

Child's Socialization Through Play Among 2-4 Years Old Children

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INTRODUCTION

Home is the most primary agency that brings about socialization. Socialization is the process of interacting with others. Children begin the process of social development at an early age. They learn to interact through play and imitate the social actions of those in their home environment who are important to them. The advent of play during the second year of life highlights the toddler's increasing ability to represent events. An attempt has been made in this paper to analyse to study the child's socialization through play among 2-4 years old children.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sixty children of 2 to 4 years old (boys and girls pooled) were drawn from the childcare and early educational settings from various cities in Punjab. Rapport was established with the child's family on inclusion of the child in the sample, and preliminary information about the child and his/her family were recorded. During this visit, the purpose of research was explained and made clear to the parents. A formal request was made for their participation and consent was obtained from parents of each selected child for participating in the research investigation. Parents were assured that the information given by them would be kept strictly confidential. Data for the present investigation were collected either in the home settings of children or in the childcare settings being attended by them.

Tool Used for the Present Study

Socialization at home was assessed by using an interview schedule. It included only one aspect of Socialization i.e. play. The section includes a number of questions related to this particular aspect of the child's life. The questions had a three point rating scale of Always/Sometimes/Never. The appropriate response relating to the mother's reported behaviour about

the reference child was rated on the three point scale. A separate column was provided for taking down any special remarks about the child's socialization at home.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates the socio-personal characteristics of parents and families of 2-4 years old children. It is quite clear from the Table-1 that more than half of the parents (mother-65% and father-58.33%) of the child were postgraduate. Further, majority (66.67%) of the mothers were working and the fathers were in service. Almost four-fifth of the total children (i.e. 83.33%) were from high socio-economic status. In addition, in almost fifty per cent of the cases they were the only children living in joint families.

Table 2 indicates the percent frequency distribution of various components of child's socialization through play among 2-4 years old

Table 1: Socio-personal characteristics of parents and families of 2-4 years old children (N=60)

S. No.	Characteristics	N	%
1.	<i>Mother's Education</i>		
	Graduate	21	35.00
	Post Graduate	39	65.00
2.	<i>Mother's Occupation</i>		
	Working	40	66.67
	Housewife	20	33.33
3.	<i>Father's Education</i>		
	Graduate	25	41.67
	Post Graduate	35	58.33
4.	<i>Father's Occupation</i>		
	Business	24	40.00
	Service	36	60.00
5.	<i>Type of Family</i>		
	Nuclear	29	48.33
	Joint	31	51.67
6.	<i>Number of Children</i>		
	One	31	51.67
	Two	28	46.67
	Three	1	1.67
7.	<i>Income of the Parents per month (Rs.)</i>		
	Below 15,000	10	16.67
	Above 15,000	50	83.33

Table 2: Percent frequency distribution of various components of child's socialization through play among 2-4 years old children (N=60)

Components	Always		Seldom		Never	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>The child's play contents are...</i>						
sound producing objects and toys, e. g., rattles etc.	36	60	21	35	3	5
wooden toys	13	21.7	23	38.3	24	40
constructive toys, blocks, clay	44	73.3	13	21.7	3	5
vehicles and outdoor material	44	73.3	13	21.7	3	5
human and animal toys	37	61.7	17	28.3	6	10
Mechanical toys	39	65	16	26.7	5	8.33
odds and ends	26	43.3	13	21.7	21	35
books, cuttings, crayons	46	76.7	10	16.7	5	6.7
anything else	3	5	4	6.7	53	88.3
<i>The child gets toys when...</i>						
not given toys at all	2	3.3	3	5	55	91.7
purchased on occasions (birthdays, new year etc.)	42	70	16	26.7	2	3.3
as a reward	12	20	32	53.3	16	26.7
given as gifts by relatives and visitors	21	35	35	58.3	4	6.7
the child asks for them	15	25	39	65	6	10
needed	36	60	18	30	6	10
<i>The child is allowed to play with toys...</i>						
according to mother's wish	5	8.3	24	40	31	51.7
according to specific instruction and guidance	10	16.7	28	46.7	22	36.7
as the child pleases	51	85	7	11.7	2	3.3
<i>The child is given the toys to play...</i>						
occasionally	2	3.3	17	28.3	41	68.3
whenever the child desires	55	91.7	5	8.3	0	0
<i>The child is responsible for...</i>						
preserving and keeping the toys in order	23	38.3	23	38.3	14	23.3
sharing the toys	29	48.3	20	33.3	11	18.3
giving away and discarding toys	6	10	21	35	33	55
not responsible for anything	19	31.7	11	18.3	30	50
<i>The child's hobbies (e.g. collection of pictures, stamps, balls, dolls, cars etc. etc....)</i>						
encouraged	33	55	8	13.3	19	31.7
shown indifference to	0	0	9	15	51	85
discouraged	0	0	0	0	60	100
<i>The child is helped to...</i>						
collect	23	38.3	12	20	25	41.7
classify and preserve	22	36.7	8	13.3	30	50
use	24	40	5	8.3	31	51.7
<i>The child is allowed to play...</i>						
in the house	54	90	6	10	0	0
at neighbours	20	33.3	28	46.7	12	20
common courtyard	32	53.3	19	31.7	9	15
garden or nearby playground	23	38.3	25	41.7	12	20
in the street	9	15	15	25	36	60
<i>The child is allowed to play with children...</i>						
Who are socially desirable	25	41.7	10	16.7	25	41.7
Who are chosen by parents	8	13.3	14	23.3	38	63.3
Whom the child likes	49	81.7	9	15	2	3.3
Siblings and their friends	35	58.3	4	6.7	21	35
Siblings alone	20	33.3	7	11.7	33	55
Anyone	12	20	10	16.7	38	63.3

children. It is evident from Table 2 that in majority of the families of sample children (76.7%), the child's play contents are books, paper cutting and drawing with crayons followed by constructive toys, blocks, clay as well as vehicles and outdoor material 73.33 per cent

each. Further these 70 per cent of children got toys on occasions (birthdays, new year etc.). This was followed by 'giving them toys' when they needed (60%). The child was in most of the cases, allowed to play with these toys as he wished (85%). Only in 8.33 per cent children played

with toys according to mother's wish. Significant condition effects were found in which more complex forms of play were observed when the children were playing with their mothers than when playing by themselves (Fiese, 1990). Majority of families (91.67%) gave toys to children to play wherever the child desired. Keeping the child's wish on priority. The child's sense of responsibility with respect to toys was in most of the cases restricted to sharing the toys (48.34%) followed by "preserving and keeping the toys in order" (38.33%). The child's hobbies (i.e. collection of pictures, stamps, balls, dolls, cars etc.) were encouraged by more than fifty per cent (i.e. 55%) of the parents. Among the different categories of help i.e. to collect, use, classify and preserve; children in majority of the cases were given help to use (50%) the toy/play material followed by the help to collect the play material (38.33%). The child's area of play in almost all the cases i.e. 90% is limited to the house followed by a common courtyard (53.33%). The child's will prevails in majority of the cases (81.67%) when choosing the peer groups/friends with whom he is allowed to play. Ladd (1987) reported that preschoolers who engaged in more pro-social (i.e. cooperative play, social conversation) and less anti-social (aggression, arguing) and disruptive (rough-and-tumble play) play ground behaviour would be more accepted and less rejected by peers. Siblings and their friends (58.33%) are the next preferred choice with whom the child is allowed to play. Ladd (1990) found that higher levels of cooperative play and social conversation made significant positive contributions to peer status, while arguing, aggression and rough play behaviours were negatively related to peer status for preschoolers.

The analysis of its various aspects pointed out that only 5 to 10 per cent of parents do not provide one or the other kinds of toys; 40 per cent never give wooden toys to children and 35 per cent do not consider odds and add befitting play material for children. It was surprising to discover that 91.7% parents do not add toys/play materials to

the child's environment on regular basis. Addition of play material was still considered to be occasion related event i.e. birthday, reward or a gift from friend and a relative. Majority of parents seldom (65%) responded to the requests of the child for toys. Only 37% parents allowed child to play without any formal instruction, however, 85% children were playing as they pleased. Fifty to over fifty per cent parents never helped children to collect, classify and preserve or use the play material. About one third of parents could not appreciate the role of play material in socializing their children.

SUMMARY

Such practices indicate that parents despite their education and lesser socio-economic constraints are not appreciating the role of play materials in socializing their children. The lack of appreciation seems to emerge from lack of knowledge about the role of play materials in the optimum development of children.

KEYWORDS Socio-personal Characteristics. Socialization. Child.

ABSTRACT The study deals with the child's socialization through play among 2-4 years old children. The sample comprised of sixty children drawn from the childcare and early educational settings. The study reveals that the parents despite their education and lesser socio-economic constraints are not appreciating the role of play materials in socializing their children. The lack of appreciation seems to emerge from lack of knowledge about the role of play materials in the optimum development of children.

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