



## Research Article

# Moral values and social skills of pupils with mild intellectual disability: Does indigenous language storytelling and gender play any role?

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Indigenous languages hold significance as they reflect the heritage and historical background of native communities across the globe. This research explores how storytelling in languages impacts the values and social abilities of students with mild intellectual disabilities. The study followed an experimental design employing pretest, post-test, and control group structures. To examine the influence of language storytelling and gender, a 2x2 factorial matrix was incorporated into the research. Convenient sampling techniques were used to select forty students from two schools in Ibadan, Oyo State. The study used tools such as the Moral Foundations Questionnaire to measure values and the Social Skills Rating System to assess social skills. The analysis involved conducting an Analysis of Covariance at a significance level of .05. The findings revealed that storytelling in languages enhanced moral values and social skills among students with mild intellectual disabilities. These results highlight the nature of reasoning, social skill development and various factors beyond gender considerations. Indigenous language storytelling fostered sensitivity, vocabulary growth and improved moral reasoning among pupils while contributing to language development and a better understanding of social dynamics. The findings indicate that it is crucial to include the growth of values and social skills in this population's development. The research emphasizes the advantages of reviving languages through storytelling to cultivate values and social abilities in pupils with mild intellectual disabilities. This contributes to their growth, cultural identity, and self-determination.

**Keywords:** Moral values, social skills, pupils with mild intellectual disability, indigenous language storytelling, gender

## 1. Introduction

Developing moral values and social skills in pupils with mild intellectual disabilities is a complex and critical aspect of their growth and overall well-being. These individuals face unique challenges in comprehending and internalizing moral values and social norms, often stemming from difficulties in information processing and communication impairments. This can be due to challenges in processing information, impaired communication abilities, and slower cognitive development (Lifshitz, 2020). Additionally, they may experience receptive and expressive language limitations, which can hinder their engagement in interventions designed to support them (Hronis et al., 2017). Additionally, the ability to function adaptively decreases with moderate or severe intellectual disabilities, making internet use more complex for individuals with these disabilities (Ågren et al., 2019). In the past, studies have found a pattern of intellectual delay, with most of the people who took part having mild to moderate intellectual disability [ID] and being good at fluid reasoning (Axelrad et al., 2007). Furthermore, cognitive deficits in individuals with mild ID can range from mild to profound and are often accompanied by severe expressive language impairment and low adaptive skills (Purugganan, 2018).

Teaching moral values to these pupils is of utmost importance because it helps them differentiate right from wrong and make ethical decisions (Lickona, 2004). Moral values provide a foundational framework for appropriate behaviour and relationships. These values are pivotal to their personal growth, social integration, and well-being. While individuals with intellectual

disabilities may face unique challenges in comprehending and practicing moral values (Oliver, 2018), it is crucial to recognise their potential for moral development and provide them with the necessary guidance and support (Tuffrey-Wijne, 2013). Equally significant are social skills, as they are essential for navigating interactions with peers, teachers, and the broader community (Lee & Carter, 2012). Developing these skills can enhance their ability to form positive relationships and participate in social activities.

Positive reinforcement techniques are pivotal in shaping moral behaviour and social skills. Reward systems that acknowledge and celebrate moral choices and successful social interactions can motivate pupils. Encouraging peer interactions is also vital. Organising activities that promote teamwork and cooperation allows pupils to practice social skills and learn from their peers (Topping et al., 2017). Family involvement is a significant factor in reinforcing moral values and social skills outside the classroom. Collaborative efforts between schools and families provide consistent support (Cohen et al., 2006). Regular assessment and progress monitoring help track a pupil's moral values and social skills development, enabling adjustments to teaching strategies and interventions based on assessment results.

A significant body of research focuses on the social skills and moral values of individuals with intellectual disabilities. Adeniyi and Omigbodun (2016) conducted a study on the effect of a classroom-based intervention on the social skills of pupils with ID. The result demonstrated the importance of targeted interventions in improving social skills among this population. Tailoring support and interventions to meet the specific needs of each pupil is crucial. Teachers, parents, and therapists should collaborate to create individualised education plans [IEPs] that address moral and social development goals. Effective teaching strategies, such as visual aids, social stories, role-playing, and clear, concise language to explain moral concepts and social expectations, are essential.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Concept of Pupils with ID**

Pupils with mild intellectual disabilities constitute a diverse group characterised by cognitive challenges that affect their ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills in line with typical developmental expectations (Wuang et al., 2008). Understanding this concept is essential, as it highlights this population's unique characteristics and considerations. These pupils typically exhibit intellectual functioning within the mild range, with IQ scores falling between 50 and 70 (Alesi et al., 2015; Smits-Engelsman & Hill, 2012). While their intellectual functioning may be below average, it remains within the mild category, indicating that they possess the potential to learn and develop various skills with appropriate support. In addition to intellectual functioning, their adaptive behaviour is a significant consideration (Buntinx, 2016).

Individuals in this population may encounter various daily obstacles related to adaptive skills, including interpersonal interaction, self-care, social engagement, and problem-solving. Further research has shown that adults with minor intellectual disabilities have much worse health outcomes than people without disabilities. This shows the need for comprehensive support in many areas (Emerson et al., 2016). Learning delays are common among these pupils, particularly in academic domains like reading, writing, and mathematics (Fletcher et al., 2018). The acquisition and application of these abilities frequently necessitate additional time, repetition, and personalised teaching. Individuals with ID may encounter difficulties in social interaction and communication abilities, manifesting as challenges in comprehending social cues, forming friendships, and effectively expressing themselves.

The educational inclusion of students with mild ID has been a subject of investigation, with findings suggesting the importance of providing access to the general education curriculum and the challenges these students face in the educational system (Shaw, 2017). Achieving independence in daily life tasks can be a challenge. These pupils may require ongoing support to develop self-help skills such as dressing, feeding, and personal hygiene. In an educational context, pupils with

mild intellectual disabilities benefit from individualised education plans that outline specific educational goals and strategies to address their unique needs (Timothy & Agbenyega, 2018). These plans may involve specialised instruction, accommodations, and modifications to the curriculum. Inclusive classrooms, where pupils with disabilities learn alongside their typically developing peers, can promote social interaction and foster a sense of belonging (Ziegler et al., 2020). Some pupils may require specialised support from special education teachers, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and other professionals to address their learning and developmental needs.

## **2.2. Indigenous Languages Storytelling**

Native or Indigenous peoples worldwide speak a rich and diverse linguistic tapestry known as indigenous languages. They represent a unique facet of cultural identity and history, offering insight into traditional knowledge, stories, and oral histories passed down through generations. These languages are deeply intertwined with the cultures they belong to, playing a central role in ceremonies, rituals, and cultural expressions (Weisgrau et al., 2023). However, Indigenous languages face significant threats to their survival. Historical factors like colonisation, forced assimilation, and language shifts have contributed to their decline. In today's globalised world, the dominance of major world languages poses an ongoing challenge to the vitality of indigenous languages (May, 2013). Many of these languages have only a handful of speakers left, placing them in the category of endangered languages.

In recent times, there has been a surge in the movement to restore and preserve indigenous languages, which have been facing the threat of extinction. The movement recognizes the crucial significance of these languages and aims to bring them to the forefront of cultural and linguistic diversity. This effort aims to preserve and revive these languages for linguistic purposes and to preserve cultural diversity and Indigenous identities (McCarty, 2003; Walsh, 2005). Language revitalisation connects Indigenous youth with their cultural heritage, helping to bridge generational gaps. Indigenous languages are more than just a tool for communication; they also hold specialised knowledge about ecosystems, plants, and animals. They reflect the profound connection between Indigenous peoples and their natural environments, contributing to sustainable practices and ecological awareness. Corntassel (2008) asserts that the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages is unequivocally linked to Indigenous rights and self-determination.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognises the importance of protecting, preserving, and revitalising Indigenous languages (Gilbert, 2007). These efforts are considered integral to the broader goals of Indigenous self-determination, autonomy, and cultural preservation. Education plays a significant role in these efforts. Learning Indigenous languages can enhance learners' cognitive development, linguistic skills, and multicultural awareness (Atleo & Fitznor, 2010). Indigenous language education has improved academic outcomes for Indigenous students while fostering a sense of pride and cultural identity.

The examination of the influence of storytelling on moral awareness and ethical decision-making has been investigated in several fields, such as religious instruction (Mpofu, 2021), financial industries (Al-Hawamleh, 2019), and the integration of ethical and spiritual principles in professional settings (Burns et al., 2022). These studies highlight the diverse impact of storytelling on the formation of morals, ethical considerations, and decision-making processes. Furthermore, the capacity of storytelling to impact behaviour, specifically with the adoption of Covid-19 preventive measures among children of school age, serves as further evidence of the extensive influence of narratives on the formation of attitudes and actions (Driscoll & McKee, 2006).

## **2.3. Concept of Gender**

Gender is a multidimensional concept beyond the typical binary definition of male and female. It results from a complex interaction of social, cultural, psychological, and biological variables that shape individuals' understanding of femininity and masculinity and their associated behaviours

and expectations (Best & Williams, 2001). Bussey (2011) describes gender identity development as a complex process influenced by biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors. Gender identity is a complex construct that cannot be simplified to a binary concept. People can express and experience their gender in diverse ways that go beyond the traditional understanding of gender as only male or female (Brinkman et al., 2012).

Furthermore, the development of gender identity is intertwined with other social identities, such as ethnicity and race, highlighting the importance of an intersectional perspective in understanding gender (Robbins & McGowan, 2016). The influence of gender extends beyond individual identity to societal structures and cultural norms, impacting areas such as education, family dynamics, and financial decision-making. Gender roles, which are deeply embedded in societal expectations, can have implications for individuals' experiences of discrimination and inequality. Moreover, gender ideology, shaped by perceptions of gender differences, plays a significant role in perpetuating traditional views of gender and influencing how individuals are labelled and sorted based on gender (Kågesten et al., 2016; Saguy et al., 2021). Understanding gender also involves recognising the impact of gender on various aspects of life, including language use, physical activity, and even the perception of talker gender based on speech signals. Additionally, gender differences have been explored in diverse fields, such as mathematics development, meal ingestion, and even in the context of autism spectrum disorders.

## 2.4. Hypotheses

The null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance were:

H02. There is no significant main effect of treatment on a) Moral values of pupils with mild ID, b) Social skills of pupils with mild ID.

H02. There is no significant main effect of gender on a) Moral values of pupils with mild ID, b) Social skills of pupils with mild ID.

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Research Design

The present study employed a standardised approach to gather data and conduct analyses. This section outlines the materials and methods used in the research. The research study employed a quasi-experimental design, explicitly utilising a pre-test, post-test, and control group structure. The design incorporated a 2x2 factorial matrix. The study included two treatment groups, namely indigenous language storytelling and control, and the consideration of gender as the moderating variable, including both male and female participants.

### 3.2. Participants

Forty pupils with mild ID were selected for the study. A convenient sampling technique was adopted to select the participants from two special schools in Ibadan metropolis, Oyo State. The selected participants were designated as pupils with ID based on assessment. Schools were assigned to one of the two treatment and control groups: ILS or CT treatment group. School ILS participants (N = 20, male = 10; female = 10; mean age = 10.3) were selected, while in school CT (N = 18, male = 8; female = 10; mean age = 10.9) were selected. Participants in the school ILS were exposed to indigenous language storytelling, while in School C, they were subjected to a control group with Placebo teaching.

### 3.3. Instruments

#### 3.3.1. The Moral Foundations Questionnaire [MFQ]

The Morality-as-Cooperation Questionnaire [MAC-Q] was also created to measure moral values related to working together, and its psychometric properties look good (Curry et al., 2018). Graham et al. (2011) identified five moral intuitions measured by the scale: harm/care, fairness/reciprocity, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity. These

questionnaires provide a strong foundation for assessing diverse moral values. They can be adapted to different cultural settings, as demonstrated by adapting and validating the Moral Sensitivity Questionnaire among Brazilian nurses (Ferreira et al., 2021). The MFQ was developed through various stages of item analysis using diverse and extensive samples. The primary objective of MFT is to widen the scope of moral psychology research to encompass the entire spectrum of moral concerns, including those present in non-Western cultures, religious traditions, and conservative political beliefs. The scale was precisely tailored to match the mental age of the participants, and underwent rigorous pilot testing involving non-primary respondents, eventually yielding an impressive reliability coefficient of 0.85 according to Cronbach's alpha.

### 3.3.2. *The Social Skills Rating System [SSRS]*

It has been widely used to assess and improve social skills in various populations, including children with high-functioning ASD (Wolstencroft et al., 2018). The SSRS and its updated version, the Social Skills Improvement System-Rating Scales [SSIS-RS], have been compared by raters for respondents different ages, showing that it can be used in a variety of situations (Gresham et al., 2011). The SSRS has also been used in research on emotional and social intelligence, good leadership, and preschoolers' social skills, showing that it can be used to measure a wide range of social skills (Frey et al., 2011). Furthermore, the SSRS has been examined for its reliability and validity in different cultural contexts, such as Norway and Iran, indicating its cross-cultural applicability (Strømgren & Couto, 2021). The SSRS's internal consistency and multidimensionality have also been confirmed through factor analyses, which adds to its credibility as a test (Ogden, 2003).

Moreover, the SSRS has been used in research on the social and behavioural differences among preschoolers, demonstrating its utility in understanding social dynamics in diverse populations (Bain & Pelletier, 1999). It has also been valid with other tests, like the BASC, highlighting its importance in complete social skills testing (Flanagan et al., 1996). The SSRS has also been used in research studies that plan social skills interventions for preschoolers, showing how important it is for guiding intervention strategies (Frey et al., 2013). Furthermore, the SSRS has been utilised in research on the relationship between teachers' knowledge of teaching social skills and students' social skills, highlighting its role in educational settings (Yildiz, 2017). The pilot test conclusively determined the suitability of the scale for collecting the intended information, as evidenced by a high Cronbach's alpha of .78.

### 3.4. Ethical Consideration

The purpose of the research was duly communicated to the participants' parents via a letter. Additionally, they were obligated to accompany the pupils to the school on a designated day. Adhering to research ethics, the investigator consulted with the participants' parents. During this meeting, the research assistant, a teacher, explained the consent form in the parents' native language. After ensuring that all parents had a satisfactory understanding, they proceeded to fill out the consent form and their signature on it. The privacy of the participants' profiles and responses was guaranteed in advance. A significant limitation of the research was the absence of session recording.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using Analysis of Covariance [ANCOVA] at 0.05 significance level, while adjusted marginal mean was used to determine the significance direction. ANCOVA is a statistical technique that combines elements of both analysis of variance [ANOVA] and regression analysis (Yang & Juskiw, 2011). It compares group means while controlling for the effects of one or more continuous variables, known as covariates.

One of the key assumptions for using ANCOVA is the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes (Johnson, 2016). This assumption states that the relationship between the covariate(s) and the dependent variable is consistent across all levels of the categorical

independent variable. In other words, the effect of the covariate(s) on the dependent variable is the same for all groups being compared (Schneider et al., 2015). Violation of this assumption can lead to biased results and incorrect conclusions.

#### 4. Results

Table 1 presents the significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on the moral values of pupils with mild ID.

Table 1

*Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the post-moral value of pupils with ID by treatment*

<i>Tests of Between-Subjects Effects</i>						
Dependent Variable: Post-test for moral value						
<i>Source</i>	<i>Type III Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
Corrected Model	2347.418 <sup>a</sup>	12	195.618	101.655	.000	.978
Intercept	545.022	1	545.022	283.227	.000	.913
Pretest	.010	1	.010	.005	.944	.000
Treatment	1645.703	1	1645.703	855.209	.000	.969
Gender	2.039	1	2.039	1.059	.312	.038
Error	51.957	27	1.924			
Total	19005.000	40				
Corrected Total	2399.375	39				

Note. a. R Squared = .978 (Adjusted R Squared = .969)

Table 1 shows that telling stories in an indigenous language significantly affected the moral values of students with mild ID ( $F_{(1, 27)} = 855.209$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , partial  $\eta^2 = 0.969$ ). The partial eta squared (partial  $\eta^2 = .969$ ) revealed a substantial effect size, suggesting that the model accounted for a significant portion of the total variation (adjusted  $R^2 = .969$ ) in the post-test scores on moral value. This finding implies that the observed group differences can be attributed to the model. Consequently, the null hypothesis was deemed invalid.

Table 2

*Estimated marginal mean*

<i>Estimates</i>				
Dependent Variable: Post-test on moral value				
<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>	
			<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>
Indigenous storytelling group	27.994 <sup>a</sup>	.355	27.265	28.723
Control Group	12.946 <sup>a</sup>	.348	12.233	13.660

Table 2 shows the magnitude of the significant main effect across the groups. The result revealed that the treatment group ( $M = 27.99$ ,  $SE = 0.355$ ) had significantly higher post-test scores on moral value compared to the control group ( $M = 12.95$ ,  $SE = 0.348$ ),  $p < .05$ . These findings suggest that the implementation of indigenous language storytelling strategies resulted in a statistically significant improvement in the moral values of pupils with mild ID.

Table 3 presents the significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on the social skills of pupils with mild ID.

Table 3

*Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) of the post-social skills of children with ID by treatment*

<i>Tests of Between-Subjects Effects</i>						
Dependent Variable: Post-test for social skills						
<i>Source</i>	<i>Type III Sum of Squares</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
Corrected Model	3583.792 <sup>a</sup>	12	298.649	122.532	.000	.982
Intercept	170.514	1	170.514	69.959	.000	.722
Pretest	.159	1	.159	.065	.800	.002
Treatment	2931.234	1	2931.234	1202.644	.000	.978
Gender	4.963	1	4.963	2.036	.165	.070
Error	65.808	27	2.437			
Total	20624.000	40				
Corrected Total	3649.600	39				

Note. a. R Squared = .986 (Adjusted R Squared = .982).

Table 3 shows a significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on the social skills of pupils with mild ID ( $F_{(1, 27)} = 1202.64$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , partial eta squared = 0.978). The effect size was significant, as determined by partial eta squared (partial eta squared=.978). The adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.982 suggests that group differences account for approximately 97.8% of the variance in social skills scores out of a total of 98.2% accounted for by the model. As a result, the null hypothesis was not accepted.

Table 4

*Estimated marginal mean*

<i>Estimates</i>				
Dependent Variable: Post-test on moral value				
<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Error</i>	<i>95% Confidence Interval</i>	
			<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>
Treatment Group	29.990 <sup>a</sup>	.390	29.190	30.791
Control Group	11.230 <sup>a</sup>	.374	10.462	11.997

Note. a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: Pre-test for social skills = 25.5500.

Table 4 shows the magnitude of the significant main effect between the groups. The result revealed that the treatment group ( $M = 29.99$ ,  $SE = 0.390$ ) had significantly higher scores on social skills compared to the control group ( $M = 11.23$ ,  $SE = 0.374$ ),  $p < .05$ . These findings suggest that the introduction of indigenous language storytelling strategy resulted in a statistically significant improvement in the social skills of pupils mild with ID.

#### **H02a: There is no significant main effect of gender on the moral values of pupils with mild ID**

Table 1 shows that the main effect of gender on moral values was not statistically significant ( $F_{(1, 27)} = 1.059$ ,  $p = 0.312$ , partial eta squared = 0.038). Only 3.8% of the variation in moral values was due to gender ( $\eta^2 = 0.038$ ), while 96.9% of the variation in the model was due to gender (adjusted R squared =.969). The null hypothesis is accepted due to the lack of significance of the main effect of gender on the moral values of students with mild ID.

#### **H02b: There is no significant main effect of gender on the social skills of pupils with mild ID.**

Table 3 shows no statistically significant main effect of gender on social skills ( $F_{(1, 27)} = 2.036$ ,  $p = 0.165$ , partial eta squared = 0.070). Gender explained a mere 7% of the variance in social skills ( $\eta^2 = 0.070$ ) out of the 98.2% total variation in the model (adjusted R squared =.982). The null hypothesis is accepted due to the lack of significance of the main effect of gender on the social skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. The Significant Main Effect of Indigenous Language Storytelling on the Moral Values of Pupils with Mild ID

The findings demonstrate the significant impact of storytelling in an indigenous language on the moral values of students with mild ID, aligning with existing literature. Research by Datta (2018) emphasises the value of sharing indigenous knowledge through storytelling, highlighting the potential for intergenerational engagement and incorporating indigenous language as a critical component. This supports the notion that indigenous storytelling can positively impact individuals, including those with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, Han et al. (2017) study underscores storytelling's effect on shaping behaviour and values, indicating its potential relevance in promoting moral values among children.

Furthermore, the work of Otrębski and Sudol (2020) on developing and validating the Moral Sensitivity Inventory for people with intellectual disabilities provides a framework for understanding moral sensitivity in this population, which can be linked to the impact of storytelling on moral values. Moreover, the study by Farrant et al. (2014) sheds light on the early vocabulary development of indigenous children, emphasising the importance of oral storytelling traditions as a foundation for language and literacy development, which may also contribute to moral value formation. Finally, the research by Langdon et al. (2010) provides insights into the literature relating to the moral development of people with intellectual disabilities, offering a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing moral development in this population.

The treatment group scored significantly higher on moral values post-test than the control group, with a statistically significant difference. This lends credence to the idea that storytelling, particularly indigenous language storytelling, can positively impact moral development and values (Hayati., 2021). In various contexts, such as moral education in kindergarten (Rahiem et al., 2020), character cooperation building in children (Sayer et al., 2018), and promoting honesty and moral understanding in children (Talwar et al., 2015), storytelling has been recognised as a method for conveying moral values. Furthermore, the impact of stories on children's lie-telling and moral understanding has been studied, demonstrating the importance of narratives in shaping moral behaviour (Talwar et al., 2015).

### 5.2. The Significant Main Effect of Indigenous Language Storytelling on the Social Skills of Pupils with Mild ID

The large effect size indicates the significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on the social skills of pupils with mild ID. This finding is supported by (Jacob et al., 2021), who reported a considerable influence of social stories on social skills among individuals with ID. This rejection of the null hypothesis is justified based on the statistical evidence of the main effect of storytelling on social skills. The impact of storytelling on language development and social comprehension has been extensively researched and documented in literature. These findings are significant because they support the claim made by Ensor and Hughes (2008) that there exists a close connection between individual differences in social understanding and language skills in children. Furthermore, Spencer and Pierce (2022) emphasised the benefits of oral storytelling for students with code-related disabilities and limited proficiency in academic language. These references collectively support that storytelling is crucial in fostering social skills and language development, particularly among diverse learner populations.

Storytelling is a great way to improve social skills and a highly effective technique for learning a new language. According to Simorangkir (2021), storytelling can significantly enhance speaking skills in English as a foreign language. In addition, Kasami (2021) research suggests that digital storytelling can help EFL learners with low proficiency and confidence in English to improve their language skills and motivation. These findings highlight the versatility of storytelling as a powerful pedagogical tool for language education, which can be utilised in both traditional and digital formats.



### **5.3. The Significant Main Effect of Gender on the Moral Values of Pupils with Mild ID**

The main effect of gender on moral values among pupils with mild ID was statistically insignificant. The present study's findings align with other studies, indicating that gender disparities in moral reasoning may not be as substantial as previously claimed (Eisenberg et al., 2005). The study additionally underscores the influence of socialisation and social duties on females, which may result in their moral thinking prioritising the internal feelings and wants of others. Consequently, this could potentially contribute to the absence of substantial gender effects (Eisenberg et al., 2005). Additionally, Agerström et al. (2006) found that female participants reported higher levels of care morality than male participants, indicating potential gender differences in moral reasoning approaches.

It is suggested that the lack of significant gender effects on moral values among students with mild ID can be attributed to the multifaceted nature of moral reasoning (Capraro & Sippel, 2017). While gender can play a role in moral decision-making, it is not the only determining factor. A study by Armstrong et al. (2018) found that women tend to score higher than men on deontological tendencies, which suggests that certain aspects of moral reasoning may exhibit gender differences. Overall, moral judgment and the evaluation of gender-specified moral agents are influenced by various factors beyond gender alone (Capraro & Sippel, 2017).

### **5.4. The Significant Main Effect of Gender on the Social Skills of Pupils with Mild ID**

The results indicate that there was no statistically significant main effect of gender on the social skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities. Gender explained only 7% of the variance in social skills, suggesting a minimal impact of gender on social skill development (Salavera et al., 2017). This is consistent with the broader literature on gender differences in social skills, emotional intelligence, and self-efficacy, which has shown varying effects based on gender. Additionally, research has highlighted the role of peer tutoring, storytelling, and other factors in influencing the social skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities (Jacob et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Ogden et al. (2021) based their study on a study that investigated the correlation between happiness and social skills and asserted that gender-specific variations may exist. This shows many aspects of the relationship between gender and social skills in schools, as shown by the fact that boys and girls do differently in school and in how they act around others. This aligns with the submission of Nakajima et al. (2020), who concluded that there were gender differences in cognitive and social-emotional skills, emphasising the importance of understanding and addressing these differences.

It has been shown that pre-service teachers of different genders have different levels of social skills. This shows the importance of looking at gender-specific patterns in social skill development (Mueser et al., 1990). Additionally, gender differences in social competence have been studied in various contexts, including schizophrenia, indicating nuanced differences in social skill development. The research shows that gender affects social skills, emotional learning, and social capital in many ways. This highlights the importance of fully comprehending how gender affects social skill development.

## **6. Conclusion**

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the effect of indigenous language storytelling and gender on the moral values and social skills of pupils with mild intellectual disabilities. The significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on moral values highlights the benefits of storytelling, particularly in indigenous languages, as a powerful tool for fostering moral development among pupils with intellectual disabilities. The results are consistent with existing findings emphasising the value of cultural and indigenous knowledge transmission through storytelling. This implies that incorporating indigenous storytelling into educational practices can positively and meaningfully impact this population's moral values. Similarly, the significant main effect of indigenous language storytelling on social skills highlights the versatile

role of storytelling in fostering language development and social understanding, particularly among learners with diverse needs, such as those with intellectual disabilities.

The result lends credence to the idea that storytelling can be an effective intervention technique for improving the social skills of pupils with mild ID. The lack of a substantial main effect of gender on moral values and social skills among pupils with mild intellectual impairments, on the other hand, shows that gender differences in these areas may not be as pronounced as previously supposed. The complexities of moral reasoning, social skill development, and the influence of many individual and environmental factors may all contribute to the lack of significant gender effects. This emphasises the significance of taking a holistic and tailored approach to the social and moral development of pupils with ID rather than relying exclusively on gender-based stereotypes. Overall, this study emphasizes the importance of indigenous language storytelling as a culturally inclusive and relevant teaching technique for people with mild intellectual disabilities. It also urges educators and practitioners, regardless of gender, to consider each learner's unique needs and talents in their attempts to foster the development of moral values and social skills. Future research could look into the long-term impacts of storytelling interventions and the complex interaction of elements influencing moral and social development in this community.

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