

# Socio-Emotional Problems of the Individuals with Special Educational Needs

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**Abstract:** In a country like ours, the systems and convenience are generally designed to meet the needs of the normal persons only. Our telephones, transport, banking systems and even elevators are not designed to be used by the people with physical problems independently. Whereas in the developed countries, the systems have been designed keeping in mind the needs of the individuals with Special Educational Needs (SEN). For example, the lifts in public places in advanced countries have switches that are marked with Braille for the convenience of the people having visual impairment. The public buses have steps which can be lowered so that even persons on wheel chair can enter. There are special telephones available for individuals with hearing problems. Thus, the system not designed according to the needs of the individuals with SEN cause difficulties when they use these systems. This makes daily living of these people more strenuous. They encounter anxiety, fear, isolation and trauma caused by their problems or society or by both. A person's with SENs, role, status and behaviour in society is very much influenced by interpersonal behaviour, impression formation, liking etc. shown by other members of the society. The sympathetic responses, the negative or hostile reactions or indifferences in behaviour shown by others influence the attitude of handicapped persons towards the society. This results in the form of withdrawal, maladjustment and non participation in the social world. A physical problem leads to other problems only when the individual accepts it as a condition of inadequacy. The problems of individuals with SEN, mainly physical and visual are more due to learned helplessness reinforced by the individual and social factors. Indeed organ inferiority is not a barrier to realizing the potentials of an individual. The individual and the society should learn to accept the organ inferiority as one of the several individual differences seen among people. The inferiority should be accepted in proper perspective. Individuals with SEN have the same social and emotional needs as normal individuals. Individuals with SEN face a number of problems because of their physical problems, other's reactions to their physical problem and faulty attitudes of family and society in general.

## **Introduction:**

In a country like ours, the systems and convenience are generally designed to meet the needs of the normal persons only. Our telephones, transport, banking systems and even elevators are not designed to be used by the handicapped independently. Whereas in the developed countries, the systems have been designed keeping in mind the needs of the individuals with Special Educational Needs (SEN). For example, the lifts in public places in advanced countries have switches that are marked with Braille for the convenience of the people having visual impairment. The public buses have steps which can be lowered so that even persons on wheel chair can enter. There are special telephones available for individuals with hearing handicap. Thus, the system not designed according to the needs of the individuals with SEN cause difficulties when they use these systems. This makes daily living of the individuals with SEN more strenuous. They encounter anxiety, fear, isolation and trauma caused by their handicap or society or by both. A person's with SENs, role, status and behaviour in society is very much influenced by interpersonal behaviour, impression formation, liking etc. shown by other members of the society. The sympathetic responses, the negative or hostile reactions or indifferences in behaviour shown by others influence the attitude of persons with SEN towards the society. This results in the form of withdrawal, maladjustment and non participation in the social world.

## **Socio-emotional problems of individuals with Special Educational Needs:**

Following are some of the problems found in the individual with SEN:

- ❑ **Stigmatization and Withdrawal:** Because of the stigma attached to the physical problem of any kind, the individuals with SEN are not accepted by the society and people try to see their physical problems instead of abilities. As a result of this, individuals with SEN withdraw and remain isolated from the rest of the community. Degrees of stigma vary from place to place. In India social stigma is more as compared to developed countries. This attitude acts as a barrier in their integration into society. The withdrawal problem of individuals with mental problem is also caused by the pathetic or mostly hostile attitude of society towards them which magnifies their problem and even threatens their freedom and existence. A change of social outlook towards other individuals with SEN is still neglected and ignored and is still doomed to life of segregation and frustration. They continue to be rejected and isolated by the society.
- ❑ **Emotional problems:** The physical hazards may lead to insecurity and emotional disturbances. The effect of this is more if as a child, they encounter negative experiences in the home, school and community. Because the visibility of the defect attracts contemptuous attention, individuals with SEN try to hide their physical problem. It is for this reason people often resist the use of walking stick, crutches, eye glasses and hearing aids even if it leads to functional impairment. Attempts to hide the defect are sometimes made by parents who do not wish their children to be exposed to such behaviour of others or are ashamed of

their deformed offspring. This leads to embarrassment for the individuals with SEN, which often leads to emotional trauma. Some of the psychosomatic complaints include insomnia, reduced appetite, gradual loss of interest in life, negative attitude towards self and family, insecurity, anxiety and emotional instability.

❑ **Problems in Interpersonal relations and Social adjustment:** The atmosphere of continued frustration and rejections in the home leads to serious maladjustment. A child with SEN may become bone of connection between father and mother who may frequently blame each other for the short comings. The disharmony between the parents and reluctance on the part of brothers and sisters towards individuals with SEN make the individual's feeling of rejection more acute.

❑ **Communication Problems:** Major problem found among individuals with hearing problem is of communication and the consequences of this problem are many. It leads to the problem of socialization and discipline. Picking wayside flowers is acceptable while picking one's neighbour's flowers is unacceptable. The difference is subtle difficult to explain but can be crucial. Students with hearing problem, in their early years, are more likely to experiences frustrations due to not understanding or not being understood, due to which they often show temper-tantrums.

❑ **Negative Self-Concept:** Self-concept denotes an individual's evaluation of his/her worth and limitations in all those aspects of which s/he is aware of. To feel that life is worth living the individual should have a positive concept about his/her self. It is natural that an individual with SEN will have feelings of inadequacy due to his or her problem. If the teachers and parents are only concentrating on his or her problem by making comments such as "you can't do this", "It is not possible for you to achieve" etc. the individuals will develop lack of confidence and a negative self-concept.

❑ **Behavioural Problems:** Because of the faulty attitudes such as rejection, overprotection and over expectation of parents and society, individuals with SEN develop lot of emotional and behavioural problems such as aggression, head banging, temper-tantrums etc. Individuals with mental problem are reacted to much more unfavourably than individuals with physical or visual problem. Parents and teacher should try to create a more favourable attitude i.e. an attitude of acceptance and non segregations of the individual with SEN. Without an appropriate attitude i.e. an attitude on the part of the society it is difficult for the parents to bring up children with SEN and more difficult to allow adults to live in the society, enjoy as much independence as possible and work according to their actual capacities.

❑ **Problems in Employment:** Individuals with physical problems and other chronic health problems can enter occupations commensurate with their abilities. When adequate measures are taken to protect them, and those with whom they work from possible hazards arising from their physical problem, they can contribute productively. Individuals with SEN are discriminated against in getting the employment. This attitude blocks the entry of individuals with SEN in the employment markets. This also leads to lot of emotional problems.

#### **Role of Parents and Teachers:**

The individuals with SEN should be encouraged to accept their limitations without succumbing to them. Parents and teachers should encourage play, talk and free imagination. Play is one of the most powerful means of socialization. The persons with SEN do posses potentials for development as a fully independent individual. Parents and teachers should create and provide conditions for creative development of the persons with SEN and foster their creative being. Parents should accept the child's problem. Parents unconsciously tend to reject or punish their children with SEN or develop over sympathy. Both rejection and over protection have negative effect on the integrated personality of the children. Emotional problems should not be tackled by force or punishment. The emotional relationship between parents, their social behaviour with the child as well as behaviour with other family members form as models for child's social behaviour. Quarrelsome and hostile parents, inculcate aggressive and hostile behaviour among children. Emotionally unstable parents provide an 'insecure base' for children that leads to poor adjustment. So both parents and teachers should provide the supportive environment at home and school for the development of individuals with SEN.

#### **Conclusion:**

A physical problem leads to problems only when the individual accepts it as a condition of inadequacy. The problems of individuals with SEN, mainly physical and visual are more due to learned helplessness reinforced by the individual and social factors. Indeed organ inferiority is not a barrier to realizing the potentials of an individual. The individual and the society should learn to accept the organ inferiority as one of the several individual differences seen among people. The inferiority should be accepted in proper perspective. Individuals with SEN have the same social and emotional needs as normal individuals. Individuals with SEN face a number of problems because of their physical problems, other's reactions to their physical problem and faulty attitudes of family and society in general. So parents, teachers and society should provide the supportive environment at home and school for the development of individuals with SEN.

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