

The Prevalence of Depression and Anxiety in Mothers of Children with Intellectual Disability

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Abstract: In India mothers are the main caregivers of intellectually disabled children. The study is to investigate the prevalence of depression in their mothers in a teaching hospital, Tamil Nadu.

Objectives: The objective of the study is to investigate the prevalence of depression in mothers.

Study design: A cross sectional study

Results:

The mean age of intellectually disabled children was 12.56 years. Average education of mother was 6.92 years. The mean IQ was 47.5. The prevalence of depression in mother was 48% and it is seen among mother's of Moderate and Severe Intellectual disability. 92% of mothers had anxiety.

Keywords: Depression, Anxiety, Intellectually disabled, mothers

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I. Introduction

Intellectual disability produces psychological, social and financial distress to the whole family particularly mothers are continuous caretakers in our country India. Mothers of intellectually disabled children suffer more psychological distress than other family members. Fathers are less involved in caregiving activities. Research has revealed that psychiatric morbidities such as depression is common among mothers of intellectually disabled children. Studies from different countries on parents of children with disabilities suggested 35-53% of mother of children is having depression.

II. Materials and methods

The study was conducted in Psychiatry out-patient department Government Mohan Kumaramangalam Medical College Hospital, Tamilnadu. It is a tertiary care hospital. Patients attending the outpatient department along with mother were taken and who gave consent for the study.

Subjects and selection method: Patients of 5 to 18 years diagnosed as Intellectual disability according to ICD – 10. Informed consent obtained from the mother were included in the study. A sample of 50 patients was selected for the study. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of the hospital. The IQ assessment was done by Clinical Psychologist. Hamilton depression rating scale was used to measure depression in the mothers of intellectually disabled children. Beck's anxiety inventory was used to measure anxiety in the mothers.

Inclusion criteria:

Patients of 5-18 years diagnosed as Intellectual disability according to ICD-10.

Exclusion criteria:

Patients having severe medical illness were excluded

Mothers with other disabilities

III. Results

The mean age of study population was around 12.56 years. Every patient in the study received an average of 4.44 years of schooling. The mean IQ was 47.5. The study sample 50 intellectually disabled patients of which 26 were males and 24 were females. Education of mother 6.92 years.

The mean score in the mother was 8.44. Depression was present in 24 mothers and 26 mothers did not report symptoms amounting to depression.

Level of Intelligence	Number of Patients
Mild	18
Moderate	23
Severe	9

Associated Co-morbidity	Frequency	Percentage
Epilepsy	1	2
Behaviour problems	0	0
Hyperactivity	2	4
Autism	7	14

Medical Conditions diagnosed in the study population	Frequency	Percentage
Cerebral Palsy	1	2
Down Syndrome	0	0
Wilson's disease	1	2
Microcephaly	0	0

Table 1 Gender of patients

Depression in mothers	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Present	10	14	24
Absent	16	10	26
Total	26	24	50

χ^2 -test=5.046, df=3, $P=0.1687>0.05$ (not significant)

The depression is present in the mother's of female children compared to male children.

Table 2 Severity of Intellectual Disability

Depression in mothers	Grades of mental retardation			Total
	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Present	5	10	9	24
Absent	13	13	0	26
Total	18	23	9	50

χ^2 -test=20.117, df=6, $P=0.003$

The mother's of moderate and severe intellectual disability had depression.

Table 3 Severity of Anxiety

Depression in mothers	Grades of anxiety according to BAI scores				Total
	Minimal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Absent	4	17	5	0	26
Present	0	4	13	7	24
Total	4	21	18	7	50

χ^2 -test=22.559, df=3, $P=0.000$ (significant)

Severity of depression

Depression was present in the mother of Severe Intellectually disabled children. Depression was lower in Moderately Intellectually disabled mothers ,,,, % and was least with mothers of Mild Intellectual disability.

Anxiety in mothers

Ninety two percent of mothers had anxiety. The mean anxiety score according to Beck's Anxiety Inventory was 19.9.

IV. Discussion

In our study sample 24 mothers of intellectually disabled suffer from depression. The prevalence seems to be much greater than the ones reported by Emerson et al, (35%) and Olsson et al. The mother experiences distress due to irreversibility of intellectual disability, social stigma, anticipation of future and caring demand. Depression was more prevalent among mothers of female patients in the study. In the study the prevalence of psychological stress was found to be more in mother's of female intellectually disabled.

Similar to Qatar study (Al-Kuwari) and in agreement with the British study (2.67 compared to 1.6) (Manuel et al, Sloper et al, Silver et al) which can be attributed to the degree of child dependency on the mother in daily activities of life. Providing adequate information on child disability and caring skills training will have a great impact on reducing the psychological distress among mothers of disabled children. The rehabilitation institutes should shift the services from child centres to family centre services. Medical services offered to the intellectually disabled now move from an individual level to the family level especially toward the mothers. The screening of mothers of intellectually disabled should be included in the protocol for the management of intellectually disabled.

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