

Performance for communication skills of children in Himachal Pradesh

BIMLA DHANDA AND SUBHANGNA SHARMA

Accepted : November, 2008

ABSTRACT

A study was undertaken with a view to identify the developmental deficiencies in boys and girls with reference to communication skill development and to study the impact of intervention programme on skill development. A total of 1000 (half male and half female) children in the age group of 3-5 years were selected along with their mothers in each state. These children were subjected to age appropriate Winland Behaviour Scale for assessment of their skills. In order to select the children for intervention programme 20% of the low performing children were worked out in various villages. This sample having the lowest mean performance was further divided into two groups of 10% each, one group was given intervention programme and other remained as control for the purpose of comparison of intervention sample. There were half male and half female in each age group. Comparison of mean of boys to that of girls over the different age groups of 3.0 to 4.0 years, 4.0 to 5.0 years and in overall mean revealed that the boys were better than the girls in different age groups for communication sub-domain of socio-emotional competence of the children. which may be attributed to comparatively better interactions parents or care givers towards boys. Overall mean performance of the sample was 96.6 ± 12.66 which was significantly higher ($t= 28.90^{**}$) than the low performing sample with an average increase of 40.2%. The highest percentage of decrease in the sample for communication skills was observed in the village Banjar (54.4%) followed by Salooni (45.9 %), while the lowest decrease was observed in the village Barthin (32.0%).

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to:

BIMLA DHANDA

Department of Human
Development and Family
Studies, College of Home
Science, Choudhary Charan
Singh Haryana Agricultural
University, HISAR
(HARYANA) INDIA

Key words : Communication skill, Children, Male, Female.

The involvement of parents is especially important for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. Educational interventions with pupils with all kinds of behavioural and emotional problems have consistently emphasised the importance of involving families (Kamps and Tankersley, 1996) and parents of children who are receiving specific help have been shown to benefit from receiving help themselves, both by developing the parents' own skills and ensuring that the messages of home and school give to young people become more congruent (Middleton and Cartledge, 1995). Specific programmes to develop emotional and social competences have been shown in a wide range of studies throughout the world to work better where schools involve the pupils' homes and families in the process (Walberg, 1984; Haynes and Comer, 1996; Gettinger *et al.*, 1994 and Ronen, 1994). For example, some schools have successfully asked parents to help pupils with assignments and projects which look at the applicability of social and emotional learning in the home context, such as communication skills (Elias *et al.*, 1997).

In recent years, it has become increasingly clear that social and emotional skills underlie all other areas of development (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000). In fact early social and emotional competence are associated with continued competence and may help reduce the risks for

later problem behaviors. Attainment of positive social and emotional status has been shown to relate to important skills including communication cooperation and emotional regulation. (Schore, 2001). Routine care giving interactions affect children's social and emotional capacity by actually influencing the structure and function of the brain.

Intervention aimed at strengthening the parent-child relationship, reducing behaviour challenges and enhancing child and parent social-emotional capacities which exists in making communication effective. Examples include Interaction Guidance, Infant-Parent Psychotherapy (Lieberman and Van Horn, 2005), and the Incredible Years Curricula (Webster-Stratton and Reid, 2003). However, it is important to recognize that with higher levels of disturbance, change in parent-child relationships becomes more difficult to achieve.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 1000 children (half male and half females) in the age group of 3-5 years were selected along with their mothers in 12 villages in different districts thought Himachal Pradesh representing the whole state. These children were subjected to age appropriate Winland Behaviour Scale for assessment of their communication skills (Sparrow *et al.*, 1984). In order to select the children

for intervention programme, 20% of the low performing children in communication domain were worked out in each village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From district Kangra two villages, namely, Patti and Banauri were selected for evaluation and imparting intervention programme. A total of 120 children with a mean value of 106.25 ± 9.25 were selected in village Patti district Kangra (Table 1). Out of this sample, the 20% children (24) having the lowest mean (69.16 ± 15.23) were selected for implementation of intervention programme. The intervention sample was significantly lower than the total sample ($Z= 9.13^{**}$) with the percentage of decrease of 34.9%. In another village *i.e.*, Banauri a total of 78 children were selected with a mean value of 96.18 ± 13.11 out of which 20% children (16) having lowest mean values (57.62 ± 12.32) were selected for intervention programme. The intervention sample was significantly lower than the total sample ($Z= 6.39^{**}$) with the percentage of decrease of 40.1%. From district Mandi two villages, namely, Jogender Nagar and Machhial were selected for this purpose. In village Jogender Nagar a sample of 90 children had the mean value of 123.21 ± 20.18 for communication domain, while in Machhial the mean value was 105.18 ± 15.24 . In village Joginder nagar, the lowest performing sample of 20% children (18) had a mean value of 77.10 ± 10.12 and in village Machhial children (16)

having the lowest mean value of 64.70 ± 17.19 were selected for implementation of intervention. The decrease in the mean of intervention sample than total sample in J nagar and Machhial was 37.4% and 38.5%, respectively.

In district Bilaspur two villages, namely, Barthin and Janduta were selected for implementation of intervention programme. In village Barthin a total of 80 children were selected with a mean value of 105.11 ± 16.03 . The mean value of the 20% lowest sample (16) was 71.45 ± 15.70 with a significant ($Z= 4.53$) decrease of 32.0.0%. In Jandura the total number of children selected was 80 with a mean value of 95.22 ± 16.11 . Out of this sample, 20% of the children (16) having lowest mean (57.50 ± 13.65) were selected for imparting intervention programme with a significant ($Z= 5.22^*$) decrease of 39.6%.

In village Amb of district Una the mean of total (50) children was 121.10 ± 15.12 , while the mean of 20% low performing children (10) was significantly low (64.2 ± 7.44) with a decrease of 47.0% ($Z=7.28$). From district Una in village Garget a total of 110 children were selected with a mean value of 98.26 ± 17.45 . The mean value of the lowest performing children (22) was 64.23 ± 15.29 with a decrease of 34.6% from total sample. The mean of intervention sample was significantly lower than the total sample ($Z= 5.06^{**}$). From village Dhanpur district Hamirpur, a total of 79 children were selected with a mean value of 85.63 ± 11.23 . The mean of intervention sample was 56.28 ± 12.36 which was significantly below than the

Table 1 : Selection of children for imparting intervention on the basis of their mean performance for communication skills in various villages of Himachal Pradesh

District	Village	Total No. of children	No. of children In lowest 20 th per-centile	Mean	Mean of lowest 20 th percentile	% of decrease in lowest sample to total sample	Z test for mean of total sample vs lowest sample
Kangra	Patti	120	24	106.25 ± 9.25	69.16 ± 15.23	34.9	9.13**
Kangra	Banuri	78	16	96.18 ± 13.11	57.62 ± 12.32	40.1	6.39**
Mandi	J.Nagar	90	18	123.21 ± 20.18	77.10 ± 10.12	37.4	5.92**
Mandi	Machhial	80	16	105.18 ± 15.24	64.70 ± 17.19	38.5	5.54**
Kullu	Banjar	73	14	121.03 ± 21.15	55.18 ± 12.70	54.4	6.95**
Kullu	Jhiri	65	14	128.10 ± 23.16	75.18 ± 13.21	41.3	5.09**
Chamba	Salooni	40	8	102.12 ± 21.21	55.29 ± 15.24	45.9	3.60**
Chamba	Chamba	55	12	108.14 ± 12.29	65.15 ± 10.13	39.8	6.73**
Bilaspur	Barthin	80	16	105.11 ± 16.03	71.45 ± 15.70	32.0	4.53**
Bilaspur	Janduta	80	16	95.22 ± 16.11	57.50 ± 13.65	39.6	5.22**
Una	Amb	50	10	121.10 ± 15.12	64.2 ± 7.44	47.0	7.28**
Una	Gagret	110	22	98.26 ± 17.45	64.23 ± 15.29	34.6	5.06**
Hamirpur	Dhanpur	79	16	85.63 ± 11.23	56.28 ± 12.36	34.3	5.47**
	Total/ Mean	1000	202	96.6 ± 12.66	56.08 ± 7.51	40.2	28.90**

* and ** Significance of values at $P = 0.05$ and 0.01 , respectively, \pm : Standard deviation of the sample.intervention.

total mean value ($Z= 5.47^*$).

Conclusion:

Thus, overall mean of the children for communication skills was 96.6 ± 12.66 . The mean of intervention sample was 56.08 ± 7.51 which was significantly lower ($Z= 28.90^{**}$) than total sample with an average decrease of 40.2%. The highest percentage of decrease in the intervention sample was observed in the village Banjar in district Kullu (54.4%) followed by village Amb in district Una (47.0%), while the lowest percentage of decrease was observed in the village Barthin (32.0%) in district Bilaspur.

Authors' affiliations:

SUBHANGNA SHARMA, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Science, Choudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, HISAR (HARYANA) INDIA

REFERENCES

- Elias, M.**, Zins, J., Weissberg, R., Frey, K., Greenberg, M., Haynes, N., Kessler, R., Schwab-Stone, M., and Shriver, T. (1997). Promoting social and emotional learning. Alexandria, Virginia: ASCD.
- Gettinger, M.**, Doll, B., and Salmon, D. (1994). Effects of social problem solving, goal setting, and parent training on children's peer relations. *J. Applied Developmental Psychology*, **15**(2) : 28-36.
- Haynes, N.**, and Comer, J. (1996). Integrating schools, families and communities through successful school reform. *School Psychology Review*, **25** : 4.
- Kamps, D.** and Tankersley, M. (1996). Prevention of behavioral and conduct disorders: trends and research issues. *Behavioral Disorders*, **22** (1) : 41-48.
- Lieberman, A.** and Van Horn, P. (2005). Don't hit my mommy! A manual for child-parent psychotherapy with young witnesses of family violence. Washington, DC: Zero to Three Press.
- Middleton, M.** and Cartledge, G. (1995). The effects of social skills instruction and parental involvement on the aggressive behaviors of African American males. *Behavior Modification*, **19** : 192-210.
- Ronen, T.** (1994). Imparting self-control skills in the school setting. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy*, **16** (1) : 1-20.
- Schore, A.** (2001). Effects of a secure attachment relationship on right brain development, affect regulation and infant mental health. *Infant Mental Health J.*, **22** : 7-66.
- Shonkoff, J. P.** and Phillips, D. A. (2000). From neurons to neighborhoods: *The science of early childhood development*. National Academy Press, Washington, DC.
- Sparrow, S.S.**, Balla, D.A., Cicchetti, D.V. (1984). Vineland adaptive behaviour scales. AGS Circle Pines, Minnesota, USA.
- Walberg, H.J.** (1984). Families as partners in educational productivity. *Phi Delta Kappan*, **84** (6) : 397-400.
- Webster-Stratton, C.**, and Reid, J.M. (2003). The incredible years parents, teachers, and child training series: A multi-faceted treatment approach for young children with conduct problems'. In : A. Kazdin & J. Weisz (Eds.) *Evidenced-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* (pp. 224- 240.). New York: Guilford.

