

MENTALLY CHALLENGED & NEED OF REHABILITATION CENTRE

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Until the twentieth century, retardation was defined in terms of an individual's inability to meet the minimal demands of the society. With years, they have been categorized under different names as per the level of IQ, have been taken care of with special education, Daily living skill and skill training programs.

The moderate level of retardation (IQ range about 35 to 60) includes essentially the same group that is called **Trainable Mentally Retarded (TMR)**. Those who come under this group are unlikely to develop independence as adults. The academic skills taught include learning to recognize signs and common symbol, Learning to recognize and use coins, and telling time to the half or quarter- hour. In addition to development of skills of self-care and simple occupational skills, TMR eventually develop language skills, but articulation problems are more common than that in the Educable Mentally Retarded. Even they are able to speak, still the rate of learning is very slow. If not institutionalization, they can manage to live safely under the supervision of their family members. With the enrollment in Rehabilitation Center, parental help and adequate opportunities for training, they can manage to earn their own livelihood up to a certain level and lead a life as an active member of the society.

In the past the rehabilitation of the persons with mental retardation or physical disabilities was undertaken in various ways in the community. There was hardly any scientific and systematic approach to rehabilitate them. Rehabilitation refers to the process of restoring the handicapped individual to the fullest physical, mental, social and vocational usefulness for which he / she is capable. The trainable mentally challenged children/young adult are unable to derive much benefit from normal classroom curriculum and can be trained up to some extent in reading and writing. They have the ability to do some work like handicrafts, physical work by training and with times, become semi-dependents. Hence, rehabilitation is an overall process necessary in the life of a person with disability, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, autism and sensory impairment.

Rehabilitation process require a team approach ,through services of various professionals in different areas like special education, medical help, therapeutic services, vocational skill

training and vocational placement or make them work under sheltered workshop. The two major component of the whole rehabilitation process are medical and vocational.

Vocational Training and placement of persons with trainable mental retardation assumes an important place in the current scenario where the skill is the deciding factor to become a member of the working group, where they can easily contribute according to their capabilities. An instructional hierarchy (acquisition, fluency, maintenance and generalization) is followed while teaching children /young adult with mental retardation.

As the child with trainable mental retardation is different from the other group of mental retardation they, with appropriate training module and individualized instruction with certain fundamental principles, can understand the concept of simple to complex, known to unknown, concrete to abstract, and whole to part while learning tasks for their daily living skills and vocational skills. Also through observational learning & imitation, this group of mentally challenged children/young adult can acquire social behavioral skills.

Rehabilitation is mainly concerned with improving the social adjustment of an individual and prepares him for resettlement. An effective rehabilitation program must consider the trainable mentally challenged and their family on a broader basis of their behavior, in relation to their environment. Supporting environments should be provided in a rehabilitation program to improve the levels of functioning and also in developing their social competence and coping skills.

To train the trainable mentally challenged, first of all it is necessary to find out his/her Strength or weaknesses and this can be done by assessing the present level of functioning.

This assessment refers to the process of finding out the capability of the mentally challenged children/young adult which help in determining his / her ability in performing various skills. In the well equipped Rehabilitation center when a systematic method been uses different technique for studying and practicing the desired behavior is used in the teaching, training program, it makes the individual capable of learning many skills. So the people who provide services are more important than the service itself.

In a concluding part, it can be said that mentally challenged children/ young adult should not be considered anymore as the burden of the family or society, rather with correct and empathetic approach and broader outlooks, they can be trained as per their capability and potential to be include not secluded in the society.

