

Supporting Mental Health of Children with Cerebral Palsy: Teachers' Perspective

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: March 20, 2025 Revised: May 20, 2025 Accepted: May 27, 2025 Available Online: June 03, 2025	<i>This study looks to how caregivers feel about addressing the mental well-being of children who have cerebral palsy (CP) in school. Assessing the problems faced by teachers as well as the approaches that they apply for enhancing the psychological wellness of youngsters with cerebral palsy was the aim of the study. The research project comprised informal conversations / interviews involving educators who work within special educational institutions and research was qualitative in nature. The research results proved that whereas professionals realize the urgency for helping emotional well-being, teachers typically believe unable as well as untrained to handle the distinct requirements faced by pupils with cerebral palsy. Considering this, lots of teachers continuing focusing on the working alongside disabilities physicians, developing a welcoming environment while providing every learner particular attention. The conclusions in the inquiry demonstrate youngsters from developmental disabilities may progress via a whole-school psychological wellness methodology, additional assistance, as well as enhanced preparation for teachers.</i>
Keywords: Cerebral Palsy, Mental health and well-being, Special education teachers	
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Introduction

Minimal has been learned regarding how to encourage the psychological wellness of pupils with cerebral palsy in educational institutions. Cognitive instability disrupts motor abilities, coordination of muscles, plus intellect or verbal communication all are impacted by CP. Cerebral palsy, a category severe neurological disorders that result from fetal or postpartum brain harm. Along with issues related to impeded physical growth, youngsters who have spinal cord injury (CP) have specific obstacles and might affect their mental and emotional wellness (Müller et al., 2022). Mental health conditions include stress, hopelessness, overall disruptive behavior, which

are most usually provoked through these hardships, may leave an important influence overall a youngster's relationships and educational achievements (Kien et al., 2019). Learning conditions must offer suitable assistance for attending each of these young people's behavioral or cognitive concerns while psychological well-being had an important effect upon their overall growth. Creating a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere for learning instructors are mainly accountable for of providing conditions that welcome all students, especially those having disabilities like cerebral palsy. Instructors, whose are mostly liable for the schooling of a kid, may benefit pupils well-being by identifying early indications on depression, developing interactions with peers, while changing their educational methods to fulfill the unique needs of adolescents about neurological conditions. Regarding their crucial function, there's currently very little information on teachers' opinions regarding methods they can support the emotional wellness for pupils having intellectual disabilities inside the educational environment. The largest portion all published study is concerned with the specific benefits of acceptance, despite a lesser concentration of the emotional and psychological well-being of children participating (Valentini & Minucci, 2023). With exploring out the way professionals feel like improving learners' emotional wellness. This qualitative investigation seeks at filling the gap using cerebral palsy programming in classrooms. Via instructor assessments, the research endeavor will gain insight at why instructors view their duties in assisting youngsters with mental wellness queries, the tactics professionals apply, or any obstacles they face in providing the suitable degree of treatment. The research effort will further investigate the tools and training which teachers feels is required for successfully nurturing with the emotional wellness individuals have cerebral palsy as well. The outcomes among this research will offer helpful fresh insights regarding the unique requirements faced by pupils with CP in educational settings. Latest research showed that instructors commonly do not have the fundamental skills in dealing with mental health needs for children have impairments, such as those having cerebral palsy. Even though numerous educators are willing to alter their physical surroundings plus provides appropriate instructional support, this is feasible that these professionals need the comprehension or skills sufficient to successfully deal with the emotional problems individuals that have disabilities suffer (Montague & Kwok, 2022). Teachers find it impossible to deliver complete assistance related to the immense challenges involved in covering the physical and psychological requirements faced by kids with disabilities, and this also leads their experiencing overloaded (Georgiadou et al., 2022). This is necessary that educational institutions offer possibilities. Teachers must receive training in identifying mental wellness problems, boosting self-worth of children with CP, and developing healthy connections among the peers with CP. Furthermore, cross-disciplinary partnership among learners, specially trained teachers, mental health professionals, with medical practitioners could end up inside a full strategy toward assisting the mental well-being of kids who cerebral palsy at schools (Towns et al., 2022). The research's primary goals are to emphasize the vital part all instructors perform in promoting the mental wellness of youngsters having CP or find strategies, as well as instructional activities that assist with promote the capacity for teachers to generate hospitable, emotionally beneficial environments focusing on mentally health as well as equitable education.

It has become critical for educators to support the mental well-being of kids having cerebral palsy (CP) as it directly impacts their academics, interpersonal relationship and mental well-being. Children with cerebral palsy experience physical, emotional, or mental instability that's greatly driven by challenging circumstances. Their challenges, including might involve problems in movement, interactions, or loneliness, render them extra susceptible to mental illness disorders like as depression, anxiety, and poor self-worth(Müller et al., 2022). The educational environment provides an essential opportunity of early recognition and treatment with a goal to improve severe neurological struggles. Being the primary caregivers for youngsters having cerebral paralysis (CP), educators have a special position to understand the indications or psychological distress and give

prompt support. To encourage academic achievement or mental wellness, this is crucial in developing an informal yet encouraging atmosphere for schooling (Kien et al., 2019). But considering their vital contribution, not much is available approximately what techniques school teacher utilize, the obstacles that people visage, along with how they evaluate the capacity to promote with the mental wellness of youngsters suffering cerebral palsy (CP). Further investigation of the views of teachers of cultivating the well-being of these pupils will be needed owing to this lack of expertise.

The present qualitative investigation shows an opportunity to help fill this gap through researching the challenges, obstacles, and solutions of caregivers for maintaining mental well-being of youngsters with cerebral palsy. Understanding the different perspectives of professionals could allow the researchers to share essential details on the tools and instructions that teachers require in order to support these pupils successfully. The results may then guide the creation of more focused professional development programs for teachers, policy suggestions, and school-based mental health interventions. The investigation may additionally add towards a wider discussion about equitable schooling via underlining the require for a comprehensive approach that prioritizes the emotional and mental wellness for individuals having limitations within alongside. Overall physiological and academic requirements. The research results might boost consciousness of the vital importance in mental illness therapy within broad educational institutions thus improve every pupil throughout the educational setting, regardless of people suffering cerebral palsy, via pressing universities to implement an integrated approach towards pupil fulfillment. At the end of this investigation might enhance the whole educational process as well as standard of lifestyle of youngsters having cerebral palsy in nurturing mental well-being under an educational atmosphere. Additionally, the study can add to the larger discourse on inclusive education by highlighting the necessity of an integrated strategy that takes into account children with disabilities' mental and emotional well-being in addition to their academic and physical demands. By encouraging schools to take a more comprehensive approach to student well-being, the findings may raise awareness of the value of mental health care in inclusive education settings and help all kids in the classroom, not just those with cerebral palsy. In the end, by promoting mental health in a school context, this research may enhance the general educational experience and quality of life for kids with cerebral palsy. The study was intended to achieve the following objectives:

- Exploring the mental health problems of children with Cerebral Palsy in Schools.
- Evaluate those factors determining the mental wellness about youngsters having cerebral palsy at school environments.
- Exploring the teachers view about what schools are practically doing to support student mental health.

Methodology

A qualitative research study on "Supporting Mental Health of Children with Cerebral Palsy in Schools: Teacher's Perspective" would collect detailed information from educators about their knowledge, approach, and experiences with helping students with cerebral palsy (CP) in the classroom. An outline of the possible framework for the methodology is shown below:

Qualitative Research Approach: A qualitative research approach was appropriate for collecting in-depth, contextualized data because the goal is to comprehend teachers' viewpoints.

Phenomenological Approach: Teachers lived experiences and perspectives on promoting the mental health of children with cerebral palsy was investigated using this approach. It focuses on explaining and analyzing how educators perceive their responsibility to assist these kids.

Participants

Participants	Qualification	Gender
Participant 1	MPhil special education	Male
Participant 2	MA special education	Female
Participant 3	ADCP (Advance Diploma in Clinical Psychology)	Female
Participant 4	MPhil Special Education	Male
Participant 5	ADCP	Male
Participant 6	BA	Female
Participant 7	BS Psychology	Male
Participant 8	MA Special Education	Female

Results

Teachers' opinions on the practical steps schools are taking to support students' mental health are presented in this section, along with the qualitative analysis of interviews done to investigate the mental health issues of children with cerebral palsy in schools and the factors that influence their mental health.

Mental health challenges of children with cerebral palsy

A lot of respondents claimed that neurological concerns which involve depressive disorders and anxiety are particularly prevalent amongst youngsters with CP. Social exclusion might result in experiences both disappointment that feelings of isolation who may contribute to mental health issues. These kinds of problems could potentially end up in mental difficulties, with the value frustration generated through poor interaction and misunderstanding on their medical situation. Further complicating their academic experiences and adding to their emotional distress are cognitive impairments or learning disabilities that some children with cerebral palsy may have. The demands placed on caregivers can also have an impact on the emotional health of the child, and bullying and stigmatization can raise stress levels. Teachers used the following terms to explain it:

"Children with cerebral palsy frequently experience low self-esteem and feelings of burdensomeness, demonstrating an understanding of the emotional burden these children bear." (spe-1)

"Some parents give their kids little attention and little encouragement, which can make them feel like they're lagging behind their peers." (Spe-5)

"Students are acutely aware of their impairment in the younger class, but as they get older, they start to overcome this perception." (Spe-7)

Factors affecting the children with cerebral palsy

Since the degree of motor impairment and particular difficulties—like muscle stiffness, involuntary movements, or balance issues—vary greatly among people, the type and severity of cerebral palsy play important roles. The overall development of many children with cerebral palsy may also be complicated by concomitant conditions such as intellectual disabilities, seizures, or sensory impairments. Early diagnosis is essential because it enables prompt interventions that can improve general well-being, mobility, and communication. A child's progress can be greatly impacted by the availability of resources and therapy, such as speech, occupational, and physical therapy, as well as by the degree of practical and emotional support provided by family members.

A child's involvement in activities can be aided or hindered by their surroundings, which include their home, school, and community resources. In addition, keeping physical good health and promoting bodily activity are dependent upon obtaining a source of excellent medical services or adopting a nutritious diet. Professors supplied a couple of defenses:

"A significant factor involves the different athletic capacities of students having developmental disabilities in my classroom. Some students hesitate with engaging altogether during events associated with transportation challenges." (spe-1)

"I have discovered noticed that many of adolescents via cerebral palsy difficulty at interactions, therefore might arrive at this impossible to feed students too partake on collaborative initiatives or classroom conversations." (Spe-4)

"Direct physical weariness was also on the significant obstacles confronting mine patients having neurological weakness, because are able to hinder our participating with daily exercises." (Spe-8)

How to overcome challenges of children with cerebral palsy

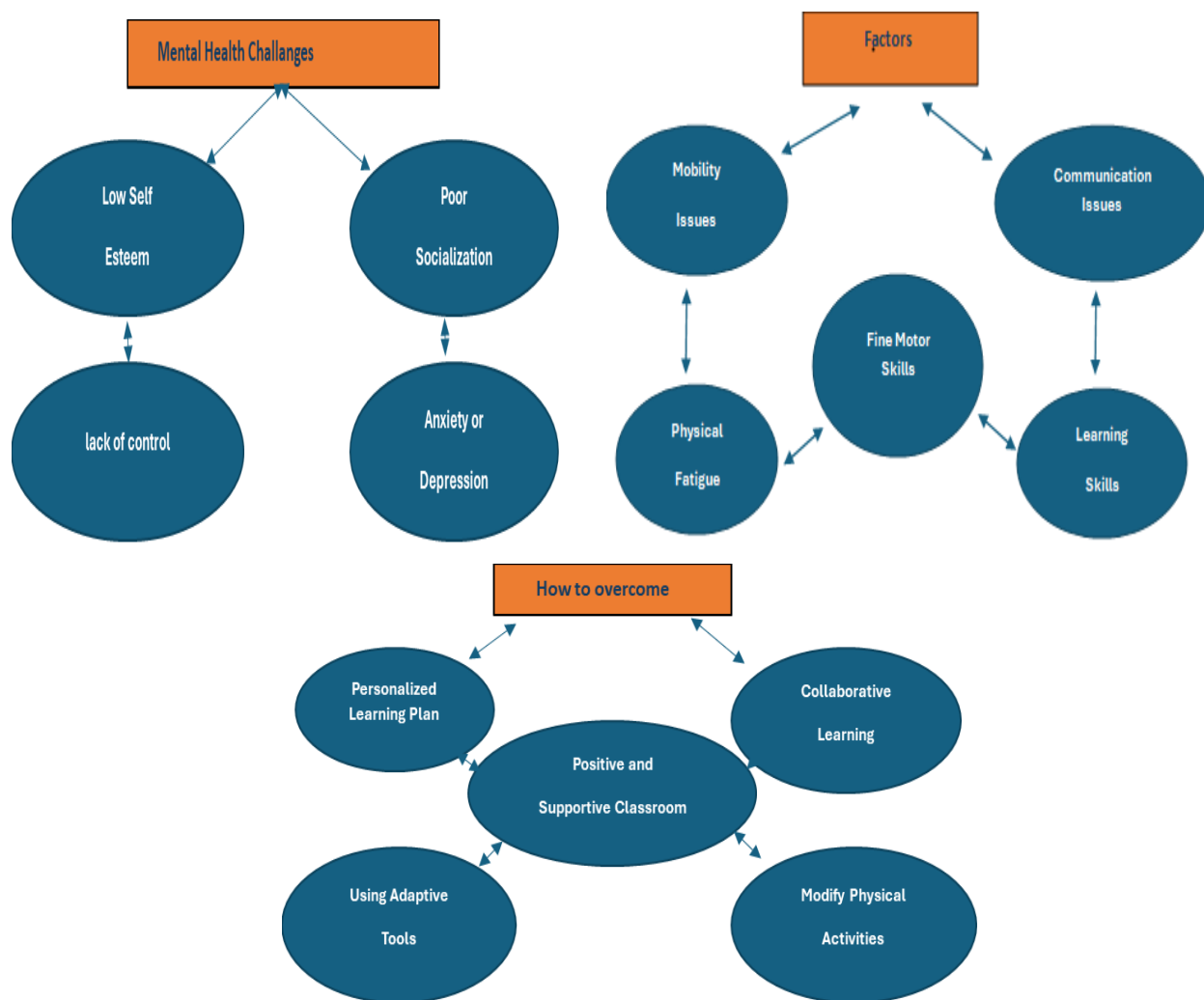
Over all else, this is necessary to supply customized approaches that take into account the specific needs of every kid. In particular, the abilities of children as well as general standard of their lives might be significantly improved using speech, occupational, and physical therapy. Teenagers receive greater latitude to speak for yourselves. Whenever technological aids, including hearing technologies or adaption instruments are implemented, individuals can participate into the curriculum further totally and openly. This is important for developing a welcoming atmosphere that encourages community cooperation; stimulating teammates and working together promotes interpersonal abilities and a feeling of belonging. Additionally, modifying classroom activities to accommodate different physical abilities guarantees that each kid is able to provide an important contribution. Daily interaction across professionals in education and therapy is needed for tracking achievements and introducing any appropriate prepare alterations. Through establishing that nurturing and encouraging environment, they might assist youngsters suffering neurological disorders transcend their hurdles as well as achieve at educational surroundings as well as afterwards. The instructor delivered pupils The clarifications which come next:

"Establishing personalized instructional materials towards every learner serves as a smart approach to overcome in addition to hurdles. This enables you to modify the lessons we teach according to their specific demands plus strengths." (spe-2)

"Innovative equipment, namely assist software or properly developed composing musical instruments, should dramatically the aid learners that CP execute projects better effectively." (Spe-7)

"I actually adjust recreational practices for guarantee ensures that youngsters should take part incorporating seated movements as well as improved sports." (Spe-6)

The major themes as well as their sub-themes who resulted during the semi-structured interviewing groupings are illustrated as the parts that follow figure:



The key findings of the thematic analysis is as under:

Lack of Training in Cerebral Palsy: A number of educators reported having little formal training in cerebral palsy, which affected their comprehension of the disorder.

Lack of Mental Health Training: Due to a lack of training in identifying and assisting with mental health concerns, teachers felt unprepared to deal with mental health issues.

General Lack of Knowledge: Teachers were unsure of how to properly meet the unique needs of children with cerebral palsy.

Mental Health Issues: Anxiety, depression, and stress are among the mental health issues that children with cerebral palsy frequently display.

Effects of Physical Limitations: Children with cerebral palsy experience worsening emotional and psychological health as a result of physical limitations, such as mobility problems.

Peer Relationship Difficulties: A lot of kids with cerebral palsy have trouble making or keeping friends, which can exacerbate mental health conditions like loneliness.

Low Self-Esteem: Because of their perceived differences from their peers or difficulties participating, children with cerebral palsy may grow up to have low self-esteem.

Frustration and Behavioral Issues: Aggression and withdrawal are two examples of behavioral issues that can result from frustration with their physical limitations.

Discussion

A variety of mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and social isolation, are frequently experienced by children with cerebral palsy. These problems stem from CP's physical restrictions, the stigma associated with disabilities, and the difficulties meeting academic standards. In addition, a lot of these kids struggle with socialization, communication, and behavioral control, all of which can lead to mental health issues. Similar findings have been incorporated in other studies (Kwan et al., 2020). When children's behavior, mood, or social interactions change, teachers are frequently the first adults to notice. They play a pivotal role in establishing a welcoming and encouraging atmosphere that fosters both mental and academic health. However, a lack of resources, training, or professional support may leave many teachers feeling unprepared to handle the mental health needs of children with cerebral palsy (Downs et al., 2018). The absence of specialized training for teachers in handling the emotional and psychological needs of kids with disabilities like cerebral palsy is a significant obstacle to providing effective mental health support. Better teacher preparation programs that address the mental and physical health aspects of cerebral palsy are needed, according to research. To spot mental health problems early and take the right action, educators need the right resources (Irwin et al., 2019). For children with cerebral palsy to receive comprehensive support, cooperation between educators, counselors, and other mental health specialists is crucial. Teachers' opinions about how this partnership actually functions (or doesn't) can offer important insights into how schools can better incorporate mental health services for students with disabilities (McMahon & Walker, 2019).

Conclusion

In summary, the study "Supporting Mental Health of Children with Cerebral Palsy in School: Teachers' Perspective" emphasizes how important teachers are in meeting the mental health requirements of students with CP in the classroom. According to the study, although most teachers are dedicated to helping these students, they frequently encounter difficulties because of a lack of resources, inadequate training, and restricted access to specialized mental health services. Teachers found that children with cerebral palsy (CP) have significant mental health problems, including social isolation, depression, and anxiety. These problems are exacerbated by physical limitations and social integration challenges. In spite of these obstacles, a lot of educators are effectively using peer relationships, tailored support plans, and inclusive practices to improve the emotional health of their students. To effectively address the mental health needs of children with cerebral palsy, teachers must receive more specialized professional development and increased institutional support, according to the research. More training in both CP and mental health, closer cooperation with medical professionals, and improved access to mental health resources in schools are some suggestions for enhancing support. In order to create a more welcoming and encouraging environment that supports the academic and emotional development of kids with cerebral palsy, the study ultimately advocates for a systemic approach in which school policies and procedures are coordinated. Schools can foster a supportive environment where children with cerebral palsy can flourish academically and emotionally by filling in these gaps.

Recommendations

1. Provide professional development courses on disability and mental health, with a focus on cerebral palsy (CP), to help teachers better identify and manage mental health issues.

2. Create and put into effect school policies that give students with cerebral palsy (CP) priority when it comes to their mental health needs, including access to mental health services and counseling.
3. Make sure that schools have explicit procedures in place for recognizing and handling mental health issues in kids with cerebral palsy.
4. To guarantee comprehensive support for kids with cerebral palsy, teachers, school psychologists, counselors, and other mental health specialists should collaborate and communicate on a regular basis.
5. To develop customized support plans, assemble interdisciplinary teams comprising educators, therapists, and mental health specialists.
6. Create peer support initiatives to foster inclusivity and lessen social isolation, assisting kids with cerebral palsy in forming social bonds and enhancing their emotional health.
7. To foster a more understanding and supportive school climate, teach peers empathy and disability awareness.
8. Make sure that, in the school setting, kids with cerebral palsy can easily access mental health resources like therapy, counseling, and support groups.

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