

The relationship between language development and behaviour problems in children ...



SUMMARY OF ARTICLE SUBMITTED BY: SUBMITTED INSTITUTE: MENT OF

PROBLEM The problem addressed in this paper is that whether or not differential language ability among children with hearing impairment is related to behavioral problems. The main purpose of this study is to find out any relationship between language inefficiency due to hearing loss and faulty behavior among children. It is hypothesized that children with hearing difficulties will have behavioral problems due to insufficient development of language ability. The authors predict that in this longitudinal study based on children diagnosed with hearing impairment as neonates (within ten months of birth), behavioral issues will be highest among those participants who have greatest level of hearing loss and whose language and communication skills are consequently least developed.

2. PARTICIPANTS Participants for this study were those from a five year follow up study by same authors involving eight districts of southern England. 165 participants fulfilled the criteria for this study. These criteria were: to have a hearing loss of greater than 40 deci-Bells in the better ear for a minimum of one year duration and being born in any of the specified districts within the specific years to fall between 5. 4 to 11. 7 years of age. Participants had only congenital (not acquired) hearing loss of neural nature, permanent nerve conduction problem or a combination of both. 120 children with average age of 7. 9 years, (67 boys and 53 girls) out of the 165 opted to be part of the study. As control group, 63 children (37 boys and 26 girls) with average age of 8. 1 years were selected.

3. METHOD Four researchers and a speech therapist along with a sign language expert were trained for 3 months prior to data collection. They then collected the data via interviews with children and their primary

caregivers. The measures used in this study included: The Test for Reception
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of Grammar, strengths and difficulties questionnaire, the bus story and usage of sign language. With usage of statistical techniques of regression and one way ANOVA, the results were determined. 4. RESULTS Following are the main findings of the study: children with hearing loss have underdeveloped language ability, the hearing impaired children score higher on behavioral problems as compared to children with normal hearing, behavioral problems are related to language ability irrespective of hearing impairment, children with hearing loss score high on conduct related and hyper activity issues as compared to children with normal hearing and there is not much difference in the behavior problems of children who use sign language only as compared to those who use both, verbal expression and sign language for communication. 5. CONCLUSION/DISCUSSION The study has clearly revealed that hearing loss leads to behavioral problems due to insufficient development of language ability. Therefore, it can be concluded that hearing loss does not directly cause behavioral problems, but insufficient language development due to hearing impairment is actually what leads to behavioral issues in the hearing impaired children. In light of these findings, measures must be taken to enhance the language competence of children with hearing impairment in various ways to avoid behavioral problems among them. In conclusion, hearing impairment is not a risk factor for behavioral problems itself; rather it is language incompetence which is the main factor in behavioral problems. REFERENCES Kennedy, C; McCann, D; Steveson, K; Watkin, P & Warsfold, S. (2010). The relationship between language development and behavior problems in children with hearing loss. The journal of child psychology and psychiatry. Vol. 51: 1, p. 77-83.

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