

Children With Special Needs (CWSN) and Parental Stress: A Study in Barpeta District of Assam.

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Abstract—

As we all know for the all-round development of a child, the role of parents is very significant. Normal parents usually worry about numerous factors related to their children and that tends to create a lot of parental stress, which further affects the daily life of their children when they start growing up. Parents always want to protect their children from the negative forces of the society. However, when a child is born with one or multiple disabilities, the unexpected and permanent nature of such traits, often become the cause of parental stress. Malaya Das from Kalyani University of West Bengal mentioned in her research study that there is considerable evidence in this regard to suggest that the parents of children with developmental disabilities, experience more stress than the parents of children without disability. She also asserted that a child's disability is significantly related to parental stress. Therefore, it may be assumed that the provision and facilities of education on the part of the children, having specific disabilities, can reduce the stress level among the parents to a great extent. Because, it is hoped that such children should also come under the ambit of education, grow up along with other children without disabilities, and are accepted positively in society. This paper is an attempt to discuss about the parental stress towards their Children With Special Needs.. The main objectives of this paper are to know the level of Parental Stress towards CWSN in Barpeta District of Assam, to know the mental status of parents of CWSN, to know the attitude of parents towards CWSN and normal children in the family, to know the co-relation between mental status of parents and parental stress. to know the correlation between attitude of parents towards CWSN and Normal children in the family and Parental Stress, to know the Correlations between Attitude of Parents Toward Special Children and Parental Stress and to give some suggestions on how positive attitude of teacher and other persons of the society can make a revolution for the parents of CWSN. In this study the researcher will take the purposive sampling technique for sample selection, Descriptive Survey method for data collection and used correlation method for data analysis. The area of the study will be Barpeta District of Assam.

Key Words:- Children With Special Needs (CWSN) ,Parental Stress ,Mental Stress etc.

Introduction

As we all know for the all-round development of child, the role of parents is very significant. Normal parents usually worry about numerous factors related to their children and that tends to create a lot of parental stress, which further affects the daily life of their children when they start growing up. Parents always want to protect

their children from the negative forces of the society. However, when a child is born with one or multiple disabilities, the unexpected and permanent nature of such traits, often become the cause of parental stress. Malaya Das from Kalyani University of West Bengal mentioned in her research study that there is considerable evidence in this regard to suggest that the parents of children with developmental disabilities, experience more stress than the parents of children without disability. She also asserted that a child's disability is significantly related to parental stress. Therefore, it may be assumed that the provision and facilities of education on the part of the children, having specific disabilities, can reduce the stress level among the parents to a great extent. Because, it is hoped that such children should also come under the ambit of education, grow up along with other children without disabilities, and are accepted positively in society

In a country like India, the educational system has also engaged itself with making room for special educational activities to empower the differently able persons, while focusing on the development of the formal aspects of education. However, the first step towards a change in Education for the differently able persons is the increased involvement of parents and other concerned adults in the arena of Inclusive Education. Parents usually play the role of teachers, continuing to educate their children long after their childhood is over. However, the case is never so easy for the parents of the disabled children. It is important that in order to develop the effectiveness of Inclusive Education, the involvement, collaboration and interaction amongst parents, students, and the school authority is necessary which will definitely reduce the level of parental stress . (Sources: Ninth Five Year Plan,1997-2002).

Objectives of the study :-

- 1.To Know the level of Parental Stress towards CWSN in Barpeta District of Assam
- 2.To know the mental status of parents of CWSN.
- 3.To know the attitude of parents towards CWSN and normal children in the family.
- 4.To know the co-relation between mental status of parents and parental stress.
- 5.To know the correlation between attitude of parents towards CWSN and Normal children (all children) in the family and Parental Stress.
- 6 To know the Correlations between Attitude of Parents toward Special Children and Parental Stress
- 7.To give some suggestions on how positive attitude of teacher ,other persons of the society can reduce parental stress.

Methodology of the study:-

For the present study, the Descriptive Method was used. The investigator conducted different survey with the help of parental stress scale and self made questionnaires.

Population of the study:-

The present study aims to study Children With Special Needs (CWSN) and parental stress in Barpeta District of Assam. As such, as per the objectives of the study the population of the study includes all the identified parents of CWSN from 4 numbers of educational blocks namely Barpeta, Mondia, Chenga, Bhawanipur among all 7 numbers of Educational Blocks under Barpeta District.

Sampling of the study:-

Purposive sampling method has been used for selecting the CWSN and their parents block wise for studying the level of parental psychological stress towards CWSN. Total sample 247 numbers of parents and CWSN were purposefully selected

Tools for data collection

- i Parental Stress Scale developed by Dr. Malaya Das, Dept. of Education, Kalyani University. This scale has been adopted to find out the level of parental stress towards CWSN.
- ii Self prepared questionnaire has been also used.

Statistical Implication:-

For quantitative analysis of the present study, various statistical techniques were used. These techniques were found to be reliable in analyzing the data.

In the first, second, third objectives the investigator studied the level of parental stress towards CWSN and for this simple percentage was used.

In the fourth, fifth and sixth objectives, Pearson correlation method was used to study the relation between mental status of parents and parental stress and to know the correlation between attitude of parents towards CWSN and Normal children in the family and Parental Stress.

Analysis of Data:-

1.To Know the level of Parental Stress towards CWSN

To examine the Stress felt by the parents having CWSN in Barpeta Districts, Parental Stress Scale was applied upon 247 numbers of parents of CWSN .These sample CWSN and their parents were selected from 4 numbers of educational Blocks of Barpeta District, namely— Mondia, Barpeta,Chenga and Bhawanipur. Administration and scoring of the Parental Stress Scale, among the parents of the sample CWSN helped us to assign the level of parental stress of the CWSN.

Parental Stress Group

Low stress group = 34 – 79

Moderate stress Group = 80 – 124

High stress Group = above 124

Table 1: Parental Stress and Father/Mother Respondent

Level of stress	Range of stress	Father		Mother		Total	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Low Stress	34- 79	39	20.6	13	22.8	52	21.1
Moderate Stress	80 - 124	143	75.7	40	70.2	183	74.4
High Stress	Above 124	7	3.7	5	7.0	12	4.5
Total		189	100.0	58	100.0	247	100.0

Table 1 present the response of the father and mother on the level of stress. Here the stress is divided into low, moderate and high level. The data shows that 20.6% fathers and 22.8% mothers have low parental stress, 75.7% father and 70.2% mother have moderate mental stress and 3.7% father and 7% mother have high stress.

2.To know the mental status of parents of CWSN.

In the table 2 the mental status of the parents of CWSN divided the level of mental status as stable, disturbed and unstable.

Table 2 : Mental Status of the Parent

	Father		Mother		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Stable	99	52.4	35	61.4	134	54.5
Disturbed	55	29.1	12	21.1	67	27.2
Unstable	35	18.5	11	17.5	46	18.3
Total	189	100.0	58	100.0	247	100.0

The above **Table 2** shows the mental status of the parents of CWSN. Here, the investigator divided the level of mental status as stable, disturbed and unstable. The data reveals the mental status of the parents of CWSN, 52.4% father and 61.4% mother are mentally stable, 29.1% father and 21.1% mother are mentally disturbed and 18.5% father and 17.5% mother are mentally unstable.

3.To know the attitude of parents towards CWSN and normal children in the family.

The investigator classified the attitude of parents as affectionate, casual and indifferent.

**Table 3: Attitude of Parents Toward CWSN and Normal Children (all children)
in the Family**

	Father		Mother		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Affectionate	129	68.3	44	77.2	173	70.3
Casual	53	28.0	12	21.1	65	26.4
Indifferent	7	3.7	2	1.8	9	3.3
Total	189	100.0	57	100.0	247	100.0

From the **Table 3** it has been found the attitude of the parents toward their CWSN and normal Children. The investigator classified the attitude of parents as affectionate, casual and indifferent. The attitude of 68.3% fathers and 77.2% mothers towards CWSN and normal children is affectionate, the attitude of 28.0% fathers and 21.1% mothers towards CWSN and normal children is casual and the attitude of only 3.7% fathers and 1.8% mothers towards CWSN and normal children is very indifferent.

4.To know the co-relation between mental status of parents and parental stress Relation between parental stress and parental stress.

Generally, the mental status of the parents and parental stress are related to each other. With the help of Pearson Correlation Method the investigator tried to find out whether there is a relation between mental status of the parents and parental stress.

Table 4: Correlation between Mental Status of the Parents and Parental Stress

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Mental_status	1.64	.774	.165(**)	.010
Parental_stress	98.50	19.845		

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the above **Table 4**, the mean score of mental status is 1.64. S.D .774 and mean score of Parental stress is 98.50, S.D 19.845 with r-value is .165 which is significant at the 0.05 level. So, the above Table reveals that there is a significant relationship between mental status of the parents and parental stress.

5.To know the correlation between attitude of parents towards CWSN and Normal children (all children) in the family and Parental Stress.

The investigator by using Pearson Correlation Method tried to correlate the attitude of parents towards CWSN and normal children in the family and Parental Stress

Table 5: Correlations between Attitude towards CWSN and Normal Children (all children) and Parental Stress

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attitude towards CWSN and normal children	2.67	.536	-.218(**)	.001
Parental_stress	98.50	19.845		

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the above **Table 5** it has been found the correlation between the attitude towards CWSN and normal children with parental stress. The mean score of attitude towards CWSN and normal Children 2.67, S.D .536 and the mean score of parental stress is 98.50, S.D 19.845, r-value is -.218, which is significant at 01% level of significant but negatively correlated.

So, the above table reveals that parental attitude towards all Children and parental stress of the CWSN are not related to each other.

Objective 6 .To know the Correlations between Attitude of Parents Toward Special Children and Parental Stress

Table 6 reveals all parents are concerned about their children. If the child is specially able then their parents will become more concerned. The investigator by using Pearson Correlation Method wanted to study the relationship between the attitude of parents towards special children and parental stress as mention below.

Correlations between Attitude of Parents Toward Special Children and Parental Stress

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Attitude of parents towards special children	2.57	.594	-.127(*)	.047
Parental_stress	98.50	19.845		

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to the above **Table 6** the mean score of the attitude of parents towards Special Children is 2.57, S.D .594, and the mean score of Parental stress is 98.50, S.D. 19.845 with r- value -.127 which is significant but negatively correlated at the 0.05 level.

So, the above table reveals that there is a negative relationship between the attitude of parents towards Special Children and parental stress of CWSN.

Major Findings

- From this study, it has been found that total 20.6% fathers and 22.8% mothers have low parental stress, 75.7% fathers and 70.2% mothers have moderate parental stress and 3.7% fathers and 7.0% mothers have high stress.
- Regarding mental status of the parents of CWSN, it is found that 52.4% fathers and 61.4% mothers are mentally stable. 29.1% fathers and 21.1% mothers are mentally disturbed and 18.5% fathers and 17.5% mothers are mentally unstable.
- Correlation between mental status of parents and parental stress, data reveal that there is a significant relationship between the mental status of the parents and parental stress.
- The attitude of the parents toward their all Children, 68.3% fathers and 77.2% mothers are affectionate, the attitude of 28.0% fathers and 21.1% mothers are unpleasant and 3.7% fathers and 1.8% mothers are indifferent by their attitude.
- Regarding the correlation between the attitude towards all Children and parental stress. The mean score of attitude towards all Children 2.67, S.D value is .536 and the mean score of parental stress is 95.50, S.D. 19.845, r-value -.218, which is negatively significant at .05% and .01% level of significant.
- Regarding attitude of the parents towards CWSN, the study shown that the attitude of 63.0% fathers and 57.9% mothers are pleasant. The attitude of 32.3% fathers and 35.1% mothers are unpleasant and 4.8% fathers and 7.0% mothers are very stressful, they become indifferent towards CWSN.
- There is a significant relationship between attitude towards special children and parental stress of CWSN with the mean score of Attitude towards Special Children being 2.57 and S.D. .594. The mean score of Parental stress is 98.50, S.D. 19.845 with r- value -.127 which is negatively significant at the 0.05 level of significant.

Suggestions

- Identifying, assessing, and certifying the CWSN had been not up to the marks. More team members, special educators need to be mobilized for identification and assessment of CWSN, which defiantly reduce the level of parental stress.
- The teams or agencies can submit the list of identified and assessed CWSN to the appropriate authority in the district for certification. Unless a person or child is certified and he/she is not treated as par with the other persons, he/she will not be able to avail any services or benefits form the authority.
- There could be a yearly refresher course held at the district level for the parents to upgrade their skills to support the CWSN.
- Promotion of various NGOs working in the field of disability is another option for improving the number of professional required to work in the field of disability.
- DIETs as resource center could be facilitated to network with NGOs and start more Quality Professional Courses & Training Programmes in the Disabilities Sector for parents and other professionals.
- Training for professionals in the assessment of Low Vision, Autism, Learning disabilities need to be taken up. This will increase the number of experts available for undertaking assessment.
- Mobile Consultants could be involved in carrying out Functional Assessment and Curriculum planning for the CWSN.

Conclusion

The study conducted by the investigator on the theme Children With Special Needs (CWSN) and Parental Stress : A Study in Barpeta District of Assam shall be a notable contribution to the field of Education of the CWSN. The study has collected and documented data and information for needful action to be taken by educational administrations, educational planners, policy makers, sociologists, psychologists with reference to the CWSN. The suggestions of the investigator shall be a positive message, as they will serve as the guidelines to be implemented for education of the CWSN. The study has a social implication from the point of view of creating awareness amongst the teachers, parents and the community members for quality Education of CWSN and facilities in Inclusive Education programme which will defiantly minimize the parental stress towards their special need children.

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