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## The Relationship Between Involvement and Perceived Social Support among Parents of Preschool Children

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### Abstract

Parental involvement plays a key role in preschoolers' development and can contribute to children's educational outcomes. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between perceived social support and involvement among parents of preschool children. Participants included 256 parents (198 mothers, 58 fathers) of children aged 3 to 6 years old. Two instruments were used to measure parental involvement and parental perceived social support. Results found that parental involvement and parental perceived social support were moderately high, with mothers reporting higher levels of involvement than fathers and higher levels of involvement for parents with higher education. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis revealed a positive predictive effect of perceived social support on parental involvement.

**Keywords:** Preschool Children, Parental Involvement, Parental Perceived Social Support

### Introduction

Parental involvement refers to the participation or engagement of parents in all activities related to their children's education (Boonk et al., 2018). Strong (2006) identified parental involvement as one of the top five policies for improving the quality of early education and care. The Chinese government is also increasing its advocacy of parental involvement in kindergartens. 2016, the Kindergarten Work Regulations stipulate that kindergartens should take the initiative to communicate and cooperate with families, provide parents with scientific parenting publicity and guidance, help parents create a good family education environment, hold regular parent meetings, establish open days for parents, set up parent committees, and share the task of educating young children at home. This fully emphasizes the importance and necessity of parental involvement in early education.

Parental involvement, as an important part of improving the quality of preschool education, has a profound impact on children's later academic achievement, social-emotional development, and social adjustment. Parental involvement predicts academic achievement from kindergarten through high school (i.e., ages 5-18) (Arnold et al., 2008). Parental involvement is potentially important in developing emerging academic skills from an early age (Christenson, 2004). In addition to the immediate benefits, early engagement patterns can

influence later engagement and help build a foundation of skills with lasting impact (Clements et al., 2004). In contrast to the extensive work with school-aged children, which has established that parental involvement is associated with children's academic achievement (Hamlin & Flessa, 2018; Thomas et al., 2020) and positive social competence (Ntekane, 2018), there is much less research on parental involvement in preschool children. and little is known about the factors that influence the early stages of parental involvement.

Social support refers to a system of moral or material help and support given to an individual from all aspects of society including parents, relatives, friends (Leutar & Orsulic, 2015). Social support can be classified by type as instrumental support, emotional support, and companionship support, and by source as family support, friend support, and significant other support (Lin et al., 2019). Social support enhances a person's close ties with others, helps them become part of a group, develop social bonds, and feel affiliated (Yıldırım & Tanriverdi, 2021). Parental perceived social support reduces children's emotional and behavioral problems, enhances parents' life satisfaction, and plays a protective role in their life (Halstead et al., 2018). The study emphasizes that the social support is important for parental performance and their involvement in the care of preschool children. For example, Sharabi and Marom-Golan (2018) investigated the relationship between the perceived social support and parental involvement of mothers and fathers of children with ASD aged 2 to 7 years and found that the perceived social support revealed a small, but significant contribution to parental involvement. Specifically, a unique contribution in explaining parental involvement emerged for informal kinship support only for the mothers, while fathers reported receiving greater formal support than mothers. This study demonstrated that parental perceived social support could predicted parental involvement.

The study of Xia et al (2020) found that Chinese parenting involvement styles differed from those of western parents, and it is evident that many findings from western studies are not fully applicable to China. Therefore, it is important to conduct research on the chineseization of parental involvement in early childhood and to reveal the characteristics of Chinese parental involvement to guide the development of early childhood family education in China. Although parental perceived social support may have an important impact on parental involvement, however, researchers have not examined the relationship between parental perceived social support and parental involvement in depth, and the only very few studies have been conducted in other countries (Sharabi & Marom-Golan, 2018), and there are still few empirical studies in China. Based on this, this study plans to analyze the characteristics of parental involvement of Chinese preschool children and explore whether parental perceived social support is a predictor of parental involvement, so as to provide an empirical basis for developing reasonable intervention strategies to effectively promote parental involvement in their children's education.

Families are the bridge and link between young children and society. By investigating and analyzing the current status of parental involvement of preschool children and the relationship between parental involvement and social support, this study will make more people aware of the importance of parental involvement of preschool children and the provision of social support to parents. In addition, this study will provide some reference for the implementation of parental involvement for preschool children in reality and provide a basis for targeted, feasible, and effective strategies for parenting behavior. This study will also provide a more scientific basis for educational authorities and kindergartens to develop policies related to parental involvement methods and rule-based practices.

## **Method**

### **Subjects**

Mothers and fathers were recruited primarily through kindergarten teachers in kindergartens in Heze city from Shandong province in China. Parents received a letter that explained the purpose of the study and its importance and were invited to participate. The research questionnaires were sent to study participants by mail or by hand by the researcher. It was made clear to participants that participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous and that the study adhered to all ethical guidelines. A total of 256 valid questionnaires were collected. Participants were 256 parents (198 mothers, 58 fathers) of preschool children (137 boys, 119 girls). 65 of the children were 3-4 years old, 77 were 4-5 years old, and 114 were 5-6 years old.

### **Instruments**

#### **Parental Involvement Questionnaire**

This study used the Parenting Involvement Questionnaire developed by (Zhang, 2020), a questionnaire specifically developed for preschool children. The questionnaire contains four dimensions, namely home supervision, parent-child communication, learning guidance, and home-kindergarten communication, with a total of 19 items. The scale was scored on a 5-point Likert (1 for never and 5 for always). The higher the total score of the questionnaire, the higher level of parental involvement. The internal consistency coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.913.

#### **Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)**

The Multidimensional Perceived Social Support Scale (MSPSS) developed by Zimet et al (1988) was used. The questionnaire contains 3 dimensions, namely family support, friend support, and significant other support, with a total of 12 items. Items of MSPSS were rated on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The higher the score, the higher level of perceived social support. This scale is widely used internationally and has high reliability and validity (Grey et al., 2020). The Chinese version of the MSPSS also has good internal consistency (Chui & Chan, 2012; Yan et al., 2022). The internal consistency coefficient of this scale in the current study was 0.933.

### **Data Analysis**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences 22 (SPSS 22) was used for all statistical analyses. Initial analyses included computing descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients for the research instruments (Cronbach's alphas), and correlations to examine the relations between parental involvement, social support, and sociodemographic variables, which can determine whether any of these demographic variables should be included as control variables in the next analysis. Thirdly, the significant differences between parental involvement on the demographic variables were analyzed, using independent samples t-test or one-way ANOVA. Finally, hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was performed to examine the predicted factors in the involvement model, with predictor variables in the following order: control variables from step 2; social support. The significance of each independent variable's contribution to the outcome was tested based on the unique contribution of the variable without other confounding.

## Results

### Overall Status of Parental Involvement and Social Support

Table 1

*Mean and standard deviation of parental involvement and social support*

Variables	M	SD
parental involvement total score	3.55	.58
parent-child communication	3.79	.70
home supervision	4.00	.70
home-kindergarten communication	2.71	.91
learning guidance	3.30	.80
social support total score	5.08	.96
family support	5.34	1.10
friend support	5.06	1.02
significant other support	4.84	1.12

From table 1, the mean score of parental involvement was 3.55, indicating that parental involvement was at a moderately high level (3 being the median). To further understand the status of parental involvement, the four dimensions of parental involvement were counted separately, and the four dimensions were scored in descending order: home supervision, parent-child communication, learning guidance, and home-kindergarten communication.

The mean score of parental perceived social support was 5.08, indicating that parents' perceived social support was at a moderately high level (4 was the median). The three dimensions scored in descending order: family support, friend communication, and significant other support.

### Characteristics of Parental Involvement

#### Impact of Parent Demographic Variables on Parental Involvement

##### (1) Differences in form fillers

Form fillers were fathers or mothers, and when comparing the involvement of mothers and fathers, mothers had higher involvement than fathers in the parental involvement total scale and the four dimensions. Significance was then tested and found that there were significant differences in the parental involvement total scale, parent-child communication dimension, and home supervision dimension, but no significant differences in the home-kindergarten communication and learning guidance dimensions.

Table 2

*Differences in parental involvement on form fillers*

	mother (M±SD) N=198	father (M±SD) N=58	t
parental involvement total score	3.61±0.53	3.37±0.73	2.297*
parent-child communication	3.86±0.64	3.57±0.84	2.387*
home supervision	4.07±0.63	3.78±0.87	2.362*
home-kindergarten communication	2.74±0.86	2.60±1.06	1.056
learning guidance	3.33±0.77	3.18±0.90	1.216

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , below is the same.

##### (2) Differences in mother's education

Table 3

*Differences in parental involvement on mother's education*

	junior high school and below N=7	high school and high school N=27	college N=30	undergraduate N=76	postgraduate N=116	F
A	3.21±0.67	3.34±0.86	3.15±0.59	3.61±0.45	3.69±0.52	7.668***
B	3.88±0.74	3.49±0.95	3.41±0.69	3.77±0.62	3.97±0.62	5.823***
C	3.36±0.79	3.86±0.97	3.54±0.83	4.13±0.57	4.11±0.59	6.939***
D	2.54±0.92	2.48±1.05	2.33±0.69	2.73±0.89	2.86±0.91	2.600*
E	2.48±0.74	3.17±1.01	2.90±0.84	3.40±0.71	3.41±0.75	4.985***

Note: A=parental involvement total score, B=parent-child communication, C=home supervision,

D=home-kindergarten communication, E=learning guidance, following is the same.

One-way ANOVA was used to test for differences in parental involvement on maternal education, and as shown in Table 3, the parental involvement total scale and all four dimensions differed significantly on maternal education.

### (3) Differences in fathers' education

One-way ANOVA was used to test for differences in parental involvement on fathers' education, as shown in Table 4, where the parental involvement total scale and the other three dimensions differed significantly on fathers' education, except for the home supervision dimension.

Table 4

*Differences in parental involvement on father's education*

	junior high school and below N=10	high school N=20	college N=40	undergraduate N=109	postgraduate N=77	F
A	3.19±0.54	3.24±0.66	3.37±0.72	3.71±0.51	3.56±0.52	5.604***
B	3.75±0.75	3.31±0.73	3.57±0.78	3.92±0.60	3.86±0.70	4.828***
C	3.60±.83	3.89±.82	3.81±.86	4.10±0.63	4.05±0.63	2.354
D	2.43±.83	2.26±.92	2.63±.87	2.90±0.92	2.64±0.87	2.884*
E	2.27±.58	3.12±.88	3.10±.88	3.57±0.69	3.19±0.76	9.476***

## Impact of Family Variables on Parental Involvement

### Differences in family type

One-way ANOVA was used to test for differences in parental involvement by family type, and as shown in Table 5, the total parental involvement scale and the four dimensions did not differ significantly by family type.



Table 5  
Differences in parental involvement on family type

	nuclear family N=154	three-generation family N=96	joint family N=4	single-parent family N=2	F
A	3.59±0.58	3.48±0.58	3.32±0.70	4.27±0.89	1.915
B	3.81±0.69	3.75±0.71	3.71±0.83	4.42±0.82	0.722
C	4.06±0.67	3.93±0.74	3.50±0.83	4.42±0.82	1.518
D	2.79±0.90	2.56±0.90	2.69±0.83	3.75±1.77	2.229
E	3.30±0.80	3.29±0.79	3.00±1.22	4.33±0.00	1.295

Note: nuclear family means that the couple lives together with their children, three-generation families refer to couples, children and grandparents living together, joint family means couples, children, grandparents and other relatives living together, single-parent family means that you live with your child .

### Impact of Child Demographic Variables on Parental Involvement

#### (1) Differences in child's gender

Independent samples t-test was used to analyze the differences in parental involvement on child gender, as shown in Table 6, the parental involvement total scale and the four dimensions did not differ significantly on child gender.

Table 6  
*Differences in parental involvement on child's gender*

	boys N=137	girls N=119	t
parental involvement total score	3.54±0.59	3.57±0.58	-0.350
parent-child communication	3.74±0.71	3.85±0.68	-1.251
home supervision	4.01±0.69	3.99±0.72	0.231
home-kindergarten communication	2.71±0.91	2.71±0.92	-0.002
learning guidance	3.30±0.82	3.29±0.78	0.155

#### (2) Differences in child's age

One-way ANOVA was used to test for differences in parental involvement in terms of child age, and as shown in Table 7, the total parental involvement scale and all four dimensions did not differ significantly in terms of child age.

Table 7  
*Differences in parental involvement on child's age*

	3-4 N=65	4-5 N=77	5-6 N=114	F
parental involvement total score	3.59±0.62	3.53±0.57	3.55±0.58	0.173
parent-child communication	3.90±0.64	3.81±0.74	3.71±0.70	1.548
home supervision	3.88±0.80	4.00±0.63	4.07±0.68	1.498
home-kindergarten communication	2.83±0.89	2.63±0.96	2.69±0.88	0.911
learning guidance	3.37±0.87	3.23±0.77	3.30±0.79	0.571

#### (3) Differences in the number of children

Table 8

*Differences in parental involvement on number of children*

	only1 N=75	≥2 N=181	t
parental involvement total score	3.58±0.61	3.54±0.57	0.398
parent-child communication	3.78±0.71	3.79±0.70	-0.106
home supervision	4.00±0.80	4.00±0.66	0.008
home-kindergarten communication	2.75±0.83	2.69±0.94	0.453
learning guidance	3.40±0.88	3.25±0.77	1.321

The independent samples t-test was used to analyze the differences in parental involvement in the number of children, as shown in Table 8, and the differences in the total parental involvement scale and the four dimensions in the number of children were not significant.

**The Relationship Between Parental Involvement and Social Support****Correlation Between Parental Involvement and Social Support**

As can be seen from Table 9, there is a close correlation between parental involvement and social support. Specifically, except for no significant correlation between home-kindergarten communication dimension and family support dimension, there were significant positive correlations between the other dimensions.

Table 9

*Pearson correlations between parental involvement and social support*

	A	B	C	D	E
social support total scale	0.36***	0.32***	0.30***	0.22***	0.24***
family support	0.33***	0.31***	0.34***	0.10	0.22***
friend support	0.31***	0.28***	0.21***	0.25***	0.21***
important others support	0.31***	0.27***	0.23***	0.23***	0.20***

**Correlation Between Parental Involvement, Social Support and Demographic Variables**

As shown in Table 10, parental involvement was significantly correlated with whether the form fillers were fathers or mothers, mother's education, and father's education. Social support was significantly correlated with mother's education and father's education. Therefore, form fillers, mother's education, and father's education were placed as control variables in the next step of the regression analysis.

Table 10

*Pearson correlations among parental involvement, social support and demographic variables*

	parental involvement	social support
form fillers	-0.169**	-0.097
child's gender	0.022	-0.015
child's age	-0.024	-0.039
child number	-0.025	-0.011
family type	-0.050	-0.043
mother's education	0.283***	0.166**
father's education	0.198***	0.201***



### Multiple Regression Analysis of Parental Involvement and Parental Perceived Social Support

Correlational analysis can only reveal the likelihood of influence, and to further explore whether social support can predict parental involvement, hierarchical multiple linear regression analysis was conducted on the data. Parental involvement was used as the dependent variable, and form fillers, mother's education, and father's education were included in the first level of regression analysis as control variables, and social support was included in the second regression analysis. The results are shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Multiple linear regression of social support on parental involvement

Note, control variable, form

predictive variables	dependent variable					
	parental involvement			parental involvement		
	B	$\beta$	t	B	$\beta$	t
form filler	-0.179	-0.128	-2.011*	-0.131	-0.094	-1.546
mother's education	0.113	0.215	2.498*	0.112	0.213	2.608**
Father's education	0.034	0.062	0.729	-0.001	-0.002	-0.026
social support				0.190	0.311	5.320***
F	8.796***			14.386***		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.095			0.187		
adjust R <sup>2</sup>	0.084			0.174		

filler :1=mother, 2=father; father's education and father's education:1=junior high school and below, 2=high school,3=college,4=undergraduate,5=postgraduate.

From model 1, the R<sup>2</sup> of the regression model for the three demographic variables and parental involvement was 0.095, and the F-value of the regression model test was 8.796 ( $p < 0.001$ ), so the regression model was significant. As indicated by the positive and negative beta coefficients, mothers had higher parental involvement than fathers, and the higher the mother's education and father's education, the higher the parental involvement. After controlling for demographic variables, the R<sup>2</sup> of the regression model of social support and parental involvement was 0.187, and the F-value of the regression model holistic test was 14.386 ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the regression model was significant. Social support explained 18.7% of the variance in the parental involvement total score. From the standardized regression coefficients, the  $\beta$  value of social support in the regression model was 0.311, and the t-value was significant, indicating that social support has a positive predictive effect on parental involvement total score, in other words, the more parental perceive social support, the more they will involvement in their children's education.

### Discussion

#### The Overall Level of Parental Involvement is Moderate to High

The average parental involvement of preschool children in Heze City from China in this study was 3.55, which was at a moderate to high level and slightly higher than the level of parental involvement of preschool children in Shenyang City from China (3.49) (Zhang, 2020), which may be related to the fact that Shenyang, as a provincial capital city, has higher survival stress and economic pressure for childcare than Heze City. In terms of sub-dimensional involvement,

the results of this study were home supervision > parent-child communication > learning guidance > home-kindergarten communication, and Zhang's (2020) findings were parent-child communication > home supervision > home-kindergarten communication > learning guidance. Although the results differ, it can be found that Chinese parents of preschool children pay more attention to home supervision and parent-child communication for their children and are less involved in learning guidance and home communication, which is consistent with the findings of (Wang, 2018).

The early childhood stage is focused on emotional education and the development of good behavioral habits. Early childhood is the best time to cultivate habits, and good habits will benefit child for life; bad habits will tire child for life. Therefore, Chinese parents pay special attention to the management of their children's behavior and habits. Parents value communication with their children because they are highly responsive to their children's needs during the early childhood years and can provide effective support and encouragement to their children. Studies have found that the type of parental involvement is mainly based on emotional warmth (Liu, 2018), and thus, parents place great importance on parent-child communication. Compared to home supervision and parent-child communication, involvement in home-kindergarten communication and learning guidance is lower, and it is possible that parents are likely to increase their involvement in home-school communication and learning guidance when their children enter elementary school as society becomes more demanding of their children's academic performance.

### **Influence of Demographic Characteristics on Parental Involvement**

It was found that parental involvement differed in parental demographic variables (mother or father, mother's education, father's education, and family type), but did not differ in family variables (family type) or child demographic variables (child's gender, child's age, and children number). Specifically, mothers were more involved than fathers in all aspects of their children's education, and mothers were more interested in and concerned about their children's education programs. These results suggest that fathers and mothers are not equally involved with their children. This result is consistent with previous studies (Behrani & Shah, 2016; Foody et al., 2015; Ingber et al., 2010) that mothers were still the primary people who manage their children. On the one hand, it was because most mothers take more parenting responsibility because of the Chinese ideology that "men are in charge of the outside and the women are in charge of the inside". On the other hand, fathers' income was usually the main source of the family economy, and it was difficult for fathers to devote much energy to their children when they went home after work (Chen, 2011). In fact, fathers, like mothers, played an irreplaceable and important role in the developmental process of children. Consistent co-parenting was associated with children's self-regulation (Abidin, 1983), effortful control (Karreman et al., 2008) and academic achievement and behavioral performance (Amato & Gilbreth, 1999). In contrast, inconsistent co-parenting (e.g., hostility, competition, and parental differences) had been linked to young children's inattention, concreteness, internalization (McHale et al., 2000), behavior problems, and peer relationships (McBride et al., 2002).

Father's education and mother's education also have effect on parental involvement, with parents with higher education levels being significantly more involved in than parents with lower education levels, a finding consistent with the findings of (Zhang, 2020). The more educated parents are, the more parenting skills and advanced parenting concepts they may have and the more sensible they can educate their children, however, the less educated

parents are, the less learning ability they have and the less educational knowledge they have acquired, so they may face a lot of confusion in the process of educating their children (Zhang, 2000). However, there were studies with inconsistent findings, Sharabi and Marom-Golan (2018) found that parental education had a unique contribution in predicting higher levels of involvement only for fathers not of mothers.

In addition, there was no significant difference in the level of parental involvement on family type, child gender, child age, and number of children, which suggested that the level of parental involvement was more influenced by parents' factors than by family factors and children's factors. Parents' awareness of the importance of parental involvement in their children's lifelong developmental outcomes and their willingness to actively devote more time and energy to parenting are the potential factors for parents to practice involvement.

### **Social Support Positively Predicts Parental Involvement**

Although the relationship between social support and parental involvement has been documented in several studies (Ingber et al., 2010; Meadan et al., 2015), the field is still in its infancy regarding mothers and fathers of preschool children. Statistical results show that social support is a positive predictor of parental involvement, and that the more social support parents perceive, the more they will involvement in their children's education, which is consistent with previous research (Hamme Peterson et al., 2010; Sharabi & Marom-Golan, 2018). More social support leads to better mental health, higher life satisfaction, lower negative emotions, and more positive interactions in parent-child play. Social support is one of the most powerful protective factors for parental involvement (Yan et al., 2022).

The pathways by which social support influences parental involvement may be complex. For example, Yan et al (2022) found that the relationship between family and friend support and parental involvement was mediated by parenting stress, while significant other support was directly and positively associated with parental involvement. In addition, support from family and friends moderated the effect of parenting stress on parental involvement. The moderating effect of social support corroborates the stress-buffering model of social support, in which social support relieved individuals from stress and buffers them from stressful events, thereby increasing their parental involvement. Sharabi's (2018) findings highlighted the buffering effect of informal support over formal support on the psychological stress of mothers of children with ASD (Boyd, 2002), and how their stress was related to their involvement (Rivard et al., 2014). Among fathers, those with higher levels of formal support (general services such as family physicians) were more involved in caring for their child with ASD. Recognizing the relationship between social support and parental involvement in preschool children adds to the limited, existing body of knowledge that can help determine the meaning of effective social support for parents and can help them become more involved in their child's care.

### **Research Significance**

#### **Theoretical Significance**

While international research on parental involvement has become an important topic in the field of psychology and has produced rich results, research on parental involvement in China has only slowly emerged, and very little of it has been done on parental involvement in early childhood education. Therefore, this study investigated the parental involvement among parents of preschool children in China and found that parents' perceived social support positively influenced the parental involvement. This finding enriches the research on parental

involvement and provides data for the study of parental involvement in China, thus making the research on parental involvement of preschool children richer and fuller.

### **Practical Implications**

Based on our findings, this study makes four key recommendations for stakeholders in children's education. First, we recommend that parents become more aware of involvement and participate in multiple ways. Parents can serve as role models and help their children form good behaviors. Since the level of parental education has a significant impact on parental involvement, parents should improve their own literacy and education, and acquire scientific knowledge of child-rearing and care essentials. Parents can establish an equal and democratic parent-child relationship with their children by creating a warm family atmosphere for them. Parents should actively participate in the activities organized by the kindergarten and make full use of the pick-up time to communicate with teachers.

Second, kindergartens should enhance educational guidance and communication with parents. The growth of preschool children cannot be achieved without the cooperation of families and kindergartens, and kindergartens should pay attention to the communication and interaction with parents. Kindergartens can make parents understand the educational philosophy and management system of kindergartens through parent meetings or thematic publicity. Kindergartens can hire experts in education or psychology to teach parents about parenting knowledge and experience. Parents can also be informed about the performance of their children in kindergartens by holding open days for parents. These actions can increase parents' motivation to participate in early childhood education.

Third, the government should strengthen the overall management and input. The government should play its leading role and strengthen the management of kindergarten and parental collaborative education. The government should actively formulate policies related to parental involvement, regulate what behaviors should be involved, and strengthen support for parental involvement, clearly define the requirements for kindergarten and parental involvement, supervise and manage the implementation of the involvement of both parties, and effectively play the main role of the government as the competent authority. In addition, the government should strengthen the funding for involvement and make information open and transparent so that parental involvement can have good economic and institutional protection.

Fourth, given the positive contribution of social support to parental involvement, it is important to establish a well-developed social support system. Characterized by the differential order pattern of interpersonal relationships in China, Ni & Su (2012) suggests building a support system centered on intra-family support and gradually spreading outward, including intra-family support network, family-friends support network, family-community support network, and family-social support network, respectively. In addition, parent support groups and parent resource centers can be established to link social resources, share information, communicate, and provide professional knowledge and emotional guidance for parents. Government should strive to build a social support and security system that is suitable for parents of preschool children in China.

### **Limitations**

The current study had some limitations. Firstly, parents who participated in the study may have been more motivated and involved than parents who chose not to participate. This may have contributed, to some extent, to a slightly higher level of parental involvement. Secondly,

all participants were from the same geographic area, limiting the generalizability of the findings for this study. In addition, this study was derived from unilateral parental reports, and any single report on structure provides a limited perspective and had the potential for reporter bias. For future studies, it is important to include multiple measures of involvement to improve assessment and provide joint evidence. Finally, the present study only verified the predictive effect of social support on parental involvement, in addition to this, single-parent, family socioeconomic status, and parental depression and other variables may have significant effects on parental involvement (Arnold et al., 2008), therefore, future research should focus on the joint influence mechanisms of parental factors, family factors and school factors on parental involvement.

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