



COMPARISON OF SOCIAL – PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERACTION BETWEEN PARENTS OF MENTALLY – RETARDED CHILDREN AND PARENTS OF NORMAL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Present research aims to investigate social – psychological interaction in parents of mentally – retarded children. From statistical community of parents of mentally – retarded children (able to be instructed) and normal students, 60 persons (30 fathers and 30 mothers) as members of study sample and persons (30 fathers and 30 mothers) as members of control sample were selected using the method of random sampling.

Data were collected through completing the questionnaire of social – psychology interaction test. Attained information was analyzed by independent go ups t-test. The results show that there isn't meaningful difference between parents of mentally – retarded children and parents of normal children in social- psychological interaction. The level of social- psychological interaction is more in mothers with mentally-retarded children than in father of such children. This ratio is true between Mothers and fathers of normal children.

Key Words: Social- psychological interaction, mentally retarded child, intractable, and parents.

INTRODUCTION

Every father and mothers, who are going to have a child, expect and wish a healthy, intelligent and nice baby. When a child with mental retardation puts his/her step in the science of life, their parents, in their first contact with the child, encounter with a lot of “what to dos” and “what have to dos” Existence of a mentally – retarded infant will cause a change in the behavior of family members. Parents in traction in fluencies social – psychological health and parent-child relation. If we assume that the number of family members is averagely five and the degree of mental retardation prevalence and epidemic is about three percent, based on international standards, then approximately 1,800,000 people of Iranian seventy million populations are affected, to some extent by the phenomenon of children's mental retardation (Ahadi and Bani Jamsli, 1990:39-100). There fore, it sounds necessary that feelings, insights, reactions and social- psychological issues of parents in family environment should be paid needed attention and should be studied and examined.

The results of some researches show that the presence of a child with mental handicap causes mental pressure on parents and other members of family. Because of having a child who is different with other children, the parents of mentally – retarded child face many problems.

These problems make severe the mental pressure in parents with mentally – retarded child (Afrooz, 1998:209). Gowen (1989) believes that because of spending more energy and financial costs, parents of mentally – retarded children, especially mothers more experience hopelessness, mental discomfort and emotional instability. They may subjected more the signs of mental pressures. Mc Hall and Haris found out in their research that some factors such as seniti of handicap, gender and age of such children increase the rate of hopelessness in their parents (Afrooz, 1988:138-147). About the effect of mentally – retarded child on parents, Alburzi(1996) shows that parents encounter with different reactions including feel of shyness (41 percent), feel of sin (32.7 percent), and hiding the child (70 percent). In relation with having a mentally – retarded child, The family suffers mental pressures, including anxiety (87 percent) , nervous annoyance (53.2 percent), effect on family relations (23percent) and marital disputes.



(Milani far, 1980: 205). The results show that mothers of mentally –retarded children are more disappointed than normal children’s mothers and they face more problems in controlling their angry toward child (Gamingrori, 1966, as quoting Robinson, 1995:148-160).

Additionally, parents with mentally- retarded child lose their love toward one – another. Especially, relation of young parents is more affected. Also, because of existence of such children, Mothers are more susceptible to disease than older mothers. This effect is more severe in literate mothers than ill-treated mothers or less educated ones (shari’ati, and Dawar Manesh, 1984).

Parents’ awareness of their children handicap deficiency is sudden or gradual, how ever their early reactions are stable. Parents reactions to child’s mental retardation are either temporal or permanently. Reactions like feel of sin and extra – ordinary support are permanent that influence family atmosphere and relational cycle of house hold for a long time. When the parents gradually accept the situation, they pass some stages for coping with mental problems of this condition. Rosen (1985,as quoting by Ahadi, 1990:79) has provided a Five- stage framework: 1) awareness of tissue, 2) recognition of what is it , 3) looking for reason(s) ,4) looking for treatment and 5) accepting the child completely.

There for, family is a social system and mentally retarded child is one of the members of this system. These two not only correlate with each other but also with other members of family. This interaction earn be considered either positively or negatively.

Most researches, carried out in this field, imply that this effect is mostly negative. That is , mental retardation of one of family members causes that the system of family can not perform its functions and duties properly . Consequently, with presence of a mentally- retarded child, performance of family faces defects and de faults. So, investigation of social – psychological interaction in parents with mentally – retarded child is the general aim of this research. With respect to this aim, the hypotheses of research are: 1) There is no difference between parents of mentally- retarded children and parents of normal children in social – psychological nitation, 2) There is no meaning full difference between fathers and mothers of mentally- retarded children in social – psychological interaction , 3) There is no meaning full difference between mothers with normal children, in social – psychological interaction, and 5) There is no difference between fathers with mentally- retarded children and fathers with normal children in social – psychological interactions.

METHOD

Regarding the subject, aims and hypotheses, the method of present research is causative – comparative. The community of research is parents of mentally – yet added children with the ability of getting trained. Age scope of these children is between 7-12 years. They are in primary schools inn exceptional centre’s of education in city of zahedan in educational year of 2006-2007.

The size of sample involves 120 persons- parents of normal and mentally – retarded children, who were selected simple- randomly from available community, Each one of them were matched based on some variables such as place of birth, level of literacy, number of children and occupation, in order to monitor the differences resulted from sample groups.

To collect data, following tools were used:

1) questionnaire of personal particularities, 2) questionnaire number 1 social- psychological in traction (performed for both groups)

Estimation on social- psychological interaction test implies internal consistency (0.837) [chai, 1985, zolzokarmaniz, 1980].

Bart – kanarad, using the method of bisection, informs of 0.83 coefficient of reliability at the level of non-conditioned respect and 0.93 about levels of respect.

Encel bekr (1984), using the same method, considers the test as reliable (0.75 and 0.94). Barson mentions the re- test correlation for all scores of test as being 0.86. Two methods of descriptive statistics and deductive statistics were used, by applying t- test for comparing the means of two independent groups in order to analyze research- related information.

RESULTS

Investigation of results is carried out based on order of hypotheses.

First hypothesis: There is no difference between parents of mentally- retarded children and parents of normal children in social – psychological interaction.

Table 1: Average of scores of social- psychological interaction of parents of mentally- retarded children and parents of normal children.

groups	mean	Standard deviation	No
Parents of mentally-retarded children	20.28	10.70	60
Parents of normal children	17.71	10.20	60
$p \geq 0.05$, $df=118$, $t=1.34$			

As the table shows, calculated $t(1.34)$ with degree of freedom (118) at level of 0.05 is not meaningful. So, between the averages, no difference exists. That is the phenomenon of child's mental retardation and normality has no effect on parent's social- psychological interaction in both groups.

Second hypothesis: between fathers and mothers of mentally – retarded children in social- psychological interaction, there is no meaningful difference.

Table 2: average of scores of social- psychological interaction of fathers and mothers of mentally- retarded children.

groups	mean	Standard deviation	No
fathers	25.53	9.37	30
mothers	17.71	9.34	30
$p \leq 0.01$, $df=58$, $t=4.26$			

Because, calculated $t(4.26)$ with freedom degree of 58 at level of 0.01, is meaningful, so it can be said that the rate of social- psychological interaction is more in mothers of mentally- retarded children than fathers of such children.

Third hypothesis: average of scores of social – psychological interaction of fathers and mothers of normal children.

groups	mean	Standard deviation	No
fathers	20.60	11.74	30
mothers	14.83	7.52	30
$p \leq 0.05$, $df=58$, $t=2.23$			

Since, estimated t (2.23) with freedom degree of 58 at level of 0.05 is meaningful, it can be concluded that the rate of social- psychological instruction is less in mothers of normal children than the fathers of normal children.

Fourth hypothesis: there is no meaningful difference between mothers with mentally- retarded children and mothers with normal children.

Table 4: mean scores of social – psychological interaction of mothers with mentally – retarded children and mothers with normal children.

groups	mean	Standard deviation	No
Mothers of normal children	20.60	11.74	30
Mothers of mentally- retarded children	25.53	9.39	30
$p \leq 0.05$, $df=58$, $t=1.78$			

Since, calculated t (1.78) with freedom degree of 58 and at level of 0.05 is meaningful, so there is no difference in compared averages.

That is between mothers of normal children and others of mentally – retarded children in social –psychological interaction, there is no meaningful difference.

Fifth hypothesis there is no difference between of mentally-retarded children and fathers of normal children.

Table 5: average scores of social-psychological interaction in fathers of mentally – retarded children and fathers if normal children.

groups	mean	Standard deviation	No
Fathers of normal children	14.83	7.52	30
Fathers of mentally-retarded children	15.30	9.37	30
$p \geq 0.05$, $df=58$, $t=0.23$			

Since, calculated t(0.23) with freedom degree of 58, and at level of 0.05 is not meaningful. So, a meaningful difference does not exist in social- psychological interaction of both groups fathers.

Discussion: family and mentally- retarded child have mutual effect on one- another. The researches indicate that this effect is mostly negative. That is, mental retardation in one family member causes the system of family does not meet its functions and duties properly.



The results of this research show that there is no meaningful difference between parents of mentally – retarded children and parents of normal children in social – psychological interaction.

However, the level of social- psychological interaction is more in mothers of mentally- retarded children than fathers of such children. Also the rat of social- psychological interaction is more in mothers of normal children than fathers of such children.

This result is not consistent with the results of previous studies that show inability of one family member causes mental pressure on whole system of family. pleas, for example shows that in II families from 20 studied families, family members experienced emotional problems due to chronic disease of one family member.

A research, carried out by Kaplan and colleagues (1973, as quoted by sa'atchi) shows that more than 80 percent of families could n't cope with mental pressures resulted from chronic disease of family member. The parents, after being informed of a family member's inability, faced some problems or their current problem stensified.

Berslaw etal (1987, as quoted by sa'atchi,1991) have studied the effects of a chronic diseased child on the mental performance of 456 mothers of those children. Their results show that the rate of mental pressure in studied mother was more than mothers of control group.

This difference may be due to change in the kind of assessed variable. That is, previous researches emphasized more on parent's mental pressure, while this research focuses on their social- psychological interaction.

Additionally, the difference has been caused by comparative – causative method and enhanced accuracy of this research.

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