

Effects of Fine Motor Development in the Subsequent Expressive and Receptive Language Skills of Children with Special Needs

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Introduction. Studies related to developmental psychology have long recognized the importance of motor development but have recently begun to systematically map out its subsequent developmental pathways. In many international studies, finding evidence on the effects of fine motor skills development on children's language skills with special needs (CSNs) has significantly grown much interest. Fine motor skills and language skills play a vital role in a child's early development. Hence, the study describes the level of performance in the fine motor domain, expressive language domain, and receptive language domain of preschool-aged CSNs of a private intervention center in Bacolod City during the school year 2019-2020. Likewise, it explores the existing relationship of the fine motor skills and language skills between the CSN's age and sex before and after participating in

a fine motor development program. Also, it determines the subsequent consequences of the fine motor development program on the expressive language skills and receptive language skills of the CSNs.

Methods. A descriptive-experimental research design was used to assess the resulting consequences of a fine motor development program on the expressive language skills and receptive language skills of CSNs of a private institution in Bacolod City during the school year 2019-2020. Using random sampling, 30 CSNs (15 for the experimental group and 15 for the control group) participated in the study. The CSNs were randomly assigned to each group. The data was gathered using the revised Philippine Early Childhood Development (ECD) Checklist. Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test, and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were used to analyze the data.

Results. The findings of the study revealed that the level of fine motor domain, expressive language domain, receptive language domain of the CSNs is generally the same before the fine motor development program was provided and that there was no significant difference in the various domains of the CSNs in the control group before and after the intervention program. On the other hand, a significant difference was noted in the experimental group before and after the intervention program. No significant relationship between sex and age in the various domains, but a significant relationship was found on the effects of the fine motor development program on the receptive language skills of the CSNs, which supports the primary interest of this study that the development of fine motor skills significantly predicted subsequent consequences on the receptive language skills of CSNs.

Conclusion. The study is the first step towards further understanding the direct and indirect cascading effects of fine motor development on the language skills of CSNs. Special Education teachers and other allied medical health professionals have a huge responsibility to collaborate and create programs that foster the development of fine motor skills, most especially in the early intervention stages, which will also eventually foster the development of language skills. The Early Childhood Education teachers working with CSNs can also use the fine motor intervention program based on the findings. The fine motor intervention program that was implemented was consistent, well-timed, and goal-directed. The intervention program created subsequent positive cascades on the fine motor skills that influenced the subsequent development of receptive language skills. It implies

that the fine motor skills development program is an influential medium of creating developmental change in the language skills of the CSNs.

Practical Value of the Paper. The study significantly contributes to the few literature on the subsequent consequences of fine motor skills development on children's language skills with special needs. In addition, the findings of the study provide baseline information in designing a more comprehensive intervention plan, which will further improve the quality of addressing the growing diversity of Filipino children with special needs.

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