

Cognitive and Somatic Development of 4 to 6 Year Old Children

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ABSTRACTCognitive development and physical growth of 4 to 6 year old children of Gharuan village in Ropar District of Punjab was evaluated. The purpose has been to depict sex differences in somatic and cognitive abilities and also to provide basic data for future comparisons. Data on 120 children (60 boys and 60 girls) were collected during 1994-95 who were between 4 to 6 years of age, the time when their formal education begins, forms the basis of this study. Anthropometric measurements which included stature, body mass, circumferences, skinfolds and skeletal diameters (Tanner et al. 1969) and the cognitive abilities (Jaswal et al. 1988) were studied. Evaluation of somatic development has revealed non-existent sexual dimorphism in stature and other body measurements. The boys and girls perform equally well in identification, comparison and achievement abilities, however, the boys exhibit better memory power, thinking, olfactory, recognition and verbal abilities than the girls. The social and parental behavior favours the male child. The absence of sex dimorphism in somatic development is because of the natural buffering of the human female to environmental insults.