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Depression and anxiety among the parents of mentally disabled children in Ranchi district

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Abstract

The study was designed to investigate the impact of children's mental disability on parents' depression and anxiety for this purpose a purposive sampling method was used and a total of 50 parents from Ranchi district were selected between the age group of 35 to 55. The objective of this article is to know the impact of children's disability on parents' mental health. Sinha anxiety scale and Beck depression inventory were administered the result shows that parents of mentally disabled children have a high depression and high anxiety.

Keywords: Intellectually disabled children, depression, anxiety, mental health

Introduction

Mental retardation: Mental retardation is a generalized disorder in a child's developmental age characterised by significantly impaired cognitive functioning and a deficit in two or more adaptive behaviours like communication, self-help, and interpersonal skills. The limitation becomes apparent between the ages of 18. Main symptoms include delays in oral development, deficits in cognitive skills, and difficulty learning social and adaptive skills. Currently, there is no cure for an established disability, though with appropriate support and training, they can learn simple skills

Depression: Depression is a serious medical condition in which a person feels very sad, hopeless and unimportant and often is unable to live in a normal way. It disturbs a person's thoughts, performance, feelings and sense of happiness. Depression is defined as a prolonged feeling of helplessness, hopelessness and sadness a condition of mental disturbance, typically with a lack of energy and difficulties in maintaining concentration or interest in life

The most common symptoms are as follows-

- Feeling of hopelessness and helplessness
- Being vulnerable and over-sensitive
- Loss of energy and motivation
- Feeling guilty and ideation of suicide

Anxiety: Anxiety is a subjective feeling of fear and uneasiness about an unknown threat or internal conflict. Anxiety is actually the body's natural response to stress that causes increased alertness and physical signs. These feeling of anxiety and stress interfere with daily activities and difficult to control anxiety is out of proportion to the actual danger. The common symptoms include

- Feeling of restlessness and nervousness
- increased heart rate
- feeling weak and tired
- trouble concentrating or thinking about anything other than the present worry
- Disturbed sleep and sweating.

Every parent wishes to have physically and mentally healthy and normal child in their life but sometimes it is not possible for many parents because some parents have children with mental disability and illness.

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The parents of such children are also affected to a great extent by the mental condition of their child usually parents face emotional, social and economic problem. It is commonly observed that if a child is born with mental disability parents' personalities change in many ways they suffer from different emotional and psychological problems like guilt, grief, loss, rejection denial, and shame and above all they develop feelings of anxiety and depression.

The present investigation was carried out to study the impact of children's mental disability on parents' anxiety and depression. It was hypothesized that parents of children with mental disabilities are more likely to have depression and anxiety than parents of children who are mentally healthy

Method

Sample was comprised of 50 parents of Ranchi city among were selected through purposive sampling where 25 were parents of mentally disabled children and 25 were parents of mentally healthy children

Tools

The following tools were employed in the present study:

1. Personal data sheet: personal data sheet was used to collect personal information like age sex location and education.
2. Beck depression inventory: The Beck depression inventory (BDI) is a 21-item self-reporting questionnaire for evaluating the severity of depression. Developed by Beck in 1961. The BDI contains 21 items on a 4-point scale. Items are summed to create a total score with higher scores indicating high levels of depression.
3. Sinha anxiety scale: Sinha anxiety comprehensive test is a self-reporting scale that contains 100 items. Developed by A.K.P Sinha and L.N.K Sinha in 1995 items are summed to create a total score with a high score indicating high anxiety.

Objectives

1. To study the level of depression between parents with mentally disabled children and parents with mentally healthy children.
2. To study the level of anxiety between the parents of mentally disabled children and parents of mentally healthy children.
3. To study the mean score of depression level between parents with mentally disabled children and parents with mentally healthy children.

4. To study the mean score of anxiety level between parents with mentally disabled children and parents with mentally healthy children.

Hypotheses

1. The level of depression among total sample and sub group.
2. The level of anxiety among total sample and sub group.
3. There is significant mean difference of depression between parents with mentally disabled children and parents with mentally healthy children.
4. There is significant mean difference of anxiety between parents with mentally disabled children and parents with mentally healthy children.

Procedure

Firstly, permission was granted from principals of different special education centres and rehabilitation centres of Ranchi city. Special education centres and rehabilitation centres were visited on monthly basis when school administration held meeting with parents. The participants were instructed to make sure not to leave any item of the administered scale unmarked. The demographic sheet was attached to gather data about variables such as age, gender, education, and socio-economic status, no of children, no of disabled children, type of disability, gender of disabled child, age of disabled child, Class of disabled child.

After collecting informed consent and demographic information, the only scale i.e., Beck depression inventory: The Beck depression inventory (BDI) is a 21-item self-reporting questionnaire for evaluating the severity of depression. Developed by Beck in 1961. The BDI contains 21 items on a 4-point scale. Items are summed to create a total score with higher scores indicating high levels of depression and Sinha anxiety scale: Sinha anxiety comprehensive test is a self-reporting scale that contains 100 items. Developed by A.K.P Sinha and L.N.K Sinha in 1995 items are summed to create a total score with a high score indicating high anxiety

The scoring was conducted according to the manual of the scale. The quarries of the participants were handled before, during and after the form completion. In the end, participants were thanked for their valuable contribution in the study.

Statistical Analysis

After collection of data with the help of relevant tools and techniques the analysis and interpretation of data with a view to arriving at empirical solution to the problem was done by SPSS social science software.

Table 1: The level of depression among total sample

Level of Depression	Range of score	Depression percentage of total sample	
		N (50)	%
Normal	1 to 10	16	32%
Mild mood disturbance	11 to 16	13	26%
Borderline clinical depression	17 to 20	3	6%
Moderate depression	21 to 30	18	36%
Severe depression	31 to 40	0	0
Extreme depression	Over 40	0	0

Table 1 revealed that

It was found that 36% of the parents had a Moderate depression.

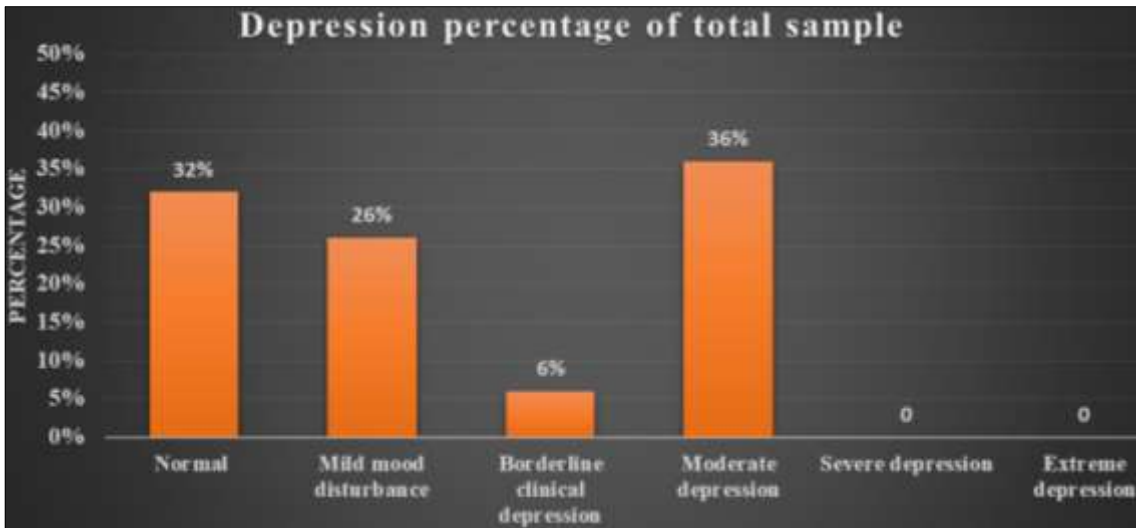


Fig 1: Graphical representation of percentage level of depression among total sample

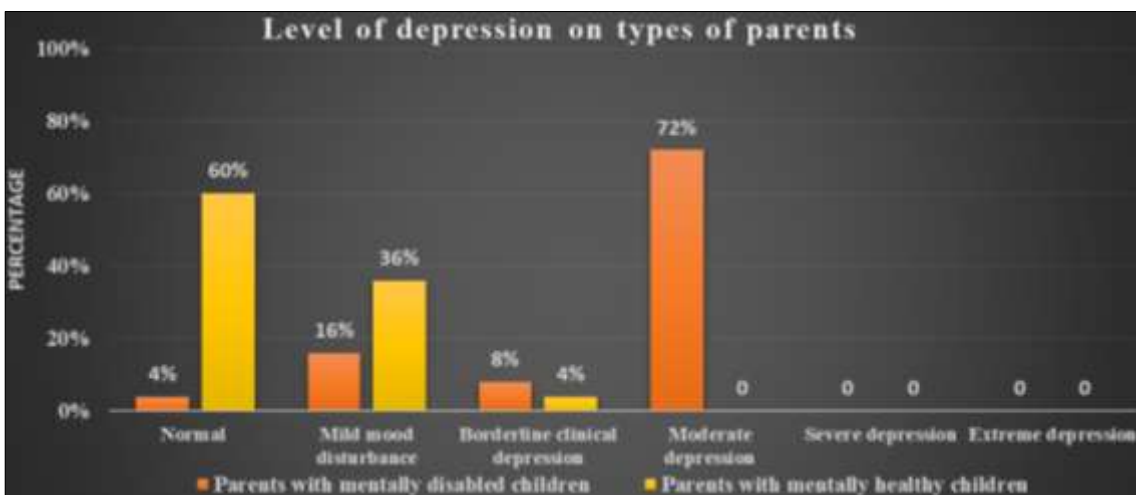


Fig 2: Graphical representation of percentage level of depression between Parents with mentally disabled children and Parents with mentally healthy children

Table 2 revealed that
It was found that 72% of the parents with mental disabled children had a Moderate depression and 60% of the parents

with mental healthy children had a normal level of depression. It means the level of depression is high in parents with mental disabled children.

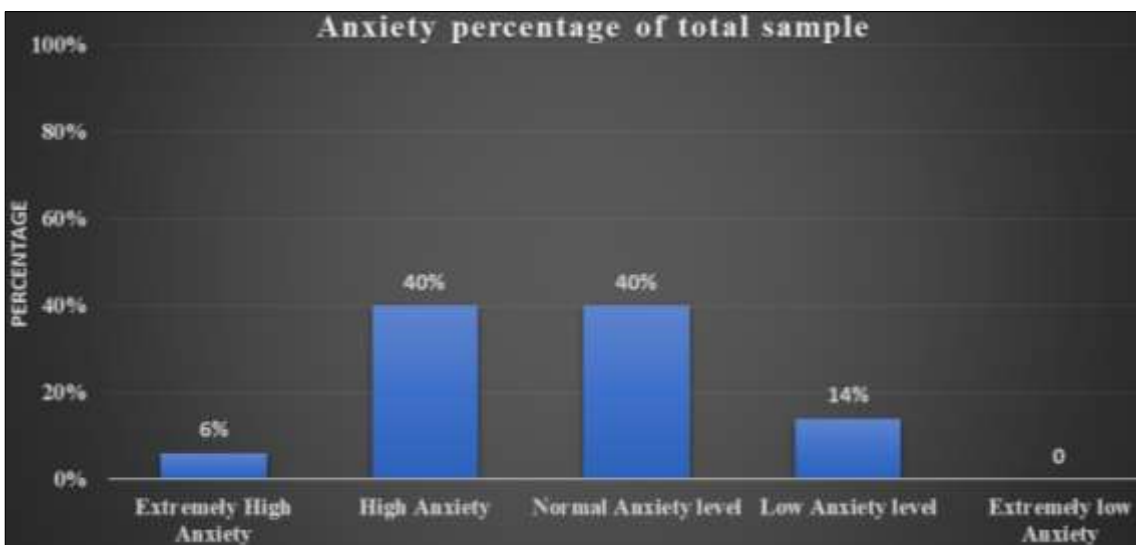


Fig 3: Graphical representation of percentage level of anxiety among total sample

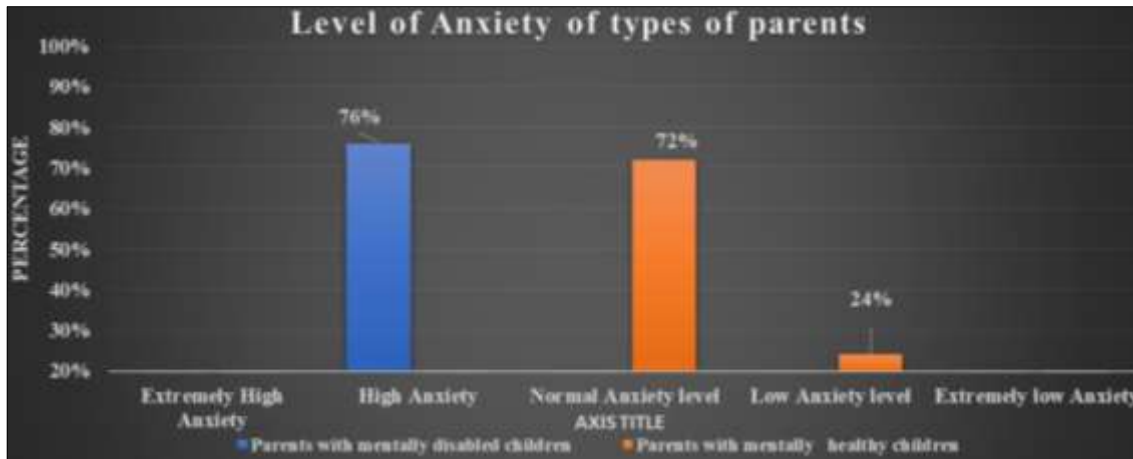


Fig 4: Graphical representation percentage level of anxiety among Parents with mentally disabled children and mentally healthy children.

Table 3 revealed that

It was found that 40% of the parents had a high level of Anxiety

Table 4 revealed that

It was found that 76% of the parents with mental disabled children had a high anxiety level and 72% of the parents with mental healthy children had a normal level of anxiety. it means the level of anxiety is high in parents with mental disabled children.

Table 2: The level of depression among sub groups.

Level of Depression	Range of score	Parents with mentally disabled children		Parents with mentally healthy children.	
		N = (25)	%	N = (25)	%
Normal	1 to 10	1	4%	15	60%
Mild mood disturbance	11 to 16	4	16%	9	36%
Borderline clinical depression	17 to 20	2	8%	1	4%
Moderate depression	21 to 30	18	72%	0	0
Severe depression	31 to 40	0	0	0	0
Extreme depression	Over 40	0	0	0	0

Table 3: The level of anxiety among total sample

Level of Anxiety	Range of score	Anxiety percentage of total sample	
		N = (50)	%
Extremely High Anxiety	100 to 29	3	6%
High Anxiety	28 to 27	20	40%
Normal Anxiety level	25 to 20	20	40%
Low Anxiety level	16 to 15	7	14%
Extremely low Anxiety	14 to 1	0	0

Table 4: The level of anxiety among sub groups.

Level of Anxiety	Range of score	Parents with mentally disabled children		Parents with mentally healthy children	
		N = (25)	%	N = (25)	%
Extremely High Anxiety	100 to 29	3	12%	0	0%
High Anxiety	28 to 27	19	76%	1	4%
Normal Anxiety level	25 to 20	2	8%	18	72%
Low Anxiety level	16 to 15	1	4%	6	24%
Extremely low Anxiety	14 to 1	0	0%	0	7%

Table 5: Mean, S.D, n and t-value of Depression level of parents with mentally disabled children and mentally healthy children

Types of Parents	N	Mean	SD	Mean difference	df	Level of significant
Mentally disabled children	25	23.52	6.11	7.31	48	0.01
Mentally healthy children	25	10.72	3.6			

0.05 = 2.008, 0.01=2.678

Table 6: Mean, S.D, n and t-value of Anxiety level of parents with mentally disabled children and mentally healthy children

Types of Parents	N	Mean	SD	Mean difference	df	Level of significant
Mentally disabled children	25	26.28	4.09	5.09	48	0.01
Mentally healthy children	25	20.68	3.7			

0.05 = 2.008, 0.01=2.678

The result reveals from Table 5 that

There is a difference between the mean scores of the types of parents with mentally disable children ($M = 23.52$) and parents with mentally healthy children ($M = 10.72$) on the

Back depression scale and the value of t' is 7.31 is significant at 0.01 level. It means parents with mentally disable children have more depression than parents with mentally healthy children.

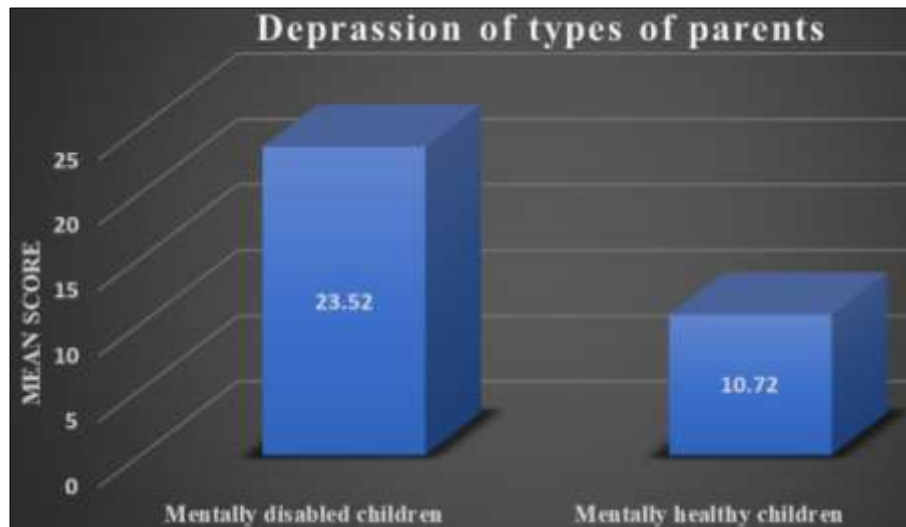


Fig 5: Graphical representation of compare mean score of Depression level of parents with mentally disabled children and mentally healthy children.

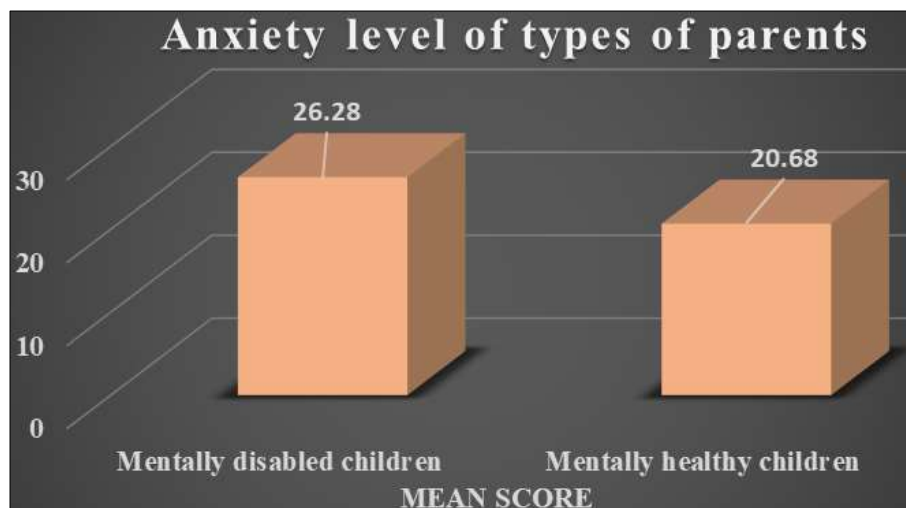


Fig 6: Graphical representation of compare mean score of Anxiety level of parents with mentally disabled children and mentally healthy children

The result reveals from Table 5 that

There is a difference between the mean scores of the types of parents with mentally disable children ($M = 26.28$) and parents with mentally healthy children ($M = 20.68$) on the Anxiety scale and the value of t' is 5.09 is significant at 0.01 level. It means parents with mentally disable children have more Anxiety than parents with mentally healthy children

Discussions

In Indian society parents of children with disability suffered from many psychological and emotional disturbances because they showed strong shame and guilt feelings with the birth of such children. Another reason of it might be societal and economical-pressures due to which they become stressed.

Parents of children with mental retardation would have more depression, anxiety as compare to parents of children with physical disability. The findings of the study support stated

hypothesis partially, as on depression and anxiety subscales of DASS parents of children with mental retardation showed significant difference from parents of children with physical disability. Literature reviews support the stated findings. Parents of children with intellectual disability had higher depression and anxiety than parents of other type of disability. And guilt was found as a route cause for depression and anxiety.

The reasons behind these results in India might be that parents of mental retarded children feel helpless when their child is sitting among family physically but not mentally, due to their lacks of mental capacities.

This study is in line with the study of Gupta & Kaur, (2010) [11] had conducted research on stress among parents of children having intellectual disability. The conclusions of this research were that parents of children having (ID) experienced higher stress. However, all the participants experienced higher level of mental stress than physical one.

In Indian society, parents experienced more depression and anxiety with disabled children due to strong guilt feelings. However mental retarded child is considered more stressful for parents than other disabilities. The reasons behind it might be mental retarded child is always considering burden on family because visual disabled child could progress in his / her life than MR Child.

Literature reviews also support it. There are many studies are available on it. The study in line with the studies of Olsson & Hwang (2001) [23] in which expressed that father of children with disabilities have more depressive symptoms than fathers of normal children but they have fewer depressive symptoms than mothers of children with disabilities.

Bumin *et al* (2008) [4] investigated the relationship between depression and anxiety with quality of life in mothers having disabled children in Turkey. The conclusion was that mothers of disabled children had depression and anxiety. Increased depression and anxiety influenced poorly on mother's health and quality of life. Sloper & Turner (1993) [26] conducted a study in which find out that fathers of children with physical disabilities experienced little psychological distress as compare with mothers.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The current study explored the relationship of depression and anxiety among parents of children with disabilities. The findings of this study revealed that there is highly significant correlation among depression and anxiety of parents with disabled children. Furthermore, significant difference was found on depression and anxiety scores among mothers of children with disabilities than fathers of children with disabilities. Another finding of this study showed that parents of mental retarded children having significantly higher level of depression and anxiety than parents of children with physical and visual disability. However, no significant difference was found between parents of disabled boys and parents of disabled girls in the mean scores of depressions and anxiety. The demographic variables i.e., education also sowed its impact on parents of children with disabilities as uneducated to class five parents showed more depression and anxiety than highly educated parents. This study suggest that the level of depression and anxiety is different in mothers and fathers with one disable child and with more than one disabled children. Therefore, the need still exists to examine these differences among parents with the no. of children with disability. This study was that, this study assessed equally single mothers or fathers with both parents. So, further researches are required to assess it separately.

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