

Harassment and Our Specially-Abled Little Blossoms

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Abstract

Children fall into more vulnerable groups because as an adult we can share our thoughts, react accordingly in any situation but our little kids..our children are unable to react in any situation. They cannot differentiate between good or bad situations for themselves. They are also unable to identify the people who love them and who want to molest or harm them. In most of the harassment cases one thing is common that they were unable to share views with adults because they fear how someone will react? What is happening with them, okay or not? Is it right or not? They are completely confused, depressed as well as alone. The situation is much worse in the case of children with disabilities. Any type of disability like physical, mental, verbal, social can increase the risk. This paper is based on secondary data which focuses on the challenges faced by specially-abled children in their daily life regarding harassment.

Keywords Children with Disability, Bullying, Harassment, Neglect, Victim etc.

Introduction

As per the Gazette of India (JJ Act) published on January 1, 2016, "A Child is a person who has not completed 18 yrs. of age." He/She needs proper care and protection which means a child without any home or place

'Specially-abled' an umbrella term used to describe the people with special needs that includes all the disabled person like visually abled, physically abled, mentally ill or mentally retarded people etc. It is alternatively used in place of disabled people. In this paper, the researcher uses this word because she strongly believes that every disabled person has some special abilities that an average person doesn't have. They have strong senses, they feel each and every emotion of life more strongly than an average person. Specially-abled children need more care and sensitive communication, a lot of understanding with a sensible touch. It is a very challenging job for a parent to raise their specially abled child. They need extra patience, care, understanding and sensitivity. The issue of Child Sexual Abuse is still a taboo in India. Majority of the Indian people remain numb regarding issues and circumstances like this. Fear of Indignity, community foundation, societal fear, fear of loss of honor, denial from the community, various social stigmas as well as taboos, lack of and police support, ill behavior of responsible authorities, fear of being victimized again etc. are the few reason hidden behind their silence. They are somehow unable to trust governmental bodies and also a gap in communication in between parents and children regarding physical or sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, physical maltreatment, reproductive health is also a vast factor among these traumas. Specially abled or disabled children suffer more in this regard because they can't even realize who is good and who is bad because they totally or you can say partially depends on others for their daily life issues like on parents, caretaker or on others relatives. The family members and the specially abled people as well as children face a lot of challenges in their life on daily basis like anger, depression, sleeping abnormalities, mood swings, stress, feeling alone at personal level but some other but major problem apart from these are related to-

1. Schools and training centers for specially-abled children
2. Lack of trained staff in schools or as an caretaker in home
3. Lack of proper attention (home and school)
4. Lack of care individually: child support services in home (day care, home assistance, personal assistant etc.) especially for disabled children are mostly unavailable in developing countries like India.
5. Regarding job opportunities and lack of support from employer
6. Regarding lack of community support
7. Regarding lack of knowledge and awareness about child abuse, maltreatment etc.

The families of specially abled children face a lot of challenges like medical issues, behavioral issues, developmental issues, learning issues as well as issues regarding mental health. Each of the problems are unique. Each of the families requires special help and assistance for their little blossoms with special needs. They need a lot of patience and flexibility in their behavior and also in their familial and



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social environment. As per the comprehensive situation analysis on Serbian disabled children focuses on six areas like poverty, discrimination, social insecurity, education, family living, social protection, healthcare and protection against child abuse and harassment done by UNICEF and NOOIS on “Children with disabilities facing difficulties and obstacles in realizing their rights” published on 30th November 2017 reveals that-

1. 25 percent to 47 percent of the disabled children have faced domestic violence.
2. 72 percent of the disabled children are in residential care while 22 percent of the disabled children are in alternative care.
3. 45 percent of the parents of disabled children revealed that they or their children faced insult and harassment because of the disability of their child.

As we all know most of the children are dependent on others for their daily work and sometimes their caretaker, neighbor or other family member takes advantage of their situation, they abuse them, physically or mentally harass them. According to the findings of Sullivan PM et al. and Westcott H.I. et al. ‘Physical disability is the major reason that are associated with sexual abuse. Institutional care, dependency on others, Difficulty in communication are the three major factors which increases the risk as well as vulnerability of physical, sexual or mental harassment cases among specially abled or disabled children. Findings of the study done by Kushwaha, N. on ‘The dilemma of good touch and bad touch among visually impaired children’ clearly shows that there is a lack of knowledge related to sexual abuse, good touch bad touch, maltreatment, etc. among the specially abled children as well as in normal children. They even don’t know what is sexual abuse, they can not differentiate good and bad touch and also not aware about the truth that a perpetrator can be there relative, family member or friend. They do not have adequate information regarding this. So, we need to ensure to get them informed and aware regarding this issue. For that we need to develop IEC materials by focusing specially abled children in interesting format, we need to organize interactive special sessions or events for them with specially abled resource person so that he/she can able to convey message very clearly regarding harassment, sexual abuse, child maltreatment and other reliable information.

Ensure awareness among our little blossoms regarding sexual and physical abuse, harassment, various types of violence, good and bad touch, about their private body parts, etc., and also make them aware about not to allow anyone to touch their private body parts or to click the photos of their private body parts and also what to do if they gone through in any unusual situation. Educate every child about self-defense tactics. As Bruce Lee said, ‘There is only one basic principle of self-defense, you must apply the most effective weapon, as soon as possible, to the most vulnerable time at the most vulnerable target’.

Spread awareness regarding various helpline numbers, i.e.

1. Child-line (1098),
2. Women Powerline-1090,
3. One Stop Center Women Helpline 181,
4. Universal All-in-one Emergency Helpline number 112 or 100
5. For the above purpose we need to develop special IEC material in a very simple but informative manner like in comic format etc.

Training of Care Takers, Parents, counselors, police personnel, educators, and other administrative personnel in a way to give a specially-abled as well as an average victim a safe, reliable, secure environment. The school administration have to ensure programs on child sexual abuse, good and bad touch, reproductive and private body parts, etc. specially designed for specially-abled children. Schools/educators through their primary duty of giving information to the children for them to become responsible individuals, offer the best opportunity for students to learn about the sexual harassment, maltreatment etc. at a tender age. In this way, the students become aware of their surroundings and can be taught about measures to take in order to limit their vulnerabilities to these situations.

We have to apply SPECIAL Interventional Approach for our little blossoms with special needs-

1. **S** stands for School Based Intervention
2. **P** stands for Parental based Intervention into which male and female family members both are included
3. **E** stands for Education based Intervention to aware and sensitize the average child towards a special one.

4. **C** stands for Community based Intervention in a way to make a sensible equality and equity based environment for our little blossoms with special needs.
5. **I** stands for Inclusion based intervention
6. **A** stands for Association based Intervention with the help of governmental, non-governmental organizations and collaboration with other stakeholders.
7. **L** stands for Locality based Intervention as per the beliefs, resources and requirements

Objective of the Study The main objective of the paper is to find out the current status as per the researches done on harassment with specially abled children . So it focuses on the challenges faced by specially-abled children in their daily life regarding harassment, maltreatment etc.

Conclusion So, one thing is clear that the majority of children involved in various previous studies were unaware about any form of harassment. We need to ensure to get them informed and aware regarding this issue. For that we need to develop IEC materials by focusing specially abled children in interesting format, we need to organize interactive special sessions or events for them with specially abled resource person so that he/she can able to convey message very clearly regarding harassment, sexual abuse, child maltreatment and other reliable information.

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