



An Intellectual Impairment In A Nutshell – Descriptive Study

KEYWORDS

Intellectually impaired children, Parents, Psychosocial problems

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ABSTRACT

Background: Learning starts from cradle and ends in tomb. Intellectual impairment is an umbrella term, which encompasses arrange of learning problems, characterized by academic underachievement in reading, writing expressions, mathematics or overall intellectual ability of the child. To adopt learning skills special measures have to be taken. When disorder leads to disability or impairment in children the psychological reactions in parents like grief, depression, anxieties, panic attacks etc. occurs. In social conditions withdrawal, stigma, isolation, loss of networking and lack of social support etc emerges. Aim: The aim of the study to know the psychosocial problems of parents with learning impairment children in a special school. Methodology: In a descriptive study involving 50 parents of learning impairment children through simple random sampling. Researcher had done his investigation in a special school at Chennai. The pilot study was conduct to check the flexibility of the study. A semi-structured interview schedule was compiled. Pre-test was done with 10 respondents to check the relevance of interview schedule. Results: The result of the careful investigation leads to 84% had psychological support and 16% were not supported. 36% feel that their child is neglected from society and 64% doesn't feel such experience. 88% experience stress in managing child and work and 12% do not experience. 28% able to concentrate on job and 79% doesn't able to contrite on work, 34% experience conflict in families due to child and 66% doesn't undergo conflict, 62% prone get angry and beat the child and 38% were not prone to anger and banging their child, 54% enjoy in social gathering and 46% doesn't enjoy due to their children problem. 64% have inferior feeling and 36% do not have such feeling, 90% discriminate for going to Special school and 10% does not discriminate, 70% experience self-exclusion when spoken about their child in the society, 75% had no social support and 25% had social support and 88% did not face any avoidance from the mainstream society

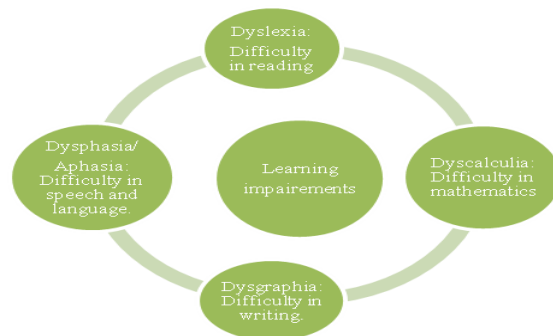
Introduction:

Learning impairment is an umbrella term, which encompasses a broad sense of leaning problems. Learning starts from cradle ends in the tomb so the child must be equipped successfully to accustom and adopt with learning skills. So efficient study habits enables them to over ineffective learning, when learning cannot be achieved projects as learning impairment. According to DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association 1994) Learning Disorder are investigated through standardised test individually when the reading, mathematics or written expression is substantially below the expected for age, schooling, and level of intelligence¹.

Cognitive domain is vital for learning. Learning is inculcated through motivation. The components of motivation are activation, persistent and intensity². According to Robert.L.Salo [2001] cognitive domains includes:-Cognitive neuroscience, Perception, Patterns recognition, Attention, Consciousness, Memory, Representation of Knowledge, Imagery, Language, Developmental psychology, Thinking-Concept formation, Human & Artificial intelligence³. According to Job kuruvilla (2012) established a creative learning process model which includes learning by Analogies, Dichotomy, Relationship, Application, Exploration, Symmetry, Bionics, insight, Scepticism, Corrective learning, Modelling & Stimulation, Learning through Experiment, Diagnostic Learning and Parallel or Comparative learning⁴.

According to Dash (2005) the characteristics of intellectual impaired children low level ability, activity, attention; motor problems, visual perceptual, auditory, perceptual language, social, emotional, behavioural, orientation problems; unorganised work habits and academic impairment. Learning

problems significantly mediate with academic achievement or activities of daily living⁵.



PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS OF PARENTS OF LEARNING DISABILITY

Doeg et al (2011) investigated on resilience, cohesion and stress in families of children with intellectual disabilities expressed through structural equation modelling to examine relationship measures of family functioning and children's competencies on one side and on the other parental stress. The outcome of the investigation showed in the mothers that FSOC score and the level of children's competencies was significant predictor of stress. In the case of fathers, family functioning was predictor of stress than family cohesion. Thus study envisages that the significance of family related variables in the adoption to living with child with an intellectual impairment⁶

Sheena grant et al (2013) Studied on parental social support, coping strategies, resilience factor, stress, anxiety and depression level in parents of children with MPS III [San filippo syndrome] reveals that Mucopolysaccharidosis type III is a degenerative disorder where manifestation of disorder can be noticed in children's intellectual and physical functioning. The study has been conducted with 23 parents of children with MPS III and with learning impairment. It was found that behavioural problems increases as the age increases, more severe intellectual disability and MPS III were same in terms of perceived social support. Anxiety and depression scores were high in both category parents but the MPS III rated themselves as less future oriented and goal oriented than parents of Intellectual impairment children⁷.

Richard Hastings (2004) Evidence based research reveals that standardised service models help in decline of parental stress eg respite care, case management. The firm evidence base is in administering cognitivebehaviour group models and parent-led support network⁸.

Dilek Kilic (2013) Studied on Psycho-social problems and marital adjustments of families caring for a child with intellectual impairment. Group 1 were 150 parents attending special education and rehabilitation; Group 2 had 140 parents who registered their children in Handicapped Education and Cooperation Association without special education without rehabilitation and Group 3 had parents of healthy children. Most of the parents in Group 1 and 2 reported that they had psychological, physical and economic problems and they had concern about their children care and future. Parents in Group 2 had higher depression and anxiety and low social support scores than Group 1 and 3, Anxiety and depression levels in parents increases as marital adjustment decreases⁹.

Learning impairment check list for parents and teachers

- Has problem in identifying time. Hard to remember days, months, seasons and mathematical tables.
- Very hard to organise work and accomplish it (Late assignment submission).
- Looks dull and slow in response
- Unable and difficulty in recall and ask for repetition of content.
- Unable to listen and understand concepts
- Fluctuation in performance.
- Susceptible for distraction even for slight interruption.
- Confuses between right and left
- Can't sit still but get excited.
- When reading misses or read twice.
- Difficulty to synthesising word (c/a/t but not cat or pronounce it as caught).
- Guesses the word and tell by not coming about meaning (bun for burn, turn for tone)
- Read back words (pot for top)
- Place letters in wrong order (act for cat)
- Shortens words (beautiful as beautify)
- Misreads words (held for head, nun for mone)
- Has difficulty in recollecting words and form sentences
- Misreads numbers (16 as 19, 80 as 30)
- Mirror writes. (ram for mar)
- Reverse the letter (m for w, bas d)
- Mirror write numbers (19 as 16)
- Omits letters (rent as rnt)
- Adds letters (often for oftten)
- Difficulty to write while dictation
- Cannot recollect alphabets for appropriate word
- Difficulty in one or more combination of subject (maths and chemistry)⁵

Significance of the study

Learning impairment is a neurological illness which has spread its root among children with below or above average children even with normal intelligence. It is impairment where children can unfast in a race in an opposite direction. This disability withdraws ability of children in academic performance, which creates loads of disturbance in the developmental period. On the other hand the failure of these children provokes loads of psychological problems, psychosomatic and social incompetence. According to Eleanor Whitehead suggests that parent of intellectually impaired child may undergo denial, blame, fear, envy, bargaining, anger, guilt, isolation, flight, this does not in sequence or skip before accepting the child¹⁰. As the researcher was interested to investigate and knowing about the psychosocial problems faced by parents of learning impaired children and suggest strategies to mediate through rehabilitation social worker to emancipate the family system from crisis.

Methodology

The main aim of the study is to carefully investigate the psychosocial problems of parents in a Special school at Chennai. The Objectives of the study are to know the socio-demographic details, psychological domain and social domain in order to suggest holistic management of intellectually impaired with the vision of rehabilitation social work perspective. The researcher used descriptive study to explain the facts. The universe was 150 respondents collected from a special school in Chennai. The sample size for the study was 50 respondents. The researcher used semi-structured interview schedule to collect the data from the respondents through random sampling- lottery method¹¹. Limitations of the study are, study had been conducted with a small sample in an institution which cannot be generalised to large population and the time was also a constrain. An ethical implication of this study is to administer informed concern to the respondents. From which each table was interpreted and analysed. After the data collection the data was coded and transferred into a master chart. From the master coding sheet it was transferred into the form of table. Scope of the study is to serve as an indigenous study in the light of Rehabilitation social work, to serve as document source for policy makers to promote welfare measures for child with intellectual impairment, to inspire Rehabilitation social workers to plan effective intervention in general and Psycho-social rehabilitation programmes in specific. Referred to the management for parent's intervention.

FINDINGS

Based on demographic details:

- ✱ The distribution of on basis of sex was 58% male and 42% female.
- ✱ On basis of age was 21-30 22%, 31-40 62% and 41-50 16%.
- ✱ On basis of religion were Hindus 72%, Muslims 18% and Christians 10%.
- ✱ On basis of residing place were Rural 6%, Urban were 86% and Semi-Urban 8%.
- ✱ On basis educational qualification were up to 10th Std 4%, up to 12th Std 20%, Diploma 12% and Degree 64%.
- ✱ On the basis of occupation were Agriculture 10%, Government 14%, Private 36%, Business 26% and No occupation.
- ✱ On basis of monthly income were 1-8000 70%, 8001-13000 22%, 13001 & above 8%.
- ✱ On basis of type of family were 72% had nuclear, 24% joint and 4% were from extended families.
- ✱ On basis of Marriage were 76% arranged, 12% love, 8% had love cum arranged and 4% consanguineous.

- ❖ On basis of age of learning impairment noticed 0-5years 16%, 6-10years 66% and 11-15years 18%.

Based on Psychological domain:

- * 84% had psychological support and 16% were not supported.
- * 36% feel that their child is neglected from society and 64% doesn't feel such experience.
- * 88% experience stress in managing child and work and 12% do not experience.
- * 28% able to concentrate on job and 79% doesn't able to contrite on work
- * 34% experience conflict in families due to child and 66% doesn't undergo conflict.
- * 62% prone get angry and beat the child and 38% were not prone to anger and banging their child

Based on Social domain:

- 54% enjoy in social gathering and 46% doesn't enjoy due to their children problem.
- 64% have inferior feeling and 36% do not have such feeling
- 90% discriminate for going to Special school and 10% does not discriminate.
- 70% experience self-exclusion when spoken about their child in the society.
- 75% had no social support and 25% had social support
- 88% did not face any avoidance from the mainstream society,

Role of Rehabilitation Social Work:-

With reference to child:

- ❖ Initially Screen the child for learning disability on the basis ICD10
- ❖ Refer for IQ test
- ❖ Develop cognitive training which has to involve in cognitive
- ❖ More involve in visual memory and visual reception training
- ❖ Turn the child for listening skills and discrimination learning.
- ❖ Improving auditory discrimination and awareness along with auditory memory and sequencing training
- ❖ Psychosocial counselling and psychotherapy
- ❖ Referral [eg Open school system]
- ❖ Placement in special, inclusive or integrated schools
- ❖ Placement in community colleges and job placements services can be done
- ❖ Involve in community coaching services.

With reference to parents of intellectually impaired child

- Parenting skills for the difficult circumstance child-Intellectually impaired child
- Parental counselling and psychotherapy.
- Psycho-education
- Short term or crash courses for parents.
- Graded guidance in academics but do not overload the child
- Attend parent teacher association meetings regularly.
- Form support groups and social networks.

Conclusion

As the saying goes like "you will never loose what you have given" so give best to the child and mould the child in the way it has to be, then we can reap the fruits of success. Great personality had these impairments; they had overcome it and proved their success. Learning impairment is manageable through early identification and intervention according to each child, because each child is unique

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