

## A Study on Psychological Well Being among the Parents of Children with Intellectual Disabilities

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### ABSTRACT

*Children with intellectual disabilities have intellectual functioning below average, inadequate self-care behaviors, socializing, communication, adaptive skills, participation and family support is needed to enhance the independence of the child so that the capability increased and decreased the family burden. Various therapists can be treated to increase the capability of families including family psyche-education therapy. The study investigated the level of psychological well being among the parents of children with intellectual disabilities; Descriptive research design was used for the present study.*

**Method:** *Data was collected from 20 parents of children with IDD. Ryff's Psychological wellbeing scale (1989) was used to assess the psychological well being which has a multidimensional view on autonomy, Environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with others, purpose in life and self – acceptance.*

**Result:** *The results showed a decrease of the burden and increased the capability of a family in caring for children with intellectual disability after psycho-education therapy. Psycho-education therapy is a therapy that can be implemented for a family with psychosocial disorders where exchanged information on mental health care due to the illness suffered, help family members to understand about the disease. In this study the results shows that more than half of the respondents are having low level of psychological wellbeing.*

**Discussion:** *In this paper, the findings convey that more than half of the parents do not have good mental health due to their multiple responsibilities. To improve their psychological well being the parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities should undergo therapy such as psychotherapy, relaxation and stress management techniques should be given to the family members of the children with intellectual disabilities.*

**Keywords:** *Psychological Well-being, Intellectual Disability, Parents of children with intellectual disabilities.*

### I. INTRODUCTION:

The term Mental Retardation is changed as Intellectual disability (ID). It is characterized by below-average intelligence or mental ability and a lack of skills necessary for day-to-day living. People with intellectual disabilities can and do learn new skills, but they learn them more slowly. There are varying degrees of intellectual disability, from mild to profound. (Source: Web MD) Internationally, the definition of mental retardation has moved away from medical model to that of an educational model which is functional and support based and emphasizes the rights of the individual.

Definition: According to the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, enacted in India, mental retardation means a "condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind of a person which is specially characterized by sub-normality of intelligence" Field workers, parents and professionals in India opine that this definition has scope for improvement. With the WHO definition, which is in use in Britain, and that of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995 in India, the AAMD definition (1983) is more prevalent among the service providers and the institutions, the usage being more of academic interest than for operational reasons. (Ref. <http://www.rehabcouncil.nic.in/writereaddata/mr.pdf>)

Children with intellectual disability need special attention and care of the family. Lumbantobing (2011), said

Intellectual Disability (ID) is a state of mental development incompleteness and stalled. Carson (2000), Intellectual disability is inadequate self-care behaviors, socializing, communication and other adaptive skills. Videback (2007), children with intellectual disability have intellectual functioning below the average for the area accompanied by limitations in adaptive functioning.

The parents and care givers of children with intellectual disability have stressful life. Feelings of avoidance are common, but seldom long fast. Frequently the diagnosis of intellectual disability is not made until after the first year of life, and the parents then have to make great changes in their hopes and expectations for the child. They often experiences prolonged depression, anger, guilt and inability to cope with psychological well being. People have many dreams for their children. Verbalization of these expectations does not occur, but deep down they remain. When the diagnosis of intellectual disability is given, their images of their child's potentials vaporize. They start imagining that the hopes they once vision will be impossible . Intellectual disability affecting family life is a question an individual wonder! That is a valid point of concern. It is effortful for parents to process the news that their ward has intellectual disability, and they begin to understand that their lives are bound to be entirely different than what they had anticipated it to be and the news is overwhelming. When there is a child in the condition of intellectual disability social activities become a bother.

There are plenty of studies related to the problems of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. But there are very few studies that touched the well being of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Generally parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are having plenty of problems in their life in physical, psychological and social, compared to the parents of normal children. Parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are facing lots of negative emotions like stress, anxiety, depression and they also have more fear about their future and their child's future which will have adverse effect on the wellbeing. In spite of that some parents accept the reality and tend to lead a positive life it developing their coping skills and self esteem, it also develops confidence to help their child considering their future. Based on Indian Census 2011 there are more than 15lacks of the children who suffer from intellectual disability. Intellectual and developmental Disability (IDD) is a developmental disability which has no cure for it. Generally intellectually disabled children are neglected and isolated from the mainstream of society. According to (Hayman, 1990, p.8) defined that in general "psychological well being is a mental condition characterized by pleasant feelings of good health, exhilaration, high self-esteem and confidence, and it often associated with regular physical activity". This study may be a motivations to the parents those who have the special child to have a positive outlook and provide better care and support to their children. This study helps the parents to build a positive attitude in the minds of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities it may reduce the fear about the future of the child.

#### **Steps to help the intellectually disabled child include:**

1. Learn everything about intellectual disabilities.
  2. Encourage the child's independence.
  3. Let the child try new things and encourage the child to do things by himself or herself.
  4. Provide guidance when it's needed and give positive feedback when the child does something well or masters something new.
  5. Get the child involved in group activities. Taking an art class or participating in Scouts will help the child build social skills.
  6. Stay involved. By keeping in touch with the child's teachers, the parent will be able to follow the child's progress and reinforce what the child is learning at school through practice at home.
6. Get to know other parents of intellectually disabled children. They can be a great source of advice and emotional support. (WebMD Medical Reference

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

**David E Gray, William J Holder (July 2009)** this paper reports the results of a study of psycho-social well-being among an Australian sample of parents of children with autism. A variety of independent variables including: socio demographic information, health and treatment status of the child and coping behaviours were assessed in terms of their effects on parental depression, anxiety and anger. The results of regression analysis indicated that fathers, and those parents who received more social support, had lower scores of depression, anxiety and anger. The age of symptom onset was positively related to depression, but was not significant in terms of anxiety and anger. Parents with older children, females and larger families reported lower scores of anger. These independent variables were not significantly related to depression or anxiety. Neither the type nor the extent of coping behaviours was significantly related to any of the measures of psycho-social well-being used in this study.

**Jane M Urray Cram, Anna P Nieboer (June 2011)** Parental stress has been identified as a major affecter of caregivers' psychological well-being and a risk increaser for unwillingly placing children with disabilities in the care of others. Recognition of effective means to ease care giving burdens must guide policymaking and will help to provide better and tailored support and intervention for the children. This study aims to characterize caregivers of children with intellectual disabilities who are about to seek outside support and care and to identify the conditions under which psychological well-being and parental stress are affected using parental stress as a mediating factor. We found that parental stress and the child's depressive feelings strongly affected psychological well-being. We also found an indirect relation of restricted caregiver social activities through parental stress. To protect psychological well-being of caregivers, support services should address depressive feelings among children with intellectual disabilities, facilitate caregivers' social activity, and reduce stress.

**Mohammadreza Bayat et al. (2011)** compared the psychological problems between parents of intellectually disabled children and parents of normal children. 100 Parents with intellectually disabled children were selected and compared with 100 having normal children studying in inclusive school and also in special schools of second to fifth standard. Selected 50 mothers and 50 fathers of intellectually disabled children. The psychological problems in parents of intellectually disabled children was compared. The study has stated that "parents with intellectual disabilities children experienced more psychological problems as compared with those having normal children and their difference as regards hostility, Anxiety, obsessive compulsive, interpersonal senility, psychotics, the study reveals that there have been difference existed between mothers and fathers with intellectual disabilities. Mother tolerated and suppressed in their mind anxiety, stress, and psychological problems than that of fathers.[6] parental age is another factor for copying stress and anxiety. Depression of mother is more than others especially caregivers and fathers it focuses sufficient interactions of mother and children, it always cheerful and language development.

In another study which was about "psychological well-being of care givers of children with intellectual disabilities: using parental e stress as mediating factor" conducted by **J.M.Cramm and A.P.Nieboer (2011)** examined the effect of parental stress. Parental stress has been identified as major factor of caregiver's psychological well-being. Lack of relaxation and other social activities increase parent stress, study expresses that parents and care givers of intellectually disabled children neglected their own chronic conditions in favour of disabled kids. Parents with higher education and better financial support reported less behaviour problems in their children feel less burdened by their services and have better mental health outcomes than less educated parents. They focus to characterise caregivers of children with intellectual disabilities who are always need outsource support and care, also identify what are the conditions under which psychological well-being and parental stress are affected in caring of their children. The study expresses that the parental stress and the child depressive feelings strongly affected psychological well-being. The results indicated that The children's fearful or depressive feelings and pain level were significantly related to caregivers of psychological well-being, significant relations were also found with caregivers education level and restriction in social activities due to care giving tasks.

**Narmin Boromand, Mohammad Narimani (February 2014)** *In this study the researcher wants to Comparing the psychological well being factors among the parents of the mentally retarded children with those of the normal children* the descriptive research is comparative - causative. The statistical population of the present research includes all the parents of the mentally retarded and normal children whose children were studying in the mentally retarded and normal schools in Maha bad in the educational year of 2012-2013. For the study the researcher used the multistage random sampling to collect the data and the Ryff psychological well being questionnaire was used. To analyze data, The results shows that There is a significant difference between the parents of the normal children and those of the mentally retarded children with regards to the psychological well being factors (positive relationship with the others, mastering the environment, self acceptance factors, independence, having purpose in life, and personal development).

**Irum Hayat, MahwishZafar (July 2015)** This study investigated the relationship between coping strategies and psychological well-being among parents with Down syndrome children. The sample comprised of 120 parents (60 fathers, 60 mothers of diagnosed 60 children with Down syndrome) the data was collected through purposive sampling. The study was an exploratory study and used co-relational research design. The study planned to investigate all possible relationships among variables and demographic variables. Results showed significant correlations between psychological well-being and coping strategies. Those parents who relied more on active avoidance coping, reported lower levels of psychological well-being as compared to those who relied on problem-focused coping strategies. Fathers scored significantly high on psychological well-being than mothers. Data analysis suggested significant differences in parental psychological well-being and coping strategies with the increasing age of the children. Gender differences were also explored which suggested that parents with girl-child had comparatively higher levels of psychological wellbeing than parents with boy-child.

**Hifsa Batool et al. (2018)** have been systematically analysed the attitude of parents towards Children with Intellectual Disability and that of normal children. The objective of the research was to investigate parental attitudes towards intellectual disable children. The analysis of data clearly explained parental feeling, attitude related to the gender, age and education of parents of these children. The findings of this current research are matched and agreed with many other researches Descriptive study has been conducted and data collected by using survey method from the sample of 200 parents of intellectually disabled children, out of 200 hundred parents were parents of normal children. Parental age group were 26 to 65 and children age group 6-15 yrs. The study concluded that “there is significant difference found in the parental attitude among parents of intellectually disabled children and parents which having normal children. There is no significant difference found in the parental attitude of fathers and mothers towards their intellectually disable children. There is no significant difference in the parental attitude towards intellectually disabled children on the basis of age of parents. There is significant difference in the parental attitude towards intellectually disable children on the basis of their education.”

### **III. MATERIALS AND METHODS :**

#### **Aim and Objectives of the study**

- 1 To study the level of psychological well being among the parents of children with **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**.
- 2 To suggest suitable measures to help the parents of **children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to have a healthy life**.

#### **Hypotheses**

1. There is a significant relationship between the age of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their level of psychological well being.
2. There is a significant difference among the occupation of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their level of psychological well being.
3. There is a significant difference between the family types of the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their level of psychological well being.

### **IV.METHOD AND MATERIALS :**

The Universe of the present descriptive study includes all the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who enrolled in anyof the school under Block ResourceCentre. Data was collected from all the 20 parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. A self-prepared interview schedule was used to collect the socio – demographic characteristics of the respondents. And the Ryff's Psychological well-being scale (1989) was used to know the level of psychological well being among the sample. This scale has a multidimensional view on autonomy, Environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with others, purpose in life and self - acceptance has been adopted.

### **V. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY :**

#### **Findings related to socio demography details**

The studies revealed that majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 25– 50 years. More than half of the respondent's educational qualification was up to high school. Nearly half of the respondents were daily wagers. Vast majority of the respondents reside in rural area. Majority of the respondents are from nuclear family type. Majority of the respondent's children are male. Characteristics of parents of children with intellectual disability are composed of four sub-variables: age, education, household income and family type. Characteristics of the parents in the form of numerical data are age, calculated by the central tendency .The average age of parents who have children with mental retardation was 38 years old . The age of the youngest is 25 years old, and the

oldest is 50 years old. More than half of the parents have a low education level with the majority of family incomes is below average while most of the family type is nuclear.

#### **Findings related to psychological well being**

More than half (60) of the respondents have low level of psychological well being and remaining (40) of the respondents are having high level of psychological well being. Out of 20 respondents it is 12 and 8 respectively.

#### **Findings related to the Dimension:**

Based on the findings related to the dimensions nearly half of the parents of children with IDD's are having low level of positive relation with others, and more than half of the respondents are having low level of self acceptance. At the same time about the autonomy and personal growth there are more than half of the parents are having high level of autonomy and personal growth. Next to that based on the Environment there are more than half of the respondents are having low level of environmental mastery, regarding purpose in life majority of the parents are having low level of purpose in their life. On the whole of positive and negative emotions this parents of children with IDD's having more than half of the parents having low level of psychological well being and nearly half having high level of psychological well being. There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their level of psychological well being. The finding reveals that most of the parents face psychological problems irrespective of age with regard to their children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

There is a significant difference between the occupation of the respondents and their level of psychological well being. Out of 20 respondents three of them are government job, five business, three of them coolie and nine out of twenty are farmers. There is no significant difference between the family type of the respondents and their level of psychological well being.

### **VI. SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION:**

Social Work intervention is essential to improve the psychological well being among the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Training programmes should be organized among the parents in order to enhance their coping skills. Psycho education should be given to the parents of children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to strengthen and overcome their psychological problems. Therapies such as psychotherapy, relaxation and stress management techniques should be given to the family members of intellectually disabled children and the referral services can also be done to the parents and the family members for managing their well being. Motivation should be given to the parents for continuous special training and rehabilitation for their children, and health counseling can be given to the parents to have a healthy life style.

### **VII. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION :**

#### **Suggestions to the parents of children with intellectually challenged children to improve their Psychological well being**

"You Should Take Care Of Yourself So You Can Take Care Of Him." *By Amanda Greene Kelly* Mar 21, 2012 this is the coward all the parents of children with intellectual and developmental disability have their mind and heart because of this they need to take care of them first then only they can take care of their children in all the aspect. The parents can have a good mental health by encouraging their child to do their work independently. For example, help the child to learn daily care skills, like dressing, feeding, and toilet training. By the support of special educators, we have to give the child frequent feedback in his /her development. And the parents also should praise the child when he or she does well. It helps the child to build their abilities. Then the parents should find out the skills which the child is learning at schools that will have to be applied at home also. For example, if the child gets the knowledge about money like counting the money and value of the money then parents should take their child to the supermarket and help the child to count out the groceries and count the change (National Dissemination Centre for Children with Disabilities, 2003). Once the children with *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* learn to manage their personal needs it will help the parents to reduce their responsibility in taking care of the child and it will also give them a hope that without their support the children can manage their life. It makes the parents to have a good psychological well being inspire of all their problems and makes the parent to view their life in a positive way.

Parental distress that affects psychological well-being, which needs to be further studied and correlated. It should be assess the psychosocial well-being of parents with intellectual disability children on mental health. Family burden and quality of life are important area of the psychosocial well-being. The field of intellectual Disability (ID) is strongly influenced by the subjective wellbeing of the parents. Most of the parents and primary caregivers reported not being able to pursue social, recreational or leisure interests, such as family excursions, relaxation therapies and recreation time with their partners, their other children or friends and burden of care.

Caregivers and parents also reported that when they are stressed, they can become easily irritated and frustrated. So, there is a need for further comprehensive study to explore their stress, and proper program should be applied to help them managing their stress. This argument is supported by more oriented interventions showing positive effect on parents with intellectually disabled children.

### **VIII.CONCLUSION:**

Based on this study, the findings conveys that most of the parents do not have good psychological well being due to their multiple responsibilities. To improve their psychological well being the parents of intellectually challenged children should undergo therapies such as psychotherapy, relaxation and stress management techniques. And it also applicable to the family members of the intellectually challenged children, referral services can also be given to parents and the family members to lead their life in positive way. Because referral service makes the parents to help their child in a better way. Based on the motivations and supports from the family members and the relatives are helps the parent to supports their child in a batter way and it also helps them to have a hope and confidence in their child's development through that this parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities help their child to have continues special training and rehabilitation. Proper counseling services are also helps the parent to lead their life in a positive way and it also helps them to have a good psychological well being. On a larger scale, quality of life can be viewed as including all aspects of community and social life that have a direct and quantifiable on the physical and mental health. These help to mitigate the development of poor mental wellbeing such as depression or anxiety. As a result, it's important to enroll, a family-centered approach, as well as schedules for psycho education and appropriate quality of life intervention for parents in conjunction with child care, is essential. In consultation with experts in the field, we have come to understand that no such studies have been conducted on this topic in India to date. Individual's judgment regarding the life satisfaction and level of positive and negative emotions is defined as subjective well-being.

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