

Impact of Parents as Teachers on Kindergarten Readiness

What is Parents as Teachers? (PAT)

PAT works to create positive partnerships between home, school and the community and plays a vital role in supporting families and children from the very beginning toward school readiness, which is not cost for the parents.

A trained parent educator completes home visits with families to promote early learning, knowledge and understanding of important developmental milestones. Periodic screenings increase parents' understanding of their children's developmental progress, as well as inform them of any possible delays. Early intervention helps to identify concerns which improves school readiness for young children.¹²

Purpose of the Research

- Identify impact of Parents as Teachers
- Assess kindergarten readiness in three areas
- Identify gaps in services from PAT
- Work to increase knowledge of PAT services

Participants

The participants included 1 kindergarten teacher and their 20 kindergarten students at one suburban elementary school that serves primarily white students.

The teacher was female and reported her ethnicity as White. The children are 60% male and 40% female.

The students in the sample were 75% White, 15% Black, 10% other ethnicities. Due to relief initiatives

put forth by the COVID-19 CARES Act, all children in the school district currently receive free lunch, so economic data from this sample was not attainable.

Research Methods

- The assessment tool that was used was the Kindergarten Academic and Behavior Readiness Screener (K-ABRS), which is a three-item evaluation completed by teachers in the beginning of the academic year (Stormont et al., 2015). This screening tool measures



Parents as Teachers®



¹ Parents as Teachers. (n.d.). *Who we are index*. Parents as Teachers. Retrieved September 20, 2021, from <https://parentsasteachers.org/who-we-are-index>.

² Buek, K. W. (2019). Early growth trajectories of Children's approaches to learning: The contribution of parent and family characteristics. *Psychology in the Schools*, 56(6), 1053–1072. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22224>

the academic, behavioral, and overall readiness of children in kindergarten and each of these items is rated on a five-point scale (*poor, fair, good, very good, excellent*)³

- Utilized case-control study
- Non-random sampling was used because the data came from one teacher in one classroom

Variable List (IV & DV)	Variable Format	Type of Analysis to be Conducted	Reason for Analysis	Information to Report
Race	Nominal (White, Black, multiple)	Univariate- descriptive	Sample description	Mode, Rates
Gender	Nominal (Male, Female)	Univariate- descriptive	Sample description	Mode, Rates
Parents As Teachers involvement (IV)	Nominal (Yes/No)	Univariate-descriptive	Sample description	Mode, Rates
Behavioral Readiness (DV) Parents As Teachers involvement (IV)	DV - Interval (1-5) IV – Nominal (Yes/No)	Bivariate - T-test	RQ1: Does PAT involvement improve a child's behavioral readiness for kindergarten?	Mean, SD, p value, t-test
Academic Readiness (DV) Parents As Teachers involvement (IV)	DV - Interval (1-5) IV – Nominal (Yes/No)	Bivariate - T-test	RQ2: Does PAT involvement improve a child's academic readiness for kindergarten?	Mean, SD, p value, t-test
Overall Readiness (DV) Parents As Teachers involvement (IV)	DV - Interval (1-5) IV – Nominal (Yes/No)	Bivariate - T-test	RQ3: Does PAT involvement improve a child's overall readiness for kindergarten?	Mean, SD, p value, t-test

Discussion

The overall findings in our study did not yield statistically significant results. Past studies and other research has shown the effectiveness of PAT, and how it assists parents in understanding child development and prepares children for school⁴. This seems to be more a fault of the study than evidence that PAT does not improve outcomes for children. PAT was created to close gaps in readiness for children entering schools, regardless of their backgrounds. PAT has been evaluated in many studies, with results that show the effectiveness of the program and how it addresses those gaps⁵. PAT seeks the best outcomes for all children. While the results of this study may be insignificant, PAT is a program that does improve relationships between children and parents, and provides parents with support when other information may not be available to them.

³ Stormont, M., Herman, K., & Reinke, W. (2019). Kindergarten Academic and Behavior Readiness Scale: Matching Screening Data with Instructional Support Needs. *Children & Schools*, 41(4), 249–252. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdz018>

⁴ School Readiness Indicators Project, & Iveson, C., Ready or Not, Here We Grow: Cultivating Successful Learners: Tracking School Readiness1–8 (2004). Jefferson City, MO.

⁵ Buek, K. W. (2019). Early growth trajectories of Children's approaches to learning: The contribution of parent and family characteristics. *Psychology in the Schools*, 56(6), 1053–1072. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22224>

Limitations

- Unable to include PAT families
- Limited source of data
- Small sample size
- Diversity of sample

Future Recommendations

There are many improvements that could be made for future studies done on this program. First, PAT could address accessibility by pushing into schools and making sure that parents know how to access services. They could also work more closely with hospitals to ensure that kids who need it are identified and connected to services. Future research should include a large sample size. A larger sample size would allow for statistically significant results that could lead to findings that could improve the PAT program. It should also include a more diverse group of participants. The research could take into account how long the students had been participating in the program and how that impacted the effectiveness. Future research could also compare the specific interventions that exist within PAT to understand how each intervention is used. This could assist in the longevity of the program by evaluating whether the practices should remain the same, or adapt as new information is gained on parenting practices.