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Impact Of Psychological Environment On Children's Creativity

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Creativity is the act of generating new imaginative ideas into reality. Ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find unrevealed patterns, to make connection between unrelated phenomenon and to manufacture solution are chief characteristics of creativity. Creativity is keenly associated with an individual's personality and emotional life. Model developed by Russ (1996) explain the relation between creativity and psychological process. This model suggested that there are three components involved in creativity - personality traits, emotional processes and cognitive abilities. Although few children already have the necessary elements others may need encouragement and skill development in order to engage in creative activity. Psycho-social environment affects children's creativity and other aspects of development. Although the exact mechanisms through which one's psycho-social environment affects one's mental and physical development are not entirely known. A large number of studies indicate that such an effect does exist. Some research suggests that children's development is positively influenced by the context in which they are living. Children from more resource- rich and socially relevant conditions show greater intellectual, emotional, creative, behavioural, and social gains than those from more resource-poor and socially antipathetic condition. Children's intelligence and academic success are affected by their interaction and relation with the people around them. Children involved in positive friendships are more likely to get success in school. Achievement and attendance are higher among those children whose social surroundings are defined by household stability.

Key Words: Creativity, Personality, Development, Antipathetic, Interaction

Introduction

The psychological environment is the space and place where the child grows. It affects their health, learning, and behaviour. In addition, research reveals that consequences of the psychological as well as physical environment affect the psychosocial aspect of the child. The environment influences on child development are those that affect each and every relationship that children will form throughout their lives and the quality of said relationships, whether with their families, peers or the neighbourhood where they reside. These relationships are so dominant that when the child grows up these relations help them to grow positively and properly.

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Children's development is often associated with objective aspects like availability of basic material resources, access to health and education good time with family. In addition to objective aspects, it can also be defined more broadly as a subjective experience, i.e., the perception that individuals have of how well their lives are going. According to Huebner and Gilman (2003) the promotion of healthy environmental systems, particularly healthy school environments, is essential to promoting the well-being and mental health of children and young children. Aspects of social and emotional developmental are also important for children's well-being and mental health. Thus, even before entering school, skills such as self-confidence, developing positive relationships, and expressing emotions effectively are essential for the future development of young children (Shonkoff J.P. and Phillips D.A.,2000). A study including 52 systematic reviews and meta-analyses endorses the importance of promoting well-being and preventing mental health problems in schools through early intervention with young children, especially in areas that develop emotional and social skills (Weare K. and Nind M.,2011).

Research shows that a large number of children face inadequate physical, psychological and social environment in their lives. Researchers from various fields of study—developmental psychology, sociology, economics, demography, and family studies—have independently explored different domains of inequality and instability in the supportive structures that predict children’s outcomes. However, little effort has been made to look across research disciplines and study contexts to synthesize our knowledge base and find out connections among various domains of such type of negative environment.

Thus child development is a remarkable and intricate journey, influenced by a number of multiple of factors that interact to shape the course of a young life. Among these factors, environmental elements stand out as key determinants in child’s development, encompassing a broad spectrum of influences from the prenatal environment to the socio-economic and cultural setting in which a child is raised (Rao et al, 2012). Several environmental factors may affect the processes of brain-development, although one of the most relevant is the impact caused by environmental stress. According to Bronson (2000), the environment provides “food” as stimulation and contents for the growth of the mind.

A large number of researches reveal significant relation between family income and children’s physical health, socio-emotional and behavioural outcomes, cognitive abilities, and school achievement (Conger and Rand 2005; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Early Child Care Research Network 2005). Low-income children are at a greater risk of failure in school and more likely to experience grade retention, receive special education services, and drop out of high school (Jencks and Mayer, 1990; Laird et al. 2006). The structure of the family plays a major role in children’s experiences and the support they got in the home. There are strong evidences that family instability negatively influences children’s social emotional development and behaviour. Various researches of adolescents have identified a significant relation between family transitions and child well-being (Adam 2004; Brown 2006). According to a report by Cavanagh Huston (2006), Children in instable families with highly depressed parents showed more disruptive behaviours with peers and slightly more externalizing behaviours during their transition to first grade than their peers in respect to stable families. Instable families also displayed lower maternal sensitivity and very poor quality of home environments, which related to disruptive classroom behaviour. Yet instable families that did have higher levels of emotional and material resources buffered the negative effects of family instability on children’s problem behaviours. Positive parenting may also buffer children from instability. When parents successfully cope and adapt to stressful life changes, and support their children through these changes, the effect of adverse experiences on children may be minimized, and potentially insignificant. The pioneering work of Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969) underscored the importance of a competent relationship between the parents and the child for its healthy growth. Early research presented the child as a passive recipient within this system. Later, however, studies found that some children are biologically more prone than other children to develop a secure attachment.

Several studies measured the positive psychological effect on children's overall well-being. Elfrink et al. (2017) reported a positive impact on children's self-report of well-being, with a larger effect for younger children on health-related quality of life. Owens and Patterson (2013) and Shoshani and Slone (2017) measured children's well-being through life satisfaction. Unlike Owens and Patterson, who found no significant effect of the intervention on life satisfaction, Shoshani and Slone found a significant increase in children's life satisfaction in the intervention group but not in the control group. Regarding self-esteem, Owens and Patterson found a significant increase over time in the best possible selves' condition, but not in the gratitude or control condition.

Objective of the Study

The present study intended to examine the effect of psychological environment on children's creativity. Positive psychological environment and negative psychological environment were treated as independent variables whereas creativity was treated as dependent variables. Thus, the objectives of the study are as follow:

1. The study intended to examine two groups of children – growing in positive and negative psychological environment – in respect of their creativity. The purpose was to examine the effect of positive and negative psychological environment on their creative development.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis has been formulated for empirical verification keeping in view the above objectives:

1. Children growing in positive psychological environment will be more creative than children growing in negative psychological environment.

Sample of the study

Keeping in view the nature of present study incidental cum purposive sampling method was found appropriate. The present study was conducted on an incidental come purposive sample consisting 400 children of 10 to 14 years of age from urban, semi urban and rural area of Patna district. Half of the samples were comprise of those children who were growing in positive psychological environment. Other half of the sample were comprise of those children who were growing in negative psychological environment. Among the children growing in positive psychological environment, half were male and half were female, so as the children growing in negative psychological environment.

Research Tools

1. Personal information blank was used to know the name, age, address, socio-economic condition, family atmosphere etc. of the respondents.
2. Divergent Production Ability Test by K. N. Sharma (2011) was used for measuring creativity of the respondents.

Statistical analysis of the data

Statistical method applied for data analysis was t – test. Results obtained on the basis of this method were recorded in tables and were discussed and interpreted with region and justification.

Result and interpretation

There were two independent variables – positive psychological environment and negative psychological environment. The study consist creativity as dependent variable. Divergent Production Ability Test was administered to respondents growing in positive and negative psychological environment and their scores were obtained separately. Then mean, SD and SE were calculated for all the groups. After that t - test was employed and the significance of difference between the two means were examined and the result were recorded in the table below:

Table

Mean, SD and t value of Creativity scores of respondents growing in positive and negative psychological environment

Dimension	Respondents	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	df	p
Creativity	Children Growing in Positive Psy. Enviro.	200	68.05	6.49	0.46	10.77	398	<0.01
	Children Growing in Negative Psy. Enviro.	200	61.05	6.73	0.47			

Result displayed in the table showed significant effect of positive and negative psychological environment on respondent creativity. Respondents growing in positive psychological environment are more creative than those growing in negative psychological environment ($t = 10.77$, $df = 398$, $p < 0.01$). Outcome of the scores are that children growing in positive psychological environment are more creative whereas children growing in negative psychological environment are less creative.

Conclusion

There is a significant effect of psychological environment on growing children's creative development.

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