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Effect of intervention on mothers' temperament of female infants in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The present study was aimed at investigating the mothers' temperament of rural female infants in district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. Total of 60 rural female infants' mothers (30 in experimental and 30 in control group) were selected. An intervention for a period of six months regarding temperament 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 experiment group with regards to temperament. The intervention had a significant effect on the mother's temperament in the experimental group.

Introduction

The first year of the life is formative and impressionable. Infancy is a period of prodigious growth and learning. Not only physical structures and functions develop, but personality characteristics also become well defined and patterned. Girl child occupies a prominent place in the demography of any country. Female children form 20 per cent of the country's population and their welfare and development should be a matter of a national priority. They are the future human resources of a nation; therefore, it is imperative to promote their health and to protect them from diseases because only a healthy body has healthy mind.

Mother's temperament has a strong influence in child rearing and in imbibing the knowledge regarding childcare. Temperament can be affected by many factors like age of the mother, number of children, gender of the child, type and size of the family, education of the mother etc. Temperament of a person can be defined as stable individual differences in quality and intensity of emotional reaction (Berk 1993). The word intervention means mediation and it has been derived from the word intervene which means to modify existing skills, practices and to prevent the undesirable actions and to bring out desirable changes. Intervention programme is the programme, which is based on preplanned activities using in indigenously available and low cost materials to enhance the physical, motor, and cognitive development of the children.

Material and Methods

A total of 60 mothers having female infants' belonging to the age group of seven to twelve months' were selected from two clusters of villages in the Panchrukhi Block of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, one experimental and other control group. 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 temperament was also to be controlled, in other words both the controlled and experimental group had to be similar on these parameters. So there was need to assess the temperament. Mother's temperament scale was used during intervention. The inventory to know mother's temperament consisted of 44 items on different pleasant and unpleasant emotions of the mother, aggressiveness, initiative-taking attitude, caring for others, understanding and sharing nature, etc.

Results and Discussion

From the Table 1 it is observed that during pre- testing in the experimental group 86.7 per cent of mothers had average temperament and only 13.3 per cent had good temperament. While in the control group 90 per cent had average temperament and only 10 per cent had good temperament. After giving appropriate intervention to the mothers 63.4 per cent had average temperament and 36.6 per cent had good temperament in experimental group

whereas no change was observed in the control group.

As it is revealed from Table 2 that the mothers in the experimental group of 7-6 months infants had mean score 144.8 of their temperament, whereas 9-10 months infants' mothers had a mean score 153.3 was noted during pre-testing. While in control group mothers had a mean score as 143.5 (of infant's age 7-8 months), 154.0 (of infant's age 9-10 months) and 141.3 (of infant's 11-12 months). During post-testing the experimental group mothers had sufficient increase in their mean scores as 162.6 for mothers having infants of age 13-14 mothers having infants 17-18 months. No change was observed in the control group mothers having infants of age 13-14 months and 15-16 months. t-value was found significant in case of mothers having infants of age 15-16 months, which was significant level of significance.

Majority of the mothers were in the age group of 21 to 25 years they were educated till middle school, were housewives belonging to joint families and medium / large sized families. During pre testing in the experimental group mothers were less energetic, more aggressive and more irritable etc. due to the responsibilities of family members because they had joint and medium/ large size families. After giving the intervention the mothers were understand the importance of good temperament, which might reflect on their behaviour with their children. The mothers were found active, energetic, less irritable and behaved better with their children after imparting the related information. In the present study there was increase in mean score of temperament of mothers after giving them intervention. This is due to the fact that the time period of intervention (Six months) was very less to judge to change in the temperament of mothers. Although the mothers in experimental group had a better temperament after post testing, there was no noticeable increase in mean scores of control group because they were not introduced with sufficient knowledge. That is why after giving the intervention to the mothers in the experimental group, they showed better temperament.

The results are in line with Verma *et al.* (2001) and Khadi *et al.* (2002). They also observed that educational intervention had a significant impact on enhancing the mother's temperament and the developmental outcomes of infants.

Table 1. Distribution of scores regarding mother's temperament

Scores	Pre testing		Post Test	
	Experimental group	Control group	Experimental group	Control group
48-112	-	-	-	
113-176	26 (86.7)	27 (90)	19 (63.4)	27(90)
177-240	4 (13.3)	3 (10)	11(36.6)	3(10)

Figure in parenthesis indicate the percentage

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of mother's temperament

Age in months	Groups	Pre test		Post test	
		Mean (SD)	t-value	Mean (SD)	t-value
7-8	Experimental	144.8 (20.0)	0.13	162.6 (15.7)	2.04
	Control	143.5 (19.4)		144.8 (19.1)	
9-10	Experimental	152.0 (11.1)	0.46	162.4 (9.1)	2.59*
	Control	154.0 (9.2)		152.2 (9.3)	
11-12	Experimental	153.3 (21.7)	0.02	162.5 (13.7)	1.90
	Control	141.3 (8.9)		153.1 (8.9)	

* Significant at 5 % level of significance

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