

# Developmental disabilities as broad spectrum essay

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Developmental disabilities have a broad definition because they entail many dimensions of the human body both in the external and external dimensions. In other words, the term developmental disability is not just about the physical disability just as many people may be tempted to think but it also touches on the mental challenges. Developmental disabilities can also be defined as disorders that occur across a spectrum because they are classified in a varied range.

For instance, developmental disabilities according to the federal definition refer to the ' severe, chronic disability in an individual which is attributable to mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments (Public Law 106- 402, 114 STAT. 1684). This is because developmental disabilities can either present themselves physically through deformities or internally through behavioral manifestations due to some effects on physiological functions of the brain. Usually these impairments are attained before the age of 22 and they are likely to continue indefinitely (Public Law 106- 402, 114 STAT. 684). In other words there is no guarantee that developmental disabilities will in any way improve or regain full recovery despite their manifestation at an early age. For instance, some individuals may develop schizophrenia and never recover fully despite medication and others when attacked by a bout of polio they end up with physical deformities for the rest of their lives. On the other hand most schizophrenia cases present themselves during puberty or adolescence just before onset of maturity age.

Developmental disabilities may result in substantial functional limitations in 3 or more of the following activities for instance self care, receptive and <https://assignbuster.com/developmental-disabilities-as-broad-spectrum-essay/>

expressive language learning, mobility, self direction, capacity for independent living, economic self sufficiency and reflects the individuals need for a combination and sequence of special, interdisciplinary or generic services, individualized supports or other forms of assistance that are life long or extended (Public Law 106- 402, 114 STAT. 684). In many cases when developmental deformities strike they tend to affect the normal functioning of an individual resulting to some impairment in the normal undertakings of a person. Sometimes this means that the affected person be assisted in doing literary everything including doing basic things like personal hygiene. In other words such individuals are not their former self and these calls for understanding from family and friends to help them adjust to the society and normal life.

Subsequently developmental disabilities according to the state refers to the disabilities attributed to brain injury, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, prader Willi syndrome or mental retardation to mention a few. This definition also shows that developmental disorders occur across a spectrum because they touch on many facets of human body and brain.

Developmental retardation can also refer to any other neurological condition closely related to meant retardation or which requires treatment similar to that required for mental retardation which is continuous or is expected to continue and constitutes of substantial hardship on the part of the individual (Wisconsin statue: Chapter 51: 01 (5) (a) ). This is one of the factors that make developmental disorders to be very unpredictable and unfair in any

individual's life because some of these disorders take away ones dignity and capacity to function normally without a warning.

Subsequently any effect on any part of the brain may result to a physical deformation hence making developmental disorders very broad (). The brain can be equated to an engine that regulates the normal functioning of the body and when all or one part of the brain is affected the results may be fatal and brain injuries also dictate the degree manifested in the physical deformity. Similarities among six major disabilities Most developmental disabilities have similarities which make them to be defined as developmental disabilities.

For instance mental retardation, Epilepsy, Autism/PDD, cerebral palsy, Prader- Willi syndrome, traumatic brain injury all share very many characteristics that make them to be grouped under the developmental disabilities category. One common characteristics of this six major disabilities is that they make the effected individual face a lot of hardship in terms of getting integrated into the society and being able to lead a normal life just as the state and federal definitions show.

For instance epilepsy makes life very hard for a person suffering from the disease because when they get fits their lives could easily endanger their lives since they lose sense of reality. An individual with epilepsy may suffer from the epileptic fits near fire or water and this may cause them to fall in fire and get serious burns especially if there is no one to assist the individual. This makes family members and caretakers to be obligated to track the family member with developmental disability to ensure their safety.

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On the other hand, individuals with mental retardation have mental and physical challenges which make normal functioning very hard. For instance, an individual with mental retardation may even lack the ability to possess receptive and expressive language and this can make communication with other people very hard. On the part of the individual with mental retardation, the person may not have his/her needs met because other people may not understand their needs and hence they may feel neglected.

Subsequently, just like other developmental challenges, an individual with autism will in most cases face hardships in maintaining their attention over long periods or time. This makes it very hard for the person with autism to be able to learn and retain information in the brain as other normal persons. On the other hand just like the federal definition of developmental disability states; individuals with cerebral palsy may have problems with mobility because of nerve impairment and even children who go to school may have very high IQ's but be unable to write information down.

Just like other individuals with developmental disabilities, a person with Cerebral Palsy may be unable to lead an independent living since they are totally depended on others to survive. On the other hand an individual with Prader- Willi syndrome will also have difficulties in attention and movement due to hypotonia and this also affects their normal development. This is characteristics are also common with individuals with traumatic brain injuries which may affect ones mobility, speech, ability to talk and sight to mention a few.

An individual with a traumatic brain injury just like other individuals with developmental disabilities may lack the capacity to be economically self sufficient since they can no longer work and think independently. The six developmental disabilities also call for medical attention, individualized support and many more services to be able to survive. With this in mind, it can be argued that developmental disabilities have similar characteristics and these similarities culminate to their definition as developmental disabilities.

Family responses to a diagnosis of developmental disabilities In many cases when family has one of its members diagnosed with developmental disabilities they are faced with shock and disbelief and in most cases some think that the doctors are incompetent and hence seek further help from a different doctor. The experience is very overwhelming and stressful and it makes some people languish in denial because they still hope that the individual diagnosed with a developmental disability will recover fully.

Subsequently some family members may start blaming for the disability diagnosed with one of their family members. For instance, they may feel that they had a role to play in the circumstances that culminated to the disability and keep on blaming themselves on issues they cannot change. All in all it can be argued that most family members become more prone to stressors when one of them is diagnosed with developmental disabilities. Other members loose hope because they don't have the economical ability to sustain their loved one and in many cases they think that their loved one will die.

Others also think that such individuals cannot be of any importance in the society because their capacity to contribute as members of society has been cut short by the developmental disability. In most cases this is not true because there are cases of individuals with spinal injuries who have braced themselves with successful careers. Prader- Willi Syndrome (PWS) This is a genetic condition caused by the deletion in chromosome 15. It is a disorder which a child is born with and scientists believe that this condition is caused by the disturbance of the hypothalamus in the brain.

The Prader- Willi Syndrome is characterized by physical symptoms of Hypotonia which is weak muscles, short muscles which are characterized by short hands and legs because the body lacks growth hormones. On the other hand persons with this disorder end up eating a lot of food due to persistent hunger and lack of satisfaction. Metabolic rate in individuals suffering from the Prader- Willi Syndrome is very slow and this makes them prone to weight problems for instance obesity. Persons with Prader- Willi Syndrome also have respiratory problems, and delayed motor action.

This means that their intelligence and IQ is very slow and learning is impaired hence successful schooling for such individuals is not possible. On the other hand, persons with Prader- Willi Syndrome have behavioral problems like skin picking, feeding difficulties, excessive sleepiness and they also lack vomit reflex. Prader- Willi Syndrome is a disorder that affects a person through out their life course and appetite and weight is a major significant issue in the management of the disease beyond childhood.

This is because individuals with Prader- Willi Syndrome have persistent hunger bouts that make them eat a lot of food frequently without getting satisfied. If weight and diet is not controlled in a person suffering from the Prader- Willi Syndrome there could arise negative health implications for instance diabetes, cardiac and respiratory complications to mention a few. With this in mind, it is then very important to make sure that a person is trained on diet control from a young age to ensure that they learn to control their eating habits. This also comes a long way through their lifespan.

Epilepsy Epilepsy can be defined as a neurological disorder which can affect people from all spheres of life. Epilepsy is manifested through seizure attacks which make one look like he/she is possessed by some force. A seizure can be defined as an uncontrolled electrical activity in the brain which in many cases produces a series of physical convulsions, thought disturbances or a combination of symptoms. The frequency and type of seizures depend on the affected place in the brain and also other factors like individuals age and health status are contributing factors.

There are different factors which precipitate seizures for instance brain tumors, infectious diseases, lead poisoning and head injuries to mention a few (sio kwa WHO). Hence, it can be argued out that epilepsy mainly attacks the brain and manifests itself through seizures. When an individual has seizures they tend to lose control of their body movements and in unsecured environments individuals may end up drowning or even sustaining serious injuries through burns and injuries. Epilepsy has several causes and four major factors in its treatment and diagnosis.



For instance; children and adolescents are prone to have epilepsy from unknown causes in which scientists believe that it is as a result of an imbalance of certain chemicals in the brain. On the other hand, the most probable cause of epilepsy in older individuals is as a result of brain tumors and this is also used as a diagnosis mode. Consecutively trauma on the brain can also trigger epilepsy at any age for instance through infection of malaria and meningitis in adults. Febrile illnesses of any kind are also known to culminate to seizures in children and in 3% of these children they will develop epilepsy later in life.

Management of Epilepsy entails various steps. For instance, caregivers are supposed to ensure that an individual with epilepsy is not subjected to further injury of the brain. On the other hand, epilepsy can be treated through the use anti-epileptic drugs and after 2-5 years of successful treatment one can be weaned off treatment without relapses. Subsequently, persons with epilepsy can also be treated through the use ketogenic diet which is a diet with low carbohydrate levels and high fat levels.

This diet helps in reducing seizures in individuals with epilepsy. On the other hand those who have tried anti epileptic medication without success may opt to use surgery means. This surgery is very delicate and has to be performed by competed and skilled doctors to avoid damaging the brain. The main aim of this operation is to ensure that the spread of electrical energy in the brain is interrupted by removing a small part of the brain usually where these seizures originate. Traumatic brain injury

Traumatic brain injury is caused by an injury in the brain hence affecting the functions of the neurons, nerve tracts or sections of the brain. This then affects the normal functioning of the brain for instance thinking and regulating of the body temperatures. Brain injury is caused by a direct blow to the head which causes the brain to move or even break the skull and hence expose the brain. This mode of injuries is common in motor vehicle crashes, firearms and physical violence.

People with traumatic brain injury especially in the frontal lobe experience problems in making judgments, initiations, inhibition of behavior, problem solving for instance solving arithmetic problems, planning and anticipation, motor planning, self monitoring, personality, emotions, awareness of abilities, attention and concentration, organization, speaking, mental flexibility. Subsequently when an individual has a traumatic brain injury in their temporal lobe they lack their ability to speech, memory, organization, understanding, sequencing and hearing.

The recovery process of a person suffering from traumatic brain disorders constitute of many steps. For instance, the recovery process may also include a series of psychotherapies and counseling programs to enhance the healing process. Counseling also comes along way in helping an individual who is mentally challenged to accept reality and move on with their life. On the other brain injuries are not also limited to minor and major corrective surgeries to improve the well being of the individual.

In other cases some individuals with traumatic brain disorders may get severely handicapped and lead life long implications like getting depended

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on people for the rest of their lives. A person with traumatic brain injury suffers from many implications for instance cognitive, physical and emotional complications. Cognitive implications may include short and long term memory loss making it easy to erase information from the brain easily. On the other hand traumatic brain injuries also cause slowed ability to do tasks and process information and this affects the normal speed of doing things.

Also depending on the extend of the injury one may be unable to do more than one thing and also experience spatial disorientation. In other instances people with traumatic brain injuries have trouble keeping attention as well as experience organizational problems and disoriented judgments.

Subsequently, physical implications may include experience of seizures with magnitude depending on the extend of injury. Subsequently, other physical implications may include balance problems such that an individual may be unable to walk stably or even carry delicate things safely.

Brain injuries may also cause speech problems in that the individual affected may be unable to communicate well with other people as they used to. One may also lose smell and taste making life very difficult for the affected person. Emotional implications of an individual with traumatic brain injury include increased anxiety and extreme mood swings and depression depending on the extend of the brain injury. Also a person with traumatic brain injury may easily get agitated and at the same time also lack the initiative to understand how his behavior change negatively affects those people around them.

For instance a parent who has traumatic brain injury may get agitated by every thing that is done by the children making them feel like the parent does not care for them anymore as before. There are some potential issues when one member experiences a traumatic brain injury. For instance family members become more prone to stressors because the brain injuries in many cases transform the life of the individual completely. This also calls for adjustment of the family structures and undertakings to ensure that the family gives moral support to the affected individual.

Traumatic brain injury also calls for employment of various therapies and treatment aimed at ensuring that the individual with the traumatic brain disorder gets both medical care and psychotherapy care. An individual with traumatic brain disorder needs a lot of understanding especially from family member to ease the recovery burden and also avoid labeling of such persons for instance as mentally retarded instead of individuals with traumatic brain injuries. Cerebral palsy Cerebral palsy is a disease which is caused by permanent injury in the brain before, after and during pregnancy.

During the prenatal phase cerebral palsy could be caused by infection to the mother during pregnancy for instance rubella and cytomegalovirus. These sicknesses cause severe damage to the nervous system of the fetus resulting to cerebral palsy. Consecutively if the mother has Rh incompatibility it can also cause Jaundice since in this situation the immune system of the mother attacks the baby. In cases where mothers smoke and take alcohol and other abuse other drugs such as cocaine and Heroine; cerebral palsy can result in an infant due to toxicity.

During the perinatal stage, infants get cerebral palsy through oxygen shortage and stroke due to mother's coagulation disorders. All these result in harm of the nervous system. Subsequently during prenatal care a child may suffer from cerebral palsy through bleeding in the brain due to injuries sustained in the brain. An infant could also suffer from cerebral palsy as a result of kidney/ Urinary tract infections resulting to brain damage which in turn leads to cerebral palsy. Children with cerebral palsy have various implications for instance developmental outcomes which manifest themselves before the age of eighteen.

Some of the major outcomes include; problems in learning and hearing because of problems of muscle control. On the other hand such children have problems of drooling and speech in which children may have dysarthria, hypernasal and hyponasals problems of speech. This is so because of the main problem that affects children with cerebral palsy which revolves around muscle control. For instance such children lack the capacity to control their hand and leg movements and also their mouth and tongues.

This also makes them prone to bladder control problems depending on the magnitude of injury some children manifest bed wetting problems, small leaks of urine problem and general lack of bladder control. There are several modes of intervention which enhance independence and development among persons with cerebral palsy. For instance people with cerebral palsy could go for surgery especially if they are not responding to normal medication. In this phase doctors adjust the muscle and tendons to

compensate for the contractions and make it easier for the individual to adjust to normal functioning even if not fully recover.

The other management concept revolves around physical therapy in which greatly helps in strengthening muscles and take precaution against lack of tissue. Therapists also employ the use of behavioral therapy to improve physical, communicative skills and mental. This form of therapy conditions behavior to prevent self destructive behavior and help the individual with cerebral palsy easily integrate in the society. Another appropriate approach to enhance independence and development revolves around use of drugs to control seizures caused by cerebral palsy.

The use of drugs also helps in calming the muscles for easy control and management of the situation. Extra credit option Understanding the Prader-Willi syndrome has greatly shaped my life because I am able to understand the basic concepts behind this condition. For instance, I never used to understand why persons with Prader- Willi syndrome have weight problems and now I know it is because the disability makes them have high appetite and lack of satisfaction even after they eat a lot of food. Professionally I am able to handle such cases without judgments and portray a lot of understanding in my undertakings.

All in all Module A was a key ingredient in the success of my professional life because it has expounded much on mental retardation and Prader- Willi syndrome. For instance, I am able to put myself in the shoes of the individuals with developmental disabilities and appreciate them the way they are yet at the same be able to extend help to help them manage these

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conditions. To assist a family whose child has been diagnosed with Prader-Willi syndrome I would show the family how they can always be available to the changing needs of the family member who has the Prader- Willi syndrome.

For instance this could be through getting affiliated with the available support groups for the condition and also getting involved in the services available for persons with the Prader - Willi syndrome. I would also show them the need to appreciate their family member and also see him as a contributing member of the society. This means that they don't have to label their family member as incapacitated with the proper management of the condition the family member could get integrated into the society despite their disability.