

# Understanding the context of learning disabilities



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Identify legislation and policies that are designed to promote the human rights, inclusion, equal life chances and citizenship of individuals with learning disabilities. Explain how this legislation and policies influence the day to day experience of individuals with learning disabilities their families. Explain what is meant by 'learning disability' Give examples of causes of learning disabilities. Describe the medical and social model for disability. State the approximate proportion of individuals with learning disability for whom the cause is 'not know'.

Describe the possible impact on a family of having a member with learning disability. | Individuals with learning disabilities are more vulnerable and prone to deceptions. There are legislation in place to ensure that they are treated equally and fairly. Specific legislation relating to those with learning disabilities includes: Disability Discrimination Act Mental Health Act Community Care Act National Health Act Other laws that are not specifically for those with learning disability buy affects them includes education, voting rights, ownership of property, guardianship, controlling personal finance and consent of sex etc.

Human Rights The Human Rights Act 1998 focuses on the right not to be discriminated against. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 states that all individuals must be allowed to make their own decisions unless they are unable to due to mental state etc. Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 was assigned to protect individuals from discrimination. This Act was extended in 2005 with additional right in sectors such as employment, education buying or renting of land or property.

Inclusion Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 allows disabled people the same access to services in areas such as education, social services, health, employment, housing. The Equality Act 2010 requires equal treatment regardless of disability to employment as well as private and public service. Therefore employers and service providers must make reasonable adjustments to their workplaces in order to make it suitable and easily accessible for those with disabilities. Learning disability may at times be referred to as learning disorder or learning difficulty.

This is when a person's brain is affected by factors that make it difficult for them to receive or process information in the typical manner. This prevents the individual from learning as quickly as someone without the disorder. Those with learning disabilities tend to find it difficult completing tasks when left to their own accord. A person's intellectual impairment can be categorised using their IQ. With an IQ between 50-70 is considered a mild disability, 35-50 is moderate, 20-35 is severe while below 20 is Learning disability occurs when a person's brain development is affected.

According to <http://www.nhs.uk> there are particular situations that affect the development of a person's brain, these includes; 'the mother becoming ill in pregnancy problems during the birth that stop enough oxygen getting to the brain the unborn baby developing certain genes the parents passing certain genes to the unborn baby that make having a learning disability more likely (known as inherited learning disability) illness, such as meningitis, or injury in early childhood' There are situation where there is an unknown cause for learning disability.

Other conditions that relate to learning disabilities includes cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome, autism and epilepsy. Medical model for disability immediately suggest the individual becoming difficult for the parents and requiring 'special needs'. With label like this, disable people tend to be ridicule by their peer. Medical model isolates intellectually disabled individuals by encouraging the idea that the individual should become accustomed the way society operates rather than society adapting to them.

Social models on the other hand embraces those with learning disabilities. School and work place have made adjustment to fit the needs of those with disabilities. There are obvious efforts made to break all barrier a disabled person may come across in society. This provides the opportunity for those with learning disabilities to achieve while enhancing their confidence and self-esteem. Social mode explores method that ensure that individual with intellectual disabilities reach their full potential. The cause for learning disability is not always clear.

For the families of those who have intellectual difficulties, it is vital for them to be aware of the cause of the disability. The severity of a persons' learning disabilities are categorised depending on their IQ. The causes all depend on the severity of the disability. 50% of those who are mildly intellectually impaired do not know the cause of it. Only 5% of those under this category have a clear diagnosis for the the cause of their condition. 25% of those with severe or profound disability do not have a diagnosis for their disorder.

There are several challenges that a family comes across when a member has learning disabilities. There are pressure in the form of finances, time, educational and medical choices. With the immense pressure that the family

have to deal with it, it is inevitable that certain emotions such as disappointment, anger and blame. A member of a family having learning disabilities may be considered to bring the family even closer however in a lot of cases as some families find it very difficult to accept that there is a problem.

This lack of acceptance tends to put a strain on the relationships and disrupt the family dynamics. Having a member of the family with learning disability can be a unique experience shared between the family. It can make everyone become aware of the strength they never thought they had. The family may find themselves working together to overcome barriers associated with learning disabilities hence bring them closer together as a family. On the wider scale it could create connections within communities and religious groups.