

# PREVALENCE AND EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENTAL COORDINATION DISORDER ON LEARNING-RELATED SKILLS OF SOUTH AFRICAN GRADE ONE CHILDREN

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Introduction:** Physically awkward children face a host of difficulties, which include difficulties in the school environment. Therefore, it is important to identify Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD) early in a child's life to allow for proper and timely intervention and support. The objective of this study was to determine the prevalence of DCD and examine the relationship of the degree of motor difficulties on learning-related skills.

**Method:** This comparative study made use of quantitative data. Three hundred and forty-seven (N=347) Grade 1 children took part and were between the ages of five and eight years (mean age=6.58±0.4). There were 190 girls and 157 boys. The Movement Assessment Battery for Children-2 (MABC-2 Test) was used to identify DCD. In addition, each participant was evaluated with the Aptitude Test for School Beginners (ASB). Learning-related skills of children with DCD were compared to those without DCD.

**Results:** The prevalence of DCD (severe motor difficulties) was 6% and the at-risk group constituted another 6%. Motor difficulties had a significant effect on five of the eight learning-related subtypes, namely reasoning, numerical skills, gestalt, coordination and memory.

**Conclusion:** Children with DCD experienced more learning-related problems compared to their peers without DCD.