

# Influential factors on parental involvement in promoting social skills of mentally challenged children

■ P.B. KHADI, VINEETA KUMARI AND M.V. MOKASHI

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■ **ABSTRACT** : A correlation design used to know the parental involvement in promoting social skills of 53 mentally challenged children from 3 special schools of Hubli and Dharwad city during the year 2008-09. BASIC-MR by Peshawaria and Venkatesan (1992) was administered to assess the social skills of children. Parental involvement was assessed by using self-structured tool. Results revealed that majority of the children (37.73%) had acquired moderate level of social skills followed by 32.08 and 30.19 per cent children who fell under high and low category, respectively. Majority of parents (71.70%) fell in low involvement in developing the skills among children while none of the parents were in high level. Results also illustrated low involvement of parents regarding specific social skills, viz., acquisition of social tasks such as showing sympathy for others, when they are sad (3.8%), apologizing if he or she hurts the feelings of others (7.5%), greeting other children (9.4%) etc. None of the parents were involved in promoting communication tasks. Parents were highly involved in enhancing social activities like responding appropriately when introduced to others (17%) and in community use items viz., recognizing and naming buildings (26.4%), carefully crossing the road (18.9%), making small purchases (17%) etc. Child's age, degree of disability, associated disability, age at admission to special schools and degree of constraint had significant influence on the parental involvement. A significant positive relation between parental involvement and social skills of children indicated that parental involvement was higher in children with higher skills. It may be due to the reciprocity in interactions with more parental involvement, children respond more or *vice-versa*. Parents gain confidence in promoting social skills in children who are mildly mentally challenged than those who are moderately challenged. This implies the need for parental programmes to empower and enhance their involvement in acquisition of social skills.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Parental involvement, Mentally challenged children, Social skills

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See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

**M.V. MOKASHI**

Department of Human  
Development and Family Studies,  
College of Rural Home Science,  
University of Agricultural Sciences,  
DHARWAD (KARNATAKA) INDIA  
Email : [malavika.m17@gmail.com](mailto:malavika.m17@gmail.com)