

Development of Parental Attitude towards Homeschooling Scale

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ABSTRACT: This paper explains the procedure of developing parental attitude scale constructed by the investigators to measure an attitude of parents towards homeschooling. The scale has been constructed by making use of Likert's method of summation to get a three point judgement on each item. After reviewing many related studies done in the field of homeschooling both in India and in other countries, dimensions which were reported as positively or negatively related to homeschooling were selected for constructing the tool. A list of 72 items included both positive and negative items refer to the parental attitude towards homeschooling was drafted. After the drafting of scale it was analysed by various experts in different fields as well as on the basis of feedback obtained from 200 parents both male and female from private schools of Amritsar city. The scale was reframed with 50 items in all. The newly constructed scale has content and face validity. Split-half method was used to find out the reliability which is 0.54. Standard scores were obtained. Various norms were also framed on the basis of which interpretation can be done.

KEY WORDS: *Home schooling, Parental Attitude*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Everyone who enters in the life of a child, even for a brief moment, can have an impact on his/her life as that experience will be assimilated into his very being. One of the biggest challenges today is to prepare children to understand the nature of the world in which they are living, to find solutions to the personal and social problems they face and to lead rich and satisfying lives. The solutions to these challenges are normally found in the educational programs adults have formulated for the child. This necessarily leads us to the world of schooling, an institution that was developed to help children reach their goals and desires. Some parents have become so disillusioned with the public school system that many of them are turning to homeschooling. Teaching children at home is nothing new. Parents, extended family, and tutors have been doing so for ages. Homeschooling also known as home education, is the education of children inside the home, as opposed to the formal settings of a public or private school. Home education is usually conducted by a parent or teacher.

According to Ray (1991) homeschooling is defined as "Learning/teaching situation where children spend the majority of the conventional school day in or near their home in lieu of attendance at a conventional institution of education. Parents or guardians are the prime educators of their children".

Many families that start out with formal school structure at home often switch to less formal and often, more effective ways of imparting education outside the school. An increasing number of parents today seem to prefer putting their children in schools that offer a departure from the rote method of learning, opting for institutions that have embraced alternative systems such as Montessori or Waldorf or even choosing to educate them at home. Homeschooling can also be about mentorship and apprenticeship, in which a tutor or teacher is with the child for many years and gets to know the child very well. Homeschooling can also be used as a form of supplemental education and as a way of helping children learn under specific circumstances. The term also refers to instruction in the home under the supervision of correspondence schools or umbrella schools. The investigators decided to construct an attitude scale to study parental attitude towards homeschooling so the newly constructed scale contains all the elements pertaining to the homeschooling.

II. METHODOLOGY

In the present study descriptive survey method of investigation was used to find out the attitude towards homeschooling among parents of elementary school students.

III. SAMPLE

For the present study, the data was collected from a sample of 200 elementary school students' parents both male and female from private schools of Amritsar city using random sampling technique for conducting pilot study.

IV. TOOL DESCRIPTION

The first part of the scale is captioned general information, which includes the variables: gender, age, educational qualification, number of offspring, name of school and board of education. After reviewing many related studies done in the field of homeschooling both in India and in other countries, the following dimensions which were reported as positively or negatively correlated to homeschooling were selected.

SCHOLASTIC ENVIRONMENT (CURRICULUM, ACADEMIC LEVEL AND EDUCATIONAL APPROACH)

This area includes various beliefs related to the curriculum, academic level and educational approach followed in the school. 17 items were formed concerning beliefs such as quality of education and facilities in school.

CO-SCHOLASTIC ENVIRONMENT (VALUES, MORAL INSTRUCTIONS AND SOCIALISATION OF CHILD)

This area includes various beliefs related to the values and moral instructions imparted in the school as well as socialisation of child. 16 items were formed concerning the co-scholastic environment of the school. This area includes responses such as secular education, pupil- teacher meet, co-curricular aspect, values imparted, moral and physical development of child.

OTHER REASONS (WELL BEING AND SAFETY OF CHILD)

This area includes various beliefs related to the well being and safety of child available in the school. 17 items were formed concerning beliefs about other reasons such as physical and mental health, well being and safety of child.

Table I
Showing area-wise distribution of items on parental attitude scale

Areas of Scale	Item Number	Total No. of items
Scholastic Environment	1 to 17	17
Co- Scholastic Environment	18 to 33	16
Other Reasons	34 to 50	17

Table II
Showing positive and negative items of the attitude scale

Positive items (+ve)	11,12,13,15,16,17,26,27,28,29,31,32,34,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,49,50
Negative items (-ve)	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,14,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,30,33,35,36,37,48

V. SCORING

The scale was constructed by making use of Likert method of summation to get a three point judgement on each item. Against each statement three alternative responses, namely, 'Agree', 'Undecided', and 'Disagree' were given score of 3,2 and 1 for favourable or positive statements and for unfavourable or negative statements, scoring system is reversed i.e 1,2 and 3. An individual's score in this scale is the sum total of the scores for all the statements.

Table III
Showing distribution of scores on +ve items and -ve items

POSITIVE ITEMS		NEGATIVE ITEMS	
AGREE	3	AGREE	1
UNDECIDED	2	UNDECIDED	2
DISAGREE	1	DISAGREE	3

The generated 72 items on Parental Attitude towards Homeschooling were subjected to expert opinion drawn from the Department of Psychology, Education and Language to check its content, relevancy, simplicity, repetition, double-barrelled, clarity and appropriateness. Based on the opinion of the experts, some of the items were modified and some were deleted. While selecting and editing statements, the following type of statements are excluded:-Statements that are factual or capable of being interpreted as factual, statements that are irrelevant to the psychological object under consideration, statements that are likely to be endorsed by almost everyone or by almost none, statements which are complex, directness and simplicity, statements which includes words that may not be understood by those who are to be given the completed scale and statements which contain universals such as all, always, none and never thus resulting in ambiguity. Thus, 50 items were selected on a three point Likert-type Scale to measure the Parental Attitude towards Homeschooling.

VI. PILOT STUDY

After constructing the parental attitude scale on homeschooling, pilot test was conducted on a random sample of 200 parents both male and female from private schools of Amritsar city. The pilot study was conducted with a view to find out the reliability and validity of the tool and also to eliminate any ambiguity so that parents do not find any difficulty in responding to the items in the parental attitude scale towards homeschooling. Scoring was done on the three point scale. Total score for each subject was calculated. The sum of the item credits represented the individual total score.

VII. RELIABILITY

Coefficient of reliability was determined by the Split-Half (even-odd) method. The scale was divided into two equal halves. Items with odd numbers formed one half test and items with even numbers formed second half test. The reliability co-efficient by Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula comes out to be .54. Scale may have limited applicability as it is applied on small sample. For increasing the reliability the scale may be applied to large sample which depict more accurate results.

VIII. VALIDITY

The items of attitude scale were selected with the help of relevant literature and the preliminary form was submitted to a group of experts. The scale has the 'Universe of content' as it includes statements from all the selected dimensions of homeschooling, namely, scholastic environment (curriculum, academic level and educational approach), co-scholastic environment (values, moral instructions and socialisation of child) and other reasons (well being and safety of child). Due weightage was given to all the dimensions while selecting all items. The scale contains 50 statements which represent the universe of content. Hence, it has content validity. The scale was given to experts in the field of education and they agreed that the items in the scale were relevant to the objectives of the study. Hence it has face validity also. Only highly diagnostic items were included in the final form of the scale. This ensures content validity of the scale.

Table IV
Showing Standard Score (T score) of each item

Item	Standard Score	Item	Standard score	Item	Standard score	Item	Standard score	Item	Standard Score
1	61.12	11	75.88	21	61.19	31	74.19	41	76.86
2	64.36	12	73.28	22	62.88	32	71.59	42	76.79
3	68.36	13	73.91	23	64.57	33	64.21	43	71.52
4	61.83	14	62.95	24	64.00	34	77.49	44	78.55
5	61.40	15	70.96	25	75.31	35	61.76	45	72.29
6	60.70	16	76.93	26	72.01	36	64.00	46	73.49
7	64.21	17	74.47	27	72.93	37	60.98	47	77.70
8	62.67	18	66.11	28	72.43	38	76.72	48	63.37
9	66.04	19	64.78	29	73.84	39	76.44	49	70.96
10	64.36	20	59.58	30	64.99	40	74.26	50	73.98

The correlation between various areas correlating moderately with each other emphasizes the desirability of studying the individual from the stand point of these basic areas. While as the correlation between the areas and the total attitude scores are sufficiently high ranging from 0.82 to 0.85 showing the high degree of relationship which point out the fact that each is contributing significantly to the attitude scale.

Determination of Norms:

Interpretation of raw scores thus collected can be done on the basis of following table as high, moderate or low level of attitude towards homeschooling.

Table V
Showing level of Attitude

Score	Level of Attitude
Above Median	High Attitude
Below Median	Low Attitude
25 th Percentile or Below	Low Attitude
Between 26 th to 75 th Percentile	Moderate Attitude
76 th Percentile or Above	High Attitude

Table VI
Showing Gender-wise Percentile Norms on Attitude scale

Male	Percentiles	Female	Interpretation
109.05	P90	107.81	High
105.41	P80	103.96	

101.77	P70	100.12	Moderate
98.14	P60	96.27	
94.5	P50	92.5	
90.86	P40	87.17	
84.07	P30	80.5	Low
76.93	P20	73.83	
68.68	P10	63.83	

Table VII
Showing Category-wise Percentile Norms on Attitude scale

Percentiles	Scholastic	Co- Scholastic	Other Reasons	Interpretation
P90	458	444.5	488.36	High
P80	425.5	428.5	476.21	
P70	395.5	412.5	464.07	
P60	330.5	380.5	459.07	Moderate
P50	295.5	333.83	431.75	
P40	278.5	307.17	410.5	
P30	261.5	285.5	378	Low
P20	243	265.5	290.5	
P10	221.75	240.5	278.83	

IX. CONCLUSION

As the basic required procedure was adopted by the researchers in the task of developing a new instrument to measure the Attitude of Elementary School Students' Parents towards Homeschooling, it is confirmed that the tool constructed and validated by the researchers is psychologically sound, reliable and valid for further studies in the Indian context.

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