

Preschool teacher perceptions: aggressive behaviour of preschool children in Sri Lanka

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The aim of the present study was to explore the preschool teachers' perceptions of nature and prevalence of aggressive behaviors displayed by preschool children. In order to explore the research issue, a survey questionnaire was given to a sample of 275 preschool teachers from 18 districts of Sri Lanka. In addition, 22 preschool teachers from varied preschool communities (rural, urban, temple preschool, street community preschool etc.) were interviewed using a pre designed semi structured interview schedule to explore in depth, preschool teacher perceptions of aggressive behaviors in children. Results indicated that aggressive behaviors that teachers listed could be divided into three main categories: physical, verbal and emotional. Most frequently occurred aggressive behaviors were the physical forms of aggression such as hitting, shoving, pinching, throwing things, grabbing objects etc. Preschool teachers also mentioned during the interview that only children, children who come from troubled homes, children who are exposed to violent media and role models display more aggressive behaviors in comparison to their peers. They have also noted gender differences of aggression. The study highlights the significance of an extensive preschool teacher training program to develop skills and competencies to prevent and minimize aggressive behaviors in preschool children and developing competencies within preschool teachers to conduct parental awareness and skill training in effective parenting.

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