

Mental Health Status and Its Improvement in Babies of Urban and Rural Hisar

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ABSTRACT The present investigation was carried out with the objectives to study the mental health status of babies, and the impact of intervention programme developed for low performing babies. Cognitive development index of 400 babies was assessed to find out differences for age groups, gender and locality. The sample comprised boys and girls distributed in 4 age groups during the age of one to two years in urban and rural areas. Considerable differences in mental level were observed for all the age groups studied for both boys and girls in both areas. With regard to gender, rural boys were better than rural girls, but in urban area boys were at par with girls for all the age groups. Interaction of age and gender revealed that there was no differential increase in boys and girls over the age groups studied. Urban babies were superior to the rural babies at same age groups but at par for pooled mean of all age groups. The babies having significantly poor mental status in both areas were administered an intervention programme for a period of three months through their care givers. The impact of intervention programme for cognitive development was significant in urban area for all the age groups, but in rural area out of four age groups only two age groups could show improvement. In order to make the intervention programme more effective it was realised that the programme should be given to wider range of age groups and for some more extended time especially in rural areas.

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