



## Co-Curricular Activities For Development Of Social Skills Among Mentally Retarded Students

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### Abstract

Co-curricular activities are major parts of curriculum of special schools for mental retardation. Social skills are important aspects for educating mentally retarded students. Various co-curricular and extracurricular activities are useful for development of social skills among mentally retarded students. This paper is discussed major areas of co-curricular activities and social skills and its aspects and also discussed relationship between co-curricular activities and social skills. This study was found that various co-curricular activities were directly and indirectly influenced on developing social skills among educable, trainable and custodial mentally retarded students.

### Keywords

Co-curricular Activities, Development, Social Skills, Mental Retardation, etc

### Introduction

The curriculum of each special school for mental retardation is different. Various innovative ideas and techniques used from special teachers to developing mentally retarded students. Co-curricular activities are helpful for developing educational, functional, psychological and social skills in mentally retarded students. Now the inclusive education is more significant other than special schools but mentally retarded students having developmental delays and they need some special instructions and assistance. Various co-curricular activities daily implemented in special schools but there is no guidance available for how implement these activities for social skills development. This study provides the relation between co-curricular activities and social skills which is helpful for special schools.

### Concept and categories of Mental Retardation

According to Census of India, 2011, "Mental Retardation is lacks understanding

/comprehension as compared to her/his own age group; or Is unable to communicate her/his needs when compared to other persons of her/his age group; or Has difficulty in doing daily activities; or Has difficulty in understanding routine instructions; or Has extreme difficulty in making decisions, remembering things or solving problems.” Now the term 'Mental Retardation' is replaced as 'Intellectually Disabled' at international level. In India, it's called as 'Divyang' also. Following educational categories of mentally retarded students are used for the study.

1. Educable
2. Trainable
3. Custodial

### **Concept and areas of Co-curricular Activities**

Co-curricular Activities means the activities that enable to additive and accompaniment of the curricular. These activities are very useful for educational institutions to development of the students' behaviour and also the classroom learning process. Co-curricular activities are those activities which are out of the curriculum and these are the part of the institution. These activities have moral and social values. Following areas/ aspects of social skills were included in this study.

1. Co-curricular activities
2. Extracurricular activities
3. Parent-school interaction activities
4. Indoor and outdoor activities

### **Concept and areas of Social Skills**

According to Gresham & Elliott (1990), “Social skills means socially acceptable learned behaviors that enable an individual to interact effectively with others and to avoid or escape negative social interactions with others.” Following areas/ aspects of co-curricular activities were included in this study.

1. Communication Skills
2. Daily Living Skills
3. Selfhelp Skills
4. Personal-social skills
5. Life skills

Social skills are not independent. They are related to interpersonal and intrapersonal behaviour of human being so that these skills are very complicated. Co-curricular activities are the ways to develop these skills.

### **Objectives Of The Study**

The following objectives are stated for the present study.

1. To study the co-curricular activities incorporated in the curriculum of mentally retarded students.
2. To study the social skills to be developed in mentally retarded students from the co-curricular activities included in the curriculum of mentally retarded institutions.
3. To study the relationship between co-curricular activities used in special schools and social skills developed among mentally retarded students.
4. To give recommendations for development of social skills through co-curricular activities among mentally retarded students based on the conclusions of the study.

### **Assumptions Of The Study**

The study is based on the following assumptions:

1. Social skills can be developed among mentally retarded students through the curriculum.
2. Co-curricular activities are important part of the curriculum of the mentally retarded institutions.

### **Scope Of The Study**

The present study is included following scope:

1. The present study includes co-curricular activities which are important part of the curriculum of mentally retarded institutions. Co-curricular and extra-curricular both activities are referred for this research in terms of 'Co-curricular Activities'. The researcher has chosen 20 co-curricular activities for the study.
2. The present study includes social skills to be developed among students in mentally retarded institutions in Maharashtra state. Self help skills, daily living skills, personal-social skills, life skills are the major areas of social skills and from that 20 social skills are chosen.

### **Dilimitations Of The Study**

Delimitations of the present study are stated as following points:

1. The present study is limited for early age to 18 years old mentally retarded students, special teachers and head masters of special schools in Maharashtra state.
2. The present study is limited only those co-curricular activities which are included in the curriculum of mentally retarded institutions in Maharashtra state.
3. The present study is limited for simple and basic social behavior of mentally retarded students which are included in social skills. Advanced social skills are not expected.

### **Limitations Of The Study**

Limitations of the present study are stated as following points:

1. There is limited strength of mentally retarded institutions in Maharashtra state.
2. The present study is not covered mentally retarded students studying in special class in integrated settings.
3. The present study is not related to mentally retarded students studying in inclusive setting.
4. Present study is not covered early intervention and its aspects for 0 to 3 years old mentally retarded students.
5. The present study is not related to home based or custodial care units of special schools.
6. The present study is not related to English medium special schools.
7. The present study is not covered vocational training centers for above 18 years old mentally retarded students.
8. The present study is not related to visiting or part time teaching staff of special schools.

### **Need Of The Study**

RTE, 2009 act and related various programmes comes for the purpose of equity and equality and education for all. Mentally retarded students are the part of society and they have rights to education under RPWD, 2016 act. They have also productive members in society. So that there is need to pay attention for their small and simple skills development for their effective rehabilitation. Special schools are isolated from general education system and inclusive classrooms are more effective for socialization of mentally retarded students other than special schools so that there is need to aware of special teachers about how to develop social skills among mentally retarded students. Co-curricular activities are helpful for

development of socially acceptable behaviors of mentally retarded students.

### **Significance Of The Study**

Co-curricular activities and social skills are two major terms studied in this research. Co-curricular activities are helps to develop academic, physical, social, civic, moral, spiritual, aesthetic, cultural development of mentally retarded students. Social skills development approach is very important to enriching student's social life. Social skills training provide opportunity to students for social interactions in their school and home environment. Hence, the special teachers will be aware of these terms and they can take serious for implementing co-curricular activities for the purpose of social development. This specific purpose the researcher has chosen this study.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is adopted Descriptive Research Method. Survey method was used for data collection of the study.

### **Sampling Design**

The researcher has chosen the sample within 05 geographical regions of Maharashtra with the help of 'non probability method' and 'convenience sampling' technique was used. 78 head masters of special schools for mental retardation were responded through by post as well as Google link also. 23 head masters who were responded check list were given interviews also.

### **Data Collection**

Check List for objective no. 1 and 2, and Interview for objective no. 3 were used the tools for data collection. Data collected from 78 head masters through check list using postal method and Google link. Open ended face to face interview were taken from 23 head masters who were responded check list also.

### **Data Analysis**

Collected data was analyzed using Percentage, Average, and Graphs for check list and interview. The researcher quantified the qualitative data collected through interview using percentage.

### **Major Findings Of The Study**

Major findings of the study were based on the analysis of check list and interview. They stated here as objective wise:

**Objective no. 1: To study the co-curricular activities incorporated in the curriculum of mentally retarded students**

1. All Special schools (MR) are conducted Leisure Time Activities, Various Festivals and Programmes, and Parent Meetings for all categories of MR students.
2. All Special schools (MR) are conducted Visual Arts, Visual Crafts, Drawing/ Painting, Interactive Games, Puzzles, School Competitions, Leisure Time Activities, Various Festivals, Programmes for Educable and Trainable categories of MR students.
3. Majority of special schools (MR) conducted Physical Education Training, Exercises and Yoga, Special National/International day for all categories of MR students.
4. Majority of special schools (MR) conducted Performing Arts, Handicrafts, Annual Gathering, Baal Anand Melava, Local Field Visits, and Educational Trip for Educable and Trainable MR students.
5. Some of special schools (MR) conducted Special Olympics Training and Activities in Sheltered Workshop for Educable and Trainable MR students.
6. Majority of special schools (MR) are not conducted School Competitions, Special Olympics Training, Visual Arts, Visual Crafts, and Performing Arts for Custodial MR students.

**Objective no. 2: To study the social skills to be developed in mentally retarded students from the co- curricular activities included in the curriculum of mentally retarded institutions**

1. Communication Skill, Behavior and Response, and Observation and Imitation are developed through co-curricular activities in special school environment among all categories of MR students.
2. Learning Readiness Skills, Adjustment & Cooperation, Organization Skill, Flexibility, Friendship Skills, Interpersonal Relation Skills, Commitment & Responsibility are developed through co-curricular activities in special school environment among Educable and Trainable MR students.
3. Self Management Skill, Decision Making Skill, Problem Solving Skill, and Conflict Management are not developed through co-curricular activities in special school environment among Custodial MR students.

4. Interpersonal Relation Skills, Commitment & Responsibility, Assertion, Self Control & Protection, Self Awareness Skill, Empathy Skills, Coping with Stress, and Coping with Emotions are not developed through co-curricular activities in special school environment among Custodial MR students.

**Objective no. 3: To study the relationship between co-curricular activities used in special schools and social skills developed among mentally retarded students.**

1. All head masters agree about social skills can be developed through co-curricular activities among various types of MR children.
2. All head masters agree about development of social skills through co-curricular activities helps to capacity buliding, and increases confidence level of MR students.
3. Majority of head masters said that social skills are highly expected from normal children but very small activities can be expected from MR children.
4. All head masters said that celebration of festivals, and celebrations of cultural programmes are mostly used co-curricular activities for development of social skills in their school.
5. All head masters said that they conduct meeting of teaching and non teaching staff for implementing co-curricular activities for MR children.
6. All head masters said that they faced the problems in taking support of parents for developing social skills among mentally retarded students.
7. Some head masters said that they need to support and guidance for developing social skills through co-curricular activities among MR children.
8. Most of head masters satisfied their school experiences about development of social skills through co-curricular activities among MR children.

**Recommendations**

The researcher mentioned here the recommendations through this research based on the results of the data.

1. Special schools should maintain various references and materials based on social skills and co-curricular activities.
2. Special school head masters should give their attention on proper planning and implementing of co-curricular activities for MR students.
3. Parents should pay attention to their child for the purpose of development of positive social behavior among them.
4. Social units/ NGOs should increase their interest in co-curricular activities conducted in special schools.
5. Government should pay proper attention on development of social skills among MR students through various methods and ways.

### **Conclusion**

This research is contributed in the area of special education and mental retardation and briefly studied the co-curricular activities conducted in special schools (MR) for development of social skills. Various teaching strategies and techniques can be useful for training and development of skills among mentally retarded students. If special teachers can use these activities and methods systematically then social competencies will be developed among mentally retarded students.

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