

Physical Aggression and Language Skills among Children with Mild Intellectual Disabilities

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Abstract : Physical aggression is one of the most common behavioural problems among children with intellectual disabilities. Behaviours such as hitting, kicking, and threatening with the intent to harm others are examples of physical aggression. Identified language delays are related to physically aggressive behaviours, as children with poor language skills are often frustrated by socially interactions with their peers, leaving them at risk engaging in acts of physical aggression. As a result of this concern, physical aggression and language skills of children with mild intellectual disabilities was investigated. In the current study, 102 students, from years 1-3, with mild intellectual disabilities (51 girls and 51 boys) have been recruited from five educational centres which cater for children with mild intellectual disabilities in the city of Shiraz (a major city in Iran). The Test of Language Development-Primary: 3rd Edition (TOLD-3) and Overt and Relational Aggression Questionnaire were used to assess these children. Results showed that physical aggression had a significant negative association with expressive ($p = 0.008$), and receptive ($p = 0.019$) language skills. In addition, boys demonstrated more physically aggressive behaviours than girls ($p = 0.014$). No difference was found in expressive and receptive language skills between girls and boys with mild intellectual disabilities. The overall findings suggest that improving the language skills of children with intellectual disabilities experiencing language delays will help them to avoid exhibiting antisocial behaviours in social interactions.

Keywords : behaviour, language skills, mild intellectual disabilities, physical aggression, primary school students

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