

ROLE OF PARENTS IN EDUCATING INTELLECTUALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN

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Abstract

The present research deals with the examining the role of parents in educating intellectually challenged children. The parents have to play a crucial and vital role in the aspect to providing the education to all level of intellectually challenged children, sometime providing special education is not possible due to the education, locality and financial level of the parent and family of those children. An attempt has been made by the researcher in explaining the role of parents in arranging and providing educational facilities to their special kids. The present research is descriptive in nature and a sample of 100 respondents has been selected as respondents for the purpose of this research. The parents of intellectually challenged children have been selected as respondents and different statements has been framed by the researcher to find out the role played by them in the present aspect taken as a problem. The percentage method has been employed to draw the inferences and it has been found that parents of the intellectually challenged children accepted that they have to engage themselves completely in arranging and imparting education for their intellectually challenged children, so that they may learn those skills to undertake the daily life activities conveniently.

Key Words: Parents, Intellectually Challenged Children, Education, Special Schools and Learning Life Skills.

INTRODUCTION

According to the **Mental Health Act of 1983**, severe mental impairment is defined as a state of arrested or incomplete development of the mind, which includes severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning and is associated with abnormally aggressive or seriously irresponsible behaviour on the part of the person in question. (**Census India**) describes that every parent desires for their child to be physically and psychologically flawless. Some children are born with a temporary or permanent physical or mental condition. The birth of a disabled kid, or the discovery that a child has a handicap, can have far-reaching consequences for the family. However, "every child is unique." The same can be said for a disabled child. Every child and family is unique. **Ndurumo (1993)** describes mental retardation as a condition characterised by poor overall intellectual performance and deficiencies in adaptive behaviour. According to the American Association on Mental Retardation, mental retardation is a disability marked by significant limits in intellectual functioning as well as adaptive behaviour as manifested in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. This impairment appears before the age of ten (**Luckasson et al., 2002**). Stereotypes or indications that particular children are a "type" must be avoided because all children are unique people. **Deborah (1992)** observes that children with intellectual disabilities

exist in our societies and that we must embrace the difficulties of living and working with them. **Randiki (2002)** Special education has progressed through several stages or ages over the years. Prior to the 17th century, people with impairments were thought to be less socially and physically adept everywhere across the world. Children born with disabilities were not easily accepted and were viewed as a burden on the family and society as a whole.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This part of the research paper deals with the review of previous studies, researches and article written by various scholars, and academicians. It helps in finding the research gap between present research study and previous researches undertaken by various researchers. These are as follows: -

Goswami (2013) in the study revealed that 27 out of 30 parents have a positive parenting attitude, which is more than half of the total. Rest three has demonstrated a bad parenting attitude, accounting for less than half of the total. Those that are even more than 50% positive do not have a 100% positive outlook. Because the problem is not biological, social workers should play an important part in resolving this social issue. **Shetty and Menezza (2013)** in their study presented that the common attitude toward those with mental illnesses has to alter. They should not be sympathised with, shielded from, or mocked; rather, they should be assisted in growing and developing within their strengths and limitations. Their education or training should begin at home, and then they may be enrolled in specific schools or institutes. The duty for their rehabilitation and adjustment should then fall on society and the state. **Flinsi, Babu and Kathuria (2015)** suggested that there was a substantial difference in perception scores between parents and caregivers. There was a substantial relationship between parents' perception scores and their relationship with their child. The information leaflet was well received and used by parents and caregivers. **Joseph and Muthee (2016)** found that cultural belief, negligence, a lack of sensitization, and a lack of technical skills among parents and teachers were the major causes of poor enrolment of mentally retarded children in chosen schools under examination. **Dhar (2019)** concluded that mentally handicapped youngsters, both boys and girls, were found to be less intelligent, emotionally unstable, irritable, obedient, sober, undependable, shy, tender minded, obstructive, shrewd, placid, thoughtless, and tents. **Anchal and Rani (2021)** revealed that society ignores mentally challenged children and places little emphasis on their education and training. Parents are regarded as equal partners with teachers in the education of children with intellectual disability. The role of parents in the development of education for mentally challenged students'

the role of parents is critical in building the complete school system for mentally disabled students.

RESEARCH GAP

There are several researches have been undertaken on reviewing the role of parents in educating intellectually challenged children in India, but least studies have been done on such topic in Himachal Pradesh. It is important to study the awareness level of the parents regarding importance of education for the intellectually challenged children especially in the hilly state of Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, the present research study was conducted on the role of parents in providing education to these children.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following procedure has been followed by the researcher: -

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present research focused on reviewing the role of parents in providing education for the intellectually challenged children. The problem is entitled as, **“Role of Parents in Educating Intellectually Challenged Children”**

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This research has been undertaken to study the role of parents in providing education for the intellectually challenged children.

SOURCE OF DATA

The present research study is based on primary as well secondary sources of data. The primary data has been gathered with the help of the interview schedule framed by the researcher. In order to know about the importance of role played by the parents in providing education for such children eleven statements have been included in the interview schedule and same questions has been asked from the parents of these children. The data thus collected has been compiled and inferences have been drawn. The three point likert scale has been used in this study and was ranked from 1 to 3 with 1 representing “Important”, 2 for “Somewhat Important” and 3 for “Not at All Important” respectively.

TOOL USED FOR DATA ANALYSIS

The percentage method has been used for the analysis of collected data.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

For the purpose of present research a sample of 100 parents from the different places such as Mandi, Shimla, Solan, and Kullu have been selected. Purposive sampling technique has been used to draw the sample for this research.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The present section deals with the data analysis and interpretation of the data collected: -

Table 1: Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Age Group (In Years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
25-35	33	33
35-45	42	42
Above 45	25	25
Total	100	100

Source: Data Collected through Interview Schedule and Compiled by the Researcher

The table number 1 predicted that majority of the respondents (42 percent) belonged to the age group of (35-45) years, followed by the age-group (25-35) years (33 percent) and rest of the 25 percent respondents those above the age of 45 years. This revealed that maximum number of respondents who participated in the present research were young and mature people.

Table 2: Profession-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Profession	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Educationists	15	15
Lawyer	03	03
Chartered Accountant	02	02
Doctor	17	17
Business	22	22
Administrative Staff	07	07
Farmers	11	11
Daily Wage Workers	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: Data Collected through Interview Schedule and Compiled by the Researcher

The above table showed the profession wise division of the respondents who took part in the research study. Out of 100 respondents selected as a sample for the purpose of the study revealed that 23 percent of the respondents were daily wage workers, who

earns their living by working on daily basis such as laborer, mason, carpenter or unskilled workers etc., 22 percent were involved in various types of businesses such as have confectionary shop, showroom, joint venture company, sole proprietorship, partnership business, and other type of businesses, 17 percent were in medical profession, 15 percent were educationists, 11 percent were farmers, 7 percent of the respondents were indulged in the administrative work such as HAS, IAS, HPS, IPS and so on, 3 percent were lawyers and rest of the 2 percent were chartered accountants. This explanation predicted that majority of the respondents were well qualified and involved in intellectual and creative aspect to earn the livelihood for self and their dependents.

Table 3: Responses of the respondents regarding Role of Parents in providing Education for the intellectually Challenged Children

Statements	Yes	Somewhat	No	Total
Are you aware of the educational institutions providing education for the intellectually challenged children?	60 (60)	12 (12)	28 (28)	100 (100)
In your vicinity special schools have been established by the concerned Government for disseminating education for intellectually challenged children?	20 (20)	15 (15)	65 (65)	100 (100)
Do you agree that education for intellectually challenged children is essential for their growth and development?	70 (70)	23 (23)	07 (07)	100 (100)
Have you taught your intellectually challenged children about the skills for daily life activities?	25 (25)	15 (15)	60 (60)	100 (100)
Are you economically capable of bearing the expenses of providing education for your intellectually challenged children?	60 (60)	10 (10)	30 (30)	100 (100)
Are you capable of providing all educational needs for your intellectually challenged children?	45 (45)	15 (15)	40 (40)	100 (100)
Do your children are learning skills and activities for daily life in the special schools they have admitted?	80 (80)	05 (05)	15 (15)	100 (100)
Have you ever attended any kind of training programme organised by NGO/NPO/Government organisations to teach you how to take care of your intellectually challenged children?	81 (81)	09 (09)	10 (10)	100 (100)

Have you ever attended seminars/conferences/meetings organised by NGO/Government departments for creating awareness about policies/schemes/services offered to support intellectually challenged children?	83 (83)	09 (09)	08 (08)	100 (100)
Do you agree that as parents of intellectually challenged children you have play an important role in arranging and imparting education for them?	90 (90)	06 (06)	04 (04)	100 (100)

Source: Data Collected through Interview Schedule and Compiled by the Researcher
 Figures in the parenthesis shows the percentage value of the responses

The table 3 explained about the responses of respondents regarding the significant role played by respondents especially parents in the present research in providing education for their intellectually challenged children. It is necessity to make the life of these special children easy and obstacle free. The statements given in the above table has been explained one by one to draw the inferences: -

Statement 1: Are you aware of the educational institutions providing education for the intellectually challenged children?

It is revealed that most of the respondents (60 percent) were aware of the educational institutions opened by the Government, NGO/NPO for providing education to the intellectually challenged children to teach basic life skills. Whereas 28 percent were not aware and rest of the 12 percent are of mixed opinion about the above statement. Thus, it has been concluded that awareness level about educational institutions which are providing education for the intellectually challenged children is higher and it is essential for parents to have knowledge about these institutions to make the life of these children stress free.

Statement 2: In your vicinity special schools have been established by the concerned Government for disseminating education for intellectually challenged children?

Out of 100 respondents, 65 percent were against this statement and only 20 percent respondents were favoring this statement. And rest of the 15 percent respondents was having varied responses about it. The data revealed that respondents responded negatively about the statement asked from them, but in reality they are not against this statement but due to lesser number of special schools established in the state, they

responded negatively. As such schools have been opened in those areas which are accessible in every aspect such as Sundenagar, Nagchala, Shimla, Nahan, Arki, Kullu and Solan, are the names of few places where special schools have been established by the state Government, NGOs/NPOs and others.

Statement 3: Do you agree that education for intellectually challenged children is essential for their growth and development?

It is evident from the data given in the above table that 70 percent of the respondents agreed with the above statement, whereas 23 percent gave their little support and 7 percent responded negatively. Therefore, it has been found that majority of the respondents agreed that education is an essential weapon even for the intellectually challenged children for their growth and development in every sphere of their life.

Statement 4: Have you taught your intellectually challenged children about the skills for daily life activities?

It is observed that most of the respondents (60 percent) were not able to teach their intellectually challenged children. It is due to the reason that all the parents are not trained and have not possessed special education skills needed for educating these children. The parents failed to observe and sense the needs of their special children as and when required by these kids. On the other hand only 25 percent respondents possessed such competence to teach their especially abled children. Rest of the 15 percent responded that they may or may not teach their intellectually challenged children. Form the above discussion, it has been presented that majority of the respondents have the competence of teaching their intellectually challenged children.

Statement 5: Are you economically capable of bearing the expenses of providing education for your intellectually challenged children?

It has been predicted form that 60 percent of the respondents were economically strong enough to bear the expense of providing education to their intellectually challenged children. Whereas 30 percent were not and rest of the 10 percent responded that they may bear the expenses as per their capacity. Therefore, it has been revealed that majority of the respondents were well off and can invest finances to provide better educational facilities for their intellectually challenged children.

Statement 6: Are you capable of providing all eductaional needs for your intellectually challenged children?

The data revealed that out of 100 respondents only 45 percent of the parents were capable of providing all kinds of education needed to enhance the skills of their intellectually challenged children. Instead of this 40 percent of the respondents were not capable of providing all needed educational facilities because of lack of knowledge about schemes, policies and services provided by the Government. The rest of the 15 percent respondents were slightly capable of providing such need for their children. Thus, it has been found that the concerned organisations needs to disperse the awareness among the parents of family members of such children to take the benefits of schemes, services and policies so that they may avail the advantages for educating their children.

Statement 7: Do your children are learning skills and activities for daily life in the special schools they have admitted?

The table number 3 has been presented that majority of the respondents (80 percent) agreed with the above statement whereas 15 percent disagreed and rest of the 5 percent revealed their mixed responses about the present statement. Thus, it has been concluded that most of the respondents were happy with the services provided by the educational institutions to the intellectually challenged children for enhancing the essential skills needed for daily life.

Statement 8: Have you ever attended any kind of training programme organised by NGO/NPO/Government organisations to teach you how to take care of your intellectually challenged children?

It is evident from the table that 81 percent of the respondents responded positively while 20 percent responded that they never attended such training and awareness programme. Rest of the 9 percent was replied that they have attended such programmes but sometimes. Thus, from this explanation, it has been found that majority of the parents have attended such programmes and they want their intellectually challenged children to learn the daily life skills.

Statement 9: Have you ever attended seminars/conferences/meetings organised by NGO/Government departments for creating awareness about policies/schemes/services offered to support intellectually challenged children?

83 percent of the respondents responded that they have attended seminars/conferences and special meeting organised by concerned departments, NGOs, and NPOs for providing training and creating awareness among parents how to handle and take care of the intellectually challenged children, while 8 percent of respondents never

attended these type of programmes because of their busy schedule or lack of awareness regarding these programmes. And rest of the 9 percent responded that they sometimes attended such programmes. So, it has been presented that maximum number of parents wants to play significant role in providing education to their mentally challenged children.

Statement 10: Do you agree that as parents of intellectually challenged children you have play an important role in arranging and imparting education for them?

The data provided in the table number 3 revealed that majority of the respondents (90 percent) agreed that as parents they have to play significant role in arranging and imparting education for intellectually challenged children. The main objective behind this is to make these children skilled and efficient to learn the basic daily life activities. Whereas 6 percent of the respondents showed their least interest in this and rest of the 4 percent were completely disagreed with the statement. Therefore, from the above discussion it has been revealed that parents understand their responsibilities and role they have to play in providing educational facilities for their intellectually challenged children.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it has been concluded that majority of the parents who were selected as a sample for the purpose of present research agreed that they have to play a significant role in arranging and providing basic educational facilities to teach and train to learn basic daily life skills for their intellectually challenged children. They understand that for arranging educational aspect needed to educate their children they have to take the help and support of specialised professions i.e. special educators and NGOs, NPOs, and concerned Government Departments, who are offering various schemes and support to enhance the life the of these children. The intellectually challenged or mentally weak kids are the most ignored segment of our society and treated as a burden by the parents, family and society as well. Therefore, by taking into consideration all the favourable and unfavourable circumstances, it's the parents only who have to come forward to make the life of such children stress free.

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