

Paediatric Motor Difficulties and Internalising Problems: An Integrative Review on the Environmental Stress Hypothesis

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Abstract : The current study aims to provide an in-depth analysis and extension of the Environmental Stress Hypothesis (ESH) framework, focusing on the complex interplay between poor motor skills and internalising problems like anxiety and depression. Using an integrative research review methodology, this study synthesizes findings from 38 articles, both empirical and theoretical, building upon the foundational work of the model. The hypothesis posits that poor motor skills serve as a primary stressor, leading to internalising problems through various secondary stressors. A rigorous comparison of data was conducted, considering study design, findings, and methodologies - while giving special attention to variables such as age, sex, and comorbidities. The study also enhances the ESH framework by introducing resource buffers, including optimism and familial support, as additional influencing factors. This multi-level approach yields a more nuanced and comprehensive ESH framework, highlighting the need for future studies to consider intersectional variables and how they may vary across various life stages.

Keywords : motor coordination, mental health, developmental coordination disorders, paediatric comorbidities, obesity, peer problems

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