

ABSTRACT

Challenges Faced by the Parents of Special Children

Achsah John*

Sylvia Daisy

Abstract: Family is the important social institution devoted to the growth of the child and parents are the important agents of socialization. This paper examines the challenges faced by the parents of special children. Special children are those who are affected by intellectual disability which is manifested by limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviours. Intellectual disability affects about 2-3 percent of the general population. Intellectual disability is caused by genetic conditions, problems during pregnancy, problems during childbirth or illness or injury. However, certain causes of intellectual disability are preventable. Intellectual disability may be diagnosed through interviews with the parents, observation of the child, and testing of intelligence and adaptive behaviours. Remedies include learning everything one can about intellectual disabilities, encouraging the child's independence, getting the child involved in group activities, staying involved and getting to know other parents of intellectually disabled children. In India, children with disabilities mainly come under the purview of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Disability in India is still functioning in the realm of social welfare instead of a rights perspective. Census 2001 has revealed that over 21 million people in India are suffering from one or the other kind of disability. This is equivalent to 2.1 percent of the population. Among the five types of disabilities, disability in seeing is highest at 48.5 percent followed by disability in movement (27.9%), mental retardation (10.3%), in speech (7.5%), and in hearing (5.8%).

Key words: Special children, Intellectual disability, Mental retardation, Intelligence quotient (IQ), Down syndrome.

*** The author participated in the Professor Radha Kamal Mukerjee Young Social Scientist Award Contest held during the Conference: Science, Technology and Society at Indore Christian College, Indore on January 6-7, 2018.**