

A Description of Preschool Parents Perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness

دراسة عن آراء أولياء الأمور حول جاهزية أطفالهم للإلتحاق برياض الأطفال

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## Abstract

Children as young as three are being assessed whether they are ready or not for kindergarten by examining their academic skills which have raised parents' concerns about their children's ability to be successful in formal schooling. Parents are a child's first teacher and their beliefs about readiness affect the kind of experiences and materials which they provide for their children and knowing their perceptions could benefit teachers, schools and legislators in this region for improving the quality of early childhood education. Kindergarten readiness is a complex construct that involves multiple dimensions of children development. This descriptive survey study was conducted to describe preschool parents perceptions about the skills that they believe are important for their child to be ready for kindergarten. By utilizing the National Education Goal Panel framework of readiness, an online questionnaire was constructed and distributed to a convenient sample of 76 parents of 3 to 4 years old children who are enrolled in the United Arab Emirates preschools. Parents reported that Social and Emotional domains were most crucial to children's success in kindergarten yet they focused on academic instruction when engaging in activities with their children. The findings of the study can be utilized to better inform parents about the skills that are crucial for readiness, help teachers in designing better instructional experiences and aid legislators in planning and implanting policies that could improve the quality of early childhood education in the country. Further research is still required on this topic that can be on larger scale so that it would generalizable to a bigger population.

يخضع الأطفال في سن الثالثة لعملية تقييم تتعلق بما إذا كان لديهم الاستعداد للانتقال بمرحلة رياض الأطفال من عدمه، وذلك من خلال التحقق من مهاراتهم الأكاديمية . هذه الإختبارات طالما أثارت مخاوف أولياء الأمور بشأن قدرة أطفالهم على النجاح في مسار التعليم الرسمي. أولياء الأمور هم المعلم الأول للطفل، حيث تؤثر معتقداتهم حول استعداد أطفالهم على المواد والأنشطة التي يقدمونها لأبنائهم ومعرفة تصوراتهم عن هذا الإستعداد تفيد المعلمين والمدارس والمشرعين في هذه المنطقة مما قد يساهم في تحسين جودة التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة. مفهوم الاستعداد للانتقال بمرحلة رياض الأطفال معقد و يعتمد على أكثر من محور في مراحل تطور الطفل. لقد أجريت هذه الدراسة الاستقصائية على وصف آراء أولياء الأمور بشأن المهارات التي يعتقدون أنها مهمة لأطفالهم في بحث يكونوا على استعداد للانتقال بمرحلة رياض الأطفال. أُجري استبيان عبر شبكة الإنترنت وجرى توزيعه على عينة مناسبة تتكون من 76 ولي أمر ممن لديهم أطفال في عمر 3 إلى 4 سنوات مسجلين في حضانات في دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة. رغم إفادة أولياء الأمور أن المجالات الاجتماعية والعاطفية هي الأهم لنجاح الأطفال، غير أنهم ركزوا على المهارات الأكاديمية في الأنشطة التي شاركوا بها أطفالهم. يمكن توظيف نتائج الدراسة في تثقيف أولياء الأمور على نحو أفضل عن المهارات المهمة لعملية للاستعداد لرياض الأطفال، وكذلك في مساعدة المعلمين في تصميم الخبرات التعليمية بشكل أفضل، وأيضًا في مساعدة المشرعين في تخطيط وزرع السياسات التي من شأنها تحسين جودة التعليم في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة في الدولة. ولا تزال ثمة حاجة إلى إجراء مزيد من الأبحاث حول هذا الموضوع.

## Dedication

To my Mother; for her bedtime stories every single night

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## Chapter I

In March, every year, Kindergarten interviews are carried out widely in many settings and a lot of parents are in a complete daze when their child is going through them (Francis, 2013). Children as young as three years are interviewed to get into Kindergarten One (KG1) or Foundation Stage 2 (FS2). There are still no official guidelines on the manner at which kindergarten assessments are carried out (Francis, 2013). The purpose of the interview as most schools claimed was to assess whether a child has the social skills to blend in school and if he can comprehend instructions (Francis, 2013). However, the reality gives us another perspective; examples questions reported by parents in interviews included “What is the color of your teeth? There is a drink you have in the morning that has the same color. What is it?” which baffled the children and made the parents declare that the interviews were harder than job interviews (Francis, 2013). My nephew was no exception; he had to sit three different interviews where he was asked to identify numbers, shapes, colors and letters; the experience wasn't a pleasant one and the usually outgoing child had refused to answer the questions when being in the spotlight of attention and interrogated by complete strangers. When hearing that from his mother; it had struck me that I did not sit for any interviews for my master education why do three years old have to go through that? Along with my sister, many other parents started streaming our child care center that serves children from 3 months to 4 years, requesting that the teachers should instruct the children in their numbers, shapes, colors and letters for they don't want them to fail their KG interviews which are hard to get for usually admissions are based on lottery system (Francis, 2013).

Child care centers, as defined by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority in Dubai, are

“educational institutes providing non-compulsory pre-school education for children [by] qualified teachers (...) with the primary objective of promoting structured educational experiences based on learning through play and facilitating social educational adjustment of children” (Karaman , 2011, p. 1).

These settings usually serve children from 45 days to 4 years of age and are considered to be the first exposure of the children in the UAE to education (Zaman & Sabry, 2014). They are governed by the Ministry of Social Affairs which have set strict rules about safety, health

regulations, location, and staff qualifications and considers them to have a profound impact on children's early development as expressed by Moza Al Shoumi director of the child department in the ministry (Zaman & Sabry, 2014). She also pointed out the nurseries should help in building children's language skills, cognitive and physical abilities, foster children's talents and shape their personalities (Emirates 24/7 News, 2013).

In a Global Education and Skills Forum , Sheikha Bodur Bint Sultan Al Qasimi, chairperson of Sharjah Investment and development authority emphasized the importance of early childhood education where she stated that if a child is brought up in a stimulating environment with proper education; "he will grow and flourish" (Global Education and Skills Forum, 2014). The speakers in the forum also pointed out that early childhood education should not be focused on building only academic skills but also should nurture the child's psychological and logical skills (Global Education and Skills Forum, 2014). Al Qasimi also stressed that if the children have a sound early years education; they would gain "a higher potential" for success in their higher education (Global Education and Skills Forum, 2014). Moreover, Educationists in a conference that was organized by the Ministry of Education discussing various issues in the early years have appealed to kindergartens and nurseries not to downgrade academics to their level and act up like primary schools (Absal, 2012). Early years education is an empirical piece of the education puzzle, but it has to be completed by focusing on all aspects of a child's development.

Contrary to the school claims it seems that Kindergarten interviews are focused on children's academic skills rather than their social and emotional development; which in turn has made the parents believe that those skills would guarantee their child a spot in KG. Being a preschool teacher and knowing the developmental level which the children are at; I know that those children are not ready for learning such advanced academic skills and the focus of our preschool education should be the emotional and social domains while introducing the academic skills in a play-based approach. Despite our various elaborated conversations and heated debates, a majority of them were not convinced. That's is when I thought it is impractical to know the parent's views so that we would be able to form a better collaboration where parents and teachers are in sync with the skills that their children should have for a successful formal school start.

## Background

The (...) [United Arab Emirates] devoted its attention to all members of society including women. The [late] president Sheikh Zayed affirmed that “[a] woman [should take] (...) her distinctive position in society, (...) like men; women deserve the right to occupy high positions according to their capabilities and qualifications” (Anon., n.d.). Moreover, women in the UAE comprise 35% of the Emirati workforce in 2010 where 66% have jobs in the government sector from which 30% are in management positions and 15% work as specialists such as doctors, nurses, pharmacists, teachers and engineers (Al-Shamisi, 2011).

In contrast to traditional UAE families where a woman’s primary role was domestic work and child-bearing, nowadays many young Emirati women are striving to have successful careers (Abdul-Rauf 2000 as cited in Green & Smith, 2006, p. 267). This ambition is posing a challenge to many working mothers in the UAE, where they must maintain equilibrium between their jobs and manage to fulfill the needs of their spouses and offspring (Nazzal 2004 as cited in Green & Smith, 2006, p. 267). Another issue that is burdening working Emirati mothers is maternity leave. The UAE labor law (8) for the year 1980 entitles women working in the private sector only 45 working days leave following the birth (United Arab Emirates Government, 2001, p. 10). A federal law (11) issued in 2008, allows 60 days of maternity leave for mothers working in federal government departments (Government of United Arab Emirates, 2008, p. 4). Nonetheless, the UAE is considered to grant the shortest period of birth leave among other countries (McQueen, 2009). With such a short maternity leave, some Emirati working mothers might have no choice but to hire foreign labor to care for their children. According to a study conducted by the Dubai Women Establishment (DWE) which affirmed that 62% of working mothers in the emirate of Dubai expressed that their children (0-4 years) are cared for by domestic workers (Bennett, 2009, p. 15). In addition, 58% of children ages (0-3 years) in the Gulf region spend 30-70 hours per week under the care of unqualified non-Arabic speaking domestic workers; this is considered to be harmful to children as studies indicate that it might lead to behavioral problems and affect bonding with parents. (Roumani 2005 as cited in (Karaman , 2011, p. 4).

Over 93% of working mothers still preferred to enroll their children in workplace nurseries, with more than 66% preferring it over outside nurseries according to a study that was

conducted by the Dubai Women Establishment. (Dubai Women Establishment, 2012, p. 8). To fulfil this need, the UAE Cabinet issued a decision in 2006 to encourage government entities to institute workplace nurseries on their premises to better support working mothers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, n.d., p. 195). But, compliance to this decision is very low as per the MoSA where 11% of 320 government entities have set up a workplace nursery (Issa , 2013); which leaves Emirati mothers to no choice but to resort to hiring housemaids or utilizing expensive private nurseries.

Nonetheless, enrollment in nurseries is very low in the UAE with less than 5% of Emirati children enrolled in nurseries due to parents questioning the quality of care, availability of vacancies for children, cheap domestic help when compared to nursery fees, lack of knowledge about the benefits of early years provision, and living within extended families (MoSA , 2009 as cited in Karaman , 2011, p. 2 ; Bennett, 2009, p. 14). Also, with 89% of early years workers being expatriates; many families fear that this would have an adverse impact on the children's national identity and their acquisition of the Arabic language (Bennett, 2009, p. 15; Karaman , 2011, p. 6). Moreover, a recent study conducted by Arabian Child a local early years consultancy company revealed that 85% of private nursery teachers are unqualified; which further confirmed the parent's skepticism about the provision of care (Simpson , 2011) , for it has been established that the factor the effects the excellence of care in early years the most is the quality of the staff (Bowman et al. , 2000 as cited in Karaman , 2011, p. 6).

All these circumstances has led the Ministry of Social Affairs to raise the standards of the care provided in nurseries where they have started implementing new regulations to ensure the quality of provision, for instance; the ministry in cooperation with the ministry of labour is looking to amend labour laws for nursery workers where visas will be offered only to those who have proof that they have some background in Early Years Education (Simpson , 2011). The Ministry also mandates 30 credit hours of professional development for qualified staff to ensure that quality of care is maintained and that are getting the latest update on recent best practices (Nereim, 2013). In addition, the Ministry had urged child care centers to “teach toddlers [rather than] just babysit” (Nereim, 2013). This has received a welcoming response from principals of child care centers or nurseries; for they have seen it as upgrade of their status from play schools to centers that provide a proper “education” with a designated curriculum (Nereim, 2013). In

2013, the UAE Cabinet has approved a draft law which was proposed by the MoSA to regulate many aspects of early years provision such as health, environment, safety, teacher qualifications, punitive fines and standards of care that are provided by government nurseries and private nurseries, where the old law was only applicable to day care and specified fulfilling primary child, needs as explained by Moza Al Shoumi (WAM, 2013; Nereim , 2013).

### Statement of the Problem

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has started in the recent years to pay much attention to the early years (0 to 6 years) sector where the former Minister of Education Humaid Mohammad Al Qutami declared it to be the most critical for a child's development (Absal, 2012). He further emphasized the importance of improving the sector by focusing on teacher quality as he perceived it to be the foundation of future school success for the children in the UAE (Absal, 2012). This emphasis on the sector might have also raised the awareness among parents who after realizing the importance of the first years in a child's life and the significant effect of the early years sector which contributes to later school success which has consequently led to the increase in the number of nurseries in response to the high demand in the UAE as it has risen from 189 nurseries in 2008 to 405 in 2013 catering the increase in the number of children from 12000 in 2008 to more than 23000 in 2013 (Zaman & Sabry, 2014).

On the other hand, raising the standards of care, teacher qualifications and regulations should not be used as a trigger to downgrading of the academics to preschool education and raising the expectations about the skills and the knowledge that children should develop before entering formal schooling among teachers and parents. With the new legislation that has increased the entry age for kindergarten children to 4 years by the Ministry of Education, children who fall just short of the cut-off age are catered into preschool (Olarde-Ulherr, 2014). Most parents perceive preschool education as means for easing their children's transition to KG, others see it as a winning ball for the KG admission lottery while a few prefer it to leaving their child with a nanny (D'Souza, 2013). Principals of Kindergartens affirmed although the age cut-off is "academically sound", it is not an easy task to convince parents about the new age requirement as a many of them want their child to join formal school for they don't believe that their child is learning in preschool (Olarde-Ulherr , 2014). This delay in entry to KG might make parents to push preschools to teach their children the academic skills they perceive as essential

for their child entry to KG as it is evident from the various KG assessment interviews where children as young as three are bombarded with questions regarding their academic skills and are deemed as not ready based on their lack of knowledge in those skills (Francis, 2013). Parents have raised their objections to the assessment considering them to be nerve racking for toddlers, biased and not based on scientific research but they still deemed that it is the school's responsibility to teach their children such skills that are required to KG, not parents (Issa , 2013).

Kindergarten Readiness has been widely researched in the past 40 years and is still a matter of debate on many of its aspects such as the definition, whose responsibility is it to ensure readiness for KG, what skills are most important for readiness and readiness assessments (Kagan 1990; Meisels, 1998 as cited in Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 3; Ronald, 2010, p. 18; Graue, 2006, p. 49). It is essential to pinpoint parents and early childhood teacher's views about readiness in the context of changing policies as supporting the development of children with diverse backgrounds can only be accomplished when parents, teachers, and communities start communicating their ideas, beliefs about readiness and embracing their responsibility for children's early experiences and learning (Wesley & Buysse, 2003, p. 353). Parents and teachers often have different views about readiness ; where parent emphasize that their children should know be able to count, read, and write while teachers look for other skills such as the child's ability to communicate effectively, displaying appropriate behavior and are excited about learning (Diamond et al.,2000 as cited in Protheroe, 2006, p. 34). Several factors might affect parents' perceptions of readiness such as their "ethnic, cultural and educational background as well as the ways readiness is constructed within the community" (Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 94). Parents beliefs about the academic skills not only could stem from the media where academic performance and achievement are accentuated but also from the standardized testing that are implemented in primary grades which would undoubtedly make parents concerned about their child's academic skills (Meisels, 1995 as cited in Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 98). It is pivotal that parents and early childhood teachers have a common ground on the skills that are essential for children to succeed in school for only then, parents would promote skills that are necessary for kindergarten readiness which teachers opt for (West, 1993, p. 2).

## Purpose & Research Questions

The purpose of this survey study is to describe preschool parents perceptions about the skills that they believe are important for their child to be ready for kindergarten and to establish whether there is a relationship between parents age, education level and income and their perceptions kindergarten readiness. Also to determine if the skills they perceive as important have an impact on the activities they provide for their children. There are two research questions for this study:

1. How parents perceive kindergarten readiness?
  - a. What skill do parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?
  - b. How their perceptions of the skills impacted their home activities with their children?
2. Is there a relationship between parent age, level of education and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness?

## Significance

Preschool education is starting to receive much attention in the UAE, where parents, teachers, and preschools are striving to educate children in the skills which are believed to guarantee them a successful school life. With calls from experts to invest more in the sector the country has started working towards improving early years services that are provided to its youngest citizens (Absal, 2012). However, research is still scarce and many aspects in the early years still need to be explored. This study might be utilized to fill that gap in knowledge for it provides parent views about readiness which could be the first step in forming better collaborations between preschools and families that will improve children's outcome achievements. This study might have provided parents with an insight into the skills and knowledge that their children might exhibit which are considered crucial for kindergarten readiness. Ultimately, they might have started promoting those skills with their children. It might have also highlighted parent's role in preparing their children for kindergarten by inquiring about the activities that parents usually engage in with their children. Moreover, the survey might be used by teachers and legislators as a basis for developing kindergarten readiness guidelines for the country and starting to implement transitions practices between preschools and kindergartens. It also can be used by teachers for instructional planning and incorporating the skills in the preschool curriculum which

could aid in easing children transition to kindergarten. Moreover, the survey could be utilized for assessing children skills and then planning proper experiences to help them reach the required level of readiness which is essential for their school success. The results might also encourage preschool, kindergarten teachers, parents and community discussions about kindergarten readiness.

### Assumptions and Limitations

There is a couple of assumptions and limitations in this study. First, parents can read simple English that was used as the language of the questionnaire. Second, parents have access to the Internet and have basic computer skills to navigate the web to access the online questionnaire. Third, the sample targeted working parents because they are more likely to place their child in a preschool to gain the custodial function. While some of the limitations include self-reporting where participant may over-report or under-report their perceptions, parents might have misunderstood the words or they weren't clear enough and often answers obtained by this approach may differ from those obtained by interviews or telephone (Dale 2006 as cited in Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 259). Moreover, the questionnaire had a high drop-out rate could be due to the duration of the survey, the ease by which participants were able to drop-out, lack of incentives, busy work schedule, lack of Arabic translation, required questions and loss of interest (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 284). In addition, the layout of the survey might have appeared different in various devices which might have deterred many parents from participating or dropping out midway (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 283). Another limitation for the online questionnaire is the use of a non-probability, convenient sample which could impact the generalizability of the findings and produce a sampling error (Cohen, et al., 2011). Moreover, it is commonly known that online questionnaires usually target participants with good education and income so this might have affected the representation of the sample (Hewson et al. cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 285). Furthermore, for the purposes of the data analysis the intervals between the Likert scales are assumed to be equal which contradicts the scale's limitation but are essential for better understanding of the respondent's views (Freidman and Amaoo, 1999 as cited in Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 387). Finally, although it best to get views of preschool and kindergarten teachers about kindergarten readiness so that a complete picture would be presented, and better efforts will be invested in improving it, however; due to the lack of time, resources and access; the study focused on parents.

## Definitions of Terms

In this study, the following terms are defined as such:

**Early Childhood:** it is the stage from 0-6 age group which included the years before compulsory education in the UAE. (KHDA, n.d as cited in Bennett, 2009, p. 9).

**Nursery:** “A nursery (crèche) is a centre-based service primarily for infants and toddlers. These centers, staffed by a professional nurse and educators, are generally open 8-10 hours per day throughout the year” (Bennett, 2009, p. 28).

**Preschool-age children or preschoolers:** All children between the ages of three to five (Cappelloni, 2011, p. 59).

**Kindergarten or pre-school programs** are professional centre-based programs (...) [that serve] children from 3-6 years, with a predominantly educational aim. Kindergarten and pre-school programs are distinguished from (...) [other services] in being daily and more intensive, and with more highly qualified staff (Bennett, 2009, p. 28).

**Kindergarten Readiness:** A multi-dimensional view of the attributes that preschool-age children demonstrate at the time of kindergarten entry. These attributes or characteristics fall with the five constructs of learning and development that are identified in the National Education Goals Panel as 1. Physical Well-Being and Motor Development, 2. Social and Emotional Development, 3. Approaches towards Learning, 4. Language Development and 5. Cognition and General Knowledge. (Cappelloni, 2011, p. 59; Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3)

**Kindergarten Readiness Skills:** “Specific skills, abilities, and characteristics that preschool-age children demonstrate at the time of kindergarten entry” (Cappelloni, 2011, p. 59).

## Chapter II

### Literature Review

This review will present kindergarten readiness theories and definitions that were explored in previous research and expanded in recent years. In addition, it will introduce and explain the National Education Goal Panel five dimensions of early learning and development which are used a framework for this study. Finally, it will also present findings from previous studies that have explored parent, preschool and kindergarten teacher's perceptions of kindergarten readiness.

### Kindergarten Readiness

In recent years with the advances in neuroscience have helped scientists to come to the conclusion that the early years in a child's life are the most vital for his motor skills and language development (Gallahue, 1996; Kuhl, 1994 cited in Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 262). These advances have also aided in better understanding the influence of brain development on a child's kindergarten readiness and future school success (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 262). Consequently, interest in the quality of the experiences that children have in preschool has increased; for it has been established that quality preschool experiences support children's readiness by helping them in developing better language scores and math skills (Peisner-Feinberg et. al, 2001 as cited in Ackerman & Barnett, 2005, p. 13). Also, it is presumed that readiness could be shaped much earlier than thought and interventions that are introduced after infancy could be too late (Ronald, 2010, p. 17). Thus emphasizing relationships that a child has with his family, child care centers and school which are considered to be the cornerstone of future school success (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 1999; Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta & Cox, 2000 as cited in Pianta & La Paro, 2003, p. 24). However, kindergarten readiness conceptualization is still "murky" where the current views are advocating that it includes a group of skills and attributes that are presumably connected to school success and comprises of various domains of development that can be supported by developmentally appropriate practices (Graue, 2006, p. 47).

There have been many attempts to define kindergarten readiness in the context of various theories. Defining readiness is considered to be a hard task due to the fact that children develop at different sequences and rates which are influenced by their physical health, nutrition and the environment where they live which eventually has an impact on their knowledge, skills and

behaviors (Ackerman & Barnett, 2005, p. 14; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009). The complexity of kindergarten readiness is apparent when efforts are made to establish its “operational definition, guidelines and timelines” (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 338). Traditionally, readiness has been viewed as either readiness to learn or readiness for school (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 338). Readiness to learn is considered to be the level of development at which the child can learn certain materials (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 1). While readiness for school is considered to be the ability of the child to cope with the school environment successfully (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 338). School readiness is a combination of both these notions where children should be ready to learn and ready for school (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 338). Both of these views stem from the maturational standpoint that was prominent in school readiness research and practice (Meisels, 1999 as cited in Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 338). This perspective which is attributed to Gesell (1940) who advocates that children should have certain biological traits that render them ready for school tutoring (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339). This biological stage is usually coupled with the child’s age where he supposedly grows to be mature enough cognitively, emotionally and develops the necessary psychomotor skills for school (University of California Santa Barbara, n.d., p. 2). Since development precedes learning, it is presumed that children’s development cannot be precipitated or influenced by instruction making readiness as a function of the child’s age (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339). Consequently, a cut-off age has been introduced for kindergarten entry and it is used to determine if the children have the supposed minimal level of development which allows them to be able to function in school (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339). Although using a cut-off age may be appealing to policy makers, however; complications arise when determining which date it should be (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339). Moreover, parents have the control on deciding their child entry to kindergarten and often try to evade the age rule, as it has been observed that child who falls just below the cut-off age are usually held back allegedly to give them the benefit of an extra year. While those who are far from the cut-off age are pushed through because parents tend to believe that school will help their child more (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339). This approach has been criticized, for it is evident that even without setting an age limit, children in any classroom tend to have a range of ages and skills and those who enter kindergarten younger tend to eventually catch up with other children academically and socially in par with their older classmates and it also suggests that shortfalls in

readiness are attributed to the child himself rather directing efforts to improve early years care and education settings to accommodate every child regardless of their development level (Morrison & Griffith, 1997 as cited in Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 339 ; Kelley & Surbeck, 1991 as cited in Winter & Kelley , 2008, p. 261).

Modern perspectives on readiness are based on sociocultural/social constructivist which are attributed to Lev Vygotsky (1930) who proposed that learning guides development; when children interact with others and their environment, this interaction advances their development level (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Graue, 1993 as cited in Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 345). Therefore, when children in preschool are socially active with their peers, teachers, and family members who often scaffold them through learning experiences, their development level is raised (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 345). This perspective is in line with the neuroscience evidence where it has been proved that brain structure and functions are affected by experiences a child goes through (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 345). His views are in total contrast with the maturational view which recommended waiting till the child is ready before introducing any learning experiences (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 345). The Vygotskian view suggests that waiting for children maturation for satisfactory school performance is contradictive as it may never happen, instead preschools and early childhood education should allow the children to go through guided social experiences that will provide them with the skills they need to use in primary school and beyond (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 346). Another theory that is also utilized to understand readiness better is Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological/interactionist theory which proposes that a child's development is related to the contextual influences around him (Weigel & Martin, 2006 as cited in Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261). His theory proposes that children's development does not happen in isolation, it is shaped by various layers of influence surrounding the child and moving outwards from him which ultimately could affect his development trajectory (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261). The contextual layers that have the most impact on the child's development are his family members, early years settings and the community (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261). This theory emphasizes the interactive nature of readiness where it advocates that the school and the child should cooperate and work together to achieve positive educational achievements for children (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 346). It considers that each child can learn with the appropriate resources and the proper amount of support (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 346). Language and cultural diversity among children in

today's schools stresses the importance of providing each child with the opportunity to learn a new skill with the right amount of interactions in early years that develops the child's in one way or another (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 346). Considering readiness as a production of the interaction between the school and the child eliminates the needs of assessments and placement practices where the child is required to be ready for entering school as per the maturational view (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 346). This interactionist perspective which calls for schools to be flexible, centered around the child and provides developmentally appropriate practice are advocated by renowned early childhood education organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (Carlton & Winsler, 1999, p. 347). NAEYC has issued principles in which they explicitly mentioned opposing to readiness tests and advocating the acceptance of all children who meet the legal age into school (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009).

Knowing kindergarten readiness theories, definitions and measurement are integral for only then teachers, school, communities can carry out actions that promote children readiness (Mesisles, 1999 as cited in Graue, 2006, p. 50). Meisels (1999) had proposed that these theories be usually reflected in communities, where they are embedded in practices that are carried out in schools, included in their policies and most of them are evident in children's everyday lives (Graue, 2006, p. 50). Furthermore, he advocated that readiness should be synthesized in ways that embrace what every child "brings into schools and what schools do in response" (Mesisles, 1999 as cited in Graue, 2006, p. 50).

### The National Education Goals Panel view of readiness

The United States in 1989 had set its National Education Goals 2000 where the first goal was "by the year 2000 all children in America will start school ready to learn" (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 1). This goal has highlighted the importance of early years education and the significant of school readiness in supporting children's progress towards successful school experiences that ultimately aid in achieving societal objectives in devising a better workforce (Boyer, 1991; Kelley & Surbeck, 1991 as cited in Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261). This renowned devotion to the early years is a result of the recent provided evidence from research regarding the positive effect that preschool education has in improving children's readiness for school (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261). Accordingly, preschool has been dubbed as the most imperative grade in

securing long-term readiness success for children (Barnett & Hustedt, 2003; Hemmeter, 2000 as cited in Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 261).

The National Education Goal Panel (NEGP) has proposed a new perspective on readiness which is more comprehensive (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 262). It speculates readiness as a multidimensional and interrelated concept which includes widespread areas of development and is not exclusive to only cognitive, language and literacy skills (Winter & Kelley, 2008, p. 262). The NEGP also recognizes that kindergarten readiness is a construct that is shaped by the child's experiences, the environment where he lives with his family, the community, his early experiences in early childhood centers, and his teachers who all work towards providing learning experiences which promotes his education and skills (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 5 ; Cappelloni, 2011, p. 4). In addition, the NEGP underlines the significant role of a child's family and how crucial it is to support their needs by the community because they work tirelessly to provide and nurture their children (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 6). The NEGP also acknowledges that "individual, cultural, and contextual variables influence how children present themselves, understand the world, process information and interpret experiences" (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 7). The NEGP suggested that learning and development encompass five dimensions which are: 1. Physical well-being and motor development; 2. Social and emotional development; 3. Approaches towards learning; 4. Language development; and 5. Cognition and general knowledge (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3). These dimensions were conceptualized by the NEGP (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3) as follows

1. **Physical well-being and motor development:** Research has proved that the mother's and child's health have an effect on a child's school performance where low birth weight or poor nutritional habits could have long-lasting implications for a child's school readiness. Also, children should be given opportunities were their motor development is enhanced by experiences that allow gross and fine muscles growth. This dimension includes characteristics such as rate of growth, physical fitness and body physiology, fine and gross motor skills, oral and sensorimotor skills and functional performance (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 9).
2. **Social and Emotional Development:** this dimension is considered to be the basis for a child's meaningful relationships that are part of his school experience (Kagan, et al.,

1995, p. 3). A child who is emotionally well; will be able to engage in classroom activities which have a positive impact on him, his friends and educators (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3). It includes characteristics such as self-confidence, self-concept, ability to be in a group, self-efficacy, ability to communicate feelings and to be sensitive to other's feelings (Kagan, et al., 1995, pp. 3,19).

- 3. Approaches towards learning:** refers to the child's preferences, temperaments and styles that affects the way he participates in learning and develops his interest towards pursuing it (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). This dimension is affected by a child's culture and it crucial for schools and teachers to be sensitive to cultural differences in children (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). Some of the characteristics that are featured in this dimension include curiosity, creativity, independence, cooperation and persistence (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4).
- 4. Language Development:** Language is a tool for the child to be able to participate in learning that improves his cognitive and emotional development within the classroom (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). When children are exposed to language in both written and verbal formats they gain the necessary skills to communicate with others and express their feelings and thoughts (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). Some of the characteristics in this dimension include listening and speaking, asking questions, using language creatively such as retelling stories or rhyming words and emergent writing (Kagan, et al., 1995, pp. 31,32).
- 5. Cognition and General Knowledge:** It include the sum of the experiences that the child had which are reorganized and accumulated based on the interactions in stimulating environments that the child received under the guidance of expert adults (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). This dimension recognizes that there are three kinds of knowledge which are physical, logical-mathematical and social-conventional (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 36). Some of the characteristics that children develop from their experiences are knowledge of patterns and relations, cause and effect, solving problems, imagination, and awareness of self, family and the community (Kagan, et al., 1995, pp. 4,39).

The NEGP has been used as a framework for various studies that investigated kindergarten readiness for several reasons. First, the NEGP has broadened views about kindergarten readiness "beyond the ABCs and 123s and highlighted the interconnections between the five domains"

(Maxwell & Clifford, 2004, p. 2). Second, it advocated that its three objectives are the basis of successful school life which are: 1. High-quality preschool education that is available to all children, 2. Parent active participation in the child's education, 3. a child's mental and physical health (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 1). Third, it based on research in early childhood development and education and is one of the key factors in providing a shared conceptualization of readiness (Cappelloni, 2013, p. 9). It has also helping in forming definitions and clarifying the various domains of learning and development that has an effect on children's readiness and recognizing that children's experiences in early childhood are related to their success later in life (Cappelloni, 2013, p. 9). Moreover, it promotes that readiness is not the function of the child alone; communities have to work together in order to build the capacity to be able to accommodate all children who join kindergarten where policies and strategies should be formed so that learning opportunities are suitable for everyone (Shore, 1998 as cited in Cappelloni, 2013, p. 9; Kagan et al., 1995).

### Parents and Teachers Perceptions about Kindergarten Readiness

Parents and educators always tend to have different views about what is necessary for kindergarten readiness (Boethel, et al., 2004, p. 46). Parents often think that pre-academic skills are more necessary for kindergarten readiness when compared to kindergarten teachers (Olmsted & Lockhart, 1995; Harradine & Clifford, 1996; as cited in Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 94). Parents' views about kindergarten readiness vary according to their culture, ethnicity, education and community views about readiness (Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 94). Parents who believe that kindergarten readiness is crucial for their children school success tend to provide various early experiences which might also include formal and informal tutoring at their home and in their community activities (Bates et al., 1994 as cited in Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 94). It is crucial to understand parents views for it has been established that a child's language development, cognitive skills, social competencies when they start kindergarten are strongly influenced by their parent views (Currie, 2005 as cited in (Abu Taleb, 2013, p. 1887). On the other hand, preschool teachers tend to value social skills, ability to communicate and following instructions and appropriate behavior as essential skills for kindergarten readiness (Hains , et al., 1989, p. 12). Teachers usually de-emphasize academic skills, however; they still thought that parents should expose their children to literacy by reading to them and to early numeracy by simple

counting in order to support their readiness for kindergarten (Lara-Cinisomo, et al., 2008, p. 344; Heaviside & Farris, 1993; Powell, 1995 as cited in Diamond, et al., 2000, p. 94).

There have been several studies that investigated parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness and compared to them to teachers perceptions; for it has been established that knowing about parent's perceptions would aid them in promoting the skills that teachers look for. One of the most prominent studies that examined parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness is the National Household Education Survey (NHES) 1993 (U.S. Department of Education, 1996, p. 8). This cross-sectional telephone interview survey study screened 64000 household in the United States (US) where the sample for the readiness perceptions included 10,888 parents or guardians of children whose age ranged from 3 to 7 and are enrolled in nursery, kindergarten or primary school (U.S. Department of Education, 1996, p. 8). It examined the level of importance parents places on a variety of kindergarten readiness skills which included 7 items; three of which were school-related items that were counting to 20, using pencils or brushes, knowing letters of the alphabets while the remaining four were considered behavioral items that were taking turns, communicating needs, wants and feelings, being enthusiastic and curious about activities and sitting still and paying attention were rated by parents on a 5-point Likert scale (U.S. Department of Education, 1996, p. 46). It also inquired about the child's developmental level, activities parents did with their children at home, television viewing hours, child health status and demographics that included age, education level, first language and income (U.S. Department of Education, 1996). Parents consensually reported that it was essential or very important for kindergarten readiness that children can express their needs, take turns, and be curious about new activities (West, 1993, p. 3). In addition, 80% of parents thought that paying attention to the teacher and taking turns are essential or very important for readiness (West, 1993, p. 3). Moreover, knowing the alphabets, being able to count to 20 and using pencils was considered to be essential or very important by 41% of parents (West, 1993, p. 3). Furthermore, this study reported that parent education has an effect on their rating of the skills (West et al. 1992 as cited in West, 1993). It indicated a significant difference in parents perceptions of skill importance in terms of their level of education; for it has been found that the percentage of parents who considered all school-related items as essential or important have decreased with the increase in education level from less than high school education 55% to college education 29% (West, 1993, p. 3). Behavioral-items were also affected by parent education; 77% of parents with less

than high school rated them as essential or very important in comparison to 45 % parents with college education (West, 1993, p. 4). This study had limitations such as data collection method and population coverage (West, 1993, p. 9).

In another interview study which conducted by Barbarin et al. (2008) where it analyzed 452 preschool parents' beliefs about readiness in relation to their socioeconomic status (p. 671). Similar to the previous study (West, 1993), parents in general cited Nominal Knowledge such as knowing numbers, letters colors and body parts than on Inferential Reasoning which involves retelling stories, comparisons, solving problems and recognizing patterns and sequences (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 687). It also stated that parents who were employed were 11 times more likely to mention inferential reasoning than parents who were not employed (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 688). Moreover, it revealed that parents who had a high school degree or higher were more likely to cite nominal knowledge than those with less degrees, while other aspects of readiness such as language, social skills, and inferential knowledge were indifferent to parent education level (Barbarin, et al., 2008, pp. 688,695).

In a study which was carried out by Kim, et al. (2005) in order to form an understanding of parents beliefs about readiness and to find a relationship between their beliefs and their actions using the data from the NHES:93 (p. 3). The sample included 4356 parents with preschool children at the time of the study (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 6). The study used the same seven items utilized in the NHES and parents had to rate them also using a 5-point scale (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 6). It also investigated parent home activities by inquiring about what parents did with their children in the previous week; such as telling them a story, playing indoors or outdoors, doing arts activities, helping with chores, and teaching them numbers, letters, songs (Kim, et al., 2005). This study reported that parents perceived all items as important for their children's readiness (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 11). In contrast to the previous study (West, 1993); social skills were regarded as more important than academic skills; suggesting that parents were more inclined to opt for a ready to learn view where they might have been more concerned about their children developmental ability to learn social interactions such as turn taking and sharing than their academic ability (Kim, et al., 2005, pp. 11,12). Kim et al. (2005) noted that there was a correlation between parent's beliefs about kindergarten and their demographic variables as the study reported that kindergarten beliefs among parents were subjected to parent's age, education,

income and ethnic background (p. 12). Parents who de-emphasized academic skills were older of age, had higher education and higher income and they also engaged their children in activities that enhance their social skills such as storytelling, household chores and doing errands (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 13). While parents who emphasized academic skills were more likely to engage their child in direct instruction activities such as teaching their children numbers and letters (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 13).

In a study that was conducted by Welch & White (1999) to examine the variance in parent's and teacher's perceptions about the skills that are need to be successful in kindergarten (p. 3). Their sample included 25 teachers and 103 parents whose children are enrolled in preschool (Welch & White, 1999, p. 10). They have conducted a survey with 15 items unlike the previous studies (West, 1993; Kim, et al., 2005) and asked parents and teachers to rate the skill on a 5-point Likert scale; only the demographic page was different between teachers and parents (Welch & White, 1999, p. 19). This study concluded that, parent and teachers have a high level of similarities about the skills that are essential for kindergarten with the exception of knowing the alphabets where parents ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = .820$ ) rated it more crucial than teachers ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = .862$ ,  $t(35.18) = -2.19$ ,  $p < .05$ , two-tailed (Welch & White, 1999, p. 12). On the other hand, when teacher's responses were examined ; the skills that were recounted as most important by teachers were being healthy and well nourished, ability to communicate needs and being enthusiastic and curious (Welch & White, 1999, p. 13). It should be noted that the sample is much smaller than the previous studies (West, 1993; Kim, et al., 2005; Barbarin, et al., 2008)

In 2007, another National Household Education Survey was conducted where the focus was mainly about kindergarten readiness (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 1). There were 2633 completed interviews which targeted parents of 3 to 6 years old who are not placed in kindergarten yet (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 1). It inquired about parents perceptions of their child development, skills they thought were necessary and activities that they did to prepare their children for kindergarten (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 3). When parents were asked about what they think was important to prepare their children for kindergarten, a majority just like previous studies still considered academic skills as essential (West, 1993; Welch & White, 1999) were 62% of parents thought teaching sharing was important, 56 % reported the alphabets, 54% said numbers, 45% stated reading and 41% felt holding the pencil was important to teach (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 3). The

study also investigated activities that parents did to prepare their children for kindergarten. It reported weekly reading frequency among parents where it conveyed that 55% of children were read to every day, 28% three or more in the past week, 13% once or twice and only 3% of children weren't read to at all (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 3). In addition, it examined television viewing where it presented that children watch 2.6 hours on weekdays and 2.7 hours on weekends and children who had mothers working for 35 hours or more; watched more television on the weekend than those whose mothers worked less than 35 hours or weren't employed which were 3 hours to 2.4 hours respectively (O'Donnell, 2008, p. 3).

In a study where parents, preschool teachers, and kindergarten teachers in Hispanic and the Black community perceptions about kindergarten readiness were compared (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, p. 537). Lack of instruments that have sufficient items to evaluate readiness had prompted the researcher to construct a 46 items survey based on the National Education Goal Panel which inquired about the importance parents and teachers placed on readiness resources as defined by the author (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, p. 546). The sample included 461 parents whose children were going to join kindergarten in the coming year, 12 prekindergarten teachers and 57 kindergarten teachers (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, p. 542). This study concluded that there was no relationship between parent's education and their beliefs about kindergarten readiness (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, p. 546). It also asserted that parents and teachers were in agreement about children's health and social skills being crucial for kindergarten readiness with the emphasis on being able to get along with others and communicating their needs while self-care skills, motor development, and being interested were rated lower (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, p. 551). Moreover, it also conveyed that parents like those in previous studies placed more emphasis on the importance of children compliance to teacher authority, classroom routines, knowing basic information such as the alphabets, body parts and numbers than did teachers (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000, pp. 551,552).

Kindergarten Readiness is still a complex concept despite the attempts to define it, and the theories that were presented are utilized to outline policies about children's readiness for kindergarten. In spite of consensus about the multidimensional view of readiness; age is still used in many countries as means of determining if children are ready or not for kindergarten for it provides an easy way of filtering children rather than schools being ready for diverse children.

Moreover, it seems the readiness perceptions is a product of many factors which could be parents' demographics, teacher's views, and community visions. Due to its significance is has been studied vigorously over the years where those studies have provided an overview of the level of importance that parents conveyed about the skills that are necessary for kindergarten readiness and often compared them to teachers views. Most of the studies used a survey design where they aimed for large numbers and might have provided more reliable information that have shaped kindergarten readiness opinions and preschool education. A trend was noted among parent from these studies were they emphasized academic skills over social skills with the exception of a couple of studies. However, a majority of the studies used a tiny number of items that described readiness skills while other studies had included teachers also where the items might have been more complex and sophisticated. A comprehensive survey that includes a holistic view of readiness and that is customized to parents' perceptions is yet to be developed.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

For the purpose of describing the importance that parents placed on kindergarten readiness skill, presenting the impact of the perceptions on home activities and correlating those perceptions to their demographics and descriptive research design was used to facilitate presenting a comprehensive view of the situation, beliefs and perceptions (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 366). A survey method was utilized where an online questionnaire (Diamond, et al., 2000; Kim, et al., 2005; O'Donnell, 2008; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000; West, 1993) was constructed based on the five dimensions outlined in the NEGP and readiness is considered to be viewed within the interactionist model where it is speculated to be a function of the child, the family, the educators, the school and the community (West, 1993; Cappelloni, 2011). An online questionnaire was chosen because it simplifies data collection, provides structured numerical data, can be carried out without the researcher being present, can reach a larger number of respondents in various geographic areas (Wilson and McLean, 1994 as cited in Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 377; Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 276).

The research questions for the study are:

1. How parents perceive kindergarten readiness?
  - a. What skill do parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?
  - b. How their perceptions of the skills impacted their home activities with their children?
2. Is there a relationship between parent age, level of education and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness?

### The Sample

A non-probability convenient sample of working parents whose 3 to 4 years old children are enrolled in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) preschools and will be joining the kindergarten next year. Parents were chosen as the subjects for this study for many reasons. First, knowing parents views about readiness is of utmost importance for usually they are their child's first educator (Barbarin et al., 2008, p. 672; Chadwick, 2014, p. 6). Second, readiness views that parents perceive may have an influence on the kind of materials and experiences that they

provide to their children in their home environment or outside (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 672). Third, parents' beliefs also affect the skills that they nurture for they might focus on the skills they deem essential and neglect other skills that they deem as unimportant (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 672). Moreover, parental beliefs not only affect the kind of experiences provided but also the level of parental involvement for it is assumed that parents would invest more time and energy in skills that they value as crucial for their child before enrollment to kindergarten (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 672). Finally, parent level of engagement in the child's education is also a factor of their perception; whether they deem themselves responsible for the child's readiness or they consider it to be someone else's responsibility (Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 672).

Government and private preschools in the UAE were approached and the study purpose was explained to the principal (See Appendix 1: Preschool Access Letter) and those who agreed to participate were sent a parent invitation (See Appendix 2: Parent Invitation) via an email that had a link to the online survey so that they would be able to distribute it to the parents who are eligible for the study in their setting which have given the study the advantage of immediacy (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 276). However, due to low response rate and many of these preschools denying access; another sampling technique was deployed where the questionnaire was posted in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This snowballing technique have undoubtedly increased the response rate, provided easy access and have given the respondents the privilege of recruiting others for the study; however, it is prone to bias as respondents might prefer to "mask" their friends by not telling them about the study, they might also invite participants who are unsuitable for the goal of the research, and finally it would be difficult to measure the response rate as various untracked invitations are sent to the respondents (Brickman-Bhutta, 2012; Hecathorn, 1997 as cited in Cohen et al., 2011, p. 159). The online survey went live from October, 2014 till February, 2015; a total of 943 viewed the questionnaire out of which 330 started it, 107 completed it and 223 dropped out with a response rate of 32% and an average completion time of 18 minutes. The final sample included responses from 76 parents where 31 were excluded due to missing data, participants were not employed, child age does not qualify, or the child was not enrolled in a preschool.

## The Instrument

An online questionnaire titled “Parents’ Perceptions about Kindergarten Readiness” (See Appendix 3: Questionnaire) was constructed for the purpose of describing the importance that parents placed on kindergarten readiness skills that they consider are essential for their child’s success in kindergarten. The questionnaire included three sections. The first section included demographics which included questions with a range of inquiries about gender, nationality, age, education, marital status, spouse education, household income, work organization type, working hours, spouse working hours, center type, center location, child age, enrollment age, child caretaker before joining the center, first language of participant and their spouses, languages used with the child and reasons for enrollment which were included because previous studies have investigated them and some of them were found to affect parents perceptions about the importance they place on kindergarten readiness skills and the activities they engage in with children to promote readiness skills (West, 1993 ; Kim, et al., 2005 ; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000 ; Diamond, et al., 2000; O’Donnell , 2008; Barbarin, et al., 2008). Open ended questions such organization name; Center name were included so that the study results will be shared with the participating preschools if they requested them.

The second section included 42 kindergarten readiness skills where parents were asked to rate them according to their importance based on a five-point Likert scale where the labels were specified as (1 not important, 2 not very important, 3 somewhat important, 4 very important, 5 essential); these labels were used because the NHES which is most prominent study for kindergarten readiness deployed them (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; West, 1993). Likert scales are commonly used in research for they provide the researcher with “a degree of sensitivity and differentiation (...) whilst still generating numbers [and they] afford the researcher the freedom to fuse measurement with opinion, quantity and quality” (Cohen, et al., 2011, pp. 386,387). The 42 readiness skills were selected and are primarily based on the five dimensions of the NEGP, which are: 1. Physical well-being and motor development (10 items); 2. Social and emotional development (8 items); 3. Approaches towards learning (6 items); 4. Language development (10 items); and 5. Cognition and general knowledge (8 items) (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3) which is considered to be the most comprehensive framework that provided a multidimensional and inter-correlated view of readiness (Kagan, et al., 1995). The items were also selected based on literature review of children development, studies that measured teachers’

perceptions of readiness and a parent guide to kindergarten that was published by the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) (Meggitt, 2006; Hains, et al., 1989; Lara-Cinisomo, et al., 2008; Abu Taleb, 2013; Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2013; Cappelloni, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 1993). The NEGP dimensions have been reviewed by many experts and their input have been incorporated into the document which in turn increases its validity (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 5). After careful reviewing of the literature and the NEGP; the items were selected so that each will cover the dimension in a holistic manner and were written in a simplified format so that it would be easy for the parents to comprehend them (See Appendix 4: Permissions) (Kagan, et al., 1995; National Center for Education Statistics, 1993). Many of the items are interrelated and could be placed in another dimension than the one it is in but this is in line with the NEGP assumption that readiness is an inter-correlated construct and a reliability test was carried out to determine their interrelation further as was done in previous studies (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3; Cappelloni, 2011).

The third section included question about children television viewing hours and parent weekly and monthly activities with their children such as reading a book, telling a story, teaching numbers, letters and colors, playing games indoors or outdoors, doing errands and house chores with the child, visiting a library, a museum, religious place, going to a live show, a zoo or an aquarium (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; West, 1993). These activities were based on the NHES that are considered to be the most common activities a parent would do with their child and also the ADEC parents' guide to kindergarten have included some of these activities as tips for parents to help in preparing their children for kindergarten (See Appendix 4: Permissions) (National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; Diamond, et al., 2000; West, 1993; Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2013)

## Data Collection

After receiving the invitation either from the principals of the preschools or by accessing the link <http://kindergartenreadiness.questionpro.com> that was posted on social media. The purpose of the study, the criteria for choosing the subjects, duration of the questionnaire and the researcher's contact details were provided and the respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and they had the right to drop out at any point via a drop out button that was accessible on every page (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 281). Anonymity was ensured by the activation

of the Respondent Anonymity Assurance (RAA) which was offered by QuestionPro website that was used to construct the online survey; this feature denies the researcher the possibility of knowing the respondents emails or IP addresses (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 281). Participant consent was assumed once the survey was submitted, and confidentiality was explained for each respondent in the invitation and emails, names, or any contact details were not requested in the study. The QuestionPro website also offered an Anti-Ballot Box Stuffing (ABBS) feature where a respondent was not allowed to answer the questionnaire more than once which reduced data replication and respondent bias (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 282). To reduce error messages in the questionnaire, decrease participants' frustration, and reduce dropouts; mandatory answers were used for the questions that directly had an influence on the research questions (Cohen, et al., 2011, pp. 283,284). Simplicity in language and design was maintained throughout the questionnaire to ensure high response rates (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 283). Follow-up reminders was done on a weekly basis where principals were sent a reminder email and the invitation was re-posted on social media weekly for it has been reported that follow up tend to increase participation (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 284). All the data from the questionnaire were saved on the QuestionPro server once respondents submitted their answers.

## Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to identify the clarity of the questions, their simplicity, the duration that is required to finish questionnaire, and to measure Cronbach's alpha for the kindergarten skills items (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 402). This reliability test was chosen because it provides "inter-item correlation that is, the correlation of each item with the sum of all other items, and is useful for multi-item scale" (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 201). One of the government preschools has agreed for the study, and the invitation was sent to the principal so that she'll send it to the parents who had 3 to 4 years enrolled there. 13 parents have started the survey out of which 10 completed it, 3 dropped out with a response rate of 76% and 2 were excluded for missing data; the final number of parents was 8. Some of the parents have contacted the researcher to ask a few questions, they were asked about the clarity and if there were any difficult words after their inquiry was answered. None has pointed it the difficulty, but some have complained about the duration of the questionnaire for the invitation specified the completion time as 10 to 15 minutes; but the average duration for the respondents was 28

minutes , therefore; the time in the invitation was changed to 15 to 25 minutes for the main study.

A Cronbach alpha was run for the questionnaire using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. The alpha for the kindergarten readiness items was 0.931 for 40 items excluding two items (see Table 1) which were “Can ask questions and Identifies shapes and colors” (See Appendix 5: Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Test-pilot).

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha for the Pilot Study

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.931	.920	40

However, both of these items were included in the final questionnaire because with the close examination of the data it seemed that all the 8 parents in the pilot study have selected the same answer for these questions resulting in zero variances between them which have led to excluding them from the reliability analysis. Furthermore, these items are considered to be crucial in comprehending kindergarten readiness skills especially asking questions for children begin that type of activity at a very young age where they are seeking information better to understand their world (Kagan et al., 1995; Chadwick, 2014)

## Data Analysis

Data coding was done when the questionnaire was constructed; for each of the questions that were included the answers were coded accordingly. Once the data collection was completed; the online questionnaire was closed, and the data was exported from the QuestionPro server as an SPSS file. The variables in the study were all obtained by self-report and measured as presented in Table 2:

Table 2: Operational Definitions

Variable Name	Research Question	Items on the Survey
Kindergarten Readiness	Question 1, a, b	See Questions:

		31,32,33,34,35 where a 5 point Likert scale specified level of importance (1 not important, 2 not very important, 3 somewhat important, 4 very important, 5 essential )
Parent Age	Question 2	See Question: 2; parents were asked for their Date of Birth, their age was calculated by SPSS and then categorized into age groups
Parent Education	Question 2	See Question 5: (below High school, High school, Diploma, Bachelor, Masters, Doctorate)
Household Income	Question 2	See Question 19 : income was inquired by the country's currency AED and then categorized with SPSS to (low, medium, high, very high, wealthy) based on the average income in the UAE (Bundhun, 2009)
Home Activities	Question 1 ,b	See question : 36, 37, 38, 39 television viewing hours (None, 1-2 hours, 3-4 hours, 5-6 hours, more than 6 hours), activities that parents did with the child in the past week and the previous month

		(None, Once, Twice, Three or more times)
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Using SPSS, data was analyzed to present answers to the research questions:

1. How parents perceive kindergarten readiness?

Analysis included summarizing the data to compute frequencies, percentages and means of the five dimensions to determine which dimension parents perceive as most important.

a. What skill do parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?

Analysis also included summarizing the data and computing percentages of parents who rated the skills as “Very Important” or “Essential” then ordering them from the highest to lowest percentage (Cappelloni, 2011; West, 1993; Diamond, et al., 2000; West, 1993; National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; Welch & White, 1999)

b. How their perceptions of the skills impacted their home activities with their children?

Analysis also included summarizing the data and computing percentages which were then related to the percentages that parents placed on the readiness items (Cappelloni, 2011; West, 1993; Diamond, et al., 2000; West, 1993; National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; Welch & White, 1999)

2. Is there a relationship between parent age, level of education and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness?

Analysis included computing the parent age from the date of birth then categorizing those age categories with a difference of 5 years. Parent income was also categorized with a difference of 30000AED between each group which included (Low, Medium, High, Very High, and Wealthy). Those parent demographics then were correlated with the perceptions by utilizing Spearman rho correlation for non-parametric ordinal data (Cohen, et al., 2011, pp. 702, 703). These demographics were chosen because previous studies have shown that they

have an impact on parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness (Diamond, et al., 2000; West, 1993; National Center for Education Statistics, 1993; Kim, et al., 2005).

## Chapter IV

This study was conducted to describe parents perceptions about the skills that they believe are important for their preschool child to be ready for kindergarten and to establish whether there is a relationship between parents age, education level and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness. Also to determine whether parents' perceptions impact to the activities that they do with their children. A survey design was adopted where an online questionnaire was constructed and utilized to describe the perceptions that parents who had 3 to 4 years old children enrolled in preschool hold about kindergarten readiness. The questionnaire was based on the NEGP five dimensions of learning and development that are: 1. Physical well-being and motor development; 2. Social and emotional development; 3. Approaches towards learning; 4. Language development; and 5. Cognition and general knowledge (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 3). The questionnaire included three sections: questions related to parents demographics, 42 items that corresponded readiness skills items where parents rated them according to their importance on a 5-point Likert scale and questions about the frequencies of home activities. Alpha Conbrach reliability test was done after the data collection was concluded. Other analysis were done to determine the level of importance parents placed on the readiness construct, correlations of their perceptions of their demographics and home activities they did with their children. This chapter starts with presenting parents demographics and then will detail the results in relation to the research questions providing a summary of the findings.

### Demographics

A non-probability , convenient sample of 76 of preschool parents have completed the online questionnaire (73.7%) were females while (26.3%) were males with a mean age of (M=33.49, SD=4.83) where age was calculated from the reported date of birth and then categorized accordingly. The Majority of the parents were expatriates (55.3%) while the remaining parents were from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) (44.7%) (See Appendix 6: Parent Citizenship). Almost all of the parents were married (98.7%) with the exception of (1.3%) who reported being divorced (See Table 3)

Table 3: Summary of Parents Demographics

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Gender Male	20	26.3

	Female	56	73.7
	Total	76	100.0
Nationality	UAE	34	44.7
	Expatriates	42	55.3
	Total	76	100.0
Parent Age	20 to 25 Years	3	3.9
	26 to 31 Years	25	32.9
	32 to 37 Years	35	46.1
	38 to 43 Years	9	11.8
	44 to 49 Years	4	5.3
	Total	76	100.0
Marital Status	Married	75	98.7
	Divorced	1	1.3
	Total	76	100.0

Both parents and their spouses reported having high levels of education; with the majority with a Bachelors degree (53.9%) and (47.4%), a few had a Doctorate (3.9%) and (1.3%), some had a Masters (21.1%) and (14.5%), others had a Diploma (13.2%) and (14.5%), the rest had a High School (6.6%) and (19.7%), (1.3%) and (2.6%) were below High School respectively (See Table 4) .

Table 4: Parent Education

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Level of Education	Doctorate	3	3.9
	Masters	16	21.1
	Bachelors	41	53.9
	Diploma	10	13.2
	High School	5	6.6
	Below High School	1	1.3
	Total	76	100.0
Spouse Level of Education	Doctorate	1	1.3
	Masters	11	14.5
	Bachelors	36	47.4
	Diploma	11	14.5
	High School	15	19.7
	Below High School	2	2.6

Total	76	100.0
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A high percentage of the parents worked in the Government sector (68.4%) , followed by Private (28.9%) and then Semi-Government (2.6%) while their spouses mainly worked in the Private Sector (38.2%), followed by Government (36.8%) and then Semi-Government (9.2%). Almost all of the parents and their spouses worked on full-time contracts (92%) and (80%), without shift-duty (85%) and (63%), and mainly for 7 to 8 hours (75%) and (50%) respectively.

Household income was categorized according to the average monthly income in the UAE which is 36438.10 AED for UAE nationals while expatriates have an average income of 22989 AED; in this study (10.5%) of parents reported an income of 20000 (See Appendix 7: Parent Income) to 22000 AED, thus 55.3% of parents had low income, 36.8% had a medium income while 7.9% had a high income (See Table 5).

Table 5: Parent Employment

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Parent Organization Type	Government	52	68.4
	Semi-Government	2	2.6
	Private	22	28.9
	Total	76	100.0
Missing	0	1	1.3
Total		76	100.0
Spouse Organization Type	Government	28	36.8
	Semi-Government	7	9.2
	Private	29	38.2
	Total	64	84.2
Missing	0	12	15.8
Total		76	100.0
Parent Employment Contract	Full-Time Employment	70	92.1
	Part-Time Employment	4	5.3
	Special contract employment	1	1.3
	Total	75	98.7
Missing	0	1	1.3
Total		76	100.0
Spouse Employment Contract	Full-Time Employment	61	80.3
	Part-Time Employment	1	1.3
	Temporary employment	1	1.3

	Total	63	82.9
Missing	0	13	17.1
Total		76	100.0
Parent Working Hours	5 to 6 hours	4	5.3
	7 to 8 hours	57	75.0
	9 to 10 hours	12	15.8
	11 to 12 hours	1	1.3
	Total	74	97.4
Missing	0	2	2.6
Total		76	100.0
Spouse Working Hours	5 to 6 hours	1	1.3
	7 to 8 hours	38	50.0
	9 to 10 hours	20	26.3
	11 to 12 hours	4	5.3
	Total	63	82.9
Missing	0	13	17.1
Total		76	100.0
Income	Low	42	55.3
	Medium	28	36.8
	High	6	7.9
	Total	76	100.0

Most of the preschool children were enrolled in private nurseries (64.5%) that were located in the emirate of Dubai (85.5%) where only (38.2%) of them were registered in workplace centers. The preschool children had a mean age of ( $M=3.53$ ,  $SD=0.50$ ) which was calculated from the reported date of birth. Children enrollment age (See Appendix 8 : Enrollment Age) to the center was categorized where children were more likely to be enrolled in centers when they were 1 to 2 years old (36.8%) and the percentage of older children 3 to 4 years old was (14.5%). Before enrollment parents reported that the child's principal caretakers were a housemaid (36.8%) like previous studies have reported (Bennett, 2009; Karaman, 2011), Self (21.1%), Grandparents (17.1%), Spouse (15.8%), and only (3.9%) specified a nursery. Enrollment cause was reported as preparing the child for kindergarten (50.0%), No one to take care of the child at home (25.0%) and playing with children their age (18.4%) (See Table 6).

Table 6 : Child Care Center Data

Variable	Frequency	Percent
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Child Care Center Type	Government	27	35.5
	Private	49	64.5
	Total	76	100.0
Center Location	Abu Dhabi	5	6.6
	Dubai	65	85.5
	Sharjah	1	1.3
	Ajman	5	6.6
	Total	76	100.0
Workplace Center	Yes	29	38.2
	No	47	61.8
	Total	76	100.0
Enrollment Age	1 Month to 1 Year	13	17.1
	1 Year to 2 Years	28	36.8
	2 Years to 3 Years	23	30.3
	3 Years to 4 Years	11	14.5
	Total	75	98.7
Missing	System	1	1.3
Total		76	100.0
Child Caretaker before Enrollment	Self	16	21.1
	Spouse	12	15.8
	Grandparents	13	17.1
	Housemaid	28	36.8
	A Relative	2	2.6
	A Friend	2	2.6
	A Nursery	3	3.9
	Total	76	100.0
Enrollment Reason	No one to take care of him/her at home	19	25.0
	To prepare him/her for Kindergarten	38	50.0
	She would be able to play with children his/her age	14	18.4
	You started a new job	3	3.9
	Your spouse started a new job	1	1.3
	Total	75	98.7
	Missing	0	1
Total		76	100.0

Parent and Spouse mother tongue included a range of languages. The most reported were Arabic (59.2%) & (60.5%), English (9.2%) & (6.6%), Hindi (3.9%) & (5.3%), Malayalam (3.9%) & (3.9%) and Tagalog (3.9%) & (5.3%) respectively. The languages that were used mostly to communicate with the child were reported as Arabic (53.9%), English (31.6%), Malayalam (3.9%) and Tagalog (2.6%) (See Table 7).

Table 7: Mother Tongue Languages

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Parent Mother tongue	Arabic	45	59.2
	Balochi	2	2.6
	Cebuano	1	1.3
	English	7	9.2
	Greek	2	2.6
	Hindi	3	3.9
	Malayalam	3	3.9
	Persian	1	1.3
	Punjabi	1	1.3
	SerboCroatian	1	1.3
	Sindhi	1	1.3
	Somali	1	1.3
	Tagalog	3	3.9
	Tamil	1	1.3
	Turkish	1	1.3
	Urdu	3	3.9
Total	76	100.0	
Spouse mother tongue	Arabic	46	60.5
	Balochi	3	3.9
	English	5	6.6
	Greek	2	2.6
	Hindi	4	5.3
	Korean	1	1.3
	Malayalam	3	3.9
	Punjabi	1	1.3
	SerboCroatian	1	1.3
	Somali	1	1.3

	Tagalog	4	5.3
	Tamil	1	1.3
	Turkish	1	1.3
	Urdu	3	3.9
	Total	76	100.0
Language at Home	Arabic	41	53.9
	English	24	31.6
	Greek	2	2.6
	Malayalam	3	3.9
	Persian	1	1.3
	SerboCroatian	1	1.3
	Somali	1	1.3
	Tagalog	2	2.6
	Turkish	1	1.3
	Total	76	100.0

Television viewing was reported by parents were (42.1%) and (48.7%) specified their child watching 1-2 hours of television during the week and the weekend respectively. Very few parents reported that their children watched more than 6 hours in a week (See Table 8).

Table 8: Television Viewing Hours

**TV Hours Week**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	11	14.5
	1 to 2 hours	32	42.1
	3 to 4 hours	20	26.3
	5 to 6 hours	6	7.9
	More than 6 hours	6	7.9
	Total	75	98.7
Missing	0	1	1.3
Total		76	100.0

**TV Hours Weekend**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	None	14	18.4

1 to 2 hours	37	48.7
3 to 4 hours	17	22.4
5 to 6 hours	7	9.2
More than 6 hours	1	1.3
Total	76	100.0

Parents in the sample reported frequencies of their weekly and monthly activities. The most frequent weekly activities parent engaged in were (63.2%) Playing indoors and (52.6%) teaching letters or words were done three or more times. Reading books were among fewer frequent activities with (26.3%) reporting that they have not read a book to their child and only (21.1%) indicating they have read to their child more often. A high percentage of parents engaged socially with their children in activities such as (46.1%) taking them to the grocery store and (28.9%) doing chores with their child (See Table 9).

Table 9: Weekly Activities

<b>Week Activities</b>	None	Once	Twice	Three or more times	Total
<b>Read a book to your child</b>	20 26.3	22 28.9	18 23.7	16 21.1	76 100.0
<b>Told a Story</b>	12 15.8	17 22.4	20 26.3	27 35.5	76 100.0
<b>Taught letters numbers or words</b>	11 14.5	10 13.2	15 19.7	40 52.6	76 100.0
<b>Taught a Nursery rhyme or played one</b>	12 15.8	16 21.1	12 15.8	36 47.4	76 100.0
<b>Did art and crafts activities</b>	17 22.4	21 27.6	15 19.7	23 30.3	76 100.0
<b>Played with toys or games indoors</b>	2 2.6	14 18.4	12 15.8	48 63.2	76 100.0
<b>Played games or sports outdoors</b>	6 7.9	16 21.1	17 22.4	37 48.7	76 100.0
<b>Took your child with you to the grocery store</b>	6 7.9	13 17.1	22 28.9	35 46.1	76 100.0
<b>Your child helped you with household chores</b>	17 22.4	15 19.7	22 28.9	22 28.9	76 100.0

Among the most frequent monthly activities that parents reported (38.2%) visiting a zoo or aquarium and (23.7%) going to a live show once in the last month. Some activities were almost never done with the children such as (82.9%) of parents reported not visiting a library or a museum. Overall, nearly half of parents did not engage in many monthly activities with their children (See Table 10).

Table 10: Monthly Activities

Monthly Activities	None	Once	Twice	Three or more times	Total
<b>Visited a library</b>	63	10	3	0	76
	82.9	13.2	3.9	0.0	100.0
<b>Went to a live show or a play</b>	42	18	10	6	76
	55.3	23.7	13.2	7.9	100.0
<b>Visited a museum</b>	63	10	2	1	76
	82.9	13.2	2.6	1.3	100.0
<b>Visited a zoo or an aquarium</b>	27	29	15	5	76
	35.5	38.2	19.7	6.6	100.0
<b>Talked to your child about your family history</b>	37	14	15	10	76
	48.7	18.4	19.7	13.2	100.0
<b>Visited a religious place</b>	37	16	10	13	76
	48.7	21.1	13.2	17.1	100.0

## Research Question 1

### 1. How parents perceive kindergarten readiness?

In order to answer this question, the means of the items in each dimension were calculated to determine which domains the parents perceived as most important for readiness (Welch & White, 1999) (Cappelloni, 2011). Parents in this study perceived the Social and Emotional domain as most crucial for kindergarten readiness ( $M=4.21$ ,  $SD=.55$ ), followed by Physical and Motor ( $M=4.14$ ,  $SD=.57$ ), Approaches towards learning ( $M=3.99$ ,  $SD=.56$ ), Language ( $M=3.85$ ,  $SD=.73$ ) and lastly Cognitive domain ( $M=3.93$ ,  $SD=.69$ ). Parents seemed to be relatively in agreement about the importance of Physical and Motor, Social and Emotional and Approaches towards Learning while discrepancies had emerged in the last two domains which are Language and Cognitive (See Table 11).

Table 11: Parents Perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness

	Physical and Motor Development	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches towards Learning	Language	Cognitive Development
N Valid	76	76	76	76	76
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.1474	4.2138	3.9956	3.8592	3.9309
Std. Deviation	.57445	.55521	.56041	.73814	.69474

a. What skill do parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?

To answer this sub-question percentage, frequencies and means were calculated for the 42 item responses on the 5-point Likert scale where the parents reported the importance of the skills. The Cronbach Alpha for the 42 items (See Appendix 9: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test) was .967 (See Table 12).

Table 12: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.967	.967	42

Parents unanimously agreed that “Can walk and run with balance” was the most crucial skill for kindergarten readiness were (96%) rates this items as “Very Important” and “Essential” (M=4.62, SD=.56) with minimum discrepancy as evident by the standard deviation. Around 80% to 95% of parents rated social and physical items as “very important” and “Essential” (See Appendix 10: Percentages of Kindergarten Readiness Items). Items that are related to academic skills such as counting to 20 and sorting objects were considered less important by the parents. Also, items related to approaches to learning were among those that were rated relatively less important such as following center routines, inventing ideas and imagination finishing a given

task, curiosity, and separating easily from parent. Higher levels of parent disagreement about the importance of the skills were evident in items related to language (See Table 13).

Table 13: Parentages of Parents who rated Kindergarten Readiness Skills as "Very Important" or "Essential"

Variable	Parentage of Parents (N=76)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Can walk and run with balance	96%	4.62	.565
Is healthy and nourished	95%	4.59	.593
Can communicate with the teacher	92%	4.41	.677
Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first language	92%	4.39	.634
Can ask questions	92%	4.28	.602
Can use the toilet independently	91%	4.39	.750
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	89%	4.33	.700
Shows confidence when doing an activity	88%	4.32	.677
Can wash his hands unaided	87%	4.32	.804
Seeks help when faced with a problem	87%	4.22	.704
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	86%	4.22	.842
Can follow rules	84%	4.17	.719
Resolves conflicts non-aggressively	83%	4.20	.783
Forms friendships	83%	4.13	.718
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	80%	4.11	.704
Can communicate in English	79%	4.08	.829
Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or more	79%	3.97	.864
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	78%	4.12	.879
Understands that his actions have consequences	78%	4.09	.803
Identifies shapes and colors	78%	4.07	.806
Follows two-step directions	78%	4.03	.765
Can brush his teeth	76%	4.03	.923
Knows the alphabets	75%	4.07	.971
Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes	74%	4.04	.791
Is eager and curious when presented with new activities	72%	3.86	.743
Can imagine and invent ideas	71%	3.95	.831
Separates easily from the parent	71%	3.91	.867
Finishes a given task	70%	3.76	.814
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	68%	3.89	.888
Can sort objects into categories	68%	3.89	.932
Can solve problems	68%	3.80	.864
Shows interest in books	67%	3.91	.836
Can count up to 20	64%	3.87	.869
Follows center routines	62%	3.83	.855
Can retell a story	62%	3.76	.936

Can rhyme words	62%	3.71	1.030
Can scribble	61%	3.74	.985
Has a sense of time	61%	3.66	1.027
Sings Nursery Rhymes	57%	3.74	.971
Can button his clothes	57%	3.57	1.100
Writes his name	55%	3.59	1.157
Can color within the lines	53%	3.58	.983

### Research Question 2

2. Is there a relationship between parent age, level of education and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness?

This research question was answered using a Spearman rho correlation to present the relationship parent background has on their perceptions of kindergarten readiness. The analysis did not find any statistically significant association (See Appendix 11: Correlations between Kindergarten Readiness Domains and Parent Demographics) between parent age, level of education and income with kindergarten readiness or the five domains that were presented (See Tables 14, 15, 16).

Table 14: Correlation between Kindergarten Readiness and Level of Education

			Level of Education	Kindergarten Readiness
Spearman's rho	Level of Education	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.019
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.868
		N	76	76
	Kindergarten Readiness	Correlation Coefficient	.019	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.868	
		N	76	76

Table 15: Correlation between Kindergarten Readiness and Household Income

			Kindergarten Readiness	Household Income
Spearman's rho	Kindergarten Readiness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.110
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.345
		N	76	76

Household Income	Correlation Coefficient	.110	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.345	
	N	76	76

Table 16: Correlation between Kindergarten Readiness and Parent Age

			Kindergarten Readiness	Parent Age
Spearman's rho	Kindergarten Readiness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.001
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.995
		N	76	76
	Parent Age	Correlation Coefficient	-.001	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.995	
		N	76	76

## Summary

An online questionnaire was conducted to describe parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness using 42 items where responses were collected from 76 parents whose 3 to 4 years old children were enrolled in preschools in the UAE. The data analysis revealed several findings.

Parents in the sample were mostly female, highly educated, worked in the government sector, and had reasonably good income. They also reported that their children were mainly enrolled in private non-workplace nurseries located in Dubai. In a contingency with previous research in the area, a housemaid was the primary caretakers of the children before enrollment. More than half of the parents spoke Arabic, few spoke English and the rest spoke a range of other languages, however; the languages that were reported to be used most often with the children were Arabic and English.

Parents mainly engaged with their children in indoors play and most commonly taught their children the alphabets and numbers. A lot of the parents were more likely to involve their children in social activities. Places where parents took their children the most included aquarium or the zoo while a large percentage of parents did not visit libraries or museums.

Majority of the parents were in agreement about the importance of physical, social and emotional, approaches to learning domains while some discrepancies were evident in cognitive and language domains. Parents in the sample rated social and emotional domain of readiness higher than the other domains. They perceived that the most important skill for kindergarten readiness was “Can walk and run with balance”. Social skills such as cooperating in play and waiting for their turn, resolving conflict non-aggressively were among those that were rated crucial by most of the parents while academic skills such as knowing the alphabet, sorting objects into categories, counting to 20 were among those that were rated less important. Contrary to previous studies; a statistically significant relationship was not established between kindergarten readiness and parent education, income, and age.

The following chapter will include a detailed discussion of the findings where the researcher will attempt to interpret the results carefully in relation to previous relevant studies.

## Chapter V

Kindergarten Readiness has been researched extensively, however; consensus about the many of its aspects are still unclear (Graue, 2006). Many stakeholders are involved in forming the concept of readiness which include the child, family, teacher, school, and community. However, in the UAE it seems that the responsibility of readiness is still bestowed on the child where many kindergartens are still assessing children's academic skills before accepting them in their schools. The purpose of this survey study is to describe parents perceptions about the skills that they believe are important for their preschool child to be ready for kindergarten and to establish whether there is a relationship between parents age, education level and income and their perceptions kindergarten readiness. Knowing what skills parents perceive that are essential for kindergarten is crucial better to understand parents attribution and involvement with their child early education. Previous studies have reported that parents usually have various views about readiness, and they often hold views different than those of teachers (Graue, 2006) (Diamond, et al., 2000).

There are two research questions for this study:

1. How parents perceive kindergarten readiness?
  - a. What skill do parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?
  - b. How their perceptions of the skills impacted their home activities with their children?
2. Is there a relationship between parent age, level of education and income and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness?

These questions were attempted to be answered using responses from an online questionnaire that was completed by 76 parents whose children are enrolled in preschools in the UAE.

This chapter includes a discussion of data that was analyzed based on the research questions, recommendations for future studies, implications of the study and a conclusion.

## Discussion of the Findings

### Research Question 1

This question addressed how parents perceive kindergarten readiness in terms of the emphasis they place on the domains that were based on the NEGP framework. After calculating the means, standard deviations and the percentages, it turned out that parents in the sample valued the Social and Emotional domains more than the other domains of readiness which was consistent with a prior study by Kim et al. (2005), however; it contradicted most of the other studies which reported that parents most commonly viewed readiness in the light of the cognitive/academic domains rather than social domain (West, 1993; Barbarin, et al., 2008; Welch & White, 1999; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000). It is evident from this finding that parents seemed to believe that their children should have appropriate social skills before learning the academic skills for kindergarten (Kim, et al., 2005). This view might be attributed to the parents viewing kindergarten readiness as the child being ready to learn rather than ready for school; as they appear to be more vigilant about their child being developmentally able to engage in social interactions rather than failing academically (Kim, et al., 2005). Social skills are considered to be a critical factor in children's success in kindergarten; as children who are socially competent, able to control their attention, and have the ability to self-regulate their feelings are more likely to achieve better academically in higher grades than child who lacked self-regulation (Morisset, 1994; Raver, 2002; Martin, Drew, Gaddis, & Moseley, 1988 as cited in Barbarin, et al., 2008, p. 673). These findings might also be a result of parent level of education in the sample which might have made them more aware of children development and also might be because parents are more exposed to preschool education and are more aware of the significant of the social domain (West, 1993).

The sub-question of the first research question was "What skill parents perceive as most important for kindergarten readiness?" which was addressed by calculating the percentage of parents that rated kindergarten readiness skills as "Very Important" and "Essential". Parents reported that a child's ability to walk and run with balance was the most important for kindergarten readiness then came being healthy and well nourished. It is evident that parents seem to believe these physical domain items as the most crucial for readiness than other items. This finding is peculiarly more is consistent with teachers perceptions of readiness than those of

parent when comparing them to previous studies where the parents in various studies emphasized the importance of academic skills such as knowing the alphabets, being able to count to 20, using pencils and knowing body parts (O'Donnell, 2008; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000; Welch & White, 1999; West, 1993). This also might be attributed to parent viewing readiness as ready to learn where pre-set physical and social maturity needs be reached before a child is presumably useful in kindergarten (Kagan, et al., 1995, p. 4). Nonetheless, physical development is a crucial aspect of readiness for children who are physically competent are apt to use their mental processes better because physical movements are the roots for future mental skills (Kelly, n.d. cited in Amundson, 1999, p. 10). In addition, curiously other skills that parents considered as crucial just like teachers reported in previous studies are the ability of being able to communicate with the teacher and asking her questions (Hains , et al., 1989; Welch & White, 1999 ; Diamond, et al., 2000). Communication is the root of learning; children who do not develop appropriate language skills and are not accustomed to asking questions may develop reading problems and have difficulties in learning thinking skills (Clapp 1988, p. 192 as cited in Amundson, 1999, p. 12; Chadwick, 2014, p. 14).

The Second sub-question “How their perceptions of the skills impacted their home activities with their children?” was addressed by evaluating the percentages of the reported skills and the percentage of the reported activities to report any significant impact. Usually, the skills that parents value might affect the kind of experiences and activities that they provide to their children, however; one must be cautious as this notion was not consistently found across studies (Stipek, Milburn, Clements and Danial, 1992 as cited in Diamond, et al., 2000). Parents reported high engagement in activities like playing indoors and outdoors which is consistent with the most important skill they reported for readiness. In addition, parents in this study valued social skills, and they reported being engaged in various social activities with their children such as taking them to the grocery store and doing chores with the child. On the other hand, even with social skills being valued by the majority of parents; home instruction of numbers and letters was frequently carried out among the parents. This finding is in contrast to previous findings for although parents in this study valued social skills; they were engaged in academic instruction with their children (Kim, et al., 2005). This might also be attributed to the fact that parents' perceptions are affected by the media and the community views; for success in standardized tests is still advocated by various means in the media and kindergarten assessments are still carried

out in the UAE where the country aims to be among the top 20 countries on the PISA test by 2021; which might have driven the parents to encourage their children to learn about academics (Pennington, 2015) (Olarde-Ulherr, 2014). Similarly, as parents reported interest in books among the lower skills they valued; the frequency of reading to their children was small, and library visits were almost non-existent. Although most of parents valued a child being able to communicate in his first language over being able to communicate in English, home literacy activities such as telling the child a story and joint book reading were reported among the fewer frequent activities. This finding contradicts previous research where it was noted that parents who value language and literacy skills are often more engaged in activities that promote them such as having various conversations with the children and reading with their children (Barbarin, et al., 2008). It is worthy to note out that parents home activities are a function of many factors such as their education, gender of the child, and parent motivation, not all parent will have similar attitudes towards kindergarten importance and might not be so enthused to engage stimulating activities with children and it also might be due to parent believe that preparing their children for kindergarten is the responsibility of the teachers not them (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 15 ; Wesley & Buysse, 2003, p. 360). Finally, almost half parents in the study reported that their children watched 1-2 hours of television during the week and in the weekend; this finding might be praiseworthy as it seems that children in the study watched less television and were more engaged indoor play with their children, however; one should also be cautious as parents might have opted for more socially acceptable answers. Nonetheless, hours of television viewing seem to be linked to children's interest in reading where those who watch less than two hours daily might be ever more interested to engage in reading which might have a positive future impact on a child's language outcome (Morrow, 1983 as cited in Bennett, et al., 2002, p. 4; Bennett, et al., 2002, p. 19). Yet, parents in the sample seem less engaged in reading and appear to be slightly better in telling their child a story which could be linked to their culture were its most prevalent in this region to narrate stories to children.

## Research Question 2

Parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness have been reported to be influenced by parent age, education, income and ethnic background (Kim, et al., 2005, p. 12). A Spearman rho correlation test was utilized for the data as it was non-parametric and measured and categorized to get ordinal scale data (Cohen, et al., 2011, p. 700). The analysis in this study did not find a

statistically significant relationship between parent age, income and education with either kindergarten readiness as a construct or with each of the five domains. Some previous studies had the same finding for instance Barbarin, et al. (2008) reported that a significant difference in parents' perceptions about kindergarten readiness for language and social skills could not be established based on parent's education. This finding might be attributed to research method and sampling technique; as it has been explained by the limitations in Chapter I. Using snowballing sampling technique might have attracted respondents that didn't differ much in their demographics for instance it is evident from the results that there isn't much diversity in respondents education level that could help in measuring the correlation. Moreover, the online questionnaire is often criticized for attracting highly educated and with good income which might have also been reflected in the representation of the respondents and have consequently affected the correlation test.

## Summary

Parents perceptions of kindergarten readiness was researched extensively in previous studies (Barbarin, et al., 2008; Diamond, et al., 2000; Kim, et al., 2005 ; National Center for Education Statistics , 1993 ; O'Donnell , 2008 ; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000; West, 1993 (Welch & White, 1999). Most of these studies utilized a survey method where kindergarten readiness skills were rated according to their importance. Items of readiness skills in some of the studies were a few as seven (O'Donnell, 2008; West, 1993), another had 15 items (Welch & White, 1999) while one had as many as 43 (Piotrkowski, et al., 2000). In an attempt to fathom readiness and to provide parents with a more comprehensive view of readiness in a simple yet broad view, a scale with 42 kindergarten readiness items was constructed for the purposes of this study. As per previous studies data was analyzed by calculating means and percentages of the ratings that parent's placed on the readiness items (West, 1993; Diamond, et al., 2000; Cappelloni, 2011). This study has revealed that parents collectively valued social and emotional skills which they consider to be crucial to the success of their child at kindergarten. The skill that parent perceived as most necessary for kindergarten readiness was the ability of the child to walk and run with balance followed by being healthy and well-nourished which relieved to be in compliance with teacher views that were examined in previous studies (Cappelloni, 2011). These opinions might be related to parent's belief about readiness to learn where they are more conscious about their child's maturation to the appropriate social and physical development level which renders him

ready for school rather than his academic success. However, their views were not reflected in the type of activities they provided to their children as parents were more likely to engage in instructing their children numbers and letters despite valuing social skills which could be due to the community's emphasis on academic skills as presented on attention to standardized tests results and academic assessments of 3 years old children (Graue, 2006). Despite parents valuing a child's ability to communicate in his first language, many languages that parents reported as their first; were not used when communicating with the child and children were not engaged in many literacy enhancing activities such as reading (Amundson, 1999). Finally, this study could not establish a relationship between parent age, education, and income level and their perceptions of kindergarten readiness as was demonstrated in previous studies due to the limitations that were presented in regards to the study's sampling and research methodology (Diamond, et al., 2000). The implications of the findings and recommendations will be further discussed in the following section.

## Recommendations

### Future Research

Kindergarten readiness is a dynamic concept where previous studies focused not only on parents perceptions but also to those of preschool and kindergarten teachers (Abu Taleb, 2013; Cappelloni, 2011; Hains , et al., 1989; Lara-Cinisomo , et al., 2008). Therefore, further research which investigates teachers and parent perceptions would be crucial for it will help in further understanding readiness, might aid in forming better transition practices between preschool and kindergarten, and support teachers in designing better instructional activities for the children which was not feasible for the current study.

This study used a survey design when examining parents' perceptions, other previous studies used interviews (Kim, et al., 2005); utilizing other designs or using a mixed method design might provide a profounder views of parent's beliefs that are more explicit.

Moreover, the effects of parent's demographic background were evident in various studies (Barbarin et al., 2008; Diamond et al., 2000; Piotrkowski, et al., 2000). Due to the limitation on the data scale that was used in this study, a statistically significant correlation was not established. If future research were to get more robust data that is interval or ratio, correlations might be more evident.

## Implications for Practice

Investigating parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness and coming up with these findings could be beneficial to many stakeholders.

First, this study might be one of the first to provide a description of parents' perceptions about kindergarten readiness in the UAE. By highlighting parents' role in readiness and having them be participants in the study and might have given parents an insight into the skills that could make their children more successful in their later school years, might have also allowed them to reflect on the kinds of experiences that they provide to their children and might push them to be more involved in a child's preschool education and be responsible for readiness by providing activities that strengthen their skills which have been proved to have tremendous positive effect on a child's future success.

Second, majority of the parents in this study have placed value on social skills first, but discrepancies were present with the other domain and parents' activities did not match the activities and experience they provided to their children. When preschool teachers know about parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness, it might have tremendous positive effects for the children. For instance, teachers would have an idea about the skills the parents value and would be able to reinforce those skills through their instructional activities and also provide parents education in ways that they could enhance their child's readiness skills. It might also trigger kindergarten readiness discussions among preschool and kindergarten teachers and parents.

Third, legislators could benefit from the findings by utilizing the study to introduce a common framework about kindergarten readiness and introducing a definition that is better suited to this region, developmentally comprehensive, precise in terms of its operational definitions and not mainly focused on the academic skills. Also with the findings from this and probably further research, legislators could start working on a national curriculum and instructional plans that might be designed based on the skills presented or by others which is aligned with kindergarten curriculum but is sensitive to the developmental level of preschool children, comprehensive, based on the latest neuroscience research, sufficient to help the child be ready for kindergarten. Moreover, policy makers may start work on outlining proper transition practices for preschools and kindergarten which could aid in improving children's readiness for

schools and building better collaboration between preschools, kindergarten and their families by sharing common expectations about readiness. Finally, legislators may want start examining the purpose of kindergarten assessments that are being carried out, examine their practicality and start working on making schools ready for children rather than the other way around.

### Concluding remarks

This study was carried out to examine parents' perceptions of kindergarten readiness in the light of the NEGP framework which provided a comprehensive researched based construct of readiness. It presented kindergarten readiness as a multidimensional interrelated construct rather than one that is focused on only one domain (Kagan, et al., 1995) where a child's interaction with his peers, family, environment and community from his preschool years could shape a lot of the skills that he requires to be ready for kindergarten. A comprehensive and multidimensional kindergarten readiness construct if utilized by policy makers in the UAE , it be could a revolutionizing concept for early childhood education and the pushing force for a paradigm shift for changing the current maturational view to a more interactionist view where everyone who is involved with the child play a fundamental role in making him more competent for formal school demands. It also could be

Findings in this study provided a unique insight into the mind of preschool parents be contrary to most prominent previous studies, parents valued social and emotional skills but still were a bit concerned about their children academic performance which was reflected in the type of activities they provided to their children. Parents could be the change agent for better children readiness if they are provided with right information and tools to help their children be better prepared for readiness for a simple act such as telling a story to the child or visiting the grocery could have tremendous effect on a children's skill development. Also, parents' role as the first teacher of their children should be augmented from early starting in preschools where they are made aware of the skills that teachers expect and their child should have so that they would be to provide better experiences for their children. In addition, Parents are an integral component in preparing children for kindergarten readiness and are more likely to invest in their children and by utilizing this asset preschools, kindergartens, communities could work collaboratively to form a collaborated front the burden of readiness is shared among all stakeholders to ensure that all children are accepted as they are, and they would help to reach their full potential. Kindergarten

readiness is a complex concept but one that could have considerable positive effects on children outcomes if it is incorporated in quality driven preschool education settings.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Preschool Access Letter

Dear Principal,

My name is Eqlima Dinar and I'm a Masters of Education student in the British University in Dubai. Currently, I'm doing my dissertation that is titled "Parents' Perceptions about Kindergarten Readiness" and I would appreciate your cooperation and assistance.

This study targets working parents who have three years old children enrolled in child care centers in the United Arab Emirates. I would appreciate if you would circulate the invitation attached in your center so that the parents would be able to access my internet-based questionnaire in QuestionPro website. I would also be grateful if you sent an email from your center encouraging parents to do the questionnaire.

The internet-based questionnaire has three sections. The first section includes questions about demographics. The second section includes kindergarten readiness skills where parents have to rate them according to their importance and the third section inquires about home activities that parents do with their children. It takes about 15-25 minutes to fill the questionnaire. Kindly be informed that all the data obtained from this study will be used for the purposes of research only. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained for your clients and any data reported cannot be traced back to your clients.

Conducting this study in your organization could benefit you in many aspects. First, it has been established that parents are the foremost educators of their children, and their beliefs have great impact on their children's development and academic success. Second, knowing parent's perceptions about kindergarten readiness could benefit your settings as you would be able to customize your curriculum, plans and instructional strategies in ways that better meet your client's needs. Third, the results could aid your settings in establishing better kindergarten transition practices that would benefit the parents and raise their satisfaction level. Moreover, by utilizing this study, your setting could offer parent educational sessions to introduce the concept of kindergarten readiness and fill the knowledge gap of your clients. Finally, this study might help you in reaching out to kindergartens and building better community connections that could

make you better informed about the requirements of building a sound foundation for the children in your setting.

I would be more than glad to share the results with you once they are published. If you have any further inquiries about the study don't hesitate to contact me on my mobile 0503839335 or email: [120017@student.buid.ac.ae](mailto:120017@student.buid.ac.ae)

Thank you for your time and support.

Best Regards,

Eqlima Dinar

## Appendix 2: Parent Invitation

Dear Parent,

My Name is Eqlima Dinar; I'm a student in the British University in Dubai (BUiD) doing my dissertation for my Masters degree in Education.

I'm conducting this study in order to investigate your perceptions about your child's kindergarten readiness. This study is crucial because you are considered to be the most knowledgeable person about your child's development, skills and your perceptions are vital for your child's success in his school life. This study would help in informing our practice in early years settings and could be the cornerstone for building a better collaboration between you and your child's teacher and setting.

You have been selected for this study because your 3 years old child is enrolled in child care center based in the United Arab Emirates. I would really appreciate it if you would fill out the internet-based questionnaire by accessing the link below. This internet-based questionnaire has three sections. The first section includes questions about demographics. The second section includes kindergarten readiness skills where you have to rate them according to their importance and the third section inquires about home activities that you do with your child. It takes about 15-25 minutes to fill the questionnaire. Rest assured that all the information you provide will be used for research purposes only and the study has been reviewed by the BUiD Ethical committee. Any information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity and the data reported cannot be traced back to you.

The study results will be published in my dissertation as part of fulfilling my course's requirement. If you face any difficulty or is unsure about the questions; please feel free to contact me on my email [120017@student.buid.ac.ae](mailto:120017@student.buid.ac.ae) or telephone 0503839335.

I hope that you will be willing to participate and I thank you in advance for your time. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss the study's result.

Kindly click on the link below to access the survey.

<http://kindergartenreadiness.questionpro.com>

Best Regards,

Eqlima Dinar

## Appendix 3: Questionnaire

### 1. Parents' Perceptions about Kindergarten Readiness

Dear Parent, You are kindly requested to participate in my Parents Perceptions about Kindergarten Readiness Survey. In this survey, you will be asked to answer questions about some demographics information, rate kindergarten readiness skills according to their importance and provide the frequencies of home activities you do with your child. This questionnaire will take 10- 15 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the survey at any point. Your answers will be confidential, and data from this research will be published in my dissertation as part on my courses requirement. If you have questions at any time about the survey, you may contact Eqlima Dinar at 0503839335 or by email at 120017@student.buid.ac.ae. Your participation is much appreciated. Thank you very much for your time and support. Please start with the survey now by clicking on the Continue button below.

Kindly attempt to answer all questions  
Section 1: Demographics

Please answer the following demographic questions.

1. What is your gender?
  1. Male
  2. Female
  
2. What is Your date of birth?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What is your country of citizenship?
  
4. What is your Marital status?
  1. Married
  2. Divorced
  3. Widow
  
5. What is the highest level of Education you have achieved?
  1. Doctorate
  2. Masters
  3. Bachelors
  4. Diploma
  5. High School
  6. Below High School

6. What is the name of the organization where you work?

7. What type of an organization is it ?

1. Government
2. Semi-Government
3. Private

8. What is your job title?

9. What type of employment do you do?

1. Full-Time employment
2. Part-Time employment
3. Temporary employment
4. Special contract employment

10. Do you do Shift Duty?

1. Yes
2. No

11. Please specify your daily Working Hours

1. 5 to 6 hours
2. 7 to 8 hours
3. 9 to10 hours
4. 11 to12 hours
5. More than 12 hours

12. Is your Spouse employed ?

1. Yes
2. No

13. What is the name of the organization where your Spouse works?

14. What type of an organization is it ?

1. Government
2. Semi-Government
3. Private

15. What type of employment does your Spouse do?

1. Full-Time employment
2. Part-Time employment
3. Temporary employment
4. Special contract employment

16. Does your Spouse work Shift Duty?

1. Yes
2. No

17. Please specify your Spouses Working Hours

1. 5 to 6 hours
2. 7 to 8 hours
3. 9 to 10 hours
4. 11 to 12 hours
5. More than 12 hours

18. What is the Highest level of Education your Spouse achieved?

1. Doctorate
2. Masters
3. Bachelors
4. Diploma
5. High School
6. Below High School

19. What is your Household Monthly Income?

1. Less than 4000 AED
2. 5000 to 7000 AED
3. 8000 to 10000 AED
4. 11000 to 13000 AED

5. 14000 to 16000 AED
6. 17000 to 19000 AED
7. 20000 to 22000 AED
8. 23000 to 25000 AED
9. 26000 to 28000 AED
10. 29000 to 31000 AED
11. 32000 to 34000 AED
12. 35000 to 37000 AED
13. 38000 to 40000 AED
14. 41000 to 43000 AED
15. 44000 to 46000 AED
16. 47000 to 49000 AED
17. 50000 to 52000 AED
18. 53000 to 55000 AED
19. 56000 to 58000 AED
20. 59000 to 61000 AED
21. 62000 to 64000 AED
22. 65000 to 67000 AED
23. 68000 to 70000 AED
24. 71000 to 73000 AED
25. 74000 to 76000 AED
26. 77000 to 79000 AED
27. 80000 to 82000 AED
28. 83000 to 85000 AED
29. 86000 to 89000 AED
30. 90000 to 92000 AED
31. 93000 to 95000 AED
32. 96000 to 98000 AED
33. 99000 to 100000 AED
34. 102000 to 104000 AED
35. 105000 to 107000 AED
36. 108000 to 110000 AED
37. 112000 to 114000 AED
38. 115000 to 117000 AED
39. 118000 to 120000 AED
40. 122000 to 124000 AED
41. 125000 to 127000 AED
42. 128000 to 130000 AED
43. 132000 to 134000 AED
44. 135000 to 137000 AED
45. 138000 to 140000 AED
46. 142000 to 144000 AED
47. 145000 to 147000 AED
48. 148000 to 150000 AED

20. What is your first language or mother tongue ?

21. What is your Spouses first language or mother tongue ?

22. In what language do you mostly communicate with your child at home?

23. What is your Childs date of birth ?

- \_\_\_\_\_

24. What is the name of the child care center where your child is enrolled?

25. What type of a child care center is it ?

1. Government
2. Private

26. In which emirate is the center based?

1. Abu Dhabi
2. Dubai
3. Sharjah
4. Ajman
5. Umm Al Qaiwain
6. Ras Al Khaimah
7. Fujairah

27. Is the child care center located at your workplace?

1. Yes
2. No

28. How old was your child when s/he first joined the child care center?

1. 1 Month
2. 2 Months
3. 3 Months
4. 4 Months
5. 5 Months
6. 6 Months
7. 7 Months
8. 8 Months
9. 9 Months
10. 10 Months
11. 11 Months
12. 1 Year
13. 1 Year and 1 Month
14. 1 Year and 2 Months

15. 1 Year and 3 Months
16. 1 Year and 4 Months
17. 1 Year and 6 Months
18. 1 Year and 7 Months
19. 1 Year and 8 Months
20. 1 Year and 9 Months
21. 1 Year and 10 Months
22. 1 Year and 11 Months
23. 2 Years
24. 2 Year and 1 Month
25. 2 Year and 2 Months
26. 2 Years and 3 Months
27. 2 Years and 4 Months
28. 2 Years and 5 Months
29. 2 Years and 6 Months
30. 2 Years and 7 Months
31. 2 Years and 8 Months
32. 2 Years and 9 Months
33. 2 Years and 10 Months
34. 2 Years and 11 Months
35. 3 Years
36. 3 Years and 1 Month
37. 3 Years and 2 Months
38. 3 Years and 3 Months
39. 3 Years and 4 Months
40. 3 Years and 5 Months
41. 3 Years and 6 Months
42. 3 Years and 7 Months
43. 3 Years and 8 Months
44. 3 Years and 9 Months
45. 3 Years and 10 Months
46. 3 Years and 11 Months
47. 4 Years
48. 4 Years and 1 Month
49. 4 Years and 2 Months
50. 4 Years and 3 Months
51. 4 Years and 4 Months
52. 4 Years and 5 Months
53. 4 Years and 6 Months

29. Before joining the child care center; who took care of your child?

1. Self
2. Spouse
3. Grandparents
4. Housemaid
5. A Relative
6. A Friend
7. A Neighbor
8. A Nursery

30. What was the main reason behind enrolling your child in the child care center?

1. No one to take care of him/her at home

2. To prepare him/her for Kindergarten
3. S/he would be able to play with children his/her age
4. Recommended by a relative or a friend
5. You started a new job
6. Your spouse started a new job
7. You could afford it

Section 2: Kindergarten Readiness Skills.

Children need to have certain skills to be ready for kindergarten. Carefully read the statements below and rate them according to their importance.

31. How important do you think it is that your child...

	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Essential
Is healthy and nourished	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can walk and run with balance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can use pencils, crayons and paint brushes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can color within the lines	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can button his clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can brush his teeth	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can wash his hands unaided	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can use the toilet independently	<input type="checkbox"/>				

32. How important do you think it is that your child...

	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Essential
Follows center routines	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Forms friendships	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can communicate with the teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Expresses his feelings, wants, needs in his first language	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Resolves conflicts non-aggressively	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Shows confidence when doing an activity	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	<input type="checkbox"/>				

33. How important do you think it is that your child...

	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Essential
Finishes a given task	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Is eager and curious when presented with new activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can imagine and invent ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Separates easily from the parent	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can ask questions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Seeks help when faced with a problem	<input type="checkbox"/>				

34. How important do you think it is that your child...

	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Essential
Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or more	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Follows two-step directions	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can communicate in English	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Writes his name	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sings Nursery rhymes	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Shows interest in books	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Knows the alphabets	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can rhyme words	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can retell a story	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can scribble	<input type="checkbox"/>				

35. How important do you think it is that your child...

	Not important	Not very important	Somewhat important	Very important	Essential
Understands that his actions have consequences	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Has a sense of time	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can solve problems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Identifies shapes and colors	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can follow rules	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can count up to 20	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Can sort objects into categories	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### Section 3 : Parent-Child Home Activities.

This section is about home activities that you do with your child. Please choose the answer that matches your home routine best.

36. How many hours would you say your child watches television in weekdays (Sunday to Thursday)?

1. None
2. 1 to 2 hours
3. 3 to 4 hours
4. 5 to 6 hours

5. More than 6 hours

37. How many hours would you say your child watches television on the weekends (Friday to Saturday)?

1. None
2. 1 to 2 hours
3. 3 to 4 hours
4. 5 to 6 hours
5. More than 6 hours

38. In the past week, have you engaged your child in the following activities?

	None	Once	Twice	Three or more times
Read a book to your child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Told him/her a story	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taught him/her letters, numbers or words	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taught him/her a Nursery rhyme or played one	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did art and crafts activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Played with toys or games indoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Played games or sports outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Took your child with you to the grocery store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your child helped you with household chores such as cleaning or cooking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

39. In the past month how often have you done the below activities with your child ?

	None	Once	Twice	Three or more times
Visited a library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Went to a live show or a play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visited a museum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visited a zoo or an aquarium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talked to your child about your family history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Visited a religious place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
---------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

## Appendix 4: Permissions

Department of Education - Support <edcusthelp@supportcenteronline.com>

Jul 15

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting the U. S. Department of Education.

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If you require additional assistance regarding information from our National Center for Education Statistics, you may contact them by calling (202) 502-7300.

Once again, thank you for contacting the U.S. Department of Education. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us at 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) between the hours of 9:00am and 5:00pm, EST Monday - Friday.

Sincerely,

Julio Torres  
Information Resource Center  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20202

The following Customer(s) have been CC'ed:

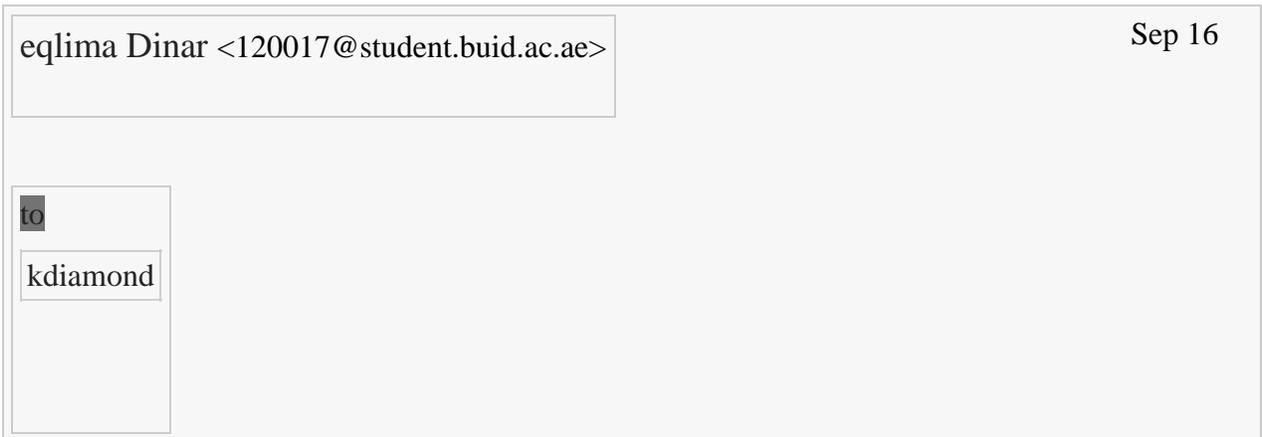
### Incident Information:

Incident #: 28022-32997

Date Created: 7/14/2014 12:03 PM EDT

Dear Sir,

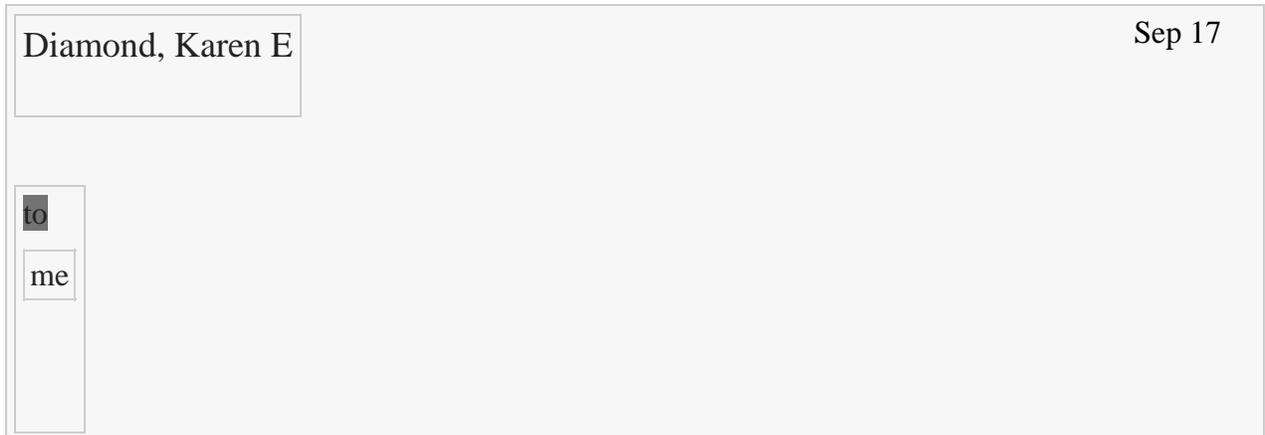
Question: I would like to get permission to use the survey in in National Center for Education Statistics Report NCES 93-410 for my dissertation study in my Masters Degree, I'm wondering how can I get that permission from the author and is there an updated version of the survey.



Dear Madam,

I'm a student in the BUiD doing my dissertation. in your study of parent's conceptions of kindergarten readiness You have specified home activities that I would like to utilize in my study. would that be alright? and I would like to ask , based on what were these specific activities mentioned.

Eqlima Dinar



Thank you for writing. The activities were the ones used in the second National Household Education Survey (NHES), conducted in 1993 by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). They are common activities in which parents in the US often engage with their young children.

Good luck with your work.

Karen E. Diamond, Ph.D.  
Professor Emerita  
Human Development and Family Studies  
1200 W. State St.  
Purdue University  
W. Lafayette, IN 47907-2055

eqlima Dinar <120017@student.buid.ac.ae>

Sep 5

Dear Madam,

I would like to get permission to use the survey in the study you conducted about kindergarten teachers' perceptions of kindergarten readiness for my dissertation study in my Masters Degree and am wondering if there is there an updated version of the survey. I would like to use the survey in my preschool where I would like to test the perceptions of my fellow teachers and the parents of my students as well as the kindergarten teachers where they will be joining soon. Your study is really interesting and I would really appreciate it if you would provide me with a copy of the survey.

---- Nancy Cappelloni wrote ----

Dear Eqlima

Thank you for contacting me about the study and survey I designed. I am very pleased with it and its efficacy.

What program are you in?

If you found the dissertation, you will find the survey attached as an appendix.

You have my permission to use the survey, but you will need to do two things:

Cite with proper references the survey (author, date, etc)

Use the survey with the intended population. It was not intended to use with preschool teachers, as the name implies, nor parents. For those populations, I would design a far different survey. This one is specific to the kindergarten teachers and their perceptions. Perhaps part of the survey can be of use to you.

Let me know what you decide to do.

Good luck with your work.

Best

Dr Nancy Cappelloni

## Appendix 5: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test (pilot)

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Is healthy and nourished	4.88	.354	8
Can walk and run with balance	4.38	.744	8
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	4.13	.354	8
Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes	4.25	.707	8
Can color within the lines	3.75	.707	8
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	4.00	.535	8
Can button his clothes	3.63	.916	8
Can brush his teeth	4.00	.926	8
Can wash his hands unaided	4.00	.926	8
Can use the toilet independently	3.88	.835	8
Follows center routines	3.88	.354	8
Forms friendships	4.25	.707	8
Can communicate with the teacher	4.63	.518	8
Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first la	4.63	.518	8
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	4.13	.354	8
Resolves conflicts nonaggressively	4.38	.518	8
Shows confidence when doing an activity	4.38	.518	8
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	4.50	.535	8
Finishes a given task	4.25	.463	8
Is eager and curious when presented with new acti	3.88	.354	8
Can imagine and invent ideas	4.25	.463	8
Separates easily from the parent	3.75	.463	8
Seeks help when faced with a problem	4.13	.354	8
Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or mo	4.00	.535	8
Follows twostep directions	3.50	.756	8
Can communicate in English	3.50	.535	8
Writes his name	3.63	.916	8
Sings Nursery rhymes	3.50	.756	8
Shows interest in books	4.00	.535	8
Knows the alphabets	4.00	.756	8
Can rhyme words	4.00	.756	8
Can retell a story	3.75	.463	8
Can scribble	3.75	.463	8
Understands that his actions have consequences	3.88	.641	8

Has a sense of time	4.00	.535	8
Can solve problems	4.13	.835	8
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	4.00	.926	8
Can follow rules	3.75	.463	8
Can count up to 20	3.88	.641	8
Can sort objects into categories	3.88	.641	8

## Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Is healthy and nourished	156.13	175.554	-.240	.	.933
Can walk and run with balance	156.63	174.268	-.071	.	.935
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	156.88	169.268	.439	.	.930
Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes	156.75	163.929	.497	.	.929
Can color within the lines	157.25	158.500	.810	.	.926
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	157.00	161.714	.841	.	.926
Can button his clothes	157.38	151.125	.953	.	.923
Can brush his teeth	157.00	153.714	.821	.	.925
Can wash his hands unaided	157.00	153.714	.821	.	.925
Can use the toilet independently	157.13	154.411	.883	.	.924
Follows center routines	157.13	170.696	.282	.	.931
Forms friendships	156.75	166.214	.368	.	.930
Can communicate with the teacher	156.38	162.554	.804	.	.927
Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first la	156.38	165.125	.604	.	.928
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	156.88	171.554	.189	.	.931
Resolves conflicts nonaggressively	156.63	165.411	.582	.	.928
Shows confidence when doing an activity	156.63	165.411	.582	.	.928
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	156.50	168.286	.350	.	.930
Finishes a given task	156.75	174.500	-.105	.	.933

Is eager and curious when presented with new acti	157.13	170.696	.282	.	.931
Can imagine and invent ideas	156.75	169.643	.296	.	.931
Separates easily from the parent	157.25	172.786	.035	.	.932
Seeks help when faced with a problem	156.88	174.125	-.088	.	.933
Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or mo	157.00	166.571	.476	.	.929
Follows twostep directions	157.50	167.429	.277	.	.932
Can communicate in English	157.50	164.571	.625	.	.928
Writes his name	157.38	158.268	.621	.	.928
Sings Nursery rhymes	157.50	158.857	.735	.	.926
Shows interest in books	157.00	164.000	.668	.	.928
Knows the alphabets	157.00	159.429	.703	.	.927
Can rhyme words	157.00	161.714	.580	.	.928
Can retell a story	157.25	165.357	.660	.	.928
Can scribble	157.25	165.357	.660	.	.928
Understands that his actions have consequences	157.13	161.268	.722	.	.927
Has a sense of time	157.00	166.571	.476	.	.929
Can solve problems	156.88	160.125	.597	.	.928
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	157.00	158.857	.588	.	.928
Can follow rules	157.25	176.500	-.267	.	.934
Can count up to 20	157.13	163.554	.577	.	.928
Can sort objects into categories	157.13	174.696	-.099	.	.935

## Appendix 6: Parent Citizenship

		Citizenship			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Djibouti	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Egypt	5	6.6	6.6	7.9
	Greece	2	2.6	2.6	10.5
	India	10	13.2	13.2	23.7
	Iran Islamic Republic of	1	1.3	1.3	25.0
	Ireland	1	1.3	1.3	26.3
	Jordan	3	3.9	3.9	30.3
	Liberia	1	1.3	1.3	31.6
	New Zealand	1	1.3	1.3	32.9
	Pakistan	4	5.3	5.3	38.2
	Palestine	3	3.9	3.9	42.1
	Philippines	4	5.3	5.3	47.4
	Serbia	1	1.3	1.3	48.7
	Turkey	1	1.3	1.3	50.0
	United Arab Emirates	34	44.7	44.7	94.7
	United Kingdom	3	3.9	3.9	98.7
	United States	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

## Appendix 7: Parent Income

		Household Monthly Income			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 4000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	5000 to 7000 AED	3	3.9	3.9	5.3
	8000 to 10000 AED	7	9.2	9.2	14.5
	11000 to 13000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	15.8
	14000 to 16000 AED	3	3.9	3.9	19.7
	17000 to 19000 AED	4	5.3	5.3	25.0
	20000 to 22000 AED	8	10.5	10.5	35.5
	23000 to 25000 AED	4	5.3	5.3	40.8
	26000 to 28000 AED	7	9.2	9.2	50.0
	29000 to 31000 AED	4	5.3	5.3	55.3
	32000 to 34000 AED	7	9.2	9.2	64.5
	35000 to 37000 AED	3	3.9	3.9	68.4
	38000 to 40000 AED	3	3.9	3.9	72.4
	41000 to 43000 AED	2	2.6	2.6	75.0
	44000 to 46000 AED	5	6.6	6.6	81.6
	47000 to 49000 AED	2	2.6	2.6	84.2
	50000 to 52000 AED	2	2.6	2.6	86.8
	53000 to 55000 AED	2	2.6	2.6	89.5
	56000 to 58000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	90.8
	59000 to 61000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	92.1
	65000 to 67000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	93.4
	68000 to 70000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	94.7
	71000 to 73000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	96.1
	77000 to 79000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	97.4
	83000 to 85000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	98.7
	90000 to 92000 AED	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

## Appendix 8: Enrollment Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 Months	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	3 Months	4	5.3	5.3	6.7
	6 Months	4	5.3	5.3	12.0
	9 Months	1	1.3	1.3	13.3
	11 Months	1	1.3	1.3	14.7
	1 Year	2	2.6	2.7	17.3
	1 Year and 1 Month	2	2.6	2.7	20.0
	1 Year and 2 Months	2	2.6	2.7	22.7
	1 Year and 3 Months	1	1.3	1.3	24.0
	1 Year and 4 Months	1	1.3	1.3	25.3
	1 Year and 6 Months	5	6.6	6.7	32.0
	1 Year and 7 Months	2	2.6	2.7	34.7
	1 Year and 8 Months	2	2.6	2.7	37.3
	1 Year and 9 Months	1	1.3	1.3	38.7
	1 Year and 10 Months	2	2.6	2.7	41.3
	1 Year and 11 Months	1	1.3	1.3	42.7
	2 Years	9	11.8	12.0	54.7
	2 Year and 2 Months	3	3.9	4.0	58.7
	2 Years and 5 Months	3	3.9	4.0	62.7
	2 Years and 6 Months	7	9.2	9.3	72.0
	2 Years and 7 Months	3	3.9	4.0	76.0
	2 Years and 10 Months	1	1.3	1.3	77.3
	3 Years	6	7.9	8.0	85.3
	3 Years and 2 Months	3	3.9	4.0	89.3
	3 Years and 3 Months	1	1.3	1.3	90.7
	3 Years and 4 Months	3	3.9	4.0	94.7
	3 Years and 5 Months	2	2.6	2.7	97.3
	3 Years and 6 Months	1	1.3	1.3	98.7
	3 Years and 10 Months	1	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	75	98.7	100.0	
Missing	0	1	1.3		

Total	76	100.0	
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### Appendix 9: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Item Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Is healthy and nourished	4.59	.593	76
Can walk and run with balance	4.62	.565	76
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	4.22	.842	76
Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes	4.04	.791	76
Can color within the lines	3.58	.983	76
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	4.12	.879	76
Can button his clothes	3.57	1.100	76
Can brush his teeth	4.03	.923	76
Can wash his hands unaided	4.32	.804	76
Can use the toilet independently	4.39	.750	76
Follows center routines	3.83	.855	76
Forms friendships	4.13	.718	76
Can communicate with the teacher	4.41	.677	76
Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first la	4.39	.634	76
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	4.11	.704	76
Resolves conflicts nonaggressively	4.20	.783	76
Shows confidence when doing an activity	4.32	.677	76
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	4.33	.700	76
Finishes a given task	3.76	.814	76

Is eager and curious when presented with new activities	3.86	.743	76
Can imagine and invent ideas	3.95	.831	76
Separates easily from the parent	3.91	.867	76
Can ask questions	4.28	.602	76
Seeks help when faced with a problem	4.22	.704	76
Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or more	3.97	.864	76
Follows twostep directions	4.03	.765	76
Can communicate in English	4.08	.829	76
Writes his name	3.59	1.157	76
Sings Nursery rhymes	3.74	.971	76
Shows interest in books	3.91	.836	76
Knows the alphabets	4.07	.971	76
Can rhyme words	3.71	1.030	76
Can retell a story	3.76	.936	76
Can scribble	3.74	.985	76
Understands that his actions have consequences	4.09	.803	76
Has a sense of time	3.66	1.027	76
Can solve problems	3.80	.864	76
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	3.89	.888	76
Identifies shapes and colors	4.07	.806	76
Can follow rules	4.17	.719	76
Can count up to 20	3.87	.869	76
Can sort objects into categories	3.89	.932	76

**Item-Total Statistics**

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted

Is healthy and nourished	164.61	527.709	.146	.	.968
Can walk and run with balance	164.58	528.034	.142	.	.968
Can kick a ball and climb the stairs	164.97	514.506	.440	.	.968
Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes	165.16	505.868	.718	.	.966
Can color within the lines	165.62	503.706	.620	.	.967
Can feed himself with a spoon or fork	165.08	505.620	.649	.	.967
Can button his clothes	165.63	498.076	.667	.	.967
Can brush his teeth	165.17	501.290	.723	.	.966
Can wash his hands unaided	164.88	508.239	.639	.	.967
Can use the toilet independently	164.80	511.174	.599	.	.967
Follows center routines	165.37	513.542	.458	.	.967
Forms friendships	165.07	511.209	.625	.	.967
Can communicate with the teacher	164.79	511.022	.671	.	.967
Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first la	164.80	518.294	.462	.	.967
Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others	165.09	513.471	.566	.	.967
Resolves conflicts nonaggressively	165.00	509.067	.632	.	.967
Shows confidence when doing an activity	164.88	513.092	.602	.	.967
Cooperates in play and waits for his turn	164.87	508.489	.730	.	.966
Finishes a given task	165.43	509.182	.604	.	.967
Is eager and curious when presented with new acti	165.34	507.028	.731	.	.966
Can imagine and invent ideas	165.25	507.257	.643	.	.967
Separates easily from the parent	165.29	510.608	.528	.	.967
Can ask questions	164.92	515.807	.580	.	.967
Seeks help when faced with a problem	164.97	514.053	.547	.	.967

Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or mo	165.22	506.229	.645	.	.967
Follows twostep directions	165.17	508.570	.662	.	.967
Can communicate in English	165.12	504.826	.712	.	.966
Writes his name	165.61	495.789	.678	.	.967
Sings Nursery rhymes	165.46	498.705	.746	.	.966
Shows interest in books	165.29	503.835	.733	.	.966
Knows the alphabets	165.13	502.542	.656	.	.967
Can rhyme words	165.49	496.600	.748	.	.966
Can retell a story	165.43	495.956	.844	.	.966
Can scribble	165.46	498.972	.729	.	.966
Understands that his actions have consequences	165.11	506.735	.682	.	.966
Has a sense of time	165.54	500.332	.667	.	.967
Can solve problems	165.39	504.269	.696	.	.966
Recognizes the difference between real and pretend	165.30	505.947	.633	.	.967
Identifies shapes and colors	165.13	503.316	.776	.	.966
Can follow rules	165.03	509.386	.682	.	.967
Can count up to 20	165.33	504.170	.694	.	.966
Can sort objects into categories	165.30	498.134	.794	.	.966

## Appendix 10: Percentages of Kindergarten Readiness Items

**Is healthy and nourished**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat important	4	5.3	5.3	5.3
	Very important	23	30.3	30.3	35.5
	Essential	49	64.5	64.5	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can walk and run with balance**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Very important	23	30.3	30.3	34.2
	Essential	50	65.8	65.8	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can kick a ball and climb the stairs**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	2	2.6	2.6	3.9
	Somewhat important	8	10.5	10.5	14.5
	Very important	33	43.4	43.4	57.9
	Essential	32	42.1	42.1	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can use pencils crayons and paint brushes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	19	25.0	25.0	26.3
	Very important	32	42.1	42.1	68.4
	Essential	24	31.6	31.6	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can color within the lines**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	9	11.8	11.8	13.2
	Somewhat important	26	34.2	34.2	47.4
	Very important	25	32.9	32.9	80.3
	Essential	15	19.7	19.7	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can feed himself with a spoon or fork**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	5.3
	Somewhat important	13	17.1	17.1	22.4
	Very important	29	38.2	38.2	60.5
	Essential	30	39.5	39.5	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can button his clothes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Not very important	13	17.1	17.1	19.7

Somewhat important	18	23.7	23.7	43.4
Very important	26	34.2	34.2	77.6
Essential	17	22.4	22.4	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can brush his teeth**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	6.6
	Somewhat important	13	17.1	17.1	23.7
	Very important	32	42.1	42.1	65.8
	Essential	26	34.2	34.2	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can wash his hands unaided**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Somewhat important	7	9.2	9.2	13.2
	Very important	29	38.2	38.2	51.3
	Essential	37	48.7	48.7	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can use the toilet independently**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	6	7.9	7.9	9.2
	Very important	30	39.5	39.5	48.7
	Essential	39	51.3	51.3	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Follows center routines**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Somewhat important	26	34.2	34.2	38.2
	Very important	28	36.8	36.8	75.0
	Essential	19	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Forms friendships**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	12	15.8	15.8	17.1
	Very important	39	51.3	51.3	68.4
	Essential	24	31.6	31.6	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can communicate with the teacher**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	5	6.6	6.6	7.9
	Very important	32	42.1	42.1	50.0
	Essential	38	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Expresses his feelings wants needs in his first la**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Somewhat important	6	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Very important	34	44.7	44.7	52.6
	Essential	36	47.4	47.4	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Shows sensitivity to the feelings of others**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat important	15	19.7	19.7	19.7
	Very important	38	50.0	50.0	69.7
	Essential	23	30.3	30.3	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Resolves conflicts nonaggressively**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Somewhat important	11	14.5	14.5	17.1
	Very important	33	43.4	43.4	60.5
	Essential	30	39.5	39.5	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Shows confidence when doing an activity**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat important	9	11.8	11.8	11.8
	Very important	34	44.7	44.7	56.6
	Essential	33	43.4	43.4	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Cooperates in play and waits for his turn**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	7	9.2	9.2	10.5
	Very important	34	44.7	44.7	55.3
	Essential	34	44.7	44.7	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Finishes a given task**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	6.6
	Somewhat important	18	23.7	23.7	30.3
	Very important	42	55.3	55.3	85.5
	Essential	11	14.5	14.5	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Is eager and curious when presented with new acti**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Somewhat important	18	23.7	23.7	27.6
	Very important	42	55.3	55.3	82.9
	Essential	13	17.1	17.1	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can imagine and invent ideas**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Somewhat important	19	25.0	25.0	28.9

Very important	33	43.4	43.4	72.4
Essential	21	27.6	27.6	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Separates easily from the parent**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not very important	5	6.6	6.6	6.6
Somewhat important	17	22.4	22.4	28.9
Very important	34	44.7	44.7	73.7
Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can ask questions**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Somewhat important	6	7.9	7.9	7.9
Very important	43	56.6	56.6	64.5
Essential	27	35.5	35.5	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Seeks help when faced with a problem**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Somewhat important	9	11.8	11.8	13.2
Very important	38	50.0	50.0	63.2
Essential	28	36.8	36.8	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Pays attention to the teacher for 10 minutes or mo**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	6.6
	Somewhat important	11	14.5	14.5	21.1
	Very important	40	52.6	52.6	73.7
	Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Follows twostep directions**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Somewhat important	15	19.7	19.7	22.4
	Very important	38	50.0	50.0	72.4
	Essential	21	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can communicate in English**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	2.6
	Somewhat important	14	18.4	18.4	21.1
	Very important	35	46.1	46.1	67.1
	Essential	25	32.9	32.9	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Writes his name**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	4	5.3	5.3	5.3

Not very important	9	11.8	11.8	17.1
Somewhat important	21	27.6	27.6	44.7
Very important	22	28.9	28.9	73.7
Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Sings Nursery rhymes**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Not very important	5	6.6	6.6	7.9
Somewhat important	27	35.5	35.5	43.4
Very important	23	30.3	30.3	73.7
Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Shows interest in books**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Somewhat important	24	31.6	31.6	32.9
Very important	31	40.8	40.8	73.7
Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Knows the alphabets**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
Not very important	2	2.6	2.6	5.3
Somewhat important	15	19.7	19.7	25.0
Very important	27	35.5	35.5	60.5

Essential	30	39.5	39.5	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can rhyme words**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
Not very important	5	6.6	6.6	10.5
Somewhat important	21	27.6	27.6	38.2
Very important	29	38.2	38.2	76.3
Essential	18	23.7	23.7	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can retell a story**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Not very important	5	6.6	6.6	7.9
Somewhat important	23	30.3	30.3	38.2
Very important	29	38.2	38.2	76.3
Essential	18	23.7	23.7	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can scribble**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
Not very important	7	9.2	9.2	10.5
Somewhat important	22	28.9	28.9	39.5
Very important	27	35.5	35.5	75.0
Essential	19	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Understands that his actions have consequences**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Somewhat important	15	19.7	19.7	22.4
	Very important	33	43.4	43.4	65.8
	Essential	26	34.2	34.2	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Has a sense of time**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Not very important	6	7.9	7.9	11.8
	Somewhat important	21	27.6	27.6	39.5
	Very important	30	39.5	39.5	78.9
	Essential	16	21.1	21.1	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can solve problems**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	6.6
	Somewhat important	19	25.0	25.0	31.6
	Very important	37	48.7	48.7	80.3
	Essential	15	19.7	19.7	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Recognizes the difference between real and pretend**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	5	6.6	6.6	6.6
	Somewhat important	19	25.0	25.0	31.6
	Very important	31	40.8	40.8	72.4
	Essential	21	27.6	27.6	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Identifies shapes and colors**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	16	21.1	21.1	22.4
	Very important	35	46.1	46.1	68.4
	Essential	24	31.6	31.6	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can follow rules**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Somewhat important	11	14.5	14.5	15.8
	Very important	38	50.0	50.0	65.8
	Essential	26	34.2	34.2	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can count up to 20**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	1	1.3	1.3	2.6
	Somewhat important	25	32.9	32.9	35.5

Very important	29	38.2	38.2	73.7
Essential	20	26.3	26.3	100.0
Total	76	100.0	100.0	

**Can sort objects into categories**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not important	1	1.3	1.3	1.3
	Not very important	4	5.3	5.3	6.6
	Somewhat important	19	25.0	25.0	31.6
	Very important	30	39.5	39.5	71.1
	Essential	22	28.9	28.9	100.0
	Total	76	100.0	100.0	

### Appendix 11: Correlations between Kindergarten Readiness Domains and Parent Demographics

			Level of Education	Physical and Motor Development	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches towards Learning	Language	Cognitive Development
Spearman's rho	Level of Education	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.003	-.087	.133	.091	-.006
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.982	.457	.253	.434	.956
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Physical and Motor Development	Physical and Motor Development	Correlation Coefficient	-.003	1.000	.632**	.642**	.660**	.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.982	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Social and Emotional Development	Social and Emotional Development	Correlation Coefficient	-.087	.632**	1.000	.695**	.671**	.610**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.457	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Approaches towards Learning	Approaches towards Learning	Correlation Coefficient	.133	.642**	.695**	1.000	.777**	.735**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.253	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Language	Language	Correlation Coefficient	.091	.660**	.671**	.777**	1.000	.864**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.434	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Cognitive Development	Cognitive Development	Correlation Coefficient	-.006	.604**	.610**	.735**	.864**	1.000

nt	Sig. (2-tailed)	.956	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Correlations

			Parent Age	Physical and Motor Development	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches towards Learning	Language	Cognitive Development
Spearman's rho	Parent Age	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.117	.003	.011	-.061	-.076
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.315	.978	.922	.599	.516
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Physical and Motor Development		Correlation Coefficient	.117	1.000	.632**	.642**	.660**	.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.315	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Social and Emotional Development		Correlation Coefficient	.003	.632**	1.000	.695**	.671**	.610**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.978	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Approaches towards Learning		Correlation Coefficient	.011	.642**	.695**	1.000	.777**	.735**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.922	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Language		Correlation Coefficient	-.061	.660**	.671**	.777**	1.000	.864**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.599	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Cognitive Development		Correlation Coefficient	-.076	.604**	.610**	.735**	.864**	1.000

ent	Sig. (2-tailed)	.516	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Correlations**

			Household Income	Physical and Motor Development	Social and Emotional Development	Approaches towards Learning	Language	Cognitive Development
Spearman's rho	Household Income	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.107	.169	.041	.077	.106
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.358	.146	.728	.508	.363
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Physical and Motor Development	Physical and Motor Development	Correlation Coefficient	.107	1.000	.632**	.642**	.660**	.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.358	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Social and Emotional Development	Social and Emotional Development	Correlation Coefficient	.169	.632**	1.000	.695**	.671**	.610**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.146	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Approaches towards Learning	Approaches towards Learning	Correlation Coefficient	.041	.642**	.695**	1.000	.777**	.735**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.728	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76
Language	Language	Correlation Coefficient	.077	.660**	.671**	.777**	1.000	.864**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.508	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	76	76	76	76	76	76

Cognitive Development	Correlation Coefficient	.106	.604**	.610**	.735**	.864**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.363	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	76	76	76	76	76	76

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).