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**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROVISIONS AVAILABLE FOR
STUDENTS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDERS IN ANDHRA PRADESH**

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Abstract

In this study aimed at finding the Educational Provisions of Children with autistic spectrum disorders in Andhra Pradesh. Autism is a life –long brain disorder that is normally diagnosed in early childhood during early age. Students with autism have difficulties in communicating, forming relationships with others and find it hard to make sense of the world around them. The investigator finds that facilities available in Special schools for Autistic children significantly.

Introduction

Autism is a disorder characterized by impairment in communication and social development. The condition is highly variable and may be accompanied by certain behavioral features as well as severe learning difficulties. The varied manifestations of this condition make assessment and intervention a challenging task for speech-language pathologist/therapists. Autism is a life –long brain disorder that is normally diagnosed in early childhood during early age. It is a result of neurological disorders that affects functioning of the brain and child’s communication and Social skills. Autism cannot be diagnosed medically. The most depended method to diagnose autism is to observe the child’s communication, behavior and development level.

Concept of Autism

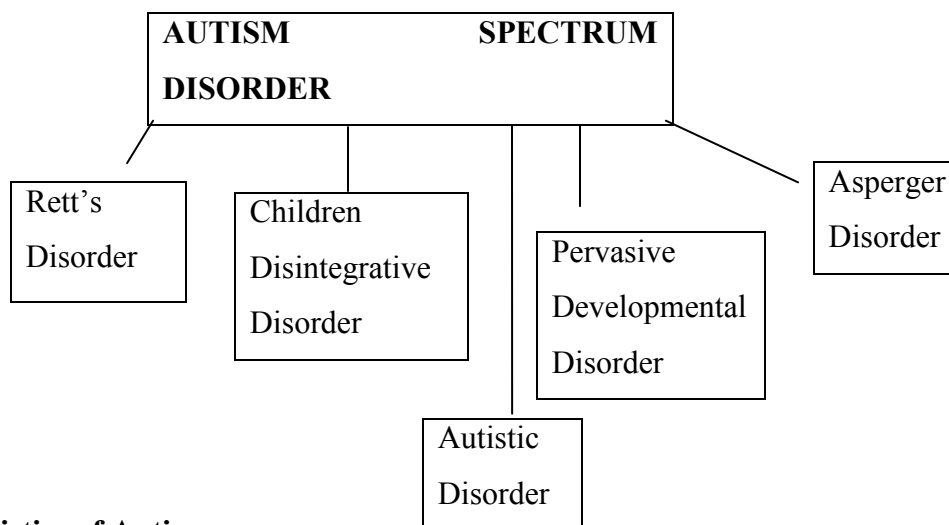
Autism is a neurobiological disorder. Autism and schizophrenia differ on several important features, including age of onset, cognitive level, course, and family history. Autism papers to be evenly distributed across all socioeconomic and educational levels. Autism is usually a lifelong disorder. Many characteristics and behaviours associated with Autism can improve substantially with early intervention. Children with autism do not follow the typical patterns of child development. In some children, hints of future problems may be apparent from birth. In most

cases, the problems become more noticeable as the slips farther behind other children of the same age.

The five types of Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) are

- Autistic Disorder
- Rett Syndrome
- Childhood Disintegrative Disorder
- Asperger Syndrome
- Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS)

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder mean condition of all disabilities in this process those are some disabilities related to the Autism.



Characteristics of Autism

These are some characteristics of autism follows.

- Difficulty in relating to others
- Resistance to change
- Stereotyped behavior (motor)
- Echolalia and literalness in language
- Attachment to objects rather than humans
- Obsessive and or compulsive behaviors
- Sleep and eating problems
- Poor pretend play and lack of imagination

- Inability to express plain or hurt

Importance of Autism

The goal of autism education is to help with the difficult symptoms of the disorder while improving the child's ability to talk, interact, play, and care for his or her needs. As soon as a child's disability has been identified, education should begin. Public schools in every state are required by law to provide appropriate education for school-age children with autism. Early and intensive autism education can help children grow and learn new skills. The goal of this education is to help with the difficult symptoms of autism in a child and to improve the child's skills that help him or her talk, interact, play, learn, and care for his or her needs.

These will include, as needed, services provided by the following:

- Speech therapists
- Occupational therapists
- School psychologists
- Social workers
- School nurses
- Aides.

How important is it?

Autism is a neurodevelopment disorder characterized by difficulties in social relations and communication and by rigid patterns of behaviour in affected individuals. It also involves typical processes of perception, attention and motor development.

Prevalence of the Autism

The absence of a screening tool for developmental disability in young children from developing countries has previously hindered autism researches and service in these territories.

There are no accurate statistics regarding Autism; Many who have some kind of autism haven't been diagnosed, so the numbers are only rough estimations based on the national wide prevalence rate of one in fifty that works out to approximately one million in our country. Presently the autism affected population in India would be close to crores. As the medical community is unable to find any suitable single course for its root, the only suitable are early detection and intervention. One of the major difficulties faced by parents of children with autism in India is obtaining an accurate diagnosis.

In Andhra Pradesh statistical data is identified gender wise information that is boys are 1654 and girls are 1258. But enrolled in special schools only students are there in A.P. It can be said that through the state the statistical data is very low.

Curriculum and Educational Provisions

Teaching has been the most important ingredient of successful management strategies. The effectiveness of programmes likes Treatment and education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped students have been well researched and well established. A teacher or special educator has a role in developing the individualized education programme for the students and guiding and counseling the family of the student. Schools have a specific curriculum prepared by the special education, which meets the individual needs of the students, the curriculum is broad relevant and balanced prepared for students to take up National Open Schools examinations. It is also helpful the students in to mainstream schools.

Autism includes verbal and non- verbal communication thus a variety of teaching strategies will help the child to achieve the objectives set forth in his or her development plan should be used, based upon the students initial evaluation and on going assessment in school curriculum addresses mathematics, language and literacy, like, plans dance and music as therapy, Job Training, support service, Computer aided teaching, visual direction, expressive language skills, emotions and academic performance. Educational strategies are established individually on the basis of a detailed assessment of the autistic person learning abilities.

Educational Aspects:

- Fine motor and gross motor skills
- Body movement like, yoga
- Group activities
- Reading and writing skills (Academic)
- Social interaction skills
- Self-help skills (self activities)
- Imitation (eye contact, observation to surrounding area) and
- Music therapy (co-curricular activities)

Special Resources

Dyslexia laboratory is a reading /writing practice room, housing a series of activities to assess and develop fine motor co-ordination letter recognition and formation basic reading and writing

can be well established through special activities. Autism Laboratory provides sufficient stimulus for the autistic students to register learning inputs. Soft room is a safe play centre to promote activities that build up gross motor co-ordination, special ability and proper reflex movement these activities are grassed towards promoting self awareness and confidence of the student's physical self.

English language teaching: It is conversational English and language skills are imparted through a special English language teaching (ELT) programme and computer is also Home Science is also help them to develop additional skills.

As the special education is the integral part of education where the facilities available for students with autistic spectrum disorder. The outcome of a quality of special education programme includes the development of students with autism performance in academic activities.

Thus, finally the education and special education runs in parallel way for the overall growth and development of the students with autism. So, in this way autism students need special educational provisions for the growth and development in life.

Objectives

- ❖ To enquire into the physical infrastructure and financial facilities available in special schools of Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ To enquire manpower resources available in special schools of Andhra Pradesh.

Questions to be addressed in this study

This study is intended to find the answers for the following questions.

What is the scenario of special education schools with regard to the

- a) Facilities of physical, Infrastructure and Financial facilities provided for students with autism in Andhra Pradesh.
- b) Manpower Resources provided for students with autism in Andhra Pradesh.

Method

Normative Survey method was used in the study.

Sample

The sample of the present study was 46 special schools for autism, selected randomly from the 135 special schools in three regions in Andhra Pradesh.

Tools: In the present study tools has been designed by the investigator questionnaire enquiring and observation in to the educational provisions available in special schools for the children with autistic spectrum Disorder.

Reliability and Validity of the Tools

In order to study Reliability and Validity of the research tools, a pilot study was conducted on a small sample from selected special schools in Andhra Pradesh. Reliability was calculated by split half method. The Reliability value 0.81 was arrived which shows that the tool is highly reliable.

The research tools have the content validity because it is intended to assess the objectives of the study area wise educational provisions wise. The research tools were reviewed by the experts in the field to desire the construct validity. The results of the study can be compared with that of previous studies and it clearly shows that it has a concurrent validity.

Procedure

To collected data from principal/Management of the special schools to facilities available for students with autistic spectrum disorder.

Statistical Techniques.

Item wise analysis on a nominal school with the frequency percentage of responses were tabulated and used for interpretation. To work out reliabilities through test-retest person product moment correlation was worked out, as traditional in the researcher.

Result and Discussion

Table – 2: Physical Infrastructure facilities available in schools for ASD

Dimension	Variable	Frequency / Percentage		Level of significance
Transport facility	Availability in special school	32	70%	positive
Suitable chairs	„	43	94%	positive
Suitable tables	„	43	94%	positive
Staff Room	„	32	70%	positive
Counseling Section		34	74%	positive
Resources Room		35	76%	positive
Clinics		23	50%	Negative
Therapy Room		35	76%	positive
Audiology Unit		23	50%	Negative
Physiotherapy Unit		34	74%	positive
Vocational Unit		27	59%	Negative
Testing Lab		41	89%	positive
Library		23	50%	Negative

Ramps	26	57%	Negative
Toilets	45	98%	positive
Play Ground	39	85%	positive
Technology/Unit (Computer)	39	85%	positive

In Andhra Pradesh maximum special schools are functioning under private management. 71.73% schools are day schools while three schools are Residential type and remaining 21.74% schools are of day-cum-residential are there in Andhra Pradesh.

57% schools are functioning in rented buildings and 80.43% schools are of co-education type.

From the above analysis, the hypotheses, which states physical infrastructure facilities available for students with autism in A.P. are satisfactory is duly accepted in case of availability of clinics, audiology unit, vocational unit library, and ramp facilities.

Table – 2: Financial Resources

Dimension	Variable	Frequency / Percentage	Level of significance
Grants	Availability in special school	45 98%	positive

Al most all schools are financially available to run administrators and provides facilities for the welfare of students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder & Government of India & Justice-Ministry of India.

Table – 3: Manpower Resources

Dimension	Variable	Frequency / Percentage	Level of significance
Special Educators	Availability in special school	45 98%	Positive
Non- Special Educators		41 89%	Positive
Physician		20 44%	Negative
Physiologist		31 67%	Negative
Audiologist		22 48%	Negative
Speech-therapist		27 59%	Negative
Physiotherapist		26 57%	Negative
Occupational therapist		21 45%	Negative

From the above analysis the questions which states availability of manpower facilities are available for autistic children in Andhra Pradesh are satisfactory is duly acceptance in case of available of rehabilitation psychologist, physician, Audiologist, Speech therapist, physiotherapist and occupational/Vocational therapist facilities for students with autistic spectrum disorder.

Conclusion

From the above findings the following conclusion has been drawn.

It is observed that many of the special schools have genetic equipment that is suitable for all the challenged students but no schools have specially equipped with special resources to treat students with autistic spectrum disorder because of many reasons, one of the reasons is the incidence and financial problems of autistic spectrum disorder in Andhra Pradesh is comparatively low when we draw an overall special needs scenario. But special schools that are providing education for students with autism need to pay attention to fulfill important components which are brought to focus in the present study.

All these physical infrastructure, instructional and manpower facilities are specially recommended for these institutional/special schools.

Suggestions

- The need for an experimental study of the impact of educational provisions on the performance of students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
- There is a need for the study to develop curriculum for the students who completed secondary level.

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