



A Study on the Attitude of Siblings Towards Their Mentally Retarded Brother/Sister

KEYWORDS

Mental retardation, sibling attitudes, emotional risk, Emotional bonds.

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ABSTRACT

Family is the basic unit and every member of the family influence and affects every other member. When there is a mentally retarded child in the family the burden of the family increases. Even in families with typically developed children sibling rivalry is a matter to reckon with. The problem is multi fold with mentally retarded children. Hence the study attempted to study the attitude of their siblings among 60 respondents. The respondents are the siblings of MR children in day care centers in Coimbatore Corporation. But contrary to belief the siblings had positive attitude towards their MR children and they have responded positively towards the future of their relationship. It may be because of the age group being 5-9 or they are hiding their real emotions towards them.

INTRODUCTION

Biologically, a child is generally a human between the stages of birth and puberty. Some vernacular definitions of a child include the fetus, as being an unborn child. The legal definition of "child" generally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a person younger than the age of majority. "Child" may also describe a relationship with a parent or authority figure, or signify group membership in a clan, tribe, or religion; it can also signify being strongly affected by a specific time, place, or circumstance, as in "a child of nature" or "a child of the Sixties."

Siblings

Siblings are people who share at least one parent. A male sibling is called a brother; and a female sibling is called a sister. In most societies throughout the world, siblings usually grow up together and spend a good deal of their childhood socializing with one another. This genetic and physical closeness may be marked by the development of strong emotional bonds such as love or hostility. The emotional bond between siblings is often complicated and is influenced by factors such as parental treatment, birth order, personality, and personal experiences outside the family.

Types of siblings:

Full sibling

A "full sibling" (full brother or full sister) is a sibling with whom an individual shares the same biological parents.

Half sibling

A half sibling that shares the same mother (but different fathers) is known as a "uterine" sibling, whereas one that shares the same father, (but different mothers) is known as an "agnate" sibling. In law, the term consanguine is used in place of agnate. In addition, first cousins who between them have a set of parents who are identical twins, while technically not siblings, are genetically equivalent to half siblings. Half siblings can have a wide variety of interpersonal relationships, from a bond as close as any full siblings, to total strangers. Other terms for half siblings would be as follows.

- * A child that has the same father but different mother is a paternal half-brother/sister.
- * A child that has the same mother but different father is a maternal half-brother/sister.

3/4 sibling

"3/4 siblings" are siblings who share one parent and whose other two parents are full siblings. A similar situation arises when a man or a woman has children with two half-siblings.

3/4 siblings share more DNA than half siblings, but less than full siblings. For example, if a man has a child with a woman and then fathers a child with her sister, the children will be 3/4 siblings. This term is more commonly used in animal breeding.

Milk sibling

Milk brothers or sisters are children breastfed by a woman other than their biological mother, a practice known as wet nursing and once widespread in the developed world, as it still is in parts of the developing world.

God siblings

A "god sibling" (god brother or god sister) is determined when two or more children share the same godparent. They are siblings in the eyes of God since they share the same godparents. There is a common misconception that the blood children of a godparent are god siblings of those who were baptized by their parents.

Foster siblings

"Foster siblings" are children who are raised in the same foster home, or are also foster Children of the person's parents or foster parents' biological children.

Attitude of sibling towards mentally retarded

Sibling rivalry is not uncommon, but having a sibling with special needs can be challenging. Siblings of differently able children may grapple with feelings of hurt, rejection and embarrassment. Severe retardation in a child surely has an effect on all family members. Studies of nondisabled siblings in these families have indicated both emotional risks and perceived benefits. Little is known about how out-of-home placement of the child with retardation affects the siblings. Adolescent siblings of children with retardation living at home (N = 25) or in residential placement (N = 20) were contrasted with siblings of children without retardation (N = 28), on measures obtained from their mothers and themselves. Despite their different situations, these siblings were highly similar on measures of psychological adjustment, self-esteem, and family environment.

Early diagnosis of psychiatric disorders in children with intellectual disabilities leads to early treatment. Medications can be helpful as one part of overall treatment and management of children with intellectual disabilities. Periodic consultation with a child and adolescent psychiatrist may help the family in setting appropriate expectations, limits, opportunities to succeed, and other measures which will help their child with intellectual disabilities handle the stresses of growing up.

Sibling relationships, however, were less intense, with less warmth but also lower conflict, in families where the child lived out of the home. Most siblings of children with retardation reported positive personal growth experiences while also expressing realistic concerns about the future. Siblings of children with retardation had beliefs and attitudes about placement that were highly consistent with the child's current living situation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of Literature helps the researcher to understand the research problem, to decide on the variables and to avoid duplication of the research done already. Following are the researches reviewed for the present study

In the study on "Longitudinal Relationships between Sibling Behavioral Adjustment and Behavior Problems of Children with Developmental Disabilities"(1984), conducted by Richard. Behavioral adjustment of the siblings and their brother or sister with developmental disability was assessed. Comparisons of adjustment for siblings of children with autism, Down syndrome, and mixed etiology mental retardation failed to identify group differences. Regression analysis showed that the behavior problems of the child with developmental disability at Time 1, but not the change in their behavior over time, predicted sibling adjustment over 2 years. There was no evidence that this putative temporal relationship operated bidirectional: sibling adjustment did not appear to be related to the behavior problems of the children with developmental disabilities over time.

In the study named "Mentally retarded children and their older same-sex siblings: Naturalistic in-home observations"(1987); Stoneman, et al studied children and siblings. Older siblings accommodated the presence of MR children through their selection of activities. Interactions between MR children and siblings were characterized by accentuated role asymmetries and less joint object play. Gender differences in sibling roles, parent-child relationships are noted.

Bishop et al (2008) conducted a study on "predictors of perceived negative impacting in sibling attitudes of mentally retarded children". Parent of 60 sibling retarding children were interviewed with child and adolescence. Impact assessment when their children approximately 9 years old. Regression analysis revealed that African American parent of children reported. Lower level of perceived impact of have a child with mentally retarded then Caucasian.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The relationships between home environment, family adjustment and the social competency of mentally retarded and other children are interwoven to each other. The home environmental variables included parental behavior and attitude, psychosocial climate, and demographic and structural characteristics of the families. The measures of family adjustment included the mentally retarded child's impact on the family and the family's capacity to cope with mental retardation. The child characteristics were described in terms of adaptive and maladaptive behavior, psychological and social adjustment, and self-concept measures.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the social demographic factors of the respondents
- To understand the aspects determining attitude of respondents mentally retarded brother/sister
- To analyze the attitude of siblings towards mentally retarded brother/sister
- To find the impact of socio demographic variables on attitude of siblings

Methodology

The researcher adopted the descriptive design for describing the objective of the study.

Researcher used Interview schedule as tool of data collection. The schedule consists of two parts:

- Personal profile of the respondents
- Questionnaire on Siblings attitude towards mentally retarded children.

The personal profile consist of questions related to age, gender, educational qualification, marital status, occupation, monthly income, relationship, type of family and number of person in the family, birth order of diseased brother/sister. The Siblings attitude towards mentally retarded was determined using 39 questions. It is a 2 point scale schedule with Yes/No choices.

Universe of the study contain mentally retarded children in four homes for mentally retarded in 10 km radius of Coimbatore Corporation. The researcher selected 60 siblings from 182 children at homes. The researcher adopted convenient sampling.

Inclusion Criteria

- MR children at days care centers of Coimbatore city corporation limits
- MR children having siblings

Exclusion criteria

- MR children without siblings
- MR children staying in boarding's and residential homes

FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- It can be inferred from this study the majority of the respondents belong to 11-15 years.
- The present study revealed that majority respondents are male.
- In this study more than half of the respondents belong to rural area.
- It can be inferred from this study that majority of respondents brother/sister belong to the age group of 5-9 years,
- In the study more than half of the respondents brother/sister is younger brother.
- The present study shows that majority half of the (50%) respondent's brother/sister in the family.
- The present study showed that majority of (40%) respondents brother/sister has 2 sibling.
- The present study says that majority of respondents family income level is 5000-10000.

FINDINGS RELATED TO ATTITUDE OF SIBLINGS TOWARDS THEIR MENTALLY RETARDED BROTHER/ SISTER.

- The present study revealed that most of the respondents do not have same problem in their family.
- The most half of the respondents to get on very well with their brother/sister.
- It can be inferred from this study that most of their brother/sister respect them.
- It can be stated from this study that majority of the respondents trust their mentally retarded brother/sister.
- In the study ,majority of respondents love their MR sibling
- It is indicated from the study majority of the respondents do not hate their brother/sister.
- It can be inferred from the study most of the respondents feel that their brother/sister like to have them around.
- It is clear from this study that most of respondents really like their brother/sister
- It is revealed from this study, that majority of respondent don't feel to have different brother/sister.
- These studies revealed that majority of respondents think that they are important to their brother /sister.
- The study shows that majority of respondents feel that there brother/sister is a source of pleasure.
- The project says that, majority of respondents feel that their brother/sister should not die.
- The project study shows that, the majority of respondents feel that their brother/sister should follow their ideas and opinion.
- It is clear from this study; most of respondent says that enjoyed being with their brother/sister.

- The present study show that, majority of respondents feel that their brother/sister neglected from the society due to mental condition
- The project study says that majority of respondents feel that their brother/sister condition will be cured.
- It can be inferred from the study that 53% of respondents have healthy of sibling attitude towards mentally retarded children's, 47% respondent's unhealthy sibling's attitude.

CONCLUSION

This study clearly shed light up on the sibling's attitudes towards their mentally retarded brother/sisters. From this study it's revealed that a lot of respondents have negative attitude towards their siblings. This study stresses the need of educating youths and adolescents in this field to develop a positive attitude.

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