

The Level of the Aggressive Behavior of Mentally Disabled Students at Ajloun Governorate from the Teachers' Point of View

Dr. Nayef Ali Wahsheh
Department of Special Education
Faculty of Arts and Educational Science
Ajloun National University

Abstract: The purpose of this study is to determine the level of aggressive behavior of the mentally disabled students at Ajloun Governorate from the teachers' point of views. The sample consisted of all (94) mentally disabled students of simple and intermediate level who were enrolled in the special education centers at the first semester of the academic year (2018-2019). Thirty paragraphs scale was constructed and developed as a study tool. The scale consisted of three dimensions of the aggressive behavior: self-directed aggression, aggression directed towards others and aggression directed towards property and objects. The results showed the level of the aggressive behavior of the mentally disabled students at Ajloun Governorate from the teachers' point of view was high. There were statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) due to the degree of disability in favor of the intermediate level. There were no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha=0.05$) due to the gender.

Key words: aggressive behavior, mentally disabled.

The topic of mental disability is one of the oldest topics that are concerned by psychologists, education, sociology and mental health. It is a complex phenomenon which needs the effort of many people especially who is responsible for the mentally disabled. Hence, the care of these sectors is a humanitarian and civil principle that emphasizes the importance of the human rights of the disabled and their families (Dahan, 2014). Because of the limited capabilities of these mentally disabled children that do not allow them to take full advantage of the activities of other ordinary children, they need a special kind of treatment that will help them to maximize their limited capacity (Saleh & Albanna, 2008).

It is important to educate students with mental disabilities. Their education needs special programs in order to help these students to achieve the ultimate benefits and outcomes. But there are some of the behavioral problems that may face the students with mental disabilities. These problems consider obstacles for the educational process and for the students themselves, specialists from special education, psychologists and counselors need to stand with the students with a mental disability and help them to overcome these behavioral problems. This could happen through the therapeutic programs which are appropriate to their ages, the degree of disability and their physiological and psychological characteristics in order to help others to deal with them (Alharthy, 2015).

Children with mental disabilities are more likely to have behavioral problems than others; this is the result of their lack of adaptation to the requirements of the surrounding community, lack of mental or sensory perception of the stimuli around them in addition to the lack of understanding to the accepted social framework (Alsartawi, Almuhiari, Abdat, & Alzyoudi, 2012). The most dangerous behavior for the mentally disabled children is being violent, harming themselves and others, disturbing behavior and inability to establish acceptable social relations with peers. This is because they direct all their activity and energy towards destructive behavior which will make them more likely to avoid situations that have an impact on the positive interaction of peers, parents and brothers. This prevents them from participating and influencing their community, become more targeted for frustration and often show a lack of skills to interact with others (Badawi, 2011).

The aggressive behavior is considered the second most common problem among disabilities, especially those with mental disabilities. Therefore, the aggressive behavior of the mentally disabled has interested by large number of researchers (Alkhatib, 2014). Hence, the behavioral problems especially the aggressive behavior of mentally disabled children, are a heavy burden on their teachers. This behavior often has negative effects that affected the normal performance of the teacher's role, as well as ostracize them and make them undesirable individuals (Alrousan, 2000).

Numerous studies have found that various forms of aggressive behavior (physical violence against self, others, property, chaotic behavior, verbal and non-verbal threats, tantrums, and screaming and excessive negativity that are incompatible with the development and growth of adaptive behaviors) represents a threat to the aggressive individual, other individuals subject to aggression, and against the property, in addition to other problems and difficulties, which can be summarized in the following key points:

1. Aggressive behavior is a major obstacle to mentally disabled when considering the possibilities of integrating them into society.
2. Aggressive behavior and associated behavior problems are a major factor in poor compatibility.
3. Aggressive behavior leads to a loss of time that individuals spent on the care and rehabilitation of mentally disabled because of the time they spent in monitoring the aggressive behavior of them.
4. Aggressive behavior is undesirable, objectionable and socially unacceptable, such as sexual abuse, urine and fecal play.
5. The increasing of the likelihood that mentally disabled individuals will be victims of abuse and physical mistreatment by their caregivers.
6. It significantly increases the possibility to return the mentally disabled individuals to the Shelter institutions which represent the most restrictive environments for them.
7. Aggressive behavior is one of the most common problems that leads the mentally disabled individuals to psychiatric and other mental health services.
8. It Increases the risk of failure in competitive jobs, as mentally disabled individuals who exhibit aggressive behavior are less likely to get a job under competition.
9. Aggressive behavior makes mentally disabled individuals susceptible to avoidance and isolation by people around them, such as parents, brothers and peers thus affecting their social interaction and personal composition (Debbies, 1999).

Studies and research have been conducted on the subject of behaviors of mentally disabled students, with different variables, including (Ross & Cornish, 2002). This study aims to determine the prevalence and frequency of stereotyped behavior, self-harm and aggressive behavior in children and adolescents with Cri du Chat syndrome). Also it investigates the relationship between self-harm, aggressive and stereotypical behavior in these individuals. The results of this study showed that stereotypical behavior appeared in (82%) of the cases, where typical behavior appears in half of these cases daily. Through the prevalence of (15) forms of self-harm behavior, it was found that beating the head, biting and ruminations (stereotypes) are the most common behaviors. Aggressive behavior has been found to be prevalent (88%) with a negative correlation between age and behavior.

Totsika, Toogood, Hastings and Lewis (2008) found that the behavioral problems often occurs in children with mental disabilities early in life and continues through life. By following the behavioral problems of children over the age of eleven, the results show that the most common behavioral problems are extreme physical aggression, self-harm and recurrent stereotypes.

Hogue, Mooney, Morrissey, Steptoe, Johnston, Lindsay and Taylor (2007) conducted a study of 172 mentally handicapped males in correctional institutions with different levels of protection. After the application, it was found that those enrolled in the higher protection system obtained higher degrees in the field of physical aggression compared to those enrolled in the lower protection system, and did not show any differences in behavioral problems directed towards the outside such as verbal aggression and obedience and excessive movement. However, people enrolled in the higher protection system have obtained significant degrees in the area of behavioral problems, such as anxiety, depression and self-esteem.

Van Ingen, Moore, Zaja and Rojahn (2010) aimed to compare the prevalence of behavioral problems in the study population between simple and intermediate disability. The results showed that people with intermediate mental disabilities have behavioral problems more than those with simple disabilities with regard to hyperactivity, destructive behavior, aggression, as well as mental disorders, social behavior, and stereotypical behavior.

The study by Dave, Chauvan, and Dalvi (1993) aimed to identify behavioral disorders in mentally disabled children, on a sample of 40 mentally disabled children. The results of the study revealed the existence of a number of abnormal behaviors and behavioral disorders, including hyperactivity, in addition to the suffering of many stereotypical and socially unacceptable behaviors and their tendency towards aggression against self and others.

Problem and Purpose of the study

Aggressive behavior is a major problem for mentally disabled children in terms of the effects it has on them in terms of harming themselves and their inability to establish acceptable social relations with their colleagues. In addition to the negative impact of this abnormal behavior in the classroom environment that does not benefit the mentally disabled children from the educational programs and rehabilitation, not to mention the negative effects that that behavior in the social environment of the child.

The aggressive behavior is also a major problem for teachers and supervisors who are responsible for the education, care and rehabilitation of children with mental disabilities as a result of the many negative aspects of providing various services to them within the centers of special education. It is highly documented that aggressive behavior is the most influential factor in the decisions to determine the type the service can be offered to the mentally disabled individual.

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of aggressive behavior for students with mental disabilities in Ajloun governorate from the teachers' point of view?
2. Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities due to the degree of disability?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in the level of aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students due to gender?

Significance of the Study

The significant of the study is as follows: (a) highlighting the level of aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities in Ajloun Governorate, which in turn affects both teachers, students, educational programs, the family, institutions and society in general; (b) drawing attention to the differences in the level of aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students based on a number of variables; (c) encouraging people who are responsible about mental disabilities to allocate a budget to support various programs in order to reduce the undesirable behavior of mentally disabled students, especially the aggressive behaviors;(d) preparing a scale to measure the level of aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students; and (e) this study is a continuation of the previous research on the subject of the behavior of students with mentally

disabled students. It may be a start to study the subject from multiple aspects and variables, and will have an impact on the birth of other studies.

Method and Procedures

The sample of the study consisted of all (94) mentally disabled students of simple and intermediate level who were enrolled in the special education centers at the first semester of the academic year (2018-2019). Students were distributed as in Table (1) according to the variable of the degree of disability, and gender. There are no extreme mentally disabled students in these centers.

Table 1. The Percentage of the Distribution of Study Sample According to the Degree of Disability and Gender

No.		Numbers	Percentage
1	Degree of disability	Simple	44 46.8%
		Intermediate	50 53.2%
2	Gender	Male	48 51.1%
		female	46 49.9%
	Sum	94	100%

Instrument, Validity and Reliability

The researcher used a questionnaire which constructed by reviewing the theoretical framework on the aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students and by reviewing the questionnaires that were developed in the study of Ahmad (2017), Sharifi (2016), Dahan (2014), Badawi (2011), and Saleh and Albanna (2008). A thirty paragraph scale was constructed and developed as a study tool. The scale consisted of three dimensions of the aggressive behavior: self-directed aggression, aggression directed towards others and aggression directed towards property and objects. Ten paragraphs of self-directed aggression (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10), 10 Paragraphs of aggression directed towards others dimension; (11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20) and 10 paragraphs of aggression against property and objects dimension (21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30).

A Five-point Likert scale was employed (always = 5, often = 4, sometimes = 3, rarely = 2, never = 1). 5 indicate the highest level of aggressive behavior, while 1 indicates the lowest level of aggressive behavior. Thus, the level of each paragraph can be extracted, as is the extraction of the total level of the total number of the paragraph of each dimension of the aggressive behavior,

after knowing the estimated average of the responses to its paragraphs. The interpretation of the results of the responses has been based on the estimates as in Table (2):

Table 2. Estimated Average of Teachers' Responses and their Levels

Estimated Average	Levels
1 – 1.80	Very low
1.81 – 2.60	Low
2.61 – 3.40	Medium
3.41 – 4.20	High
4.21 – 5	Very high

Validation and Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the validity of the content of the study instrument, the jury was asked to examine the validity of the paragraphs. The jury consisted of 12 scholars and specialized professors in the fields of special education, psychology and measurement and evaluation. The jury recommended making some modifications in terms of clarity, the integrity of the language and the representation of the paragraph of its dimension, to reach to 30 paragraphs at the end. The correlation coefficients of the subjects of the study instrument were extracted with the total score in a survey sample from outside the study sample, which consisted of (40) mentally disabled students. The scales were analyzed and the correlation coefficient of each paragraph calculated. Where the correlation coefficient there is a sign of validity for each paragraph in the form of correlation coefficient between each paragraph and the total score on one hand, and between each paragraph and its link to the dimension to which it belongs and between each dimension and the total score on the other hand. The correlation coefficients of the paragraphs with the instrument as a whole ranged from 0.41 to 0.72, and with the dimension 0.44-0.88, Table (3) shows this.

Table (3): Correlation Coefficients between Paragraphs, the Total Score and the Dimension to Which They Belong

Paragraph number	Correlation coefficient with dimension	Correlation coefficient with the instrument	Paragraph number	Correlation coefficient with dimension	Correlation coefficient with the instrument
1	0.62(**)	0.57(**)	16	0.88(**)	0.51(**)
2	0.72(**)	0.61(**)	17	0.61(**)	0.44(**)

Paragraph number	Correlation coefficient with dimension	Correlation coefficient with the instrument	Paragraph number	Correlation coefficient with dimension	Correlation coefficient with the instrument
3	0.76(**)	0.71(**)	18	0.60(**)	0.50(**)
4	0.66(**)	0.63(**)	19	0.55(**)	0.45(**)
5	0.51(**)	0.50(**)	20	0.66(**)	0.45(**)
6	0.68(**)	0.63(**)	21	0.85(**)	0.52(**)
7	0.79(**)	0.47(**)	22	0.62(**)	0.61(**)
8	0.75(**)	0.63(**)	23	0.73(**)	0.72(**)
9	0.62(**)	0.67(**)	24	0.78(**)	0.61(**)
10	0.44(**)	0.61(**)	25	0.46(**)	0.41(**)
11	0.51(**)	0.48(**)	26	0.45(**)	0.47(**)
12	0.67(**)	0.57(**)	27	0.61(**)	0.57(**)
13	0.85(**)	0.57(**)	28	0.69(**)	0.68(**)
14	0.82(**)	0.55(**)	29	0.73(**)	0.72(**)
15	0.77(**)	0.53(**)	30	0.64(**)	0.59(**)

* Significance (0.05).

** Significance (0.01).

It should be noted that all correlation coefficients were of acceptable score and statistical function, so none of these paragraphs were deleted, Table (4) shows this.

Table 4. The Correlation Coefficients Between the Dimensions and the Total Score

	self-directed aggression dimension	aggression directed towards others dimension	aggression directed towards property and objects dimension	Total score
self-directed aggression dimension	1			
aggression directed towards others dimension	0.561(**)	1		
aggression directed towards property and objects	0.558(**)	0.491(**)	1	

dimension				
Total score	0.632(**)	0.857(**)	0.648(**)	1

* Significance (0.05).

** Significance (0.01).

To ensure the reliability of the study instrument, the (test-retest) was applied, it was reapplied after two weeks to a group of outside the sample of the study consisting of (40) students and mentally disabled and then calculated Pearson correlation coefficient between their estimates at both times. The consistency coefficient was calculated in the internal consistency method according to the Cronbach's alpha formula. Table (5) shows the coefficient of internal consistency according to the Alpha Cronbach's formula and the regression coefficients. These values are considered appropriate for the purposes of this study.

Table 5. Cronbach's Internal Consistency Coefficient and Alpha Reliability

Dimension	retest consistency	internal consistency
self-directed aggression dimension	0.89	0.79
aggression directed towards others dimension	0.91	0.75
aggression directed towards property and objects dimension	0.93	0.77
Total score	0.91	0.84

Data Analysis

To answer the research questions, the researcher used: a) T-test and retest, b) Pearson correlation coefficient, c) Cronbach's Alpha Coherence Coefficient and reliability of retest, and d) means and standard deviations. The next section will discuss the findings of this research.

Findings and Discussion

Question 1: What is the level of aggressive behavior for students with mental disabilities in Ajloun governorate from the teachers' point of view?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations of the aggressive behavior level for mentally disabled students in Ajloun Governorate were calculated as shown in Table (6). Aggressive behavior came at a high level. The table shows that the means ranged between (3.45-3.86). Self-directed aggression dimension came first with the highest mean (3.86), then aggression against others dimension with an average of (3.59), while the aggression against property and objects dimension comes the last place with an average of 3.45 and the mean of the instrument as a whole was 3.63.

Table 6. Means and Standard Deviations of The Level of The Aggressive Behavior of The Mentally Disabled Students at Ajloun Governorate From The Teachers' Point of View.

Number	Dimension	means	standard deviations	Level
1	self-directed	3.86	0.486	High

Number	Dimension	means	standard deviations	Level
	aggression dimension			
2	aggression directed towards others dimension	3.59	0.696	High
3	aggression directed towards property and objects dimension	3.45	0.656	High
	Total score	3.63	0.561	High

The results of the study of the aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities at Ajloun from the teachers' point of view were at a high level. The researcher explains this result as an indicator of the frustration and failure of these students which makes their responses negative and resorting to aggressive behavior as a case of venting or compensation for their inability to participate, most parents demand their children to behave in proportion to their age rather than their mental age. Therefore, the child is exerting some of his/ her psychological and vital energy on resisting his/ her internal tension, and part of his/ her energy tends to win the satisfaction of parents and teachers, also, he/ she may find it difficult to do so, which leads to the feeling that it is inferior to other peers, resulting in the types of psychological and social pressures, leading to aggressive behavior.

This is confirmed by Alkhattib (2014) that the mentally disabled are the most people who suffer from behavioral problems because of their inability to identify aspects of socially acceptable behavior, in addition to the delay of their linguistic abilities, which makes them resort to aggression to express their emotions rather than verbal expression. Their exposure too many failures and frustrations as a result of surrounding social trends and their mental retardation often increases their inadequacy in identifying aspects of socially acceptable behavior.

Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities due to the degree of disability?

To answer this question, the means and standard deviations of the level of aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities were calculated according to the variable of the degree of disability. To illustrate the statistical differences between the means, the T-test was applied. Table 7 shows this.

Table 7. Means and Standard Deviations and T-Test for the Impact of Degree of Disability on the Level of Aggressive Behavior of Students with Mental Disabilities

	Degree of disability	Number	means	standard deviations	t	df	Statistical significance
self-directed aggression	Simple	44	3.74	.422	-2.225	92	.029
	Medium	50	3.96	.519			

dimension							
aggression directed towards others dimension	Simple	44	3.35	.701	-3.375	92	.001
	Medium	50	3.81	.622			
aggression directed towards property and objects dimension	Simple	44	3.25	.683	-2.849	92	.005
	Medium	50	3.62	.584			
Total score	Simple	44	3.44	.548	-3.169	92	.002
	Medium	50	3.80	.524			

Table (7) shows statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the degree of disability in all dimensions and in the total score. This result can be attributed to the strong and positive correlation between aggressive behavior and the extreme of disability, i.e. the higher the extreme of mental disability, the higher level of aggressive behavior, where biological and organic variables play a large role in this, through multiple imbalances and neurological problems more among students with intermediate mental disabilities compared to students with simple mental disabilities. This can also be largely due to the fact that students with intermediate disabilities do not have access to simple social, cognitive and emotional skills that can be applied sequentially and flexibly to the cultural context. This leads to inappropriate responses in different social situations due to their lack of these skills, which in turn leads to the emergence of aggressive behavior among students with intermediate mental disabilities at a higher level than that of students with simple mental disabilities.

Question 3: Are there statistically significant differences in the level of aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students due to gender?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations of the level of aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students according to gender variable were extracted. To illustrate the statistical differences between the means, the T test was employed. Table 8 shows this.

Table 8: Means, Standard Deviations and T-test of Gender Impact on The Level of The Aggressive Behavior of Mentally Disabled Students

	Gender	Number	means	standard deviations	t	df	Statistical significance
self-directed aggression dimension	Male	48	3.89	0.476	0.610	92	0.544
	Female	46	3.83	0.500			

aggression directed towards others dimension	Male	48	3.71	0.664	1.756	92	0.082
	Female	46	3.46	0.713			
aggression directed towards property and objects dimension	Male	48	3.54	0.609	1.392	92	0.167
	Female	46	3.35	0.696			
Total score	Male	48	3.71	0.544	1.444	92	0.152
	Female	46	3.55	0.571			

Table (8) shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) due to the effect of gender in all dimensions and in the total score. The researcher explains that the gender variable is not a factor among the factors that can lead to a difference in the level of aggressive behavior in students with mental disabilities. The problems they faced and the consequences of many aspects had an important role in influencing the level of aggressive behavior they have, whether males or females

Conclusion

The study concluded that the level of the aggressive behavior of the mentally disabled students at Ajloun governorate from the teachers' point of view was high. The study indicated that there were statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the effect of the degree of disability in all dimensions and in the total score in favor of intermediate mental disability. It is found that there were no statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) attributed to the gender effect in all dimensions and in the total score. Therefore, the researcher suggests that all efforts should be made by parents, educators and officials to increase interest in this category, provide all the physical and moral means to reduce the extreme level of the aggressive behavior, modify them for the better, and direct them to the right destination .To finally reach a category that is not completely free of aggressive behavior but less extremely.

Recommendations

In light of the findings of the current study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Conducting studies on the aggressive behavior among mentally disabled students with different dimensions and variables.
- Conducting studies on the aggressive behavior of people with other disabilities.
- Finding the impact of therapeutic programs on the aggressive behavior of students with mental disabilities.
- Conducting studies on parental attitudes and their relationship to aggressive behavior problems of students with mental disabilities.
- Paying attention to the training courses for teachers of students with mental disabilities.

- Modifying a program for the aggressive behavior of mentally disabled students should be part of the individual educational plan.
- Holding training, counseling and educational sessions for the families of students with mental disabilities to reduce the aggressive behavior of their children.

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The Study Questionnaire

The researcher conducts a study entitled "The level of The Aggressive Behavior of The Mentally Disabled Students at Ajloun Governorate from Teachers' Point of View".

Therefore, please read the (30) paragraphs of this questionnaire carefully, and answer them honesty; put a (√) in front of the phrase that applies to the mentally disabled student, knowing that the answers will be treated with complete confidentiality for the purposes of scientific research only.

Thank you for your cooperation
Dr. Nayef Ali Wahsheh

- 1- Degree mentally disability: Simple
 Intermediate
 Extreme
- 2- The gender of the mentally disabled: Male
 Female

NO.	Paragraph	Always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
1	Cry deeply during anger.					
2	Bite fingers during the time of anger.					
3	Throw himself/herself on the ground when he/ she gets angry.					
4	Scratch his/her body with his fingernails.					
5	Hit his/ her face with hands when being angry.					
6	Pull his/ her hair strongly when gets angry.					
7	Hurt himself/ herself with sharp instruments.					
8	Scream for trivial reasons.					
9	Hits his/ her head in the wall when fights.					
10	Insults himself/ herself.					

11	Fights with others for no reason.					
12	Throw things on others.					
13	Bite when dealing with others.					
14	Take the others' things by force.					
15	Insult others.					
16	Stirs problems within the classroom.					
17	Pull the hair of others.					
18	Scream in others' face.					
19	Intentionally harm others.					
20	Assault others by body signs.					
21	Destroy teaching aids in the classroom.					
22	Damage the games of the center.					
23	Distorts the walls of the classroom.					
24	Destroy the classroom's seats.					
25	Close the door of the classroom sharply.					
26	Damage chalks.					
27	Break the windows of the classroom.					
28	Throw chairs on the ground.					
29	Ruin water taps.					
30	Tamper with electricity switches.					