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Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice of Parents Towards Monitoring Their Children's Academics at Home

Asra Ali, M.Sc., (Ph.D. Research Scholar) and
Rajalakshmi. M.S., M.Sc., M.Ed., Ph.D. (Research Guide)
Department of Early Childhood Education and Administration
Smt. V.H.D Central Institute of Home Science (Autonomous)
Seshadri Road, Gandhi Nagar
Bengaluru-560001, Karnataka, India
Email addresses:
asraali1989@gmail.com
rajmasesh@gmail.com

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Abstract

A life-long love for learning can emerge and be fostered with the support of parents. When parents become involved with their child's schoolwork, the child in turn realizes that education is an important facet to the parents. Children automatically tend to work harder at their studies when parents are involved in their academics. Parents in turn should set high standards for their children, encourage their children to work hard and maximize their full potential.

It can be said that most parents are already naturally engaged with their children in many of their children's activities. This engagement can solidify the family bonding and help children develop holistically within their differing strengths to become confident and meaningful individuals first and citizens next, thereby contributing to the growth of the nation in later years. However, most of the times parents are unaware about how to actively participate in their children's academics. They most often either follow methods that their parents had practiced, or their peers' practice and recommend. They almost always encourage learning by memorization and adopt the question-and-answer technique when engaging their children at home. They expect verbatim repetitions of what is written in the school notebook. Children who are not strong on language skills may find this method of study a herculean task.

Therefore, the broad objective of the present study was to investigate the parental involvement in their children's academics through assessing parents' **knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP)** towards their children's learning. A Knowledge, Attitude and Practice scale was designed and Standardized.

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Applying the cluster sampling method, 600 parents of children studying in classes 1 to 6 were drawn from 8 schools across the 4 Zones of Bangalore city for the KAP survey. Analysis of the KAP survey results indicated a significant difference between the KAP parameters of parents selected for the study. Although parents are actively involved in their children's academics, they are not aware of scaffolding their children's learning by focusing on their learning strengths. The results obtained call for an intervention program that could help parents understand how they can scaffold their children's learning to make their learning more meaningful.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Parents, Monitoring, Children's Academics.

Introduction

Most parents, even the educated ones, are ignorant of their child's learning ability, style and preference. They leave academics to the teachers and are satisfied only if the child is doing homework regularly and scoring good marks in tests.

It has been found generally that parents do not explore alternative means of learning and many of them in fact get upset if their child wants to experiment methods such as studying with a friend, reading aloud, lying down and reading, walking around, making charts or listening to music.

Parents with limited income inevitably tend to focus on trying to ensure that their child gets good grades, admission in a reputed college and pursue a time-tested professional course (read: Engineering). 'Competition' is an all-pervading word that causes anxiety and sleepless nights to many parents, particularly at the time of tests and exams. Many parents pressurize teachers to give more homework, take extra classes, hold mock-tests, with the single-minded purpose of getting those elusive extra marks that will ensure a 'stable' future.

Most parents are unaware of the range of careers available, and their potential. They do not know the concept of matching the child's aptitude to most suitable career. Their world is limited to ensuring that their child gets better marks than his peers, and that they feel is the ultimate parameter of good parenting.

Unfortunately, parents often do not know the difference between studying **hard** and studying **smart**. Concepts like short breaks during study, breathing exercises, periodic revision, evaluating the best time to study difficult subjects are alien to them. Many children with immense potential tend to lose motivation due to this.

It can be said that most parents are already naturally engaged with their children in many of their children's activities. This engagement can solidify the family bonding and help children develop holistically within their differing strengths to become confident and meaningful individuals first and citizens next, thereby contributing to the growth of the nation in later years.

However, most of the times parents are unaware about how to actively participate in their children's academics. They most often either follow methods that their parents had practiced, or their peers' practice and recommend. They almost always encourage learning by memorization and adopt the question-and-answer technique when engaging their children at home. They expect verbatim repetitions of what is written in the school notebook. Children who are not strong on language skills may find this method of study a herculean task.

Therefore, the broad objective of the present study was to investigate the parental involvement in their children's academics through assessing parents' **knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP)** towards their children's learning.

Research Methodology

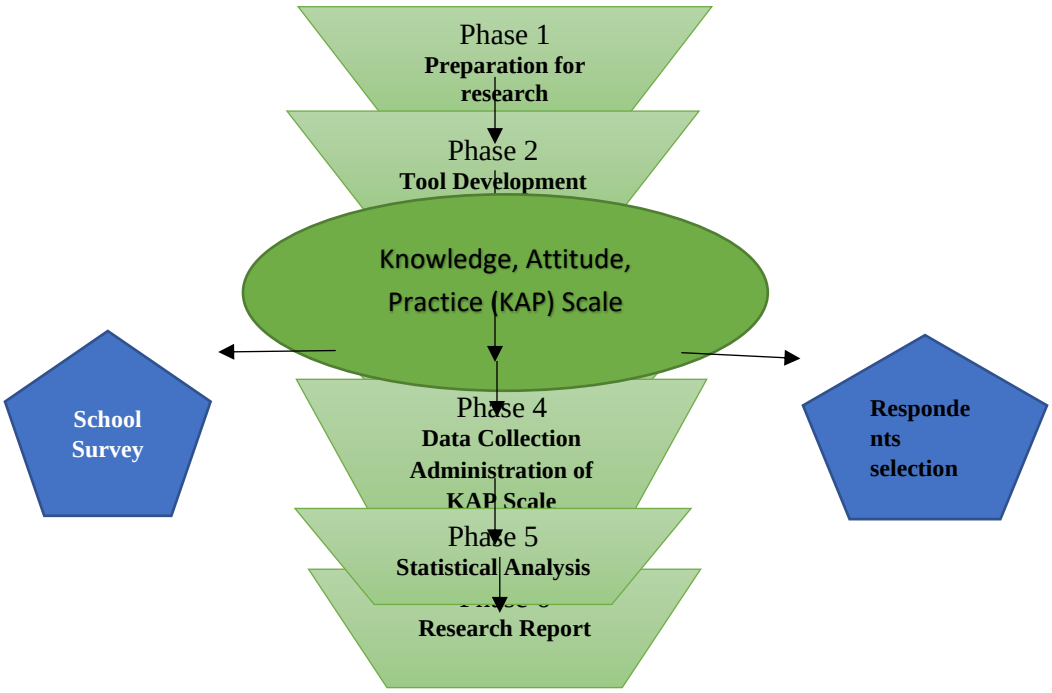
I. Assumptions for the Study

a) Parents do not have adequate knowledge of how to help their children learn using their dominant learning styles.
b) Parents generally do not have the right attitude when it comes to their children's academic performance and assess their children's academic performance based on their marks.
c) Parents practice traditional methods while helping their children to learn and are unaware of newer methods that could be adopted to learn.

II. General Problems

- Most parents are of the opinion that the school teaches children and their role at home is only to ensure that homework is completed and the children study for a set period of time on a daily basis every day.
- Even if parents want to be involved in their children's learning/study at home, they are uncertain about the process. For most parents, successful learning outcomes are the end result of a test or an examination. They fail to understand that learning is for life and that knowledge has to be constructed upon. A break in the constructing of knowledge can lead to a halt in the learning process.

Research Design



III. Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to assess parents:

- **knowledge** towards their children's learning.
- **attitude** towards their children's learning
- **practice** towards their children's learning

IV. Scientific Hypotheses

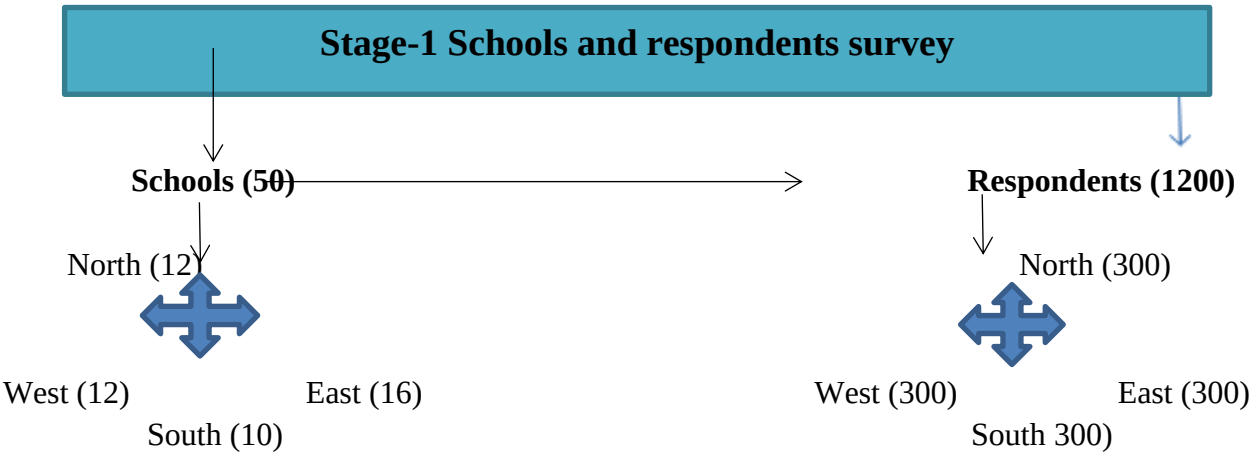
To test the knowledge, attitude, and practice of the parents towards children's learning the following hypotheses were postulated:

- Parents do not have **adequate knowledge** on children's general learning, academic learning and academic success.
- Parents do not have a **positive attitude** towards their children's everyday learning, exam preparation and methods adopted for learning.
- Parents do not have a **positive Practice** towards their children's everyday academic preparation, exam preparation and exam outcome.

V. Population and Sampling

Sampling was carried out in 3 stages:

Stage-1: School and respondents' selection for the survey



Stage-1: Schools and respondent survey:

In this stage a survey of registered SSLC schools in Bengaluru city was carried out using the internet. The schools to be identified for the research study had to satisfy the following inclusion criteria set by the researcher:

- The Schools should offer the SSLC curriculum
- The schools should offer English as a medium of Instruction
- The schools should predominantly cater to the lower middle-income group
- The schools must readily cooperate with the researcher during data collection.

The first 50 schools across the four zones that satisfied the criteria set by the researcher were selected for the study. Thus,12 schools from Bengaluru North, 10 from Bengaluru South, 12 from Bengaluru West and 16 from Bengaluru East were identified for the present study.

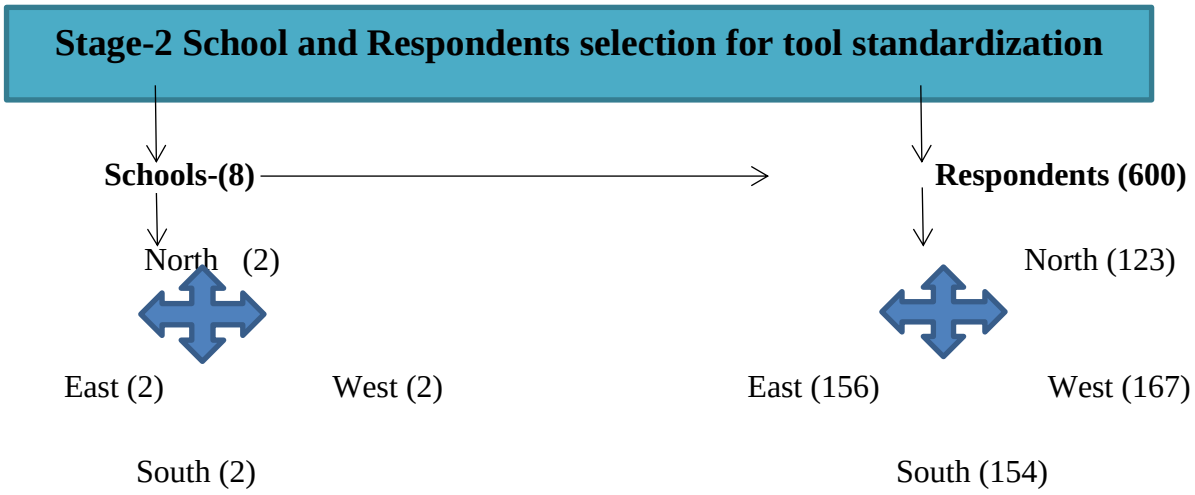
Respondents Selection

The inclusion criteria set for selecting the respondents were as follows:

- Only parents of children studying in classes 1 to 6 were to be selected for the study.
- The parents must readily participate in the survey and be available on the dates mentioned by the researcher.

After selecting the schools for the study, the researcher focused on selecting respondents for the study. The parents were identified through the school with the help of the Principals/administrators. The parents were met in groups at each school and the purpose of research explained. Those parents who were ready to participate in the survey were asked to leave their names and contact details with the Principal/administrator of the school. The first 300 parents who could be contacted from each zone were selected for the study. Only those parents who were ready to participate in the survey and give their total cooperation were shortlisted for the study.

Stage-2: School and respondents' selection for tool standardization:



School Identification

From the 50 schools identified in the Phase 1, 8 schools (2 schools from each zone) were selected using the lottery method.

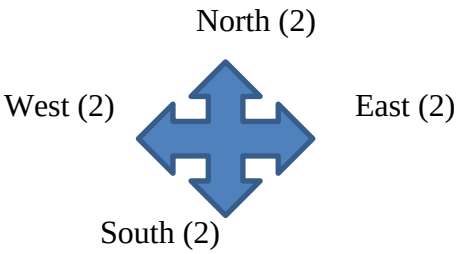
Respondent Identification

From the 8 schools identified above a total of 600 parents were identified for the tool standardization process. Purposive Random Cluster sampling was used for selecting the parents. The parents who were ready to spare time and answer the scale provided were selected. Thus 123 parents from the 2 schools in North Zone, 154 parents from the 2 schools in the south zone, 156 parents from the 2 schools in the East Zone and 167 parents from the 2 schools in the West Zone were selected for the study.

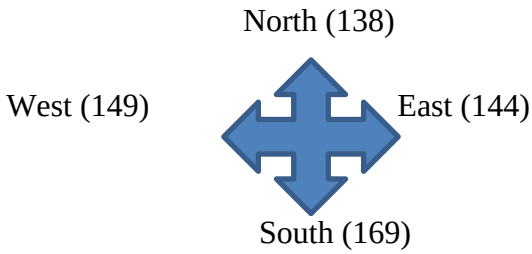
Stage-3: School and respondents' selection for data collection

Phase- 3 School and respondent's selection for KAP survey

Schools-(8)



Respondents (600)



School Identification

From the 50 schools identified in stage 1, a total of 8 schools were identified using the lottery method for data collection. Thus, 2 schools from the North zone, 2 schools from the South zone, 2 schools from the East zone and 2 schools from the West zone were selected for the KAP survey.

Respondent Identification

From the 8 schools identified above, a total of 600 parents were identified for data collection. Purposive Random Cluster sampling was used for selecting the parents. The parents who were available on the day of data collection, ready to spare time and answer the scale provided were selected. Thus 138 parents from the 2 schools in North Zone, 169 parents from the 2 schools in the south zone, 144 parents from the 2 schools in the East Zone and 149 parents from the 2 schools in the West Zone were selected for the research study.

Vi. Construction of Measuring Instrument

A tool titled the **Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) scale** was developed in English for the study.

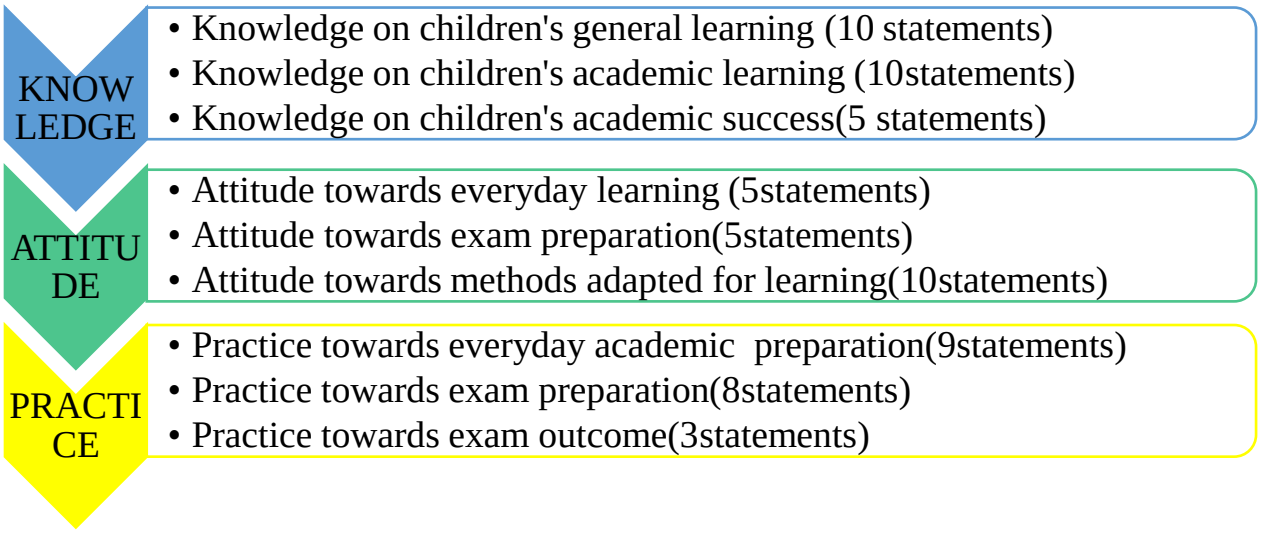
The tool was standardised in three phases- viz., Face Validation, Content Validation and Reliability.

Description of KAP Scale

Extensive review was carried out on the availability of standardised scales to elicit information on parents' knowledge, attitude, and practice of their children's academics at home.

The reviews indicated that standardised scales were not available in the market that suited the current research. Therefore, the researcher developed the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) scale, compatible for the Indian context and suitable for the age group selected for the present study.

- The scale consists of 65 statements.
- The scale had 3 main components and 9 subcomponents (3 sub components under each main component) as indicated below:



The statements have 3 possible responses - “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Not sure”.

Scoring

- Scoring pattern- Agree- 2; Disagree -1; Not sure - 0.
- No negative statements.
- Maximum Score (Overall) – 130. Least Score- 0

Kap Scale Scoring Pattern

Knowledge Component: Total number of statements – 25

Sl.No	Knowledge components	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure	Maximum possible Total score
1.	Knowledge towards children's general learning	10	20	10	0	20
2.	Knowledge towards children's academic learning	10	20	10	0	20
3.	Knowledge towards children's academic success	05	10	5	0	10
		25	**Grand Total score**			**50**

Scoring Interpretation for knowledge Component

Score Range	Interpretation
26- 50 Good	Good
1- 25	Satisfactory
0	Poor

Attitude: Total number of statements - 20

SI. NO	Attitude component	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure	Maximum possible Total score
1	Attitude towards everyday learning	05	10	05	0	10

2	Attitude towards exam preparation	05	10	05	0	10
3	Attitude towards method adopted for learning	10	20	10	0	20
		20	**Grand Total score**			**40**

Scoring Interpretation for attitude Component

Score range	Interpretation
21- 40	Good
1- 20	Satisfactory
0	Poor

Practice: Total number of statements - 20

SI. No	Practice component	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Not Sure	Maximum possible Total score
1	Practice towards everyday academic preparation	09	18	9	0	18
2	Practice towards exam preparation	08	16	8	0	16
3	Practice towards exam outcomes	03	6	3	0	6
		20	**Grand Total score**			**40**

Scoring Interpretation for practice Component

Score Range	Interpretation
21- 40	Good
1-20	Satisfactory
0	Poor

Standardisation Procedure adopted for the KAP scale

Stage I: Face Validation

This was the first stage in tool validation. In this stage, the researcher looked at the operationalization of the tool and checked whether "on its face" it seemed like a good translation of the tool.

Stage II: Content Validation

75 statements each were identified for the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice components initially. These statements were given to 5 subject experts each in the field of Psychology, Human development, and Education for scrutiny. Based on the inputs received from the experts, 25 statements were shortlisted for the knowledge component and 20 each for the attitude and practice component.

Stage III: Reliability

The KAP Checklist was developed to assess the Knowledge, Attitude and practice of parents towards their children's academics. The KAP scale was distributed to 600 parents, aged between 26-40 years to test the reliability of the tool. The reliability of the tool was found to be **0.71** after applying the **split-half test of reliability**.

VII. Data Collection

Data collection was conducted in 3 stages.

Stage1: School and respondents Survey

As indicated in phase-V under Population and Sampling, a total of 50 schools were identified. 12 schools from Bengaluru North, 10 schools from Bengaluru South, 12 schools from Bengaluru West and 16 schools from Bengaluru East were identified by the researcher during the sampling phase. These schools were personally visited by the researcher and the Heads of the

Institutions met. The researcher explained the research concept and their cooperation sought for the data collection.

On mutually convenient dates the researcher met the parents of the children identified for the study at the venue determined by the Heads of the Institutions. The parents were told about the research concept and its purpose and their cooperation sought. Only those parents who were ready to get involved in the data collection and cooperate with the researcher were identified for the data collection. Thus, a total of 1200 parents i.e., 300 parents each from North, South, East and West zone were selected for the data collection.

Stage 2: School and respondents' selection for tool standardization

8 schools (2 schools from each zone) were identified for this phase of data collection. 600 parents were identified in this phase for the tool standardization process. Data for tool standardization was collected from 123 parents from 2 schools in the North Zone,154 parents from the 2 schools in the south zone, 156 parents from the 2 schools in the East Zone and 167 parents from the 2 schools in the West Zone.

The parents who were identified in Phase-1 for this phase of data collection were contacted and requested to assemble on the given date at the given venue. When the respondents assembled at the given venue, the researcher ensured that they were comfortably seated. The researcher also ensured that the venue was well ventilated and properly furnished so that the parents were not put to any discomfort while answering the scale which might hamper the data being collected. The parents were assured that there were no right or wrong responses and requested to fill in the data sheets honestly. They were encouraged to clarify any doubts that might arise while filling up the check list.

Stage-3: School and respondents' selection for survey

8 schools (2 from each zone) were identified for collecting data for the KAP survey. 600 parents were identified for this phase (survey) of data collection. Data for the survey was collected from 138 parents from 2 schools in the North zone, 169 parents from 2 schools in the South zone, 149 parents from 2 schools in the East zone and 144 parents from 2 schools in the West zone. Here again only those respondents who were ready to spare their time and answer the scale provided to them were identified for the study.

As indicated earlier for this phase of data collection, parents were contacted and requested to assemble on the given date at the given venue. When the parents assembled at the given venue, the researcher ensured that they were comfortably seated. The researcher also ensured that the venue was well ventilated and properly furnished so that the parents were not put to any discomfort

while answering the checklist which might hamper the data being collected. The parents were assured that there were no right or wrong responses and requested to fill in the data sheets honestly. They were encouraged to clarify any doubts that might arise while filling up the check list. The KAP checklist was administered directly by the researcher.

VIII. Results and Discussions

Table 1 Socio - demographic profile of the respondents:

		Respondents	
Classification of Respondents by Age group	**Age group (years)**	**Number**	**Percentage**
	26-30	115	19.2
	31- 35	255	42.5
	36 -40	230	38.3
	Total	**600**	**100.0**
		Respondents	
Classification of Respondents by Qualification	**Qualification**	**Number**	**Percentage**
	Below 10^{th} std	167	27.8
	SSLC	225	37.5
	PUC/Diploma	183	30.5
	Degree	25	4.2
	Total	**600**	**100.0**
	Occupational	**Respondents**	
Classification of Respondents by Occupational status		**Number**	**Percentage**
	Home maker	560	93.3
	Teachers	29	4.9
	Others	11	1.8
	Total	**600**	**100.0**
	Type of family	**Respondents**	
Classification of Respondents by Type of family		**Number**	**Percentage**
	Nuclear	425	70.8
	Joint	114	19.0
	Extended	61	10.2
	Total	**600**	**100.0**

Classification of Respondents by Family income	**Family income**	**Respondents**	
		Number	**Percentage**
	Rs.20,000-50,000	535	89.2
	Rs.50,000-2,00,000	31	5.2
	Rs.2,00,000-5,00,000	34	5.6
	Total	**600**	**100.0**
Classification of Respondents by Number of children	**Number of children**	**Respondents**	
		Number	**Percentage**
	One	287	47.8
	Two	263	43.8
	Three	50	8.4
	Total	**600**	**100.0**

Table 1 indicates the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. It can be observed that majority of the respondents were in the age group of 31 to 35 years, have completed their pre-university education and were predominantly home makers.

Today the trend is for nuclear families and this trend is also observed in the data collected. Majority of the respondents came from nuclear families and had an income ranging from 20,000 to 50,000/- per month.

Small family norm appears to be the trend. It was observed that a majority (47.8%) of the respondents had only one child, followed by 43.8% of the respondents who had two children. These socio demographic trends indicate a typical lower middle-income group.

Table- 2: Aspect wise mean scores for Knowledge, Attitude and Practice

Aspect wise Mean Knowledge scores of Respondents							
No.	Knowledge Aspects	Statements	Max. Score	Knowledge Scores			
				Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)
I	General learning	10	20	17.47	2.39	87.3	11.9
II	Academic learning	10	20	16.56	3.14	82.8	15.7
III	Academic success	5	10	8.84	1.37	88.4	13.7
Combined		**25**	**50**	**42.87**	**5.96**	**85.7**	**11.9**
Aspect wise Mean Attitude scores of Respondents							
No.	Attitude Aspects	Statements	Max. Score	Attitude Scores			
				Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)
I	Everyday learning	5	10	8.96	1.27	89.6	12.7
II	Examination preparation	5	10	8.75	1.24	87.5	12.4
III	Method adopted for learning	10	20	17.23	2.39	86.2	12.0
Combined		**20**	**40**	**34.94**	**4.26**	**87.3**	**10.6**
Aspect wise Mean Practice scores of Respondents							
No.		Statements		Practice Scores			

	Attitude Aspects		Max. Score	Mean	SD	Mean (%)	SD (%)
I	Every day academic preparation	9	18	14.64	2.12	81.4	11.8
II	Examination preparation	8	16	13.34	1.77	83.4	11.1
III	Examination outcomes	3	6	4.94	0.97	82.4	16.1
Combined		**20**	**40**	**32.93**	**3.80**	**82.3**	**9.5**

Research demonstrates a strong link between what parents know about children's learning and how they behave with their children. Parents with more knowledge are more likely to engage in positive academic practices, whereas those with limited knowledge are at a greater risk of negative behaviors. Parental knowledge not only enhances academic performances, but it also has a positive influence on the students learning outcomes. Parents knowledge of how their children learn affects his performance and attitude towards school, self-esteem, and motivation.

When aspect wise mean knowledge scores of the respondents are observed it is seen that **parent's knowledge** towards their children's **general learning skills** is **"good"** (87.3%).

Parents knowledge of their children's **academic learning** is also **"good"** (82.8%) but the average score is lesser then their knowledge on children's academic learning skills indicating that they require to be taught how to help their children in this domain.

When the scores for **parents' knowledge** on children's **academic success** is observed it is seen that parents have scored the highest (88.4%) in this domain. This very clearly indicates that parents focus is on academic success rather than fostering their children's knowledge on developing general learning skills or academic related learning skills. This could be the reason why we are not able to produce critical thinkers with strong problem-solving abilities.

Children whose parents have a positive attitude towards learning and education perform better in school then children whose parents have a negative attitude towards learning and education. Children's performance in school and learning is directly influenced by parental attitudes towards education.

When aspect wise mean attitude scores of the respondents are observed it is seen that **parent's attitude** towards **everyday learning** is **"good"** (89.6%) indicating that parents ensure that children learn their schoolwork on a daily basis. When their attitude towards **exams preparation** was studied it is observed that the mean average score is **"good"** (87.5%) indicating that parents focus on helping their children to prepare well for their exams. This finding also correlates with the knowledge sub-component **"academic success"** score obtained. This highlights the fact that **exam preparation** and **academic success** are very important to parents, especially when parents themselves are not academically well qualified.

Comparatively the scores obtained **for parents' attitude** towards **methods adopted for learning** is lower (88.4%). This could be because most parents are aware of only the rote learning method. They might not be aware of their children's learning styles and strengths. Hence, they may not be in a position to help make their children's learning a pleasurable task in which the child engages in spontaneously.

Parental practices can have a positive or negative influence on a child's attitude and behavior. It can enhance or be detrimental to the child's academic performance.
Parent child interactions can affect motivation, sense of competence and the belief that the child has control over his success in school. When the practice component was considered it is observed that most of the parent's **practice** was focused on **exam preparation** (83.4%) indicating once again that exam outcomes was of utmost importance to the parents. However, comparatively, **everyday academic preparation** scored slightly lower (81.4%) than the other two subcomponents. In conclusion it can be inferred from the data obtained that parents knowledge, attitude and practice was focused more on **academic outcomes** in terms of exams and marks rather than learning for knowledge and pleasure.

Table-3: Overall Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Mean Scores of Respondents

N=600

No.	Aspects	Statements	Max. Score	Scores			
				Mean	SD	Mean(%)	SD(%)
I	Knowledge	25	50	42.87	5.96	85.7	11.9
II	Attitude	20	40	34.94	4.26	87.3	10.6

III	Practice	20	40	32.93	3.80	82.3	9.5

When the overall **knowledge, practice and attitude** mean scores of the respondents are studied it is observed that parents have very good knowledge, attitude and practice towards their children's learning. The **attitude component** has obtained the highest (87.3%) mean score, followed by **knowledge** mean score (85.7%). Comparatively practice has scored the least mean score indicating that parents do not adopt the right practices when it comes to their children's learning. As discussed in the previous table, parents focus their children's learning on academic outcomes and examinations. **The data obtained leads to the rejection of the hypothesis formulated**. Parents do have **adequate knowledge** on their children's **general learning, academic learning and academic success.** They also have a **positive attitude** towards their children's **everyday learning, exam preparation and methods adopted for learning**. Parents also have a **positive Practice** towards their children's **everyday academic preparation, exam preparation and exam outcome**. What needs to be addressed is helping parents to scaffold their children's learning by understanding their learning styles and learning through the multiple intelligence approach. This will make children's academic learning easy, exciting, and meaningful with constructive outcomes for children and parents.

IX. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that most parents are already naturally engaged with their children in many of their children's activities. However, engaging in these experiences through the perspective of the Multiple Intelligences approach can help parents to connect with their children in pleasant ways. This engagement can solidify the family bonding and help children develop holistically within their differing strengths to become confident and meaningful individuals first and citizens next, thereby contributing to the growth of the nation in later years. The study strongly recommends that parents be introduced to the concept of learning through the multiple intelligence approach understanding their children's dominant intelligences rather than through rote learning or exam focused learning. If this is put into practice, we will produce a generation of learners who are well informed critical thinkers, able to meaningfully contribute to the society they live in.

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Asra Ali, M.Sc., (Ph.D. Research Scholar)
Department of Early Childhood Education and Administration
Smt. V.H.D Central Institute of Home Science (Autonomous)
Seshadri Road, Gandhi Nagar
Bengaluru-560001, Karnataka, India
asraali1989@gmail.com

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