



Educational and Daily Living Needs of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Rural Areas of Chhattisgarh: Perspectives of Parents and Special Educators

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Abstract

The present study investigated the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of parents and special educators. The study aimed to identify the major educational needs, daily living challenges, and barriers faced by families in accessing educational and support services. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The sample comprised 60 respondents, including 30 parents of children with intellectual disabilities and 30 special educators, selected through purposive sampling from selected rural areas of Chhattisgarh. Data were collected using a self-developed Educational and Daily Living Needs Assessment Scale for Children with Intellectual Disabilities (EDLNAS-CWID). The collected data were analysed using frequency and percentage.

The findings revealed that vocational training was identified as the most important educational need, while communication and language development, functional academics, daily living skills training, remedial teaching, and appropriate teaching-learning materials were also recognized as essential educational requirements. The major daily living challenges included dressing independently, eating and feeding, personal hygiene, toileting, communication, and social interaction. Respondents further reported that financial constraints, lack of awareness about available services, limited parental training, transportation difficulties, shortage of trained professionals, and inadequate educational resources were the major barriers to accessing educational and support services. The study highlights the need for strengthening vocational education, life skills training, parent support programmes, and community-based rehabilitation services through collaborative efforts among parents, special educators, schools, and government agencies. The findings provide context-specific evidence to support



educational planning and improve the quality of educational and rehabilitation services for children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.

Keywords: Chhattisgarh, Daily Living Skills, Educational Needs, Intellectual Disability, Parents, Rural Areas, Special Education, Special Educators.

Introduction

Intellectual disability (ID) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour, affecting conceptual, social, and practical skills that originate during the developmental period (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities [AAIDD], 2021; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013). These limitations influence children's ability to learn, communicate, solve problems, and perform activities of daily living independently. Consequently, children with intellectual disabilities require specialized educational interventions and continuous support to maximize their developmental potential and enhance their quality of life (Kauffman et al., 2017).

Education plays a vital role in promoting the cognitive, social, emotional, and functional development of children with intellectual disabilities. However, effective educational programmes should extend beyond academic achievement and include communication, adaptive behaviour, self-care, social interaction, and vocational skills that prepare children for independent living and community participation (Turnbull et al., 2016; Kauffman et al., 2017). Functional academics combined with systematic training in daily living skills such as personal hygiene, dressing, eating, toileting, mobility, and safety awareness enable children to become more independent and actively participate in family and community life (Luckasson et al., 2002; Raver, 2009).

Parents and special educators are the primary stakeholders in supporting the educational and developmental needs of children with intellectual disabilities. Parents reinforce learning and adaptive skills within the home environment, while special educators provide individualized instruction, modify teaching strategies, and facilitate the development of communication, academic, and functional skills. Research has shown that effective collaboration between families and educational professionals contributes significantly to children's educational



achievement, adaptive behaviour, and successful inclusion in society (Sharma et al., 2008; Singal, 2008).

In India, several policy initiatives, including the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, the National Education Policy (2020), and Samagra Shiksha, emphasize equitable access to quality education for children with disabilities (Government of India, 2016; Ministry of Education, 2020). Despite these initiatives, children with intellectual disabilities living in rural areas continue to face substantial challenges in accessing educational and rehabilitation services. Limited availability of trained special educators, inadequate teaching-learning materials, financial constraints, poor transportation facilities, lack of rehabilitation services, and low parental awareness often restrict their educational opportunities and overall development (Girimaji & Srinath, 2010; Peshawaria & Venkatesan, 1992).

Previous research has consistently highlighted the importance of individualized educational programmes, adaptive skill development, family participation, vocational education, and community-based rehabilitation in improving educational outcomes for children with intellectual disabilities (Turnbull et al., 2016; Kauffman et al., 2017). Studies have also emphasized that strengthening collaboration among parents, teachers, and rehabilitation professionals contributes to better educational planning and improved quality of life for children with intellectual disabilities (Davis & Florian, 2004; Sharma et al., 2008). However, limited empirical evidence is available regarding the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of both parents and special educators. This lack of context-specific evidence limits the planning and implementation of need-based educational and support services.

Therefore, the present study, "Educational and Daily Living Needs of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Rural Areas of Chhattisgarh: Perspectives of Parents and Special Educators," was undertaken to identify the major educational needs, daily living challenges, and barriers faced by families in accessing educational and support services. The findings of the study are expected to provide valuable evidence for educators, policymakers, rehabilitation professionals, and government agencies in strengthening educational planning, improving support services, and promoting the independence, social inclusion, and quality of life of children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.



Review of Literature

The educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities have been widely recognized in the field of special education. Previous research has consistently emphasized that these children require individualized educational support, functional academic instruction, adaptive skill development, and family-centred interventions to promote independence, social participation, and an improved quality of life. Educational programmes that integrate communication, self-care, vocational preparation, and daily living skills have been found to be more effective in enhancing the overall development of children with intellectual disabilities (Kauffman et al., 2017; Turnbull et al., 2016).

Research conducted in the Indian context has highlighted the importance of inclusive education, early intervention, and community-based rehabilitation. Girimaji and Srinath (2010) reported that delayed identification, inadequate educational resources, shortage of trained professionals, and limited awareness among families continue to restrict educational opportunities for children with intellectual disabilities, particularly in rural communities. Similarly, Raver (2009) emphasized that early intervention and family-centred educational practices play a significant role in improving communication, adaptive behaviour, and daily living skills. Sharma et al. (2008) and Singal (2008) further demonstrated that positive teacher attitudes, professional preparation, and collaboration between parents and educators are essential for successful inclusive education and improved learning outcomes.

International studies have also emphasized the importance of comprehensive educational planning for children with intellectual disabilities. Kauffman et al. (2017) argued that effective special education should focus on functional academics, communication, adaptive behaviour, social participation, and vocational skills. Likewise, Turnbull et al. (2016) highlighted that family-centred services, individualized educational planning, and multidisciplinary collaboration contribute significantly to children's educational achievement and quality of life. Davis and Florian (2004) recommended differentiated instructional strategies and evidence-based teaching practices to address the diverse learning needs of children with disabilities. Furthermore, Luckasson et al. (2002) and Thompson et al. (2004) emphasized the importance of individualized assessment and support-based planning in promoting adaptive functioning, independence, and community participation among individuals with intellectual disabilities.



The reviewed literature clearly indicates that educational support, adaptive skill development, family participation, vocational education, and community-based rehabilitation are fundamental components of effective educational programmes for children with intellectual disabilities. However, most previous studies have focused on inclusive education, teacher preparation, adaptive behaviour, or rehabilitation services in general. Limited research has specifically examined the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of both parents and special educators. This gap in the literature provided the rationale for undertaking the present study, which seeks to generate context-specific evidence for improving educational planning and support services for children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.

Objectives of the Study

- 1 To identify the educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh.
- 2 To assess the daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh.
- 3 To examine the educational and support service needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh

Research Questions

- 1 What are the educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh?
- 2 What are the daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh?
- 3 What difficulties do families face in accessing educational and support services for children with intellectual disabilities?

Methodology

The present study employed a descriptive survey research design to investigate the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of parents and special educators. The descriptive survey method was considered appropriate because it facilitated the systematic collection of information regarding



educational needs, daily living challenges, and barriers encountered by families in accessing educational and support services.

The study was conducted in selected rural areas of Chhattisgarh. A total of 60 respondents, comprising 30 parents of children with intellectual disabilities and 30 special educators, participated in the study. The respondents were selected through purposive sampling, as they possessed direct knowledge and experience related to the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities.

Data were collected using a self-developed Educational and Daily Living Needs Assessment Scale for Children with Intellectual Disabilities (EDLNAS-CWID). The instrument consisted of two sections. The first section collected demographic information about the respondents, while the second section included structured items related to educational needs, daily living challenges, and difficulties in accessing educational and support services for children with intellectual disabilities. The content validity of the instrument was established through expert review by specialists in the field of special education before its administration.

Prior permission was obtained from the concerned institutions before conducting the study. The purpose of the research was explained to all participants, and informed consent was obtained before administering the questionnaire. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were assured that the information provided would remain confidential and would be used exclusively for academic research purposes. The anonymity and privacy of all participants were maintained throughout the research process.

The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analysed using descriptive statistical techniques. Frequency and percentage were used to summarize the educational needs, daily living challenges, and barriers in accessing educational and support services as reported by the respondents. The findings were presented using tables and graphical representations to facilitate interpretation and discussion.

Results

This section presents the findings on the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh, as perceived by parents and special educators. The findings are organized into three themes: (i) educational needs, (ii) daily living challenges, and (iii) barriers in accessing educational and support services.



Table 1: Educational Needs of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in the Area

		Frequency	Percent
1. What are the major educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities in your area?	Assistive devices	6	10.0%
	Communication and language	6	10.0%
	Daily living Skills training	6	10.0%
	Functional academics need	6	10.0%
	Proper TLM and teaching aids	6	10.0%
	Remedial training	6	10.0%
	Social skills development	6	10.0%
	use of TLM	6	10.0%
	Vocational training	12	20.0%
	Total	60	100.0%

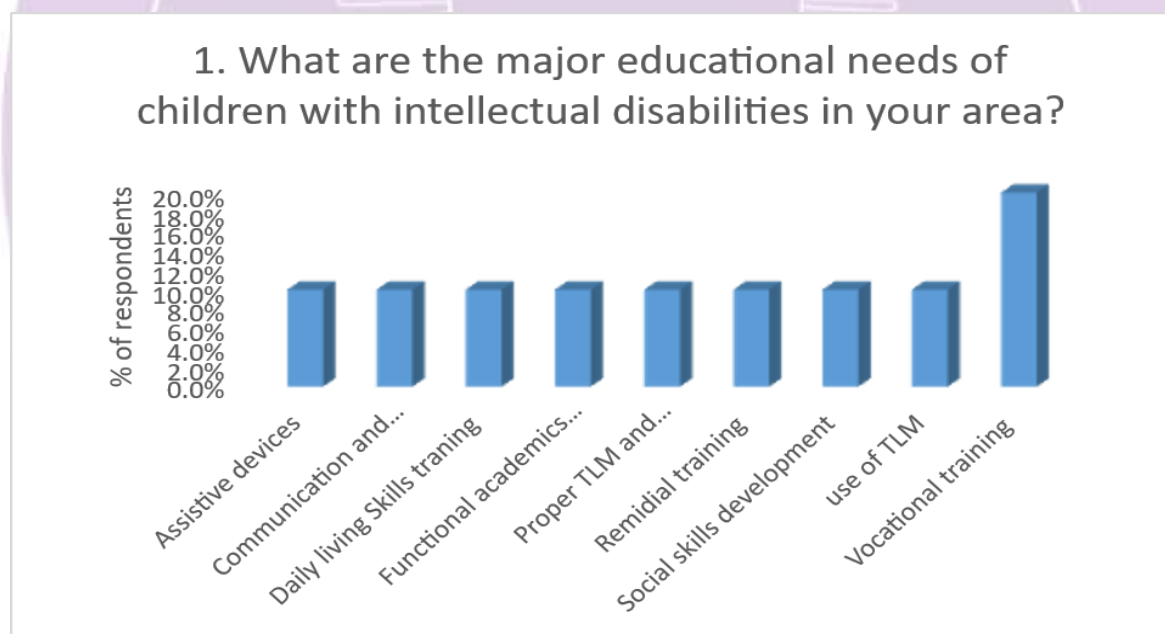


Table 1 and Figure 1 present the respondents' perceptions regarding the major educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh. Among the identified needs, vocational training was reported most frequently, accounting for 20.0% ($n = 12$) of the responses. The remaining educational needs, including assistive devices, communication and language development, daily living skills training, functional academics,

proper teaching-learning materials, remedial training, social skills development, and the use of teaching-learning materials, each accounted for 10.0% ($n = 6$) of the responses. The findings indicate that respondents considered vocational training the highest educational priority while recognizing the importance of providing comprehensive educational support across multiple developmental domains.

Table 2: Daily Living Challenges Faced by Children with Intellectual Disabilities in the Area

		Frequency	Percent
2. What are the major daily living challenges faced by children with intellectual disabilities in your area?	Communication of needs	8	13.3%
	Dressing independently	9	15.0%
	Eating and feeding skill	9	15.0%
	personal hygiene	9	15.0%
	Safety awareness	8	13.3%
	Social interaction with other	8	13.3%
	Toileting skills	9	15.0%
	Total	60	100.0%

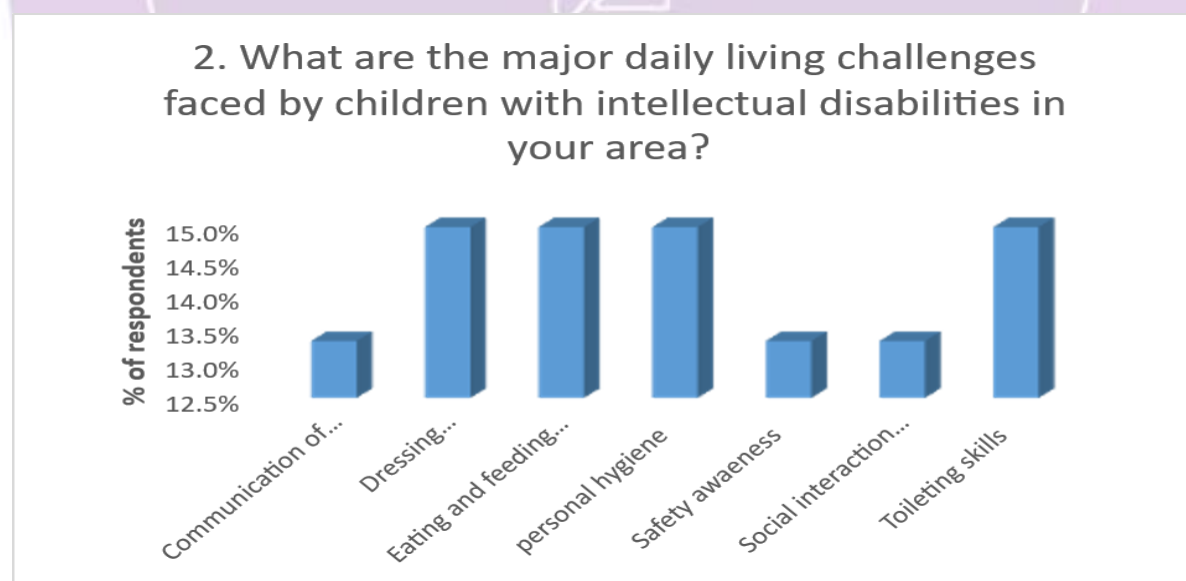


Table 2 and Figure 2 present the major daily living challenges experienced by children with intellectual disabilities. The findings show that dressing independently, eating and feeding



skills, personal hygiene, and toileting skills were reported as the most common challenges, each accounting for 15.0% ($n = 9$) of the responses. Communication of needs, safety awareness, and social interaction with others were each reported by 13.3% ($n = 8$) of the respondents. These findings highlight that self-care and adaptive functioning remain important areas requiring continuous educational intervention and support.

Table 3: Educational and Support Services for Children with Intellectual Disabilities

		Frequency	Percent
3. What difficulties do families face in accessing educational and support services for children with intellectual disabilities?	difficulty in obtaining government benefits	7	11.7%
	Financial problem	8	13.3%
	lack of awareness about available services	8	13.3%
	lack of learning materials and resources	7	11.7%
	limited parental training and guidance	8	13.3%
	shortage of special schools and professional	7	11.7%
	Social stigma and discrimination	7	11.7%
	Transport difficulties	8	13.3%
	Total	60	100.0%

3. What difficulties do families face in accessing educational and support services for children with intellectual disabilities?

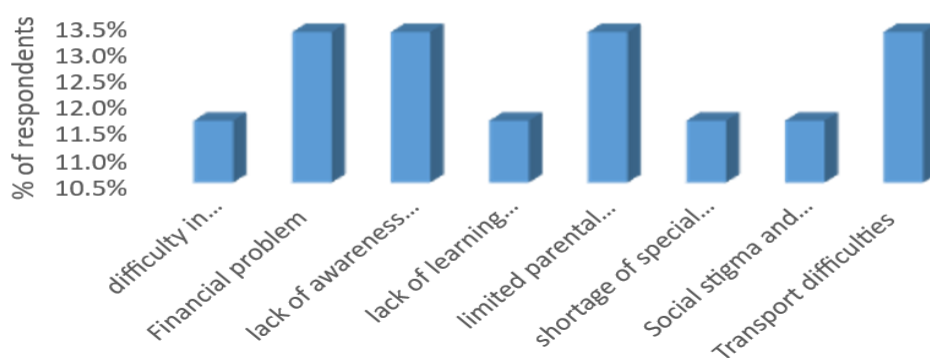




Table 3 and Figure 3 present the difficulties faced by families in accessing educational and support services for children with intellectual disabilities. The findings reveal that financial constraints, lack of awareness about available services, limited parental training and guidance, and transportation difficulties were the most frequently reported barriers, each accounting for 13.3% ($n = 8$) of the responses. Other barriers, including difficulty in obtaining government benefits, lack of learning materials and resources, shortage of special schools and trained professionals, and social stigma and discrimination, each accounted for 11.7% ($n = 7$) of the responses. These findings suggest that both socioeconomic and service-related factors continue to limit access to educational and rehabilitation services in rural areas.

Collectively, the findings demonstrate that children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh require comprehensive educational support, particularly in vocational education, communication, functional academics, and daily living skills training. The study also identified significant challenges related to self-care and adaptive functioning, as well as multiple barriers affecting families' access to educational and support services. These findings provide evidence for strengthening educational planning, parent support, and community-based services for children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.

Discussion

The present study investigated the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of parents and special educators. The findings revealed that vocational training was perceived as the most important educational need, followed by communication and language development, functional academics, remedial teaching, and the availability of appropriate teaching-learning materials. These findings are consistent with Kauffman et al. (2017), who emphasized that educational programmes for children with intellectual disabilities should integrate functional academics and vocational education to enhance independence and future employability. Similarly, Turnbull et al. (2016) highlighted that individualized educational programmes focusing on functional skills contribute significantly to improving the quality of life of children with disabilities.

The study also identified dressing independently, eating and feeding skills, personal hygiene, and toileting as the major daily living challenges faced by children with intellectual disabilities.



These findings support the work of Raver (2009), who reported that systematic instruction in self-care and adaptive behaviour is essential for developing independence among children with intellectual disabilities. Likewise, Luckasson et al. (2002) emphasized that adaptive behaviour, including practical daily living skills, is a key dimension of intellectual disability and should be addressed through individualized educational planning and continuous skill development.

Another important finding was that families experienced multiple barriers in accessing educational and support services, particularly financial constraints, lack of awareness, limited parental training, and transportation difficulties. These findings are in agreement with Girimaji and Srinath (2010), who reported that inadequate educational resources, shortage of trained professionals, and limited awareness continue to hinder educational opportunities for children with intellectual disabilities, particularly in rural areas. Similar observations were reported by Peshawaria and Venkatesan (1992), who emphasized the importance of strengthening community-based rehabilitation services to improve access to education and support for children with disabilities in underserved communities.

The findings further demonstrate that parents and special educators share similar perceptions regarding the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities. This highlights the importance of collaboration between families and schools in planning effective educational interventions. Sharma et al. (2008) and Singal (2008) similarly reported that active parental involvement and collaborative educational practices enhance learning outcomes and promote successful inclusion of children with disabilities.

Overall, the study emphasizes the need to strengthen vocational education, life skills training, parent awareness programmes, and community-based support services in rural areas. Improving the availability of trained professionals, teaching-learning materials, rehabilitation services, and government welfare programmes can enhance educational opportunities and promote the independence, inclusion, and quality of life of children with intellectual disabilities. These findings may assist policymakers, educational administrators, and rehabilitation professionals in developing evidence-based educational programmes and support services for children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.



Educational Implications of the Study

- **Strengthening Vocational Education:** Greater emphasis should be given to vocational training to promote future employability and independent living among children with intellectual disabilities.
- **Focus on Daily Living Skills:** Educational programmes should include systematic training in personal hygiene, dressing, eating, toileting, communication, and social interaction.
- **Use of Individualized Teaching Strategies:** Teachers should adopt individualized instructional methods, functional academics, and appropriate teaching-learning materials to meet diverse learning needs.
- **Capacity Building of Parents:** Parent training and awareness programmes should be organized to enable families to effectively support their children's education and daily living skills at home.
- **Strengthening Support Services:** Schools and government agencies should improve access to special educators, assistive devices, learning resources, and rehabilitation services, especially in rural areas.
- **Enhancing Community Awareness:** Awareness programmes should be conducted to reduce social stigma and encourage community participation in the education and inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities.
- **Improving Government Support:** Efforts should be made to simplify access to government welfare schemes and educational support services for families of children with intellectual disabilities.

Conclusion

The present study examined the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh from the perspectives of parents and special educators. The findings revealed that children with intellectual disabilities require comprehensive educational support, with particular emphasis on vocational training, communication and language development, functional academics, daily living skills training, and appropriate teaching-learning materials. The study also identified major daily living challenges related to



dressings, personal hygiene, eating and feeding, toileting, communication, and social interaction, highlighting the importance of systematic life skills training.

In addition, the study found that families encounter several barriers in accessing educational and support services, including financial constraints, lack of awareness, limited parental training, transportation difficulties, shortage of trained professionals, and inadequate educational resources. These barriers continue to affect the educational opportunities and overall development of children with intellectual disabilities in rural communities.

The findings underscore the need for collaborative efforts among parents, special educators, schools, rehabilitation professionals, and government agencies to strengthen educational planning and improve access to support services. Greater emphasis on vocational education, adaptive skill development, parent empowerment, and community-based support programmes can promote the independence, social inclusion, and quality of life of children with intellectual disabilities. The study contributes context-specific evidence that may assist educators, policymakers, and service providers in developing need-based educational interventions and strengthening special education services in rural areas of Chhattisgarh.

Strengths of the Study

- The study focuses on an under-researched area by examining the educational and daily living needs of children with intellectual disabilities in rural areas of Chhattisgarh.
- It incorporates the perspectives of both parents and special educators, providing a comprehensive understanding of children's needs.
- The findings provide practical evidence for improving special education services, parent support, and educational planning in rural communities.
- The study contributes context-specific evidence that may assist policymakers, educators, and rehabilitation professionals in developing need-based interventions.

Limitations of the Study

The present study has certain limitations. The sample consisted of only 60 respondents selected through purposive sampling from selected rural areas of Chhattisgarh. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all children with intellectual disabilities or other geographical regions. The study relied primarily on respondents' perceptions, which may be influenced by individual experiences and subjective opinions. In addition, the study focused only on parents and special



educators and did not include the perspectives of general educators, rehabilitation professionals, or the children themselves.

Future Research

Future studies may include larger and more diverse samples from different districts or states to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Comparative studies between rural and urban settings may provide deeper insights into regional differences in educational and daily living needs. Researchers may also investigate the effectiveness of vocational education, parent training programmes, and community-based rehabilitation interventions in improving the educational outcomes and independence of children with intellectual disabilities.

Ethical Considerations

Prior permission was obtained from the concerned institutions before conducting the study. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research. The collected information was used solely for academic purposes.

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