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Research Article

PARENTAL PERCEPTION REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERGENT THINKING SKILLS FOR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The present research was conducted to study the perception of parents regarding the importance of divergent thinking skills for children. The sample for the present study comprised 200 Parents (100 Mothers and 100 Fathers) of 200 children who were categorized as HP (High Performer) and LP (Low Performer) on the basis of their performance on Divergent Production Ability Test (DPAT). A Self devised Parental Perception Questionnaire was used to assess the views of parents regarding divergent thinking ability of children. The results of the study revealed that almost all the sample parents provided freedom of expression to their children. Statistically, significant differences were seen between parents of HP and LP children with respect to freedom of expression to children while insignificant differences were noticed among mothers and fathers on this aspect of divergent thinking. Statistically, a significant difference was also noticed among parents of HP and LP children with regard to acceptance of ideas while the insignificant difference was seen between mothers and fathers on this component of divergent thinking. Results also showed that majority of parents did not participate in brainstorming and storytelling activities while most of the parents sometimes involved in wordplay and sharing experiences activities with their children. The study has implications for children, parents, teachers and professionals in the field of child development and can be used to provide inputs for enhancement of divergent thinking skills among children.

INTRODUCTION

In the present competitive world, it is very important for a person to possess a series of skills, resources, capacities and abilities that will allow him to move forward in changing and continually demanding the world. As an indispensable life skill in the 21st century, divergent thinking has a very important role in the individual growth of a child (Sefton-Green 1999). Divergent thinking is one of the necessary skills to adapt to today's and future's world. Now societies require individuals having problem-solving, multi-faceted thinking, effective communication, and creative thinking skills (Kaptan 1999; Richardson 2003; Burris & Garton 2006). A large number of environmental factors influence creative abilities. These include socio-cultural and personal barriers that can diminish divergent thinking abilities. Ekvall and Tangeberg-Anderson (1986) identified ten factors in society that influence creative thinking abilities: challenge and motivation, freedom, support of new ideas, trust, openness, liveliness and dynamism, playfulness and humor, debates, conflict, and risk taking. Family or parental attitude are also considered a significant force in encouraging or discouraging creative thinking in a particular culture. Parents play the most important and influential role in molding and developing character in their children. Attitude and behavior of parents have a crucial role in the development of creativity of children (Kemple & Nissenberg 2000).The parent is the child's first teacher. Indeed family provides the first learning experience for the child by providing warmth during the developing years. Every child has the potential to be creative in one way or another (Shimm and Ballen, 1996). It is the responsibility of parents to provide every opportunity for the child to develop creative thinking. Brzezinski (1993) claimed that parental beliefs have a great impact on children's creative skills. If parents recognize their children's potential, they would contribute to the development of these skills by registering the child to the art classes, or encourage the child's problem solving and problem finding labors more than usual. Parents structure environmental conditions at home. They can enable children to express themselves and contribute something new to the society. Parents' encouragement keeps their children guided to become divergent thinkers. Although parents have an inevitable role to encourage children's creativity, there are some obstacles that impede parents to contribute to their children's creativity growth. For instance, parents have little or no knowledge of the games, rhymes, toys, songs, home environment, stories,

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household goods, and parental attitudes in developing children's creativity (Jayatilaka, 2010). Moreover, parents and teachers find it difficult to notice their children's creativity. Some of the behaviors of creative people—such as unconventionality, impatience, difficult to control, inappropriateness, and unusual viewpoint—are frowned upon by society (Shapiro 1991).

Although many studies have been conducted on children's convergent thinking skills, not many studies on divergent thinking ability among school children have been conducted in India. There is no such study available on parents in Jammu district. Since parental behavior is also rooted in the cultural patterns, the present investigation was significant for understanding the parenting patterns in this regard in the selected context. Keeping this as background, the present research was designed to provide data about parental perception related to the development of divergent thinking skills among young school going children. The study is being conducted on an aspect which has practical implications not only for policy makers, welfare workers but parents and school children themselves. The data will help to provide new insights about this important aspect of thinking, which may be utilized for drawing concrete action plan later.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the perception of parents regarding the importance of divergent thinking skills for children.
2. To compare the perception of parents regarding divergent thinking across groups and sex of parents.

Research Methodology

The sample for the present study comprised 200 Parents (100 Mothers and 100 Fathers) of 200 children who were categorized as HP (High Performer) and LP (Low Performer) on the basis of their performance on Divergent Production Ability Test (DPAT) in Phase I of the study. To collect the information from the parents, the researcher first visited the schools and explained the purpose of the study to the school authorities. With the help of teachers, home address of sample children was taken and after that purposive sampling technique was used to approach the parents. A Self devised Parental Perception Questionnaire was used to assess the views of parents regarding divergent thinking ability of children. The categories covered in the Questionnaire are as follows: Background Information about Parents and family members, views regarding Freedom of Expression, Freedom of Questioning and Experimentation, Acceptance of childrens'

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Parents

	HP			LP			χ^2 (HP-LP)	*Overall Total*			χ^2 (F-M)
	F (n=50) (%)	**M (n=50) (%)**	**Total (n=100) (%)**	**F (n=50) (%)**	**M (n=50) (%)**	**Total (n=100) (%)**		**F (n=100) (%)**	**M (n=100) (%)**	**Total (n=200) (%)**	
			Age in Years								
28-32	- -	15 (30)	**15 (15)**	1 (2)	10 (20)	**11 (11)**		1 (1)	25 (25)	**26 (13)**	
32-36	12 (24)	16 (32)	**28 (28)**	12 (24)	23 (46)	**35 (35)**		24 (24)	39 (39)	**63 (31.5)**	
36-40	24 (48)	15 (30)	**39 (39)**	13 (26)	13 (26)	**26 (26)**		37 (37)	28 (28)	**65 (32.5)**	**45.64****
40-44	13 (26)	3 (6)	**16 (16)**	19 (38)	4 (8)	**23 (23)**	6.66	32 (32)	7 (7)	**39 (19.5)**	
44-48	1 (2)	1 (2)	**2 (2)**	5 (10)	- -	5 (10)		6 (6)	1 (1)	**7 (3.5)**	
					Qualification						
Functionally Literate	- -	- -	**- -**	1 (2)	4 (8)	**5 (5)**		1 (1)	4 (4)	**5 (2.5)**	
Middle	- -	1 (2)	**1 (1)**	5 (10)	7 (14)	**12 (12)**		5 (5)	8 (8)	**13 (6.5)**	
Matric	5 (10)	13 (26)	**18 (18)**	21 (42)	15 (30)	**36 (36)**		26 (26)	28 (28)	**54 (27)**	
Hr.Sec	10 (20)	14 (28)	**24 (24)**	15 (30)	15 (15)	**30 (30)**		25 (25)	29 (29)	**54 (27)**	
Graduate	28 (56)	21 (42)	**49 (49)**	8 (16)	8 (16)	**16 (16)**		36 (36)	29 (29)	**65 (32.5)**	
Post graduate	4 (8)	1 (2)	**5 (5)**	- -	1 (2)	**1 (1)**	43.24**	4 (4)	2 (2)	**6 (3)**	**7.22**
Professional Degree	3 (6)	- -	**3 (3)**	- -	- -	**- -**		3 (3)	- -	**3 (1.5)**	
					Occupation						
Government Employee	8 (16)	1 (2)	**9 (9)**	27 (54)	- -	**27 (27)**		35 (35)	1 (!)	**36 (18)**	
Private Sectors	25 (50)	11 (22)	**36 (36)**	5 (10)	10 (20)	**15 (15)**		30 (30)	21 (21)	**51 (25.5)**	
Self Business	17 (34)	3 (6)	**20 (20)**	18 (36)	8 (16)	**26 (26)**	10.34*	35 (35)	11 (11)	**46 (23)**	**15.74***
Home Makers	- -	35 (70)	**35 (35)**	- -	32 (64)	**32 (32)**		- -	67 (67)	**67 (33.5)**	

** Significant difference at 0.05 level

Ideas, Provision of materials/ opportunities to explore with material for children, Parents' involvement in activities with children, Evaluation of Childrens' Creative Expressions. The data was collected by visiting homes of selected sample children. In the initial visits, the rapport was built with parents (either mother or father). On an average, it took one and half hour to complete the questionnaire for each parent. The Hindi language was used for giving instruction and interacting with parents during the administration of tool. The entire data collection was completed within a period of six months. The data obtained were subjected to both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background information of parents of sample children

A total of 200 parents (100 fathers and 100 mothers) of 200 children who were grouped as HP (High Performer) and LP (Low Performer) on the basis of their performance on the divergent production ability test were included as respondents. All the parents belonged to middle-income group. The majority of the parents were in the age group of 36-40 years and most of them were educated up to graduation level. A large number of fathers were a government employee and also working in private sectors while most of the mothers were homemakers (Table 1).

It was revealed from (table 1) that a large number (39%) parents of HP children were in the age group 36-40 years while in the case of parents of LP children, it was seen that many of them (35%) were in the age range 32-36 years. When comparing mothers and fathers, it was seen that a large number of mothers belonged to the age group 32-36 years whereas 37% fathers were in the age range 36-40 years. Overall, it was seen for the entire sample that the majority parents (64%) were in the age group 32-40 years. The calculation of chi-square test indicated insignificant difference among parents of HP and LP children with respect to their age. Statistically, a significant difference was seen between mothers and fathers on this aspect. It was seen that about half of the parents of HP children were graduate while in the case of parents of LP children, 36% of them were educated up to matric. It was also seen that more than half of the parents of HP children were qualified above graduation level but different was the case of parents of LP children, 17% of them were qualified above graduation level. Statistically, a significant difference was found among parents of HP and LP children with regard to their educational qualification. The difference was insignificant between mothers and fathers in this aspect.

It was found that most of the fathers (54%) of HP children were government employee and 36% fathers were engaged in self business like wholesale business of different things, shops, workshops etc.

Table 2 Views regarding freedom of expression of ideas

Freedom of Expression	HP			LP			χ^2 (HP-LP)	Overall Total			χ^2 (F-M)
	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)		F (n=100) (%)	M (n=100) (%)	Total (n=200) (%)	
Liberty to Express ideas											
Mostly	42 (84)	31 (62)	**73 (73)**	17 (34)	10 (20)	**27 (27)**		59 (59)	41 (41)	**100 (50)**	
Depend on type of ideas	7 (14)	19 (38)	**26 (26)**	20 (40)	22 (44)	**42 (42)**	53.12**	27 (27)	41 (41)	**68 (34)**	
No	- -	- -	**- -**	9 (18)	11 (22)	**20 (20)**		9 (9)	11 (11)	**20 (10)**	**6.52**
Any other	1 (2)	- -	**1 (1)**	4 (8)	7 (14)	**11 (11)**		5 (5)	7 (7)	**12 (6)**	
Freedom in games and recreational activities											
Mostly	39 (78)	32 (64)	**71 (71)**	22 (44)	16 (32)	**38 (38)**		61 (61)	48 (48)	**109 (54.5)**	
Depend on type of game & recreation	3 (6)	6 (12)	**9 (9)**	6 (6)	6 (6)	**12 (12)**	***21.06****	9 (9)	12 (12)	**21 (10.5)**	***3.42***
No	- -	- -	**- -**	5 (10)	5 (10)	**10 (10)**		5 (5)	5 (5)	**10 (5)**	
Any other	8 (16)	12 (24)	**20 (20)**	17 (34)	23 (46)	**40 (40)**		25 (25)	35 (35)	**60 (30)**	
Permission to children to follow interest											
Complete permission	38 (76)	36 (72)	**74 (74)**	7 (14)	7 (14)	**14 (14)**		45 (45)	43 (43)	**88 (44)**	
Depend on type of interest	8 (16)	7 (14)	**15 (15)**	4 (8)	12 (24)	**16 (16)**		12 (12)	19 (19)	**31 (15.5)**	
Never	3 (6)	3 (6)	**6 (6)**	17 (34)	17 (34)	**34 (34)**	***83.9****	20 (20)	20 (20)	**40 (20)**	
Neither encourage Nor discourage	- -	2 (4)	**2 (2)**	3 (6)	- -	**3 (3)**		3 (3)	2 (2)	**5 (2.5)**	***2.26***
Any other	1 (2)	2 (4)	**3 (3)**	19 (38)	14 (28)	**33 (33)**		20 (20)	16 (16)	**36 (18)**	

** Significant difference at 0.05 level

Regarding fathers of LP children, it was found that half (50%) of them were engaged in private occupations like private companies, factories, tailoring, driving etc. Majority (70%) mothers of HP children were homemakers and 22% mothers were working in private schools, factories, shops etc. In the case of mothers of LP children, it was also seen that most of the mothers (64%) were homemakers. 20% were engaged in other private jobs while 16% of them had their self-business i.e. parlour, boutique, knitting business etc. There was the difference in occupation pattern of HP and LP childrens' fathers but not much difference in this regards for HP and LP childrens' mothers (Table 1).

Parents perception regarding the importance of divergent thinking skills

The parents were questioned about the following aspects of Divergent thinking

Freedom of Expression of ideas

Every individual has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers .The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice *(Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 19).* Freedom of expression of ideas is the basic cornerstone of divergent thinking ability.

The data in (table 2) reveals that majority of the parents of HP children provided liberty almost all the time to their children for expressing whatever the children wished to express. They were of the opinion that during this age, children have a lot of ideas in their minds which they want to share. They allowed their children to express everything with them without any restrictions.

In the case of parents of LP children, it was observed that they provide liberty only after listening to the type of ideas being expressed by their children based on the judgment of its being. A large number of LP parents said that their response mostly depends upon the type of ideas spoken by the children. The calculation of chi-square test indicated significant difference among parents of HP and LP children with regard to the provision of liberty for expressing ideas by children. The insignificant difference was observed among fathers and mothers of children with regard to the provision of liberty for expressing ideas by children, though fathers seemed to be providing more freedom of expression (59% as compared to 41% mothers) while mothers restricted the freedom according to the type of idea.

It was indicated that most of the parents of HP children provide complete freedom to their children to decide games and recreational activities without any restrictions. They were of the view that during childhood period, children like to play games and enjoy recreational activities. They also said that playing games were very important for their overall growth and development. Regarding the parents of LP children, it was seen that a large number (40%) of them had given some other reasons like they provide freedom to their children but for a limited period (time set for playing i.e. half an hour or one hour and not more). Some of them had set rules for playing games i.e. not to move outside the house, play at home while few parents said they allowed their children for deciding games but only under their supervision and guidance. It was also found that fathers provided more freedom to their children in deciding games and recreational activities than mothers although the difference was insignificant statistically. Statistically, a significant difference was observed among parents of HP and LP children with regard to freedom in deciding games. Overall, it was good to note that 54.5% parents believed in providing freedom to children in deciding games and recreational activities mostly. Data also depicts that high number of parents of HP children provide complete permission to their children to follow their

Table 3 Parental acceptance of Childrens' Ideas

Responses	HP			LP			χ^2 (HP-LP)	Overall Total			χ^2 (F-M)
	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)		F (n=100) (%)	M (n=100) (%)	Total (n=200) (%)	
Multiple ideas of children											
Complete acceptance	11 (22)	9 (18)	**20 (20)**	1 (2)	7 (14)	8 (8)		12 (12)	16 (16)	28 (14)	
Depend on type of ideas	28 (56)	33 (66)	**61 (61)**	9 (18)	13 (26)	22 (22)		37 (37)	46 (46)	83 (41.5)	
No acceptance	6 (12)	8 (16)	**14 (14)**	39 (78)	28 (56)	67 (67)	58.62**	45 (45)	36 (36)	81 (40.5)	4.52
Any other	5 (10)	-	**5 (5)**	1 (2)	2 (4)	3 (3)		6 (6)	2 (2)	8 (4)	
Original ideas of children											
Mostly	33 (66)	23 (46)	**56 (56)**	4 (8)	6 (12)	**10 (10)**		37 (37)	29 (29)	**66 (33)**	
sometimes	11 (22)	4 (8)	**15 (15)**	25 (50)	23 (46)	**48 (49)**		36 (36)	27 (27)	**63 (31.5)**	
Never	1 (2)	1 (2)	**2 (4)**	16 (32)	15 (30)	**31 (30)**	80.56**	17 (17)	16 (16)	**33 (16.5)**	2.46
Any other	5 (10)	22 (44)	**27 (27)**	5 (10)	6 (12)	**11 (11)**		10 (10)	28 (28)	**38 (19)**	

** Significant difference at 0.05 level

with complete encouragement from them while in case of parents of LP children, it was found that most of them (34%) did not permit their children to follow their interest because of various concerns. It was also seen from the findings that almost equal number (33%) of parents of children had given some other reasons like children were too young for performing any activity at their own. Some parents thought that children needed their supervision but due to time constraint, they could not encourage their children. Few parents responded that their children got diverted from their studies if they encourage their children for other activities. Overall, it was seen that 44% parents provided complete permission to their children for following their interest. The calculation of chi-square test indicated significant difference among parents of HP and LP groups of children. The insignificant difference was noticed among fathers and mothers on this aspect (table 2).

Acceptance of Childrens' Ideas

Parental acceptance "means showing empathy towards their children. In an atmosphere of acceptance, children learn that their ideas, thoughts, and feelings are safe to share with their parents. Being accepted by parents, children will feel free to explore their world and express themselves without the fear of disapproval.

multiple ideas of their children mostly depended on the type of ideas being expressed by their children. Most of them told that only those ideas which were approved by the society or set as per societal norms were accepted by them. On the other hand, the majority of parents of LP children (67%) showed little acceptance towards multiple ideas of their children as most of them said that children got the wrong concept of things if they encourage their children for expressing multiple ideas about different things. Parents also responded that children got confused about the rightness (right or wrong) with the concepts. Overall, It was also indicated that mothers acceptance mostly depends on the type of ideas whereas most of the fathers were not in favour of accepting multiple ideas. The calculation of chi-square test indicated significant difference among parents of HP and LP children with respect to acceptance of multiple ideas of their children. Insignificant difference was observed among fathers and mothers of both (HP and LP) children on this aspect

Parents were asked the question whether they appreciated something expressed by the child which was quite unique and different from the common.

Table 4 Parents' Participation in various activities

Participation	HP			LP			Overall Total		
	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)	F (n=50) (%)	M (n=50) (%)	Total (n=100) (%)	F (n=100) (%)	M (n=100) (%)	Total (n=200) (%)
				Brainstorming					
Mostly	14 (28)	11 (22)	25 (25)	- -	1 (2)	1 (1)	14 (14)	12 (12)	26 (13)
Sometimes	20 (40)	15 (30)	35 (35)	3 (6)	4 (8)	7 (7)	23 (23)	19 (19)	42 (21)
Not at all	14 (28)	24 (48)	38 (38)	47 (94)	45 (90)	92 (92)	61 (61)	69 (69)	130 (65)
Any other	2 (4)	- -	2 (2)	- -	- -	- -	2 (2)	- -	2 (1)
				Word play game					
Mostly	18 (36)	23 (46)	41 (41)	- -	- -	- -	18 (36)	23 (46)	41 (20.5)
Sometimes	23 (46	25 (50)	48 (48)	15 (30)	24 (48)	39 (39)	38 (38)	49 (49)	87 (43.5)
Not at all	4 (8)	2 (4)	6 (6)	33 (66)	20 (40)	53 (53)	37 (37)	22 (22)	59 (29.5)
Any other	5 (10)	- -	5 (5)	2 (4)	6 (12)	8 (8)	7 (7)	6 (6)	13 (6.5)
				Telling stories					
Mostly	13 (26)	24 (48)	37 (37)	2 (4)	2 (4)	4 (8)	15 (15)	26 (26)	41 (20.5)
Sometimes	22 (44)	10 (20)	32 (32)	10 (20)	27 (27)	37 (37)	32 (32)	37 (37)	69 (34.5)
Not at all	7 (14)	15 (30)	22 (22)	37 (74)	16 (32)	53 (53)	44 (44)	31 (31)	75 (37.5)
Any other	8 (16)	1 (2)	9 (9)	1 (2)	5 (10)	6 (6)	9 (9)	6 (6)	15 (7.5)
				Experience sharing					
Mostly	17 (34)	21 (42)	38 (38)	1 (2)	- -	1 (1)	18 (18)	21 (21)	39 (19.5)
Sometimes	22 (44)	14 (28)	36 (36)	34 (68)	31 (62)	65 (65)	56 (56)	45 (45)	101 (50.5)
Not at all	7 (14)	13 (26)	20 (20)	10 (20)	11 (22)	21 (21)	17 (17)	24 (24)	41 (20.5)
Any other	4 (8)	2 (4)	6 (6)	5 (10)	8 (16)	13 (13)	9 (9)	10 (10)	19 (9.5)

When parents were asked to respond about their acceptance of multiple ideas of children, data (table 3) shows that among a large number of parents of HP children, acceptance regarding

It was found that more than half (56%) parents of HP children appreciated most of the original ideas of their children without any condition while most of the parents of LP children (48%)

said that they sometimes appreciated original ideas as they told it mostly depends on the type of ideas and only those ideas which were considered correct as per societal norms were appreciated. 31% parents of LP children did not appreciate original ideas of their children as they reported having less time to notice all the ideas expressed by their children. Some parents gave reasons like that they never observed or listened to their children and that their children were too young for expressing original ideas. It was also seen that fathers mostly appreciated their childrens' ideas while many of the mothers were undecided in this respect. The calculation of chi-square test indicated significant difference among parents of HP and LP children with respect to appreciation of original ideas. Statistically, insignificant difference was found among fathers and mothers with regard to appreciation of childrens' original ideas.

Parents' Participation in various activities

Creative activities help acknowledge and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of children as well as offer excellent opportunities to individualize parenting and focus on each child. In order to fulfill children's need for creativity and self-expression, it's important to provide activities that are based on their interests.

Parents' participation in various activities has a significant impact on the children's development. It was seen (table 4) that 38% parents of HP and 92% parents of LP children did not participate in brainstorming activities as they said that they were busy with their work and they didn't have enough time to spend on these activities while 35% parents of HP and 7% parents of LP children told that they sometimes participated with their children but it was also dependent upon the time. Overall, most of the parents did not participate in brainstorming activities.

Regarding the wordplay game, 48% parents of HP children and 39% parents of LP children said that they sometimes played a word game with their children but it was mostly dependent on the situation, time and interest of both parents and children. It was also seen that 41% parents of HP children told that they always played word games with their children while none of the parents of LP children gave this response. 53% parents of LP children said that they have no time to play word games with their children. Some of the parents told that they want to play but children like to play with their friends and not with parents while others responded that children were very busy with their academic work so they don't have time.

When parents were asked about the storytelling activity, many (37%) of parents of HP children were of the view that they always told stories to their children as they believed that through stories one can give any message to children while 53% parents of LP children did not tell any stories to their children as they said that their daily routine is too hectic and after doing their whole day work, they were not in position to tell stories to their children. It was observed that 32% parents of HP and 37% parents of LP children were of the view that they sometimes told stories to their children only on their demand. Parents also gave some other reasons like they wanted to tell but children did not like to listen to stories whereas some parents said that children like to make stories of their own.

It was also revealed from the findings that 38% parents of HP and few parents of LP children always shared experiences with their children.65% parents of LP and 36% parents of HP children sometimes shared experiences with their children as it was also dependent upon the situation and time while 20% HP and 21% LP children did not involve in experience sharing activities because of lack of time. When comparing fathers and mothers participation in various activities, it was seen that most of the mothers were not able to participate in various brainstorming and word play games activities whereas in the case of storytelling activity, fathers were not able to perform this activity.

Overall perception of parents regarding divergent thinking across groups (HP-LP) and sex (F-M) of Parents

Table 5 depicts highly significant differences between parents of HP and LP children with regard to freedom of expression, questioning, experimentation, acceptance of multiple ideas, and provision of material, impact of electronic goods and evaluation of a creative expression. The difference was also found significant among mothers and fathers on encouragement for experimentation, satisfying curiosity, response to questioning and evaluating the creative expression.

Table 5 Overall perception of parents regarding divergent thinking across groups (HP-LP) and sex (F-M) of Parents

Categories	Difference HP-LP	Difference (F-M)
Provision of liberty to express ideas	53.12**	6.52
Freedom in deciding games and recreational activities	21.06**	3.42
Permission provided to children to follow their interest	83.9**	2.26
Encouragement of questioning by children	80.16**	3.4 1
Responding childrens' queries with excitement and interest	59.94**	9.49**
Response to curiosity of children	83.06**	9.76**
Encouragement of childrens' experimentation	83.12**	20.16**
Acceptance of multiple ideas of children	58.62**	4.52
Approval of childrens' efforts	80.56**	2.46
Appreciation of childrens' original ideas	60.32**	4.8
Provision of material for fantasy play	18.16**	2.43
Allowing children to use water paints	67.56**	9.08**
Permitting child to encourage in messy play	43.16**	6.00
Exposure to children regarding objects and activities	30.2**	4.38
Impact of electronic gadgets	8.56**	1.82
Evaluation of childrens' creative expression	21.82**	11.54**

** highly significant difference at 0.01

CONCLUSION

Parental perception about divergent thinking certainly influences the encouragement given to the child and the structuring of child's home and school environment to promote the skills related to divergent thinking among children. Significant differences in perception of High Performer and Low performer Parents with regards to various aspects of divergent thinking reveal the role that their parenting might have produced on divergent thinking in their children besides other genetic and environmental factors. Gender differences in perception of parents have also been noticed in this study. Similar results have been found in other research studies (Singer & Lythcott, 2004 and Feinstein, 2006). To conclude, it can be said that it is important to build positive awareness among the parents in particular and society, in general with

respect to the need, significance and methods of developing divergent thinking skills among children.

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