



From Curriculum To Practice: Intellectual Disability Awareness Among Psychology Students

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Abstract: Persons with Intellectual Disability (PwID) face discrimination and excluded in most of the social activities due to their limitations in adaptive behaviour and intellectual functioning. A multi-disciplinary team should involve in a collaborative work to restore the maximum abilities of PwID. Due to lack of awareness among psychologist, may lead to ineffective multi-disciplinary team. It is essential to gain experience and knowledge about various disabilities, causes, characteristics features, intervention strategies, therapeutic services, and remedial teaching as the role of future psychologist is inevitable in the upliftment of the life of PwID. The objective of this study is to find out the awareness level among Undergraduate Psychology students about Intellectual Disability. Survey study under descriptive research design is employed to collect the existing facts about the awareness level of Undergraduates of Psychology programme. The results indicated that students need to gain in-depth information about Persons with Intellectual Disability to expand their skills and positively impact their career pursuits.

Index terms: Awareness level, Intellectual Disability, Survey study, Undergraduates

I. Introduction

Intellectual Disability (ID) is characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. This disability originates during the developmental period, which is defined operationally as before the individual attains age 22 (AAIDD, 2021). Adults with ID can learn at an adequate rate and quantity if they focus on the right parts of the learning stimulus. Persons with Intellectual Disability (PwID) may accomplish at the same rates but fall behind their classmates overall even if appropriate educational aids are put in place. PwID have learning and memory capacities that are noticeably below average. They are less adept at applying knowledge to novel contexts and grow their learning sets more slowly than their peers without disabilities (Westling, D. L et al., 2000). To acquire information, one must attend to the learning task for the needed period and control distractions, but PwID may struggle to distinguish and respond to relevant inquiries in both educational and social settings (Carlson, W., & Witschey, H., 2018). The role of Psychologists is crucial since they offer assessment, intervention and support to PwID. Undergraduates pursuing psychology programme who want to deal with unique groups, such as PwID, especially need to obtain knowledge about the wider range of disabilities, such as physical impairments, chronic health impairments, intellectual disabilities, speech and language disorders, and sensory impairments (Rosa et al., 2016). This study aims to investigate the knowledge, attitudes, and experiences of undergraduate psychology students towards PwID.

II. Methodology

Survey study under Descriptive Research design and Purposive sampling technique is employed to collect the existing facts about the awareness level of Undergraduates of Psychology programme. As all the subjects should be pursuing Psychology degree. A total of 62 college students from Coimbatore district were selected

as the sample of the study. A Questionnaire is adapted from the dissertation to assess the awareness level is used as a tool for data collection. The tool consists of 3 domains and 32 items including statements of physical features, behavioural issues and general understanding of PwID.

III. Objectives of the study

- To find out the awareness level of Intellectual Disability in the domain physical appearance among Undergraduates enrolled in Psychology programme
- To find out the awareness level of Intellectual Disability in the domain behavioral issues among Undergraduates enrolled in Psychology programme
- To find out the awareness level of Intellectual Disability in the domain general information among Undergraduates enrolled in Psychology programme
- To find out the awareness level of Intellectual Disability among Undergraduates enrolled in Psychology programme

IV. Data Analysis

Table 1.1 Domain 1- Awareness level on physical features of PwID

Domain 1	No	Low	Moderate	High
Scores	24	11	16	11
Percentages	38.70%	17.74%	25.80%	17.74%

Table 1.2 Domain 2- Awareness level on behavioural issues of PwID

Domain 2	No	Low	Moderate	High
Scores	24	17	13	8
Percentages	38.70%	27.40%	20.96%	12.90%

Table 1.3 Domain 3 – Awareness level on General understanding of PwID

Domain 3	No	Low	Moderate	High
Scores	19	24	13	6
Percentages	30.60%	38.70%	20.96%	9.30%

Table 1.4 Responses of the sum of all the 3 domains

Total	No	Low	Moderate	High
Scores	18	28	9	7
Percentages	29%	45.10%	13.50%	11.20%

V. Results and Discussion

The domain 1 consists of 7 items that includes the Statements on Physical Features of PwID. 24 out of 62 samples i.e., 38.7% of the samples have no awareness about the physical features of PwID. 11 out of 62 samples i.e., 17.74% of the have low awareness. 16 out of 62 samples i.e., 25.8% of the samples have moderate awareness. Only 11 out of 62 samples i.e., 17.74% of the samples have high awareness level on the physical features of PwID. The domain 2 consists of 11 items that includes the Statements of Behavioural Issues of PwID. 24 out of 62 samples i.e., 38.7% of the samples have no awareness on behavioural issues. 17 out of 62 samples i.e., 27.4% of the have low awareness. 13 out of 62 samples i.e., 20.96% of the samples have moderate awareness. Only 8 out of 62 samples i.e., 12.9% of the samples have high awareness behavioural issues of PwID. The domain 3 consists of 14 items that includes the Statements of Statements on General Understanding of PwID. 19 out of 62 samples i.e., 30.6% of the samples have no awareness on general understanding of PwID. 24 out of 62 samples i.e., 38.7% of the have low awareness. 13 out of 62 samples i.e., 21% of the samples have moderate awareness. Only 6 out of 62 samples i.e., 9.3% of the samples have high awareness on general understanding of PwID. The sum of the responses of all 3 domains. 18 out of 62 samples i.e., 29% have no awareness about the PwID. 28 out of 62 samples i.e., 45.1% have low

awareness about the PwID. 9 out of 62 samples i.e., 13.5 have moderate awareness about PwID. 7 out of 62 i.e., 11.2% have high awareness about the PwID.

VI. Summary and Conclusion

Majority of the responders are female. 39% of the sample are male and 61% of the sample are female. 8 out of 24 samples (male) i.e., 33.33% have no awareness about the PwID. 9 out of 24 samples i.e., 37.5% have low awareness. 4 out of 24 samples i.e., 16.6 have moderate awareness about PwID. 3 out of 24 i.e., 12.5% have high awareness about the PwID. 10 out of 38 samples (female) i.e., 26.3% have no awareness about the PwID. 19 out of 38 samples i.e., 50% have low awareness about the PwID. 5 out of 38 samples i.e., 13.1 have moderate awareness about PwID. 4 out of 38 i.e., 10.5% have high awareness about the PwID. Workshops and seminars can be conducted to the Undergraduate psychology students to have a spotlight on the specific field. Undergraduate psychology students need to gain in-depth information about Persons with Intellectual Disability to expand their skills as it positively impacts their career pursuits. Beyond assessment, a psychologist's responsibilities in special education often include counselling, behavior management, social skills training, and more. As such, future psychologists need to be well-versed in the needs of PwID. In the realm of special education, psychologists play a vital role from diagnosis to intervention and follow-up.

VII. References

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