emphasised in the Kuwait National curriculum (MOE, 2015), traditional methods are still followed by the majority of EFL teachers, and outdated pedagogical tools are constantly employed (Al-Nouri, 2019; Alsafran, Al Ajmi, and Al Azmi, 2020; Assaf, 2023; Tryzna and Al Sahroufi, 2017). The gap between the recommendations of English curriculum designers and the actual teaching practices is apparently affecting learners' attitudes in public schools of Kuwait in a negative way. Assaf's (2023) study supports this claim, as the participants clearly attributed their struggles in the four English language skills to the traditional teacher-centred methods used in their previous English classes. Moreover, these participants have declared their vital need for the employment of modern, practical, and interactive teaching methods in which they can be more involved as learners. Apparently, learning English, especially in contexts where it is considered a foreign language (EFL), seems to be hindered by many factors; one of these significant factors is the learner's attitude towards EFL (Tran, 2020).

The learner's attitude is claimed to have a direct and noticeable impact on the learning process as well as the outcomes. According to Latchanna and Dagnev (2009), the term 'attitude' refers to "a mental and neutral state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (p. 1). As the definition suggests, the previous experience of learners shapes their perspectives about the knowledge being acquired and consequently guides their response to it in any future exposure. Wulandari et al. (2024) agree with this point and suggest that learners' attitudes can directly influence their motivation and willingness to interact. This claim is also supported by Tran (2020), Yuliani et al. (2023), and Viet (2017), who emphasise that examining learners' attitudes in language learning contexts can lead to the effective development of curriculum and teaching methods and inform decision-makers on the aspects that require improvements or modifications. Interestingly, Viet (2017) indicates that a negative attitude that learners might have about language learning due to a previous experience can be changed into a positive attitude if the correct methods are employed.

Therefore, and because of its significant influence, the current study aims at examining the attitudes of EFL learners in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait towards the integration of a well-established approach in the field in their English courses, which is project-based learning (PBL). It is hoped that by allowing these learners to try this new method and discover its effects, their attitudes towards EFL could be positively altered.

Project-based learning (PBL) is one of the student-centred methods that has been acquiring attention in the field of education lately. It has been noticed that this method encourages students' curiosity and involvement in the learning process (Maros et. al., 2021). Al-Hammad et al. (2024) have also recommended PBL as one of the effective methods that can enhance the acquisition of the 21st-century essential skills, like critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. It should be noted, though, that the idea of integrating a project in teaching is not new in the field, as it has always been present in the learning process (Thomas, 2000). According to Thomas (2000), there does not seem to be an agreed-upon definition for what exactly PBL can refer to; however, the discussions around this concept seem to share a number of characteristics that usually refer to a process in which students need to work collaboratively on solving a problem or answering a question over a period of time and display a final product in a specific way.

The effectiveness of this approach as a better alternative to the traditional teacher-centred method is investigated by many studies. For example, Gratchev (2023) compared the effects of both traditional examinations and project-based assessments on students' performance. He concluded that project-based assessment provided a better learning experience and led to improved performance compared to the traditional exams. His study also revealed positive attitudes among a number of learners about the replacement of exams with assignment-based assessments. These learners praised the more realistic conditions of projects compared to exams and the provided opportunities to practice the required skills to solve a real-life situation. Gratchev (2023) attributes these positive findings to a number of factors, including the access to resources, the flexibility of the time limit, and consequently decreased stress and anxiety, which are not available in exam assessments. Moreover, Maros et. al. (2021) have noticed similar positive attitudes towards PBL among the participants of their study. The findings of their study recommend PBL as one of the effective student-centred methods that teachers can integrate in their teaching. PBL is also found to enhance learners' collaborative skills and improve the essential 21st-century skills like critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and responsibility (Aifan, 2021; Tran & Nguyen Ngoc, 2023). Furthermore, Naji et al. (2020) have reviewed the studies that investigated the implementation of PBL in the Qatari educational system and found that this method is

noticed to raise learners' motivation, willingness to engage in the learning process, and in-depth learning. Positive effects on other skills like collaboration, analysis, and self-directed learning have also been noticed in this review.

PBL have also been investigated in English teaching contexts and revealed promising results. For example, in their exploration of the most effective pedagogical strategies to employ in courses teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) at Kuwait University, Saad & Alme fleh (2023) suggested that PBL is one of the highly recommended methods that can improve the teaching quality and enhance learners' English proficiency. Moreover, Boardman et al. (2024) have conducted a comparative study that yielded encouraging results. They compared traditional teaching strategies with PBL in a secondary school and examined the reactions of both teachers and learners. Their study concluded that PBL can be considered a successful method to enhance the language learning process and encourage learners' interaction and collaboration. Despite the challenges that might be faced through the implementation of PBL, Boardman et al. (2024) have asserted that, with the adequate training and education, this method is highly achievable in English teaching classes, and its results are worth attempting. In another study conducted by Adams (2018), who investigated the perceptions of EFL teachers and learners towards PBL, a number of encouraging conclusions regarding this issue have been reached. Adams suggested that the revealed attitudes towards this approach are generally positive. In this study, the interviewed teacher has reported improvements in learners' collaborative skills and willingness to participate. Moreover, most of the participants in this study have highlighted the effectiveness of this method for language learning and raising motivation. Similar positive reactions were highlighted by Thuan (2018), who have integrated PBL in EFL elementary classes for two years and noticed an evident satisfaction with this method among his students. He also found that this approach encourages learners' interaction, increases their motivation, and enhances autonomous learning among them. These engaging results of PBL have also been noticed to improve the reading comprehension skills of EFL learners in a study conducted by Kavlu (2015).

Based on the related literature, the effectiveness of PBL has become significantly evident in the field of education in general, and in EFL in particular. Its promising outcomes that are revealed by the previous studies encourage its integration in EFL classes in Kuwait's public educational institutions. However, concerns might arise regarding the introduction and acceptance of this new method that EFL learners in Kuwait are not familiar with and might be hesitant to try, as indicated by Naji et al. (2020). Therefore, the current study aims to examine EFL learners' attitudes in

Kuwait towards PBL after experiencing this method in one of their EFL classes. It is hoped that by employing a new student-centred method that encourages them to be active and productive, learners can have positive attitudes about learning English and how feasible it can be. This study is also considered significant for drawing the attention of stakeholders and policymakers in Kuwait to the positive attitudes of the participants about this experience, which might encourage them to implement this student-centred method in EFL classes in the future. Moreover, the findings of this study provide insights that could be effectively employed to improve the quality of EFL teaching in Kuwait and equip learners with one of the major requirements for their educational and professional success. Although the study only focuses on the attitudes of undergraduate EFL learners, its results can inspire other researchers to examine the perspectives of different groups of EFL learners in Kuwait before reaching any generalisable results. Through this study, the following questions are addressed:

1. What concerns do EFL learners in Kuwait have about learning English through PBL?
2. What difficulties do EFL learners face when having to learn through PBL?
3. How effective do EFL learners believe PBL to be for their English language improvement compared to the traditional teaching methods?

Methodology

This study aims at investigating learners' attitudes towards integrating PBL in EFL courses in Kuwait. A quantitative method is adopted to achieve the purpose of this study. According to Dornyei (2007), quantitative research is effective in revealing the common features among a certain group regarding a specific phenomenon. It is also characterised as producing objective data that could usually be generalised to other similar contexts (Dornyei, 2007). These characteristics are believed to well serve the purpose of the current study, which is hoped to come up with useful findings that are possible to generalise to other EFL contexts in Kuwait.

The quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire that was designed to investigate the attitudes of female EFL learners in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait regarding the effectiveness of PBL for learning English. Questionnaires are one of the most commonly used methods in the field of applied linguistics for collecting large data that tests informants' attitudes regarding a specific issue (Zhang and Aryadoust, 2022; Dornyei, 2007). They are also reported as effective in providing objective and reliable data that can be used in other similar studies and inform the process of policy making (Dash and Arulmozi, 2023). The constructed questionnaire included 19 closed-ended questions, all of which are multi-item scales that are

designed to collect factual (5 items), behavioural (4 items), and attitudinal (10 items) data (Donrnyi, 2007). 16 questions were multiple-choice items, while 3 had phrasal rating scales. It should be noted that, as recommended by Dornyi (2007), the questionnaire was intentionally planned to be short and concise to motivate the informants to answer all the questions and provide honest answers to each item.

The questionnaire was answered by 180 female EFL learners from the College of Basic Education in Kuwait. Most of these students have received EFL instruction for at least twelve years (45 minutes a day, five times a week) during their pre-college education. 99 participants are enrolled in the Pre-intermediate General English course (PGE), which is equivalent to Level A2 of the CEFR. The remaining number of participants are enrolled in the Advanced General English course (AGE), which is equivalent to Level B1 of the CEFR. It is worth mentioning that both courses are compulsory in the students' major sheet; this means that they need to pass these courses in order to graduate and get a bachelor's degree. Around 92% of the participants are between 18 and 25 years old, while only 7% of them are older in age. It is also noted that 41% of them are specialised in Islamic Studies, around 14% are specialised in scientific majors, 10% are specialised in the Arabic language, around 7.5% are specialised in home economics, and the remaining 26% are specialised in other majors.

Based on the researcher's experience, the points mentioned above about the characteristics of EFL learners in Kuwait seem to be clearly evident in the participants of this study. Many of these students suffer from language anxiety, lack motivation, underestimate the importance of learning English, and struggle with the basic language skills. Therefore, it was a bit challenging to encourage learners with these characteristics to attempt a new learning method and participate in this project. It is worth mentioning here that a good number of students have dropped the course as soon as they were informed about the plan of the project and its role in the course teaching and assessment.

During the course, the participants were asked to work on a project with a group of 5-6 classmates over a two-month period following the steps specified below:

1. Choose a topic of interest.
2. Divide the chosen topic into subtopics so that each member can focus on one aspect of the investigation.
3. Ask three to four questions about the specified section. These questions are supposed to guide the investigation of the learners and focus on specific points.

4. Collect information to answer the proposed questions. Answers should be written in the form of a minimum of one paragraph to each question.
5. Introduce your final project with your group through an oral presentation.

These steps are meant to control the process and guide the learners in their work to achieve the ultimate EFL goal. Through these steps, learners are expected to improve collaborative, analytical, and critical thinking skills. Moreover, linguistic skills like reading, listening, writing, and speaking are supposed to be activated through the steps of the project. Throughout this process, the teacher worked to improve the linguistic competence of the learners by providing language instruction and focusing on the linguistic skills that they needed to complete the project. This included grammar, vocabulary, writing, and reading comprehension exercises, in addition to short oral presentations. At the end of the course, the participants were asked to present their projects with their groups in the form of oral presentations. Finally, after completing their projects, the participants answered a questionnaire regarding this experience and how they perceive it. The results of the questionnaire are discussed in the following section.

Results

In this section the results of both behavioural and attitudinal questions are displayed. The behavioural questions section was designed to focus on the informants' beliefs and attitudes before attempting the new teaching method. The participants were first asked to assess their perceived English proficiency; 41% of the participants considered their English proficiency level to be average, 25% of them believed their level was satisfactory, and only 9.4% described their English proficiency as "low" or "very low." On the other hand, 16% of the informants believed that they had a "very good" level of English, and about 7% considered their level to be "excellent." When asked whether they have been through the experience of integrating PBL in an English course before, almost half of the participants answered that it was new to them, whereas the other half reported that they have tried this method in previous courses. As for their reactions to the idea of employing this method, 19.5% of the informants were hesitant to keep the course, but they decided to try, while for 34% of them, the main reason they remained enrolled in the course was because there was no other option. Interestingly, 44% of the participants responded to this question by stating that they were excited to try this method, and they believed it would benefit their English proficiency. The last question in this section focused on the concerns that the participants had regarding the implementation of PBL in

the course before being involved in it. The results showed that around 50% of them were worried about their grades and the possibility of losing marks if they tried this new method. 25% of the participants believed that their level of English is not sufficient to perform these kinds of projects. The main concern for about 30% of the informants was trying a new method that they have not experienced before, while the idea of having to present orally in English concerned only about 15% of the participants. Only 6% of answers indicated their lack of motivation to work on a project in a foreign language. The results of the behavioural section are displayed in the chart below.



Figure 1. Results of Behavioral Questions

The next section in the questionnaire included 10 attitudinal questions that aimed at revealing the informants’ attitudes after being through the experience of integrating PBL in their English course. The first question asked the participants to rate the effectiveness of the steps proposed to conduct the project. Almost three-quarters of the answers (72%) indicated that the planning steps were excellent and effective for the implementation of the project, while 25% of the participants believed that they were useful to some extent. Only 1% replied that the steps were not clear and needed to be modified, and another 1% thought these steps were unnecessary and even not useful. When asked about the most challenging steps in the project plan, the

participants were allowed to choose more than one answer. As expected, about half of the 180 participants (89) believed it was the oral presentation that constituted the biggest challenge in this project. 48 of them thought that choosing a topic to work on for the project was more challenging, while working with a group was challenging for 42 participants. For 31 of them, the real challenge was answering the presentation questions in a well-written English text, whereas the step of asking questions about the chosen project was challenging to only 25 informants.

Regarding the third question in this section, the majority of the informants (71%) believed that their English has improved after being through the experience of integrating PBL in the course. On the other hand, only 6% of the informants did not notice any improvement in their English proficiency level after this experience, and about 23% of them could not decide whether their language has improved or not. The next question asked the participants to rate from 1-5 the extent to which they believe this experience has positively affected their English proficiency level. It should be noted that choosing 1 means having the least positive effect (0-19%), while 5 means having the highest positive effect (80-100%). About 34% of the answers were (5), 13% were (3), 5% were (2), and only 3% for each (4) and (1). The participants were then asked to specify the aspects that they believe have improved most after trying the PBL method. This question also allowed choosing more than one answer from the list, which included the following points:

1. Improving lexical knowledge.
2. Raising self-confidence.
3. Acquiring more information about new topics.
4. Improving collaborative skills
5. Effective Planning
6. All of the above

The most chosen aspect was raising self-confidence, as 72 participants believed that their self-esteem has improved after being through this experience. 66 participants thought that this method has helped them increase their lexical knowledge and acquire new English vocabulary. Collaborative working skills has improved among 44 participants, and 33 of them believed that they have acquired more information about new topics. 22 participants have benefitted from the effective planning of the project. It is worth noting that 53 participants believed that the PBL method has benefitted them in all the above-mentioned aspects. Surprisingly, despite the benefits that the participants believed they have gained from this experience, about 60% indicated in the next question that the concerns they've raised in

question (9) were still justified after experiencing the PBL method, while 40% believed the opposite was true.

About the factors that helped the participants pass this experience successfully, 39% of them highlighted the importance of the instructor's continuous guidance and support. The steps specified to complete the project were effectively helpful to 26% of the participants, while 24% of them believed they were able to complete this project because of working within a group. Only 11% of the participants attributed their success to a previous experience in conducting these kinds of projects.

The participants were also asked whether their beliefs regarding the most effective method to learn English as a foreign language have changed after experiencing PBL. In other words, do they still believe that English is best learnt through the traditional method where they are assessed based on exams and quizzes, or through conducting a project similar to the one they have experienced? Most of them (about 68%) perceived PBL as a more effective substitute for the traditional method, whereas 32% still believe that the traditional method is more effective. Moreover, 83% of the participants indicated that, in the future, they will more probably choose a course that implements the PBL method; in contrast, only 16% reported that they will still prefer a course that follows the traditional paper exams method. Finally, the participants were asked to assess their English language general improvement after passing this course by choosing from a scale from 1-5, where 1 equals the least improvement and 5 equals the best improvement. 38% of the participants rated their improvement as (4), 29% decided it was (5), 19% chose (3), 10% chose (2), and only 2% chose (1), indicating that there was barely any noticed improvement in the language. The results of the attitudinal section of the questionnaire are displayed in the following charts.



Figure 2. Results of Attitudinal section

Discussion

Before discussing the results, it is worth noting that there is a significant difference in the results of the attitudinal section between the informants from each of the investigated courses. In other words, more informants from the AGE course (75%) have described their English level to be average or better compared to 60% of those from the PGE course.

Moreover, more participants from the AGE course (60%) have tried before working on a project through an EFL course than the participants from the PGE course (40%). This might consequently have led to similar variations in the answers to the next question, where 51% of AGE students expressed excitement about the implementation of PBL in the course compared to only 38% of the PGE students. This is probably attributed to the fact that students at the AGE level have usually completed one or two prerequisite English courses in college, which might have contributed to their better evaluation and more positive attitudes. However, these differences are seen in the attitudinal questions only, not in the other sections of the questionnaire.

On the other hand, it can be said that the general results of this study coincide with the previous literature on the effectiveness of PBL and the positive attitudes towards it. To begin with, there is an evident positivity among participants from both groups regarding their perceived English level and willingness to implement a new method. This can be elicited from the fact that about 66% of the informants have described their English proficiency to be average or even better, compared to only 34% who assigned a lower evaluation to their EFL skills. Furthermore, a significant percentage of the participants (44%) were optimistic about the experience and decided to try it, despite a clear hesitation and cautiousness in the other answers. This hesitation aligns with the study of Naji et al. (2020), in which they highlighted the importance of taking into consideration the concerns of learners and teachers who are used to traditional teaching when asked to shift to a more learner-centred method, like PBL. Some of these worries can also be seen in the next question, in which the answers reflect high concerns about the participants' grades in a course where a new strategy is implemented. In this question, half of the informants expressed their concerns about losing marks if the PBL methods are adopted. The second aspect that concerned the informants is trying a new method that they haven't experienced before, especially among the students of PGE (34%). This can be related to the results obtained from question seven, in which 60% of this group reported that it was the first time for them to try this method in an English course. The insufficient English competency comes in the third place among the concerns expressed by the participants, despite the positive attitudes about their English skills that were reflected in the previous section. This is evident in the item "My English proficiency level would not help me complete this project effectively" that was chosen by 25% of the participants and the item "I do not prefer to perform an oral presentation, especially in English" that was chosen by 15%. Therefore, it might be suggested that EFL learners in this study have positive attitudes about their English proficiency level but only to a certain extent. It seems that they become more cautious about using their English language for new purposes

that they are not used to. Unexpectedly, the item related to the lack of motivation to implement PBL in the course was chosen as a major concern by only 6% of the participants in this study. This could indicate that learners' motivation might not constitute a major obstacle to the implementation of new learner-centred methods, even in EFL classes.

As for the way the participants have perceived the implementation of PBL, it can be claimed that a positive attitude is evident in their answers, which coincides with the findings of the previous related studies (Gratchev, 2023; Maros et al., 2021; Adams, 2018). First of all, the majority of the participants (72%) believed that the steps planned for the project were helpful and effective, in addition to 25% believing that these steps were helpful to some extent. This indicates that almost 95% of participants have positive perceptions about these steps. Moreover, 71% of the informants indicated that their English has improved significantly after being through this experience. This improvement was rated as 3 and above, on the 1-5 rating scale, by 71% of the answers (the majority have chosen 5). In addition, the item "all of the above" was chosen 53 times as an answer to the aspects that the participants believe have improved most through this experience. This means that, for half of the participants, implementing PBL in their English courses has helped them learn new vocabulary, raise their self-confidence, acquire new knowledge, improve collaborative skills, and plan effectively for a project. It is worth noting that the item "raising self-confidence" has received the highest number of votes (72), and the item "learning new vocabulary" has gained 66 votes (the second highest number). At the end of the questionnaire, about 68% of the informants believed that PBL is more effective in teaching English than the traditional teaching methods, and even 83% of them indicated that in the future, if given the choice, they would choose a course that employs PBL over the one that follows the traditional method. The participants have also highlighted the most important factors that helped them complete their projects successfully. On top of these factors is the guidance and support provided by the instructor, which was chosen by about 35% of the participants, followed by the effective planning of the project, which received about 24% of the votes. Working in a group was also considered effective by 22% of the participants, while only 10% believed they have succeeded because of their prior experience.

All of these results clearly support what has been suggested by the previous literature regarding the integration of PBL in education. The noticed effects of this method on the participants' educational achievement and English proficiency support the results discussed by studies of Saad & Alme fleh (2023), Thuan (2018), Adams (2018), and Kavlu (2015). In their studies, scholars have highlighted the positive outcomes of implementing

PBL in their classes, especially in terms of improving learners' English proficiency and linguistic achievement and increasing positivity among both teachers and learners. Moreover, the importance of group work and collaboration was confirmed in the questionnaire, which supports what Aifan (2021) and Tran & Nguyen Ngoc (2023) have suggested regarding the advantages of integrating PBL in teaching. These studies have asserted that one of the most important gains from this method is the enhancement of collaborative skills among learners, which is believed to play a significant role in preparing them for their future careers. Raising learners' motivation to engage in the learning process and increasing their willingness to try new methods can also be concluded from this study as results of integrating PBL. These results were also evident in most of the studies in this field, especially the ones by Naji et al. (2020), Gratchev (2023), Boardman et al. (2024), and Thuan (2018).

Nevertheless, the percentage of the participants who have still preferred the traditional teaching method should not be neglected (32% for question 17 and 16% for question 18). It should be noted that most of these participants have described their English proficiency level as either weak or satisfactory. Moreover, a good number of them have rated the improvement to their English level after the implementation of PBL as 1 or 2. This might lead us to suggest that there is a remarkable relationship between the self-perceived English level and the flexibility to accept the implementation of a new student-centred approach, like PBL. These reactions were expected by Naji et al. (2020), who suggested that learner-centred methods, like PBL, might not be welcomed by learners with low English proficiency who would believe that their linguistic competence is not adequate for these types of strategies. One final note that can be elicited from the results of this study is that there does not seem to be a significant relationship between the participant's major and their attitudes about PBL.

Conclusion

Testing learners' attitudes is considered one of the important factors for the improvement of learning methods and teaching strategies. The current study attempted to examine the attitudes of 180 EFL female learners in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait toward the implementation of PBL in their English courses. The purpose of the study was to reveal how these learners, who are used to traditional teaching methods, would perceive this student-centred approach and interact with it. It can be concluded from this study that there is an evident positive attitude among the participants about using PBL in English courses. Despite their concerns about their grades and the insufficiency of their actual English level, most of the participants believed that this method is more effective for improving their linguistic

skills and preferred to choose a course with a similar approach in the future. It should be noted that factors like the instructor's guidance and support, effective planning, and group work seem to have contributed to the successful completion of this project to a large extent.

The study has provided important insights about how EFL learners in the College of Basic Education in Kuwait would perceive the integration of PBL in their English courses. However, further investigation can be carried out to learn more about the relationship between these outcomes and other aspects. Factors like age, major, and previous education might have an influence on how EFL learners react to the introduction of new student-centred methods in English teaching courses. Moreover, similar studies might be conducted on different groups of learners to see whether similar results would be obtained or other related factors would arise. It is hoped that this and other similar studies will encourage stakeholders and policymakers in Kuwait to integrate PBL as a modern and effective student-centred approach in EFL courses. If implemented, this method is expected to play a major role in achieving the goals specified in the Kuwait National Curriculum (MOE, 2015) and improving the level of English proficiency among graduates of Kuwait's public educational institutions. This would hopefully equip these graduates with the essential 21st-century skills and help them meet one of the major requirements for their educational and professional success, which is having an adequate level of English proficiency.

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