

Socio-Emotional Development of Pre-Schoolers and Effects of Facilities Available

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KEYWORDS Social emotional; peri-urban; pro-social behavior; house keeping; first hand experiences

ABSTRACT The ability to live effectively with in the family and later to function capably within the neighborhood, classroom, feelings and attitudes about one self and others. The present investigation was carried out in Haryana and Union Territory of Chandigarh to know the status of facilities available for socio-emotional development in pre-schools. Study was conducted in 58 purposively selected schools of urban, periurban and rural areas of Haryana and U.T., Chandigarh. The perusal of results indicated that activities for socio-emotional domain were conducted but not appropriately. Major differences were observed in activities like celebration on birthdays, National days, and availability of separate place for doll play etc. Pre School of Chandigarh provided more opportunities for activities related with socio-emotional domain.

INTRODUCTION

Developing social skills is not an easy task. It takes knowledge of correct relationship skills in addition to time and experience. Young children have much to learn about themselves and surrounding environment (Smith, 1982). During this period children have effect on others and simultaneously they are being affected by others in their lives as they learn more during early years, particularly from parents, teachers and peers. It becomes vitally important in their later ability to form and maintain relationship, work and play well with others and feel valued confident and competent in different types of situations. The socio emotional domains encompass four essential aspects of children development, education and social skills, emotional strength and stability.

The development of Socio-emotional strength is a life long task, and it is inter dependent with children's cognitive, physical and social development, because children spend major amount of time in extra familial settings.

METHODOLOGY

Study was conducted in purposively selected state of Haryana and union territory of Chandigarh. Multistage sampling technique was used for sample selection. Pre and primary sections were selected purposively from rural, urban and peri-urban areas of Hisar district and Chandigarh. Two pre-school laboratories, one from Department of HDFS, CCS HAU, Hisar and other

laboratory nursery school from Government Girls College, Chandigarh run by the Department of Child Development were also selected purposively. Further seven schools from each cultural settings i.e. rural, peri-urban area were selected randomly from both places - Hisar and Chandigarh. Sample from urban areas is consisted of fourteen schools, seven from private and equal number from public sector were taken randomly. To gather information, principal and school-teachers were interviewed to know about status of social-emotional domain. Data were collected through interview schedule and observation checklist. Descriptive analysis was used to draw inferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This domain provides the facilities and opportunities for promoting socio-emotional development in children.

Data revealed that 65.51 per cent School in Hisar and about 75.86 per cent school in Chandigarh provides time for social group participation. Data further showed that 51.72 per cent schools of Hisar and 62.06 per cent schools of Chandigarh were conducting activities for development of pro-social behavior patterns (Table 1).

In case of the aspects inculcating social responsibilities in children, it was found that 55.17 per cent schools of Hisar and 72.41 schools of Chandigarh were used to give these types of responsibilities.

According to Rae Pica (1997), movement

Table 1: Existing status of educational program for young children regarding socio emotional domain

S. No.	Aspect	Hisar (Haryana) N=29	U.T. Chandigarh N=29	Grand total N=58
1.	Social group participation	19 (65.51)	22 (75.86)	41 (70.68)
2.	Development of prosocial behavior pattern	15 (51.72)	18 (62.06)	33 (56.89)
3.	Inculcates social responsibilities	16 (55.17)	21 (72.41)	37 (63.79)
4.	Separate place for doll play/house keeping with accessories	7 (24.13)	11 (37.93)	18 (31.03)
5.	Facilitating to puppet play	7 (24.13)	5 (17.24)	12 (20.68)
6.	Celebration of			
	a. Festivals	17 (58.62)	20 (68.96)	37 (63.79)
	b. Birthday	9 (31.03)	16 (55.17)	25 (43.10)
	c. National days	12 (41.37)	16 (55.17)	28 (48.27)
	d. Any other			
	• Sports day	10 (34.48)	10 (34.48)	20 (34.48)
7.	Development of independence	23 (79.31)	22 (75.86)	45 (77.58)
8.	Provision for keeping pets	1 (3.44)	-	1 (1.72)
9.	Organizes nature walk excursions visit	8 (27.58)	8 (27.58)	16 (27.58)
10.	Development of social values	28 (96.55)	28 (96.55)	56 (96.55)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

education can help a child to adjust socially and emotionally because it can provide him with successful experiences and permit inter-relationship with other children in-groups with a partner. He shares space, he has to take turns and cooperate. He thus develops social awareness and achieves satisfaction through peer relationship and play.

It was observed that children were not given an opportunity that encouraged sharing, caring, cooperation and sympathetic attitude among them. There was also very little non-formal interaction between teacher and children. Because most of the time teachers were busy in planning home work/class work for children. If during this time children try to talk or play among themselves they were punished. Most common punishments were either head down or putting finger on mouth to keep silence. However in few schools of urban private setting, urban govt. school of Chandigarh and preschool lab, it was observed that a pro-social behavior patterns were encouraged through some activities or games.

Observations also suggest that except in rural schools and preschool labs, the children were not given any social responsibilities. In these schools children were asked to pack up play materials, putting food container and water bottles at proper places. In some of the rural and peri-urban schools children were also asked to put the chairs and tables for the teachers and distributing the note books to fellow children, conveying message to other teachers etc. In few urban private and govt. schools the children were assigned some of the social responsibilities such as guiding and helping the younger children to toilets and water fountain/cooler.

Socio-emotional learning centers also include the housekeeping area/doll house where children can play different roles. They could learn certain social skills such as sharing, taking responsibilities, and expressing emotions with each other through pretend play.

Data showed that only 24.13 per cent schools of Hisar and 37.93 per cent schools of Chandigarh had separate place for doll play/house keeping with accessories. The facility for puppet play was not available in many schools as the data reveals that 24.13 per cent of Hisar and 17.24 per cent of Chandigarh schools having facility for puppet play. Result shows that schools are actively involved in celebrating national days, festivals, birthday, sports day, etc, at both the places i.e., Hisar and Chandigarh. The observations suggest that festivals were celebrated in almost all schools in urban settings, but celebrations of National festivals were given less importance. It was also observed that in rural setting no importance was given to the celebration of festivals, birthday and National days. Preschool labs gave importance to the celebrations of children's birthday as it gives an understanding in the concept of their own growth year by year and also the concept of numbers. Such celebration also promotes social development in children. According to Baroody (1993) Children encounter mathematical ideas long before they attend school, for example young children learn that money has value when adults take them along shopping, and they learn that birthday occur at particular times of the year when they celebrate family birth days. Data revealed the information about schools providing opportunity to children to develop indepen-

dence. Score suggested that 79.31 per cent schools of Hisar and 75.86 per cent schools of Chandigarh were involved in developing independence.

According to NAEYC guide lines for Accreditation Criteria and Procedures, (1988) staff should encourage developmentally appropriate independence in children in routine activities such as picking up toys, personal grooming (use of toilet, cleaning of hands), caring for school materials and other self-help skills. Independence develops gradually through opportunities for successful practice. Expectations of independent functioning in children vary with the developmental level of the child.

Observations suggested that in some of the schools children were encouraged to help in packing up of material when an activity was over such as putting materials back at appropriate places, distributing materials among children, putting off their shoes etc. Independence is also encouraged by asking children to go to toilet alone, bring water and things for other younger children and sometimes for teacher and making them learn to select play material on their own.

A provision to keep pets at preschools was also explored however only one preschool in urban private setting of Hisar was observed keeping a pet (rabbit). Such a provision encouraged an understanding among children about the need of animals but almost all the schools including preschool labs were not putting any emphasis on this aspect of socio-emotional domain. According to minimum specification for schools (NCERT, 1996), there should be the provision for keeping pets and aquarium in school for children in order to make them learn about pet animals and to take care of pets.

Result highlighted that only 27.58 per cent school of Hisar and Chandigarh have provision for organizing a nature walks and excursions for children.

According to Arora (1995), for all round development of children it is essential to provide experiences to children through games, sports, excursions and various co-curricular activities. The observations suggest that no regular outings and nature walk were organized by the school staff instead once a year/session a picnic was organized as a part of out door activity.

However, the preschool lab of Hisar organized regular nature walks, excursion and also involved parent during such walks.

In aspects of development of social values were followed in schools of Hisar and Chandigarh both (96.55 per cent).

The observation made by the researcher suggests that social values like greeting at arrival and departure were not observed by children these were also not being initiated either by teachers or by parents except in some urban private schools and preschool labs.

In obeying the instructions of the teachers by children, it was observed that in some of the schools the strength of the children was very high and single teacher was not able to control them that's why there was no question of following the instructions by the children. It was also very interesting to observe that teachers were least bothered about the children's activities and children used to quarrel with each other while teacher was busy in checking the homework. On the other hand, in some of the schools, it was observed that social values seem to be inculcated in children, which were reflected in their behavior and activities. The teachers were also least interested and bothered about promoting social skills in children but more interested in completing the academic syllabus in time. They did not have knowledge regarding this domain. Hence, training program for teachers should be organized in the field of early childhood education.

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