

Socio-Ethical Wellbeing of People with Intellectual Disability in Black Communities: A Christian Socio-Ethical Study Conducted with People with Intellectual Disabilities in Katlehong

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ABSTRACT

Much has been written around the wellbeing of persons with disabilities in general. This article will focus on the wellbeing of persons with intellectual disabilities in Black communities in South Africa. Some studies sought to advocate for the well-being of persons with intellectual disabilities. However, none of the studies viewed matters that affect the concerned group from a Christian Social Ethical point of view. In this article I will show how persons with intellectual disabilities are viewed by society, especially in ways that suppress their self-esteem, confidence and dignity. I suggest that Christian values, drawn from the field of Christian Social Ethics, can help to diminish the problem. The values include: human dignity, human rights, Ubuntu and Biblical Ethics.

Introduction

The article seeks to portray the way in which people with intellectual disabilities are treated and viewed in Black communities, especially in ways that suppress their self-esteem, confidence and dignity. This may lead to apathy and alcohol abuse. I will suggest a few values that can help to diminish the problem. This study focused on people with intellectual disabilities who are alienated by the society after receiving some training from local special schools/centres. The concern is that they are not seen (and they in turn they do not see themselves) as full participants in the life of the community, or as full human beings that need to be treated with much dignity and respect. I focus on “Black communities” earlier because it is my immediate context and I have little knowledge of what takes place in White communities.

There is limited data available regarding the response of Christians toward the well-being of persons with intellectual disability in South Africa. The focus has