

Participation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities in Recreational and Leisure Activities

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Abstract:

Recreational and leisure activities are critical dimension for the quality of life of all people, including those with developmental disabilities. There is difference between the play of children with and without intellectual disabilities because of the limitations of the cognitive difference and the functioning level of the children with intellectual disability. The present study is taken up to find out the different leisure activities in which persons with intellectual disability participate. In this study purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. An open ended questionnaire was developed and interview method was used to collect the data. Majority of the persons with intellectual disability (64%) are spending their free time by watching television. The favourite activities of the persons with intellectual disability are watching television, play cricket, cycling' and listening music, net browsing, cooking, and shopping. The indoor games played by the persons with intellectual disability are caroms, playing cards & computer and the outdoor games played by them are cricket, basketball, flying kites and running. One of the important finding of study is that majority (93%) of the persons with intellectual disability do not know the rules of the games, even though they are

playing rule based game like caroms, basketball and cricket. An interesting finding of the study is that among all family members' mothers of persons with intellectual disability is playing an important role for participation of their children in recreational activities.

Key words: Intellectual disabilities, Recreational activities, Leisure activities, Indoor games, Outdoor games.

INTRODUCTION

Recreational and leisure activities are critical dimensions of the quality of life for all people, including those with developmental disabilities. There is difference between the play of children with and without disabilities because of the limitations of the cognitive difference and the functioning level of the children with intellectual disabilities. Some individuals with disabilities may have difficulty in communicating ideas about potential interests. Thus, exploration of interests takes time, exploring and trying out different activities and settings. Over time, however, one can begin to "discover interests" of a person which might be further developed or pursued through recreation and leisure involvements. O'Brien and Lyle (1987) speak to the importance of interests: They express individual gifts, concerns, and fascinations and call for activities, information, and tools. Shared interest founds associations. People point to interests when they describe what gives their lives meaning. Providing for students with disabilities with ways of using leisure time in a satisfying manner is also a way of enhancing the students' self-esteem and emotional well-being (Allen 1980). The student who is able to initiate or join in activities during his leisure time may become more self-confident than the student who has much leisure - time and few ideas how to use it. Involvement in recreation activities releases stress and tension from the perils of society. Braum (1991) recalls the findings of researchers that state, "relaxation tends to alleviate many of the symptoms of

stress. Activities that fill leisure time, performed within a group, strengthen social support ties known to negate stress" (p. 407). The idea of choice in leisure presents opportunities where one can recreate.

Leisure services for children and adults with intellectual disability, unfortunately, had relatively low priority. "These individuals currently may lack the skills needed to participate in traditional recreation activities (Wehman & Schleien, 1981). In addition, they may have extensive amounts of free time that is not a source of enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfaction and, thus, may be viewed as negative and undesirable (Rynders & Schleien, 1991). This shortage of appropriate leisure services for those with intellectual disability is particularly unfortunate because leisure participation is an important aspect of successful community adjustment (Rynders & Schleien, 1988).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Leisure time management is one of the important aspect for every individual. Persons without disability well plan their leisure time and utilize in a positive and constructive way. The persons with intellectual disability are lacking in this aspect. The present study is taken to find out the different leisure activities in which persons with intellectual disability participate. This can also enable us to prepare and plan leisure time activities for persons with intellectual disability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the different leisure activities in which persons with intellectual disability participate.
2. To analyze the involvement of persons with intellectual disability in leisure activities with respect to their free time activities, favorite activities, indoor & outdoor activities, knowledge of games rules of the individual,

family member support, financial needs, availability of entertainment facility at centre/ work place and difficulty they faced

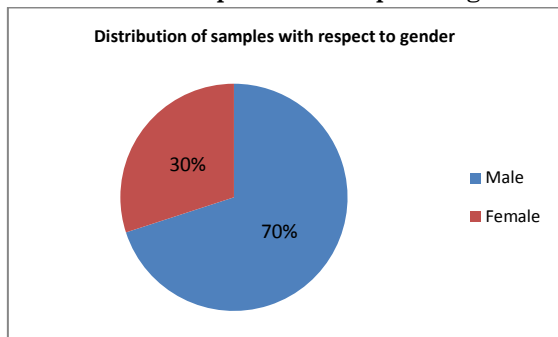
METHODOLOGY

In this present study exploratory method is used to find out the different leisure activities in which persons with intellectual disability participate.

Sample and sampling technique

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample, which consists of total fifty persons with intellectual disability. It includes both male and female participants. The total male participants are 35 and the female participants are (15). All the participants were attending vocational centre. The distributions of sample with respect to gender are presented in figure-1 below.

Figure-1: Distribution of samples with respect to gender



Tool

The researcher has developed an interview schedule which consists of two parts: Part I includes profile of the sample such as name, age, gender, severity level, vocational training, employment, income, support at home and residential localities.

Part –II consists of total ten open ended questionnaire to elicit the information from the samples.

Validity

The developed interview schedule consists of ten questions related to the different leisure and recreational activities participated by the persons with intellectual disability. Content validity is established in the selection of items by taking consensus of eighteen (18) professionals, who are working in the field of special education. Item wise analysis revealed an agreement of 90-100% for inclusion items as appropriate in the interview schedule among the eighteen (18) professionals, thereby establishing the validity of the interview schedule.

Data collection

The researcher by taking prior appointment from the head of the organizations met each sample individually and administered the tool to each respondent. Before administering the tool close rapport was built with the respondents by talking and discussing about various activities. The data was collected using the validated interview schedule formulated by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The responses were elicited by asking questions by the researcher and the responses for each of the questions were recorded. The researcher also explained the items in the other languages where ever required. The responses for each of the questions yielded varied responses from persons with intellectual disability.

Response coding

The open ended questions yielded varied responses from the participants for each of the formulated questions. Similar responses were clustered into a single common response and analysis was done.

Table- 1: Activities that you do in your free time. N=50

S.NO	Responses	n	%
1	Watch T.V	32	64
2.	Internet browsing	2	4
3.	Play cricket	6	12
4.	Walking	5	10
5.	Cycling	5	10

Multiple responses admissible

Table-1 reveals that free time activities of the persons with Intellectual disabilities. Majority of (64%) are expressed they spend their free time by watching TV. 12% play cricket, 10%, cycling and Walking and 4 % internet browsing.

Table- 2. Favourite activities that you like to do in your leisure time. N=50

S.NO	Responses	n	%
1	Watch T.V	35	70
2.	Carom, cricket, Basket ball	20	40
3.	Listen to music	8	16
4.	cooking	5	10
5	Net browsing	2	4
6.	Shopping	2	4
7	Go to church	2	4

Multiple responses admissible

Table – 2 shows the favourite free time activities of persons with Intellectual Disabilities. 70% of the persons with ID responded that watching TV is the favourite activity, 40% them are play Carom, cricket, Basketball Play, 16% is listening music, 10% cooking 4% net browsing, shopping, and go to church are the favourite activities of persons with Intellectual disabilities.

Table-3: Indoor & Outdoor games you play. N=50

Indoor			Out door		
	n	%		n	%
Caroms	45	90	Basket ball	35	70
Computer games	10	20	Cricket	20	40
Playing cards	2	4	Flying kites	4	8
			Running	2	4

Multiple responses admissible

Table-3 indicates the Indoor and outdoor games played by the children with Persons with intellectual disability. Majority (90%) caroms, 20% computer games, 4% playing cards are the indoor games are expressed by the persons with intellectual disabilities. Basketball 70%, Cricket 40%, flying kites 8% and running 4% are the outdoor games played by the persons with Intellectual disabilities.

Table-4: Know rules of the games. N=50

	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
	6	12	44	88
Cricket	Stump out			

Multiple responses admissible

Table -4 reveals that rules of the games known by the persons with intellectual disability. Total 88% of the persons with intellectual disability do not aware of the rules of the games played by them. Only 12% of them expressed that they know the rules of the cricket played by them that is stump out.

Table-5: Support to participate in leisure time activities. N=50

Responses	n	%
Yes	36	72
No	14	28

Multiple responses admissible

Table-5 reveals that support they required to participate in the leisure time activities. Total 72% of the persons with intellectual disability expressed that they need support to participate in the leisure time activities (those support are from family members, coach to train them) and 28% expressed that they do not required any support to participate in leisure time activities.

Table-6: Person who participate to play with you at home? N=50

Responses	n	%
Mother	27	54
Father	6	12
Brother	5	10
Sister	6	12
No	6	12

Multiple responses admissible

Table-6 indicates the participation of the family members in play activities with their child. Among all maximum 54 % of the persons with intellectual disability say that mothers played with them, total 12%, says that father & sister played with them and only 10% says that brother played with them. Total 12% sample expressed that no one is participating in the play activities with them.

Table-7: Do you go out to play/ movie/club/ friend / relative house? N=50

Response	No. of sample with %	Responses	n	%
Yes.	48(96%)	Movies	40	80
		Clubs	2	4
		Meet friends	10	20
		Visit relatives	15	30
No.	2 (4%)			

Multiple responses admissible

Table-7 indicates the participation of persons with intellectual disability go out to play, movie, meet friends and relatives house. Interestingly 48 (96%) of the persons with intellectual disability are going out to for movies, clubs, meets friends and visit relatives. Out of this only 2 (4%) goes to club, total 10 (20%) meet friends, total 15 (30%) visit relatives house and maximum 40 (80%) goes for movies. Only 2 (4%) of the sample says that they do not go out.

Table –8: Need money to participate in leisure time activities. N=50

Response	No. of sample with %	Responses	n	%
Yes	42(84%)	Cinema	18	36
		Hotel	35	70
		Club	2	4
No	8 (16%)			

Multiple responses admissible

Table-8 reveals that need money to participate in leisure time activities. Majority 42 (84%) of the persons with intellectual disability expressed that they need money for leisure time activities. Out of this total 18 (36%) expressed that they need money for movie, total 35 (70%) expressed that they need money for going hotel, only 2 (4%) expressed that they need money for club and very few of them that is 8 (16%) expressed that there is no need of money to participate in leisure time activities.

Table –9: Entertainment facilities at your work place. N=50

Responses	No. of sample with %	Responses for different activities	n	%
Yes	15 (30%)	Caroms	10	20
		Basket ball	5	10
		Chess	5	10
No	35 (70%)			

Multiple responses admissible

Table-9 reveals entertainment facilities at training centres/work places. Majority (70%) of the work places or training centres does not have any entertainment facilities. Only 30% of the places have facilities limited to caroms, basketball and chess, expressed by the persons with intellectual disability.

Table – 10 Difficulty faced by you in your leisure time. N=50

No. of sample with %	Responses	n	%
Yes 35 (70%)	I cannot go out alone	24	48
	No one play with me	6	12
	Don know	5	10
No 15(30%)	We go with family member	15	30

Multiple responses admissible

Table-10 reveals difficulty faced by you in your leisure time. Majority 35 (70%) of the persons with intellectual disability are facing difficulties to participate in leisure time activities such as not able to travel independently, no training. Only 30% of the participants expressed that they are not facing any difficulties in their leisure time activities, they go with family members.

RESULTS

Majority (64%) of the persons with intellectual disability are spending their free time by watching television. The favorite activity of the persons with intellectual disability are watching television, play cricket, cycling' and listen to music, net browsing, cooking, and shopping. The indoor games played by the persons with intellectual disability are caroms, playing cards & computer. The outdoor games played by them are cricket, basketball, flying kites and running. One of the important finding of study is that majority (88%) of the persons with intellectual disability do not know the rules of the games, even though they are playing rule based game like caroms, basketball and cricket. A few of the persons of the intellectual disability expressed that they know the rules of the cricket game that is only stump out. An interesting finding of the study is that mother is participating and playing main role in recreational activities among the family members expressed by the persons with intellectual disability. It is also found that all the persons with intellectual disability are going out to play, movies, going to clubs, meet friends and visit relative's house.

Majority (84%) of the persons with intellectual disability expressed they need money for movie, hotel and club and very few of them expressed there is no need money to participate in leisure time activities. Finding also reveals that majority (70%) of the work places or training centers does not have any entertainment facilities. Only 30% of the places have facilities limited to caroms, basketball and chess expressed by the persons with intellectual disability. Majority (70%) of the Persons with intellectual disability are facing difficulties to participate in leisure time activities as they do not go out alone, no one play with them and they do not know the play. Only 30% of the participants expressed that they are not facing any difficulties in their leisure time activities.

DISCUSSION

Majority of the persons with intellectual disability are spending their free time by watching television. This is proved by one of the previous study by Narayan. J. (2003) "Educational status of children with intellectual disability and additional disabilities' found that children with intellectual disabilities spend time free time by watching television, even those with Visual Impaired would quieter with the sound of television informed by the parents . Previous research has indicated that students with intellectual disability are more likely to engage more frequently in hobbies or solitary activities than social interactions, leading to increased feelings of isolation (Kleinert et al., 2007; Orsmond et al., 2004). Leisure education programs should be developed to enhance the quality of participants' lives by encouraging them to understand opportunities, potentials, and challenges in leisure; comprehend the implications of leisure for their lives; and acquire leisure knowledge, skills, and appreciations (Mundy & Odum, 1979). According to Dattilo and Murphy (1991), professionals should not only include instruction in leisure skills in services for individuals with

intellectual disability, but also adopt a more comprehensive strategy geared toward promoting an awareness of self, an appreciation of leisure, self-determination and decision-making relative to leisure, knowledge and utilization of leisure resources, as well as development of skills in the areas of social interaction and recreation activities. The favourite activity that they do in their free time is watching television, play cricket, cycling' and Listen to music, net browsing, cooking, and shopping. The indoor games played by the persons with intellectual disability are caroms, playing cards and computer games and cricket, basketball, flying kites and running are out door games. One of the important finding of study is that majority of the persons with intellectual disability do not know about the rules of the games, even though they are playing caroms, basketball has to follow certain rules. Only few persons expressed that rules of the cricket game that is stump out.

CONCLUSION

These findings provide a foundation for an improved understanding of the participation of children with Intellectual disabilities in recreational activities.

Leisure is an inalienable human right. Therefore, every effort must be made to help children and adults with intellectual disability achieve an active leisure lifestyle. Leisure services should be designed to stimulate interaction between individuals with and without intellectual disability in integrated community environments. Practitioners and families need to work closely with therapeutic recreation specialists in meeting the leisure needs of people with intellectual disability. This will help children and adults with intellectual disability to have an opportunity to experience meaningful, enjoyable, and satisfying lives.

To meet the needs of individuals with intellectual disability, leisure professionals, educators, and families must

work together to improve and expand leisure services, which can assist families and service providers in planning activities that fit with their child's preferences and ensure active participation.

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