



PERCEIVED STRESS AND ANXIETY AMONG PARENTS OF INTELLECTUAL DISABLED CHILDREN

¹ JARANI MAO, ² PROF. SUNNY JOSEPH Ph.D

¹ Research Scholar, ² Research Guide

Department of Education,
St. Joseph University, Chumoukedima, Nagaland.

¹Jaranimaho@gmail.com, ²kmsjlovesall@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Every child is an inimitable entity and special in their own unique way. This statement becomes intense in the milieu of the parents when it comes to their children. To any parent, their children are more than special comparing to any other children of the world. It is obvious for every parent to situate their anticipation from the child as soon as the new born child is welcome in the family. It is generally observed that parents seem to be wound up to have around about their child and his/her potentialities. But it is also a fact that all children are not bestowed with the same abilities or potentialities. There are some categories of children who are poles apart from the normal children and lack behind in their cognitive ability, being identified as Intellectually Disabled children. This category of children has been known with many other names like moron, imbecile, and idiot in the past.

This study has made a humble attempt in examining the level of stress and anxiety perceived by parents while taking care of Children with Intellectual Disability in Kohima District, Nagaland. Deductive approach has been used by the researcher for selection of samples (50 parents) with Intellectual Disabled children within Kohima only and data was collected using Questionnaire and interview method. Reporting of the finding was done in the form of both quantitative and qualitative technique. Quantitative like line, symbol graph and pie-chart were used along with qualitative elaboration of the given data for better and meaningful expression of the findings

Keywords: Stress, Anxiety, Parents, Intellectual Disabled Children.

INTRODUCTION

The term Disabilities refers to an impairment which impacts a person's activities and performances in life. Disabilities can be Intellectual, limitations, cognitive, improvement, sensory, exercise or the mixture of all these. An intellectual disability refers to a condition or state of mind related to the subnormal development of the mind or brain. The history of children with Intellectual Disability has always been a part and parcel of our existing society. This category of children has been known with many other names like moron, imbecile, and idiot in the past. Globally, the status of this group of individuals has said to be evolved through various stages like negligence, silent

treatment, considering them as curse for the past sins, pity etc. In a narrow perspective every society, state and country has different story to be told with regard to the history of this children.

The study had focus on evaluating the level of stress and anxiety of the parents associated with taking care of intellectual disabled children. Many studies on this area have been done in diverse forms in various places in and outside the country. However, very few are known in the area with regard to parental situation. As such this study covers the perceived stress and anxiety level bearing valuable findings for the benefit of intellectual disabled children and their parents.

Objectives:

- To assess the perceived level of stress and anxiety among parents of intellectually disabled children in their day to day life in Kohima District, Nagaland.
- To find the difference of perceived stress and anxiety among male and female parent.

Methodology: The researcher has selected 50 parents (male and female) of ID Children enrolled in inclusive schools of Kohima District, Nagaland. Descriptive research design was used to assess the stress and anxiety perceived by parents of intellectually disabled Children.

Tools used: The researcher had used Self-structured questionnaire as tools for data collection. The tool was personally administered by the researcher. The responses through the questionnaire were scaled on the five-point Likert scale consisting of 30 items.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data was analysed to facilitate answers of the formulated research objectives. Descriptive statistics was used in the form of frequencies, percentages, tables etc. The reports of the finding of the research piece are presented in the form of both quantitative and qualitative technique. Quantitative symbol graph and tables are used along with qualitative elaboration of the given data for better and meaningful expression of the findings

Sample of the Study

The sample of the study consists of 33 females 17 males representing the parent. In the absence of parents, a caretaker or caregiver was considered as a parent. The respondents were between the age group of 25-50 years of age.

Sl. No	Variables		No. of Respondents
1	Gender	Male	17
		Female	33
2	Economic status	Below Average	9
		Average	24
		Above Average	17
4	Age	Below 35 years	32
		Above 35 years	18

Table.1. Showing the total number of sample distribution in terms of gender, age and economic status

The total sample of the study consists of 50 parents having ID Children. Out of the total 17 were male and 33 were female. There were 9 respondents who have an economic status below average (annual income below one lakh), 24 were average with not less than 3 lakhs of annual income and 17 were above average with more than five lakhs of annual income. 32 total parents were below 35 years of age and 18 were above 35 years of age.

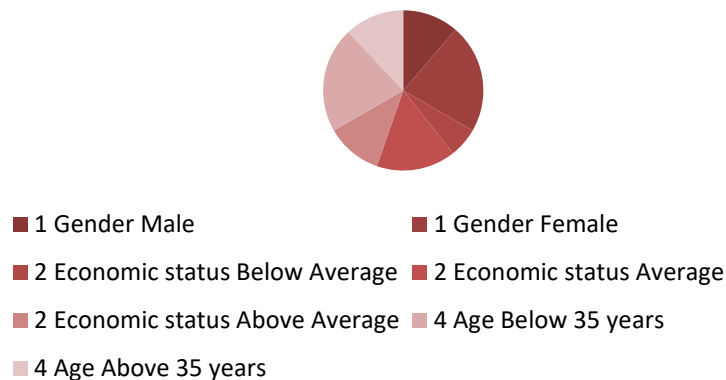


Fig.1. showing the percentage breakdowns of sample of the study in terms of age, gender and economic status.

The above figure shows that out of the total respondents, 34% represents male and 66% female. In terms of economic status, 18% were below average, 48% average and 34% above average. 64% of parents were below 35 years and 36% were above 35 years of age.

Objective 1: To assess the perceived level of stress and anxiety among parents of intellectually disabled children in their day to day life in Kohima District, Nagaland.

The study reveals that there exist stress and anxiety among parents having ID children. Their stress and anxiety is expressed very high in coping with the daily needs of such children in day to day life activities. Majority of the parents exhibits stress and anxiety in adjustment with their priorities in life while taking care of such children. Frustration and exhaustion among majority of parents were also prevalent.

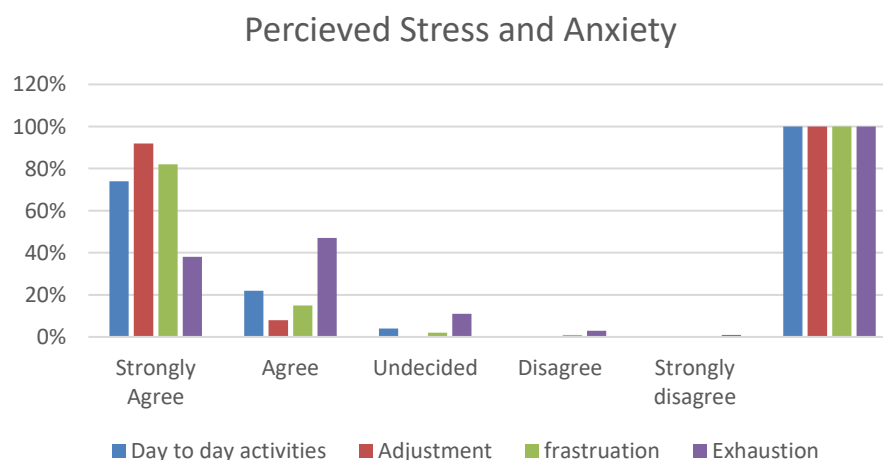


Fig.2.- Showing percentage breakdowns of the responses of the parents on perceived stress and anxiety on matters such as daily activities, adjustment, frustration and exhaustion.

The above analysis shows that the parents exhibits high level of stress and anxiety with a total percentage of 74% strongly agreeing and 22% agreeing to the presence of stress while taking care of ID Children in the day to day life

activities. In the level of making an adjustment, 92% of parents strongly agree to the fact that they have to make adjustments in their life having an ID Children. 82% of parents strongly agree that they do feel frustration while taking care of ID Children daily. While 47% of parents exhibits agree to the presence of feeling of exhaustion while dealing with such children.

Objective 2: To find the difference of perceived stress and anxiety among male and female parent.

The study reveals that overall, there exist significant differences in the perceived stress and anxiety among female and male. Female exhibits much higher stress and anxiety as compared to the perceived stress among male parent. The level of stress shows significant difference in day to day activities and adjustments. However, very few differences are seen in terms of frustration and exhaustion.

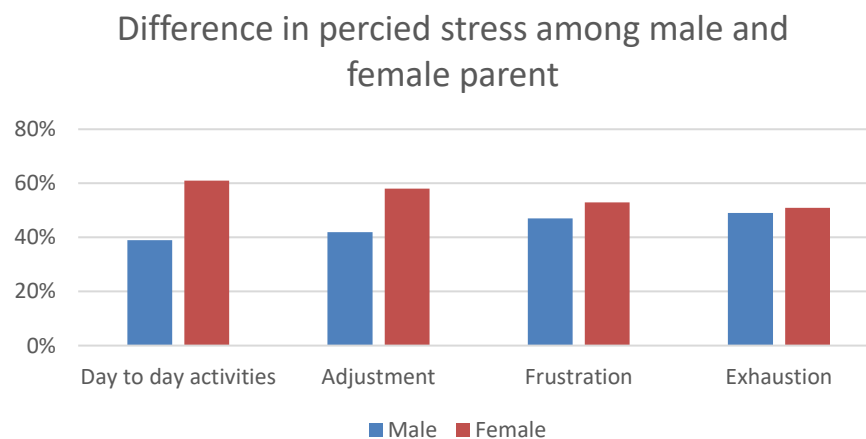


Fig.3.- Showing percentage breakdowns of differences in perceived stress and anxiety among male and female parent of ID Children.

The above figure shows that only 39% of male parent exhibits stress and 61% of female agree to have stress and anxiety in dealing with day to day life activities with ID Children. 58% of female exhibited stress and anxiety related to making an adjustment in their life while taking care of ID Children at home. 47% and 53% of male and female parents respectively shows stress and anxiety related to frustration. Further, the study also shows that 51% of female and 49% of male feels the exhaustion of taking care of ID Children in their daily life.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study shows that there exist stress and anxiety among parents of Intellectual Disabled Children despite their gender differences. The findings of the study shows that there exist differences in the perceived stress and anxiety among male and female parent which is substantiated by various other studies such as the similar study conducted by Chauhan.S.C. et.al (2016), Santhini.M.D.P (2019), Chandravanshi. G.et.al (2017) and Kaur. J. et.al. (2019).

Similar to the findings of the studies conducted by Kaur. J. et.al., (2019) and Majumdar. M, et.al., (2005), this study also reveals that there are various factor that determines the perceived stress and anxiety among parents of Intellectually Disabled Children. This study reveals that the age among the parents and economic status of the parents has an adverse effect on determining the perceived stress. Parents who are above 35 years of age are more stable as per their years of experience with the ID child compared to parents who are of younger age. Further, the

study also reveals that the stress and anxiety is high among parents with less income as compared to parents belonging to average and above average of income annually.

Hence, the results yield from this study is based on only one district as such further researcher may take up by including more districts of the region to yield better scope under the topic. It can also be extended with other aspects of investigation such as stress and anxiety related to economic status, gender of the child, age of the child, locality and educational qualification of the parent.

Basing on the findings of this study, it is suggested that there is an urgent need of identifying more areas related to the stress, anxiety and depression level among parents taking care of children with intellectual disability. There should be a proper provision and guidelines for managing stress and anxiety among parents focusing more on female parents so as to make them capable of coping with it in their day to day life. The same is required to be sensitized among all parents including those who do not have ID Children and other family members to render support to those parents in stress and depression. Such task and responsibility should be shouldered together by all people from all walks of life. A shared responsibility will make this world a better place for all to live with proper sense of equality and justice.

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