

A Systematic Review of the Psychometric Properties of Augmentative and Alternative Communication Assessment Tools in Adolescents with Complex Communication Needs

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Abstract : Objective: Malaysia has a growing number of individuals with complex communication needs (CCN). The initiation of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) intervention may facilitate individuals with CCN to understand and express themselves optimally and actively participate in activities in their daily life. AAC is defined as multimodal use of communication ability to allow individuals to use every mode possible to communicate with others using a set of symbols or systems that may include the symbols, aids, techniques, and strategies. It is consequently critical to evaluate the deficits to inform treatment for AAC intervention. However, no known measurement tools are available to evaluate the user with CCN available locally. Design: A systematic review (SR) is designed to analyze the psychometric properties of AAC assessment for adolescents with CCN published in peer-reviewed journals. Tools are rated by the methodological quality of studies and the psychometric measurement qualities of each tool. Method: A literature search identifying AAC assessment tools with psychometrically robust properties and conceptual framework was considered. Two independent reviewers screened the abstracts and full-text articles and review bibliographies for further references. Data were extracted using standardized forms and study risk of bias was assessed. Result: The review highlights the psychometric properties of AAC assessment tools that can be used by speech-language therapists applicable to be used in the Malaysian context. The work outlines how systematic review methods may be applied to the consideration of published material that provides valuable data to initiate the development of Malay Language AAC assessment tools. Conclusion: The synthesis of evidence has provided a framework for Malaysia Speech-Language therapists in making an informed decision for AAC intervention in our standard operating procedure in the Ministry of Health, Malaysia.

Keywords : augmentative and alternative communication, assessment, adolescents, complex communication needs

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