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Impact of intervention on utilization of play material of rural female infants

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Abstract

The study was aimed at investigating the existing level of play materials of rural female infants and compares the post intervention developmental outcomes of infants with control group. The study was conducted in the Panchrukhi Block of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. A Total of 60 female infants (30 infants in experimental group and 30 infants in control group) were selected. An intervention for a period of six months regarding play material was imparted to the experimental group mothers and their infants were given proper stimulation. Both the groups (experimental and control) were post tested after six months. The control group showed less change in comparison to experimental group with regards to play materials. The intervention had a significant effect on the play materials of the experimental group.

Key words: Play material, rural female infants, intervention, impact.

Introduction

Human growth and development is a natural process and takes place in a natural environment. Environment in which the child grows can accelerate or retard the child's motor, physical, mental, social and emotional development. A congenial or conducive home environment is one where parents are sensitive and responsive to the developmental needs of the child, provide the right type of toys and play material for stimulating the child's development, and the mothers are empowered with the scientific knowledge on child care and disciplining and above all providing a safe environment. Mother is sensitive and responsive to the needs of the child and organizes the environment for the child and parents get involved with the child's activities. Mother needs to properly organize the physical and temporal environment for the child's social and emotional well being. Working mother should leave her baby under the supervision of a substitutive figure who should provide adequate care and who can cater to the emotional and social needs of the child. A sibling can not provide the adequate care. The child's play environment need to be safe and free of hazards. Play materials are made accessible for stimulating the child's development and rich experiences are provided to the child with a wide variety.

Majority of the infants and young children in our country do not receive the required rich environment and stimulation at home for the natural growth and development. This is mainly due to ignorance and poverty. The rural life in particular is fraught with innumerable problems and the rural mothers, therefore, tend to take bare minimum care of their little ones.

Parents are often ignorant and confused about appropriate play and learning activities for their children and may hold unrealistic expectations regarding their child's development. Families with financial distress have problems in providing the required play material for their infants. They believe that play and toys are only for the privileged and they are not aware of how simple material or toys which provide abundant scope for manipulation and exploration are stimulatory material that fosters the creativity and mental growth of children in the most significant years of early childhood.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted in the Panchrukhi Block of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. A total of 60 infants belonging to the age group of seven to twelve months were selected from two clusters of villages, one experimental and the other control group. Each cluster comprised of four villages. An equal number of infants (n= 30 each) were selected from experimental and control group. After six months of intervention, these sub-groups came in the category of 13-14 months, 15-16 months and 17-18 months, respectively. The experimental group infants were provided with stimulating toys and play materials for enhancing motor and mental development.

Result and Discussion

About 10 percent of the infants had a stroller or walker, in the experimental group while 43.3 percent of the infants had a stroller or walker, in the control group. After post testing there was increase by 36.6 percent in the experimental group while in the control group no change was observed. In the experimental group during pre testing 26.6 percent of the infants had simple eye hand coordination toy like pegging while in control group the percentage was 30%. After post testing in the experimental group the percentage was 40 % and no change was observed in the control group. In the experimental group during testing only 16.6% and 10% of the infants had beading toys and blocks respectively while in control group the percentage was 23.3 % respectively. After post testing 33.3 % in the experimental group children had beading toys and 40% had blocks. Whereas in control group the percentage remained the same. In the experimental group 6.7 per cent of the infants and in control group, 10 percent of infants had nestling jars during pre testing. After post testing 33.3 per cent of infants in experimental group had nestling jars while no change was observed in control group. About 93.4 per cent of the infants in experimental group did not have drawing items or crayons during pre testing. After post testing 26.6 per cent of the experimental group infants had crayon or drawing items while no change was observed in control group. During pre testing 16.6 percent of infants in experimental group and 20 per cent of infants in control group had musical toys. After post testing majority of infants i.e. 30 percent had musical toys while no change was observed in control group. Majority of the parents 60 per cent in experimental group and 46.6 per cent in control group involved themselves with the child including problem solving and puzzles during pre testing. After intervention 90 percent parents in experimental group involved themselves with child. Nathan et al (1999) also found that after post testing 96.6 per cent of the fathers in experimental group involved with their children in play while in the control group no change was observed.

Table 1. Play material provided for children

Ask the mother what are play material provided for children	Pre test				Post Test			
	Experimental Group		Control Group		Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
Stroller/ walker / kiddy car/ scooter/ tricycle	3 (10.0)	27 (90.0)	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)	11 (36.6)	19 (63.4)	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)
Simple eye hand coordination toy								
Pegging	8 (26.6)	22 (73.4)	9 (30)	21 (70)	12 (40.0)	18 (60.0)	8 (26.6)	22 (73.4)
Beading	5 (16.6)	25 (83.3)	6 (20)	24 (80)	10 (33.3)	20 (66.7)	5 (16.6)	25 (83.4)
Blocks	3 (10.0)	27 (90.0)	7 (23.3)	23 (76.7)	12 (40.0)	18 (60.0)	3 (10.0)	27 (90.0)
Complex eye hand coordination toys								
Nestling jars	2 (6.7)	28 (83.4)	3 (10)	27 (90)	10 (33.3)	20 (66.7)	2 (6.7)	28 (93.4)
Puzzles	4 (13.3)	26 (86.6)	4 (13.3)	26 (86.6)	9 (30.0)	21 (70.0)	8 (26.6)	22 (73.3)
Drawing and crayons	5 (16.6)	25 (83.3)	1 (3.3)	24 (96.7)	7 (23.3)	23 (73.3)	6 (20)	24 (80)
Toys for mental activity								
Musical toys	5 (16.6)	25 (83.3)	6 (20)	24 (80)	9 (30.3)	21 (70.0)	7 (23.3)	23 (76.6)
Sand and water	8 (26.6)	22 (73.3)	9 (30)	21 (70)	11 (36.6)	19 (63.3)	9 (30)	21 (70)
Parental involvement with children								
Parents participation with the child	18 (60)	12 (40.0)	14 (46.6)	16 (53.3)	27 (90.0)	3 (10.0)	18 (60)	12 (40)

N= Number , % = Percentage

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