The Comparison between Family Performance and Psychological Need of Mothers Having Late Learning and Normal Child

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Abstract

Objectives: Realizing the issue of the slow-learning of the child could be considered as a catastrophic mental pressure for the mother. On the other hand, the existence of a slow-learner child in family could be a source of mental pressure which could expose family members, especially the mother to the future emotional crises as well as preparation for extreme reactions and disorders related to the mental pressure. This study aimed at comparing the family performance and psychological needs of mothers with slow-learning children and those with normal children. Methods: Regarding purpose, this study is fundamental and is based on the nature of Casual-Comparative research method. The population consisted of all mothers of slow and normal learning children in the city of Ahvaz in the academic year 2014-2015. Who were selected through convenience sampling method. The number of the selected samples was 200 including 100 normal students and 100 slow-learning students. To collect data and obtain information, field research as well as family functioning (FAD) and psychological needs (PNG) scales and questionnaires were applied. To analyze data, multivariate analysis of variance was applied. Results: The results of the study revealed that there is a significant difference at P<0.01 level between “psychological needs and family functioning” of mothers of slow-learning and normal children. Conclusion as: Mothers of slow-learning children were shown to have lower family functioning as well as more inter-personal problems in comparison to mothers of normal children. Thus plans should be made in order to protect these mothers and interfere in urgent cases.

Keywords: Family functioning, Psychological needs, Slow-learning children, Normal children.
1. Introduction

Considering the family and trying to eliminate difficulties and issues of this basic organization can be a valuable work in the society. Disorder in the family members cause bewilderment, worries and difficulties in relationship among the members of the family. Family's activity shows the common relationship and balance in the family. Psychological needs for analysis of motivating behavior is important. They cause tendency in us for search in the environment that we expect to solve our problems and develop our needs. Woman's role in the family as a mother and the main pillar of in caretaking and training of children and taking care of their physical and mental health while growing is very crucial.

By looking into the human creation we can find out that no two men are precisely similar to each other. These differences are taking place in different physical, mental and behavioral dimensions which are noticeable. In many of the ordinary daily classes there are some students who cannot compete with other classmates and therefore they fail at the end of the year. These pupils are called «slow learner» students and due to their slow learning they can't learn as fast as and as good as the other ordinary same age students. These students are very slow in learning and forget the matters fast. In many countries ministry of teaching and training had made a rule that slow learners students can join the ordinary schools and study the same as other students and therefore they will learn the same as the other students and use the facilities which are used by ordinary students and are not considered as exceptional students. This action is considered as normalization and integration or pervasive condition. This is not a simple task and is faced with many difficulties. These people are facing difficulties such as not being accepted and registered in the ordinary schools, teachers having negative attitudes toward them and the plan, non specialties and lack of experience of the school authorities and these children's difficulties at home and with the family. Difficulties in acceptance of slow learner child by mother on the one side and trying to show the child as a normal person in the society on the other side and also stress and fear of this child being noticed as disable, cause many difficulties in social relationship of the family and therefore causes misbehaving with the child.

On the other side, Alter and Gottlieb, in their analysis noticed that parents of regular children do not accept their children to sit next to a slow learner child and they are angry for that and this will have effect on the children's behavior. Birth of a disabled child, specially a mentally disabled child causes too much pressure on the family. Unfortunately, mothers having disabled children are facing more difficulties than the fathers with the same problem and these mothers suffer more stress and pressure. In a survey from the mothers having slow learning children, they mentioned that after they had understood that their child was a slow learner, they experienced stress and depression or even they experienced physical and mental problems and this also affected the family relationship. Most of them speak of their differences with their husband and these are mainly due to rejection of their children by the society and their relatives, since these people usually compare the disabled child with the other ordinary children and blame mother for that matter of one disabled child in the family affects the family relationship very seriously. The mothers usually are being condemned by the others and they sometime even
condemn themselves. There is a relation between family variables and child's characteristics and demographic variables with the mental health of the parents. Having a disabled child in the family usually affect the relationship in the family very hard and it even affects the social relationship as well and cause reduction in this relationship. Mothers feel responsible and even sometimes they feel guilty which is due to their characteristic construction and this mechanism produces more information about their child's disability and people’s support for disabled children. Since mothers spend more time and energy on the children than fathers and speak to the neighbors, family and other people and explain the child's condition, therefore they will be more excited and will be under pressure and these affect the family relationship.

Slow learner children create too much pressure on their parents. As Minouchin believes, no family is without the natural pressures and stresses. If a family has a proper working system, they can find ways to overcome difficulties and find proper ways to reduce their stresses and work on their stability and health. Most mothers believe that teaching and receiving guidance from doctors cause reduction in their difficulties. Most of the mothers face other problems such as calling the child and family names and labeling them badly. And at the same time people blame mothers in creating these disorders, and compare slow learner children with the other ordinary children and their slow learning cause reduction in the social relationship and also creating family problems. In fact the most stressing condition for the parents are less acceptance of the slow learner child in the society and defeat in achieving the society's supports. Studies conducted regarding the effect of a disabled child born in a family show that the parents suffer from high mental stress. They also suffer from depression and family disorder. And they also have much less time to spend on themselves and their physical and mental health and their mood is always low and bad and most of the time they are bad tempered. In a study conducted regarding the mental-social problems of the family with a disabled child show that the parents and families of these children suffer from mental and physical disabilities compared to the other families who are having normal children and family relation is low in the families having slow learner or disabled children.

Houser conducted a survey on 72 mothers having disabled children and the results showed that the level of stress and mental pressure in these mothers are very high. Malekpour and Farahani conducted a survey on the stress in mothers with disabled or slow learner children and compared them with the mothers having normal children and the results show that the mothers having slow learner or mentally disabled children suffer from much more stress than the other mothers and this stress depend on the level of the child's disability and family's concern. According to the economical, financial and social difficulties which these mothers face have direct relation with the child's disability and therefore we can say that there is a positive and direct relationship between the mothers' behavior and mental pressure and the child's disabilities.

Akbari Bayatiyani& colleagues mentioned that with the increase in the social relationship, life's quality of the parents with slow learning quality will increase. Studies conducted by Dmayer show that parents having disabled children face marriage and family problems since
stress reduces the sexual relationship. Kaveh and colleagues conducted researches and they found out that the training programs regarding increasing the endurance on the life quality of parents of those having slight disabled children. In the family mother is the most responsible person and plays an important role in the psychological condition of the family. Therefore the mothers' mental and psychological condition should be in balance since execution of the teaching intervention on mothers can very well affect the family behavior.

Glidden and colleagues showed that the mothers of the mentally disorder children have higher mark in Neurosis compared to the mothers with ordinary and natural children. In this regard Van Riper conducted a survey on 55 families having slow learner children and obtained the results that these parents experience more stress and pressure in balancing compared to the control group. Since the mother is playing a key role in creating social-psychological balance in the family and most of the pressures and stresses are on the mother and therefore these pressures and stresses affect the other members of the family, and also since these conditions play an important role in the psychological health of the family, present research looks into the condition of family performance towards their slow learner in comparison to the families having normal learner children and find out these differences between both the families. Are there any psychological differences between mothers with the slow learner children and mothers having normal and ordinary children?

**Methods**

The casual-comparative method of research has been used in this project. The variables of the project consisted of family performance and psychological needs and also independent variables. Participants were slow learner children and ordinary children. Statistical society in this project consisted of mothers of all the slow learners and ordinary primary school students who were studying in the city of Ahwaz. Statistical samples consisted of 200 girl students studying in the primary schools in the year 2014-2015 in Ahwaz. Among those who were analyzed 100 students were ordinary students and the other 100 were slow learner students. Capacity of the sample students were analyzed according to their test abilities. Since the test abilities were more than 80% it showed that the sample capacity was enough. Slow learner students were recognized from the "RIVEN" color test and family performance and turnover questionnaire and psychological needs questionnaire were presented to the mothers of the students to answer them. The method of sampling was conducted according to available sampling and the following tools were used in this project:

A. Family Assessment Device of Mac Master (FAD): FAD questionnaire contains 60 questions which are prepared for analysis of the family performance according to Mac Master Patterns. This has been prepared by Epstein, Bishop and Levin, with the aim of organizational trait explanation and family construction to evaluate the family's abilities in compromising with the family duties and receiving the reports on their measurement and evaluation. Family performance questionnaire is used for differentiating healthy families from unhealthy families, and evaluating the exchange patterns between the members of the family. This instrument consisted of explanation of tests for evaluation of the family. Test in each phrase consists of the
amount of characteristics coordination with the family which is according to the 4 level scales of Likert and in the form of "I completely agree, I agree, I disagree and I completely disagree". This questionnaire consists of 7 sub scales with the titles of emotional involvement, role play, whole action, problem solving, emotional support, and behavioral control. Low mark in this questionnaire shows the health activity and high mark in this questionnaire shows unhealthy activity. This test's validity shows that it consists of concurrent and forecasting validity. This instrument has been used in an independent study on 178 couples which were about 60 years of age with the scale of Locke-Wallace of medium marriage satisfaction coordination and show good power for forecast of scale marks among the Philadelphians old couples. This instrument also has the power to recognize clinical and nonclinical members of the family and therefore it is valid in 7 sub scales for different groups. This test is conducted on 503 samples in the year 1983 by the authors. Alfa coefficient domain for the scales was between 72% and 92% which had good internal similarity. Had marked this test's validity 0.93. The test stability according to Kronbakh Alfa was 0.96.

B. Psychological Needs General (PNG): This scale was produced in the year 2000 by Guardia, Deci and Ryan, Which measures the amount of support feeling of autonomous needs, competence and relation with the others tests. The mentioned scale consists of 21 articles which is graded according to the Likert 7 degree gradation.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Completely wrong to some extent wrong completely correct

Wei, Shaffer, Young and Zakalik, Have reported the need for independence, competence, and continuity and total scale mark as 0.68, 0.75, 0.85, 0.90 respectively. This scale has been executed among the managers and Iranian University students in Iran and they are well stable and valid and the Alfa in this condition was between 74% to 79 percent. The stability in this research is according to Kronbakh Alfa which is equal to 0.95.

C. Raven progressive matrix test: this test was prepared in the year 1947 by Penrose and Raven. This test is used for testing intelligence of the children between ages 5 to 9 years old. It consists of color images. It consists of 36 elements for mentally disabled children and they are colorful and it lasts for 30 minutes. The questions mentioned in the matrix are all from one kind and all are matrix and abstract images which are arranged in a logical sequence. The questions in the test are arranged from simple to difficult questions. To differentiate slow learner children from ordinary children, color images of Raven have been executed for these children with the intelligence quotient between 70 to 84 which are considered as slow learner children.
Results

A. Descriptive results:

Descriptive results of this project consisted of statistical indicators such as average and standard aviation for all the studied variables according to table 1.

Table 1: Average, standard aviation, minimum and maximum marks for family performance and psychological needs general of mothers having slow learner and ordinary children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variable</th>
<th>Statistical indicators</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>Standard aviation</th>
<th>minimum</th>
<th>maximum</th>
<th>number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family performance</td>
<td>Slow learner children</td>
<td>154.71</td>
<td>33.99</td>
<td>81.00</td>
<td>212.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ordinary children</td>
<td>123.62</td>
<td>23.31</td>
<td>78.00</td>
<td>204.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological needs</td>
<td>Slow learner</td>
<td>82.48</td>
<td>30.28</td>
<td>34.00</td>
<td>147.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ordinary</td>
<td>113.44</td>
<td>20.64</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>147.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 1 shows the family performance, average and standard aviation for slow learner children are 154.71 and 33.99 respectively and for ordinary children are 123.62 and 23.31 respectively and in psychological needs, average and standard aviation for slow learner children are 82.48 and 30.28 and for ordinary children are 113.44 and 20.64 respectively. In family performance, variable minimum and maximum point for slow learner children are 81.00 and 212.00 and for ordinary children they are 78.00 and 204.00 respectively and in psychological needs, variable are 34.00 and 147.00 for slow learner children and 60.00 and 147.00 for ordinary children respectively.

Result obtained from project hypothesis

Present project consisted of 2 hypotheses and each hypothesis is presented together along with its analysis results.

Hypothesis1. There are differences between the family performances of slow learner and ordinary children.

Hypothesis2. There are psychological needs differences between mothers having slow learner children and ordinary children.

Table 2: Results of analysis of multi variables "Manowa" on the points obtained by family performance and psychological needs of mothers having slow learner children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test name</th>
<th>amount</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>DF hypothesis</th>
<th>DF error</th>
<th>P meaningful level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test with Pilayee</td>
<td>0.269</td>
<td>36.31</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As table 2 shows, meaningful levels of all tests show that there is a meaningful differences between at least one of the dependent variables (family performance, psychological needs general) between slow learner and ordinary children (P=0.0001 and F=36.31).

To understand the differences, the results obtained from the analysis of single variables in Manowa text have been presented in table 3. According to the results obtained, the first hypothesis is confirmed.

Table 3: Results obtained from single variables analysis in Manowa test on family performance and psychological needs of mothers with slow learner and ordinary children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>variables</th>
<th>Total squares</th>
<th>Degree of freedom</th>
<th>Squares average</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Meaningful level P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family performance</td>
<td>48329.40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48329.40</td>
<td>56.88</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological needs</td>
<td>47926.08</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>47926.08</td>
<td>71.33</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table 3 shows, there are meaningful differences in family performances and psychological needs between mothers having slow learner children and ordinary children (P=0.0001, F=56.88). And therefore the first hypothesis is confirmed.

In the other words, according to both groups averages, there is lower family performance between mothers having slow learner children and mothers with ordinary children. And also there are meaningful differences regarding psychological needs between mothers with slow learner children and mothers with ordinary children (P=0.0001, F=71.33). and therefore the second hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion and results

This project is conducted to find out the differences between mothers having slow learner children and those having ordinary children regarding their family performance and psychological needs. 100 mothers with slow learner children and 100 mothers with ordinary children participated in the project. Results showed that there is meaningful differences in family performance points average of mothers of both groups, which means that the mothers of
slow learner children action on family performance was weaker than mothers of ordinary children (P<0.001).

This result coordinates with Bogels and Brechman, project and the results obtained by Branje, Hale, III, Frijns and Meeus, and also with the results obtained from the studies of Mosavi Shoshtari, Shahsavari, Nooraldin Vand, Shehni Yeylagh & Pasha, Sharifi, Amanolahi, Tajalli and Ardalan, based on the effect of relationship in family performance and students compatibility. According to the research conducted by Mac Conkey, Truesdale Kennedy, Chang, Jarrah and Shukri, on the deep effect of a disabled child on the family life satisfaction and family relationship are in the same direction. And the social relationship also reduces.

And according to the research conducted by Rahnama & Gholami, based on the unsuitable sanitary condition, and mental and family difficulties in slow learner children family in comparison to ordinary children were coordinating in all 3 study grades. Present study coordinates with the study conducted by Sultani Far & Bita, and the results they obtained regarding the relationship of negative performance with the children's depression. Weisman, the same as this project understand that coherence and coordination in the family and understanding among the members of the family regarding themselves and their roles as a unit has coordination and relation with the family members emotional health and they reported lower depression and anxiety.

Family performance is one of the most important indicators of life quality and family and its member's mental health. And also their negative relation is one of the most important creators and maintenance of mental disorder excitement. Having a disabled child at home causes disorder in the family behavior and all the thinking and actions of the family centers on that child. A slow learner child disturbs the family network. Family's relation with the society becomes less visible and each member of the family somehow becomes secluded. Having a disabled child in the family will affect the family especially mother and this will affect the marriage relationship. Fading out of the two sided roles of marriage will be accompanied with the bad behavior of mother in the family and having a disabled child is one of the damaging ground in the family. One of the most important and most difficult situations in the family is about having a child in the family who is not being trained properly. Since most of the training of a disabled child is done by mother, therefore repeated failure in training and caretaking causes too much mental pressure on mother.

Results also show that psychological needs of mothers with disabled and slow learner child have a meaningful difference with mothers having a normal child (P=0.001). Therefore it is clear that a slow learner child puts too much mental pressure on the mother. This result confirms the results obtained by Ong, L and Chandran, Khazaie, Duvdevany, Malekpour & Farahani, Houser, Van Riper, And Glidden and colleagues. Research showed that families with disabled children facing many different kinds of family difficulties which parents can experience during the life. Gorji and Mahmoodi, Showed in their research that mental health and children
training of mother having one disabled child and more than one child has no meaningful difference.

Research conducted by Mosevi Khatat and colleagues,⁵⁷ Regarding the cognitive, mental and social characteristics of parents having more than one disabled child show that these kind of mothers experience lower physical, anxiety, social and depression dimensions. Parents of disabled children experience instable emotional conditions, psychological diseases, stable mourning and social isolation.⁵⁸ And also most mothers are scared of being condemned by the others or by themselves which coincide with Midence andO’Neill.¹⁴

Studies conducted show increasing pressure on the mothers with disabled children and they are not healthy, need and special facilities such as physical care, treatment and training, and they are faced with family problems such as frustration, wishes, lost dreams, tolerance of people, embracement, hiding of the child etc….. And all these create pressure and by the time these pressure will increase. Therefore there should be hope for mothers regarding the slow learner child becoming better and give her hope that the stress decreases by the time and she will get relieved from all the worries and cause more success in her facing the child's difficulties.

Regarding the role of women in the advancement of child and family's health and their abilities to forward more professional and expert services and reducing the damaging effects and roles played by them as wife and mother and finally the effect of their health on the society, there should be some training sessions for mothers regarding the children training and solving the family problems and also learning skills for reducing and emitting stress and correction of behavior and not blaming herself for what had happened and also managing with the different situations to reduce pressure and motherhood difficulties and cause satisfaction in life.
References


