

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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Abstract

In this article, opinions and reflections on the social, psychological and pedagogical characteristics of families with children with intellectual disabilities are discussed. Families with children who have intellectual disabilities navigate a unique and complex set of challenges that influence their social, psychological, and pedagogical dynamics. Understanding these characteristics is crucial for educators, therapists, and support networks who aim to provide effective support to these families. The social dynamics of families with children with intellectual disabilities are often shaped by the broader societal attitudes toward disability.

Keywords: Intellectual disabilities, family dynamics, parental stress, social support, coping strategies, special education, child development, behavioral challenges, sibling relationships, inclusive education, early intervention.

Introduction

The journey of families with children with intellectual disabilities is complex, marked by both challenges and strengths. By recognizing and addressing the social, psychological, and pedagogical characteristics of these families, we can create a more inclusive and supportive environment that enables both the children and their families to thrive. These families may experience social isolation, stigma, or lack of understanding from their communities. This social isolation can result in limited social interactions and support networks, which are vital for the well-being of both the child and the family.

Stigma surrounding intellectual disabilities often leads to social exclusion. Families may find themselves excluded from community activities, social gatherings, or even extended family events. This exclusion can be due to a lack of awareness or understanding about intellectual disabilities, leading to discomfort or avoidance by others. Consequently, families may withdraw from social situations, further deepening their isolation.

Despite the challenges, many families with children with ID develop strong support networks, often consisting of other families facing similar challenges. These networks provide emotional support, practical advice, and a sense of belonging. Support groups, both online and in-person, can be a lifeline for these families, helping them navigate the complexities of raising a child with intellectual disabilities.

Siblings of children with intellectual disabilities often experience a unique set of social dynamics. They may take on caregiving roles, which can lead to increased responsibility and maturity at a young age. However, they may also experience feelings of neglect or resentment due to the disproportionate attention their sibling with ID receives from parents and caregivers.

The psychological impact of raising a child with intellectual disabilities is profound and multifaceted. Parents and caregivers often experience a wide range of emotions, from love and pride to stress, anxiety, and grief. Understanding these psychological characteristics is essential for providing effective support to these families.

Parents of children with intellectual disabilities often go through a process of emotional adjustment, which can include feelings of shock, denial, anger, and eventually acceptance. The realization that their child has an intellectual disability can be overwhelming, leading to feelings of grief for the loss of the "typical" child they expected. However, with time and support, many parents reach a point of acceptance and find joy in their child's unique abilities and achievements.

Raising a child with intellectual disabilities can be a source of chronic stress. Parents may face ongoing concerns about their child's future, their ability to provide adequate care, and the financial strain of supporting a child with special needs. This stress can lead to mental health challenges, such as depression or anxiety, making it essential for these parents to have access to mental health support.

Despite the challenges, many families exhibit remarkable resilience. They develop coping strategies that help them manage the stress and demands of their situation. These strategies may include seeking professional help, engaging in self-care activities, or finding solace in religious or spiritual beliefs. Building resilience is crucial for maintaining the family's overall well-being.

The parent-child relationship in families with children with intellectual disabilities is often characterized by a deep sense of bonding and attachment. Parents may develop a heightened sense of protectiveness and advocacy for their child, ensuring they receive the necessary support and resources. However, this relationship can also be marked by frustration or guilt when parents struggle to meet their child's needs or when they perceive societal barriers to their child's inclusion and success.

The educational needs of children with intellectual disabilities require specialized pedagogical approaches. Families play a crucial role in their child's educational journey, often advocating for appropriate services and accommodations. Understanding the pedagogical characteristics of these families is essential for educators and policymakers.

One of the most critical pedagogical tools for children with intellectual disabilities is the Individualized Education Plan. An IEP is a tailored educational program designed to meet the specific needs of the child. Families are often deeply involved in the creation and implementation of their child's IEP, collaborating with educators and therapists to ensure that the plan addresses the child's unique strengths and challenges.

Effective education for children with intellectual disabilities requires strong collaboration between home and school. Parents and caregivers are often the most knowledgeable about their child's needs and can provide valuable insights to educators. Regular communication between parents and teachers is essential for monitoring progress, addressing challenges, and making necessary adjustments to the educational plan.

Families with children with intellectual disabilities often become advocates for their child's educational rights. They may need to navigate complex educational systems to secure appropriate services, accommodations, and resources for their child. This advocacy can be empowering for families, as they learn to navigate these systems and become effective champions for their child's education.

The pedagogical approach for children with intellectual disabilities often extends beyond traditional academics to include life skills and social development. Families play a crucial role in supporting their child's acquisition of these skills, both at home and in collaboration with educators. Lifelong learning is a key focus, with the goal of helping the child achieve the highest level of independence and inclusion possible.

Pedagogical strategies must also take into account the cultural and linguistic background of the family. Families from diverse cultural backgrounds may have different expectations for their child's education and may face additional barriers in accessing appropriate services. Educators and support providers must be culturally sensitive and work to bridge any gaps that may exist.

Currently, the upbringing of children in need of special attention and the research of the peculiarities of this education are some of the most pressing issues of modern pedagogy. The disability of the Family Institute plays an important role in its future development as a residence that shapes the personality of existing children. It is through the family that the child begins to communicate with society, as well as to see himself as a free person. The child's family, loved ones, is like a chain that connects him with the outside world. The attitude towards people in need of special attention also reflects the humanitarian performance of that society. It is necessary to properly educate children with disabilities, to find their place in life in the future and not need the care of loved ones, to be one of the main goals of society.

The study of the problems of raising children in need of special attention remains one of the most pre-existing issues of modern pedagogy. For decades, social and political changes in societies have not ceased to affect family relations either, of course. The attitude towards children in need of special attention has become more humane in recent years. The main advantage in their upbringing was given to the family.

The unsolved aspects of the problem: the relationship between parents and Children, Family Education strongly influence the mental and emotional state of children in need of special attention. It is these issues that are considered the most pressing problem facing teachers and special specialists. Purpose of the article: the main goal of this article is to show the basic principles of family education of children who need special attention, as

well as the problems that often occur in these families, and to analyze solutions to them in foreign experience, in particular in the US experience.

Raising a child with a disability requires greater spiritual and physical strength from both parents. In doing so, parents should be attentive to their own health, be able to maintain emotional balance and optimism. It is unfortunate that such parents do not compare their children with other healthy children. In this, it is necessary that the parents are able to objectively assess the level of development of their children, focusing on the achievements of their children, and not on standard standards. Abnormal behavior of a child with a disability is the wrong choice of the mother to be kept away from people. In addition, natural conditions are also necessary to identify problems in the child and find measures to correct them.

Parents of a child with disabilities will be forced to radically change their permanent way of life. In the process, it is necessary for parents to carry out every work necessary for their children to adapt to the complex conditions of the outside world and take advantage of the opportunities given.

Conclusion

Families with children who have intellectual disabilities are characterized by unique social, psychological, and pedagogical dynamics. These families often face significant challenges, including social isolation, chronic stress, and the need for specialized educational support. However, they also exhibit remarkable resilience, developing strong support networks and becoming effective advocates for their children's needs. Understanding these characteristics is essential for anyone working with these families, as it allows for the provision of more targeted, empathetic, and effective support.

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