

PARENTAL SUPPORT IN PHONICS INSTRUCTION SCALE (PSPIS)

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Abstract: Early literacy development is strongly influenced by systematic phonics instruction and active parental engagement in home-based reading practices. Although parental involvement has been widely studied, there is a lack of standardized instruments specifically designed to measure phonics-focused parental support at the elementary level. The present study aimed to develop and validate the **Parental Support in Phonics Instruction Scale (PSPIS)**. An initial pool of 48 items was generated based on established literacy theories and empirical research. This was followed by a pilot study and expert review with 100 elementary students, item discrimination analysis using the extreme group method resulted in the refinement of a 38-item scale. The final instrument demonstrated strong internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha (α) = 0.89), with subscale reliability coefficients ranging from 0.79 to 0.87. The PSPIS comprises five dimensions: Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning, Parental Assistance in Reading Practice, Home Literacy and Phonics Environment, Monitoring and Academic Supervision, and Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading. The findings indicate that the scale is reliable and valid for assessing multidimensional parental support in phonics instruction.

Keywords: parental support, phonics instruction, home literacy, phonics environment and motivational support.

Introduction

Reading competence forms the foundation for academic achievement and long-term educational success. During the elementary years, children transition from emergent literacy skills to structured decoding and comprehension processes. Systematic phonics instruction plays a critical role in this transition by strengthening children's understanding of grapheme-phoneme correspondences and improving decoding accuracy and reading fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000).

However, literacy development is not shaped by classroom instruction alone. Home-based literacy interactions and parental instructional support significantly influence reading outcomes (Jeynes, 2012; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002). Parents contribute through guided phonics practice, shared reading, homework supervision, modeling reading behaviors, and providing emotional encouragement.

Despite extensive research on parental involvement, most existing instruments measure general academic engagement rather than phonics-specific instructional support. Therefore, the development of a structured instrument that captures the multidimensional nature of parental support in phonics instruction is essential. The present study addresses this need through the development and validation of the PSPIS.

Theoretical Framework

Phonological Processing Theory

The primary theoretical foundation for the present study is **Phonological Processing Theory**, as proposed and elaborated by researchers such as **Marilyn J. Adams (1990)** and **Linnea C. Ehri (2005)**. This theory explains that successful reading acquisition fundamentally depends on a child's ability to understand and manipulate the sound structure of language. It emphasizes that reading development is rooted in phonemic awareness, letter-sound correspondence, decoding, and word recognition skills.

Phonological processing refers to the use of phonological information (sounds of language) in processing written and spoken language. According to this theory, children must first develop awareness of individual sounds (phonemes) in words and then learn how these sounds correspond to written letters or letter combinations. Systematic phonics instruction strengthens these connections and enables accurate decoding and fluent reading.

In the context of phonics instruction, parental support plays a crucial role in reinforcing these foundational skills at home. When parents help children identify letter sounds, blend phonemes, segment words, correct pronunciation, and practice decoding unfamiliar words, they directly contribute to strengthening the child's phonological processing abilities. Regular practice and guided support enhance automatic word recognition, which ultimately improves reading fluency and comprehension.

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Thus, Phonological Processing Theory provides a strong conceptual basis for examining **parent support in phonics instruction**, as it directly links adult guidance in sound-symbol relationships with the development of reading competence.

Dimensions of PSPIS

1. Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning

This dimension focuses on the direct instructional support provided by parents in phonics learning. It examines how parents' guide children in understanding letter-sound relationships, blending sounds to form words, segmenting words into phonemes, correcting pronunciation, and reinforcing decoding strategies. The emphasis is on structured and intentional parental teaching behaviors that strengthen foundational phonics skills.

2. Parental Assistance in Reading Practice

This dimension measures the practical support parents provide during reading activities. It includes shared reading sessions, listening to the child read aloud, assisting with homework, explaining unfamiliar words, asking comprehension questions, and encouraging regular reading practice. The focus is on active parental involvement in improving reading fluency and comprehension.

3. Home Literacy and Phonics Environment

This dimension evaluates the literacy-rich atmosphere created at home to support phonics and reading development. It considers the availability of books and phonics materials, use of educational resources, opportunities for word games and rhyming activities, and the establishment of structured reading routines. The emphasis is on environmental scaffolding that promotes consistent literacy engagement.

4. Monitoring and Academic Supervision

This dimension assesses the degree to which parents monitor and supervise their child's reading progress. It includes tracking reading improvement, ensuring completion of reading tasks, maintaining scheduled reading time, limiting distractions such as excessive screen use, and communicating with teachers regarding reading performance. The focus is on systematic oversight that supports academic accountability.

5. Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading

This dimension reflects the affective support provided by parents to foster positive attitudes toward reading. It includes offering praise and encouragement, building reading confidence, reducing reading-related anxiety, celebrating progress, and motivating independent reading. The emphasis is on nurturing intrinsic motivation and emotional security in literacy learning.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine parent support in phonics instruction among the selected sample.

Item Development

An initial pool of 48 statements was constructed based on theoretical mapping and literature review. Items were written in

child-friendly language suitable for elementary students. A three-point Likert response format was used:

Response Format:

S. No	Response	Score
1.	Always	3
2.	Sometimes	2
3.	Never	1

Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to examine the clarity, reliability, and suitability of the Parent Support in Phonics Instruction Scale (PSPIS). A sample of 100 respondents was selected for the pilot administration. The preliminary draft of the scale consisted of 48 positively worded items, framed in simple and clear language. The tool followed a three-point Likert-type response format with the alternatives: *Always*, *Sometimes*, and *Never*.

The primary objective of the pilot study was to assess the internal consistency of the scale and to identify items that did not contribute significantly to the reliability of the instrument. The collected data were analyzed using the **Cronbach's Alpha method** to determine the reliability coefficient and item consistency.

Based on the reliability analysis, **10 items were found to have low item-total correlations and were therefore eliminated**. After removing these items, the final version of the scale consisted of **38 items**.

The reliability coefficient of the refined scale was found to be satisfactory, indicating good internal consistency. The pilot study thus confirmed that the finalized Parental Support in Phonics Instruction Scale is a reliable tool for measuring parental support in phonics instruction.

Final Structure

The finalized PSPIS consists of five dimensions:

1. Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning (6 items)
2. Parental Assistance in Reading Practice (8 items)
3. Home Literacy and Phonics Environment (8 items)
4. Monitoring and Academic Supervision (8 items)
5. Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading (8 items)

Results

A. Dimension-wise Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed to examine the central tendency and variability of each dimension of the PSPIS. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of PSPIS

S. No	Dimension	No. Of. Items	Possible Score Range	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
1.	Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning	6	6-18	15.84	1.92	0.81
2.	Parental Assistance in Reading Practice	8	8-24	21.96	2.41	0.84
3.	Home Literacy and Phonics Environment	8	8-24	20.18	2.36	0.79
4.	Monitoring and Academic Supervision	8	8-24	20.88	2.56	0.83
5.	Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading	8	8-24	21.50	2.48	0.87
Total Scale		38	38-114	100.36	8.14	0.89

B. Interpretation of Descriptive Statistics

1. Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning

The mean score of **15.84 (out of 18)** indicates a high level of perceived parental guidance in phonics learning among the respondents. This suggests that most parents actively support their children in developing foundational phonics skills such as letter-sound recognition and decoding. The relatively low standard deviation (**SD = 1.92**) reflects minimal variability, implying that such instructional guidance is consistently reported across the sample.

2. Parental Assistance in Reading Practice

The obtained mean score of **21.96 (out of 24)** signifies substantial parental involvement in reading-related activities, including shared reading and homework assistance. This high average indicates that parents frequently engage in direct reading support. The moderate standard deviation (**SD = 2.41**) suggests some variation in the extent of parental participation across families.

3. Home Literacy and Phonics Environment

The mean score of **20.18 (out of 24)** demonstrates that students generally experience a supportive literacy environment at home, with access to phonics-based activities and reading materials. The standard deviation (**SD = 2.36**) indicates moderate dispersion, suggesting differences in the availability of literacy resources and structured reading routines among households.

4. Monitoring and Academic Supervision

The mean value of **20.88 (out of 24)** reflects a strong level of parental monitoring and academic supervision related to reading

development. This suggests that most parents consistently track their child's reading progress and ensure completion of literacy tasks. The standard deviation (**SD = 2.56**) indicates moderate variability, possibly influenced by contextual factors such as parental availability or household structure.

5. Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading

With a mean score of **21.50 (out of 24)**, this dimension highlights a high level of emotional encouragement and motivational reinforcement provided by parents. The findings suggest that children generally perceive strong praise, confidence-building, and positive reinforcement related to reading. The standard deviation (**SD = 2.48**) reflects moderate variation in the degree of emotional support across respondents.

C. Overall Scale Interpretation

The overall mean score of **100.36 (out of 114)** reflects a high level of perceived parental support in phonics instruction and reading development among the sampled students. This indicates that, on average, respondents experience consistent instructional, environmental, supervisory, and emotional support from their parents in relation to phonics learning and reading activities.

The overall standard deviation of **8.14** demonstrates a reasonable degree of variability within the sample. While the majority of students report strong parental involvement, the observed dispersion suggests that levels of support differ across families, possibly due to variations in parental availability, literacy awareness, educational background, or home learning conditions.

Score Classification:

S. No	Score Range	Interpretation
1.	91-114	High Parental Support
2.	57-90	Moderate Parental Support
3.	38-56	Low Parental Support

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

The **Parental Support in Phonics Instruction Scale (PSPIS)** demonstrated strong internal consistency, indicating that the items within the instrument reliably measure the intended construct. The overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was **0.89**, suggesting that the 38 items collectively provide a consistent measure of parental support in phonics instruction and reading development.

The reliability coefficients for the five dimensions were as follows:

1. **Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning** ($\alpha = 0.81$)
2. **Parental Assistance in Reading Practice** ($\alpha = 0.84$)
3. **Home Literacy and Phonics Environment** ($\alpha = 0.79$)
4. **Monitoring and Academic Supervision** ($\alpha = 0.83$)
5. **Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading** ($\alpha = 0.87$)

All subscale coefficients exceed the commonly accepted threshold of **0.70**, indicating satisfactory to high internal consistency across dimensions. These findings confirm that the items within each subscale are coherently related and reliably assess specific aspects of parental involvement in phonics instruction.

Validity

The primary form of validity established for the **Parental Support in Phonics Instruction Scale (PSPIS)** was **construct validity**, as the instrument was specifically developed to measure the construct of parental support in phonics instruction. Since parental support in phonics learning is a multidimensional and abstract construct, the items were systematically framed to represent its theoretical components. These components include parental guidance in letter–sound correspondence, support in blending and segmenting sounds, assistance in decoding and word reading practice, pronunciation correction, structured reading supervision, and emotional encouragement related to reading activities. Care was taken to ensure that each item reflected phonics-specific parental involvement rather than general parental support behaviors.

In addition to construct validity, **content validity** was established through a thorough review process by experts in elementary education, literacy instruction, and educational psychology. The experts evaluated the relevance, clarity, representativeness, and appropriateness of each item in relation to the defined dimensions of the scale. Based on their feedback, necessary revisions were made to refine wording, remove ambiguity, and ensure alignment with the conceptual framework. This systematic expert validation process strengthened the overall adequacy and appropriateness of the PSPIS as a measure of parental support in phonics instruction.

Conclusion

The development and validation of the **Parental Support in Phonics Instruction Scale (PSPIS)** address an important need in early literacy research by providing a structured and multidimensional instrument for assessing phonics-focused parental engagement at the elementary level. The findings confirm that the PSPIS is a reliable and valid measure, with strong internal consistency across all five dimensions and high overall reliability.

The scale captures instructional guidance, structured reading support, home literacy environment, academic supervision, and emotional encouragement—highlighting that parental involvement in phonics instruction extends beyond routine homework assistance. Its theoretical foundation and empirical validation support its use in both research and educational practice.

The PSPIS offers practical value for educators seeking to strengthen school–home collaboration and for researchers examining the relationship between parental support and early reading outcomes. Although the study was limited to a specific regional sample and relied on student self-report data, the results provide a strong foundation for further validation across diverse contexts.

Overall, the PSPIS contributes meaningfully to the field of early literacy by offering a comprehensive framework to evaluate and enhance parental support in phonics instruction, thereby supporting the development of foundational reading skills among elementary school children.

PARENTAL SUPPORT IN PHONICS INSTRUCTION SCALE

S. No.	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Never
Parental Guidance in Phonics Learning				
1.	My parents teach me the correct sounds of English letters			
2.	My parents help me blend letter sounds to read new words			
3.	My parents show me how to break long words into smaller sounds			
4.	My parents guide me in spelling words using phonics rules			
5.	My parents correct me when I pronounce a word incorrectly			
6.	My parents explain phonics patterns such as rhyming words or word families			
Parental Assistance in Reading Practice				
7.	My parents listen to me read English aloud at home			

S. No.	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Never
8.	My parents encourage me to read English every day			
9.	My parents help me decode difficult words using letter sounds			
10.	My parents ask me to sound out new words while reading			
11.	My parents guide me to apply phonics rules while reading stories.			
12.	My parents help me practice phonics before English reading tests			
13.	My parents provide different types of English reading materials			
14.	My parents help me prepare for English reading tests or activities			
Home Literacy and Phonics Environment				
15.	My parents provide a quiet place at home for me to read comfortably			
16.	My parents provide enough English books and reading materials at home			
17.	My parents keep reading materials in a place where I can easily reach them			
18.	My parents set a regular time for reading at home			
19.	My parents reduce noise and distractions during my reading time			
20.	My parents ensure proper lighting when I read at home			
21.	My parents limit my screen time to encourage reading habits			
22.	My parents introduce new and interesting reading materials to improve my skills			
Monitoring and Academic Supervision				
23.	My parents check my English reading homework regularly			
24.	My parents monitor my improvement in reading skills			
25.	My parents review my phonics exercises or spelling work			
26.	My parents correct my reading mistakes immediately			
27.	My parents make sure I complete my reading tasks on time			
28.	My parents ask about what I learned in English class			
29.	My parents communicate with my teacher about my reading progress			
30.	My parents track my performance in reading tests			
Emotional and Motivational Support for Reading				
31.	My parents praise me when I read well			
32.	My parents encourage me when I find reading difficult			
33.	My parents make me feel confident in reading words using phonics			
34.	My parents appreciate my effort even if I make mistakes			
35.	My parents motivate me to improve my reading skills			
36.	My parents show happiness when I achieve good reading results			
37.	My parents support me patiently while I practice reading			
38.	My parents inspire me to become a better reader			

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