Savant syndrome: rare yet spectacular condition in which someone with a developmental disability has an ability that contrasts the individual's overall handicap.
- The skills usually fit into one of five general categories: musical, art, mathematical, mechanical/spatial and calendar calculations.
- Savant skills are usually accompanied by an extraordinary memory.
- A greater IQ is related to having a savant skill. The majority of savants tend fall into the mild to borderline categories of developmental delay.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD): neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by impairments in language and communication, reciprocal social interaction, and the presence of repetitive behaviour.
- 10% of individuals with ASD have a savant skill.
- Repetitive and restricted behaviours tend to facilitate high-level skill development.
- Savant skills may relate to poor social communication.

ABSTRACT

Objective: To investigate the nature of savant skills in children with ASD by examining the relations that IQ, language ability, parental encouragement, social skills, and repetitive and restricted behaviours have with these talents.

Method: An online parental questionnaire was administered to 22 caregivers with children aged 3-12 years with a current ASD diagnosis.

Result: More than half of the children had a talent that was both above the general level of the child and above that of children of the same age. The key to understanding savant syndrome may lie in examining it in relation to ASD.

RESULTS

- 13/22 children were considered to have savant skills.
- 11/22 children were considered to have extraordinary memory.

INTRODUCTION

- Savant syndrome: rare yet spectacular condition in which someone with a developmental disability has an ability that contrasts the individual's overall handicap.
- The skills usually fit into one of five general categories: musical, art, mathematical, mechanical/spatial and calendar calculations.
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- A greater IQ is related to having a savant skill. The majority of savants tend fall into the mild to borderline categories of developmental delay.

CONCLUSIONS

- More than half of the participants had a talent, whether it was a savant skill or extraordinary memory.
- A greater number of savant skills may be correlated with:
  - Lower levels of social communication
  - A higher IQ
  - Better language abilities

LIMITATIONS:
1. Unrepresentative sample: The current study had a small sample size and showed a bias towards high-functioning participants.
2. Parental report measures: Tendency of under- or over-reporting a child’s behaviour which can be affected by who the parent is using as a comparison group when filling out questions.
3. Lack of a uniform definition of savant syndrome: Without a set definition, it is virtually impossible for researchers to properly assess and study the syndrome.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS: Future studies should take on a multi-dimensional approach by pairing report-data with experimental observation. There is a desperate need for a widely accepted classification of savant syndrome and its associated talents.

Pearsone correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relation between the number of savant skills and:
- IQ: \( r_{(22)} = .36 \ p = .10 \)
- Language ability: \( r_{(22)} = .39 \ p = .08 \)
- Social communication: \( r_{(22)} = .38 \ p = .08 \)
- Parental encouragement: ns
- Repetitive and restricted behaviours: ns

\( \* p < .10 \), marginally significant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Skill</th>
<th>Number with Skill</th>
<th>Males (17) with Skill</th>
<th>Females (5) with Skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar Calculation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Languages</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: it is possible for children to display more than one type of skill.