



## REHABILITATION OF MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN: CHALLENGES & PROSPECTS

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### ABSTRACT :

*Mental retardation has emerged as most imperative in the field of special education, as it is such dilemma which is very difficult to identify and diminish. Though, in recent times numerous researches have been done for the happiness of MR Child. But the present dynamic era has brought more major challenges in the field of special education especially, mental retardation in providing rehabilitation so time has come up to convey innovative methods replacing the existing methods, facilities and evaluation system for reducing the problems of MR Child. The present paper aims at to identify prevailing dilemma associated with MR Child; accordingly attempt has been made to determine and provide rehabilitation to MR children that includes several trainings and placing them in job etc. for overcoming such dilemma. Hence, it is believed that incorporation of trainings, daily activities in curricula and management of behavior by the teachers as well as parents will pave the way to bring wellbeing among mentally retarded children and make prosperous future.*

**KEYWORDS :** Education, Handicapped, MR Child, Rehabilitation.

### INTRODUCTION:

Now a day, Mental Retardation has become one of the major and popular areas in the field of special education. Generally, a mentally retarded child is one who has subnormal mental functioning correspondence with adaptive behavior. Mentally handicapped child process limited intelligence as comparable with normal child and there is various degree of retardation. In fact it has been seen such children have difficulty to preformed their daily routine task. Due to inadequate intelligence they cannot make satisfactory academic record according to parental and teacher's expectations. Sometimes, they confront several problems in the language, attention, adjustment, discrimination, motivation, decision making, abstraction and so on. The degree of retardation differs from one individual to others such as, mild, moderate, severe and profound. Unlike normal children a child with mental retardation require assistance to learn. Children with mental retardation urgently needed boosting of families, teachers, peers, and friend's so as to perform successfully in school learning which will lead happy and productive life them like others. Among different retarded children's only mild retarded children are competent to acquire educational facilities from the school's but they are not hare-footed in the school activities like normal children. For their



sub-average intellectual power such child always considered as slow learners in the society. Usually, mental retardation occurs in a child due the cause of congenital and environmental factors. However, if adequate steps could be taken in prior these problems can be minimized and those who already lost their capacity this also can be restored through rehabilitation process. Hence, endeavor to be made

to aware the people regarding these problems and rehabilitation process, so that they too enjoy a holistic life and auspicious future.

### **Defining mentally retarded children**

Generally, we know that Mental retardation is a condition of mind associate with sub-average intellectual functioning, such defect of mental retardation in the individual is neither disease or nor a medical syndrome with particular causes. Both internal and external factors may responsible for such scarcity of capacity. It is observed that this occurs in the child at the time of birth or later during the period of development commonly before the age of adolescence.

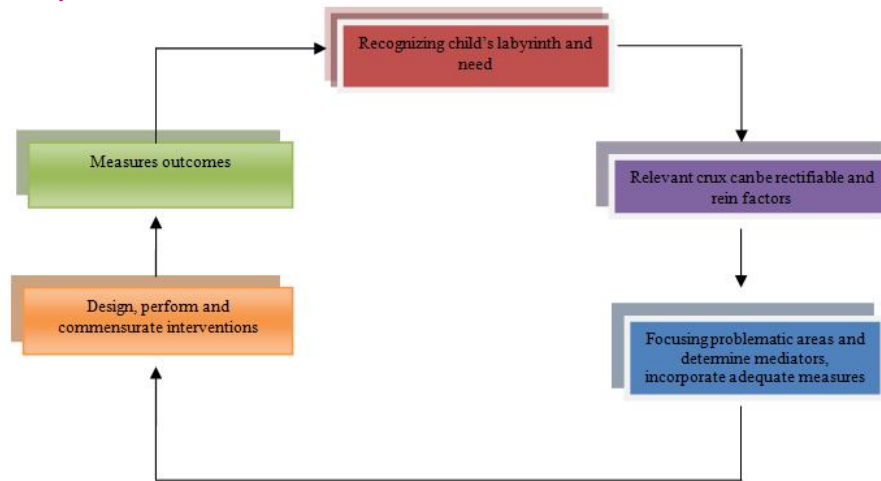
According to American association on Mental Retardation (AMMR), "Mental retardation refers to substantial limitation in present functioning. It is characterized by significantly sub-average intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with related limitation in two or more of the following applicable adaptive skill areas: communication, self care, home living, social, community use, self-direction, health and safety, functional academics, leisure and work, mental retardation manifest before age 18"

### **Concept of rehabilitation:**

It is very difficult to explain rehabilitation in simple one or two words. Notwithstanding, it is a special kind of adequate arrangement, measures, facilities through which a person can take obtainable opportunities and use their remaining ability to the utmost, who already lost their capabilities due to malady. The main intension of rehabilitation is to help an individual to acquire optimal functioning capability as far as give possible assistance. Rehabilitation process enables a person to function optimally in the society and changing their own life style with the help of modern mobility aids and appliance as well as facilitate social adjustment to the individual. Through rehabilitation process a person can spent their life with full happy, courage and confidence. A child with mental retardation can be rehabilitated in different ways like, in the field of education, vocational training, employment, orientation and mobility, community education as well as assure community participation towards integration. To provide rehabilitation to mentally retarded children initiative can be taken by central as well as state Government and NGO's with the inclusion of various legislations, policies for their overall development.

### **Necessity to rehabilitate mentally retarded children:**

We have been seeing that mentally retarded children are associated with several problems that leads them exclude from society. None of among us like to exclude them from participating in any social activity as they are the part of society but their lack of capacity in terms of language, attention, concentration make bound them to be excluded. The crucial need for mentally retarded children is rehabilitation through which they will restore their capacity and easily take daily activities like normal children; the most important fact is that they will not feel isolated after rehabilitation. Hence, rehabilitation is essential for mentally handicapped children in order to make their life opulent and prosperous. Rehabilitation process provide ample opportunity to mentally retarded child to restore their capability through modern aids and appliance, education, mobility training, job facilities, community participation and so on which make their daily routine task more convenient as well as open up a way for social inclusion into the society. Through all such facilities a mentally retarded child sublimes their goals which will develop self confidence courage and confidence as well as lead them toward a successful and happy life. Usually, a educable mentally retarded child use to go in school, make friend circle, participate extra-curricular activities, along with normal peers in an ordinary schools under single roof and it is only possible only when adequate encouragement is given for rehabilitation.

**The rehabilitation process:**

**Source:** A modified version of the Rehabilitation Cycle from (10).

**Prevailing issues relating to mentally retarded children:**

- **Social isolation:**

Social Isolation is a common crux we often found in our social culture. Majority of among us except a small section neglect mentally retarded as because such children cannot make work according to our social expectation level as correspondence to normal one. Due to peoples ill mental thinking civilized society is not ready to talk and cooperate with them. Sometimes it is visible that, parents of mentally retarded children feel shame to expose their children in front of others and always keep them distant from social contact. Such incident is very pathetic which will diminish a child living confidence in the society.

- **Economic paucity:**

Monetary crisis is a crucial issue in every aspects of individual life. A child with mental retardation also may victim with this, because inadequacy of money among parents cannot meet the demand of these children as well as nutrient for their mental boost. Apart from it, inadequate budget in school hampers in running administration, organization, NGO's and various sectors. As a result, expectation of mentally retarded children cannot meet which creates obstacle in their prosperous and social upbringing.

- **Lack of adequate human resources:**

Human resources are the core heart of any institutions, rehabilitation centre, organizations, NGO's and other sectors. To deal efficiently with mentally handicapped children large number of training personnel is needed. Without adequate number of training personnel and resources working progress of rehabilitation especially for mentally handicapped children cannot reach satisfactory level. In our modern era we often observed that in our society due to crisis of adequate resources mentally handicapped children are in dilemma in their daily life. Sometimes, apathy attitude are found among resource persons who always reluctant to work with such people. Ill attitude of people towards mentally retarded children generate obstacle in the process of rehabilitations. Usually, common people and parents of mentally retarded children cannot deal efficiently with mentally retarded children and never try to understand their problems deeply and begin malpractice for their nourishing. All such resources lacuna does not provide a prosperous life to them and manipulate a vacuum relationship with peers, parents as well as society.

- **Lack of community participation:**

Community takes special place in every process of society, in fact without community participation no work of society takes place effectively. In case of special children the community participation is more important but rarely do we see community are playing role or paying their effort for social inclusion of special children. Hence, plenty of awareness programme to be organized so that community strive for solution of special children, especially mentally retarded.

- **In effective teaching method:**

In order to make learning more meaningful and suitable effective teaching method is highly required. Presentation of content and method are not the same for mentally retarded and normal children. Success of teaching is fully responsible on teacher's knowledge and competency. Ignorant teachers always introduce faulty method in the classroom to deal with mentally retarded children. There is lack of existing modern aids and appliance for effective teaching method in the regular classroom setting especially for mentally retarded children. Hence, such malpractice teaching cannot make their learning fruitful for a long period.

- **Rude curricula:**

Curriculum is a set of course which is provided to the learners through institutions for their all round development. It is a heart of teaching learning process in any organization. Past and future's teaching and learning cannot be same. We often found that traditional curriculum is practicing in the school; there is no scope for study with advanced curriculum according to the pupils need especially for mentally MR children. Such children must learn according to need based curriculum transaction for gaining efficiency over their daily routine task. The rudeness in curriculum leads them to lose zeal towards learning and finally some give-up.

- **Inappropriate classroom blueprint:**

Well organized and arranged classroom is essential for constant successful learning in the schools. A superior classroom is with proper lights, fans, setting arrangement, ventilation, projector, audio-visual aids and adequate teaching aids and so on. The inadequate of facilities in classroom create hindrance in the way of learning of mentally retarded children. Therefore, attempt to be made for establishing good classroom considering the several problems confronting by mentally retarded children.

- **Faulty evaluation system:**

Evaluation is essential to measure overall working progress of an individual. In educational setting we observed that students are evaluated on the basis of examination system but this assumption is not always correct at all. It is a common fault appears in all educational system that all time emphasis is given on learning ignoring other activities. Generally, we know a child with MR cannot make satisfactory educative attainment as comparable to normal child. As a result, they seek alternative assessment systems in which they can show their performance like home task, participation in co-curricular activity, small assignment on simple activity, through oral method and so on. In fact such activities are not practiced in the regular educational setting which creates hindrance in their educative ways.

- **Lack of inter-sector coordination:**

Inter-sector coordination is necessity to make grand success of any initiative. Usually, it is observable that there is huge gap between bottom level and administrative top level. Sometimes the lack of adequate communiqué between different sectors leads to failure while implementing policy.

- **Defective pedagogy:**

In order to make understand learning content, incorporation of effective teaching methods is essential to make it grand success. Usually, we see modern and need based teaching method are not used in the classroom, teacher use to teach through traditional ways. There is no effort to deliver content in the classroom through advanced ways with the help of suitable examples, pictures, diagrams, maps and proper illustration on the account of individual difference. All such teaching deformity creates obstacle in learning of mentally retarded children's as well as discourage a child to leave the school.

- **Lack of proficient teachers:**

Teachers are called man making social engineer. If there is no existence of teachers we cannot imagine a consequential teaching learning situation in the classroom. Diverse pupils are come from dissimilar place, so obviously need based education is needed for all the children. It is familiar to all that integrated education ensures opportunity to the disabled children to learn with their general community in a regular classroom setting but all such inventiveness sometimes may not assist to achieve reasonable result, this occurs due to lack of proficient teachers. When we look into different educational setting as well as other sectors general teacher who neither trained nor skilful deals with children's very traditionally. Without prior knowledge regarding amenities of CWSN how he or she can treat a child scientifically. Even no competent teacher's are appointed in the schools who already taken a special training to deal with disabled children. A child with MR seeks teacher's assistance to develop their language, behaviors, daily routine task and so on. A teacher due to his/her incognizant misleads a child to complete their daily activities which diminish child's unique potentialities.

**Rehabilitation of mentally retarded children through different ways:**

A child with mental retardation can be rehabilitated by following several ways. Some major methods to diminish mental retardation are given hereunder:

- **Training for motor development:**

Usually, mentally retarded children cannot deal with motor development. While such children try to start walking frequently they may fall. A child with mental retardation might have difficulty with controlling head, walking and setting etc. In order to maintain their balance of movement a physiotherapist is required to give proper training. Through training it is possible to improve their motor functioning which will build MR child's self confidence and their motor power may able to function effectively like as normal child.

- **Training for language development:**

It is noticeable that, language development of mentally retarded child always behind unlike normal children. Though we know language plays crucial role for expressing human thought, ideas, emotions, feeling, love and so on. If a child has language difficulty how he will express himself his emotion, feeling in the society. Such children can produce sound but unable to speak and their speech may not clear as well as understandable. Proper training is required to reduce their problem. Effort of teachers, parents and peers are very crucial for improving language skill among them as well as speech therapist can also play a pivotal role. During the time of training only one word should be taught to a child with good pronunciation and clarity and later induce him to repeat that word. Children to be encouraged to keep it up with concerned word practice. Regular drill effort regarding language may also facilitate them to improve their language functioning.

- **Optimistic Daily Activities:**

Proper training is required for mentally handicapped children to perform their daily routine tasks. It is the duty of school to make effective teaching plan and giving training to mentally retarded children. Such

child should be induced to perform daily activity. Small individualize task should be provided to them under controlled supervision. While mentally handicapped children gain mastery over the task amount of supervision might be decreased. Through effective training such children acquire efficiency in different areas viz. taking bath, toilet, eating, holding object etc. Too much patience is needed for parents as well as teachers. The said effort may enable mentally retarded children's to function daily activity thoroughly in their social environment.

- **Behaviour Management:**

Adequate training is essential for mentally retarded children to shape their behavior. It is evident that mentally retarded child's are aggressive and impulsive. Sometimes they misconduct and threat to others. Intentionally they throw a thing or item to others which causes destructible. Such unsocial activity can be changed through training like by playing role model, cooperation, social interaction, giving responsibility, encouraging moral code of conduct etc. All theses said initiatives by the parents as well as teachers pave the way for mentally retarded children bringing improvement in their conduct and functional normally in their social culture effectively as well as make social relationship fruitful.

- **Providing Vocational Training:**

Need based vocational guidance is necessity for mentally handicapped children. As we know work is highly essential for every individual so in a simple meaning work means to earn. Through earning one can boost his life towards quality living. The main intention of vocational training for the mentally retarded children is to enable them to learn independently as well as make them self dependent. In our modern competitive era we are looking for such types of training that is needed for mentally retarded children to run their daily life smoothly. To provide vocation according to their educational status, there is 17 such rehabilitation centre setup in different places like Kolkata, Delhi, Chennai, Kanpur etc. in Indian Territory under the supervision of Government of India. Such facility provides ample opportunity to them to live readily without any obstacle into the society.

- **Work placement:**

Willingness of a mentally handicapped child should be acquainted before placing him in a job. The ability of a mentally handicapped child should be tested through aptitude test or checklist, which helps a counsellor to understand their working capability. Initially, a counsellor must analyze various job which are required semi-skilled and fitted for several mentally retarded children like farming, helper, attendant, bees keeping, poultry farm, dairy and other simple task. After performing all these activity successfully they will gain self confidence and will get ample scope to function in their society without any hindrance. Optimal job will be provided to them if job requirement and concerned skills of individual are matched. All such effort paves the ways for restoring them into mainstream of our society.

**CONCLUSION:**

We can sum up by saying that a mentally retarded child needs adequate supporting arrangement to make their life glorious. Due to lack of adequate intelligence mentally retarded children cannot perform in work efficiently. A child with mental retardation may have difficulty in different areas like communication, education, social community participation, mental activity, self care adjustment, home living and so on. All such lacuna makes them distinct from the social relationships which will diminish their self concept and confidence. For restoring capability of mentally retarded children rehabilitation process, NGO's, governmental policy, legislation privilege provide ample opportunity to them running their daily routine tasks without any disturbing like as normal child. Problem of mental retardation cannot diminish for forever but can be minimized through rehabilitation in various ways. Rehabilitation for disabled children brought a revolution in the history of special education. Now a day the field of special education has become most favorable investigation areas for researchers, where too many researches has been conducted by the

government as well as public sectors in order to develop unified curriculum for all, and that will be conducive educative environment for normal and disabled children in the school. All these effort pave the ways for principle of integration and bring the entire child into the mainstream of school education.

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