

The impact of play on life quality of children with intellectual disability

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Abstract: The study aimed to understand the role of play activities, as playing a significant role in the life of children with intellectual disabilities; it also aimed at using play activities that improve many aspects of growth of children with intellectual disabilities. It also has positive effects on the integration process of the children of this group with their ordinary peers in everyday activities, which helps them to be accepted, thus contributing to their greater integration into society as a whole. The researcher used the experimental method. The study sample consisted of 38 children aged between 8 and 12 who had intellectual disability in Taif, and they were randomly selected. Then they were divided into two experimental groups and a control group. The tools of the study were: Quality of life skills test (researcher preparation) - Note card for quality of life skills (researcher preparation). The study reached many results; there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the children of the experimental group on the quality of life test in the pretest and post-test. In addition, there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the children of the experimental group on the quality of life note cards in pre and post- test. The study recommended that, when using the method of education by playing, sensory, visual and audiovisual stimuli must be considered while teaching this group, also activities that match their level of intelligence must be chosen to achieve success.

Keywords: play strategy, intellectual disability, children life.

1. INTRODUCTION

Intellectual disabilities of all kinds have been documented throughout history. Society has been often unkind to people with intellectual disability and sentenced them to prison or even death. However, present societies are working toward desegregation and support of intellectually disabled individuals. Intellectual disability is a generalized disorder characterized by impaired cognitive functioning. This disorder is rooted in childhood (Wenner, 2009). Children make up a major part of world population (about 50% of the population in developing countries). Antisocial behaviors are the most common disorders in children and adolescents. Children with intellectual disability may exhibit symptoms such as delayed speech development, deficits in memory skills, difficulty learning social rules, difficulty with problem solving skills, delayed development of adaptive behaviors, and lack of social inhibitors (Nikazin, Shaeeri & Nainian, 2007). Intellectual disability is one of the disabilities that make up a high proportion of people with special needs at the global level, which amounts to 3%, or one third of the total members of this category in general, and intellectual disability is a kind of intellectual and psychological failure of the child that prevents him from adapting to the social environment as a result of lack of awareness and appropriate behavior in different situations, which lead to the failure of the child in Showing behavior and the formation of social relations, Which calls for the cooperation and unite of all concerned bodies to reduce the increase in the number of children with mental disabilities. Identifying the needs of children with intellectual disabilities and finding ways to satisfy them helps to a large extent to develop a healthy child as much as his abilities

allow. The most important of these needs: is the need to play, as it helps to grow and strengthen the muscles, and helps in the movement of blood circulation and revitalization, and it also achieves many of the needs of mental growth, psychological growth and social growth. (Elsayed. Abdel-Nabi, 2004: 22). A child with an intellectual disability is pleased to enjoy the life enjoyed by other ordinary children, including playing and getting away from the troubles of life (Mahrous Al-Shennawi, 1997). Play is the life of the child and the ability in which the child can move and play and with the same capacity be vital, Play is essential for the development of physical, motor, mental, emotional and social aspects of the child. Play is also a need of the physiological needs that the individual needs for his growth (Zaid Al-Hawaidi, 2004). Muhammad Abdel-Jaber, Muhammad al-Nababtah (1998: 249), Naima Badr and Abdel-Fattah Saber (2000) agree that one of the basic goals that scientists have for people with intellectual disabilities is to teach them to how to engage in leisure activities in an appropriate manner. Kamal Morsi (1999) argues that people with intellectual disabilities need to be enjoyed and entertained, and to help them acquire skills that enable them to use their leisure time in acceptable recreational activities that benefit them and their families.

Purpose of the study:

The present study aimed to shed light on the role of play activities, as playing a significant role in the lives of children with intellectual disabilities. On the other, the study stressed on using play activities that improve many aspects of growth of the child with mental disabilities, that will reflect positively on the integration of children of this group with ordinary peers in the activities of daily life, which helps to improve them, and thus contribute to their integration into society as a whole.

Research Questions:

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the average scores of children in the research sample on the quality of life test in pre and post test in favor of the post-test.
2. There is a statistically significant difference between the average scores of the children of the research sample on the quality of life note pre and post test in favor of the post -test.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies in the area of quality of life in children and adolescents have shown that high levels of satisfaction with life or perceived quality of life act as a powerful psychological force. Research has shown a significant relationship between quality of life and a variety of high-risk behaviors and physical and learning disorders (Zullig, Pun &, Huebner, 2007). Research has also shown that the intensity of symptoms of mental disorders is an important factor in the health-related quality of life of children and adolescents (Dey, Landolt &, Mohler-Kuo, 2012). For instance, in children and adolescents with cerebral palsy health-related quality of life was significantly related to lower levels of psychopathological symptoms, higher levels of prosocial behavior, and a lower need for social activities (Frontini, Crespo, Carona,& Canavarro,2012). Different aspects of quality of life are threatened in children with mental disorders, with the greatest effect on psychosocial and family-related domains and less effect on physical domains (Dey, Landolt &, Mohler-Kuo, 2012). Regular motor activity has many benefits for mental and physical condition (Setkowicz,& Mazur,2006). In the other study sporting practice has shown the greatest effect on the quality of life of autistic children, as it improves sensorimotor skills, communication, socialization, and self-esteem (Massion, 2006). Play links a child's internal thoughts to the outer world by allowing the child to control or manipulate outer objects. Play allows the child to safely express experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires that might be more threatening if directly addressed (Wethington, Hahn, & Fuqua-Whitley, 2008). Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength. It has also been shown to help children adjust to the school setting and even enhance children's learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills (Ginsburg, 2007). Previous study showed that quality of life in adolescents was affected by mental health, socio-economic status, gender, and age differences (Wenner, 2009). Beside this positive effect of group meeting therapy was indicated on both quality of life and family relations of intellectually disabled children (Ghamari Givi, 2013). The relationship between autonomy and quality of life in students with hearing impairment indicated significant differences between students with hearing impairment and normal students in power of choice and independence (Hassanpour, Naraghi,& Mousavi,2011), and also a significant relationship between quality of life and the risk of unintentional injuries in children(Soori, Abachizadeh,2006). Beside this, quality of life and self-report in children strongly influenced adolescents with cognitive disability (Ikeda, 2013). Miller and Monroe (1990),

determine the relationship between musical activities and adaptive behavior in the study sample of 16 persons with mental disabilities at the age of majority, With special musical skills or with special musical interests or both. The study found difficulties in achieving adaptation to musical skills or interests. These difficulties were characterized by overlapping and confusion. However, the results of the study indicate that there is no (generally) poor adjustment among those with special musical skills associated with mental disability, which indicates the effectiveness of some activities and musical skills in the development of adaptive behavior of people with intellectual disabilities.

Children with intellectual disabilities

Due to the current interest in play activities and their relationship to life aspects, the following definition of children with intellectual disabilities can be adopted. Children with mental disabilities are defined as children whose functional performance is generally lower than the mean by two or more negative standard deviations, accompanied by a lack of adaptive behavior (ie, a significant decrease in their maturation rate, and their ability to Learning, and social norms, during their growth from birth to 18 years, whether for genetic or acquired reasons) (Abdul Muttalib Al-Qureaiti 2011: 205).

Play

There are many definitions addressed to define the concept of play, and provide a comprehensive definition. In spite of the many studies conducted on the game, there are still difficulties in determining what the play is , and may be due to the difficulty of definition of the play to the coverage and diversity of activities, at the vertical level, we find that the upper animals play, children play at different stages of their age, and The adults play, and on the horizontal level we find sensory and motor play, imaginative play, and play according to rules, and in each of these categories we find countless kinds of play (Naima Badr and Abdel Fattah Saber, 2000). Many have tried to define the play in a way that includes all its features, and although this may seem easy - we have all played - but it is not at all. It has been said that play is as dodgy as water and cannot be theoretically fixed just as the hand cannot be tightened on water (Christine McIntyre, 2004). Some of the definitions of play in terms of the activities, actions and movements of the child in general or the child with mental disabilities in particular can be presented as follows:

Play is defined as "a variety of activities ranging from sporting, artistic, cultural, and electronic or scientific games extended to all ages." (Ahmed Jad Mewl, 2009: 50). And "play activities are a variety of sports, artistic, cultural, etc. activities practiced by children and help in their physical, mental, social, emotional and linguistic development." (Al-Tehama, 2005: 7). Despite the many benefits that play may achieve in the psychological, physical, social and other aspects, but the first interest of the child when engaged in the exercise of various activities is entertainment, however, the development of different aspects of the personality can be achieved by things and ways other than playing, but recreation and recreation The child will receive it only through various and varied play activities. (Ahmed Jad Mawli, 2009: 49).

The importance of play activities for people with intellectual disabilities

"Persons with disabilities in general, and persons with mental disabilities in particular, shall enjoy physical, social and educational benefits as a result of their participation in appropriate recreational activities. A child with mental disabilities may, as a result of participating in a program with play and recreational activities, obtain the following benefits:

Playing helps this class of children to achieve a better level of fitness and health, as well as helps to grow the language. Play activities also help with mobility training and thus ease of movement. Playing activities also help to develop the skills of social interaction and gain acceptance from peers with disabilities and normality, which helps to modify the child's self-concept and help him to interact within a wide range of attitudes and peers and develop his leisure skills (Naima Mohammed Badr, Abdel-Fattah Saber, 1999). The sports activities practiced by almost all children with intellectual disabilities are of a great importance to them in that they help them to develop motor coordination or motor capacity.it also helps in developing endurance, social communication and self-confidence, as well as raise their moral spirit and satisfy their needs to the sense of success and excellence. Playing activities help also in emancipation of emotions through the exercise of play activities, formation of normal behavioral trends through interaction and integration with peers and modifying misconduct and training them on socially acceptable behavior, responsibility and role distribution. (Mustafa Fahmi, 1965: 175; Suheir Kamel, 1998: 202; Kamal Morsi, 1999: 314; Wafaa Zaatat, 2003).

Parenting Tips to Help in Raising a Child with an Intellectual Disability

Parents can play a significant role in treating and raising a child with an intellectual disability. Parents should encourage independence with children with mental disabilities, as they have a slow learning curve. A parent telling their child that he cannot do anything will make him even more dependent and foster low self-esteem. One method to make kids independent is by breaking down complex tasks/ideas into simple one. Parents must be active at parent-teacher meetings to find out what are the strengths and weaknesses of their child. Parent-teacher conferences can be an excellent forum where you can keep track of their child's development. It can also be a place where a healthy exchange of ideas can take place. Many parents limit their child's interactions with others in a bid to protect them. Then there are others who wish to avoid unpleasant situations. While these are legitimate reasons, making a child socially active would foster a sense of normalcy. Taking care of a child with disabilities is difficult for parents. Often there are instances when parents go into depression or bickering takes place between the couple. It can be helpful to know that there are other parents out there who are going through the same ordeal. Networking helps parents a lot, as it not just acts as a support group but also becomes a place where parents can share their experiences and ideas to come up with new ways of raising kids with disabilities. Developing a habit that can be followed by the kids as it can help them feel secure is very important to break up routine. School can be stressful, and a safe environment at home with a predictable routine can help them feel secure. Children with mental disabilities need constant appreciation and affection to overcome those. Encouragement through a reward system can help boost their self-confidence. However, avoid any negative punishments as it is likely to demotivate them. Children with mental disabilities may find it difficult to cope with certain situations. In such cases, it is essential that they don't dwell on their inability to comprehend those things. Diverting their mind would be a good idea in such situations. Something as simple as giving them headphones and making them listen to music would help in diverting their mind.

3. METHODOLOGY

The experimental method was used because it is more appropriate to the nature of the study and appropriate to the goal set by the researcher, which he set to explain the variables of the study. The study consists of children aged between 8 and 12 years who suffer from mental disability in the city of Taif, consisting of 38 children (boys and girls), they were randomly selected from children with mental disability, then divided into two experimental groups and a control group.

Data Collection

After the participants took the pretest, the experimental group performed selected school games for 12 weeks, with three 1-hour sessions per week. During this period the control group performed their daily routines. Students from both group (control & experimental), were allowed to integrate with each other, after this integration both groups took the posttest. The instrument for data collection was the 40-item Quality of Life (Prepared by the Researcher), Comprises 4 subscales: physical function, social function, cognitive function, and emotional function. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. After confirming the validity of the questionnaire, it was distributed among a sample of parents of children with intellectual disability. The mean Cronbach's alpha was 0.90, indicating the high reliability of the questionnaire.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the collected data, T-test for independent samples was used to examine whether there were significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in the pretest. The results indicated the absence of a significant difference between these groups. Paired t-test was used to examine the effect of selected school games on the quality of life of the participants. The results indicated that school games have a significant positive effect on quality of life. Ghamari Givi et al showed that group therapy meeting has a significant positive effect on family relations of children with intellectual disability.

Table (1): T-test results in the pre and post test of the experimental group in the quality of life test

Variable	Total (N)	Total averages		df	t Statistic	p-value
		Pre-test	Post-test			
Quality of Life	38	133		37	25.30	0.001

To verify the validity of the first hypothesis, which states that: *There is a statistically significant difference between the average scores of the children of the research sample on the quality of life test in the (pre and post) test in favor of the post-test.* The researcher calculated the significance of the differences between the mean scores of the children of the experimental group on the test, in (pre and post) test using the T-test.

The table above shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the average scores of children in the experimental group on the quality of life test in the in the pre-test and post - test, where calculated (T) is greater than tabular (T) and = 2.20, and therefore it is statistically significant for the results of children in the post-test and thus validates the first hypothesis.

Table (2): T-test results in the pre and post test of the experimental group in the note of quality of life

Variable	Total (N)	Total averages		df	t Statistic	p-value
		Pre-test	Post-test			
Note card quality of life	38	270		37		0.001

To verify the validity of the second hypothesis, which states that: There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the children of the research sample on the note of quality of life in the test in the in the pre-test and post - test in favor of the post - test, the researcher calculated the difference between the average scores of the children of the experimental group on the note card Quality of Life in pre-test and post - test T-test. The table above shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of children of the experimental group on the quality of life observation card the pre-test and post - test, where calculated (T) is greater than tabular (T) and = 2.20, and therefore it is statistically significant for the results of children in the post-test and thus validates the second hypothesis.

Table 3: Paired t-test comparisons of physical function in the pretest and posttest

Variable	Test	N	mean	t-Statistic	df	p-value
Physical Function	Pre-test	38	2.55	-3.3	37	0.001
	Post-test	38	2.73			

The present findings showed a positive relationship between health-related quality of life and physical activity among adults with affective, anxiety, and substance dependence disorders. The results indicated that these disorders were associated with substantial impairment in health-related quality of life. Also, higher levels of physical activity were associated with higher health-related quality of life. Physical activity and play are thus beneficial to those suffering from mental disorders. Our findings are consistent with the results of Schmitz et al.

Table 4: Paired t-test comparisons of social function in the pretest and posttest

Variable	Test	N	mean	t-Statistic	df	p-value
Social Function	Pre-test	38	2.75	-2.3	37	0.006
	Post-test	38	2.90			

The results also showed a significant positive relationship between playing activities and social function of the intellectually disabled. Nikazin et al. studied quality of life in adolescents with an emphasis on mental health, socio-economic status, gender, and age differences. The results showed that boys were in a better condition than girls in physical well-being, mental well-being, parent relations and home life, social support and peers, and autonomy. There were also statistically significant differences among students with high and low social and economic status in physical well-being, family relationships, household life, financial resources and mental well-being. Univariate ANOVA results showed that the normal group had a higher degree of abnormal groupies in mood, emotional, social acceptance, mental well-being, and mind. Our results are consistent with these results.

Table 5: Paired t-test comparisons of cognitive function in the pretest and posttest

Variable	Test	N	mean	t-Statistic	df	p-value
cognitive function	Pre-test	38	2.30	-3.3	37	0.001
	Post-test	38	2.60			

The results of the present research indicated that playing activities also have a significant positive effect on the cognitive function of children with intellectual disability. Ikeda investigated the relationship between quality of life and self-report in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders or mild intellectual disability. The findings showed that the PedsQL questionnaire was inappropriate for children and adolescents with ASDs or MID. cognitive and language ability and disease-specific symptoms such as impaired social relationships strongly influenced the comprehension and appraisal of the questionnaire. our observations are consistent with the present findings.

Variable	Test	N	mean	t-Statistic	df	p-value
cognitive function	Pre-test	38	2.50	-2.9	37	0.002
	Post-test	38	2.64			

The present research results indicated the significant positive relationship between playing activities and emotional function of children with intellectual disability. Hassanpour et al. examined the relationship between autonomy and quality of life in students with hearing impairment. The results indicated significant differences between students with hearing impairment and normal students in power of choice and independence. our observations are consistent with the present findings.

Conclusion of results:

The main findings of the research were to identify the needs of children with mental disabilities and to find ways to satisfy them which greatly helps the child to grow as soundly as his or her abilities allow. The most important needs are the need to play. A child with a mental disability is happy to enjoy the life enjoyed by other ordinary children, including play, and stay away from the troubles of life. The results of the study also proved the play is the life of the child, and the ability in which the child can move and play with the same ability to be animal, and play is necessary for the development of the physical, motor, mental, emotional and social aspects of the child, in addition to that playing is the child's way to discover his world, To start the cognitive growth of these children.

Finally, the results indicated the importance of using both play activities and interaction with the ordinary in achieving social adjustment and development of adaptive behavior in children with mental disabilities.

Recommendations

In the light of the results of the current study, the research recommends the need to use the strategy of playing in the development of some of the skills and concepts of different kindergarten children, whether the ordinary or with special needs. The teacher's guide of people with special needs also need to be prepared and included with a detailed explanation of how to design and use games in teaching. Special education teachers should diversify between learning strategies and use more than one learning strategy instead of a traditional teaching method learning through different games. The most important recommendation of this research is to generalize the use of the educational method, based on playing in all contents of the curriculum for children with intellectual disabilities. Finally, the research recommends the research recommend While using the method of teaching through play, consider the stimuli sensory "audio and visual" educating of students with intellectual disabilities and choosing activities commensurate with their level of intelligence to achieve the chances of success.

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