

Home Numeracy Practices of Primary School Children: Parent Perspectives

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1 INTRODUCTION



The importance of parental engagement in their children's numeracy learning has been long recognised in research and government policies (1,2,3).



However, research specifically exploring the different ways parents engage with their children's home numeracy experiences is limited.



The aims of this exploratory study were to examine:

- I) The range and nature of home numeracy practices in England.
- II) The impact parents' values and emotions towards numeracy has on their manner of engagement with home numeracy experiences.



Home numeracy practices were categorised into two types:

Explicit practices: Generally, these activities are carried out in the style of school practices and meet the mathematics national curriculum specifications regarding methods and milestones.

Implicit practices: These are activities that take place outside of school and are not in the style of school practices. They include everyday life activities which have aspects of numeracy, but maths is not the true nature of the activity (e.g. cooking, art and crafts, board games).

2 QUESTIONNAIRE STUDY

Participants:

30 parents (28 mothers, 2 fathers) with children aged 6-8 years old (Year 2 and Year 3) in England took part in a pilot study testing out a newly developed Parent Questionnaire.

Method:

Parents complete the questionnaire either online or paper copy.

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The questionnaire was designed to capture quantitative and qualitative data on:

- The nature and range of home numeracy practices.
- Parents' values towards different numeracy practices, including where they value specific practices to be learnt/take place (i.e. home vs school).
- Parents' feelings towards engaging with their children's numeracy activities.

4 CONCLUSION

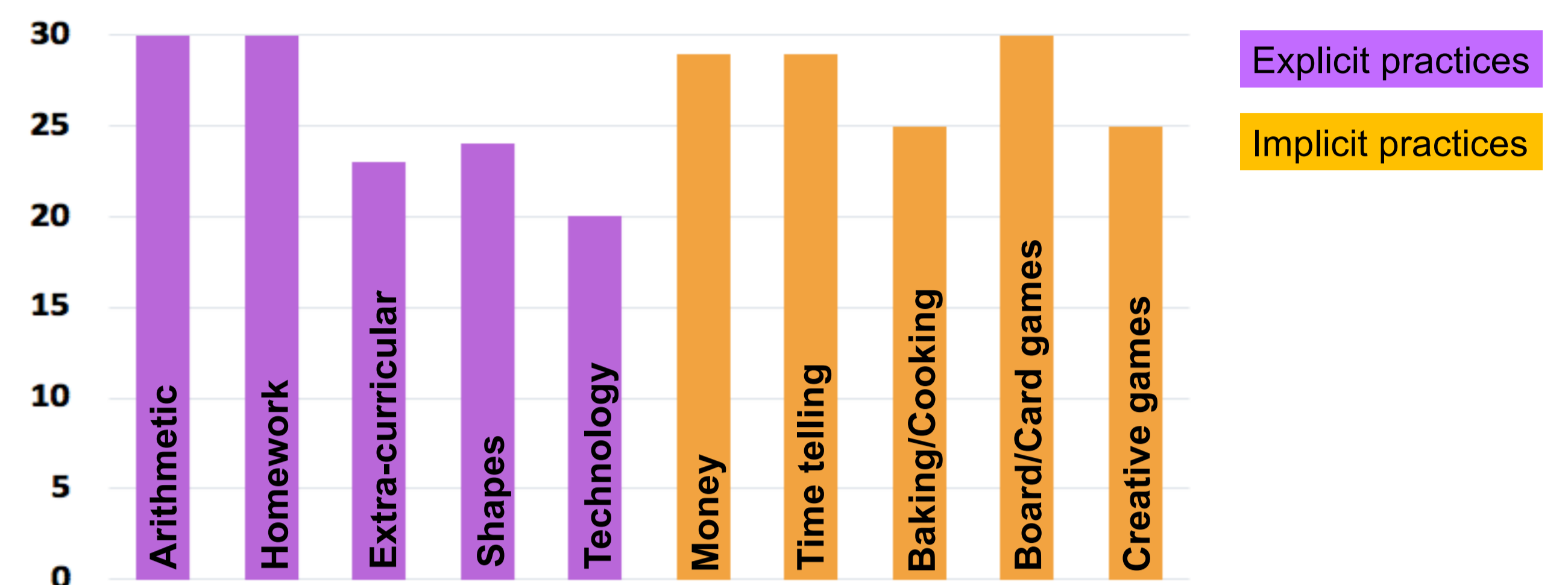
These initial findings show that parents engage their children in a wide range of home numeracy practices.

The findings also indicate that the values parents hold towards numeracy and the emotions/feelings they experience may have an impact on how they engage their children with numeracy activities.

This study has provided the bases for revising the questionnaire to collect data from a larger sample to obtain a better understanding of what activities are typically taking place at home and why.

3 RESULTS

Number of parents indicating their child taking part in each type of home numeracy practices



Parents values towards school and home learning

17 out of 30 parents reported valuing baking/cooking activities and board/card games to mostly be learnt/take place at home.

With reasons including....

- Opportunity for social interaction with their children.
- Parents wanting their children to learn something specific from the activity.
- Viewing schools as not having time for this activity.

16 out of 30 parents reported valuing statistic activities (tally/chart related activities) to mostly be learnt/take place at school.

With reasons including...

- Being unsure how to make the activity fun at home.
- The activity not occurring naturally in everyday life.
- Generally viewing the activity as required to be taught by teachers.

Parents feelings towards home numeracy experiences

Emotion and feeling words used by parents to describe their experiences whilst engaging with their children in...

School style numeracy activities



Everyday life numeracy activities



Note: The larger the word, a higher number of parents used it to describe how they feel.

References

- (1) Desforges, C., & Abouchar, A. (2003). The impact of parental involvement, parental support and family education on pupil achievement and adjustment: a literature review. *Department of Education and Skills Research Report*, 1-108.
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- (3) Abreu, G. de. & Cline, T. (2005). Parents' representations of their children's mathematics learning in multiethnic primary schools. *British Educational Research Journal*. 31(6), 697-722.