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Understanding the Link between Parents' Beliefs and Children's Reading Performance

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the relationship between parental self-beliefs and the reading skills of Grade 1 learners at Mandaue City Central School for the school year 2024–2025. Using a descriptive correlational design guided by the Input–Process–Output model, data were collected from 120 parent–child pairs. Parents assessed their beliefs across seven domains teaching efficacy, positive affect, verbal participation, reading instruction, knowledge base, resources, and environmental input while learners' reading skills were measured through the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). Results showed that parents generally held high to very high beliefs in most domains, particularly in teaching efficacy, positive affect, verbal participation, reading instruction, and knowledge base, while environmental input was rated moderate and resources low. Most learners were transitioning readers (73.33%), with only 26.67% reading at grade level. Statistical analysis revealed no significant relationship between parental self-beliefs and learners' reading skills (p = 0.518), suggesting that strong parental beliefs alone do not necessarily lead to higher reading proficiency. The findings highlight the importance of complementing positive parental attitudes with consistent, targeted literacy practices at home and quality instruction in school to improve early reading outcomes.*

Key words*: Environmental input, knowledge base, parental self-beliefs, positive affect, reading instruction, reading skills, resources, teaching efficacy, verbal participation.*

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1. Introduction

Parental beliefs about children's literacy form the foundation of the home literacy environment and play a pivotal role in shaping children's reading development (Cheung et al., 2021). These beliefs influence not only the frequency and quality of shared reading activities but also the strategies parents use to support their child's literacy growth (Celik et al., 2023). Parents who view themselves as active and capable contributors to their child's education are more likely to engage in interactive reading practices, provide a variety of literacy materials, and create language-rich environments at home (Wu, 2025). Research has shown that positive parental attitudes toward reading are linked to higher levels of early literacy skills, including vocabulary, comprehension, and print awareness (Rodríguez et al., 2009; Yeomans-Maldonado, 2021). Conversely, parents who underestimate their influence or believe literacy development is primarily the responsibility of schools may be less proactive in fostering reading habits at home (Sabjan, 2018; Zhang, 2024). Shaping

children's exposure to reading experiences, parental beliefs serve as a critical determinant of early literacy success.

Parental reading beliefs span several interrelated dimensions, including teaching efficacy, positive affect, verbal participation, reading instruction, knowledge base, resources, and environmental input. Zhang (2024) articulates that parental beliefs encompass self-efficacy in guiding young readers, attitudes toward reading, and the degree to which parents believe they play a meaningful instructional role. These dimensions align with foundational constructs of the PRBI as identified by DeBaryshe (1994), such as parents perceived ability to influence literacy, enjoyment in shared reading, and recognition of environmental supports. In addition, Dong (2022) emphasizes that actual parental behaviors shaped by belief systems have a more substantial impact on children's English as a Second Language performance than mere provision of resources or general literacy orientation. Ratka-Pauler (2024) further extends this insight by illustrating that parents' underlying beliefs both behavioral and normative influence their engagement in joint literacy activities. These findings collectively highlight the significance of measuring each belief domain distinctly rather than aggregating them into a single index.

Resources and environmental input are often under-examined yet vital dimensions of parental beliefs linked to reading outcomes. Yeomans-Maldonado (2021) points out that access to physical reading materials such as books, library visits, and literacy-oriented subscriptions forms a key component of the home literacy environment and interacts with parental attitudes to shape literacy engagement. Similarly, the PRBI includes items addressing environmental input, though these subscales sometimes display lower reliability (DeBaryshe 1994), indicating they warrant deeper investigation. Broader research on socio-economic disparities underscores how low-SES households tend to provide fewer dialogue-rich opportunities and limited print exposure factors intertwined with environmental input beliefs (SES research 2025). Therefore, researchers must scrutinize not only whether families possess reading materials but also the extent to which parents believe and act on the belief that such materials and stimulating literacy contexts are essential to their children's development.

Verbal participation the dialogue parents engage in during reading and their knowledge base about literacy processes are critical mediators between belief and child outcomes. DeBaryshe (1994) observed that parents with stronger reading-related beliefs scored higher on measures of parental questioning and responsiveness during shared reading sessions. This suggests that belief in their role (teaching efficacy) translates into enriched verbal participation. Dong (2022) further reports that proactive parental teaching behaviors exert greater influence on children's reading outcomes than passive exposure to resources. This implies that knowledge base and teaching efficacy beliefs drive active engagement. Moreover, Zhang (2024) describes parental reading beliefs as combining confidence in their instructional role and positive attitudes, reinforcing that when parents believe they are capable teachers, they are more likely to co-construct meaning with their children thereby enhancing emergent literacy competencies.

Despite the clear import of parental beliefs and the utility of PRBI, several research gaps persist. First, many studies focus on aggregate PRBI scores or a narrow subset of belief dimensions, neglecting the full spectrum of domains particularly resource- and environment-related beliefs. Second, subscales like Reading Instruction and Environmental Input in the PRBI sometimes yield lower reliability (DeBaryshe 1994), suggesting instrument refinement is needed. Third, findings regarding the predictive power of individual belief domains remain mixed: for example, Dong (2022) found parental behaviors mediated reading performance more than beliefs alone, raising questions about isolating specific belief influences. Fourth, while cross-cultural validations (Rodríguez 2009; Saban 2018; Wu 2025) exist, few studies examine cultural or socio-demographic moderation effects on how belief domains translate into behaviors and outcomes. Collectively, these gaps indicate a need for nuanced, domain-specific investigation of parental beliefs and their unique contributions to children's reading skills.

Given the multidimensional nature of parental reading beliefs and their differential impact on literacy development, your study measuring parental beliefs across seven specified domains and assessing children's reading performance fills a crucial gap. Using a comprehensive instrument like the full PRBI and validating reliability for each subscale within your context, you can clarify which dimensions truly matter for early reading skill acquisition. Such work can reveal, for instance, whether teaching efficacy or resource-related beliefs are more strongly associated with children's decoding or comprehension outcomes. Additionally, exploring beliefs alongside measurable reading outcomes will generate actionable insights for parent-focused

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interventions or literacy programs. Ultimately, your study has the potential to advance both theoretical understanding and practical application in early literacy by identifying which parental belief dimensions most effectively support children's reading success.

2 Literature Review

Parental beliefs regarding reading are pivotal in shaping the home literacy environment and directly influencing early literacy outcomes. These beliefs determine how frequently parents engage in shared reading, the quality of literacy materials provided, and the richness of language-based interactions at home. Parents who view themselves as active partners in their child's education tend to use strategies such as interactive storytelling, questioning, and linking book content to everyday experiences, which have been shown to enhance vocabulary, comprehension, and motivation to read (Anderson et al., 2015; Niklas & Schneider, 2017). Research further indicates that a positive parental attitude toward reading is associated with stronger early literacy skills, including phonological awareness and print knowledge (Manolitsis et al., 2013; Silinskas et al., 2020). Conversely, when parents believe reading instruction is primarily the responsibility of schools, home-based literacy activities may be less frequent or less effective, potentially hindering children's progress in early reading (Hamilton et al., 2016). This highlights parental beliefs as crucial factors in fostering children's literacy development.

Beyond the PRBI framework, the broader home literacy environment (HLE) including material resources and parent engagement has also been linked to children's reading development. Yeomans-Maldonado (2021) emphasized that access to print materials such as books, library visits, and literacy-related subscriptions is foundational to literacy engagement, especially when coupled with strong parental beliefs about the importance of reading (Yeomans-Maldonado 2021). Similarly, Çalışkan & Ulaş (2022) found that structured parent-involved reading activities led to marked improvements in elementary students' reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading attitudes, underscoring the practical impact of parental engagement (Çalışkan & Ulaş 2022). Adding to this, Wu (2025) confirmed that parents' involvement in early book reading shaped by their beliefs about literacy plays a significant role in boosting young children's language and literacy development. These findings collectively underscore that beyond attitudes tangible actions anchored in parental beliefs are essential for cultivating reading skills in children.

3. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive correlational research design to investigate the relationship between parental beliefs and the reading skills of Grade 1 learners at Mandaue City Central School for the school year 2024–2025. This design was selected as it allows for the objective measurement of associations between variables without manipulation, thereby preserving the natural context in which parental beliefs and reading skills interact. Guided by the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model, the study examined parental involvement and self-efficacy as inputs, the processes by which parents support literacy development, and the reading skills of learners as outputs. The respondents consisted of two groups: (1) parents of Grade 1 learners, who rated their self-beliefs and perceived value of reading in their child's literacy development, and (2) their children, whose reading performance was assessed using the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). The CRLA, mandated by the Department of Education through DepEd Order No. 009, s. 2024, is a standardized diagnostic tool administered twice per school year to identify learners' reading levels and areas for improvement. Parental beliefs and involvement were measured using a structured questionnaire adapted from Epstein's framework of parental involvement, which includes dimensions such as parenting practices, communication with teachers, support for home learning, and participation in school activities. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with sample statements including, "I regularly read with my child at home" and "I communicate with my child's teacher regarding their reading progress." Data were collected simultaneously from parents and learners to allow direct correlation analysis between belief scores and CRLA results. Quantitative data analysis involved descriptive statistics to determine the level of parental beliefs and involvement, as well as inferential statistics specifically Pearson's correlation to assess the strength and significance of the relationship between parental beliefs and learners' reading performance. This methodological approach ensured a systematic, evidence-based examination of how parental self-beliefs influence early literacy outcomes.

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4. Results

The data in Table 1 show that, overall, parents have a high level of belief in their role in developing their child's reading skills, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.89. Several indicators received a very high rating, such as believing they play an important role in their child's development (WM = 4.86), that their child learns many important things from them (WM = 4.45), that parents need to be involved in their children's education (WM = 4.64), and that children do better when parents also teach them at home (WM = 4.85). These responses suggest strong confidence in and commitment to active parental involvement. However, some items were rated only moderate, such as feeling there is little they can do to prepare their child for school (WM = 2.66), not knowing how to help their child learn (WM = 2.83), and thinking schools not parents are responsible for teaching (WM = 2.70).

Table 1. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of teaching efficacy.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	As a parent, I play an important role in my child's development.	4.86	0.42	Very High
2	There is little I can do to help my child get ready to do well in school.	2.66	1.56	Moderate
3	My child learns many important things from me.	4.45	0.66	Very High
4	I would like to help my child learn, but I don't know how.	2.83	1.19	Moderate
5	I am my child's most important teacher.	4.39	0.81	Very High
6	Schools are responsible for teaching children, not parents.	2.70	1.19	Moderate
7	Parents need to be involved in their children's education.	4.64	0.62	Very High
8	When my child goes to school, the teacher will teach my child everything my child needs to know so I don't need to worry.	3.62	1.38	High
9	Children do better in school when their parents also teach them things at home.	4.85	0.42	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.89		High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.92	

This shows that while most parents believe in their importance, a portion still feels uncertain or dependent on schools for their child's learning. The standard deviation of 0.92 suggests there are varied opinions among parents, but the general trend leans toward recognizing their role in their child's reading development.

The results in Table 2 indicate that parents generally have a high level of positive affect toward developing their child's reading skills, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.56. Many parents strongly agree with positive statements, such as enjoying reading with their child (WM = 4.34), seeing reading time as special (WM = 4.57), feeling warm and close when reading together (WM = 4.35), wanting their child to love books (WM = 4.32), and trying to sound excited while reading (WM = 4.38). These very high ratings show that parents associate reading with enjoyment, bonding, and emotional connection. However, some indicators received low ratings, such as finding reading boring or difficult (WM = 2.34), believing their child does not like to be read to (WM = 2.27), and avoiding reading because the child won't sit still (WM = 2.45), indicating that a few parents face challenges in maintaining engagement during reading. Moderate ratings were also observed for having to discipline the child during reading (WM = 3.18) and reading only when the child requests (WM = 2.87), suggesting that in some cases, reading is not fully integrated as a regular habit.

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Table 2. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of positive affect.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I find it boring or difficult to read to my child.	2.34	1.16	Low
2	I enjoy reading with my child.	4.34	0.78	Very High
3	I have good memories of being read to when I was a child.	4.08	0.80	High
4	Reading with my child is a special time that we love to share.	4.57	0.72	Very High
5	My child does not like to be read to.	2.27	1.15	Low
6	I feel warm and close to my child when we read.	4.35	0.89	Very High
7	I have to scold or discipline my child when we try to read.	3.18	1.29	Moderate
8	I want my child to love books.	4.32	0.79	Very High
9	I don't read to my child because he or she won't sit still.	2.45	1.27	Low
10	I read to my child whenever he or she wants.	2.87	1.34	Moderate
11	When we read I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.	4.38	0.82	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.56		High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			1.00	

The findings in Table 3 show that parents have a very high level of belief in the importance of verbal participation when developing their child's reading skills, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.42. Most indicators received very high ratings, such as believing that reading helps children become better talkers and listeners (WM = 4.78), that children learn new words, colors, and names from books (WM = 4.58), and that discussing pictures is just as important as reading the story (WM = 4.50). Parents also strongly value making reading interactive, as seen in their high ratings for encouraging children to help tell the story (WM = 4.28), ask questions (WM = 4.38), and answer questions during reading (WM = 4.18). These responses suggest that parents recognize reading as more than just decoding text it is an opportunity for dialogue, comprehension, and language development. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.72 indicates consistent agreement among parents, reinforcing that verbal participation is widely viewed as a key element in fostering children's reading growth.

Table 3. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of verbal participation.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	When we read I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.	4.40	0.75	Very High
2	Children learn new words, colors, names, etc., from books.	4.58	0.71	Very High
3	Reading helps children be better talkers and better listeners.	4.78	0.53	Very High
4	My child knows the names of many things he or she has seen in books.	4.29	0.76	Very High
5	When we read, I want my child to help me tell the story.	4.28	0.73	Very High
6	I ask my child a lot of questions when we read.	4.18	0.84	High
7	When we read, I want my child to ask questions about the book.	4.38	0.75	Very High
8	When we read we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story.	4.50	0.69	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.42		Very High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.72	

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Table 4. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of reading instruction.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I read with my child so he/she will learn the letters and how to read simple words.	4.6	0.59	Very High
2	Parents should teach children how to read before they start school.	4.64	0.61	Very High
3	My child is too young to learn about reading.	2.10	1.26	Low
4	When we read, I have my child point out different letters or numbers that are printed in the book.	4.5	0.72	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.96		High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.79	

The results in Table 4 indicate that parents generally hold a high level of belief in their role in providing reading instruction to their children, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.96. Most strongly agree with statements that emphasize early literacy preparation, such as reading with their child to teach letters and simple words (WM = 4.60), and believing that parents should teach children to read before they start school (WM = 4.64). They also value interactive practices, like having their child point out letters or numbers in books during reading sessions (WM = 4.50). However, there is a notable contrast in one item, where parents rated low the belief that their child is too young to learn about reading (WM = 2.10), indicating that most reject the idea that early reading instruction should be delayed. The standard deviation of 0.79 suggests fairly consistent agreement among respondents, showing that while some variation exists, parents overwhelmingly view themselves as active facilitators of their child's early reading development.

The data in Table 5 reveal that parents have a very high level of belief in the value of reading for expanding their child's knowledge base, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.42. All indicators received very high ratings, showing strong consensus on the cognitive and developmental benefits of reading. Parents highly agree that stories help build imagination (WM = 4.46), teach morals and lessons (WM = 4.53), and provide knowledge about unfamiliar places, people, and experiences (WM = 4.44). They also believe that reading can impart important life skills, such as following instructions or ensuring personal safety (WM = 4.38). Additionally, they value making stories relatable by connecting them to their child's own life experiences (WM = 4.26), which can enhance comprehension and engagement.

Table 5. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of knowledge base.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	I try to make the story more real to my child by relating the story to his or her life.	4.26	0.89	Very High
2	Stories help build my child's imagination.	4.46	0.68	Very High
3	My child learns lessons and morals from the stories we read.	4.53	0.62	Very High
4	Reading helps children learn about things they never see in real life (like Eskimos and polar bears).	4.44	0.79	Very High
5	My child learns important life skills from books (like how to follow a cooking recipe, how to protect themselves from strangers).	4.38	0.81	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.42		Very High
Aggregate Standard Deviation			0.76	

The relatively low standard deviation of 0.76 indicates consistent agreement among respondents. Overall, the results suggest that parents strongly recognize reading as a powerful tool for broadening their child's understanding of the world and developing essential skills.

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Table 6. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of resources.

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Even if I would like to, I'm just too busy and too tired to read to my child.	2.63	1.08	Moderate
2	I don't read to my child because we have nothing to read.	2.01	0.94	Low
3	I don't read to my child because there is no room and no quiet place in the house.	2.08	1.04	Low
4	I don't read to my child because I have other, more important things to do as a parent.	2.06	1.12	Low
Aggregate Weighted Mean		2.19		Low
Aggregate Standard Deviation			1.04	

The results in Table 6 show that parents generally have a low level of belief in resource-related barriers as reasons for not reading to their children, with an aggregate weighted mean of 2.19. Most parents disagreed with statements suggesting they lack time, materials, or an appropriate space for reading. The lowest ratings were given to "I don't read to my child because we have nothing to read" (WM = 2.01), "there is no room or quiet place in the house" (WM = 2.08), and "I have other, more important things to do" (WM = 2.06), indicating that these factors are not commonly perceived as obstacles. A slightly higher but still moderate rating was observed for being too busy or tired to read (WM = 2.63), suggesting that while time constraints may occasionally be an issue, they are not a dominant factor. The standard deviation of 1.04 indicates some variation in responses, but overall, the data suggest that most parents believe they have the resources and environment necessary to support their child's reading activities.

Table 7. Level of beliefs of parents in developing the reading skills of the learners in terms of environmental input

S/N	Indicators	WM	SD	Verbal Description
1	Some children are natural talkers, others are silent. Parents do not have much influence over this.	3.02	1.32	Moderate
2	Children inherit their language ability from their parents, it's in their genes.	3.35	1.35	Moderate
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.18		Moderate
Aggregate Standard Deviation			1.33	

The data in Table 7 indicate that parents have a moderate level of belief in environmental input as it relates to developing their child's reading skills, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.18. The responses suggest that some parents view language ability as influenced more by innate factors than by environmental or parental efforts. This is reflected in the moderate ratings for statements such as "parents do not have much influence over whether a child is a natural talker" (WM = 3.02) and "children inherit their language ability from their parents" (WM = 3.35). The relatively high standard deviation of 1.33 shows that opinions on this matter vary widely, with some parents strongly agreeing and others strongly disagreeing. Overall, the results suggest that while parents acknowledge some environmental influence, there remains a considerable belief that language development is largely determined by genetics, which may affect how actively they engage in language-rich reading activities at home.

Table 8. Level of Reading Skills of the Learners.

Reading Skills	f	%
Reading at Grade Level	32	26.67
Transitioning Reader	88	73.33
Total	120	100.00

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The results in Table 8 show that the majority of learners are transitioning readers, with 88 students (73.33%) falling into this category. This indicates that while these learners have developed some foundational reading skills, they are still in the process of achieving full proficiency and require further support to reach grade-level expectations. Only 32 learners (26.67%) are reading at grade level, suggesting that a smaller portion of the cohort demonstrates the fluency, comprehension, and accuracy expected for their grade. The distribution highlights a significant gap between current reading performance and desired literacy benchmarks, pointing to the need for targeted interventions and sustained parental and instructional support. These results underscore the importance of strengthening home reading practices and reinforcing literacy instruction in school to help more learners progress from transitioning to grade-level reading proficiency.

Table 9. Test of relationship between Parental Self-Beliefs and Reading Skills of the Learners.

Variables	df	χ^2 -value	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Parental Beliefs and Reading Skills	2	1.315	0.518	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

Note: *significant at p<0.05 (two-tailed).

The results in Table 9 show that there is no significant relationship between parental self-beliefs and the reading skills of the learners, as indicated by the p-value of 0.518, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. With a computed t-value of 1.315 and the decision to "do not reject Ho," the findings suggest that variations in parents' self-beliefs about their role in their child's reading development are not statistically associated with whether the child is a transitioning reader or reading at grade level. This implies that while parents may hold strong beliefs about the importance of their involvement, these beliefs alone may not directly translate into measurable differences in learners' reading performance. Other factors such as actual reading practices at home, the quality of school instruction, and learners' individual abilities may play a more substantial role in influencing reading outcomes.

5. Conclusion

Parents showed high to very high beliefs in most areas of supporting their child's reading, especially in teaching efficacy, positive affect, verbal participation, reading instruction, and knowledge base. They had moderate beliefs about environmental input and low beliefs that resources were a barrier. Most learners were transitioning readers, with few readings at grade level. Statistical analysis found no significant relationship between parental self-beliefs and learners' reading performance, suggesting that strong beliefs alone do not guarantee higher reading skills. Other factors, such as actual reading practices, school instruction, and learner readiness, likely have a greater impact. The results highlight the need to pair parents' positive attitudes with consistent, practical literacy support at home and in school.

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