

Mastery motivation and cognitive development among 18- 36 month old toddlers: A developmental perspective

Abstract

Previous researchers have suggested that mastery motivation is a force that energizes, directs and sustains goal-directed behavior in children, and is related to their developmental outcomes, such as cognitive, language, socio- emotional, adaptive competence and physical activity. The aim of the present study was to explore the effects of mastery motivation on the cognitive development among 30 toddlers between age ranges of 18- 36 months. Mastery motivation among toddlers was measured by using Individualized assessment of mastery motivation Manual (Morgan et al, 1992) which comprised of structured play activities. As for cognitive development, Bayley scale of Cognitive Development (Bayley–III; Bayley, 2006) was used. Simple Regression was used to determine the effect of toddlers' mastery motivation on their cognitive development. It was found that mastery motivation contributed significantly and positively towards toddlers' cognitive development (Beta=.612), receptive language scale (Beta=.599) and fine motor scale (Beta=.566). As mastery motivation targets the underlying developmental processes to enhance competence rather than merely teaching skills, it has strong contribution to early childhood intervention programs. Findings of the present research can help parents, caretakers, and child minders to plan intensive pre-school program that provide experiences to optimize child development and enhance mastery motivation.