

The Development of Education in Kuwait by Nouran Mohamed Bassam



Despite the heated nature of Kuwaiti desert and the difficulty of obtaining a living. Kuwaitis have known the road to success and how to evolve and progress. They paved the way to education for generations to come. The following is a reference to the milestones in the development of education in Kuwait.

1- Katateeb were the basis for upbringing young children. (Katateeb is a physical location, or school, where youth were taught the Holy Quran, Islamic teachings, writing, reading, and basic mathematics.) And mosques were for advanced studies. Education in Kuwait went through two phases, the first being the pre-formal education period, which is by means of Katateeb, and the second was the formal school. The first formal school dates back to 1911, when Mubarakiya was established.

2- The first teacher that taught in Kuwait was Sheikh Mohammed Bin Firouz (died in 1723), he took over the judiciary and education. He is considered to be the first scientist Kuwait has ever known, and the first judge, preacher and teacher.

3- Sheikh Nasser Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah contributed to the process of establishing Al-Mubarakiya School. Sheikh Nasser was blind and a lover of science, education and culture. His efforts are worthy of praise. He obtained the title of "Ka'b al-Ahbar".

(Ka'b al-Aḥbār full name: Abū Ishāq Ka'b ibn Manī' al-Himyari was a 7th-century Yemenite Jew descended from the Arab tribe of "Dhi Ra'in" who converted to Islam. He was considered to be the earliest authority on Isra'iliyyat and South Arabian lore).

(When someone is given the title of "Ka'b al-Ahbar" it means they are very well educated and very good at what they know).

4- Al-Khalid family were in charge of financial affairs in Mubarakiya School, from the very start of establishing Mubarakiya School to establishing the Knowledge Department. Throughout a quarter of a century, the Khalid family supported and managed the affair of Mubarakiya School. Recently, the grandsons of Al-Khalid family donated more than fifty thousand historical documents to the Kuwait Research and Studies centre in addition to donating a collection of historical holdings.

5- In 1913, the Arab Charitable Society in Kuwait was founded by Farhan Fahad Al-Khaled Al-Khudhair. The first charity with the goal of helping the poor, burying the dead, disturbing water, providing scholarships for students, treating the sick, teaching and providing a library.

6- In 1921, Al-Ahmadiyya School was established. On the opening day, the Kuwaiti historian Abdulaziz Al-Rasheed said: "O people of Kuwait, this is your school, more than that it is your life, strive to make it better and work hard to improve it".

7- The first school community play was called "Correctional dialogue", it was presented at Al-Ahmadiyya School in 1923.

8- Today, Kuwaiti women relish in the right to education. The Kuwaiti constitution guarantees them a decent life. Women have achieved great things in various fields of life. This great grace would not have been possible without the blessings of God and then the sincere efforts of the early reformers, and among those nobles: Sheikh Musaed al-Azmi, who studied in Al-Azhar.

9- Ms. Mariam Abdul Malik Al-Saleh was the first Kuwaiti female teacher. She joined the educational field in 1937.

10- Mr. Omar Assem, Abdullah Khalaf Al-Dahyan, Abdulaziz Al-Rasheed, Yousef Al-Qenaei, Abdullah Al-Nouri, and Abdulaziz Hussein. These are some of the scientists who have left a mark on the evolution of Kuwaiti educational thought.

11- Al-Nour School is the first special needs school in Kuwait, It was established in 1955.

12- In 1996, a decision was issued to establish special classes for slow learning students, which obliged the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education to establish special classes for this category of students within the stages of primary and middle school, provided that these classes are adapted to suit the needs of these students in terms of educational equipment. The law also requires that the curricula of these students to be adjusted to suit their own abilities and mental characteristics.

13- In 2000, private universities started to inaugurate.

14- In 2004/2005, the school stages division was changed from (4-4-4) to (3-4-5).

15- Education in Kuwait is free for all Kuwaitis until the stage of undergraduates and mandatory until middle school. Today, Kuwaiti no longer faces the problem of illiteracy.

16- "Kuwait's memory" a website that electronically documents the heritage and intellectual, cultural and artistic production of Kuwait, and includes more than a thousand articles, with written, visual and audio data. This platform was created by the National Library of Kuwait to link the past with the present, by containing books, periodicals, documents and collections that chronicles the stages of the development of Kuwait, through an interactive digital platform using modern technologies in line with the library's vision to keep up with the latest information technology techniques, which allows the general visitors to see the most important Heritage Library collectibles.

Written by: Nouran Mohamed Bassam.

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