

# Aversive And Nonaversive Interventions: Controlling Life-threatening Behavior By The Developmentally Disabled

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Behavioral management in children with intellectual disabilities in a resource-poor setting in Barwani, India

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ABSTRACT

**Background:** Management of behavioral problems in children with intellectual disabilities (ID) is a great concern in resource-poor areas in India. This study attempted to analyze the efficacy of behavioral intervention provided in resource-poor settings.

**Objective:** This study was aimed to examine the outcome of behavioral management provided to children with ID in a poor rural region in India.

**Materials and Methods:** We analyzed data from 104 children between 3 and 18 years old who received interventions for behavioral problems in a clinical or a community setting. The behavioral assessment scale for Indian children with mental retardation (BASIC-MR) was used to quantify the study subjects' behavioral problems before and after we applied behavioral management techniques (baseline and post-intervention, respectively). The baseline and post-intervention scores were analyzed using the following statistical techniques: Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test for the efficacy of intervention;  $\chi^2$  for group differences.

**Results:** The study demonstrated behavioral improvements across all behavior domains ( $P < 0.05$ ). Levels of improvement varied for children with different severities of ID ( $P = 0.001$ ), between children who did and did not have multiple disabilities ( $P = 0.011$ ).

**Conclusion:** The outcome of this behavioral management study suggests that behavioral intervention can be effectively provided to children with ID in poor areas.

**Key words:** Behavioral assessment scale for Indian children with mental retardation, behavioral problems, community-based rehabilitation, India, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, tribal population

### INTRODUCTION

People with intellectual disabilities (ID) have a wide range of needs<sup>[1]</sup> and most exhibit behavioral problems. Around 7-15% of people with ID have severely challenging behavioral problems.<sup>[2]</sup> The nature and severity of these behavioral problems vary with the degree of ID.<sup>[3]</sup> In children with ID, the social environment in which they live and interact also shapes their behavior.<sup>[4]</sup> Having a child

with ID is stressful for families<sup>[5]</sup> and the child's behavioral problems can create additional stress and frustration for parents and caretakers.<sup>[6]</sup> Furthermore, behavioral problems also impede the child's learning in a number of settings, including at school and at home. Many children with ID in rural communities are isolated from their peers and are therefore deprived of interaction and play because of their behavioral issues. This isolation limits their opportunities to learn through observation and interaction with other

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