

## **Intellectual Giftedness - Is the grass really greener on the other side?**

While there is a lot of discussion in the media about the intellectually disabled children and their struggles, there is very less focus on intellectually gifted children and the difficulties they face. In Fact many people are unaware that there is a distinction between the two intellectual categories .

**Who are gifted individuals you ask?** Answer is, children who demonstrate an advanced ability or potential in one or more specific areas when compared to others of the same age, experience or environment. To be specific, gifted children are the ones with an IQ above 130. (Mildly gifted: 115 to 130, Moderately gifted: 130 to 145, Highly gifted: 145 to 160 and Profoundly gifted: 160 or higher). In Fact such a child's intelligence, creativity, and potential for success are so exceptional that their needs go beyond general education programmes. Their exceptional abilities can also have a positive impact on their academic performance but for this specialised training or support services for such children should be provided. For them to flourish, identification of gifted children becomes very important.

Well as being gifted has its advantages it also puts these children through various challenges. Some of these challenges are as follows-

- **Issues with self esteem**

Intellectually gifted children may experience bullying and depression more often as a result of feeling different from their peers. Therefore, it's crucial to monitor such children's self-esteem and collaborate with their teachers and school counsellor to determine whether or not they are actually having any difficulties and help them if they are facing such challenges.

- **Need of perfectionism**

Children that are gifted are frequently driven to excel in all facets of their lives. Because they want to do everything perfectly, gifted children may put off starting their schoolwork or school assignments or spend a lot more time on them than necessary. The pursuit of perfection can also be time-consuming, exhausting, and even harmful to one's health.

- **Unrealistic expectations -**

Most often, gifted children are their own harshest critics. Many of them have trouble with exams because they have such high standards for themselves when they take an exam. Receiving a B or C grade might be devastating for someone who has consistently received As in school. Since achieving straight As is not always doable, it is vital to help them understand this. Additionally, sometimes assisting them in setting realistic goals can be helpful.

They also face issues like -Unchallenged academic environment which leads to boredom, frustration and disruptive behaviour. As they learn faster as compared to their peers it makes them loner and their innovative thinking makes them subject to criticism. At times they even struggle to make others understand their ideas, So basically gifted children are not perfect, even they need proper attention and care from family and school.

There are also various myths associated with intellectually gifted children which make a distorted image of such kids in the society. It is believed by people that such children are intellectually so bright that they don't need any help. Now this statement speaks only half truth as such kids are bright but only with special training they can reach their full potential.hence they require special training and support to be their best selves. It is also believed by people that such kids are highly mature so they can deal with stress by themselves. But in reality that is not possible because at the end they are kids with not so common types of difficulties like perfectionism and having unrealistic expectations of oneself.

According to me every parent should get their child's IQ tested as the results could help the educators make better educational plans for students with different types of needs. This can also help in identifying intellectually gifted students who can be specially trained and supported to reach their goals and utilise their potential to the best levels. Once they are recognized they can take benefits of the various programs/ schemes by the government of India for intellectually gifted children.

**-Krupa .B. Somaiya**

M. A. Psychology (Part II)