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COMPARISON OF ATTITUDES OF MOTHERS AND FATHERS

TOWARD NURSERY SCHOOL EDUCATION

by

Pamela Meals

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Family and Child Development

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Pamela Meals

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	v
ABSTRACT	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Objectives	3
Hypotheses	3
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	5
Parental Attitudes Toward Nursery School Education	5
Effects of Parental Attitudes on Children	11
Measurement of Attitudes	15
Summary	17
III. PROCEDURE	20
Selection of the Subjects	20
Description of the Instrument	21
Reliability	22
Validity	23
Personal Background Information	24
Administration of the Questionnaire	24
Analysis of the Data	24
IV. FINDINGS	26
Description of the Subjects	26
The Subjects' Responses	28
Scoring	30
The First Hypothesis	34
The Second Hypothesis	35
The Third Hypothesis	35
The Fourth Hypothesis	36
Summary of Findings	37
V. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION	39
Summary	39
Discussion	41
Implications	43

LITERATURE CITED	45
APPENDIX	49
VITA	53

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Background information of the subjects	27
2. Number of high and low scoring subjects' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate	29
3. Number of high and low scoring mothers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate	30
4. Number of high and low scoring fathers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate	30
5. Item analysis of scale items	31
6. Number of mothers' and fathers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate	34
7. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning child's independence or dependence as it relates to nursery school	35
8. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning the value of the nursery school experience for the child	36
9. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning care and guidance of the child at nursery school	37

ABSTRACT

Comparison of Attitudes of Mothers and Fathers
Toward Nursery School Education

by

Pamela Meals, Master of Science

Utah State University, 1968

Major Professor: Dr. Jay D. Schvaneveldt
Department: Family and Child Development

Attitudes of middle class mothers and fathers toward nursery school education were measured and compared. The subjects were parents of children who attended the Utah State University nursery school. A scale was developed to test parental attitudes. Attitudes toward nursery school education were definitely favorable. Comparison of attitudes expressed by mothers with those expressed by fathers revealed significant differences between the two groups, when the total number of responses of all scale items were considered together.

The total scale included 48 items comprising three subscales, which tested the following parental attitudes toward nursery school education: attitudes concerning a child's independence or dependence as it relates to nursery school attendance, attitudes pertaining to the value that the nursery school has for a child, and attitudes toward the care and guidance of a child while at nursery school. Comparisons of attitudes of mothers and fathers in each of these three areas disclosed that there was no significant difference between the two groups in attitudes expressed. Mean scores of mothers and fathers were 77.4 and 76.2, respectively.

The scale used to measure attitudes was found to discriminate significantly between the high and low scoring subjects. However, an item analysis of the scale revealed few individual items which could discriminate significantly between the high and low scoring subjects.

(60 pages)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study sought to compare the attitudes of middle class mothers and fathers, who have children attending nursery school, toward nursery school education. An understanding of the attitudes of mothers and fathers toward nursery school education is of both theoretical and practical importance in the field of child development today. The theoretical importance lies in the relevance this problem has to the effects produced by attitudes and in a larger context, to the processes of socialization. The practical importance relates to nursery school philosophy and practice: the need for parent-teacher communication, and the need to see each child as an individual.

Swift (1964) discusses the present-day controversy concerning early group experience. A number of situations have resulted in the expansion of nursery programs: (1) the increasingly large proportion of mothers in the labor force, (2) the importance attached to good social adjustment, and to the ability to function well in the group, and (3) the value that educators and others place on utilizing the child's full potential for learning during the preschool years. However, the wisdom of the expansion of nursery schools has been questioned: (1) because of concern expressed by those who feel that greater group participation in the preschool years would interfere with the fulfillment of the child's need for a close relationship with his mother, and (2) because of concern expressed about the effects on the young child of the greater

routinization of care in the group situation, and the necessity of conforming to group demands before the child has completely defined himself and his role as an individual.

In addition to the foregoing controversies, parents can be expected to have additional differing attitudes toward nursery school, simply because it is their own child who is concerned. Read (1950) points out that the experience of having a child enter nursery school means different things to each parent. The school offers each parent something different. It would be helpful for the teacher of the nursery school to understand the parents' feelings, and that attitudes toward having their child there may be mixed.

Swift, after reviewing several studies, discusses a different perspective on the problem and concludes that:

. . . many of the traits which the child brings to the nursery, and which ensure his success or failure in the nursery group, are related directly to parental attitudes and the experiences the parents have provided in the home. (Swift, 1964, p. 279)

This has relevance to the present problem in that attitudes of parents toward school and the activities at school are dominant in shaping the attitudes of their children toward the same. Although most influence on the child has been attributed to maternal attitudes and practices, Tasch (1952) is representative of those who point out that the role of the father must not be underestimated.

Statement of the Problem

The specific purpose of this study was to measure and compare the attitudes of mothers and fathers of children attending the Utah State University nursery school during Spring Quarter, 1968, concerning several

aspects of nursery school education: the value of the nursery school experience for the child, the child's independence or dependence as it relates to nursery school attendance, and the care and guidance the child has while at nursery school. This measurement of parental attitudes required the development of a parental attitude scale, which was a major part of the study. In view of the unquestionable effects of parental attitudes on their children, it was felt that any new knowledge that this study might contribute would be of importance. Also, expressed attitudes of mothers and fathers might reflect need for more parent-teacher communication and possibly even parent education. Nursery school education, as used in this study, has reference to education received in nursery schools or preschools which have recognized educational programs for children between the ages of two years and five years.

Objectives

The objectives were: (1) to measure the attitudes of parents concerning nursery school education, (2) to compare attitudes of mothers with those of fathers, and (3) to evaluate the method used as a measure of parental attitudes.

Hypotheses

- (1) There is a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers.
- (2) Attitudes of mothers reflect more anxiety about letting children become independent than do attitudes of fathers.
- (3) Fathers' attitudes reflect more negativism toward the value of the nursery school experience than do the mothers'.

(4) There is no significant different between attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning care and guidance of their children in the nursery school.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review was made of representative studies in the following areas: (1) attitudes of parents toward nursery school education, (2) effects of parental attitudes on children, and (3) the measurement of attitudes.

Parental Attitudes Toward NurserySchool Education

Abundance of ideas and theory, but meager empirically verified knowledge, characterize the impression created by this area of study. Cunningham (1934) is the only empirical study found which deals specifically with the attitudes toward nursery schools. The sample tested was small, and consisted of university students studying in the fields of education and sociology. From the statistical treatment of the results of this application it was evident that the groups employed were quite homogeneous in regards to attitudes toward nursery schools. The students closely connected with the School of Education and thus with the university nursery unit, scored slightly higher on the attitude scale than the students studying sociology. The mean score for all male subjects was slightly less than the mean score for all female subjects. There was noticeable congregation of scores around scale values 7 and 8 on the 11 point attitude scale. The author pointed out that this may have been due to factors totally apart from reliability or validity of the scale. Predominant among these factors is the possibility that the majority of

persons may actually lie in these two positions in regards to their attitudes toward nursery schools; the subject of nursery schools obviously does not comprise as radical an issue as some moral, political, or family issues. These positions represent an attitude which is definitely favorable to nursery schools, and yet the mean score is kept down to 8 by the endorsement of criticisms which, by their frequency of occurrence, are proved to be held even by persons who in general are strongly in favor of nursery schools.

Read (1960) points out that in taking a child to nursery school each parent is undertaking a significant experience. The child will develop much more independence, he should develop satisfying relationships with other people outside his family, and he will have experiences that his family does not share. A few parents, whose own growing-up was filled with conflicts, may find it difficult to share with the teacher responsibility for the child and what happens to him. If it has been extremely important to a mother to have the child dependent on her, the change may be difficult to accept, and it may be difficult to accept the child's liking for nursery school and readiness to leave the parents. Read also observed in this connection that it is often the father who is more in favor of sending a child to nursery school than the mother, as the father has less of an emotional adjustment to make than does the mother. Also, if a mother has found the care of a young child quite difficult she may be reluctant to enroll him in nursery school, being afraid of her own feeling of wanting to escape from the care of the child. Read states further that the difficulty a child may have in entering school is likely to be directly related to the difficulty that the parent has in leaving the child free to enter.

Kleim and Ross (1965) researched the impact of kindergarten entry on the family. The child who goes to kindergarten for the first time may create (1) anticipatory tension, (2) reactions to separation, (3) value conflicts and (4) role changes for the parents. This type of crisis could be expected to be as difficult, and even more difficult, for a nursery school child.

Phelps (1965) studied parental perception of role behavior of nursery school teachers. The major findings of this study were: (1) Those adults who perceived the teacher's role behavior as negative tended to have conflicting role expectations of the teacher. (2) Adults perceiving the teacher positively seemed to be evaluating her on the basis of personal characteristics rather than expected role behavior. (3) Those adults who had little or no perceptual change tended to have some characteristics both positive and negative. (4) The fathers usually produced perceptual patterns similar to those of their wives. (5) The relationship between the type of perception exhibited by adults and their attitudes toward family life and child behavior was inconclusive. The theoretical and practical implications discussed were: (1) The discrepancy between the teacher's behavior and the role expectation of the adult students tested could be alleviated or minimized by using the initial meeting of teacher and adult to discuss her role in the nursery school and the expectations she has for the parents. (2) The suggestion was made that nursery school teachers should have a basic knowledge of the principles of adult psychology and learning, and the implications these have for adult activities. (3) Educators must overcome the belief held by some parents that nursery school is only some place to leave children rather than a potentially exciting educational

experience for both the child and parent. .

An English primary school headmaster (anonymous, 1965) constructed an opinion poll which was to produce a reflection of parental opinion concerning the service offered by an infant and junior school. The questionnaire consisted of 13 questions, each having four possible answers. Although this questionnaire is not appropriate for studying parents of American preschoolers, it is relevant that the parents tested were cooperative and showed a serious and responsible approach to the problem, and that teachers were greatly benefited by knowing the parental attitudes.

Baruch (1939) described expressed attitudes of parents who had children in the Broadoaks Preschool of Whittier College when asked why they sent their children to this school. Reasons given, over the several years of inquiry, were varied but group themselves into several rather well-defined categories: (1) Social adjustment. The largest number of parents questioned sent their children to preschool for companionship of other children of their own age. (2) To help overcome problems. Many parents turned to the preschool for help with problems they could not solve. (3) To prevent problems from arising. Other parents felt that the preschool was a safeguard and promoted best development. (4) To relieve certain home conditions. Where there is tension or other unusual home conditions the preschool offers an outlet for the child. (5) For parking purposes. It was reported that a smaller number of parents used the nursery school to have children out of the way. (6) For parent education. Frequently parents feel a need for learning to be a better parent. (7) Because parent and child remain better friends when not perpetually together. Parents felt a need for leisure and work time

apart from their children. (8) As a transition to school. Many parents were sensitive to the difficulties involved in adjustment to school. (9) For intrinsic educational advantages. Many parents believed the preschool offered distinct advantages and opportunities for growth.

Reeves (1941) states that when a child goes to nursery school for the first time there is a question as to whose adjustment is more difficult--the child's or parents'. His going means that the baby is a baby no longer, and that the first break in the close-knit relationship of dependency between child and parents has been made. This break, traditionally set at the school or kindergarten age, is now often stepped down to nursery school age. Discussions with parents disclosed reasons for sending children to nursery school. Parents want their children to learn socially approved conduct such as: to learn to play with other children, to eat, sleep, talk, and control their bodies, to use many materials, to stop stuttering, thumb-sucking, whining, crying, biting, hitting other children, and so on ad infinitum. Often parents send their children to nursery school to aid the child's step toward freedom. They send them for a break from too close association. Occasionally the emotionally rejected child goes to nursery school. Perhaps the parent wants some focus of blame if the child does not develop well.

Stendler (1951) studied social class difference in parental attitudes toward school at Grade I level. One area researched concerned parental beliefs about preschools. Since nursery-kindergarten is not compulsory, attendance at preschool might be interpreted as an indication of parental belief in education, and vice versa. Results showed that a child's chances of attending preschool decrease as one goes down the social ladder; almost 100 per cent of upper and upper-middle class

families sent their children to preschool, while only 14 per cent of the lower-lower class families sent theirs. The reason most commonly advanced for not sending a child to preschool was that of cost. However, results cannot be explained only in terms of the economic factor but may be due to differences in the way in which different social classes regard the school. It seemed likely that some lower class families were not thoroughly sold on preschools but preferred to spend their money in keeping with their particular values. Reasons given for sending children to preschools, which came mainly from upper and middle class families, included: (1) to improve social adjustment, (2) to prepare for first grade, and (3) kindergarten is something one accepts without question these days. Reasons other than financial for not sending children were statements such as, "They're in school long enough;" "I've got a kindergarten here at home with two of them." While there were social class differences in preschool attendance, reasons for sending or not sending children showed no distinct social class trend.

Forbes (1960), in a study of parental selection of schools for preschool children, disclosed some attitudes of relevance to this study. Reasons parents selected a school were given: (1) Parents with children in half-day programs felt that the program available was an important criteria in their selection of a school. The convenience of the program was listed by some parents as a second consideration. (2) Parents with children in all-day preschool programs were most interested in the convenience of the school. Reasons given for sending children to school were also given: (1) Parents of children in half-day schools indicated that their children were sent to school to prepare them for first grade and to give them playmates of their own age. (2) Most of the

children attending all-day schools did so because the mothers were not home during the day.

Phelps (1965a) studied parent perceptions of cooperative nursery school evening meetings. Parents who had children in a parent cooperative nursery for two-year-olds and a nursery for four-year-olds in Berkeley, California, were interviewed as to their attitudes about evening parent education meetings. There were 53 subjects, 41 mothers and 12 fathers. Examination of results indicated that 28 parents expressed dissatisfaction, while 25 parents indicated they perceived these meetings as beneficial. Implications of findings suggest the need for teachers to broaden their professional experience to include certain facets of adult education. If cooperative nursery teachers subsequently employed this special knowledge, nursery school without a doubt would become more attractive to the parents. A teacher could then effect changes in behavior and be more instrumental in developing parental attitudes which are desirable.

Effects of Parental Attitudes on Children

Swift (1964) states that the effect of the nursery experience on the particular child will depend upon the child's own personality, abilities, and interests. These in turn will have been shaped by earlier experiences in the home. Children from lower social classes seem to benefit most.

Hurlock (1956) states that parental attitudes play a role of major importance in determining the attitudes and behavior of the child. If

parental attitudes changed for the better as their children grew older, their effect would be less serious. But parental attitudes tend to be persistent and to change quantitatively rather than qualitatively. Thus, the attitudes which affect the preschool child will also shape the entire future of this child. Mendinnus (1959) writes that an assumption underlying parent attitude questionnaires is that parent attitudes show some constancy over time. Other research findings argue against the notion of attitude constancy (Baldwin, 1946; Lasko, 1954).

Read (1960) reports that in taking a child to nursery school, each parent is undertaking a significant experience. The way the mother really feels about sending the child to nursery school will have a profound effect on the way the child adjusts there. If she feels reluctant, unsure, or overanxious about his attending she hinders his accomplishment of the task of meeting the new experience and growing more independent. It is noted in this connection that children who have had brothers or sisters in school previously usually enter more easily than those who have not. If the parent has accepted school experience for the child, the child is likely to find it easy to do the same.

Parental attitudes toward child-rearing and the family life are important influences on the personality development of the child (Rosen, 1955; Schaefer and Bell, 1958; Deutsch, 1964a and 1964b). Dager (1964) states that personality formation has been viewed universally as taking place during the early years, which are spent primarily within the family.

Several studies indicate a positive relationship between the personality of children and the personality of their parents (Crook, 1937; Roff, 1950; Finney, 1959). It has been pointed out that parent-child

resemblance is lower in emotional characteristics (such as introversion or dominance) and higher in interests, opinions, and attitudes. In fact, the average parent-child correlation on most attitude scales is approximately as high as on intelligence tests (Anastasi, 1958). Bandura (1963) confirms the significance of imitation in the personality development of the child. Hartup (1959) states that children imitate the like-sexed parent more often than the opposite-sexed parent.

Bandura and Huston (1961) studied identification as a process of incidental learning. The authors state that although part of a child's socialization takes place through direct training, much of a child's learned behavior is believed to be acquired through identification with the important adults in his life. This process has been variously described as "vicarious" learning, observational learning, and role taking. The learning appears to be more a result of active imitation by the child of attitudes and patterns of behavior that the parents have never directly attempted to teach than of direct reward and punishment of instrumental responses. The results of this study generally substantiate the hypothesis that children display a good deal of social learning of an incidental imitative type.

Maier (1965) reviewed theory of Piaget, who states that identification as a mental process becomes evident towards the end of the child's second year. Identification in young children emerges from a combination of imitation and a sense of awe for the model. This sense of awe comes from the child's continuous experience with this model, usually his parents, because they have been continuously associated with satisfaction of his immediate needs and interests.

LeShan and LeShan (1961) point out that value orientations and goal setting behavior of children come directly from their parents' value orientations. The largest single impact on the child is related to what the parents are and do, rather than what they say. Frye, South, and Vegas (1965) agree that children tend to have orientations similar to those of their parents. In Western culture it would be expected that the mother would have more effect than the father on the child's orientation since the mother spends a greater amount of time with the child.

The relative importance of the mother and father upon the child is of importance to this study. Peterson, et al. (1959) state that there are practically no studies that research the attitudes of fathers and their part in the formation of personality tendencies among children. A review of literature on parent-child relationships over the years 1929-1956 revealed at least 169 publications dealing with relationships between mothers and their children, and only 12 dealt with father-child relationships. This imbalance has usually been justified through reference to an assumption that mothers play a more important part than fathers in the development of the child personality. Levy's (1943, p. 3) statement is typical: "It is generally accepted that the most potent of all influences on social behavior is derived from the social experience of the mother." Maier (1965) reviewed works of Sears, who places great emphasis on the importance of the mother's role in the child's personality development. Until around the age of four years, when boys are encouraged to switch identification to the father, the mother is the significant person in the lives of both girls and boys. Peterson, et al. (1959) evaluated the validity of this assumption through examination of both parents and assessment of their relative influence on the

behavior of children. They feel that probably the most significant finding to come from this study is that the attitudes of fathers are at least as intimately related as maternal attitudes to the occurrence and form of behavior in children. Thus, there is reason to believe that the emphasis in this effect is not as one-sided as it previously appeared (Read, 1945; Bowlby, 1951; Swewll, 1952; Miller and Swanson, 1958; Glidewell, 1961; Grant and Kantor, 1961). Fathers ought to be given more research attention and education or therapy concerning child relations. Nash (1965), after an extensive review of literature, found a relative lack of studies of the father and his role. It is concluded that relative neglect of the father by various researchers may have distorted the significance of the impact of the father on a child's development.

Measurement of Attitudes

Yarrow states that:

Even most charitably, research in parent-child relations cannot be viewed as a field in which methodology is exemplary and in which evidence is firm and consistent. But even most critically or despairingly, this field cannot be dismissed as unimportant in behavioral or developmental theory. Despite or because of these facts, how parents bring up their children and how parental characteristics are infused into child personality are questions that continue to inspire research. (Yarrow, 1963, p. 215)

Evidence of great interest in parent-child relations is seen in the number of attitude scales constructed to assess child-oriented parental attitudes (Champney, 1939; Shoben, 1949; Porter, 1954; Highberger, 1955; Schaefer and Bell, 1958; Lehner, 1960; Pumroy, 1966). The standard

techniques of scale construction are reported in several sources (Thurstone and Chave, 1929; Likert, 1932; Stouffer, Guttman, Suchman, Lazarsfeld, Star, and Clausen, 1950; Green, 1954).

Brown (1942) and Bell (1958) point out problems inherent in attempting to assess parental attitudes. Hoffman and Lippitt (1960) discuss methodological problems of studying the family and the child.

Nye and Bayer (1963) reviewed 456 studies published between 1947 and 1961 which indicated that the questionnaire technique of data gathering has dominated family research in recent years. The questionnaire was the instrument used in over half of all the published studies, with no other technique close to it. Becker and Krug (1965) state that questionnaire approaches to the assessment of parent attitudes have offered the enticing prospect of finding more efficient and economical methods for data collection in developmental research.

Cunningham (1934) designed a scale to measure attitudes toward nursery school. The author constructed a baseline representing the whole range of attitudes from those expressing the strongest appreciation of nursery schools to those most strongly opposed to them. In this way, ordinate numbers along the intervening scale points were theoretically measures of the popularity of each item. Attitudes were measured insofar as they were represented by verbal expression. Sincerity, truthfulness, and conduct as related to expressed attitudes were not determined. The first step in the construction of the scale consisted of collecting 175 statements of opinion concerning nursery schools from sources of literature, written statements gathered from various people interested in child development, and from random remarks from conversation. An attitude scale of 11 intervals was used. In

assigning scale positions for the statement, 100 persons from the education department of the University of Michigan were asked to assign scale values to each statement. Tabulations of returns were made, ambiguous statements were eliminated, and a final form was devised. Determination of the subject's attitude toward nursery schools was accomplished by computing the mean scale value of all the statements which he endorsed.

Summary

The above literature reviewed representative studies in the areas of parental attitudes toward nursery school education, effects of parental attitudes on children, and the measurement of attitudes. The following summary points were revealed by the review: Parental attitudes toward nursery schools appear to be favorable, despite endorsement of certain criticisms. Attitudes may be mixed; taking a child to nursery school is a significant experience for each parent, and may actually be a kind of crisis as the child gains his first independence. Parental perception of role behavior of nursery school teachers is not always positive; parent-teacher communications might alleviate or minimize discrepancies. Parents appear to be cooperative subjects when tested concerning attitudes, and teachers may be greatly benefited by the resulting knowledge. Parents' attitudes are reflected in reasons given for sending children to nursery school: for social adjustment, to help overcome or prevent problems, to gain independence, to relieve home conditions, for parking purposes, for parent education, to provide a break from perpetual parent-child association, as a transition to school, for educational purposes, as a release from parental responsibilities. Upper and middle class

parents display more favorable attitudes toward nursery school than do lower class parents. Parental perceptions of cooperative nursery school parent education meetings indicated much dissatisfaction; implications suggest a need for teachers' special knowledge of parents and parent education.

Parental attitudes play a role of major importance in determining the attitudes and behavior of the child. It is believed that parents' attitudes about the nursery school will significantly effect the child's adjustment there. Studies point out a positive relationship between parents' and child's personality. Imitation and identification significantly influence personality development. Children develop value orientations similar to their parents'. The mother is most often thought of as having the more important part in the development of the child's personality, but the father's place must not be underestimated.

There have been many attitude scales constructed to assess child-oriented parental attitudes. Review of these and other writings reveal methodology employed and problems encountered in testing parental attitudes. The questionnaire approach has been widely used and seems to be an effective way to assess attitudes. The method of construction of the one existing scale to measure attitudes toward nursery schools was presented.

There were virtually no empirical studies of parental attitudes concerning nursery school education, but there were writings demonstrating interest in the area, and the importance of knowledge concerning parental attitudes. In view of the unquestionable effects of parental attitudes on the child and his adjustment, and the lack of empirical research in the area of parental attitudes toward nursery school, it is

felt that this study will begin to fill a gap in this area of child development research. This study, in addition to measuring parental attitudes, compares the attitudes of mothers with those of fathers. The use of fathers in the sample is important because of the scarcity of research in child development where fathers have been studied as compared with mothers. The present study also makes a contribution to methodology, as a scale was constructed to assess the subjects' attitudes concerning certain aspects of nursery school education.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

The method and procedure followed in conducting this study is described as follows: (1) selection of the subjects, (2) description of the instrument, (3) measurement of reliability, (4) measurement of validity, (5) personal background sheet, (6) administration of the questionnaire, and (7) treatment of the data.

Selection of the Subjects

The subjects were chosen from among the parents whose children attended the Utah State University child development laboratory during Spring Quarter, 1968. The sample consisted of a systematic random sample of all parents who had children in the East and West labs of the Utah State University nursery school. The sample was drawn from the alphabetical list of parents whose children were attending the nursery school labs. There were 40 married couples comprising the 80 subjects interviewed. These 40 husband-wife units were considered to be representative of middle and upper-middle class parents of children who attend the nursery school at Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

It was assumed at the beginning of this study that the subjects would be cooperative in the project since participation in research is one of the purposes of the Child Development laboratory at Utah State University. This proved to be true.

Description of the Instrument

A scale for measurement of parental attitudes was developed to meet the needs of this study. The first step in developing a scale for measuring parental attitudes was to select areas of concern toward which parents might be expected to have definite feelings. Three areas were selected which seemed to be typically ones of concern: (1) a child's dependence or independence, (2) the value of the nursery school experience for the child, and (3) the care and guidance a child has at nursery school. Although these are areas of concern, there are indications that parents react to them with a variety of attitudes.

Dependency was selected because entrance into nursery school is usually the first major step that the preschool child takes toward independence from the family. This might be difficult for both parent and child.

The value of the nursery school was selected as a major area of concern to be evaluated because, rightfully, most parents try to do what is best for their children. Parents are aware of the importance of providing opportunity for growth of healthy, well-adjusted children. The majority of the scale was concerned with this area.

Care and guidance of a child while at nursery school was selected because of the concern common to all parents over their children's safety and well-being while not at home.

The second step in developing the scale was to list a variety of possible parental attitudes and reactions toward the three selected areas of concern to be used as scale items. The third step was to have four professionals from Utah State University examine the list of possible

scale items with regard to specific criteria and then accept, reject, revise, or add to the items. More description of this procedure will appear later in this chapter.

The completed scale was a series of items reflecting attitudes: 11 in the area of dependency, 24 in the area of value of the nursery school experience, and 13 in the area of care and guidance. Items from the three areas were mixed in the questionnaire in order to avoid obvious disclosure of the attitudes they were testing. Subjects were to respond by circling "Agree," "Disagree," or "Undecided" for each item. Some items were negative and some positive. They reflected varying degrees of opinion, from mild to extreme.

Reliability

Reliability was determined by test-retest. Eight couples (8 fathers and 8 mothers) were selected, in a systematic random fashion, to be interviewed. The couples were selected from the same lists used in selecting the 80 subjects of the actual study, excluding those 80 subjects. Appointments for interviews with the subjects were made by telephone, and the scale was administered to both parents at the same time in the home. This assured an independent measure of attitudes, as mothers and fathers filled out the questionnaires without collaborating. Tentative appointments for the retest were made at the time of the first interview, were confirmed later by telephone, and were conducted from 7 to 10 days following the original interview; the subjects were asked to respond again to the same questionnaire used for the first interview. The results were examined for consistency over time, by

measuring the percentage of agreement of questionnaire answers from each subject's original and second interview. The measure of reliability was found to be 83.63 per cent.

Validity

Validity of the scale was examined as follows: Four professionals from Utah State University in the departments of psychology, education, sociology, and child development evaluated possible scale items with regard to specific criteria. A list of possible scale items had previously been compiled by the investigator and the major professor for this study. The four professionals were each given the list of suggested items and instructions for evaluating them, several days before the meeting of this committee. At the time of the meeting, the professionals were instructed to accept, reject, or revise each item on the basis of:

- (1) Appropriateness to the theoretical construct (Is this item related to the framework of the study?)
- (2) Validity (Does this item test the attitude it is intended to test?)
- (3) Appropriate wording (Is this item worded so as not to make an answer obvious?)
- (4) Singularity of purpose (Does this item test only one concept or attitude?).

Three of the four judges were required to be in agreement in order for an item to be accepted for use in the scale. Additional items suggested by the professionals were also incorporated into the scale. The resulting scale was comprised of 48 items: 34 items from the list of possible scale items were revised and used, 9 were accepted in the original form, 1 item was rejected from the scale, and 5 new items were added by the committee (see Appendix).

Personal Background Information

A background information sheet was included for the purpose of acquiring information needed in interpreting the data. This included the following: sex, year of birth, occupation, education completed, number of children, position in the family of the child attending nursery school at the time of the study, the subject's birthplace (in reference to population size), and which parent was responsible for initiating the necessary response for the child's attending nursery school (see Appendix).

Administration of the Questionnaire

Appointments for interviews with the subjects were made by telephone. The investigator administered the questionnaire in the home with both parents present at once, to prevent collaboration in answering. Subjects were instructed to fill out the background information sheet, then work through the items as quickly as possible since first impressions tend to be the most accurate measures of attitudes.

Analysis of the Data

Personal background information was tabulated, means were figured, and a table was prepared to present a summary of the data. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test whether or not two samples had been drawn from the same population. Scores were figured for each subject, and the mean scores were computed. The total number of appropriate, undecided, and inappropriate responses were tabulated for mothers and fathers, and chi square was used to test whether or not the scale significantly discriminated between the upper and lower scoring subjects.

An item analysis tested each individual item to see whether or not they significantly discriminated between the upper and lower scoring individuals. Responses of mothers and fathers, concerning the four hypotheses, were analyzed using chi square to see if there was a significant difference between the attitudes of mothers and fathers. Descriptive statistics were utilized to describe other facets of the study.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Description of the Subjects

The sample for the present study consisted of 40 husband-wife units. The criteria used in selecting the subjects was that they were parents of children who attended the East or West labs of the Utah State University nursery school during Spring Quarter, 1968.

The mean age of the mothers was 30.3 years, for the fathers it was 32.8. The sample appeared to be well educated, and occupations of the parents were in the skilled and professional categories. The mean number of children in the families of the couples was 3.2. The mean position in the family of the child attending nursery school was 2.4. Most of the subjects were from small population areas. Both parents were responsible, in most cases, for putting the child in nursery school. Background information of the subjects is presented in Table 1.

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test whether two independent groups had been drawn from the same population. The U score which was derived from this analysis was transformed to a z score, since n_2 was larger than 20. The z score was not significant at the .05 level. Hence, it was assumed that the two groups, mothers and fathers, had similar distributions, and represented the same population.

Table 1. Background information of the subjects

		Mothers N=40	Fathers N=40
Age	22-25	6	4
	26-30	13	9
	31-35	17	15
	36-40	4	11
	41-43	0	1
	\bar{X}	30.3	32.8
Occupation	Unskilled	0	0
	Skilled	2	13
	Professional	6	19
	Housewife	30	0
	Student	2	8
Education	High school	10	5
	1-3 years college	16	4
	Bachelor's degree	10	12
	Graduate work	3	19
Number of children	1		4
	2-3		24
	4-5		9
	6+		3
	\bar{X}		3.2

Table 1. Continued

		Mothers N=40	Fathers N=40
Position in the family of the child attending nursery school	1st		16 (1 set of twins)
	2nd and 3rd		17 (1 set of twins)
	4th +		7
	\bar{X}		2.4
Birthplace (size)	Farm	15	12
	Less than 2,500 people	12	10
	2,500-50,000	9	11
	50,000 and larger	4	7
Parent responsible for enrolling the child in nursery school	Both	23	20
	Mother	15	19
	Father	2	1

The Subjects' Responses

Examination and scoring of the subjects' responses to the scale items revealed the following findings: The total group of 80 subjects answered 2,796 appropriate responses, 543 undecided responses, and 501 inappropriate responses. A chi square analysis, which compared the upper one-fourth and lower one-fourth scoring subjects, produced a chi square value of 110.88 was significant at the .001 level. Table 2 presents the data concerning responses of the high and low scoring subjects.

Table 2. Number of high and low scoring subjects' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Upper one-fourth scoring subjects	785	114	61
Lower one-fourth scoring subjects	588	180	192
	$\chi^2 = 110.88$ (P. = .001)		

The 40 mothers answered 1423 appropriate responses, 241 undecided responses, and 256 inappropriate responses. When these frequencies were submitted to chi square analysis, a chi square value of 52.5 was derived, which was significant at the .001 level. Table 3 shows the data concerning responses of the high and low scoring mothers.

The 40 fathers answered 1373 appropriate responses, 302 undecided responses and 245 inappropriate responses. When these frequencies were submitted to chi square analysis, a chi square value of 59.24 was derived, which was significant at the .001 level. Data concerning responses of high and low scoring fathers are presented in Table 4.

An item analysis was made using a chi square test on each item in the scale to determine if there was a relationship between obtaining a high or low score on the scale, and the individual items. The mother and father ratings were treated separately and the upper and lower quartiles were used to make the analysis. There were 7 items which discriminated between high and low scores with the mothers, and 5 with the fathers. Results from the item analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 3. Number of high and low scoring mothers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Upper one-fourth scoring mothers	399	51	30
Lower one-fourth scoring mothers	308	73	99
	$\chi^2 = 52.5$ (P. = .001)		

Table 4. Number of high and low scoring fathers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Upper one-fourth scoring fathers	386	63	31
Lower one-fourth scoring fathers	280	107	93
	$\chi^2 = 59.24$ (P. = .001)		

In summary, when the total number of scale items was analyzed together, the scale significantly discriminated between the high and low scoring subjects. However, an item analysis indicated that few of the individual scale items discriminated significantly between high and low scoring subjects.

Scoring

Throughout the investigation and analysis the scores were treated separately for mothers and fathers. For each of the 48 items appropriate

Table 5. Item analysis of scale items

Item	Level of significance	
	Mothers	Fathers
1. Nursery school, to a degree, reflects how our society pampers children.	n.s.	n.s.
2. Learning independence is a desirable outcome of the nursery school experience.	n.s.	n.s.
3. A drawback to the nursery school is that it does not teach the child to play alone.	n.s.	n.s.
4. The nursery school broadens the child's experience in a desirable way.	n.s.	n.s.
5. Responsibility can be taught better in the home than in the nursery school.	.05	.05
6. Through the nursery school the child learns to cooperate with others.	n.s.	n.s.
7. Children are better off staying at home until the age when public school begins.	n.s.	n.s.
8. Most children can profit by nursery school.	n.s.	n.s.
9. Disciplining of children should be left up to parents, not done by nursery school teachers.	n.s.	n.s.
10. When a large group of children are together in the nursery school, they learn objectionable habits from each others.	n.s.	n.s.
11. Nursery school education reflects an "educational frill" of a well-to-do society.	.05	n.s.
12. Nursery schools help children in making social adjustments.	n.s.	n.s.
13. Children this age are too young to be away from their mothers for the length of the nursery school period.	n.s.	n.s.
14. Nursery school teachers can help children to eliminate undesirable habits.	n.s.	n.s.
15. Nursery school is a helpful transition from the home to the public school.	n.s.	n.s.
16. Going to nursery school is a way for a child to catch all kinds of illnesses.	n.s.	n.s.
17. Nursery schools stimulate intellectual growth.	n.s.	n.s.
18. A child's safety at nursery school is to be questioned--the teacher can't watch everyone at once.	n.s.	n.s.
19. Nursery school gives parents an opportunity to talk about "children" with other interested adults.	n.s.	n.s.
20. There are more chances for social learning at nursery school than in a neighborhood with friends.	n.s.	n.s.
21. The child in the nursery school receives less help than he does at home.	.02	n.s.

Table 5. Continued

Item	Level of significance	
	Mothers	Fathers
22. Nursery school teachers can help prevent problems better than parents can, because of their objective view of the child.	.05	.01
23. Nursery school has become a prestige experience in America.	n.s.	n.s.
24. A child should have time to "be a child" before he is placed in organized preschool experiences.	n.s.	n.s.
25. The nursery school provides more opportunities for learning than does the home.	.001	n.s.
26. Parents and children will remain better friends when not perpetually together.	n.s.	n.s.
27. Some of the best opportunities for teaching in the nursery school occur in the toileting situation.	.02	n.s.
28. The child learns little for future use--just "nursery school stuff."	n.s.	n.s.
29. If both parents were working, it is preferable to leave the child with someone he knows (neighbors or relatives) rather than send him to a nursery school.	n.s.	.05
30. An aim of nursery school should be to educate parents as well as children.	n.s.	n.s.
31. The freedom a child has in nursery school encourages him to "run wild" at home.	n.s.	n.s.
32. Teachers should be expected to conform to requests from parents as to their children's participation in nursery school activities.	n.s.	n.s.
33. Regular attendance at nursery school for a child who is enrolled is not necessary.	n.s.	n.s.
34. Nursery school activities have a tendency to engage boys in "sissy" activities.	n.s.	n.s.
35. It is difficult for a parent to accept his child's showing affection to other adults, such as a nursery school teacher.	n.s.	n.s.
36. Nursery school experience is a desirable one for every child in our society.	.02	.01
37. It is hard for preschool children to go to nursery school because they still feel so dependent on their mothers and fathers.	n.s.	n.s.
38. Teacher-parent conferences are unnecessary at the nursery school level.	n.s.	n.s.
39. Lax discipline in the nursery school creates additional problems for parents.	n.s.	n.s.
40. If a child wants to stay home from nursery school with the family some days, he should be allowed to do so.	n.s.	n.s.

Table 5. Continued

Item	Level of significance	
	Mothers	Fathers
41. Nursery school may make children discontent with what they have at home.	n.s.	.01
42. Nursery schools seem chaotic and unorganized.	n.s.	n.s.
43. Nursery school provides time for children away from the family, which they should have.	n.s.	n.s.
44. Nursery school experience will make it more difficult for the child to be adequately stimulated in kindergarten.	n.s.	n.s.
45. If a child makes a fuss when left at nursery school the parent should stay until he is no longer needed.	n.s.	n.s.
46. The child who comes from a stable middle-class background doesn't need a nursery school experience.	n.s.	n.s.
47. The children who need nursery school for social contacts are the ones who don't benefit from it, because the situation makes them more shy.	n.s.	n.s.
48. Children need not attend nursery school if there are siblings at home with whom they can play.	n.s.	n.s.

responses were assigned a score of 2, undecided answers were assigned a score of 1, and inappropriate responses were given no score. Responses were judged as appropriate if they favored the nursery school experience, inappropriate if they reflected some reservations concerning an aspect of the nursery school experience. The total score for a subject was acquired by addition of the scores for each of the 48 items.

Scores ranged from 88 to 55 (the higher numbers being more appropriate), with a mean of 76.8 and median of 78. Mothers' scores ranged from 88 to 55, with a mean of 77.4 and median of 78. Fathers' ranged from 87 to 62, with a mean of 76.2 and median of 78. The scores of mothers and fathers differed very little, the mothers' being somewhat higher than the fathers'.

The First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis stated was: There is a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers toward nursery school education. This hypothesis was supported by the findings. The chi square value of 10.19, which was derived when comparing the total number of responses given by mothers and fathers, was significant at the .01 level. Table 6 shows the data concerning comparison of mothers' and fathers' responses.

The findings concerning scores of subjects seem to be in conflict with the above data concerning the difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers. The subjects' scores indicated very little difference between mothers and fathers, while a chi square comparing the two groups was significant at the .01 level. This conflict can be minimized in terms of the size of sample and the scale items; the size of the sample (80), the number of scale items (48), and the number of possible responses (3) make it possible for small differences to become apparent when chi square analysis is used. Thus, the properties of the chi square test could make possible a distortion of the data.

Table 6. Number of mothers' and fathers' responses judged as appropriate, undecided, or inappropriate

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Mothers' responses	1,423	241	256
Fathers' responses	1,373	302	245
	$\chi^2 = 10.19$ (P. = .01)		

The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis stated that: Attitudes of mothers reflect more anxiety about letting children become independent than do attitudes of fathers. Scale items numbered 2, 7, 13, 21, 24, 29, 35, 37, 40, 43, and 45 tested attitudes concerning the child's independence (see Appendix). This hypothesis was not supported by the findings. Table 7 presents data concerning comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers toward a child's independence as it relates to nursery school attendance.

There was little difference between attitudes expressed by the two groups. Both mothers and fathers appeared to support a child's independence as it relates to going to nursery school. The chi square of 3.4 was not significant at the .05 level.

The Third Hypothesis

The third hypothesis stated was: Fathers' attitudes reflect more negativism toward the value of the nursery school experience than do the

Table 7. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning child's independence or dependence as it relates to nursery school

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Mothers	313	57	70
Fathers	302	76	62
	$\chi^2 = 3.4$ (n.s.)		

mothers'. Scale items numbered 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20, 23, 25, 28, 30, 33, 36, 38, 41, 44, 46, 47, and 48 tested attitudes concerning the value of the nursery school experience (see Appendix). This hypothesis was not supported by the findings. Table 8 shows data pertaining to the value parents assign to the nursery school experience.

These data, as presented in Table 8, reveal very little difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers. Both groups appear to attach substantial value to the nursery school experience. The chi square value of 2.52 was not significant at the .05 level.

The Fourth Hypothesis

The final hypothesis stated was: There is no significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning care and guidance of their children in the nursery school. Scale items 5, 9, 16, 18, 19, 22, 26, 27, 31, 32, 34, 39, and 42 tested attitudes concerning the child's care and guidance while at nursery school (see Appendix). Table 9 presents data relating to parental attitudes toward a child's care and guidance while at nursery school.

Table 8. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning the value of the nursery school experience for the child

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Mothers	774	102	84
Fathers	758	124	78
	$\chi^2 = 2.52$ (n.s.)		

Table 9. Comparison of attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning care and guidance of the child at nursery school

	Appropriate answers	Undecided answers	Inappropriate answers
Mothers	336	82	102
Fathers	313	102	105
	$\chi^2 = 3.04$ (n.s.)		

There was very little difference between mothers' and fathers' attitudes in this area. Both groups seemed to approve, with some reservations, the care and guidance a child has while at nursery school. The chi square of 3.04 was not significant at the .05 level. This hypothesis is held tenable.

Summary of Findings

(1) When the total number of scale items was analyzed together, the scale significantly discriminated between the high and low scoring subjects. The chi square value derived was 110.88 and was significant at the .001 level. Analysis of the total number of high and low scoring mothers' responses to scale items yielded a chi square value of 52.5, which was significant at the .001 level. When the total number of fathers' responses to scale items was analyzed, it was found that the scale discriminated between the high and low scoring fathers, as the chi square value of 59.24 was significant at the .001 level. However, an item analysis indicated that few of the individual scale items discriminated significantly between high and low scoring subjects. There were 7 items which discriminated between high and low scores with the

mothers, and 5 with the fathers.

(2) Findings revealed that, when the total ratings of all items were analyzed together, there is a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and attitudes of fathers toward the three aspects of nursery school education tested. However, when parental attitudes concerning the three different areas were analyzed separately, the findings were that:

(a) Attitudes of mothers do not reflect more anxiety about letting children become independent than do attitudes of fathers; the attitudes expressed by the two groups were similar.

(b) Attitudes of fathers do not reflect significantly more negativism toward the value of the nursery school experience than do attitudes of mothers; the attitudes expressed were similar.

(c) Attitudes of mothers and fathers were similar concerning the care and guidance a child receives while at nursery school.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Summary

This study sought to measure and compare the attitudes of middle class mothers and fathers toward nursery school education. Subjects were parents of children attending the Utah State University nursery school during Spring Quarter, 1968. Attitudes measured concerned several aspects of nursery school education: the value of the nursery school for a child, a child's independence or dependence as it relates to nursery school, and the care and guidance a child has while at nursery school. This measurement of parental attitudes required the development of a parental attitude scale, which was a major part of the study. The hypotheses examined were: (1) There is a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers. (2) Attitudes of mothers reflect more anxiety about letting children become independent than do attitudes of fathers. (3) Fathers' attitudes reflect more negativism toward the value of the nursery school experience than do the mothers'. (4) There is no significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers concerning care and guidance of their children in the nursery school.

The sample consisted of a systematic random sample of all parents who had children in the East and West labs of the Utah State University nursery school. There were 40 married couples comprising the 80 subjects interviewed. The scale developed for measuring parental attitudes

consisted of 48 items, to which the subjects responded "Agree," "Disagree," or "Undecided." During the development of the scale, checks were made of reliability and validity of the scale items. Reliability was determined by test-retest, and was found to be 83.63 per cent. Validity of the scale was examined by professionals from Utah State University, who evaluated possible scale items with regard to specific criteria. A background information sheet was included in the questionnaire. Interviews by the investigator were conducted in the home with both parents present at once, to prevent collaboration in answering.

The data were analyzed through use of chi square, Mann-Whitney U test, and various descriptive measures. Parental attitudes were definitely favorable toward nursery school education; possible scores could vary from 0-96, and the mean scores for mothers and fathers were 77.4 and 76.2 respectively. Findings revealed that, when the total ratings of all items were analyzed together, there is a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and attitudes of fathers toward the three aspects of nursery school education tested. However, when parental attitudes concerning the three different areas were analyzed separately, the findings were that: (1) Attitudes of mothers do not reflect more anxiety about letting children become independent than do attitudes of fathers; the attitudes expressed were similar. (2) Attitudes of fathers do not reflect significantly more negativism toward the value of the nursery school experience than do attitudes of mothers; the attitudes expressed were similar. (3) Attitudes of mothers and fathers were similar concerning the care and guidance a child receives while at nursery school.

When the total number of scale items was analyzed together, the scale significantly discriminated between the high and low scoring subjects. However, an item analysis indicated that few of the individual scale items discriminated significantly between high and low scoring subjects.

Discussion

It has been observed by the investigator that the scope of the study might be expanded to test parents who have not enrolled their children in nursery schools. Parents who do not send their children to nursery school may have attitudes that differ from those of parents whose children do attend. This was a study and comparison of a group of parents who have demonstrated an interest in nursery schools, as measured by a child enrolled in such. Since no other studies have been done which were similar to this one, and a measuring device had to be constructed for the study, it was felt that the scope of the study would be too broad if it also included assessment of parental attitudes of those whose children do not attend nursery schools. A study including a comparison of parents who have a child enrolled and a group who do not would be an appropriate area for further study utilizing the scale developed for this study.

In general, parental attitudes were found to be definitely favorable toward nursery school education. These findings parallel those of Cunningham (1934) who pointed out the possibility that the majority of persons may actually have favorable attitudes about nursery schools, as the subject of nursery education obviously does not comprise as radical an issue as many other issues of our times. Also, examination of the subjects' background information shows that this group of parents

is particularly well educated; they could logically be expected to have favorable attitudes toward a nursery school program.

Examination of the data revealed a significant difference between attitudes of mothers and fathers, when the total number of scale items were analyzed together. This conflicts with the findings that mothers' and fathers' scores are very similar. Perhaps the differences between the two groups are not as significant as they appear to be, but rather are over-emphasized by the use of chi square analysis. It appears that differing attitudes may be products of variables other than the sex of the subject (such as educational level, age, or number of children). It is interesting to note in this connection that the scores of husband-wife units appeared to be somewhat similar.

Mothers scored slightly higher, on the whole, than did the fathers, though this difference was not significant for any particular hypothesis. This trend is in the expected direction, since most mothers spend more time in child care than do fathers, and so should be more knowledgeable in the area.

An item analysis of the individual scale items indicated that very few discriminated significantly between high and low scoring subjects. However, a chi square analysis of the responses given by all subjects in the upper and lower one-fourth of the scorers, was found to be significant at the .001 level. Use of a larger and more diversified sample would undoubtedly reveal a greater number of scale items which could discriminate significantly.

Implications

The following implications pertain to testing of parental attitudes:

(1) The scale used in this study was developed in the hope of gaining further understanding of an area of parental attitudes. The significance of the effects of parental attitudes on children has been demonstrated by many researchers, and calls for further research.

(2) In order to test parental attitudes toward nursery school education, there is a need for better measurement techniques. Although there has been considerable writing which implies the value of nursery school education, there has been a scarcity of empirical studies on this topic. There were no empirical studies of parental attitudes concerning the nursery school.

(3) This study has demonstrated that parental attitudes toward nursery school can be measured and assessed with a certain degree of success.

(4) Further refinement of the scale developed for this study might produce more accurate and significant findings.

(5) An implication for further research relates to the scope of the sample used. It is recommended that further studies be conducted to compare attitudes of parents whose children do attend nursery school with those who do not. Also, a comparison of attitudes of parents from differing social classes would be helpful in disclosing various attitudes held in regard to nursery school programs.

(6) It is recommended that further studies be conducted to assess the effect of various background factors (such as age, education, attitudes of spouse, etc.) on attitudes of parents. This would appear to

be especially important in lieu of the fact that negligible differences in the attitudes of mothers and fathers existed in this study.

The practical implications relate to nursery school philosophy and practice. Findings point out that parents' attitudes toward nursery school education and policy are mixed; frequent and open parent-teacher communication should be seen as an essential facet of nursery education. Also, teachers should see each child in the group as an individual; he is a product of many influences, interaction with his parents being one of crucial importance.

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APPENDIX

Utah State University
 Department of Family and Child Development

Please respond to the following items as truthfully and completely as possible. Your name is not required and your anonymity in the study is assured.

Sex: male _____ female _____

Year of birth _____

Occupation _____

Education completed _____

Number of children (you and your spouse) _____

Position in the family of the child now attending nursery school

_____ first child

_____ second child

_____ third child

_____ fourth child

_____ other (specify)

Your birthplace

_____ on a farm

_____ in a community of less than 2,500 population

_____ in a community of 2,500 to 50,000 population

_____ in a community of over 50,000 population

Which parent was responsible for initiating the necessary response for your child's attending nursery school?

_____ husband

_____ wife

_____ both of us

ATTITUDES TOWARD NURSERY SCHOOL EDUCATION

Definition: Nursery school education, as used in this scale, has reference to education received in nursery school or preschool which has recognized educational programs for children between the ages of two years and five years.

Please read each item carefully and give your response by circling one of the three following categories: Disagree, Undecided, Agree.

Circle One

- D U A 1. Nursery school, to a degree, reflects how our society pampers children.
- D U A 2. Learning independence is a desirable outcome of the nursery school experience.
- D U A 3. A drawback to the nursery school is that it does not teach the child to play alone.
- D U A 4. The nursery school broadens the child's experience in a desirable way.
- D U A 5. Responsibility can be taught better in the home than in the nursery school.
- D U A 6. Through the nursery school the child learns to cooperate with others.
- D U A 7. Children are better off staying at home until the age when public school begins.
- D U A 8. Most children can profit by nursery school.
- D U A 9. Disciplining of children should be left up to parents, not done by nursery school teachers.
- D U A 10. When a large group of children are together in the nursery school, they learn objectionable habits from each other.
- D U A 11. Nursery school education reflects an "educational frill" of a well-to-do society.
- D U A 12. Nursery schools help children in making social adjustments.
- D U A 13. Children this age are too young to be away from their mothers for the length of the nursery school period.
- D U A 14. Nursery school teachers can help children to eliminate undesirable habits.
- D U A 15. Nursery school is a helpful transition from the home to the public school.
- D U A 16. Going to nursery school is a way for a child to catch all kinds of illnesses.
- D U A 17. Nursery schools stimulate intellectual growth.
- D U A 18. A child's safety at nursery school is to be questioned--the teachers can't watch everyone at once.
- D U A 19. Nursery school gives parents an opportunity to talk about "children" with other interested adults.
- D U A 20. There are more chances for social learning at nursery school than in a neighborhood with friends.
- D U A 21. The child in the nursery school receives less help than he does at home.
- D U A 22. Nursery school teachers can help prevent problems better than parents can, because of their objective view of the child.
- D U A 23. Nursery school has become a prestige experience in America.
- D U A 24. A child should have time to "be a child" before he is placed in organized preschool experiences.
- D U A 25. The nursery school provides more opportunities for learning than does the home.
- D U A 26. Parents and children will remain better friends when not perpetually together.
- D U A 27. Some of the best opportunities for teaching in the nursery school occur in the toileting situation.

- D U A 28. The child learns little for future use--just "nursery school stuff."
- D U A 29. If both parents were working, it is preferable to leave the child with someone he knows (neighbors or relatives) rather than send him to a nursery school.
- D U A 30. An aim of nursery school should be to educate parents as well as children.
- D U A 31. The freedom a child has in nursery school encourages him to "run wild" at home.
- D U A 32. Teachers should be expected to conform to requests from parents as to their children's participation in nursery school activities.
- D U A 33. Regular attendance at nursery school for a child who is enrolled is not necessary.
- D U A 34. Nursery school activities have a tendency to engage boys in "sissy" activities.
- D U A 35. It is difficult for a parent to accept his child's showing affection to other adults, such as a nursery school teacher.
- D U A 36. Nursery school experience is a desirable one for every child in our society.
- D U A 37. It is hard for preschool children to go to nursery school because they still feel so dependent on their mothers and fathers.
- D U A 38. Teacher-parent conferences are unnecessary at the nursery school level.
- D U A 39. Lax discipline in the nursery school creates additional problems for parents.
- D U A 40. If a child wants to stay home from nursery school with the family some days, he should be allowed to do so.
- D U A 41. Nursery school may make children discontent with what they have at home.
- D U A 42. Nursery schools seem chaotic and unorganized.
- D U A 43. Nursery school provides time for children away from the family, which they should have.
- D U A 44. Nursery school experience will make it more difficult for the child to be adequately stimulated in kindergarten.
- D U A 45. If a child makes a fuss when left at nursery school the parent should stay until he is no longer needed.
- D U A 46. The child who comes from a stable middle-class background doesn't need a nursery school experience.
- D U A 47. The children who need nursery school for social contacts are the ones who don't benefit from it, because the situation makes them more shy.
- D U A 48. Children need not attend nursery school if there are siblings at home with whom they can play.

VITA

Pamela Meals

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: Comparison of Attitudes of Mothers and Fathers Toward Nursery School Education

Major Field: Child Development

Biographical Information:

Personal Data: Born at Salt Lake City, Utah, December 21, 1945, daughter of Elbert O. and Jane Wetzel Meals.

Education: Attended elementary school in Washington, D.C.; Montgomery, Alabama; and Salt Lake City, Utah; graduated from Box Elder High School in 1963; received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Utah State University, with a major in social work and a double minor in child development and French, in 1967; completed requirements for the Master of Science degree, specializing in child development, at Utah State University, in 1968.

Professional Experience: Graduate assistant in Department of Child Development, September 1967 to June 1968; assistant teacher of the nursery school for the deaf, Primary Children's Hospital, Salt Lake City, Utah.