
Chapter 2

Phase – I Baseline Survey to Understand Transition Process from Home to Pre-school

Chapter 2

This chapter presents the results of Phase-I involving primary data collection on the process of transition.

2.1 Objectives

- To study the opinions and anxieties of parents and behaviour of children during transition from home to preschool.
- To find out the expectations parents have from teachers and vice versa during this period of transition.
- To study the transition program of various private schools of Vadodara city.

Before starting the study, due permission was obtained from the concerned authorities of each of the selected schools. Six schools were purposively selected for Phase-I. The criteria for selecting these schools was different locale of the city and thus would form a varied sample. The present study being exploratory and descriptive in nature the investigator did not want to confine the study to one or two schools. The selection of the sample of subjects, by conscious choice, was purposive and small.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Sample size and distribution

The sample for the present study consisted of three groups – the preschool teachers of the selected schools, the children attending the nursery sections and parents of the children attending the nursery section. In all, there were twenty teachers in the nursery section and all were included in the sample. Children (n=34) from the nursery section were purposively selected. Of these, 17 children had been to a play centre for a period ranging from 6 –12 months. For the other 17 it was a first transition. The parents (mother and father) of these 34 children comprising one of the groups were interviewed as a part of the undertaken study.

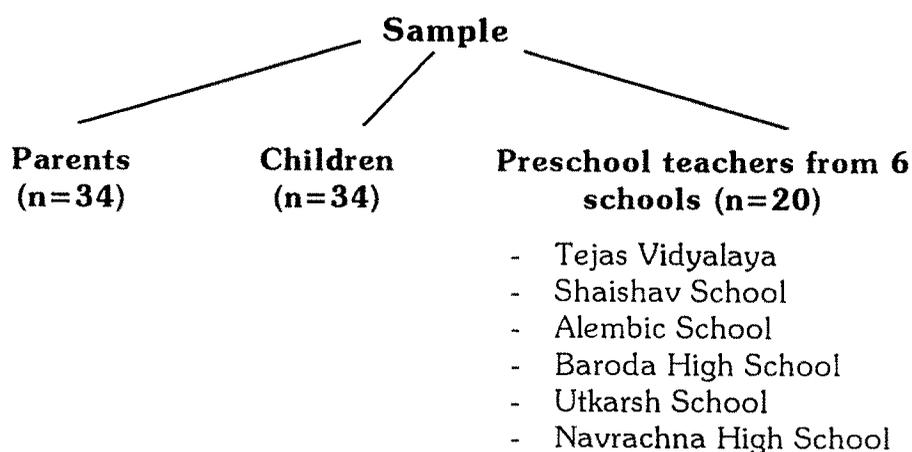


Figure 1 Distribution of study sample

2.2.2 Tool description

The data for Phase-I was collected through the use of -

- Semi Structured Interviews (SSI)
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

2.2.3 Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI)

Semi structured interviews often comprise a combination of structured and unstructured questions. They are based on a clear plan that the researcher keeps in mind. However a minimum control is exercised over the informant's responses (Bernard, 1991). SSIs were conducted with 34 parents. The schedule developed by the investigator in English was reviewed for its content validity by the experts (n=4) from both the field of Early Child Development and Communication. Later the schedule was translated into Gujarati – the local language. The bilingual schedule forms were pilot tested with parents for efficacy of their content and language. The parents could understand questions and the information received was appropriate and reliable.

Most of the questions in SSI schedule used were open ended (Appendix B) and the actual responses of the subjects were recorded. This made it possible to get valuable and indepth information on the aspects covered. The major components included in SSI schedule were -

- Background information of parents (close ended information).
- Reasons for the selection of the school (open ended information).
- Expectations from teachers (open ended information).
- Feelings of parents when their child started going to school (open ended information).

2.2.4 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions involve in depth discussion with a small number of informants (6-10) guided by a moderator on specific themes important to the investigation (Scrimshaw and Hurtado 1987). In a FGD, a related, supportive and interactive situation stimulates memories and feelings and thus leads to a spontaneous and complete discussion. A set of relevant topics were identified for FGDs with nursery class teachers. The topics were -

- Expectations that teachers have from parents about preparing children for school.
- Problems teachers face when new entrants begin school.
- Program the school offers for new entrants.

A guideline covering the above aspects was prepared for the FGDs (Appendix C). The content validation of the guideline was accorded by the experts of both Early Child Development and Communication. The FGDs were conducted separately for all the six

schools mentioned earlier. Each focus group consisted of 3 - 5 teachers and the discussions lasted for around 40-50 minutes. In all, six FGDs were conducted with the subjects.

Pilot studies for both the SSIs and FGD were carried out. This exercise not only helped the investigator in familiarizing with the technique of interviewing but also gave an insight into the framed questions. An additional objective was to test the formulated questions so that necessary modifications could be made if necessary.

In all three SSIs and one FGD were conducted for pilot studies. The respondents for the pilot work belonged to middle income group, with minimum of a graduate qualifications and residing in Ellora Park and Nizampura areas of Vadodara. This pilot work was done over a span of two to three weeks. Each interview and FGD lasted for around 45 minutes and the information was recorded. The pilot testing helped in-

- formulating appropriate probes
- simplifying the questions
- judging the time spent for each interview and FGD
- estimating time taken for each transcription.

2.2.5 Procedure for data collection

The subjects (parents) were first contacted on phone and the purpose of the study was shared by the investigator and consent was

sought for their participation in the present study. Based on the mutually convenient time, parents were then interviewed at their respective residence. This part of data collection was done during the months of June and July, 1999. A rapport was established before starting with the actual interviews. Each interview lasted for around 40-50 minutes. The interviews were recorded with due permission with the help of a tape recorder (Aiwa TP-VS, 470). The rationale for using this technology was also explained. It was conveyed that their responses were valuable for the present study and the investigator did not want to miss out on any information and instead wished to capture every bit of what they said and thus retain their verbatims. The parents understood the logic and readily agreed to the use of the recorder. The recorded interviews were transcribed in the language used within a span of 1- 2 days and subsequently also translated into English.

Similarly FGDs were conducted with the nursery school teachers of the six schools undertaken for Phase-I. For each school the FGD was conducted separately at a mutually convenient time. Each FGD lasted for about 45-60 minutes. These FGDs were also recorded, transcribed and then translated into English. The teachers were very co-operative and provided required information.

The parents as well as teachers expressed that the topic for the study was very relevant and need based and were curious to know about the future plans. The investigator explained that this was the first phase of the study and in the second phase an educational package will be developed in the form of a video and tips for parents (in the form of a leaflet), to facilitate the transition for home to preschool. The third phase would include screening of the film for the parents of the new entrants and nursery school teachers. The respondents (both parents and teachers) felt good and satisfied that their information would contribute to the second phase of an important and relevant issue.

2.2.6 Analyses of the data

The documented data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively, in terms of frequencies and percentage and through content analyses in terms of the themes of responses.

2.3 Results and Discussion

The data for Phase I of this study on transition was collected through interviews with parents of 34 children and FGD with 20 nursery school teachers. The results presented in three sections have been also discussed in the light of relevant literature.

Section I Parental opinions, worries and behaviour of children during transition from home to preschool.

Section II Expectations parents have from teachers and vice versa for smooth transition.

Section III Transition program of the selected schools.

2.3.1 Section I : Parental opinions, worries and behaviour of children during transition

This part of the Phase-I study on transition have been further subdivided into:

- i. Parental opinions
- ii. Parental worries
- iii. Behaviour of children during transition.
- iv. Parental feelings
- v. Parental rearing during transition

i. Parental opinions

The first entry to a school is a major and important step in children's life. It was clearly evident from interviews with parents that parents had a specific criteria in mind while selecting the particular school Table-1.

Table-1 Reasons cited by parents for choosing a particular school

N=34

Reason for Selection	Respondents*
Distance	17
Proposed by friends & relatives	15
Siblings	08
Qualities of the school	39
No other choice available	05

* Multiple responses

As seen from Table 1 all the parents selected the school because of its qualities. The qualities mentioned were good academic record, medium of instruction in the school, good teaching, co-curricular activities and good infrastructure. The other important reasons cited were the distance from home to preschool, suggestions, recommendations of friends with their children attending the same school. On further probing, a few parents said that they decided on a particular school since they did not have any other alternative.

The reasons given by the parents were similar to the recommendations made earlier by Takako (1982) cited in Peak (1991) about choosing a preschool, namely -

- The distance from the home to school should be short, preferably, walking distance.

- The children's friends should also be attending the same school. This will give the child confidence and will help him adjust better.
- The philosophy and environment of the school.

All parents wish to send their children to one of the best schools but may not be able to do so due to some constraints, as reported by some of the parents. In this expensive world distance between home and school also becomes important. Apart from finance, time saving and safety is of prime consideration. On entry to the nursery class, child would continue for almost 15 years thus distance will matter at each stage. Therefore many of the parents were concerned about the distance between home and the school.

Interviews with the mothers of the new entrants indicated that most of the parents (n=26) felt children need to be prepared before they start preschool whereas the others (n=8) said this preparation is not necessary. Out of these 21 mothers prepared their children regarding their absence in the school while the rest of the respondents did not. It was noted that this was not out of ignorance for preparation but because of the belief that knowing in advance may increase the child's anxiety. One of the mothers said if she would tell in advance her child would not like it and would be more anxious "*abhi se bataa doongi ke mummy vahaa par nahi hogi to use achha nahi lagega aur main nahi chahaati ke woh abhi se pareshan ho*".

Parents were further asked about how they had prepared their children for transition. Some of the parental responses were as follows -

- You'll have to finish meals on time. (The child is a fussy eater).
- I'll be waiting for you at home.
- *"Ache bache rote nahin hain. Isleya tum rona nahin"*.
Good children do not cry so you should not cry.
- *"Jo tu school jais to hun tane choclote aapis"*.
If you go to school I'll give you chocolates.
- You will learn ABCD

One of the mothers conveyed that it is not necessary to prepare the child because the child does not know what a school is. If we tell in advance the child will really feel bad about staying away from the mother. So preparation is not mandatory at all till the school starts. For this reason preparation is not necessary for eating by themselves in school."

The investigator was curious and interested to know the child reactions towards this type of parenting. On enquiring further the one of the mothers responded *"ae oongh ma thi uthi ne rade che ane kahe che mare schoole nathi jao. Ae bahu chirchiriu thai gaoo che ane school sharu thaya pachi ene bhook pan gahti gae che. Darroje kahe che ke [ale mane raja che etle mare schoole nathi jao. Aaje chauthu athavadiu thai gayu pan hajji rade che"*.

"In sleep he cries and speaks I don't want to go to school. He has become irritable and lost his appetite after starting his school.

Everyday he says tomorrow is a holiday and I don't have to go to school. This is the fourth week and he is still crying everyday".

This clearly indicates how necessary it is for a parent to realize the importance of preparing the child for transition from home to preschool and also to know the correct ways of dealing with children which would help them prepare well. If done accordingly this transition would be less difficult and traumatic and less stressful.

ii. Parental worries

Parents also go through a very difficult phase when their child leaves for school. This separation is not very easy to bear and experience. They have their pleasant and unpleasant moments as well. Most of the parents (n=27) said they were worried while others (7) said they were not.

Table 2 Reasons cited by parents for their worry

N=34

Reasons	Respondents*
Should not cry	16
Whether child will adjust?	11
Will the child eat?	09
Missing mother's presence	09
Complaints from the teacher	05
Should identify own rickshaw	01

* Multiple responses

The responses clearly depict (Table 2) that the parents were most concerned and upset about their children being missing their presence and crying while starting school. Their other concerns were whether the child would eat the food given at school and would adjust in the school environment. Parents whose children were social and those already going to a play center were not worried. However, one of the mothers had a very bad experience of a play center. She was almost in tears while saying that “Play center experience was terrible. I was really worried whether she will adjust or not. In play center I had gone for 15-20 days and still she was crying and then the teacher said since she disturbs the whole class you take her back and your fees will be refunded”.

For the other mother it was still bad because the play center teacher slapped her child and since that day the child did not enter that play center for months. Further, the child was psychologically disturbed and would exhibit it in form of bedwetting, loss of appetite, sleeplessness and irritation. This clarifies the fact that sending a child to any play center is not enough to help the child prepare for school. Unfortunately, in India these play centers are not licensed thus giving an opportunity to anybody even to non-professionals to open a play center, resulting in mushrooming of unscrupulous play centres.

Some of the other worries expressed by the parents include -

- "I am in tension till he arrives home".
- "I was really worried because for my daughter I had gone to the school for a month. He is more independent than her. I did leave him with the other members in the family before he started going to school".
- "He was separating for the first time. Even if I went to the market he accompanied me".
- "Since she is shy I know she will take longer time to adjust, he says if the teacher closes the gate I'll cry and not go to school I tried to explain the reason for the gates to be closed".

During transition, parents worrying about their children is something natural, but, if parents, teachers and school authorities understand their responsibilities still better then these worries can definitely be minimized. Similarly, almost all the Japanese mothers in their interview (Peak, 1991) indicated that they were worried when their child went to school. The worries were -

- Would adapt to new environment or not ?
- Would remain in school without crying ?
- Would perform self-sufficient routines on their own or not ?

iii. Behaviour of children during transition

Of the total number (n=34) of parents, 31 reported that the child's behaviour was entirely different at home than that displayed at

school. This was based on the reasoning that the environment at home and school are very different. At home the atmosphere is relaxed where the child receives unconditional love from the parents. Further, the child is very familiar with the home setting. On the other hand, the school is a more formal setting with the same teacher being shared by a number of peers and this influences their behaviour. The parents felt that in school children were more shy, quiet, withdrawn, conscious and less mischievous in contrast to what normally seen in the home situation.

From the mother's descriptions each child's adjustment was categorised as an easy, somewhat difficult or difficult (Peak, 1991). Adjustment to preschool was scored easy if the child never cried or refused to go to preschool during the first six days. The adjustment period was categorized as somewhat difficult when children cried or refused to go to preschool for at least one but not more than six days. The difficult adjustment was when children cried or refused to go to school for seven days or longer.

In the present study out of 34 children, 04 children had an easy adjustment, 16 had somewhat difficult adjustment and for the rest of 14 it was a difficult adjustment period. The children having a somewhat difficult and difficult adjustment period were found to be quite unhappy. The unhappiness was exhibited in the form of getting up in

the sleep and saying “I don’t want to go to school, *mummy toon maine chodi ne na jais*” (mummy you don’t leave me alone in the school).

One of the mothers noted that, initially the child was excited about new water bottle and a new bag, but when she realized that her mother would not be there she did not like it and said, “*mare schoole nathi jao karan ke teacher baarnoo band kari de che*” (I don’t want to go to school because the teacher closes the door).

This clearly indicates that young children feel very secure when they are with their mothers. Therefore, it is necessary for the administrators to maintain a close link between home and the preschool. Thus, providing a loving, caring and secure atmosphere at school.

iv. Parental feelings

The investigator was interested in knowing about parental feelings when their child was unhappy and cried in the school. Most of the parents (n=28) felt “horrible, terrible, sad, upset and tense” and were unable to concentrate. A few parents (n=6) were happy because their children did not cry. On further probing a majority of them reported that they felt like comforting till the child stopped crying, while 04 parents felt like bringing the child back to home and 02 wanted to tell a story to their children. Some expressions of the parents -

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- *“Aakru lagtu thu. I did not feel like leaving him. Dil par pathar rakhi ne aavi. I wish I could stay with him”*. (It was very difficult. I did not feel like leaving him, with a heavy heart I left him. I wish I could stay with him).
- *“Schoolwala vaalio ne thoda divas chokrao jode rehva deta hoi to kevoosaroo”*. (It would be really good if school authorities could allow parents to stay in the school with children for the initial days).
- *“I was feeling bad because until now she was with me for all 24 hours and I did not want to part with her. It was a horrible feeling, realizing that now she will have more friends and also get attached to others slowly and gradually and will not be totally mine”*.
- *“Jeev balto tho ke rarto schoole gaao che. Aajoo bajoo na beeja balako nathi rarta to ae keam rade che. Aa mane vadhare kharaab lage che”*. (I felt bad since he left crying for school. Children in neighbourhood don't cry and why he is crying. I really feel very bad).

The responses from the parents clearly suggested that transition is difficult not only for children but also for their parents. Therefore, not only children but parents too need to be prepared for this transition in order to facilitate and smoothen the whole process of transition from home to preschool.

v. Parental rearing during transition

Since most of the parents said that children did not like to go to school, cried and displayed unacceptable behaviours, the investigator asked about their interaction when their child was in distress. Most of the parents (n=27) said they gave false promises and bluffed to their children. Some of them talked about the school (n=13) and a few (n=6) reported that they gave bribes.

The false promises as reported by parents were in the form of *“Toon radti nahi. Kale hun tare schoole aavish. Beeja divse ane rickshaw ma besadi ne keehdu ke toon ja, scooter par avoon choo pan, hun na gaye. Aene ghare aavi ne tarat keedhu ke mummy toon kem na aavi hoon tari rah joti thi”*. (You don't cry. I'll come to your school tomorrow. Next day I made her sit in a rickshaw and said you go I'll come on scooter but I did not go. As soon as she came home she asked mummy why you did not come. I was waiting for you).

One mother said that I tell him “We are not going to school but to a mandir”, and finally take him to school and not mandir.

Another parent stated that she says, “I will bring icecream, chocolate and cake for you, but everytime I don't do what I say but this is just to make him stop crying”.

The above strategies do work for that particular moment. But it also leaves an impact on the child which parents do not realize or even if they do to get an immediate result they do not pay much importance. Parents forget that children learn through observation, experience and interaction with the environment. Children are great imitators as well. Thus parents need to set a right example and be happy for their valuable contribution rather than repenting for it throughout their life. Therefore, parents need to remember that they are the child's first educators with the responsibility for ensuring right guidance they need if they are to develop and flourish.

2.3.2 Section II : Expectations parents have from teachers and vice versa

The section-II of Phase-I study in transition, is further divided into subsections, namely -

- i. Parental expectations from teachers
- ii. Teachers expectations from parents.

i. Parental expectations from teachers

During the course of interview parents were asked about their expectations from the teachers. The results indicated (Table-3) that 25 out of 34 parents said that preschool teacher should be loving and caring, followed by having patience (n=17) and understanding (n=09).

Table 3 Expectations cited by parents from preschool teachers

N=34

Expectations	Respondents*
Loving and caring and mother like	25
Patient and not get angry	17
Understanding	09
Polite	08
Should have a pleasant smile	07

* Multiple responses

A few parents showed concern towards the nature of preschool teacher, being polite, humorous and expected to welcome children with a pleasant smile.

Anand (1997) in his well acclaimed book **Guide to Child Care** says that love is the most precious and important thing in the world as it provides a basis for relationship with not only parents but also friends, relatives, peers, teachers and other family members. If one fails to give love to the child it may lead to irrational anger, hatred, lack of concern for others, emotional disturbances and antisocial behaviours. Thus, it is important for a teacher to be very loving and caring more towards the entrants to preschool.

Evans (1997) emphasized that an ideal school is a place where teachers are friendly, supportive, approachable and always ready to

facilitate children's learning. When one enters an ideal preschool, one should find happy children fully involved in their activities and have difficulty in spotting the teacher, who should be fully engrossed working with a group in one corner of the classroom.

Sometimes the situation is entirely opposite. Instead of encouraging children to interact, ask and answer questions, teachers scold, ridicule or even threaten them. The teacher's behaviour has a very negative impact on children. It may lead to psychological problems and may instill fear in the child's mind. They find it difficult to adjust. Thus the environment in the school should be conducive for a child's optimal growth.

Similar situation was reported by one of the mothers in the present study. In her interview she expressed that "one day a teacher slapped my child and from that day onwards he just refused to go to school. Even at night he gets up and says, I don't want to go to school; *mare schoole nathi jao.*" It was very disturbing and upsetting said the mother.

One of the other respondent stated that she saw a teacher picking up the child and placing him at a height and saying "no birthday chocolate for you and also no food". She further expressed how harmful could be the behaviour of the teacher.



Peak (1991) in her illustrated compilation on **Learning to go to school in Japan – The transition from home to preschool life** says that a good teacher should learn to communicate intuitively with the child's inner self and guide the expressions of his feelings into a more appropriate form. As a party to the communication breakdown, teacher must also share responsibility for the child's misbehaviour. At all times teacher must avoid developing an adversarial relationship with the child.

To conclude, the expectations parents have from teachers are appropriate. They want teachers to be warm, loving and caring. This would definitely aid in the process of transition and help in better adjustment. In fact, the highly able teachers should shoulder the responsibility of new entrants.

ii. **Teachers expectations from the parents**

On the role of family Peak (1991) gave series of recommendations on the role of family in a popular book **from the first day of preschool until the last** specially of mothers for preschool children. One of the recommendation was to train children. The children should develop good daily habits and self reliance in matters of cleanliness, diet, elimination, clothing and sleep. In the present study also similar expectations were stated by the teachers. Some of the expectations reported by teachers were -

- Both parents and children should be mentally prepared for the school.
- The parents should be able to communicate with child at ease.
- Independence in children need to be fostered.
- Toilet training is must.
- The children need to be trained for a correct communicable vocabulary with a focus on local language so that they can express with ease.
- Inculcate the sense of discipline in children according to the formal setup.
- Evade bribing the children.
- False promises to be avoided.

These expectations teachers have from parents are for the easy adjustment and betterment of the child. According to Benito and Flip (1996), when empowered with the right information the parents can create more favourable conditions in the home which would influence the children. Along with some essential adjustments in the home or the school which help to smoothen the transition Myers (1997) emphasized the need of valuable anticipation, and provision of orientation for the changes that being faced by children and parents. While orientating the parents regarding the transition process the teacher's attitude must be positive with non-authoritative approach. This was reflected in the expectations from the parents given by the teachers.

Numerous investigations have shown that mutual understanding between families and schools produce better results in terms of socio-emotional development, inculcation of values and the development of cultural identity (Smale, 2000). In fact, there is a misconception that family is the party that learns and school is the party that teaches. It is preferable to be knowledgeable rather than over-educated and that knowledge gained in school is neither more nor less valid than knowledge gained in the family and the community. Moreover, if favourable change in education is expected then learning encounters between schools and families need to be more promoted.

Focusing on the role of teacher, Myers (1997) stated that in an ideal school teachers believe that children come to them with a wealth of knowledge from home, a knowledge upon which teachers need to build further. This helps teachers to establish a warm relationship between school and home. However, in the present study teachers expected that parents should interact at same wave length as that of the teachers. When such expectations are there parents may not feel very comfortable while interacting. Generally, parents feel that teachers know more and thus hesitate in asking, enquiring and arguing. Further, the moment parents realize that teachers expectations are more they end up feeling inferior and not competent enough to interact and

communicate with the teachers. Therefore, for smooth transition a close link between school and home need to be maintained for better communication, thus yielding better results.

2.3.3 Section III : Transition programme of the selected schools

As mentioned earlier, the main objective of the study was designing, developing and implementing an educational package to facilitate first transition from home to preschool. Before designing and developing it was necessary to know the existing transition programmes in different schools. For this, nursery school teachers were interviewed in groups in the selected six schools. Per school one interview was conducted. The information was collected broadly on two dimensions.

- i. Children's behaviour in the initial days of the school.
- ii. Steps taken by the school to facilitate the process of transition from home to preschool.

i. Children's behaviour in the initial days of the school

In the initial days of their entry in the school the children displayed typical behaviours and actions which made it difficult for the teachers to manage the group. The children's typical behaviours and actions (Figure 2) as noted were -

- running away from the class
- desperately weeping



Figure 2 Varied behaviours of children during inceptive days of transition
a. throwing tantrums b. displaying individual differences
c. craving for attention

- refusal to eat
- soil their clothes
- not familiar with the set-up
- can not relate with vernacular language
- need individual attention
- feel lost in the new atmosphere

The child is always under mother's constant attention, love, care and companionship for almost 2½ - 3½ years. Normally, the child is within mother's reach invariably in a familiar surrounding. Moreover, during any difficulty or discomfort mother is always there to attend to the child and console. On the other hand, the situation is quite different when the child enters a preschool. It is inevitable that children will find it difficult to adjust and therefore exhibit various actions and behaviour as stated earlier.

Providing an individual attention in school as at home is difficult. Peak (1991) differentiated the psychological behaviour in two difficult environments (at home and that in the school) and emphasized the importance of experiencing both of them to develop a well adjusted personality. In the warm and sheltered environment of one's own family, focus with their fond attention, everybody attends to the needs and wants of the child. However, in school the child and many other peers have to be dependent on only one teacher. This makes the child

to realize that “I am not special. I am not more than one among the group, and if I don’t act as everyone else does, I will be left behind”. Nevertheless, this difficult situation in the school does not continue for a long time. The children develop liking for the school provided a good coordination get established between parents, teachers and the school setup. Therefore, school also has an important role to play in facilitating the process of transition from home to preschool.

ii. Steps taken by the schools to facilitate transition

As a part of the Phase-III various measures adapted by the teachers for smooth transition in different schools were documented, analyzed and discussed have been under sub categories as -

- a. Activities in the school
- b. Teacher - child ratio
- c. Duration of the school
- d. Parents participation in the school
- e. Conducting orientation meeting for parents

a. Activities in the school

In order to facilitate the process of transition and minimize the strain, the children were provided with a variety of activities in the school as illustrated below (Table 4).

Table 4 Different activities in the school during initial days of child's entry to the school

N=6

Activity	No. of school (n)*
Songs	6
Stories	5
Outdoor games	4
Creative art	3
Special meals	1
Welcome party	1

* Multiple responses

For better adjustment and smooth transition, the teachers of all the schools (n=06) adapted an activity of singing songs with children. Similarly, only 05 schools used story telling for smooth transition. Use of outdoor games were reported by 04 schools whereas only 03 of them planned creative art activities. One of the schools had planned special meals in an appealing manner so that children would be attracted and would want to attend the school. Another school teacher pointed out that a welcome party for children as a special day was arranged. The children were accorded a warm welcome so that they feel secure in the different environment and also enjoy themselves. In short, the teachers try their best to make the environment conducive for children so that the children enjoy their stay in the school.

b. Teacher - child ratio

Teacher plays an important role in moulding child's life. When children enter school they need warm and secure environment. They need a person who loves and cares for them. In the present study, it was noted that in two of the selected schools there were eight teachers for the initial two days whereas two teachers in the other three schools. In one of the schools only one teacher was there to handle the whole class.

In their opinion regarding the ideal number of teachers for a transition group, the teachers of the five schools felt the need of a teacher and a helper teacher or two teachers in a class. Only in one of the schools the teacher responded that there should be one teacher in each group. Moreover, the respondent was the same teacher who was all alone responsible to handle the transition group in the school. This clearly indicates that the teachers were really concerned about the needs of children and felt that preferably there should be two teachers rather than one. Such an arrangement is likely to facilitate meaningful interaction with children.

c. School duration

The time schedule in 03 of the selected schools was for 03 hours in the initial period and then extended for 04 hours. In the other two schools it was for two hours for the introductory 1-2 weeks and followed by extended period. In one of the schools the schedule was

same throughout the year as some children were using bus service with fixed route and timings so that school hours could not be changed.

The school authorities were really sensitive towards the needs and characteristics of young children and therefore, gradually stretched the school timing. During transition phase children need to make many adjustments in a completely new environment. It really helps children to adjust easily if the duration of the school is of lesser time for few days.

d. Opinion of teachers regarding parents staying in the school

On the role of parents' stay in the school for the inceptive days interviews with teachers of selected schools were conducted. Among the selected schools, in 03 schools parents were not allowed to remain with the children while in other three schools parents were permitted for a day or two. However, some of the teachers noted that children settle faster in school if they are not accompanied by their parents to school. But, if required some parents can be allowed.

Parents, on the other hand, felt that it would be good if the school authorities allow the parents to be with children for the initial few days in the school.

These considerations are important and therefore necessary changes should be made for certain do's and don'ts to be implemented by the school.

From their familiar environment children leave their near and dear ones, and enter in an un-acquainted world of strangers. Accordingly, if parents are allowed for initial 2-3 days or for more days if required, it would facilitate the whole process. By then the child initiates interaction and socialization with others and fully get involved in the classroom environment and activities and feel more comfortable. As a result the school authorities must not be so rigid regarding the presence of the parents during the early adjustment period.

e. Conducting orientation meeting for parents

In all the schools the orientation meetings were held only when the classes began in the school and thus till then parents were ignorant about the whole process of transition including the role of requisite parenting. In 03 of the selected schools, parents were given certain tips to facilitate the process of transition but only after the classes began. In rest of the selected schools though general orientation meetings were arranged but without any special focus on the process of transition from home to preschool.

This wealth of information generated through interaction with parents and teachers really helped the investigator to understand the significant process of transition from home to preschool. In fact this led the investigator to comprehend the transition process from parents as well teachers perspective keeping the child in the centre.

Absolutely, this Phase-I of the undertaken study raised very pertinent and substantial issues in the process of transition. These issues, summarized below, were the basis of the next phase of the study.

- Parents were worried about their children.
- Mostly parents were unaware of the need and appropriate ways of preparing the child for preschool.
- Some of the strategies used by parents for helping children during this transition were incorrect.
- Parents, teachers as well as children found transition period very difficult.
- Some of the schools showed concern towards new entrants while some need to modify and change for the better adjustment.