Chapter 10

Issues and Recent Trends in the Assessment and Management of ID in Childhood

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ABSTRACT

The Chapter begins with an attempt to understand disability aspect in general and assessment aspect extensively. This chapter would attempt to observe both classic and latest trends of assessment techniques. Since it was observed that the recent trends concentrate extensively on global concept, the present chapter would include assessment categories on different dimensions of ability, emotions and behaviors such as intelligence, achievement, adaptive, social behavior and emotional adjustment, communication/language, sensory status, motor skills, and health status. The adaptivity skills will be emphasized more since it was observed adaptive skills plays a crucial role in the children with intellectual disability. In this current chapter a number of critical issues concerning the assessment of children with intellectual disabilities, including definitional problems, psychometric factors, and practical difficulties would be proposed to help students, counselors, teachers and psychologists.

INTRODUCTION

ID is characterized by deficits in general mental abilities and these deficits result in impairments of adaptive functioning, such that the individual fails to meet standards of personal independence and social-responsibility in one or more aspects of daily life, including communication, social participation, academic or occupational functioning, and personal independence at home or in community settings. The DSM V included the construct of adaptive behaviour in terms of three domains conceptual, social and practical domains. The conceptual (academic) domain involves competence in memory, language, reading, writing, math reasoning etc. The social domain involves awareness of others’ thoughts, feel-
ings, and experiences; empathy; interpersonal communication skills while the practical domain involves 
learning and self-management across life settings, including personal care, job responsibilities, money 
management, recreation, self-management of behavior, and school and work task organization, among 
others (DSM V, 2013).

1. PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Psychological assessment in children is a process to evaluate and understand the child’s problems in 
different areas, ones capabilities, strengths and limitations. Four important questions to be answered 
from assessment are:

- Where is the impairment in the functioning and how is the child functioning impaired?
- What are the consequences of the impairment and how it is impacting the normal functioning?
- What are the other factors (social, motivational,) that contributing in the maintain of the impairment?
- What intervention is best suited for the impairment?

The factors complicate the process of assessment with intellectual disable children in obtaining the 
legitimate estimate of intellectual performance, Presence of severe sensory impairment for example 
vision, auditory, presence of severe emotional and behavioral disturbance, medication interfere with 
cognitive neurological functioning. Henceforth it becomes so important that the factors needs to be ad-
dressed while assessing for intellectual assessment.

The continuous research on intellectual disability, emphasized that the assessment of intellectual 
functioning must be evaluated within the context of individual’s age and in relation to peer’s performance 
of the same age (Tasse et al., 2011). Assessment also should cater for:

- Accuracy in assessment also relies on cultural and linguistic diversity as well as differences in 
  communication, sensory motor and behavioral factors.
- Assessment should also give a picture of strengths the child possesses.
- Assessment should also list out the problem behavior and desirable behavior (Luckasson et al., 
  2002, p. 1)

1.1 Principles of Assessment

Based on the different intellectual deficient research association, American Psychiatric Association 
(APA) and the American Association of Mental Retardation (AAMR) the following principles applied 
to the process of assessment in children with intellectual disability. Initially ruling out psychiatric and 
non-psychiatric causes for problems of concern, the medical problems (Epilepsy, psychotic illness, vi-
sion issues, hearing problem etc.,) and then understanding the problems in expectations and supports 
and emotional turmoil, the social and emotional problems (parenting issues, social skills deficits etc.,). 
After ruling out certain aspects as mentioned above, it work towards identifying the problem by seek-
ing information on actual level of functioning in cognitive (intellectual level through assessment tools), 
adaptive (level of independence in daily activities), including communication for instance, receptive and
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