VALIDATION OF STANDARDIZED INSTRUMENTS IN EVALUATING SPEECH-LANGUAGE DISORDERS: A CHALLENGE FOR CROSS-CULTURAL SETTINGS

Communication has a meaningful impact between clinician and client in order to comprehend each other's language for effective therapeutic recovery and health related outcomes. Standardized tests are considered as one of the primary assessment tools used by a speech language pathologist to evaluate and diagnose child language impairment.

Test is administered upon the child where functional performance and scores reveals either the typically developing language skills or if an in-depth evaluation is required in any of the language domains. Making use of the data and analyzing the child's expressive/receptive language skills that lags behind when compared to norm referenced data; if the child is par their chronological age or below their mental age.

Within Pakistan; Standardized tests of West are been used constructed in English language which governs specific rules and regulations, as per the instructions manual it is a crucial and most important aspect to follow but those rules are often not abided when stimuli repetition is observed due to lack of understanding of conventional words (Native words or names) used; English language is changed in their native language due to cultural biasness while selecting low confidence interval eventually affects the true reliability and validity of the test administered. Moreover, unstructured assessment due to self-variations of Standardized Protocol leads to unfavorable treatment planning and therapy outcomes. Semantic-syntactic utterances the child elicits in critical developing language age shall be considered while keeping in mind the approximate ranges of typically developing child status relevant to our native language when compared to the same aged peers relating the chronological and mental ages of the child in our population is still undocumented. Analysis of native language development packed with evidence based knowledge and practice are unfortunately still the areas needs to be thoroughly survey and to be researched upon in Pakistan.

Consecutively, I would like to draw an attention of the clinicians/researchers for an utmost need of practicing guidelines considering norm-reference standardized tests in native language. Moreover, comprehensive analysis of language milestones in acquisition of linguistic pattern is crucial in the field. Therefore, fundamental basis of designing and formulating standardized tests should be based on prerequisites for the validation of the tool in native language across cross-cultural settings.

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REFERENCES