

ATTITUDE OF PARENTS TOWARDS MENTALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN IN RELATION TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

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ABSTRACT

Modern knowledge and methods of medical sociological science are opening new horizons of promise for physically and mentally handicapped people, but prejudice and discrimination serve to counteract such potential benefits. The medical profession, being particularly close to family with the problem, can be a major influence, depending on its familiarity with the effect of positive or negative attitude towards those affected. Parents' first indication that they may have a mentally retarded child generally comes from a physician. The at large still views the family doctor as the most logical and reliable source of advice to parents of a retarded child. Sometimes even the parents are discriminating the children with or without mental retardation. Kagan and Havemann (1980) explain that it is the emotional component of an attitude that distinguishes it from a belief. In this study the attitude will be used loosely to cover parent's behaviour, perceptions, reactions, values, feelings, etc, as the socio economic status plays a role in developing attitude towards mentally retarded children. Normally those are in this situation the investigator decided to carry out the research in this area to find out the present level of parents attitude towards mentally challenged children in relation to the socio economic status. Objectives of this are to study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parent with respect to their qualification, to study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parent with respect to their family type and to study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parent with respect to their socio economic status .parent attitude towards mentally challenged children scale(PAMCCS) was developed by researcher and socio economic status scale developed by Rajbir Singh, RaheyShyam and Satish Kumar. 140 parents were selected through systematic sampling technique. The results are attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents is differing significantly with respect to their qualification. Attitude towards mentally challenged children of parents are not differing significantly with respect to their socio economic status. Differently abled children should be taken care in the world. In the life of mentally challenged children the parents are playing a big role. So the child should not humiliate but they should be appreciated.

Keywords: Health, Fitness, Attitude and Family

INTRODUCTION

All over the world, the combination of inadequate services provided to the mentally retarded children and their families, and the shift in care from the institutions to the community, has resulted in placing an extra burden on families. It is still unknown how the attitudes of parents of the mentally retarded children toward their children toward their children's handicap in our community differ from that of the western communities. Mental retardation is a bio-psychosocial problem. The behavioral reactions of the retarded children are the by-product of several interacting forces which started from the time of conception. Not only these interacting forces are responsible, but other factors like attitude and personality patterns of the family



members, his peers and society in which he lives, play an important role in the normal development of a child.

The 19th century saw a “Strong awakening of interest in humane treatment of the mentally retarded’ (Anastasi, 1982 p.5). However, examining some of the writings of the 20th century (Huey, 1912; Fernald 1912 in anastasi, Foster, 1990), the attitudes of those purportedly concerned with the mentally retarded seemed anything but humanitarian. Parekh and Jackson (1997) make an important point, that a common perception exist that mentally retarded children are social outcasts, due to the stigmatizing consequences of the process of labelling. Foster (1990) also agree that the treatment of mentally retarded people has been characterized by neglect and abuse. In support of this notion gilbride (1993) maintain that despite advances in public policy and legislation, significant barriers towards people with mental handicaps still exist. Attitudes held by both the general public and the key players, especially parents in the persons life are often cited as an important component of the “handicapped” environment .An attitude may be defined as the individuals tendency to react positively or negatively to some person, object, situation, institution or event. Kagan and havemann (1980) also, refer to an attitude as an organized and enduring set of beliefs and feelings, predisposing us to behave in a certain way. Kagan and haverann (1980) explain that it is the emotional component of an attitude that distinguishes it from a belief. In this study the ‘attitude’ will be used loosely to cover parents behaviour, perceptions, reactions, values, feelings, etc., as the social economic status plays a role in developing attitude towards mentally retarded children. Normally those in the upper class will not have favorable attitude towards mentally challenged children. In this situation the investigator decided to carry out the research in this area to find out the present level of parents attitude towards mentally challenged children in relation to the socio economic status.

Objectives

- To study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their qualification
- To study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their family type.
- To study the significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their socio economic status.

Hypotheses

There is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their qualification.

There is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their family type.

There is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their socio economic status.

Population

The parents of Raichur district of Karnataka constituted the population of the study. The sample comprised of 140 parents selected through systematic random sampling method. The sample was taken from parents where their children are studying in Government, and private school of Raichur District. The sample comprised of male as well as female. Age wise and sex wise distribution of parents are given in Table 1.



TABLE 1
AGE WISE AND SEX WISE DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS.

Age	Male	Female	Total
Up to 40	47	41	88
Above 40	31	21	52
Total	78	62	140

Tools Used

There are two tools used in this study. These tools descriptions are given below.

1) Parents Attitude Towards Mentally Challenged Children: PATMCC scale was developed by the investigator. 25 items were retained and the scale was finalized after validation. Parents Attitude towards Mentally challenged children scale (PAMCCS) consisted of 25 items , with five alternatives to respond as ‘strongly agree’ “agree” “neutral” “disagree” and “ Strongly disagree” and 5,4,3,2, and 1 mark was given for positive items and 1,2,3,4,5 for negative items according . The maximum score could be 125 as the total numbers of items were 25 and the minimum score could be 25. Mean and S.D were calculated and the students were divided into three groups as High Attitude (Mean +SD) Moderate Attitude (Mean+Sd) and Low Attitude (Mean-SD) groups.

Reliability: The reliability of the parent’s attitude towards mentally challenged children scale (PAMCCS) was 0.74 which is computed through test-retest method. Validity: The present parents attitude towards mentally challenged children scale (PAMCCS) has been validated with content and face validity with five experts in field.

Socio-Economic Status Scale (SES): The investigator selected socio-economic status scale developed by Rajbir Singh, RadheyShyam and Satish Kumar by keeping the age locality of the sample. There are 25 items kept in the scale. One item of each for caste and occupation, two items for family (type and size) one item for educational qualification of self and other members. Four items related to mandatory matters. One item for entertainment and four items relate to housing. Item no.15 was kept to assess the real estate. Nine items are kept for assessing life areas.itemno.25 kept for household possessions. Score on item no.5, 7,14,15,and 25 are additive whereas on rest of the items only single score is given.

Reliability: Reliability co-efficient of stability was calculated by test-reset method. The co-efficient of stability was found to be 0.944 for internal consistency Cranach alpha was calculated on normalized with a mean of 50 and (SD10)t scores (N=500) and was found to be 0.791. it reflects this SES has high reliability .

Validity: To assess the validity of the questionnaire manifold criteria were set i.e. (i) self-rating correlation (ii) correlation with sigh and saxena (1981), (iii) factorial validity of the scale was also determined by factor analysis. All types of analysis gives us this scale is more valid.

METHODOLOGY

The creditability of the research depends very much upon the methods used. For the present study, the investigator wanted to collect the data which give the basic information reflecting attitude towards mentally challenged children and socio economic status of parents. At this junction it is more appropriate to elicit the response of the parent on various items of the tools. For this research, survey was found to be more appropriate.



Data Collection

After the school hours, the parents were contacted. They were told about the objectives Of the study .it was followed by the giving of instructions related to the tool to be used for the collection of data .of the instructions were like “these questionnaires are a self-administering questionnaire”. The purpose of the questionnaire was then explained to parents. It was assured that their replies would be kept confidential. The parents were requested to read the instructions carefully and to ask for any clarifications if there was any difficulty in the understanding of the instructions. It was emphasized that no items should be omitted and there was nothing right or wrong about the questions. There was no time limit for the questionnaires. However, it took approximately 30 minutes to complete it. After this the clarification sought by the teachers to give the responses as freely and objectively as possible and they could take as much time as they liked but no need of spending too much time on a particular item. After getting the filled in questionnaires the scoring was done as per the instruction in the manual.

Scoring Procedure: scoring procedures are given below for questionnaires in separate sub title.

- **Parents Attitude Towards Mentally Challenged Children :** parents attitude towards mentally challenged children scale (PAMCCS) consisted of 25 items, with five alternatives to respond as ‘strongly agree’ agree ‘neutral’ ‘disagree’ and strongly disagree and 5,4,3,2, and 1 mark was given for positive item sand 1,2,3,4,5 for negative items accordingly. The maximum score could be 125 as the total number of items was 25 and the minimum score could be 25.
- **Socio Economic Status:** scoring as been done according to the scoring procedure given in the manual. Each item is graded scoring of higher value to 0.

Data Analysis: the data were analyzed with the help of mean, percentage, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, and correlation through SPSS.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their qualification.

There are four levels of qualification, so four averages were arrived. The data were tabulated and analyzed with the help of ANOVA.

TABLE 2
QUALIFICATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MSS	F-value
Between Groups	799.21	3	266.40	3.98
Within groups	9090.18	136	66.84	

* Significant at 0.05 level of significance i.e., 2.65

From the above table 2, it is evident that the F-value 3.98 is significant at 0.05 levels. it reflects that the mean scores of attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents belonging four level of qualification are differing significantly . In this context the null hypotheses, there is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their qualification.” Is



rejected. Therefore, it may be said that attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents are differing significantly with respect to their qualification.

Hypothesis 2: there is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their family type.

There are two levels of family type, so two averages were arrived. The data were tabulated and analyzed with the help of t-test. The results are given in the table 3.

TABLE 3
FAMILY TYPE AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTALLY CHALLENGED

Family Type	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-value
Joint	43	72.79	8.48	138	0.84
Nuclear	97	72.65	8.45		

* Significant at 0.05 level of significance 1.96

From the above table 3, it is evident that the t-value 0.84 is not significant. It reflects that the mean attitude towards mentally challenged children score of joint and nuclear family parents is not differing significantly. In this context the null hypotheses, "there is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged among parents with respect to their family type" is accepted. Therefore, it may be said that the attitude towards mentally challenged score of joint and nuclear family parents is not differing significantly.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their socio economic status.

There are three levels of socio economic status (Low/ average/high), so three average were arrived. The data were tabulated and analyzed with the help of F-test, the result are given in the table 4.

TABLE 4
SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTALLY CHALLENGED

Source of Variance	SS	DF	MSS	F-value
Between Groups	278.66	2	139.33	1.98
Within Groups	9610.73	137	70.15	

* Significant at 0.05 level of significance, 3.04

From the above table 4, it is evident that the F-value 1.98 is not significant. It reflects that the mean scores of attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents belonging four level of socio economic status are not differing significantly. In this context the null hypothesis, "there is no significant difference in attitude towards mentally challenged children among parents with respect to their socio economic statuses" is not rejected. Therefore, it may be said that attitude towards mentally challenged children of parents are not differing significantly with respect to their socio economic status.



Summary of findings

- 1) Attitude towards mentally challenged children among parent is differing significantly with respect to their qualification.
- 2) Attitude towards mentally challenged score of joint and nuclear family parents is not differing significantly
- 3) Attitude towards mentally challenged children of parents is not differing significantly with respect to their socio economic status.

Recommendations: Differently abled children should be taken care in the world. In the life of mentally challenged children the parents are playing a big role. So the child should not humiliate but they should be appreciated.

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