THE ATTITUDES OF SELECTED PARENTS TOWARDS THE BEHAVIOR OF THEIR MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN ATTENDING SPECIAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Title: The Attitudes of Selected Parents Towards the Behavior of their Mentally Retarded Children Attending Special Education.

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SUMMARY

This study sought to determine the attitudes of selected parents towards the behavior of their mentally retarded children attending special education. It aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the common problems usually encountered by parents in dealing with their mentally retarded children with regard to the following aspects:

   A. Emotional

   B. Social

2. Do the attitudes of parents affect the behavior of the mentally retarded children?

   A. Emotional

   B. Social

3. Will social and emotional support group help the parents to cope with the mentally retarded child?

4. Will group counselling benefit the parents to better help their mentally retarded child ?

The findings of this study would be of help to the following: (1) Parents, so that they may provide extra care and attention to their child with mental retardation, (2) Psychology students, so that they may have deeper insights in dealing with mentally retarded children and their parents, (3) Professors, so that they may have another reference in studying the behavior and attitudes of parents to their mentally retarded child, (4) Researchers and Readers, so that they may have a basis on the emotional and social attitudes of parents to their mentally retarded child.

FINDINGS

After having analyzed the data, the researchers came up with the general observations.

In the emotional aspect, parents' response falls under a mixed level of attitude. Parents having a mentally retarded child experienced emotional problems such as finding it hard to accept the condition of the child, frustrations, and disappointments. They experience emotional problems in manifesting their attitudes towards their child but these problems will not last.

In the social aspect, parents' response falls under the positive level of attitudes. Attitudes of parents affect the behavior of their child, in a sense that, the child was accepted inspite of his/her condition.

Parents affect the child, because most of the response falls under the positive. They considered their child as a person who has the right to experience social acceptance and other social previledges that other

children experienced.

Regarding the support group, in the emotional aspect, some parents are willing to join but some are not. Some parents believed that it helps, but some believed it does not. In the social aspect, parents are willing to join and participate. They are willing to give their own encouragements and moral support concerning the social feelings of other parents for them to cope up with the same situation.

Regarding group counselling, in its emotional aspect, some parents believed that it benefits them, but some parents believed that it does not. In the social aspect, parents are willing to join for the sake of the social life of the child. They believed that this is one step to better help their child, specially in their relationship with others and facing the society.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that, parents with a special child (mentally retarded) are able to cope by accepting the child as he/she is, and treating him/her as a child with no deficiency in order to have a parent-child relationship. In the social aspect, parents are aware of their parental attitudes towards the child's social behavior. In emotional, this study concluded that there are parents who are not quite affected by some emotional problems they encountered in having their mentally retarded children.

Also, this study concluded that parents are more open of their feelings on the social aspect compared to the emotional aspect. Parents are more careful in expressing their emotional attitudes to the child as well as to other people around them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings, the researchers hereby recommend the following:

To the Family members, the researchers recommend that there must be an acceptance of the child's situation by their respective family members, especially their parents.

To the Community, to accept the condition of these special children in the society, no matter what they look like, or what their condition may be.

To the Government, to provide the mentally retarded with modern services like vocational schools for the children, and modern health and counselling for their parents, and other needs required by them.

To the Future researchers, to continue further studies on this field of research in order to benefit other researchers, other families, and institutions involved in the development of children with mental retardation and parents with mentally retarded children.