

A STUDY OF DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTIVE ATTENTION IN PAKISTANI CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the development of selective attention in Pakistan children. 149 children of grades 3 to 6 comprised the sample for the study. The result show that upto about 11 years of age there is an increase in the child's attention to all the features in a learning situation. After the age of 11 there is some indication of the development of selectivity in the children.

INTRODUCTION

Attention has been a topic of research from the earliest days. It is defined as the process by which an organism directs his sensory or elaboratory (cognitive) system [1]. It endeavours to find out how much information a mind can simultaneously survey. It has been found that adult mind can encompass only about seven discrete pieces of information at one time. In other words our capacity for simultaneous processing of information is very limited. In order to cope with limited capacity, humans must be selective in the information they choose to process.

Selective attention involves noticing and attending to (i.e. perceiving) certain features and aspects of the environment while at the same time ignoring or somehow filtering out other aspects [2].

As a major shift in the degree to which children attend selectively occurs during middle childhood. General incidental learning seems to increase until children are about ten or eleven years old, probably because through this period there is a gradual increase in the child's attention to and retention of all the features in the learning situation. However, after about age eleven there is a decrease in incidental learning suggesting that by age eleven children have learned to selectively ignore certain features of a situation as a complement to selectively attending to other features [3].

The capacity of the growing child to attend to relevant