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Do Parents' Literacy Beliefs and Home Literacy Experiences Relate to Children's Literacy Skills?

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DO PARENTS' LITERACY BELIEFS AND HOME LITERACY EXPERIENCES

RELATE TO CHILDREN'S LITERACY SKILLS?

by

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ABSTRACT

DO PARENTS' LITERACY BELIEFS AND HOME LITERACY EXPERIENCES

RELATE TO CHILDREN'S LITERACY SKILLS?

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Master of Education

This study examined the relationship among parents' literacy beliefs, home literacy experiences, and children's literacy skills. Forty-three children, who attended a university preschool, and their parents participated in the study. Parents' literacy beliefs and the home literacy experience, namely shared book reading, were examined through a self-report questionnaire. One important section of this questionnaire provided information about parents' beliefs concerning literacy acquisition; specifically, whether they believed in a top-down or bottom-up approach. The children were tested individually for emergent literacy skills, including concepts of print, alphabetic knowledge, rhyming skills, oral language skills, word recognition, and invented spelling. The results were analyzed using multiple linear regressions and hierarchical linear regressions to determine whether there is evidence of a relationship among literacy

beliefs, home literacy experiences, and children's emergent literacy skills. The present study found support for a connection between parental beliefs, measured through their behaviors, and child outcomes. Children whose parents had a top-down literacy perspective (meaning-based orientation), measured by knowledge of children's book titles, had higher receptive vocabulary skills than children whose parents had a bottom-up (skill-based) literacy belief. The implications for parents, early childhood educators, and teachers are that literacy educational programs may need to focus both on teaching parents new literacy behavior as well as on developing beliefs about literacy acquisition.

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INTRODUCTION

Children need literacy skills to function in society. Essential aspects of being

literate include reading, decoding, comprehending text, analyzing and interpreting

information, and connecting new information with other ideas (Sulzby & Teale, 1991).

The increased literacy expectations faced by all members of society have resulted in the

current universal understanding that all children must develop literacy skills. This

demand for literacy development is articulated by the Position Statement (1998) of the

International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association of the Education of

Young Children (NAEYC):

> Although the United States enjoys the highest literacy rate in its history, society
>
> now expects virtually everyone in the population to function beyond the minimum
>
> standards of literacy. Today the definition of basic proficiency in literacy calls for
>
> a fairly high standard of reading comprehension and analysis. (p. 198)

Researchers and educators are concerned with empowering children to attain this new

higher standard for literacy, as evidenced by the sheer number of investigations in

literacy education (Alexander & Fox, 2004).

A specialized theme often addressed in the literature is how young children

acquire literacy (see Sulzby & Teale, 1991 for a review of the research on emergent

literacy). Young children's interaction with literacy is a major facet in obtaining literacy

skills. The IRA and NAEYC (1998) joint position statement on young children's literacy

development illustrates this point:

The ability to read and write does not develop naturally, without careful planning

and instruction. Children need regular and active interactions with print. Specific

abilities required for reading and writing come from immediate experiences with

oral *and* written language. (p. 198)

In other words, without experiences with language and print, children face a major hurdle

in attaining literacy.

Literacy experiences occur within a cultural context in which children gain

familiarity with oral and written language through social interaction. If society values

literate people, then parents will be encouraged to help children become literate. By

focusing on cultural contexts, sociocultural theorists bind together society and children

(Miller, 2002). The sociocultural perspective shifts the focus of the learning process from

children alone to children and environment combined. Given this perspective, the process

of learning literacy must be looked at in both the context of learning, as well as in the

views society has about learning and teaching.

Therefore, studies of how children's learning grows should consider social factors

in learning. These social factors influence parents' beliefs about how to best create a

literacy environment for children. The importance of parental influence over children's

literacy environment is articulated by Purcell-Gates (1996): "Young children begin to

learn about reading and writing initially in their homes … as they observe and participate

in culturally situated literacy practices" (p. 406). Home literacy experiences are created

for children before formal schooling ever occurs. Parents' literacy beliefs influence the

types of experiences they provide for the child (Bingham, 2007). These experiences, in turn, may affect how children obtain literacy skills.

Researchers have documented two major orientations in literacy beliefs. The first is the *top-down perspective* or constructivist approach. This point of view is a meaning-based orientation toward literacy acquisition (Evans et al., 2004). Evans et al. (2004) explain that "Top-down approaches highlight the importance of higher order contextual information drawn from knowledge about textual and linguistic structures and general knowledge in deriving meaning and directing attention to aspects of print" (p. 130). In other words, this perspective involves the use of language structures, pictures, and general knowledge to teach literacy. Secondly, the *bottom-up approach* focuses on "the importance of automatic and efficient recoding of print into phonological code in short-term memory for higher level processing of meaning" (Evans et al., 2004, p. 130). This approach emphasizes skill-based functions for learning literacy, such as alphabet knowledge and phonetic cues. Thus, parents' beliefs in one approach or the other, top-down or bottom-up, may lead to differences in the type of literacy environment provided for children. The literacy environment provided by the parents may in turn influence the development of literacy skills in children.

<center>*Statement of Problem*</center>

The relationship among parents' beliefs, the literacy environment parents create for children, and children's learning outcomes has received much attention in the literature. Yet, research has not created the basis for a clear understanding of the connection between parents' literacy beliefs and children's literacy development. To

develop this basis further, investigation needs to be conducted into the relationship between parents' literacy beliefs (either top-down or bottom-up) and the kinds of home literacy experiences children receive. Such studies would also provide important information concerning the relationship among parents' beliefs, the literacy experiences they provide, and the children's acquisition of emergent literacy skills. Thus, researchers should investigate whether there are differences in the literacy experiences children receive, based on parental belief about how literacy is learned, and whether there is a relationship between these differences in literacy experiences and the emergent literacy skills children develop.

Statement of Purpose

This study examined how parental literacy beliefs (either top-down or bottom-up) and the home literacy experiences parents provide related to the development of children's literacy skills.

Research Question

The question this study addressed was the following: How do parents' beliefs about literacy (i.e. endorsement of a top-down or bottom-up perspective) as well as home literacy experiences (parents' behaviors during shared book reading) relate to children's development of early literacy skills?

Limitations

Several limitations existed in this study. First, regressions were used in the analysis of this study. This can suggest causality. However in this study, the implementation of these regressions was used only in terms of a correlational model and,

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therefore, cannot suggest causal relationships, especially because of the small sample size. Secondly, the homogeneity of the sample may be a limitation. Caution is warranted in attempting to generalize these findings to a broader population. Even though the sample group was homogeneous, it was selected purposefully in order to tease out differences in parental beliefs, their related behaviors, and children's development of early literacy skills. In research on children's literacy development, differences in socioeconomic status and ethnicity are often the strongest predictors of children's literacy development. In using a more homogeneous sample, this research attempted to determine differences in literacy behavior connected to parental beliefs rather than the socioeconomic status or ethnicity of the participants. Thirdly, use of self-reported parental measures in the form of a questionnaire (see Appendix) may not have provided an authentic view of the parents' beliefs nor the home literacy experiences. There are many problems inherent in self-reported data, and this study may not have taken these factors into account. Fourth, this study did not take into account the possibility that parent and child literacy interactions change over time. Parents may scaffold children's learning differently during emergent, early, and conventional literacy development.

Definition of Terms

Because several terms are important to understanding this study and appear through the study, a list of these terms and their definitions is provided.

1. *Emergent literacy*: This term was coined by Marie Clay in her influential work on reading from 1966. The Handbook of Reading Research, Volume II defines emergent literacy as "the reading and writing behaviors that

precede and develop into conventional literacy" (Sulzby & Teale, 1991, p. 728). This term refers not only to specific behaviors but also to the overall environment that surrounds literacy learning.

2. *Early literacy skills*: Under the umbrella of emergent literacy there are specific literacy skills. For definitional purposes, these skills include, but are not limited to, and aspects such as independent function with books, concepts of print, emergent writing, meaning writing in preconventional forms such as scribbling, drawing, nonphonetic or phonetic spelling sometimes called invented spelling (Sulzby & Teale, 1991).

3. *Home literacy environment*: The home literacy environment includes all literacy practices used in the home (Sulzby & Teale, 1991).

4. *Home literacy experiences*: Home literacy experiences are defined as literacy experiences children receive in a home environment as directed by parents. This includes "experiences that may affect the development of emergent literacy" for children, such as storybook reading, writing, and instructing about literacy (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998, p. 849). In this paper, the home literacy experience that will be evaluated is shared book reading.

5. *Parent literacy beliefs*: The definition for beliefs is the "ideas or knowledge that parents consider to be factual or true" (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005, p.4). Therefore, literacy beliefs are what parents consider

to be factual or true about literacy in general and how one becomes

literate.

6. *Storybook reading/Parent-child book reading*: This refers to the joint

reading of a book by a parent/caregiver and child. Storybook

reading/parent-child book reading deals with interaction, dialogue, and

activities that take place during the book reading (Sulzby & Teale, 1991).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship of parents' literacy beliefs, home literacy experiences, and children's literacy knowledge. This chapter reviews the literature relevant to understanding a need for the study. The literature reviewed will be organized in terms of the model described in Figure 1. This model illustrates the factors which influence the literacy development of children and serves as a reminder that considering children's current performance may not correctly position teachers and parents to support future literacy development. The model also suggests that the factors that influence children's future literacy development are not independent of them but are mediated by them. This exemplifies the reciprocal and interrelatedness of children's literacy experiences, the context in which they learn literacy, and the actual literacy development in predicting future performance. Therefore, in order to explore how children become literate, one needs to study their literacy performance and the factors that might potentially influence that development.
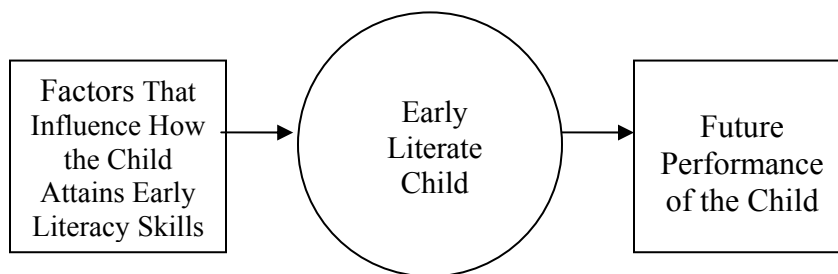
Figure 1: A model illustrating how undetermined factors relate to the future reading performance of the child.

The central construct of the model in Figure 1 is the early literate child. This model will focus the review of literature on particular factors that influence children's literacy performance. Further, the review addresses what is known from research about how children's early literacy experiences predict future performance. In addition, the review will examine research dealing with the factors that influence how children attain early literacy skills. The third section will begin with an examination of the sociocultural perspective of learning literacy, since this theoretical perspective on children's learning argues for a consideration of the role of parents and the home context. This section will then explore research on parents' literacy beliefs, as well as home literacy experiences. The last section presents and analyzes research on the interaction among parents' literacy beliefs, home experiences, and early literate children.

The Early Literate Child

Emergent Literacy

Emergent literacy, a phrase first produced by Marie Clay in 1966, means "the reading and writing behaviors that precede and develop into conventional literacy" (Sulzby & Teale, 1991, p. 728). It is best thought of as the "idea that the acquisition of literacy is best conceptualized as a developmental continuum, with its origins early in the life of a child. . ." (Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998, p.848). An early literate child, on the continuum of developing emergent literacy skills, will learn, according to Gonzalez-Mena (1993) to: (a) understand that print has meaning, namely values and function; (b) connect sounds with written words; (c) recognize print in the environment, such as restaurant names, logos, or road signs; (d) differentiate between pictures and written

words; and lastly, (e) learn that books are associated with reading. These things are what every young child should be able to do in order to surmount the next hurdle of becoming conventionally literate.

Literacy Knowledge Acquisition

To answer the question of how emergent literacy is attained, one must not only think of the cognitive factors a child brings genetically to the equation but also the effects of interaction or learning from others. The IRA (1998) stated that emergent literacy transpires through social interaction between family members in everyday settings, whether at home or in the community environment. Cochran-Smith (1986) stated the following:

> Children are not born knowing how to connect their knowledge and experiences
> in "literate" ways to printed and pictorial texts. Rather they must learn the
> strategies for understanding texts just as they must learn the ways of eating and
> talking that are appropriate to their cultures or social groups. (p. 36)

Thus, the main source of learning emergent literacy skills comes through interaction with a child's social group, culture, or family. Emergent literacy is the development of skills that precede conventional reading. The developing literacy skills of a child are realized through individualized cognitive abilities, as well as interaction with texts. Focusing on the emergent literacy skills of preschool children is important because researchers have connected these early literacy skills to children's future reading performance.

Early Literacy Experiences and Future Performance

In addition to thinking about how literacy is attained, it is necessary to consider the link between children's early literacy skills and their future performance. Researchers have shown that children's early literacy skills predict future reading performance (see for example Haden, Reese, & Fivursh, 1996; Morrow, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Senechal & LeFevere, 2002; van Kleeck et al., 1997). Researchers have concluded that children who gain early reading skills in the home environment are more likely to remain skillful readers in the future (Adams, 1990; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997; National Research Council, 1998). It is also clear that parents who establish early literacy patterns in the home (i.e. reading, choosing a variety of literature, or constructing literacy routines) have children who exhibit increased skills in language, print awareness, as well as reading comprehension during later years in school (Share, Jorm, Maclean, Matthews, & Waterman, 1983).

The exposure that children receive to books is related to increased vocabulary, listening comprehension skills, and language skills. Senechal & LeFevere (2002) conducted a longitudinal study of 168 middle-to-upper class children that examined early home literacy experiences, receptive language, emergent literacy skills, and reading achievement. Data was collected for three years on a sample of children in kindergarten, and they were followed through third grade. The results "showed that children's exposure to books was related to the development of vocabulary and listening comprehension skills, and that these language skills were directly related to children's reading in grade 3" (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002, p. 445). Another influential study looked at children's

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early literacy performance and reading achievement. In a meta-analysis on joint-book reading using twenty-nine studies, Bus et al. (1995) looked at the role of parent and child book reading in preschool children as well as their emergent literacy, language, and conventional reading development. The results showed that book reading "supports the hypothesis that parent-preschooler book reading is related to outcome measures such as language growth, emergent literacy, and reading achievement" (Bus et al., 1995, p. 15). Research has shown the link from early literacy experiences to future literacy performance (see Adams, 1990; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997, DeBaryshe, 1995; Share, Jorm, Maclean, Matthews, & Waterman, 1983) and reveals the need to understand the factors that influence the early literate child.

Factors that Influence Children's Literacy Learning

As shown in the model in Figure 1, there are various factors that influence a child's attainment of early literacy skills. For this study, two factors were specifically selected: parents' literacy beliefs and the home literacy experiences they provide for their children. These factors seemed to be well-researched and influential in children's acquisition of emergent literacy skills. In addition, one tenet that influences both of these factors is the sociocultural perspective.

Sociocultural Influences on Learning Literacy

As the model in Figure 1 suggests, "The task for researchers is not merely to study in isolation the cognitive operations of children, but rather to understand cognition in terms of the social systems for utilizing literacy" (Sulzby & Teale, 1991, pg. 744). In the social systems that surround children, parents are is often considered the child's first

teachers. Parents are dominant figures in children's sociocultural experiences.
Furthermore, the sociocultural perspective asserts that children are always interacting
with their culture. "Socioculturalists focus on children's participation in activities in the
culture" (Miller, 2002, p. 373). This theory argues that children and their culture cannot
be separated from one another (Miller, 2002). Consequently, children are immersed in
their cultural literacy learning environments.

Lev Vygotsky, a sociocultural theorist, developed the concept of Zone of
Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky argued that the ZDP accounts for the child's
acquisition of knowledge and is the site for learning. Thus the ZPD, by definition, is the
distance or continuum between a child's "actual developmental level as determined by
independent problem solving" on the lower end to the upper end of "potential
development [of the child] as determined through problem solving under adult guidance
or in collaboration with more capable others" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). Vygotsky asserts
that children who receive help from a more capable other reach a point beyond their own
current level of development.

In addition to Vygotsky, Rogoff (1990), who posited the theory of guided
participation, contributed the idea of children gaining competence through interaction
with more capable others. Guided participation means guiding children "through
collaboration and shared understanding in routine problem-solving activities" (Rogoff,
1990, p. 1991). In other words, children learn as they participate in activities with more
experienced people, such as parents. Guided participation also allows room for children
to assume more responsibility as their competence level increases (Rogoff, 1990).

Vygotsky's and Rogoff's theories suggest that children become more competent through interaction with more experienced or capable others. In this interaction, cultural competence develops and knowledge and experiences are shared. Sociocultural theory is a foundation for the present study. This theory posits that research should look at children's acquisition of emergent literacy skills in conjunction with their parents' beliefs and the literacy environment of the home. Thus, the process of learning literacy, in the context of what the culture teaches about learning literacy, should be studied in order to understand both the child's current literacy and his or her later literacy performance (see Figure 1).

Parents' Literacy Beliefs

Since parents craft the home environment and literacy experiences based on beliefs and cultural or societal views about literacy, parents' beliefs about how children attain early literacy skills could play a central role in children's literacy development. The definition of parental literacy beliefs includes the "ideas or knowledge that parents consider to be factual or true" (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005, p.4). Equally important in this definition is the acknowledgement that beliefs are defined in terms of the culture in which one was raised (Okagaki & Bingham, 2005). Sigel and McGillicuddy-DeLisis (2002) argued that parental beliefs are, in fact, the beginning point for all experiences children and parents have together. Parents' beliefs shape the practices and behaviors they exhibit as they interact with their children or engage them in literacy experiences. Indeed, parents' beliefs are evident in the practices and behaviors they exhibit, as well as the interaction they engage in with their children (Harkness & Super, 1999).

Parental beliefs may assert a central role in children's literacy acquisition. The research on parents' literacy beliefs delineates what literacy beliefs are and clarifies the relationship between these beliefs and the experiences parents provide for their children. Many reports have substantiated that children who are early readers have families that esteem literacy experiences, such as owning books and reading them aloud to children (Bus, van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995; Lancy, Draper, & Boyce, 1989; Lynch et al., 2006; Morrow, 1983; Sonnescheing et al.,1997; Teale, 1978). Research also demonstrated the correlation between the literacy beliefs of mothers' and how much book exposures their children receive. In two studies (one with 60 and another with 56 participants), DeBaryshe (1995) showed a direct relationship between maternal literacy beliefs and how much book exposure children received. In addition, beliefs were also related to the verbal quality of the readings and the experiences between the mothers and their children.

Parents' literacy beliefs or belief orientations can vary. Sonnenschein and colleagues (1997) studied parental literacy beliefs and evaluated children's language and literacy skills. In this study, parents were questioned about the most effective way to help non-reading children become readers. Two categories of parental beliefs emerged from the report. One set of parents viewed literacy activities as a source of entertainment. The researchers named this collective view the *entertainment orientation*. The second set of parents considered literacy a task that required work and skills to acquire. The title of *skill-based orientation* was given to this set of views. The results of the research indicated the existence of a significant correlation between the entertainment-oriented

parental belief about literacy experiences and their children's early literacy competence. In other words, entertainment-oriented parents had children with stronger early literacy skills than children whose parents believed in a skill-based orientation. Others have found this same correlation but refer to it differently.

In conjunction with the research on entertainment and skill-based orientation, Evans et al. (2004) studied these two approaches using a similar framework. In order to distinguish between parents who believed in a more skill-based approach (e.g., learning the alphabet and phonetic cues), or a more top-down constructivist approach (e.g., using language structures, pictures, and general knowledge) to literacy acquisition, the authors questioned parents' literacy beliefs. Teachers' beliefs were also studied. The significant finding was that parents and teachers diverged in their beliefs about learning to read. Parents more frequently chose a bottom-up approach to reading and perceived reading as a matter of learning. In contrast, the teachers believed literacy acquisition to be top-down and believe they should focus beyond skills to surround children in text (i.e. entertainment-orientation) and this is what contributed to children's development as readers. Yet, the Evans et al. study did not relate the two orientations of literacy beliefs to what literacy experiences parents create in the home environment, or in other words to parental behaviors.

Parents' beliefs are also manifested in their children's emergent literacy skills. The different perspectives on literacy beliefs, top-down or bottom-up, (Evans et al., 2004) can influence children's knowledge in distinct ways. Sonnenschein and contemporaries (1997) ascertained that when parents took a top-down approach or what the authors of the

study referred to as the entertainment perspective, children were more likely to develop early literacy competence. Although this finding suggested a clear relationship between parents' beliefs and children's early literacy skill acquisition, home literacy experiences parents provided for their children were not linked to it.

One study, however, did relate parents' beliefs to their literacy behaviors. Bingham (2007) developed a study that combined mothers' literacy beliefs and home literacy experiences and explored their relationship to children's performance on early reading tests. Sixty participants were studied, and mothers were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their literacy beliefs as well as home literacy behaviors. A storybook reading between mother and child was also videotaped and coded for the quality of interaction that took place during the reading. The child's literacy skills were also assessed. The results suggested that even after controlling for differences in mother's education, literacy beliefs were clearly related to the quality of the home literacy environment and storybook reading. The children's scores on the early literacy tests showed a positive relationship between the home literacy environment and the quality of the joint-book reading. Bingham (2007) did not look at the difference between parents' literacy beliefs (top-down or bottom-up) in relationship to the home literacy experiences.

Uncertainty still remains about whether parental beliefs in a top-down or bottom-up perspective make a difference in the home literacy experiences they create for their children. Is there a relationship between parents' literacy beliefs in a top-down approach and the literacy experiences provided? In order to answer these questions, studies should

examine the connection between parents' beliefs and children's home literacy experiences.

Literacy Experiences

Parents' literacy beliefs are a major factor in determining what literacy experiences take place in the home. The differing approaches to teaching literacy (i.e., top-down or bottom-up) are communicated to children by experiences parents create for them. Parents "convey a perspective that is appropriated by their children, either directly through their words or indirectly through the nature of the literacy experiences they provide" (Baker & Scher, 2002, p.240). It is important to look at the home literacy experiences that parents create because these surroundings shape the literacy experiences in which children engage.

The home literacy environment encompasses all literacy experiences that children might receive. Indeed, there is a wide range and variety of literacy experiences that might be studied. Senechal and LeFevre (2002) indicate that home literacy experiences have been studied through both informal and formal activities. Informal activities focus on meaning in the message and not in the print, while formal activities focus on the role of print in literacy. The majority of research of this type has centered on shared-book reading experiences. This means joint-book reading or the activity of parents and children reading books together. This experience has been dominant because it allows researchers to look at both formal and informal shared literacy experiences. Heath (1983) agreed and suggested that what affects children's literacy development is the way parents mediate books for their children as well as the language and social interaction they use with the

text. This suggests that both informal and formal literacy activities are important. Next, home literacy experiences will be reviewed focusing on research on shared-book reading experiences. The subsections will review research on the emotional connections between parents and children, the quality of their interaction, and the roles the adults have in the reading.

Joint-book Readings and Emotional Connections

Research relating literacy and attachment indicates that, through joint-readings, interactions between parents and children take place, which in turn lead to emotional connections. The literacy experience of joint-book reading is a mechanism which enables parents and children to come together in an emotional connection.

Bus and van Ijzendoom (1995) studied attachments between mothers and their preschool age children. In a study of 45 children, three distinct classifications were identified in the 350 surveys gathered. Group A included infrequent reading (two times a week) in lower socio-economic households. Group B included frequent reading (at least once a day) in lower socio-economic households, and Group C included frequent reading (at least once a day) in high socio-economic households. The children were separated from their mothers and then reunited to measure the security of the attachment based on previous research. In Ainsworth et al. (1978), classifications were made to measure the security of the attachment between mother and child followed by a joint storybook reading. The results suggested that "mother-child attachment security is related to the frequency of reading" (Bus & van Ijzendoom, 1995, p. 1009). Increased frequency in joint-readings appeared to be related to more secure attachments between parent and

child. This suggests a connection between book readings and attachment, but the question of how children attain literacy skills remains unanswered. The frequency of the reading may not be the only thing that creates an emotional connection between parents and children, but the research argued that the emotional connection increases learning. In addition to the emotional connection, the quality of the literacy experience between parents and children must also be examined as a determining factor.

Quality of Joint-book Reading

The effectiveness of parents in facilitating literacy skill acquisition depends upon the quality of the experience they provide for their children. The subsequent paragraphs provide indicators of quality literacy experiences between parents and children.

Components of a quality joint-book reading. Flood (1977) investigated storybook readings with 36 ethnically and economically diverse preschool children and parents in order to establish characteristics that predicted successful reading performance. The findings confirmed there are four components that produce a quality literacy experience: (a) children benefit from warm-up questions before the reading session using a preparative approach to reading; (b) children should be included during the reading by asking them questions; (c) connections should be made by relating the content to other areas of the children's experience and parents should reinforce positive efforts from children; and (d) follow-up or post-evaluative questions should be asked to help children assess, evaluate, and integrate the text.

In addition, Morrow (1990) identified ten reading behaviors that impact children's learning (a) scaffolding, (b) questioning, (c) dialoguing and responding, (d) offering

praise or positive reinforcement, (e) giving or extending information, (f) clarifying information, (g) restating information, (h) directing discussion, (i) sharing personal reactions, and (j) relating concepts to life experiences. Hiebert (1981) also focused on positive attitudes for reading, including enthusiasm, animation, and modeling. Storybook reading between parents and children was found to scaffold literacy knowledge (concepts of print, directionality in reading, and book handling skills) (Clay, 1979; Smetana, 2005).

Dialogue in joint-book reading. In a study done by Ninio and Bruner (1978), a middle-class mother and her son were studied. The findings of this case study illustrated a distinct pattern in the shared storybook readings. Researchers labeled this pattern as interactive dialogue. They identified four steps that occurred during their reading: (a) attention-getting dialogue; (b) questioning; (c) labeling; and (d) offering feedback in a give-and-take relationship. Over a ten month study, the mother's early use of questioning helped her child reproduce questions on his own. Cochran-Smith (1986) also demonstrated that there were turn-taking patterns between adults and children where swapping questions and answers took place. According to this study, the exchange enhanced children's comprehension of the text, understanding of print concepts, and development of oral language. Conversations between mothers and children also produced connections between texts and life events.

Adult roles during joint-book reading. Previous research suggested that parents vary in their roles during parent-child joint-book reading interactions. Roser and Martinez (1977) analyzed a small number of parents reading to preschool-aged children. These authors underscored the important role adults have in joint-book readings. The adults

emerged as (a) a co-responder as they describe, share, and review, (b) an informer-monitor as they relay information, explain, assess, and monitor, and (c) a director as they introduce, announce, and manage. The adults role provided scaffolding for the children who could then take on these roles as well. The authors stated that "the value of an adult partner who shares books and who thinks aloud in response to literature cannot be ignored" (Roser & Martinez, 1997, p. 489).

Other research identified and labeled the roles that parents take on in joint-book reading. Lancy, Draper, and Boyce (1989) studied working-class parents of ethnically diverse kindergarten and first-grade children reading storybooks together. The researchers analyzed the interactions between parents and children. The parents were classified either as *expansionist* or *reductionist*. The parents who were labeled as expansionists were generally more involved in the storybook reading. They asked questions, responded to inquiries, shared the book in close proximity with their child, and provided overall involvement with the readings. These parents appeared to view reading as a partnered activity. The reductionist parents seemed to view reading as a performance-based task. They focused on decoding and correcting errors. The children of each group of parents differed on their views of reading. The children of reductionist parents generally did not view reading as pleasurable and tried to read as quickly as possible. Children who had parents that were characterized as expansionists tended to enjoy reading and view it as a way they could learn. The Lancy et al. (1989) study showed that parents' motivations and attitudes for reading helped promote readers who love reading.

In an attempt to establish a method for teaching during storybook interactions, Whitehurst and colleagues (see Arnold et al., 1994; Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992; Whitehurst, et al. 1988) uncovered what they labeled as "dialogic reading." In this process the focus shifts from adults being the storyteller and children as listeners to the children acting as the story teller. The parents assumed the role of active listener by asking questions to children, adding information, and prompting them to provide descriptive details from the story. This interactive book reading helped children become a skillful storyteller and learn about literacy. The role the adults enacted in the storybook reading defined the interactions or behaviors that took place between parents and children (see Arnold et al., 1994; Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992; Whitehurst, et al. 1988).

Research on home literacy experiences delineated a major focus on shared book experiences. Yet, it is difficult to measure quality interactions without observation. However, another way to examine home literacy experiences without direct observation is through questioning parents about the quality of book reading through surveys. Parents can be asked to rate themselves on items or components of a shared book reading to determine the quality of the interaction.

Summary

Research has acknowledged the emotional engagement, the quality of the interaction, and the role adults play in children's literacy development. These home literacy experiences suggest a link between parents' literacy behavior and their literacy beliefs. Yet the question remains: how do these beliefs and experiences affect children's acquisition of early literacy skills? Thus, it would be important to consider parental

beliefs and behaviors in relationship to children's literacy outcomes in their literacy development. In this present study, this crucial combination of parents' beliefs and the literacy experiences they create were examined in relationship to children's literacy skills.

This research could deepen our understanding of the factors that influence how young children attain literacy (see model in Figure 1). Based upon the knowledge that early literacy skills of children predict future reading performance (Morrow, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 1996; Senechal & LeFevere, 2002; van Kleeck et al., 1997), factors that influence early literacy skill learning needed further examination. A large number of factors have been researched and shown to influence children's early literacy development. However, for this study, two of the most promising were selected for analysis: parents' literacy beliefs and the home literacy experiences parents create for their children.

Parents' literacy beliefs were specifically examined in terms of two belief orientations: either a top-down or bottom-up perspective. Research has shown that one approach seemed to give children more competence in early literacy (Sonnenschein et al.,1997). Yet, what remained unclear is the relationship between parents' literacy belief in a top-down approach and literacy experiences they provide? Are these experiences different from the experiences that parents who believe in a bottom-up approach may provide for their children? These questions suggest the need to examine the relationship between the literacy orientations of parents and home literacy experiences in relationship to children's emergent literacy skills. The alignment of parents' beliefs, the literacy

environment, and children's test performance on early reading tests, described by Bingham's (2007) study, provided a model for the study reported here. In this study, in contrast to the earlier one, parents' literacy beliefs were investigated specifically in terms of a top-down or bottom-up perspective. The purpose of this study was to address the research question of how parents' literacy beliefs (i.e., endorsement of a top-down or bottom-up perspective), as well as home literacy experiences (i.e. parents' behaviors, namely shared book readings), related to children's development of early literacy skills.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The participants in this study were parents and their preschool-age children.

Forty-three children and one of their parents were recruited from a university preschool

setting. Given that the pre-school population being studied was located at a private

western university and that participation in the preschool program was for the most part

paid for by parents, the participants were children of preschool staff, students or faculty.

As a result, the participants in the study shared similar socioeconomic status and life

experiences. One of the strong advantage as well as disadvantage in this study was the

homogeneity of the sample. The disadvantage was that because the population range was

narrow it may have been difficult to detect differences that actually existed. On the other

hand, the homogeneity of the sample made it so the variation in parents' beliefs and the

environment they create for their children was the main source of variation in children's

development of early literacy skills. This relationship identified could be attributed to

difference in parents' beliefs and behaviors rather than differences in socioeconomic

status or the ethnicity of the participants.

Thirty parent participants responded to and returned questionnaires. Table 1

represents the descriptive statistics of the study population. All but two of the

questionnaires were filled out by mothers. The other two were filled out by both parents.

Table 1 shows that on average the participants had some college education with

the partner's level being between a college and a graduate degree or professional degree

(see Appendix for questionnaire). Sixteen of the mothers reported themselves as being in the home as a full-time caregiver. Forty-six percent of the households reported an annual income level greater than $50,000 per year. Because of the numerous similarities in the population demographics, the focus of this study examined what middle class parents believe about literacy development, what experiences they provide, and the relationship this has to their children's acquisition of literacy.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Parental Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Range
Household Income	4.79	2.08	1-8
Children in the Family	3.03	1.30	1-6
Participant's Highest Level of Education	4	0.76	1-6
Partner's Highest Level of Education	4.60	0.57	1-6

Permission for the study was granted by the university's Institutional Review Board. Parents were sent a letter explaining the study and a consent form was attached asking permission for their children's participation. Once consent was granted by the parent, testing of the child commenced. Parents were asked to fill out a questionnaire (see measures section for details about the survey information and Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire). The questionnaire inquired about parents' literacy beliefs, the home literacy environment, and literacy experiences of shared book reading. The section of literacy beliefs on the questionnaire integrated questions relating to how parents teach their children, as well as their ideas about reading. The home literacy experiences

evaluation included a list of children's books (to assess parents' familiarity with children's books), questions about reading and writing activities that occur in the home, and statements about experiences or interactions with storybooks in the home. Demographic information was also collected on income and education levels as described above.

The children were evaluated for literacy skills, including oral language (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-PPVT), concepts of print (FACES), letter knowledge (Woodcock Johnson, 1990), word recognition (Woodcock Johnson, 1990), rhyming skills (FACES, 2000), alphabet sounds (PALS, 2003), and invented spelling (PAL, 2003). The children attended the university preschool two and a half hours a day for four days a week. The evaluative process was conducted during a free-play or center time. The children were interviewed one-on-one by the author or a paid assistant. The assistant was trained on the testing materials and then observed a session conducted by the author. The assistant was monitored via a two-way mirror while administering the protocol and then given additional feedback about the testing procedure. Each child was assessed in two different sessions. The first session averaged 15 minutes in length. During that session, children completed the receptive vocabulary test, concepts of print task, rhyming task, letter knowledge task and word recognition task. The second testing session lasted five minutes on average and included the alphabet sound and invented spelling tasks. The children were given a sticker for participation at each testing session.

Measures

Literacy Beliefs

Parents' literacy beliefs were evaluated through a survey developed by Evans et al. (2004) called "Approaches to Beginning Reading and Reading Instruction" (ABRRI). This survey assesses parents' views on beginning reading and requires parents to rate 14 items on a seven point Likert scale. The survey allowed identification of two differing perspectives on reading: (a) the bottom-up approach to reading where the focus is on skills; and (b) the top-down approach which focuses on a broad view of the world and language for learning to read. Items required parents to rank statements from one (little importance) to seven (greatest importance). Examples of these statements included "develop the child's ability to sound out words" or "develop accurate oral reading in the child" (Evans et al., 2004, p 131). For this study, reliability for the scales was evaluated for both the top-down and bottom-up approach resulting in Spearman-Brown reliability coefficients of 0.87 for each.

Home Literacy Measures

The home literacy practices were assessed using three measures. These included parents' ideas about teaching reading and writing, parents' knowledge of children's book titles, and parents' report of joint-book reading behaviors.

The Language Reading and Family Survey (LRFS). The home literacy environment was assessed using the survey of Whitehurst et al. (1988) called "The Language Reading and Family Survey" (LRFS). These scales included items like "How often do you or another family member read a picture book with your child?" and

"Approximately how many picture books do you have in your home for your child's use?" Items included rating statements on a scale of one (never) to five or six (very often). Whitehurst et al. (1988) have reported strong reliability for this survey. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.92.

Children's book titles measure. A book title scale by Senechal et al. (2001) was used to assess parents' knowledge of children's books. The list consists of 60 real and made-up children's book titles. The parents were asked to determine which titles they had heard of by marking to the left of the title with a check mark. Parents were asked to mark only the titles they were familiar with and not guess, since some fabricated titles were included in the list of book titles. The task was to be completed from memory without using any references. The objective of assessing parents' familiarity with books was used to determine how frequently reading took place in the home. Correct book titles included *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak (1963) and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle (1969). Samples of foil titles were *Big Old Truck*s and *The Toy Trunk*. The reliability scores of parents' answers concerning the correct book title list had a Spearman-Brown reliability of 0.62 and the incorrect book title list had a reliability of 0.76.

Shared book behaviors. Parents' shared book reading behaviors (Bingham, 2007) were assessed to illustrate how parents read books to their children. This questionnaire contained items such as "When we read, I encourage my child to help me tell the story," and "I ask my child a lot of questions about the book." This scale was designed to

examine joint-book reading behaviors occurring in the home as well as specific parent

behaviors during readings.

     A parent teaching measure. The two item scale by Senechal et al. (1998) was

distributed to parents to inquire about how they teach their children to read and to print

words. Parents' responses of never (1) to very often (7) were recorded. The reliability

coefficient for this scale was 0.919.

Child Literacy Measures

     The children's emergent literacy skills were evaluated by assessing their

vocabulary, letter knowledge, word recognition, concepts of print, and rhyming.

     Vocabulary. Oral Language, receptive vocabulary, was assessed using the

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-III; Dunn & Dunn, 1997). The children were

shown four cards and asked to point to the one that represented the object asked for by

the examiner. A standard score was given based on test performance and the age factor.

This score was used in the analysis of the data.

     Letter knowledge and word recognition. An analysis was given using a portion of

the Woodcock-Johnson (1990) Dictation Scale. The children were asked to identify a

random sampling of capital letters. The total score possible was 26. Children were asked

to identify words such as "in," "dog," and "as" and scored one if correct and zero if

incorrect.

     Concepts about print. Using the HeadStart Family and Child Experiences Survey

(FACES, 2000), concepts of print were evaluated by asking the children who participated

questions before, during, and after reading the book *Where's My Teddy* (Alborough,

1992). Sample statement and questions from the test were "Show me the front of the book," "Point to where I should start to read," and "Where do I go next when I read? Show me where to go." The child received a score of one for the correct answer and a score of zero for incorrect, incomplete, or ambiguous answers.

Rhyming. The HeadStart Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES, 2000) was utilized to assess rhyming skills. The children were read a story (see above paragraph for description) and were asked to determine if groups of words rhymed, (e.g."Ted" and "bed"). The examiner said "Those words rhyme because they sound the same at the end," giving the child being tested the definition of rhyming. Participants were then asked about four sets of words to determine if they rhymed. The scores continued as above: one if the child answered correctly or zero if not.

Alphabet sounds. Assessment was done using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) Kindergarten test (Invernizzi, et al., 2003). The children were asked to give the sounds of 26 letters including sounds for "ch" and "th." A score out of a possible 26 was given for correct short letter sounds.

Invented spelling. PALS Kindergarten test (Invernizzi, et al., 2003) also assessed invented spelling. A benchmark was set by this test with the participant needing to score at least 4 out of 26 on alphabet sound test to participated in the task. The children were shown a model for writing, the word "cat" or "map." Instructions were given to write what sounds they heard in five words (e.g., fan, mop, win). The points awarded were based on letters written: one point awarded for each letter, plus a bonus point was added if the entire word was spelled correctly, for a total of 20 points for the task.

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Data Analysis

Statistical reports were run to look at mean and standard deviations of all the variables. Correlations were generated to look at the interrelatedness of the different variables. Highly correlated variables were combined. The data were analyzed in two sets. The first set combined parent literacy beliefs and the literacy experiences provided in the home. Multiple linear regressions were run to analyze the correlation of parent literacy beliefs to parent behaviors (literacy experiences created). The second set analyzed home literacy experiences in relationship to children's literacy scores. Given the small sample size, two blocks of independent variables were formed to analyze different components of the home literacy environment. The first block grouped the independent variables that evaluated the frequency and general aspects of the home literacy environment. Thus, the block drew together the self-reported literacy environment (e.g. how often the family visits the library, how many books the family owns) with parents' knowledge of children's book titles (which also measures the home literacy environment by examining the number of books in the home as well as how often new books may be brought into the home from outside sources such as the library). The second block appraised the quality of the literacy experiences happening in the home by merging parental reports of shared book experiences (e.g., "When we read together I sound excited") and parent teaching (e.g., "I teach my child to read words"). Four hierarchical regressions were generated to examine the relationship between the home literacy environment and children's emergent literacy skills.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The presentation of the results for the data analysis includes (a) descriptive statistics of the data, (b) the relationship between parents' beliefs and home literacy practices, and (c) the relationship between home literacy practices and children's emergent literacy scores.

Descriptive Statistics

To analyze literacy beliefs, literacy experiences, and child outcomes, the means and standard deviations were calculated. The results of the mean, range, and standard deviations for data collected are presented in Table 2. A strong correlation existed between letter knowledge, letter sound knowledge, and spelling (the lowest value $r =$ 0.669 and the highest being $r = 0.787$).

Table 2

Correlation Among Alphabet Letter Knowledge, Letter Sound Knowledge, and Spelling

Variable	Letter Sound	Letter Knowledge	Spelling
Letter Sound	1.00	0.67**	0.79**
Letter Knowledge		1.00	0.75**
Spelling			1.00

** $p < 0.01$.

Thus, the variables were standardized and summed to create a new variable or composite alphabet knowledge score (See Table 2 for combined alphabet score). The results of the mean, range, and standard deviations for all measures collected are

presented in Table 3.   As for the parent sample, the mean reported to participating in

reading with their children between 15 to 20 minutes per day. Parents reported owning a

mean of 100 to 200 picture books, and that they engaged frequently in home literacy

activities. Analysis of the parents' belief data showed a mean for the top-down

perspective of 5.68 (SD = 0.84) and 5.77 (SD = 0.77) for bottom-up.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Survey and Test Score Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Range
Parent Literacy Beliefs Report			
Top-down Literacy Beliefs	5.68	0.84	3.30-6.90
Bottom-up Literacy Beliefs	5.77	0.77	4.27-7.00
Home Literacy Experiences			
Parent's Knowledge of Children's Books	0.40	0.14	0.01-0.74
Parent Teaching Activities	4.60	1.45	2.5-7
Shared Book Reading	0.40	0.14	0.01-0.74
Home Literacy Activities	-0.00[a]	0.56[a]	-0.99-1.21[a]
Children's Literacy Scores			
Receptive Language (PPVT-III)	111.49	10.77	84-134
Concepts of Print	7.35	1.89	0.00-9.00
Alphabet Knowledge	0.00[a]	0.91[a]	-1.65-2.00[a]
Rhyming	3.42	0.82	1.00-4.00

Note. [a] equals standardized scores.

For the children's tasks, the typical child had good conceptual knowledge of print (the children were able to identify the front of the book and indicate that print is read from left to right) with a mean score of 7.3 out of a possible 9. The mean number of alphabet letters child participants could name was 12. Child participants mean score for receptive language was 111.5, with the highest child scoring a 134. On the rhyming task, the children scored higher than expected (M = 3.42, SD = 0.82, R = 1.00-4.00). In review, overall the child sample showed children with good literacy abilities.

Parents' Literacy Beliefs and Home Literacy Practices

The data was first analyzed to study the relationship between parents' literacy beliefs and home literacy practices. The independent variables included the measures of beliefs in top-down and bottom-up perspectives. The following dependent variables were analyzed using a series of multiple regressions: home literacy practices of reading and writing activities, parents' knowledge of children's books, and joint-book reading behaviors. The results reported in Table 4 suggest that a belief in a top-down literacy perspective was related to parent knowledge of children's book titles ($\beta = 0.71$, p < 0.01). The R^2 for this regression was 0.31 and F (2,26) = 5.75, p < 0.01. There was no significant relationship found between any of the other variables.

Home Literacy Practices and Emergent Literacy Scores

To examine whether any of the home literacy variables were redundant, correlations were run to analyze the following variables: (a) shared book reading behavior, (b) parent knowledge of children's books, and (c) parent teaching (see Table 5).

Table 4

Summary of Regression Analyses of Parent Literacy Beliefs and Home Literacy Practices

Variable	Home Literacy Environment			Shared Book Reading Behavior			Parent Knowledge of Children's Books			Parent Teaching		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Top-down	0.10	0.14	0.15	0.02	0.04	0.13	0.83	0.18	0.71**	0.53	0.36	0.31
Bottom-Up	-0.12	0.16	-0.18	-0.04	0.04	-0.23	-0.14	0.20	-0.11	-0.22	0.39	-0.12

Note. ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Correlation Among Home Literacy Environment, Shared Book Reading Behavior,
Parent Knowledge of Children's Books, Parent Teaching

Variable	Parent Knowledge of Children's Books	Home Literacy Environment	Parent Teaching	Shared Book Reading Behavior
Parent Knowledge of Children's Book Titles	1.00	0.15	0.07	0.04
Home Literacy Environment	0.15	1.00	0.25	0.29
Parent Teaching	0.07	0.25	1.00	0.42*
Shared Book Reading Behavior	0.04	0.29	0.42*	1.00

* $p < 0.05$

The only significant correlation was between shared book reading behavior and parent

teaching ($p = 0.024$). Given this significance and the small size of the present sample, it

appeared that entering the independent variables in blocks (adding more than one to the

equation at a time) in the regression equation might prove more fruitful than examining

each variable's singular contribution. As a result, hierarchical linear regressions were

used to examine blocks of variables entered as the IVs.

The results of these hierarchical regressions are shown in Tables 6 through 9.

Two significant relationships emerged from the analyses. First, a significant relationship

existed between parent teaching and children's alphabet knowledge ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$)

in Model 2. In addition, the relationship between parents' knowledge of children's book titles and children's receptive vocabulary was significant in Model 1 ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.05$).

In order to identify ways to increase the future literate performance of children (see Figure 1), scholars of early childhood education research should design studies to determine the factors that influence children's attainment of early literacy skills. One of the factors that may influence children's preliteracy skills is the home environment. Lonigan (1994) claimed that the home literacy environment may have an effect on some part of emergent literacy skills but may not influence others (Lonigan, 1994). Understanding parents' literacy beliefs as well as the home literacy experiences that parents provide their children in the home environment could be of importance.

In the present study, the correlation between parents' literacy beliefs (i.e. top-down or bottom-up perspective) and the experiences with literacy parents provide for their children were examined. By examining these non-cognitive variables, a clearer understanding was gained of how parental beliefs and behaviors may relate to children's emergent literacy skills.

Top-Down Literacy Perspective and Book Titles

This study found that parent's beliefs in a top-down literacy perspective were related to parents' knowledge of children's book titles. Given the range of parent education, from some college to graduate degrees, parents may, in fact, have eclectic beliefs about how children learn to read. The data showed that parents' had a mean score for the top-down perspective of 5.68 and a mean score of 5.77 for the bottom-up perspective. These were not significantly different from each other.

Table 6

Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Analysis for Variables Determining Children's Alphabet Knowledge

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Home Literacy Environment	-0.33	0.33	-0.19	-0.45	0.33	-0.26
Parent Knowledge of Children's Books	1.91	1.33	0.27	1.82	1.27	0.26
Shared Book Reading Behavior				-0.11	0.20	-0.11
Parent Teaching				0.28	0.13	0.42*
R^2		0.09			0.24	
F change in R^2		1.35			2.32	

* $p < .05$

Table 7

Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Analysis for Variables Determining Children's Receptive Vocabulary

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Home Literacy Environment	4.70	3.56	0.23	4.76	3.87	0.24
Parent Knowledge of Children's Books	29.95	14.37	0.37*	30.17	14.92	0.37
Shared Book Reading Behavior				0.65	2.37	-0.06
Parent Teaching				-0.62	1.57	-0.08
R^2		0.21			0.22	
F change in R^2		3.55*			.01	

* $p < .05$

Table 8

Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Analysis for Variables Determining Children's Concepts of Print

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Home Literacy Environment	-0.98	0.67	-0.28	-0.89	0.73	-0.25
Parent Knowledge of Children's Books	1.58	2.72	0.11	1.55	2.81	0.11
Shared Book Reading Behavior				-0.28	0.44	-0.14
Parent Teaching				0.08	0.30	0.06
R^2		0.28			0.31	
F change in R^2		1.12			0.20	

* $p < .05$

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Table 9

Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Analysis for Variables Determining Children's Rhyming

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
Home Literacy Environment	-0.24	0.29	-0.16	-0.09	0.29	-0.06
Parent Knowledge of Children's Books	-0.68	1.15	-0.12	-0.63	1.13	-0.11
Shared Book Reading Behavior				-0.09	0.18	-0.11
Parent Teaching				-0.16	0.12	-0.28
R^2		0.04			0.15	
F change in R^2		0.62			1.51	

The data, from this sample, indicated that educated parents may have balanced beliefs about literacy development that include elements and strategies from both perspectives. Parents, in this study, appeared to endorse both perspectives simultaneously. Thus, this study suggested that parents may have more balanced beliefs about literacy development which included a combination of both top-down and bottom-up perspectives. This balanced approach has not been found in previous research. One possible explanation is that educated parents may believe that literacy is not learned in isolation and is mediated through many activities (Teale, 1986). Specific literacy activities may be defined by previous researchers as top-down or bottom-up perspectives, but parents' beliefs may not be mutually exclusive. Further research is needed to explore this possibility.

Parent Teaching and Alphabet Knowledge

Another discovery from this study was the existence of the relationship between parent teaching and children's knowledge of the alphabet. Parent teaching was significantly related to the alphabet knowledge of the children. This finding was consistent with Senechal et al. (1998) who found that children of parents' who reported teaching them to print and read words themselves had children who performed better on written language skill tasks, which included alphabet knowledge. In other research, shared book reading was significantly related to children's vocabulary scores (Senechal et al., 1996). The present study does not support this finding. Further research is needed to explore the connection with children's receptive vocabulary and parent-child book reading experiences. It is possible there are other connections not identified in this study.

Parent Beliefs, Behaviors, and Child Outcomes

The present study overcame shortcomings in existing literature by examining the relationship of parents' literacy beliefs (top-down or bottom-up) through the home literacy experience of book reading to child emergent literacy skills. One main finding emerged. Parents' beliefs in a top-down literacy perspective were significantly related to parents' knowledge of children's book titles. Parents who had strong beliefs about a top-down approach to literacy acquisition had more knowledge of children's book titles. In addition, parents' knowledge of children's book titles had a significant relationship with children's receptive vocabulary when combined only with the home literacy environment but not all independent variables. Thus, the more book titles parents knew, the higher their children scored on the receptive vocabulary test. This relationship, the link of beliefs through parental behaviors to child outcomes, was a central finding from the study.

Sonnenschein and colleagues (1997) studied parental literacy beliefs and categorized them into two belief perspectives: entertainment or a skill-based orientation. The entertainment oriented parents had children with stronger early literacy skills than children whose parents believed in a skills-based orientation. The study conducted by Lynch et al. (2006) did not connect their findings to child outcomes, but they did find that parents' with higher education tended to have a more holistic approach to literacy than just a skills-based perspective. The data analyzed in this study were inconsistent with these findings. Unlike the former studies, the present study's analysis which connected parent beliefs with children's scores through the quality of the home experience found no relationship between children's higher literacy scores and the orientation of parents' literacy beliefs.

The linkage from beliefs to behaviors to child outcome measures has implications for parents and educators. This finding may imply that to change parents' behavior modifications may need to be made to their belief system about literacy development. Thus, a systematic parenting literacy program could change beliefs by examining literacy development as well as focusing on parent education in literacy activities. Literacy education starts before the child enters school, so early childhood programs could focus parent education to target parent beliefs about the development of literacy, as well as education about specific parent-child literacy practices.

The implication from this study is that the more parents understand about literacy acquisition the more parent behavior could be changed. The proposition for early childhood educators is that there may be a need for greater emphasis to be placed on understanding parental literacy beliefs in order to improve the quality of children's home literacy experiences. "The more teachers know about parents' beliefs and the activities in which they engage with children at home, the more they can help build a bridge between home and school literacy" (Lynch et al., 2006, p.14). Trainings for educating parents about literacy development by early childhood educators may provide changes in parent behaviors which could ultimately lead to higher child outcomes. This study provided evidence of a connection between parents' beliefs and reported behaviors which were related to children's early literacy skills.

Limitations

Several limitations existed in this study. First, the study used regression to evaluate the data. This kind of data analysis can suggest causality. In this study, these regressions were used to develop a correlational model and, therefore, the findings do not suggest causal relationships. These findings cannot be generalized to a broader population. In addition, the small sample size

may have made it difficult to find relationships among key variables, particularly given the homogeneous nature of the sample, (the small n posed challenges in analyzing the data). A longitudinal study examining non-cognitive factors (i.e. parents' beliefs and the home literacy experiences) which influence the early literate child is needed.

The homogeneity of the sample was also a limitation. The researcher purposefully selected a homogeneous sample in an attempt to tease out differences in parents' beliefs, behaviors, and children's early literacy skills, unclouded by differences that could be attributed to socioeconomic status or the ethnicity of the participants. This may not have occurred, as the homogeneity and indeed the population range may have been too narrow to detect the differences that actually exist.

Obtaining self-report parent data through a questionnaire (see Appendix A) may not provide a sufficiently authentic representation of parents' beliefs nor the home literacy experiences. Indeed, there are many problems inherent in self-report data. Other methodologies, including interviews or observation, might provide a more diverse picture of what actually happens during a parent-child joint book reading experience. The question of research methodology becomes important in interpreting the meaning of the results. Since the questionnaire given was self-report, there may be uncertainty about the reliability of parents' description of actual behaviors. The argument may be that parents' responses to the questions/statements may be augmented by a social-desirability bias. That is, parents have an idea of what is socially acceptable and are answering based on that knowledge rather than actual behaviors. Another argument may be that parents have some restrictions on evaluating or estimating their own behaviors.

This limitation was overcome, in part, with the use of the children's book title survey. The most significant finding from the data involved parents' knowledge of children's book titles. The book title checklist may provide a more accurate picture of the home literacy experience because it eliminated either the bias of social-desirability or self-evaluation/self-estimation of behaviors. The children's book title list included correct as well as foil book titles. Parents were given this list since wrong answers may provide parents with more incentive to mark only the titles they have accurate information about. In fact, the measure potentially provides a clearer picture of actual reading behavior in the home as an indirect measure of children's actual exposure to books, unlike self-reported information from a questionnaire. Senechal et al. (1998) agree. "We argue, however, that assessing parents' familiarity with storybooks has a clear advantage over the measures that have typically been employed, namely, parent self-reports of storybook readings" (Senechal et al., 1998, p. 110). Future research, including descriptions of actual parental behaviors, would provide a more precise representation of home literacy experiences.

This study did not assess whether parents and children's literacy interactions change over time. In fact, parents may scaffold children's learning differently during emergent, early, and conventional literacy development, but the instruments used in this study did not allow consideration of this possibility. In a study of New Zealand parents, Phillips and McNaughton (1990) collected data over a month's time on the frequency of storybook readings, the time of day, and the books selected. Initially, parents would concentrate on the meaning of the text, and then they would help their children to make inferences. Engagement behaviors also shifted as the book became more familiar children. Change also occurred when the parent-child pair became familiar with the book. McDonnell et al. (2003) studied parents and children interactions with

familiar or unfamiliar books. A familiar book and text produced active participation from

children as well as a parental shift from mean-making to making predictions. One limitation of

the present study was that it did not consider developmental changes over time in regards to

parents and children's interactions.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Implications

The present study found a relationship from parental beliefs, through parental behaviors, and a relationship to children's outcomes. A correlation existed between parents' top-down literacy perspective and their knowledge of children's book titles. The parents who knew more children's book titles had children with higher receptive vocabulary scores. This connection has implications for parents, early childhood educators, and teachers. An implication of the present study is that in order to change parents' literacy behaviors, early childhood educators might begin by examining parents' beliefs about literacy development. Parental literacy education programs could benefit from teaching beliefs about literacy acquisition in addition to teaching parents about new literacy experiences. Further research is needed to provide more data about parental literacy education and its relationship to parent change. Literacy education could unify parent's beliefs about literacy development as well as change home literacy experiences.

Future Research

Additional research is needed to further explore the relationship between literacy beliefs, (either from a top-down or bottom-up perspective) and how these may influence literacy experiences parents' provide, which in turn may impact children's emergent literacy skills. One aspect that has been examined often is the relationship between parental beliefs and joint-book readings as a literacy experience. Further research is needed to explore the relationship of parents' literacy beliefs and home literacy experiences, beyond shared-book experiences. Questions about whether joint book readings can be classified as an important influence in children's emergent literacy development (Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994) should also be

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addressed. Research should be conducted to examine parents' literacy beliefs in correlation with a broad scope of the home literacy environment.

Future research should also consider the nature of self-reported data concerning parents' literacy behaviors. Senechal, LeFevre, Hudson, and Lawson (1996) have argued that because joint-book readings are a highly valued activity, parental responses could be biased. In the present study, the children's book title checklist seemed to eliminate some biases of self-reported data. Since foils were included in the list, parents only marked the titles they knew. In this same way, parents reported data and the actual occurrence in the home could differ. A more naturalistic design studying parent-child literacy interactions and relationships is warranted. Research in parental literacy behaviors ideally should use detailed descriptions of not only what is taking place in the home, but also the when, where, and how literacy activities are occurring. Okagaki and Bingham (2007) argue in their chapter on parent beliefs and behavior that we need additional methodologies other than interviews and questionnaires. There is much to be learned about the relationship between book reading, parent's beliefs, and children's learning through the use of an authentic approach.

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Appendix: Parent Questionnaire
April 04, 2007

Dear Parent,

Hi, thank you for agreeing for your child to participate in my study. This project is designed to provide us with information about the best ways to look at and assess children' development and learning in the preschool years. We are currently completing our child assessments and now would like some information from you.

Attached to this letter, please find a copy of a questionnaire that will provide us with information about your child's experiences at home. All information provided will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information. All data, including questionnaires, and children's developmental progress, will be kept in a locked storage cabinet and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them.

I realize that the questionnaire may feel a little long, however, it should take about 20 minutes to complete. I appreciate your time in completing the questionnaire.

Please return the questionnaires to the preschool office or your child's teacher.

I hope that the information we gain from this study will better help us meet the needs of your preschool child in the early elementary grades.

I appreciate your willingness to participate in our study. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (801) 422-4543 or gary_bingham@byu.edu.
Thank you

Gary Bingham, PhD.
Teacher Education
Brigham Young University

Ideas About Parenting Survey

We are interested in your ideas about being a parent. As such, we have a number of questions about how you feel about being a parent and your ideas about raising children. For each item, please circle the number that best represents your ideas. There are NO right or wrong answers to these questions. Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions.

CHILD REARING IDEAS…

For each item, rate how often you exhibit this behavior with your child.

Never	Once in a While	About Half of the Time	Very Often	Always
1	2	3	4	5

1.	I am responsive to my child's feelings and needs.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I use physical punishment as a way of disciplining my child.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I take my child's desires into account before asking him/her to do something.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	When my child asks why he/she has to conform, I state: because I said so, or I am your parent and I want you to.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I explain to my child how I feel about the child's good and bad behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I spank when my child is disobedient.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I encourage my child to freely express (himself)/(herself) even when disagreeing with me.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I punish by taking privileges away from my child with little if any explanations.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I emphasize the reasons for rules.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I give comfort and understanding when my child is upset.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I yell or shout when my child misbehaves.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I give praise when my child is good.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I give into my child when the child causes a commotion about something.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I explode in anger towards my child.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I threaten my child with punishment more often than actually giving it.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I take into account my child's preferences in making plans for the family.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I grab my child when being disobedient.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I state punishments to my child and do not actually do them.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	I show respect for my child's opinions by encouraging my child to express them.	1	2	3	4	5

20. I allow my child to give input into family rules.	1	2	3	4	5	
21. I scold and criticize to make my child improve.	1	2	3	4	5	
22. I spoil my child.	1	2	3	4	5	
23. I give my child reasons why rules should be obeyed.	1	2	3	4	5	
24. I use threats as punishment with little or no justification.	1	2	3	4	5	
25. I have warm and intimate times together with my child.	1	2	3	4	5	
26. I punish by putting my child off somewhere alone with little if any explanations.	1	2	3	4	5	
27. I help my child to understand the impact of behavior by encouraging my child to talk about the consequences of his/her own actions.	1	2	3	4	5	
28. I scold or criticize when my child's behavior doesn't meet my expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	
29. I explain the consequences of the child's behavior.	1	2	3	4	5	
30. I slap my child when the child misbehaves.	1	2	3	4	5	

Feelings about Parenting…

*Please rate these statements about being a parent	Strongly Disagree		Slightly Disagree		Slightly Agree		Strongly Agree
31. I know things about being a parent that would be helpful to other parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. The problems of taking care of a child are easy to solve once you know how your actions affect your child, an understanding I have acquired.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. I would make a fine role model for a new mother/father to follow in order to learn what he/she would need to know in order to be a good parent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I feel sure of myself as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. Being a parent is manageable, and any problems are easily solved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. I can solve most problems between my child and me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. I meet my own personal expectations for expertise in caring for my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. I know I am doing a good job as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. Considering how long I've been a mother/father, I feel thoroughly familiar with this role.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. When things are going badly between my child and me, I keep trying until things begin to change.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

41. Being a good mother/father is a reward in itself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. I honestly believe I have all the skills necessary to be a good mother/father to my child.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Parent Teaching

*During a typical week, how often do you engage in the following activities?	Never		Some times		Often		Very Often
43. I teach my child how to print words:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. I teach my child how to read words:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

IDEAS ABOUT READING…

Different opinions exist about what is most important in learning to read and what should be in a beginning reading program. Rate each of the items below on a scale from 1 to 7 according to the importance you give each of them. A rating of 1 indicates little importance and a rating of 7 indicates greatest importance.

	Little Importance					Greatest Importance	
45. Develop broad reading interests in the child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. Practice and learn the letters of the alphabet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. Develop the child's confidence to guess at words from the context such as pictures on the page or the topic of the story	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. Develop the child's ability to sound out words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. Develop a personal dictionary for a child of words related to topics in which he/she is interested	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. Develop the children's oral language as a basis for their reading and writing development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. Develop the ability to fluently read out loud with expression	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Use books selected on the basis of their colorful illustrations, high-interest content, and natural language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. Develop the child's ability to hear the separate sounds in spoken words, such as the "f" in "fish"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. Develop the child's ability to know the letters and letter combinations that represent sounds in printed words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

55.	Use books selected to have words with simple or familiar spelling patterns and short easy sentences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56.	Develop through practice the ability to immediately recognize printed words that occur often in reading materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57.	Develop accurate oral reading in the child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58.	Develop children's confidence and interest in putting their ideas on paper in whatever form they can	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59.	Develop children's ability to use the meaning of what has been read so far to read the words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60.	Develop children's ability to use picture context cues that appear near words to read new words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
61.	Help children think about similar-looking words to read a new words, such as using "fat" and "cap" to read "cat nap"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
62.	Develop children's ability to skip a new word and figure out the meaning of the new word from the rest of the sentence.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
63.	Develop children's ability to use their general world or topic knowledge to read a new word.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
64.	Develop children's ability to divide a word into parts or syllables to read new words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
65.	Develop children's ability to use pronunciation rules, such as "the final e makes the vowel say its name" (e.g., "hat" vs. "hate")	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
66.	Dividing a word into smaller parts or syllables to read it	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sharing Books with Children…

Parents have different ideas about how to share books with children. Please rate each of the items below on a scale from 1 to 6 according to whether or not you find the item descriptive of your sharing books with your child.

Not at all Descriptive Of Me 1	Slightly Descriptive Of Me 2	Somewhat Descriptive Of Me 3	Fairly Descriptive Of Me 4	Quite Descriptive Of Me 5	Highly Descriptive Of Me 6

67. When we read, I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.	1	2	3	4	5	6
68. I ask my child a lot of questions when we read.	1	2	3	4	5	6
69. When we read, I want my child to ask questions about the book.	1	2	3	4	5	6

70. I try to make the story more real to my child by relating the story to his or her life.	1	2	3	4	5	6
71. When we read, we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story.	1	2	3	4	5	6
72. When we read, I encourage my child to help me tell the story.	1	2	3	4	5	6
73. When we read, I have my child point out different letters or numbers that are printed in the book.	1	2	3	4	5	6
74. I make reading with my child an interactive experience	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please circle the response that Best describes you and your child's experiences.

75. How often do you are another family member read a picture book with your child?
     Never (1)   Seldom (2)   Sometimes (3)   Often (4)   Very often (5)

76. If you have already begun regularly reading to your child, at what age did you start?
     _____

77. How many minutes did you or another family member read to your child yesterday?
Zero minutes (1)   5 minutes (2)   10 minutes (3)   15 minutes (4)   20 minutes (5)   More than 20 minutes (6)

78. Approximately how many picture books do you have in your home for your child's use?

0-20 (1)	20-50 (2)	50-100 (3)	100-200 (4)	Over 200 (5)

79. How often do you got to the library with your child?
     Never (1)   Seldom (2)   Sometimes (3)   Often (4)   Very often (5)

80. How long does a typical reading session last?
Zero minutes (1)   5 minutes (2)   10 minutes (3)   15 minutes (4)   20 minutes (5)   More than 20 minutes (6)

81. How many stories do you usually look at each time you and your child share books?

READING & WRITING ACTIVITIES…

Listed below are activities parents may or may not do with their children, depending on the child and family and setting. Indicate how often you have done these things with your child this school year.

		Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Quite Often	Very Often
82.	Teach nursery rhymes and nursery songs	1	2	3	4	5
83.	Name pictures in books	1	2	3	4	5
84.	Talk about pictures in books	1	2	3	4	5
85.	Point out words on street/bus signs	1	2	3	4	5

86.	Read stories to child	1	2	3	4	5
87.	Read everyday labels to child	1	2	3	4	5
88.	Get child to read single words	1	2	3	4	5
89.	Listen to child read	1	2	3	4	5
90.	Point out words in magazines/newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
91.	Have child write cards or letters to family/friends	1	2	3	4	5
92.	Have child trace or copy letters	1	2	3	4	5
93.	Have child play with alphabet blocks/squares	1	2	3	4	5
94.	Get child to print his/her own name	1	2	3	4	5
95.	Get child to write a sentence or phrase	1	2	3	4	5
96.	Have child write a little book	1	2	3	4	5
97.	Read seed packet together to plant garden	1	2	3	4	5
98.	Give child a little note to read	1	2	3	4	5
99.	Read recipe together and cook	1	2	3	4	5
100.	Give alphabet chart or alphabet book to child	1	2	3	4	5
101.	Use child activity book to explore or learn letters or words	1	2	3	4	5
102.	Give picture dictionary to child	1	2	3	4	5
103.	Read non-fiction, informational books with child.	1	2	3	4	5
104.	Have child do puppet play, act out story	1	2	3	4	5
105.	Read books to answer questions about real world experiences (i.e., after going to zoo, reading a book about tigers)	1	2	3	4	5
106.	Encourage child to write in journal/diary	1	2	3	4	5
107.	Give child pencils/markers/ crayons for play	1	2	3	4	5

Children's Books...

		Children's Title			*Children's Title*
108		A Difficult Day	109.		Where the Wild Things Are
110		A Pocket for Corduroy	111.		Bears on Wheels
112		Caps for Sale	113.		Curious George
114		Franklin in the Dark	115.		Go Dog Go
116		Green Eggs and Ham	117.		Happy Birthday Moon
118		In the Night Kitchen	119.		I Was So Mad
120		Just Me and My Dad	121.		Love You Forever
122		Mortimer	123.		Murmel, Murmel, Murmel
124		Red Is Best	125.		Saggy Baggy Elephant
126		Shy Little Kitten	127.		The Poky Little Puppy
128		The Snowy Day	129.		Big Old Trucks
130		Eleanor and the Magic Bag	131.		Hello Morning, Hello Day
132		How Wishes Come True	133.		I Hear a Knock at My Window
134		Martha Rabbit's Family	135.		Terry Toad
136		Rachel's Real Dilemma	137.		The Paper Boat's Trip
138		Tracy Tickles	139.		Three Cheers for Gloria
140		Worry No Longer	141.		Winter Fun on Snowy Days
142		The Very Hungry Caterpillar	143.		This Is My Family
144		Tootle	145.		Velveteen Rabbit
146		Zack's House	147.		Thomas' Snow Suit
148		Alligator Pie	149.		We're Going on a Bear Hunt
150		Busiest Firefighters Ever	151.		Wonderful Pigs of Jillian Jiggs
152		Farmer Joe's Hot Day	153.		Whispering Rabbit
154		Goodnight Moon	155.		Snowflakes Are Falling
156		Harry the Dirty Dog	157.		The Toy Trunk
158		Jelly Belly	159.		What Do I Hear Now?
160		Alexander and the Terrible (...) Day	161.		Matthew and the Midnight Tow Truck
162		Polar Express	163.		Clarissa's Patch
164		Scuffy the Tugboat	165.		How Stephen Found a Pet
166		The Runaway Bunny	167.		Kimberly's Horse
168		Tacky the Penguin	169.		Come Along Daisy

Background Information

170. _____
<div align="center">Child's Name</div>

171. _____
<div align="center">Child's Birthdate</div>

172. _____
<div align="center">Your Age</div>

173. Please estimate your yearly household income taking all sources of income into account
- ☐ $0-$10,000
- ☐ $20,00 to $30,000
- ☐ $30,001 to $40,000
- ☐ $40,001 to $50,000
- ☐ $50,001 to $60,000
- ☐ $60,001 to $70,000
- ☐ $70,001 or greater
- ☐ Prefer not to answer

174. Who has been the most influential in shaping your ideas about being a parent?
- ☐ Mother/Father
- ☐ Grandparent
- ☐ Spouse/Partner
- ☐ Friends/Neighbors
- ☐ Teachers/Professors

Other (please specify) _____

175. How are you related to the participating child?

Mother	☐ YES	☐ NO
Stepmother	☐ YES	☐ NO
Foster mother	☐ YES	☐ NO
Grandmother	☐ YES	☐ NO
Aunt	☐ YES	☐ NO
Father	☐ YES	☐ NO
Stepfather	☐ YES	☐ NO
Foster father	☐ YES	☐ NO
Grandfather	☐ YES	☐ NO
Uncle	☐ YES	☐ NO

Other (please specify) _____

176. How many children do you have in your family? ____

177. What is *your* **highest** level of education?
- ☐ Some High School
- ☐ High School
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ College Degree
- ☐ Graduate/Professional (e.g. MA,Ph.D.)

Other (please specify) _____

178. What is your *partner's* **highest** level of education?
- ☐ Some High School
- ☐ High School
- ☐ Some College
- ☐ College Degree
- ☐ Graduate/Professional (e.g. MA,Ph.D.)

Other (please specify) _____

179. What is your occupation?

July 31, 2007

Rebecca C. Norman
2899 W. 1100 N.
Provo, UT 84601

Re: Do Parents' Literacy Beliefs and Home Literacy Experiences Relate to Children's Literacy Skills?

Dear Rebecca,

This is to inform you that Brigham Young University's IRB has approved the above research study.

The approval period is from **7/31/2007 to 7/30/2008. Your study number is X07-0221. Please be sure to reference either this number in any correspondence with the IRB.**

Continued approval is conditional upon your compliance with the following requirements:

- Your request to waive **Informed Consent** has been approved as of **7/31/2007.**

- All protocol amendments and changes to approved research must be submitted to the IRB and not be implemented until approved by the IRB.

- A few months before this date we will send out a continuing review form. There will only be two reminders. Please fill this form out in a timely manner to ensure that there is not a lapse in your approval.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

Dr. Renea L. Beckstrand, Chair /
Sandee M.P. Muñoz, Administrator
Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects
RLB/se