Conservation Tasks as a Criterion for Classification of Mentally Retarded Children in Jordan

By

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ABSTRACT

A sample of 140 normal subjects, and 140 mentally retarded subjects of seven age groups (7-8 years, 8-9 years, 9-10 years, 10-11 years, 11-12 years, 12-13 years, and 13-14 years), was selected from the populations of normal and mentally retarded children to investigate the cognitive level of mentally retarded children at different ages on the basis of some selected Piagetian tasks (mass, weight, volume, number, quantity, and area).

The data were analyzed by 2x2x7 ANOVA. Results from the analyses indicated statistically significant difference between normal and mentally retarded groups on each task. The hierarchical nature of the tasks was confirmed and found to hold for both groups. It was concluded that the nature of developmental process is the same in both groups, but mentally retarded children acquire the concepts more slowly than normal children.

The limitations of the study and the implications of findings for the classification and education of mentally retarded children were discussed.