



A STUDY ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF CHILDREN WITH MILD MENTAL RETARDATION IN DIFFERENT EDUCATIONAL SETUPS OF URBAN AREA

Bhola Vishwakarma

Research Scholar, Jagdishprasad Jhabarmal Tibrewala University, Jhunjhunu, India.

Abstract

It is a challenging task for parent, teacher and administrator to meet the educational need of children with mental retardation. Early screening, identification and properly intervention of children with mental retardation is more challenging issue for the society which may adversely affects the academic achievement of the child. A report in 1985 by the Ministry of Education (currently department of Education in MHRD), entitled Challenge of Education: A policy Perspective shows that nearly 60% of children dropped out between grades one and five. Currently, it is estimated that there are over 2,500 special schools for persons with different disabilities. It is estimated that there are 900 schools for persons with hearing impairment, 900 schools for persons with visual impairment and low vision, and 1000 for person with mental retardation and 700 for persons with locomotor disabilities. The exact number of special schools is not fully know as there are many NGOs running such schools which are yet to be included in the directories. There are 130 percent associations which have educational facilities for mentally retarded children. Various policies Acts and legislation are existed for the education and rehabilitation of children with disabilities. It is also estimated that more than 80% special schools are established in urban areas but the educational status of children with mental retardation is remain unsatisfactory even the transition of education movement has taken place in India. This research paper focuses on the academic achievement of children with mild mental retardation of particular urban areas and the result shows that integrated setup is better than the special and inclusive setup.

Key Words: *Academic Achievement, Children with Mild Mental Retardation and Educational Setup.*

Introduction

The focus of educational programmes varies according to whether the children are mildly, moderately, severely and profoundly retarded. For example, the lesser the degree of retardation, the more the teacher emphasis academic skills, and the greater the degree of retardation the more stress there is on self-help, community living and vocational skills. It should be remembered that this distinction is largely a matter of emphasis. In actual classroom practice, all teachers of retarded students need to teach academic, self-help, community living and vocational skills irrespective of the severity levels of their students. The children with disabilities study either in a special school or in a regular mainstream school. It is possible for these children to cross over from a special to a regular mainstream school if and when they want to Special Education as a separate system of education for disabled children outside the mainstream education evolved way back in 1880s in India. It was based on the assumption that disabled children had some special needs that could not be met in mainstream schools and therefore they need to study in a separate school with other children having similar needs. Special schools exists all over the world in the form of day or residential schools, and special classes attached to the mainstream school In 1947, India had a total of 32 schools for the blind, 30 for the deaf and 3 for mentally retarded. Special schools are generally organized according to different disability categories. We have schools for children with visual impairments, for the intellectually challenged and for those with hearing impairments. The major disadvantages of separate education is separate environment and that the children may find it hard to readjust to their families, peers and communities and children and usually have to leave their families and communities to stay an residential setting because these schools are usually not available in their immediate environment, These special schools however, can play an active role in providing resource support for the mainstream schools by giving their specialized service.

Integrated education has been accepted as a viable system for education children with disabilities in India. As per the NSSO (2002) report, a number of children with disabilities are in regular schools. Children with locomotor disabilities, low vision and blindness are enrolled in regular schools in larger number when compared to those with mental retardation. Integrated education does not mean just enrolling children with disabilities in regular classrooms. The children need support in terms of structural arrangements and teaching methods. Therefore, there is a need for special arrangements to assist them in general schools. Integrated education programmes are being implemented in large numbers by both governmental and non-governmental agencies in India.

Inclusion means full inclusion of children with diverse abilities in all aspects of schooling that other children are able to access and enjoy. It involves regular schools and classrooms genuinely adapting and changing to meet the needs of all children, as well as celebrating the valuing differences. This definition does not imply that children with diverse abilities will not receive specialized assistance or teaching outside of the classrooms when required, but rather that this is just one of many options that are available to, and infect required of all children.



Educable mentally retarded (EMR) children are those who are not able to be adequately educated in the regular classroom. However, they can acquire sufficient knowledge and ability in the academic areas that are useful to function effectively in later life. They will be able to receive basic academic skills (reading, writing and arithmetic) and acquire self-help skill, which supports them to be socially and economically independent. So the objectives of an educational programme for the educable group are, in general, the same as the educational objectives for all children. They should be educated to make the greatest use of their abilities to satisfy their own needs as well as the demands of the society in which they are living. The schools should provide them with such curriculum and methodology of teaching that will enable them to surmount their difficulties easily.

Review of Related Literature

Hardiman & et al (2009), made a study to compare the social competence of children with moderate intellectual disability in inclusive versus segregated school settings in the Republic of Ireland. The sample comprised 45 children across two groups: Group 1 (n = 20; inclusive school) and Group 2 (n = 25; segregated school). Findings indicated that children in inclusive schools did not differ significantly from children in segregated schools on the majority of proxy ratings of social competence.

Nugent (2007), compares Inclusive and segregated Settings for children with Dyslexia This study evaluates and compares special educational services for children with dyslexia in three different settings: special schools, reading units and mainstream resource provision. Data involved individual postal questionnaires, returned by 113 parents. Results suggested that parents were generally very positive about special educational services across all three settings, although parents of children attending specialist.

Rao & Reddy (2004), aim of this study was to find out areas for improvement in the system of special school for mental retardation in India and to provide policy guidance. It attempted to find out regional variations between special schools in terms of service facilities, number of students enrolled in both day-care and residential facilities and composition and profile of human resources vis-à-vis students and special schools and to compare them with trends for the whole of India. The results indicated that enrolment of girls students is very low and that staff to students ratio on average is 1:6 leaving scope for better utilization of the existing infrastructure.

Conrad & Kenneth (1980), selected fifty primary research studies of special versus regular class placement were selected for use in a meta-analysis. Each study provided a measure of Effect Size (ES), defined as the post treatment difference between special and regular placement means expressed in standard deviation units. Special classes were found to be significantly inferior to regular class placement for students with below average IQs, and significantly superior to regular classes for behaviorally disordered.

Mazumdar & Neki (1971), undertook a comparative study on three groups of children with mental retardation undergoing

Need for the Study

Though all the educational setups are equally important, yet there seems to exist significant difference in their mode of delivering the activity. One should critically analyze the various factors of each of these educational setups and then place the child with their need and requirement. Since decision makers (Parents, Teachers & Para-professionals) in the education of children with mental retardation face contradictory opinions, the educational setups is imperative and felt as the need of the honour.

Objective of the Study

To compare the academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area by using quantitative analysis.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference among the academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area.

Methodology

The important task after selecting a problem and framing objectives is to select or develop suitable tools and collect the data. The present study aims at comparing the different educational service delivery model in providing academic skill performance for children with mild mental retardation. Hence the investigator selected causal-comparative research design for the present study. For the conduct of the present study 3 different types of school namely special, integrated and inclusive school were selected from the population. The samples were selected from 3 special schools, 2 integrated schools and 4



inclusive schools from the district of Coimbatore. The present study focuses on the academic skill achievement for children with mild mental retardation. Hence the investigator selected purposive sampling technique for the selection of sample.

Selection of the Tool

The appropriate check list was used for this research study. The checklists consist of a list of items with a place to check or to mark Yes or No. The list of items in the checklist may be continuous or divided into groups of related items. The checklist consisted of 40 items to assess the academic performance of the sample. These 40 items were chosen from the standardized FACP tool at primary-I level from the academic domain. To assess the items of the tools, the investigator prepared and also collected appropriate materials to check the performance of the sample. After establishing sufficient rapport with the sample, the investigator requested to the subjects to perform the activities of the tool one by one with the materials prepared. Through keen observation of the performance of the sample, the investigator made an assessment in the tool. Thus the data was collected for the study.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data was tabulated and consolidated for further statistical treatment. The grouped data was then subjected to quantitative analysis, using ANOVA.

Table: Anova Test for Comparing Academic Achievements of Children with Mild Mental Retardation in Different Educational Setups of Urban Area

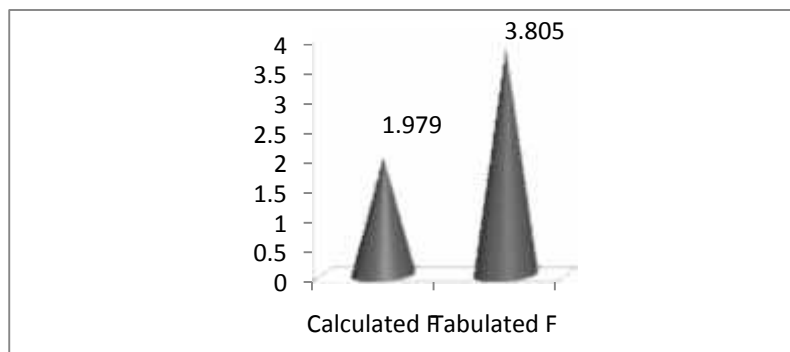
Service Delivery Model	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Special School	6	25.3333	9.7297
Integrated School	6	32.3333	2.3381
Inclusive School	4	27.2500	1.5000
Total	16	28.4375	6.6430

ANOVA for Able to do Score

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	154.521	2	77.260	1.979	Ns
Within Groups	507.417	13	39.032		
Total	661.938	15			

Discussion

ANOVA test for comparing academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area. One way ANOVA was applied to find whether there is significant difference among the academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area.



The ANOVA result shows that the calculated F-ratio value is 1.979 which is less than the table value of 3.805 at 5% level of significance. Since the calculated value is less than the table value it is inferred that there is no significant difference among



the academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area. Hence the hypothesis is retained.

Findings of the Study

There is no significant difference among the academic achievements of children with mild mental retardation in different educational setups of urban area. The mean academic achievement of children with mild mental retardation of urban areas in integrated schools is much better than special and inclusive school. Therefore integrated schools produce some better educational setups for academic achievements.

Limitation of the Study

- The samples were taken from few schools of Coimbatore district of Tamilnadu state.
- Various extraneous and intervening variables affecting the child at the time of assessment was not fully controlled.
- The study is limited up to urban areas only.

Recommendation and Suggestions

Some useful and emerging models could be parts of academic achievement of children with mild mental retardation are as follows-

- The special methods adapted in teaching could be used like- Individualization, Learning by doing, Need for learning readiness, Graded curriculum, Repetition, Periods of short duration and Concrete problems.
- Readiness of the general education system to accept the responsibility for education of children with disabilities.
- Encouragement provided by the community for including children with disabilities in local schools.
- Readiness of parents of children with disabilities to admit the children in local schools.
- Basic knowledge of general classroom teachers about the education of children with disabilities.
- Admission of all types of children with disabilities in local schools irrespective of the extent of disability.
- Enrolment rate of children with disabilities at least on par with that of non-disabled children.
- Retention of children with disabilities in schools.
- Ability of general classroom teachers to modify teaching learning strategies to teach children with disabilities.
- Availability of support from peer group to children with disabilities and vice-versa in teaching learning processes.
- Provision of support materials such as aids and appliances and books.
- Comparable achievement of children with disabilities in curricular, plus curricular, and co-curricular activities on par with their capabilities.
- Availability of specialist teacher support, if possible, to the regular classroom teachers.

Conclusion

All the educational setup are equally effective for learning and acquiring knowledge but due to some internal or external factors may not able to meet the need. The main purpose of the investigator is to find out the better educational setups in academic achievement of children with mild mental retardation of urban areas. It is evident from the above research studies that there is no much difference in educational setups for children with mild mental retardation. Our research also shows that integrated school is providing better educational setups in present situation. This is the era of inclusion which shows that now we are far from concept of inclusion due to diversity of population, culture, language and heterogeneity of children with disabilities. Inclusive education will become best educational setups after modifying the inclusive school concept. There is a great need of collaboration among the parents, teachers, administrators and policy makers to make more effective teaching and learning.

References

1. Conrad Carlberg & Kenneth Kavale (1980), The efficacy of special versus regular class placement for exceptional children: a meta-analysis, *The Journal of Special Education*, Vol. 14, Issue-3, pp. 295-309
2. Hardiman & Sharon (2009), Research in developmental disabilities, *A Multidisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 30, Issue-2, pp. 397-407.
3. Mazumdar B N, Prabhu G G & Neki J S. (1971). Special education and environment, *Indian Journal of Mental Retardation*, Vol. 5, pp. 25-32.
4. Nugent & Mary (2007), Support for learning, *British Journal of Special Education*, Vol. 35, Issue-3 pp. 136-143
5. Rao L G & Reddy S H K (2004), Organizational aspects of special school for mental retardation in India. *International Journal of Rehabilitation Research*. Vol. 27, pp. 127-133.