

## A Study of Attitude of Parents towards Mentally Retarded Children

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### ABSTRACT

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*The study was intended to find out the attitude of parents towards mentally retarded children. Sample of the study consisted of 60 parents from Panchkula and Chandigarh. Self prepared scale was used to collect the data. The scale was prepared on Likert's method of summated ratings. The results of the study showed that the parents of a retarded child may feel ashamed of their offspring and the feeling of shame may results in overt or covert rejection, but not all the parents respond negatively to the presence of a retarded child in the family. They provided medical treatment to the child and settle him in residential care centre.*

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**Keywords:** *Attitude of Parents, Mentally Retarded Children*

### Introduction

The world is full of diversity. Even human beings are similar, but still they have differences. Some are rich, some are poor, some are fair and some are dark. Similarly, every person has his own mental ability. Some are very good, some are average or less than average. People with less than average mental ability are called mentally retardation. Mental retardation is the worldwide problem. In India it is estimated about 1.5 to 1.9 million children of age group of 6 to 14 years are mentally retarded. Mental retardation depends on numerous variables and parameters which is difficult to define. The term 'mental retardation' or mental deficiency' has been defined in many ways.

According to **Tredgold (1937)**, "Mental deficiency is a state of incomplete mental development of such a kind and degree that the individual is incapable of adapting himself to the normal environment of his fellows in such a way as to maintain an existence independently of supervision, control or external supports."

According to **World Health Organization(1954)**, “It is incomplete or insufficient general development of mental capabilities.”

According to **American Psychiatric Association(1961)**, “Mental retardation refers to subnormal general intellectual functioning which originates during the development period and is associated with impairment of either learning or social adjustment or maturation of both.”

According to **British Mental Deficiency Act(1981)**, “Mental retardation is condition of arrested or incomplete development of mind existing before the age of 18 years whether arising from inherent causes or included by disease or injury.”

All the above said definitions led us to conclude that the mental retardation is the incomplete or insufficient development of mental capabilities which existing before the age of 18 years.

## **Objectives**

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To prepare a scale, to study about the attitude of parents towards mentally retarded children.
2. To study about the attitude of parents towards mentally retarded children.
3. To suggest educational implications based on findings of the present study.

## **Sample**

Sample of 60 parents has been taken from Panchkula and Chandigarh.

## **Tools Used**

Self prepared scale has been used to collect the data.

The scale has been prepared on Likert’s method of summated ratings i.e. 5 point scale.

SA- Strongly Agree

A- Agree

I- Indifferent

D- Different

SD- Strongly Disagree

Statistical techniques have beendone on the basis of frequencies and percentages.

## **Result**

On the basis of analysis and interpretation result are as follows:-

62% of the parents said that their children can independently dress, bath, comb.

70% children can play with their siblings and companions.

66% goes to special schools and they can read and write.

63% parents agreed that they help in their work assignment.

58% parents took them for regular checkup and

49% parents give nutritional diet to them.

71.67% parents provide equal opportunities.

62% parents provide proper education and

58% parents provide guidance for them.

Whereas 45% parents said that their children do help in household work and

23.33% children eat and sleep alone at home.

40% parents said that they are aware of different concessions and

46.67% parents aware about reservations given to their children.

32.23% parents said that they have full knowledge related to the problem of children and

38.36% feel ashamed of being parent of special children.

The results of the study showed that some parents found it hard to accept that child mentally retarded and agreed that they needed help in getting more knowledge about the child's condition. Emotional stress of parents is unavoidable due to the constant physical care, financial demands, the disappointment of having a mentally retarded children and concerns about child's future and long life care.

But of course, not all the parents respond negatively to the presence of a retarded child in the family circle. Regarding future plans for the child large number of parents plans either to provided medical treatment to the child or settles him in residential care centre.

## **Implications**

This study will help to understand the psychology of mentally retarded children and their parents. This study will help the parents to full fill the needs and requirements of their mentally retarded children.

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