CHAPTER – V

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION
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Early childhood is a crucial period for children’s cognitive development and they are ready and all excited to embark on development of skill and understanding in areas such as language, literary, math and science. Indeed preschoolers’ literary experiences in these domains can help to build the skills, knowledge and attitudes that prepare young children for future academic success.

The knowledge and skills that children gain in early childhood is critically important for their future. Quality preschool experiences form the foundation for the skills and knowledge that children will be expected to possess during formal schooling. Teaching pre-reading skills and encouraging children to read are essential steps on the path to literary development. Preschools should provide a strong literary program in the early years. These goals are best served by a print rich environment that includes an abundance of high quality children’s books and opportunities to interact with meaningful print as they work and play together.

When preschools cannot provide this literary foundation, there may be serious and lasting negative consequences for children, most particularly for those whose homes do not support strong literary learning experience. These children are at considerable risk of reading failure. Some children come to school better off than their peers when it comes to early literary skills. Student who start out with optimal literary foundational skills tend to thrive and grow academically, in later years.
It is important to start early if children are to develop the skills they need to be successful. Research confirms a strong correlation between early literary skill development and later reading success. Therefore it is important that pre-school children are exposed to language and literary skills from very early years. Parents are the child’s first teacher, establishing the roots of a child’s literary development. When parents have knowledge about early literary techniques and practices, they may provide a home environment that is more conducive to early literary development.

Although parents believe their role is critical in helping children to learn, they might not have much awareness about their child’s development and learning needs. The impact is that, developmentally inappropriate / inadequate strategies may be used by parents or that some parents may not feel knowledgeable or confident enough to promote literary practices at home.

Parents should be exposed to relevant knowledge about literary development, so that they can be better informed, prepared and empowered to contribute to their child’s long term academic success. Involvement of parents with reading activities at home will have a positive influence on reading achievement, language comprehension and expressive language skills of the child. It will also improve the child’s interest in reading, attitudes towards reading and attentiveness in the classroom. Families can support language and literary learning by creating a home atmosphere in which reading, writing, talking and listening are a natural part of daily life.
Parents need to recognize the benefits of reading together at home and employ methods that get their children to initiate shared reading and follow appropriate strategies in their shared reading. Children who have a stimulating literary experience from birth are known to enter school with better vocabularies, listening skills, an enhanced memory and imagination. They also possess more phonic awareness, letter knowledge, print awareness, and an understanding of the purpose of reading. They are more prepared to learn to read and have a sound literacy foundation when they reach kindergarten.

The salient findings of the present research

**Preschool Survey**

- Pre-school centers do not adequately foster literary awareness amongst the children.
- Pre-school centers do not have adequate library facilities for their children.

**Intervention Program**

**Parent Literary Awareness**

- Majority of mothers in the experimental group were undergraduates in the age range of 25 – 39.
- All mothers in the experimental group were home makers.
- The pre and post assessment comparison of parents attitude towards school selection and voluntary participation revealed significant difference and the effect size was very large (3.01)
indicating that the intervention program has had an influence on the mothers in the experimental group.

- The pre and post assessment comparison of methods of fostering literary awareness revealed significant difference and the effect size was very large (7.29), which was the highest compared to all other dimensions in parents literary awareness evaluation indicating that intervention program has had an influence on the experimental group mothers.

- The pre and post assessment comparison of parents perceptions towards reading to children showed significant difference and the effect size was very large (6.66), which was the second highest compared to all other dimensions in parent literary awareness evaluation.

- The pre and post assessment comparison of Parents Awareness of children’s literary interest revealed significant difference and the effect size was very large (5.17), which was the third highest compared to all other dimensions in parent literary awareness evaluation.

- The pre and post assessment comparison of parents as role model for fostering literary awareness revealed significant difference and the effect size was very large (4.77).

- The pre and post assessment comparison of influence of age and education of mothers with parent literary awareness assessment revealed that there is a significant difference.
**Home Literary Environment**

- The pre and post assessment comparison of knowledge dimension of home literary environment evaluation revealed that there was a significant difference and **very large effect size**.
- The pre and post assessment comparison of **attitude dimension** of home literary environment evaluation showed that there was a significant difference and the **effect size was very large**.
- The pre and post assessment comparison of **practice dimension** of home literary environment evaluation showed that there was a significant difference and the total **effect size was very large**.
- The pre and post assessment comparison of influence of age and education of mothers with home literary environment assessment revealed that there was a significant difference.

**Pearson’s Co-Relation**

- Pearson’s co-relation established a significant **positive co-relation** between parents literary awareness and home literary environment.

**Interest Ranking Inventory**

- Three activities – “Reading a book with parents or another person”, “Flipping through picture books/ magazines” and “listening to stories” showed that the median and mean interest level jumped in all cases by significant values from pre to post test evaluation. The activities when ranked revealed that literary activities showed a significant jump, almost to the top from bottom, compared to the others.
Daily Reading Log

- Analysis of effectiveness of intervention on shared reading revealed that parameters such as “Total Reading Sessions in the month”, duration of each reading session, number of times child picked the book and number of times a session was initiated by the child, showed a gradual increase over the intervention and subsequent follow-up period. Two parameters, “sessions initiated by parents” and “number of times parent selected a book” remained unchanged over the entire period. Total interest level, Total Recall level during the shared reading session registered an increase over the same period. All these show that the intervention program had really worked in a positive manner.

Teachers Checklist

- The literary ability of children whose mothers attended the intervention program (Experimental Group) was compared with children whose mothers did not attend the program (Control Group). Data obtained revealed that children whose mothers attended the intervention program showed better literary skills across all grades (Pre-nursery, LKG, UKG and 1st Standard).

- The teachers’ evaluation of literary skills (like language development, alphabet & book knowledge, reading activities and Print & Writing awareness) of children showed positive improvements, higher for the intervention group compared to the control group children in age bracket 3 – 4 years.
• The teachers’ evaluation of literary skills (like language development, alphabet & book knowledge, reading activities and, Print & Writing awareness) of children showed a higher score for all sub-dimensions for the children in intervention group compared to those in the control group. The significance was <0.001 on the t test (unpaired). The score for Print and Writing Awareness was the highest of all scores from other sub-dimensions at 17.68±3.35. Next highest was Reading Activities and Skills at 16.02±3.09.

**Conclusion**

Preschool programs give children an edge in education in a competitive world. It offers to children the basic skills necessary to be successful in formal schooling. Preschools provide children a good foundation for continued learning, communication, higher self-esteem and enjoyment of the learning process. Preschools have the important task of giving children numerous and varied opportunities to promote the child’s development during the formative years including physical development, social development and literary competence. Literary competences open the door to academic learning and help ensure later success in school.

Preschool years present a great opportunity to learn and practice oral language and literary related skills. If the preschool program does not provide learning environments that foster language and literacy development, the children are at risk for reading failure.
A vast body of research has already established that children who start out slowly in literacy skills fail to catch up academically and otherwise in later years.

The path to literary development begins long before children begin formal reading. Instruction and experiences provided in the home impact the child’s later literary and academic success. Parents play an important role in helping children acquire the pre-literary skills that lay the foundation for formal school years. But often times, mothers do not know how to develop literary skills in their children from very early years and hence fail to provide rich, language stimulating, print rich environment at home from birth.

Family literary practices determine young children’s literary skills prior to formal instruction. However, parents may not be aware of best practices in literary acquisition. Educators can help parents of young children improve their awareness and knowledge of optimal literary development by providing parents with specific strategies to build their children’s literary skills, and help families increase their understanding of early literary development.

It is a well known truth that literary learning commences earlier than school, from a child’s family and mother is probably the first and best teacher. Families teach language to their children by being role models and by trying to respond when youngsters try to communicate with them (Fields, Groth & Spangler, 2008). Parents and other adults in children’s lives have significant roles in the literacy development of children through interaction, sharing, as well as giving feedback to support their curiosity of literacy (Copeland & Edwards, 1990).
Literary rich home environment are families that lay ground work for successful readers and writers when they snuggle close to their children and share stories, emphasize rhymes and interesting sounds, and point out environmental print. These family members read a variety of material, including novels or borrow books, both for themselves and for their children. Reading and writing materials can be found throughout their home. Family members in these homes often take their children to libraries and book-stores. These homes hold ample supplies of books and writing materials, and reading and writing are generally valued as important activities. Books are associated with pleasure and library activities are rewarded.

Daily reading should be emphasized in families because reading to children helps them learn the difference between written and oral language, print concepts, learn vocabulary, complex sentence structure, story structure, familiar with language patterns, richness of literature and lastly, lifelong love of reading. This enriched home literary environment can be provided if parents are educated with proper methods and strategies to start at home early to their children.

The present research hypothesized that, if mothers could be trained to enhance their literary awareness and practices through an intervention program then they can enrich literary environment of their pre-school children. To test this hypothesis, the researcher had developed modules and exposed them to training program (intervention program). The study concluded that, the modules and the training program influenced the mothers and children.
Recommendations

From a further research perspective the following recommendations are offered:

- This research was confined to mothers of preschool children; further research target can be mothers of infants in the age group zero to three years
- A longitudinal study may be conducted to observe effects of intervention program during later childhood years in academics
- From point of view of helping preschool children in society, the following implementation proposals may be considered:
  - Catch mothers young: Establish outreach programs to catch young mothers (of infants) and teach them early literary development practices
  - Build the curriculum of preschools so that there is an enhanced focus on language and literary development
  - Create structures that enable preschool teachers and management to establish strong linkages with parents to inculcate practices relating to literary development
  - Ensure parents of preschoolers become part of preschool program and seek active volunteering in daily literary development sessions like story-telling and shared reading
  - Build up literary rich facilities in preschools like libraries, common reading areas and age appropriate books
  - Encourage non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to take up evangelization of literary development programs in preschools
• Encourage private-public-governmental participation to build a network of mobile libraries that carry material targeted for preschool children