

Parental Stimulation for Selected Development Aspects of Preschoolers in Business Class Families

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KEY WORDS Economic Status Parental Stimulation. Cognitive Development. Haryana.

ABSTRACT Thirty business class families were selected from Hisar city of Haryana who have atleast one child in the pre-school age. The data were collected by self-structured, pretested "Parental Stimulation Inventory" through personal interview technique. Analysis for areawise level of stimulation of fathers reveals that for emotional and intellectual stimulation, most of the fathers were in low category whereas for physical and social they were falling in moderate to high level of stimulation. Regarding the mothers' stimulation level the results revealed that the mothers were providing low level of stimulation in physical, social and intellectual development and moderate level of stimulation for emotional development. Comparative analysis of fathers and mothers indicated that fathers were more involved for physical and social whereas mothers for emotional stimulation.

INTRODUCTION

Stimulation can be conceptualized as providing environment having proper exposure and experience. The qualitative parent-child interaction is an indispensable source of stimulation during the crucial stage of childhood. Parents are influenced in their behaviour with their children by the situation or milieu, in which they work. Certain characteristics of occupational life of parents modify the techniques of upbringing of the child. The hours of work, the kind of work, nearness of jobs to home as well as income derived may directly affect behavioural practices (Singh and Sharma, 1975). Until quite recently there has been little consideration of the role of the father in child's development. It is obvious that children spend most of the time with mothers and fathers are usually absorbed in their business work. It is really pitying on part of fathers that they cannot devote much time to their children as reported by Pleck (1982). The present paper is a modest attempt to find out the stimulation level of parents taking few selected developmental aspects of children into consideration.

METHODOLOGY

A list of the business class families having at least one child in pre-school age group in Hisar of Haryana State was prepared. Out of this, 30 families were selected randomly. A self-structured and pretested "Parental Stimulation Inventory" having the statements of parenting behaviours related to the promotion of child's various developmental aspects, was used as a tool for collecting data. Data were collected through personal interview technique from both the parents. On the basis of total scores, the respondents were categorized as high, moderate and low stimulating levels and frequencies under each category were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals comparative stimulation levels of fathers (1A) and mothers (1B) for different aspects of development in children. In the area of emotional and intellectual development, most of the fathers provided low stimulation i.e. 56.61 per cent and 76.59 per cent, respectively whereas 43.29 per cent of fathers provided high stimulation for social development and 49.95 per cent provided moderate stimulation for physical development. Father's high stimulation for social development and moderate stimulation for physical development may imply the fact that though fathers interact rarely with their children yet their interaction through play promote physical and motor development. Fathers get the opportunities of experiencing and exploring the outside world and obviously have broadened outlook of the child. The results get the support from the research of Ninio and Rinott (1986) who were of the opinion that fathers have been found to spend a large proportion of their total time, playing with their child and fostering

social development stimulation. Regarding low intellectual stimulation, fathers are not seen to be engaged in cognitively demanding activities because such activities demand time and patience. Because of their low to medium educational background and professional constraints they leave everything to the school teachers and tutors.

Table 1 : Frequency distribution of respondents according to income and education

Variable	Father	Mother
Education		
Matric	15	22
Graduate	10	6
Post Graduate	4	2
Monthly income		
Rs 5000-10000	11	-
Rs 10001-15000	13	-
Rs 15000 & above	6	-

Table 1 A : Parental stimulation level for selected development aspects

Domains	Low (20-40)	Moderate (40-60)	High (60-80)
Physical	7 (23.31)	15 (49.95)	8 (26.64)
Social	10 (33.30)	7 (23.31)	13 (43.29)
Emotional	17 (56.61)	10 (33.30)	3 (9.99)
Intellectual	23 (76.59)	5 (16.65)	2 (6.66)
Overall	15 (49.95)	10 (33.30)	3 (9.99)

Table 1 B : Maternal stimulation level for selected development aspects

Domains	Low (20-40)	Moderate (40-60)	High (60-80)
Physical	17 (56.61)	7 (23.31)	5 (16.65)
Social	14 (46.62)	9 (29.97)	7 (23.31)
Emotional	7 (23.31)	16 (53.28)	7 (23.31)
Intellectual	12 (39.96)	11 (36.63)	7 (23.31)
Overall	21 (68.93)	6 (19.98)	3 (9.99)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Majority of mothers provided low stimulation for physical (56.61%) and social (46.62%) development, moderate (53.28%) stimulation for emotional development and low (39.96%) to moderate (36.63%) stimulation for intellectual development. Most of the times mothers interact with child through biological relationship and

care taking activities which leads to low physical stimulation.

As far as social stimulation is concerned, though mother is assumed as a primary socializing agent in the life of a child yet many mothers in the business class family do not show such kind of behaviours that promote social development as 46.62 per cent mothers gave low stimulation. This may be due to low educational status and least knowledge on child care.

On the basis of the result, it is suggested that awareness need to be inculcated among the parents about the importance of stimulation for different developmental aspects. Mass media can play an important role by coverage of the programmes emphasizing the methods of stimulation. The potentiality of child development specialists and home scientists should be utilized in development of programme, teaching aids and effective implementation of the programme for benefit of the parents.

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Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers for India No. R. No. 50747/89
Printed and Published by M.K. Bhasin on behalf of Indian Society of Human Ecology (ISHE) at Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110 007 and printed at Kamla-Raj Prakashan, Printers and Publishers, Delhi and published by ISHE at Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi 110 007.

Managing Editor: M. K. Bhasin