ABSTRACT
“A Comparative Study On Executive Functioning In Autism and Borderline Intellectual Impairment”

Executive Functioning is a collection of a number of complex brain (frontal lobe) abilities that helps to perform goal-directed daily activities. In most of the time this function remains discretely unnoticed because it becomes so typical with human daily activities like planning, working memory functions, set shifting, sequencing etc. unless there is a difficulty in performing such task requiring executive skills. Research has demonstrated that deficits in executive functions are a robust correlate of autism. The present study aims to bring out a profile of executive function (EF) in autism and borderline intellectual impairment (BII), training of EF and investigate the transfer of training (if any). Two groups of participants, one group with autism (N=15) and other group of intellectual impairment (borderline, IQ:70-80), N=15 participated in the present study. The study consisted of pre and post training measures intervened by training sessions considering mainly two executive functions viz. mental set shifting and working memory. Performance box of Colored Progressive Matrices, Tower of London DX, Trail Making Test, Part B and NIMHANS Visuospatial Working Memory Test for children had been used in present study. Training sessions were conducted by using mazes and colour shape sorter for training in mental set shifting task and object span and picture span for working memory training. The training session conducted included 40 to 50 sessions per participants given twice or thrice a week in one to one interaction. The result revealed that EF is not completely impaired in autism and BII rather, improvement and transfer of training is evident in some of executive skills. The investigation of EF in autism and BII, its trainability and transfer of training is discussed in the study.