



Psychosocial Difficulties and Acquisition of Social Skills Among Preschool Children in Early Childhood Centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated psychosocial difficulties and the acquisition of social skills among preschool children in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State. The study had two objectives, two research questions, and two corresponding null hypotheses. A correlational research design was adopted, targeting a population of 3,450 preschool children from 232 early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District. A sample of 345 preschoolers was selected using a simple random method. Data were collected using two self-structured instruments: The Psychosocial Difficulties Checklist (PDC) and the Preschool Social Skills Checklist (PSSC). The instruments were validated by three experts in Primary Education Studies, and their reliability coefficients were established using the Cronbach Alpha method, yielding indices of 0.9 for PDC and 0.8 for PSSC. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer the research questions and inferential statistics (Regression and One-way ANOVA) to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed a significant inverse relationship between hyperactivity and social skills acquisition, indicating that increased hyperactivity negatively impacts preschoolers' ability to develop essential social competencies. Additionally, social isolation was found to significantly affect the acquisition of social skills, as isolated children exhibited reduced engagement in peer interactions and social learning opportunities. Based on the findings, recommendations include incorporating psychosocial screening in school health services, implementing early intervention strategies, and encouraging parental and caregiver involvement to foster positive social development among preschoolers.

Keywords: Psychosocial Difficulties, Social Skills Acquisition, Preschool Children, Early Social Isolation, Hyperactivity

Introduction

Early childhood is a critical period for the development of social skills, which are essential for children's interpersonal relationships, emotional regulation, and overall well-being. Social skills, such as communication, cooperation, empathy, and problem-solving, play a fundamental role in a child's ability to interact successfully with peers, teachers, and caregivers. However, many preschool children face psychosocial difficulties that can hinder their ability to acquire these essential skills. Psychosocial difficulties, including hyperactivity and social isolation, may result from various factors such as family instability, socioeconomic constraints, or limited access to quality early childhood education. Hyperactivity and inattention in the early years present as persistent age-inappropriate symptoms and are psychosocial issues that are capable of causing impairment in children's learning and social development. Children who exhibit hyperactive psychosocial behaviour experience pervasive interpersonal difficulties and disapproval from their peers. Approximately 3–5% of the school-aged population may exhibit hyperactive psychosocial with male to female ratios ranging from 4:1 to 9:1, depending on the setting (Tur-Kaspa, 2005). The condition may persist into adolescence in

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about 50–80% of cases clinically diagnosed in childhood with other characteristics psychosocial such as inattention and impulsivity. These children are often predominantly hyperactive, impulsive and inattentive. Many hyperactive children also show some social and emotional functioning that are of significant concern to parents and caregivers. It has also been indicated that there is a high correlation between children who are hyperactive and their social skills. Though many of these children do not have specific social deficits, the impulsivity and inability to pay attention to details impact their social success and impede their socialization, which often puts them at risk for social concerns. Oftentimes, the children have difficulty ‘putting the brakes’ when playing with peers and struggle with regulating their psychosocial, which makes them become upset and shy away in future social events. They also often miss social cues when with peers, leading to rejection or neglect in future interactions (Stasi, 2015). According to Minchew (2016), other reasons why these children have trouble relating with others include difficulty in interpretation of social situations, problems with assimilation of rules and respecting limits, demanding so much attention and approval from others, inability to control emotions and difficulty keeping secrets or promises. Minchew (2016) described hyperactivity and inattention as problems that negatively affect children’s learning right from the early grades where social development is of uttermost importance and all children are expected to achieve a level of social competency that forms the springboard for future social interaction in life.

These alien symptoms of hyperactivity, inattention and impulsivity can be expected to interfere with the child’s social functioning and social adjustment because many children with hyperactivity experience serious difficulties in the social domain due to their interference with social functioning and adjustment (Minchew, 2016). Tur-Kaspa (2005) noted that hyperactivity and aggression more often cause children to be rejected by their classmates, they are also rated as having significantly poorer social skills than other of their mates with no significant symptoms of hyperactivity, were they exhibited comparative deficits in virtually all areas of social competence and especially lacking in social cooperation skills such as following directions from caregivers or other adults, cooperating and compromising with peers in sharing toys and other belongings as well as taking turns. Kennedy-Moore (2015) observed that the most difficult aspect of these children’s lives is the struggle to make and keep friends because of the social challenges the condition causes them. More than half of children with hyperactivity are widely disliked by their peers, and no kids name them as most liked but rather are listed among the least liked. 56% of children with hyperactivity have no reciprocated friendships. Even when children with hyperactivity find friends, the friendships tend to be of lower quality and less stable than those of typical children. The reason is that they cause a lot of distraction in the life of the children and often hit them (Hoza, 2005 in Kennedy-Moore, 2015). Hence, these children are at greater risk for poor school performance, poor peer relations, anxiety and depression, aggression, and conduct problems. Rather than acquiring social skills, they indulge in antisocial psychosocial issues such as delinquency, early substance use, and difficulties in social and personal relations during adulthood (Kennedy-Moore, 2015). Vahedi et al. (2012) noted that weakness in attention skills can negatively affect a child’s social competency. For instance, children who have attention problems may have trouble listening and attending in conversations and at the same time unable to inhibit the impulse to talk or say things at inappropriate times. A child who is not attentive and stable in class will not be able to learn and acquire social, language, and psychomotor skills and will find it difficult in subsequent learning because these skills are required to function properly in later years. Breslau et al. (2009) in Jacinta and Rotich (2015) opined that children who have difficulties focusing on classroom activities or completing homework assignments because of their attention problems are likely to be less efficient learners compared with their similarly able classmates without attention problems. Poor learning habits at the pre-school period may limit pupils’ ability to acquire basic skills required for progression at higher level education. Children will misbehave when they are unable to understand concepts being taught, and poor attention will occur, especially when there is a mismatch between the teaching style and the children’s learning styles (Jimerson et al., 2000).

However, these children can be helped to improve by providing strategies such as extra support in non-structured situations when the children are playing at the playground, during recess and at transition time to improve their socialization. It is expected that caregivers and parents work closely together with the children to ensure that they can provide extra guidance during these activities. The children should be instructed in specific social psychosocial skills such as sharing, taking turns, or asking for help. They are taught how to relate to other people with less impulsiveness and how to better interpret different social situations, as this will help these children improve their social skills. This method can be applied to a group of children or used with an individual child who has difficulty with attention. To achieve this, the classroom environment has to be structured to promote social interaction, smooth transitions, and

social communication. Learning areas can be large enough to give children the space they need to play together but small enough to provide an intimate setting for social interaction. Learning materials and toys that promote cooperative play, such as pretend cars and trucks, blocks, imaginary food and cooking props, and puppets, should always be made available in a classroom designed to facilitate social skills development. When social skills instructions are targeted to the needs of children with social difficulties such as impulsivity, aggression or even isolation, the child's social relationships can be significantly improved (Ladd, 2005). Provide the child with immediate feedback about how his or her behavior is impacting the social environment as well as how to better handle the situation in the future. Hyperactivity can contribute to social isolation when impulsive psychosocial behaviour and difficulty with self-regulation make it challenging to form and maintain meaningful social relationships.

Human beings are a social species with an inherent need to feel connected to others and to feel belonging with others. But sometimes individuals, especially children and young adolescents, isolate themselves from people and fail to participate in activities of daily living. This psychosocial issue is often silent and not easily recognized like other forms of psychosocial difficulties, and so it could degenerate to a state that will require elaborate therapy for its reversal. Children who are socially isolated do so for several reasons and will stop school and other interesting activities. Social isolation is a state of complete or near complete lack of contact between an individual and society. It could be a cause or symptom of some health issues that manifest as feelings of low self-worth, shame, loneliness and depression (Ingram and London 2015). Some of the preschool children are already isolated before registering in school, while some acquire the psychosocial as a result of their experiences in school. This is because most children are exposed to conditions that make them feel they are not wanted and so have to retire to themselves. The researcher observed in the society today that some children face one form of humiliating condition or the other from trusted adults like teachers, parents, family members and neighbours that forced them into isolation, thinking that will save them from experiencing those conditions. Some parents transfer their aggression, frustration and disappointment from their personal experiences in the society to their children and will not give children a moment to talk and play in the home. Some who live with extended relatives are not given the freedom to enjoy childhood when they become babysitters as early as age 4, forcing them to work and behave like adults. The forced state of adulthood confuses the child, what Erikson 1968) describes as role confusion. With the change of role from that of a child to that of an adult, the child begins to gradually withdraw from social interaction with other children to take up her adult role of caring for a baby. Such a child if eventually registered in the school as the one she is caring for starts school, will not be able to interact freely with caregivers and cannot even engage most play activities with peers and so will not be able to acquire social skills as others. As noted by Moutria (2017), preschoolers who are isolated during the early years of their lives are less playful than those who are well socialized. This was revealed in the analyses of two groups of preschoolers from birth to the age of seven years. It was found that those who were raised in an orphanage and had little human contact were much less playful at age 1 than those who were born and raised in prison but were in constant contact with their mothers. The study, according to Moutria (2017), demonstrated the ill effect of social isolation at an early age to include sensory and social deprivation as well as severe delay in language acquisition, which further put preschoolers at risk of prolonged social disability. Most a times, the humiliating situation preschoolers are put through such as daily molestations of physical abuse and or rape, in the hands of those who should protect them has caused them to suffer self- rejection and withdrawal.

A preschooler who has withdrawn into his or herself will not know how to interact with his or her peers because he or she has not been doing so and being that play and interaction are necessary for the them to learn social skills, those who are isolated become backward in social skills acquisition during the early childhood period. As reported by Ingram and London (2015), preschoolers who are isolated feel less satisfied with school, less engaged in class, less motivated and put forth less effort and so perform worse in school activities because connectedness and belonging in school is critical for achieving success. Isolation at the early stage of development is a critical issue because it is detrimental to preschoolers' social development. Moutria (2017) reported a study carried out in the 1940s by René Spitz, a researcher and Austrian-American psychoanalyst, who used child observation to determine just how detrimental a lack of important social interaction is to children. Harry Harlow conducted a study using monkeys that furthered Spitz's studies and explored the devastating consequences of isolation. The results of these studies are clear: being around loving, caring caregivers is essential for the proper social development of a child (Moutria, 2017). These challenges can negatively impact children's social development and academic readiness, making it essential to explore the relationship between psychosocial difficulties and social skills acquisition in early childhood education.

Statement of the Problem

The early years of a child's life are essential for developing social skills, which enable effective communication, cooperation, and interaction with peers and adults. Psychosocial difficulties such as hyperactivity and social isolation may pose significant challenges to this developmental process. Hyperactive preschoolers often struggle with impulse control, attention regulation, and appropriate social engagement, which can hinder their ability to develop positive peer relationships. On the other hand, social isolation, characterized by withdrawal from group activities and limited peer interaction, may prevent children from acquiring essential social competencies, such as teamwork, empathy, and conflict resolution. In Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State, there is growing concern about the impact of psychosocial difficulties on early childhood development. Despite efforts by educators and caregivers to promote social skill acquisition in early childhood centres, many preschoolers continue to exhibit signs of hyperactivity and social withdrawal, raising questions about the extent to which these issues affect their ability to form meaningful social connections. While research has examined various aspects of child development and psychosocial difficulty, there is a paucity of studies specifically investigating the relationship between psychosocial difficulties and social skill acquisition among preschoolers in Rivers East Senatorial District. Understanding this relationship is essential for developing targeted interventions that can support young children in overcoming social and psychosocial challenges. Therefore, this study seeks to determine the relationship between hyperactivity and social skill acquisition among preschoolers, as well as to ascertain the relationship between social isolation and social skill acquisition in early childhood centres within the study area.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate psychosocial difficulties and acquisition of social skills among preschool children in early childhood Centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Determine the relationship between hyperactivity and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State.
2. Ascertain relationship between social isolation and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. Has hyperactivity any relationship with acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between social isolation and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

H0₁: Acquisition of social skills by preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State is not significantly related to hyperactivity in them.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between social isolation and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted the correlational research design. The design is used since the researcher wants to examine the relationship between two variables, which are behaviour problems and acquisition of social skills. The study was carried out in Rivers East Senatorial District. 3450 preschool children make up the population for this study. This population was found in 232 early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District, including 1746 boys and 1704 girls who are 5 years of age from rural and urban areas of the Senatorial District (RSUBEB, 2017). 345 preschoolers, who are 10% of the study population, made up the sample of the study. They were randomly selected from 23 randomly selected early childhood centres out of the 116 centres in the 4 selected local government areas in the District for the study. Two instruments were used for data collection: the researcher-designed Behaviour Problem Checklist (BPC)

and the Preschool Social Skill Checklist (PSSC). They are all researcher-designed 20 and 40-item instruments used to measure behavioural problems that could inhibit or affect the acquisition of social skills among preschool children and social skills acquired by preschool children. They all have 3-point options scored 2 for often, 1 for sometimes and 0 for not true, respectively. The instruments were shown to the researcher's supervisor and two other lecturers in the Department of Primary Education Studies, Ignitius Ajuru University of Education. All corrections that were made by them were duly effected before they were used. The Cronbach alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instruments BPC and PSSC. To do this, 20 copies of the instrument were administered to 20 preschoolers in a childhood centre in the Port Harcourt local government area who were not part of the study. The filled copies were retrieved and scored. Data generated were analyzed using the Cronbach alpha formula to obtain a reliability index of 0.9 and 0.8 for BPC and SSAC, respectively. The instruments were administered on the children by the caregivers with the help of 4 research assistants who made sure that the two instruments were administered on each child and put together. On getting to the centres, the researcher and assistants submitted the letter of introduction to the head teacher to get permission and access to the children. The head teachers were also requested to sign the researcher's letter of introduction on presentation. Then, the researcher and assistant proceeded to the class. At the class the children were randomly selected using picking and dropping until the required number is reached, based on 40 of the class population. Then the instruments are administered on the children by the caregiver with the help of the researcher and/or assistants. This process was carried out by other research assistants in all the centres selected for the study. A total of 5 working days was used to administer the instruments in all the centres. The instruments were retrieved on the spot from the respondents. The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and regression while hypotheses were tested using ANOVA.

Results

Research Question 1: Has hyperactivity any relationship with acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State?

Table 1: Summary of regression analysis on whether hyperactivity has any relationship with acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State.

Variable	Mean	SD	N		
Preschool Social Skills	1.83	0.25	332		
Hyperactivity	1.95	0.35	332		
A: Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.545 ^a	.202	-.201	.24808	
a. Predictors: (Constant), Hyperactivity					
B: Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.771	.077	23.025	.000
	Hyperactivity	-.032	.039	-.545	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Preschool Social Skill					

Part B of Table 1 shows that the summary of regression analysis on whether hyperactivity has any relationship with acquisition of social skills by preschoolers in early childhood centres in the Senatorial District might be described as strong and inverse (Beta=-.545). The R-square value of .202 in part A shows a 20.2% contribution of hyperactivity to preschoolers' social skills. The regression equation $y=1.771-.032x$ shows that an increase in hyperactivity of preschoolers might lead to a decrease in the acquisition of social skills by preschoolers. Preschool Social Skills had a mean of 1.83, SD=0.25, while hyperactivity had a mean of 1.95, SD=0.35.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between social isolation and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District?

Table 2: Summary of regression analysis on the relationship between social isolation and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District.

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Preschool Social Skills	1.83	0.25	332
Temper Tantrums	1.79	0.37	332

A: Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.637 ^a	.321	-.319	.24816

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Isolation

B; Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.881	.073		25.850	.000
	Social Isolation	-.028	.041	-.637	-.679	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Preschool Social Skill

Table 2 shows that the summary of regression analysis on the relationship between social isolation and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District can be described as strong and inverse (Beta=-.637). The R-square value of .321 in part A shows a 32.1% contribution of social isolation to preschoolers' social skills acquisition. The regression equation $y=1.881-.028x$ shows that an increase in the social isolation psychosocial of preschoolers might lead to a decrease in the ability of preschoolers to acquire social skills. Preschool Social Skills had a mean of 1.83, SD=0.25, while social isolation had a mean of 1.79, SD=0.37.

Test of Hypotheses

H0₁: Acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District is not significantly related to preschoolers' hyperactive psychosocial.

Table 3: Summary of F-statistics on the relationship between hyperactivity and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State

C: ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	.041	1	.041	33.661	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.310	330	.062		
	Total	20.351	331			

a. Dependent Variable: Preschool Social Skill

b. Predictors: (Constant), Hyperactivity

The F-statistics show that there is a significant relationship between hyperactivity and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State ($F_{1, 330}=33.661$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis (**H0₁**) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between social isolation and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State.

Table 4 Summary of F-statistics on the relationship between social isolation and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State

C: ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
1	Regression	.028	1	.028	71.461	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.322	330	.062		
	Total	20.351	331			

a. Dependent Variable: Preschool Social Skill

b. Predictors: (Constant), Social Isolation

The F-statistics show that there is a significant relationship between social isolation and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State ($F_{1, 330}=718.461$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level

Discussion

Research question 1 and hypothesis H_{01} established the relationship between hyperactivity and acquisition of social skills by preschool children. Findings revealed Part B of Table 1 shows that the summary of regression analysis on whether hyperactivity has any relationship with acquisition of social skills by preschoolers in early childhood centres in the Senatorial District might be described as strong and inverse ($Beta=-.545$). The R-square value of .202 in part A shows a 20.2% contribution of hyperactivity to preschool social skills acquisition. The regression equation $y=1.771-.032x$ shows that an increase in hyperactivity of preschoolers might decrease social skill acquisition among preschoolers. This means that with hyperactivity, preschoolers will not acquire more social skills. The F-statistics shows a significant relationship between hyperactivity and acquisition of social skills by preschool children and so the null hypothesis was rejected ($F_{1, 330}=205.233$, $p<.05$). The way the result came out is a true picture of what could happen in a situation where the preschoolers are not sitting quietly and participating in classroom and outdoor activities. Hyperactive preschoolers are usually not able to sustain attention on any activity for a long time (Kennedy-Moore, 2015). This makes it difficult for them to benefit from any lesson that will require concentration and total attention. Most times, social skills are taught through modeling either by the caregiver or other adults and peers. With inattention, it is difficult to learn such skills, which explains the negative contribution of hyperactivity to the preschoolers' social skills acquisition. Again, the result further showed that if there is any decrease in the preschoolers' hyperactive psychosocial, which could come in the form of encouragement to control the negative psychosocial or withdrawal of pleasure, there will be an increase in the children's social skills acquisition. This result agrees with the findings of Kennedy-Moore (2015), who also observed that preschoolers with hyperactivity have difficulties making and keeping friends because they are widely disliked by their peers. Now, if one of the ways of acquiring social skills is by socializing with friends, paying attention and contributing in conversations and preschoolers with hyperactivity hardly have friends, how then can they acquire the skills? It then means that their social competency will be adversely affected, as seen in this study, if nothing is done by caregivers to improve their situation.

The results on research question 2 and hypothesis H_{02} where shown on tables 2a, b, c. Part B of Table 4 shows that the summary of regression analysis on the relationship between social isolation and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District might be described as strong and inverse ($Beta=-.637$). The R-square value of .321 in part A shows a 32.1% contribution of social isolation to preschool social skills acquisition. The regression equation $y=1.881-.028x$ shows that an improvement in the social isolation of preschoolers might lead to an increase in the preschoolers' social skills acquisition. The F-statistics show that there is a significant relationship between anxiety and acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District of Rivers State ($F_{1, 330}=15.323$, $p<.05$). The null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected at 0.05 alpha level. This result showed a very strong correlation that inversely affects preschoolers' ability to acquire social skills. Preschoolers who suffer from social isolation withdraw from social interaction with peers and adults at home and even in school, making them perform very poorly in school. These has already been reported by Ingram and London (2015) that preschoolers, who suffer some form of isolation, feel less satisfied with school, less engaged in class activities, less motivated and put forth less effort and so perform very poorly in almost every school activity because of disconnectedness; and belonging in school is critical for achieving success. Some preschoolers isolate themselves from people because of fear of the unknown, which they developed as a result of their earlier

experiences in life. This makes them gradually derail from normal life functioning. Human beings are social beings who are capable of interaction with one another. Social interaction is even more prevalent in preschoolers as they spend most of their time in school in play, which is their major form of instruction. The series of play activities help them to acquire social skills. Therefore, when a child is isolated from social interaction for one reason or the other, such child grows up lacking in many areas in life. This is because through play, preschoolers develop language, communication, interpersonal, problem-solving, fine motor skills and several other skills. A child who is withdrawn will not be able to acquire these skills because of a lack of interest in school as a result of his or her condition. Parents and caregivers must devote their time to the care and nurture of their preschoolers; this will make them their children's friends and confident. It will also give them time to observe the preschoolers and, by so doing, identify early those who show signs of dislike for every school activity as this is a pointer to social isolation. Early identification will help caregivers work out modalities to reconnect such preschoolers with their environment by making them understand the need to make friends with their siblings at home, peers at school, and even the caregivers, these children have to be shown love to change their thinking process that makes them believe that nobody loves them. Experiences of friendship and love relationship with adults and other children will help to reverse their condition and enhance participation in school activities and acquisition of social skills in them.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between hyperactivity, social isolation, and the acquisition of social skills among preschoolers in early childhood centres in Rivers East Senatorial District. The findings revealed a strong and inverse relationship between hyperactivity and social skills acquisition, indicating that increased hyperactivity negatively impacts preschoolers' ability to develop essential social competencies. This aligns with previous research suggesting that hyperactive children struggle with attention, peer interactions, and learning from social models, ultimately hindering their social development. The study established that social isolation significantly affects the acquisition of social skills. Preschoolers who experience social isolation tend to withdraw from peer interactions, limiting their exposure to social learning opportunities. This supports the argument that early childhood socialization plays an important role in cognitive and emotional development. Socially isolated children are less engaged in class activities and may exhibit lower motivation and academic performance. The study emphasizes the importance of early intervention strategies by caregivers, teachers, and parents to mitigate the negative effects of hyperactivity and social isolation. Encouraging positive behavioral management, fostering inclusive social environments, and promoting structured play activities can significantly enhance preschoolers' social skills development. Ultimately, creating a nurturing and interactive learning environment can help preschoolers develop the necessary social competencies for future academic and social success.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Screening for inappropriate psychosocial behaviour should form part of school health services in order to identify any psychosocial issues early and institute corrective measures aimed at reversing the psychosocial and enhancing learning in the preschoolers.
2. It is important that parents and caregivers devote time to the care and nurture of their preschoolers to identify early those who show signs of dislike for every school activity, as this is a pointer to social isolation.

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