Himachal Journal of Agricultural Research 34 (1):87-88, 2008

Social competence of rural and urban preschoolers

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Abstract

The present investigation was carried out in Hisar City of Haryana State to assess social abilities of preschoolers. Experimental material comprised 200 preschoolers selected from both rural (100) and urban (100) areas. Results revealed that children from urban areas surpassed children from rural areas in social competence. Social abilities of children on Vineland scale were significantly correlated with social competence on Social Attribute Checklist as if social competence increased on one scale then also increased positively on second scale.

Keywords: Social competence, rural, urban, preschoolers.

Introduction

Social competence refers to a person's ability and interpersonal skill to get along with other people (Eisler, 1976). Goldfried and D'Zurrila (1969) and Spivack and Shure (1974) proposed that social competence is the result of the development of interpersonal cognitive problem solving (ICPS) skills. A child's social competence is affected by how well he or she communicates with other children and with adults. Most children's social skills increase rapidly during the preschool years. Research during the past 20 years suggests that children who do not have basic level of social competence by the age of 6 may have trouble with relationships when they are adults (Ladd, 2000; Parker and Asher, 1987).

Methodology

Sample: The present study was conducted on 200 children from anganwadis of two villages namely Mangali and Singhran and preschool lab of College of Home Science.

Tools: Following two tools were used for the collection of more relevant data because these two tools covered some different aspects of social competence. These tools were Social attributes checklist developed by Kartz and McClellan (1970) and Vineland Social Maturity Scale (Sparrow *et al.*, 1984) was used to assess social competence of children.

Results and Discussion

Mean performance of children for social competence on Vineland Maturity Scale during the age of 2-4 year

Social competence level of boys and the girls had different trend at different age levels in both rural and urban areas. In rural area social competence of boys during the age of 2-3 years was better than girls and in urban area social competence of girls during the age of 3-4 years was better than boys. In urban area social competence of girls (398.48) in the age group of 2-3 years was better than boys (395.4) and social competence of boys in the group of 3-4 years was better than girls. There was significant difference (z=2.19) in 3-4 year age group. There was also significant difference over location (z=4.67) in age group of 2-3 years and in age group of 3-4 years (z=2.02).

Mean performance of children for social competence on social attribute checklist during the age of 2 to 4 year

Social competence of boys in rural area was better than that of girls in both age groups. Similar trend was observed in urban area as the social competence of boys was better than girls and on the observation of overall mean, there was significant difference (z= 2.95*) in the social competence of boys over location. The difference in social competence was clear over the location in age group of 2-3 years (z=2.22*).

The results of present study were in consonance with finding of Attili (1989) who found that within any community the requirement of social competence varies with gender and age. In another study, Kumra (1994) studied gender differences in competence in rural and urban children. Results showed that rural and urban children exhibited non-significant differences in social competence.

Table 1. Mean performance of children for social competence on Vineland Scale during age of 2 to 4 years

Gender	2-3 years	3-4 years	Overall mean
Rural			
Boys	352.36 ± 58.12	337.8 ± 47.53	345.08 ± 53.05
Girls	334.2 ± 70.70	362 ±63.17	348.1 ± 67.81
Overall mean	343.28 ± 64.70	349.9 ± 56.66	346.59 ± 60.60
Z-test (boys vs girls)	0.992	1.53	0.248
Urban			
Boys	395.4 ± 26.03	343.72± 48.80	369.56 ± 46.70
Girls	398.48 ± 65.13	310.8 ± 56.94	354.64 ± 75.01
Overall mean	396.94 ± 49.11	327.26 ± 55.05	362.1 ± 62.61
Z-test (boys vs. girls)	0.219	2.19*	1.19
Z-test over location	'4.67*	2.02*	0.714

* Significant at P=0.05

Table 2. Mean performance of children for social competence on social attribute checklist during the age of 2 to 4 years

Gender	2-3 years	3-4 years	Overall mean
Rural			
Boys	23.12 ± 2.50	24.24 ± 2.71	23.68 ± 2.65
Girls	21.08 ± 2.60	22.72 ± 1.70	21.9 ± 2.30
Overall mean	22.1 ± 2.71	23.48 ± 2.40	22.79 ± 0.63
Z-test (boys vs. girls)	2.83**	2.41**	3.70*
Urban			
Boys	23.88 ±1.99	23.64 ± 1.63	23.88 ± 1.80
Girls	22.72 ± 3.42	22.2 ± 1.82	22.46 ± 2.73
Overall mean	23.3 ± 2.83	22.92 ± 1.86	23.11 ± 2.40
Z-test (boys vs. girls)	1.48	2.95*	3.10*
Z-test over location	2.22*	1.33	1.33

* Significant at P=0.05

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