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## Nurturing and Supporting Children with Intellectual Disability: Implications for Education

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### Abstract

*In this paper, the conceptual foundations of intellectual disabilities and their implications for education have been discussed by laying emphasis upon the nature and needs of children with this disability. The paper is an attempt to critically analyse the provisions and measures for the wellbeing of children with intellectual disability. The paper presents intellectual disability in an integrated manner together with the search for its implications in education. It can be reiterated that parents as well as teachers make a tremendous impact on the lives of children, especially those with intellectual disability. There is a significant need to intervene in the circumstances of such children in order to emerge as "better teachers", by evaluating the gross realities of the educational systems. The paper highlights the challenges and difficulties encountered by children with intellectual disabilities in inclusive settings, the implications for teachers, and the role of pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programs.*

*Keywords: Children with special needs, disability, inclusive education*

### Introduction

A person and his/her cognition consists of intellectual or cognitive processes which make the person understand their inner and outer world, emotions, aspirations, psychological needs, temperamental inclinations, habits and behaviours. Cognition refers to the psychological processes of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses. The seven basic processes underlying cognition involve attention, perception, memory, concept formation, concrete and abstract thinking, planning and problem solving, and meta-cognition: which should be developed and enhanced in an individual (Auluck, 2007).

There is a strong inter-relationship between an individual's cognition and intelligence. General

intelligence refers to the capacity arising from the effectively working cognitive processes. According to Thorndike (1920), intelligence can be categorized into three major types - concrete, social and abstract intelligence. Concrete intelligence refers to the ability of an individual to comprehend actual situations and to react to them adequately and social intelligence involves the 'ability to understand and manage other people to act wisely in human relations' (Thorndike, 1920). On the other hand, abstract intelligence is human enquiry at the levels of neural, cognitive, functional, and logical from a bottom-up processing approach. Another eminent psychologist, Howard Gardener (2006), evolved a multiple intelligence theory which proposes that intelligence in any individual is multi-faceted and involves linguistic, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal,