



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG PARENTS OF INTELLECTUALLY DISABLED AND NORMAL CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the quality of life among parents of Intellectual disabled children and parents of normal children (age 5-10 years), in urban areas of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. Parents from both groups were given Quality of Life Questionnaire. The scores were compared and it shows parents of intellectually disabled children has decreased quality when compared to parents of normal children. We are in need to enhance the quality of life of the parents with intellectual disabled children. So holistic intervention care should be implemented in the mental health programme.

KEYWORDS : Quality Of Life, Intellectual Disabled, Normal Intelligence Children, Holistic Intervention

INTRODUCTION

The parents of children with mentally challenged finds hard to accept the child. They show series of reactions like guilt, denial, sorrow, rejection and acceptance. They experience lot of stress and they exhibit stress reaction through anger, disturbed sleep and so on. They do not find time to enjoy the things they like; it affects their QOL to a great deal. Intellectual disability refers to substantial limitations in present functioning. It is characterized by significantly sub average intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitations in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skill areas like communication, functional academics and work. Intellectual Disability manifests itself before the age of 18 years (American Association on Mental Retardation, 1992). This study aims to compare the Quality of Life among Parents with mentally challenged and normal children.

Review of Literature

Geetha and Bhaskar (1993) studied the characteristics of the families of Mentally Retarded Children and normal children. It was found that there is significant difference between two groups in all the variables.

Mungo et al. (2007) found lower quality of life among parents who has children of pervasive developmental disorder than parents with non disabled children and children with cerebral palsy.

Palmer et al (2006). Sawyer (2010) compared quality of life between caregivers of children with autistic spectrum disorder and intellectual disability with normally developing child. The result shows significant difference in the quality of life between groups. The child's behavior has a significant co-relation with caregiver's quality of life.

Helgeson (2003) social support in relation to quality of life. Social support has structural and functional measures. Social support has an impact on quality of life and well being.

Wright (1988) attempted to evaluate the effects of the stress of having a child with disabilities on the lives of their parents.

The study compared the parents of children with disabilities did not differ from the other parents with respect to self image, quality of life.

AIM

To study the difference in quality of life among parents of intellectually challenged and normal children

METHODS AND MATERIALS

It was a cross sectional study conducted at Coimbatore. Samples were recruited through purposive sampling technique. Semi structured interview was developed to find the demographic data and quality of life scales were administered on parents of mentally challenged and normal children.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

1. Age of the parents between 20-50 years
2. Parents who gave consent to participate in the study
3. Parents who are able to comprehend the instructions
4. Children's age range is between 5-10 years.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

1. Parents having psychiatric illness
2. Parents having more than one mentally challenged children

TOOLS

1. Socio-Demographic Data Sheet

It contains information like age, religion, education, marital status.

2. Quality of Life Scale (WHO QOL-BREF)

WHO QOL Brief is a short version of WHO QOL 100 questionnaires. It consists of 26 questions and has 4 major domains (physical, psychological, social, environment). The alpha score ranges from 0.59 to 0.87 Cronbach alpha of all the domains 0.87, The factor loadings of the item ranges 0.52 to 0.84. The scale has been tested in 15 centers and has high validity.

Physical domain-physical problems like hearing, vision difficulties, and sleep disturbances are measured.

Psychological domain-measures the social life, personal relations, family acceptance, social support.

Environmental domain-It measures living conditions, security, opportunity for medical assistance, recreation.

TABLE 1 Comparison between quality of life among parents of Intellectually Disabled and Normal Children

Variables	Normal Children (N=40 Mean SD)	Intellectual disabled children (N=40 Mean SD)	T
Physical	24.543.98	19.63 4.48	3.62**
Psychological	10.702.78	7.16 2.37	4.28**
Social	26.502.97	21.543.23	5.46**
Environmental	20.36-4.66	17.233.57	4.70**
Total Quality of Life	82.1014.39	65.5613.65	4.47**

The mean score of physical health of parents of normal children is 24.54 ± 3.98 and parents of Intellectual disabled children is 19.63 ± 4.48 . The significant difference is 3.62. The mean score of psychological well being of parents with normal children is 10.70 ± 2.78 and parents of Intellectual disabled children is 7.16 ± 2.37 and significant difference is 4.28. The mean score of social well being of parents of normal children is 26.50 ± 2.97 and mean score of parents of Intellectual disabled children is 21.54 ± 3.23 and T score is 5.46 which is very significant. The mean score of parents of normal children in environmental domain is 20.36 ± 4.66 and parents of intellectual disabled children are 17.23 ± 3.57 and significant difference is found to be 4.47.

There is overall significant difference in Quality of life among parents of normal and intellectual disabled children.

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