

THE CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDER

Introduction

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) encompass disruptive, withdrawn, or destructive behaviors that hinder appropriate functioning, impacting education, relationships, emotions, and well-being. EBD is characterized by persistent unhappiness, withdrawal, aggression, or extreme mood swings, these behaviors significantly disrupt learning and social interactions.

This topic offers insights into the concept of EBD, common symptoms, areas it affects, and its consequences if not intervened earlier. The document targets academics, students, special education educators, parents, and other professionals and any other people interested with EBD. It emphasizes collaborative efforts and technology tools to enhance the information be accessed widely. It greatly intends to promote understanding and effective practices to improve educational and social outcomes for learners with EBD.

Audience

This topic is designed for academics, educators, special education professionals, school administrators, and parents who work closely with students exhibiting Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.

Length of the topic

The information provided can be comprehensively reviewed in 30-40 minutes, ensuring a quick yet thorough understanding of EBD and its implications for learners and their environments.

Topic Outcomes

After completing reading this topic, the audience will be able to:

- Conceptualize the meaning of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD).
- Understand the key characteristics and symptoms of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders.
- Recognize the importance of early identification and intervention in managing EBD.
- Gain awareness of how EBD affects different areas of life, including education, relationships, and emotional well-being.
- Be equipped to identify behaviors that meet the criteria for EBD and take appropriate steps to address them.

Technology Requirements for readers

- **Interactive Tools:** Devices such as tablets or laptops with apps for emotional regulation, social skills training, and self-monitoring.
- Assistive technologies for staff and students with disabilities

The Concept of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) Overview

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders refer to observable destructive or acting-out behaviors directed toward others, as well as immature or withdrawn behaviors. These behaviors indicate underlying mental and emotional conflicts that are not age-appropriate. EBD includes inappropriate behaviors (toward oneself or others) or emotions, such as harmful tendencies, low self-worth, and irrational aggression, withdrawal, or persistent unhappiness or depression without apparent reasons.

EBD affects various aspects of a child's life, including:

- **Education:** Inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
- **Relationships:** Difficulty in building or maintaining satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers or adults.
- **Behavior:** Exhibiting inappropriate behaviors or emotions under normal circumstances.
- **Physical Health:** Developing physical symptoms, irrational fears, or cruelty associated with personal or social problems.
- **Emotions:** Persistent unhappiness, depression, or internalizing behaviors.

Criteria for labeling learners with EBD

For a child to be identified as having an Emotional and Behavioral Disorder, the following must be observed:

- The behavior must be chronic, occurring over a prolonged period.

- The behavior must be severe, significantly deviating from age-appropriate norms.
- These behavioral characteristics must interfere with the child's educational performance.
- The child may exhibit extreme cruelty, unhappiness, or withdrawal.

Children with EBD often struggle with academic performance, social relationships, and self-regulation. They may be unable to form meaningful relationships with family, peers, and adults in the school system.

Common symptoms of EBD include:

- Persistent sadness or feeling down.
- Confused thinking or reduced concentration.
- Withdrawal from social interactions, excessive fears, or extreme guilt.
- Extreme mood swings (highs and lows).
- Outbursts of irritability or bad temper.
- Hyperactivity (short attention span, impulsiveness).
- Immature behavior (crying, temper tantrums, poor coping skills).
- Hurting oneself or discussing self-harm or suicide.
- Verbal or physical aggression, including fights or physical attacks.
- Vandalism or destructiveness.
- Avoidance of social interactions and lack of social skills (e.g., difficulty sharing, impatience, lack of humor).
- Unjustified fears, such as fear of insects, darkness, or sleeping or going to the toilet alone.
- Frequent complaints of illness that cannot be medically verified.

- Out-of-control behavior that is potentially harmful to self or others.
- Talking excessively or yelling as if something bad has happened.
- Disturbing peers, ignoring teachers, or refusing to follow directions.
- Complaining frequently or blaming others.
- Failing to complete assignments.
- Acting out, such as stealing or destroying property.
- Avoiding social interactions and rejecting themselves due to feelings of rejection.

Children with EBD are frequently in conflict with those around them and are often rejected by peers. They lack social skills needed to form friendships, such as sharing, patience, and reciprocity. This rejection can lead to a cycle of self-rejection and further isolation. If these antisocial behaviors appear in early childhood, they are strong predictors of delinquent or criminal behaviors during adolescence (ages 14–18). Without early intervention, these behaviors can lead to:

- School dropout.
- Arrests and involvement in criminal activities.
- Substance abuse.
- Destructive behaviors in schools (e.g., arson).
- Conflicts with teachers.
- Premature death.

Note: Early intervention is critical to addressing EBD and mitigating its adverse effects.

References

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