

## Training Needs of the Families with Mentally Retarded Child: A Mini-Review

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Parents of mentally retarded children often do not have the knowledge of how to deal with their child care, and essential health care team aware of their educational needs, using appropriate teaching methods to respond to these needs. Therefore, this study aimed to identify teaching methods to suit the needs of families with mentally retarded children has been doing.

**Methods:** This study was based on a systematic review of methods and purposely focused on the research questions, search for information retrieval, evaluation, integration will. Therefore, all scientific papers published from 2008 to 2013 in the Pub Med Science Direct, Cochrane, Eric,

Databases were searched in line with the research question, and deleting articles that did not make the inclusion criteria, number 6 was selected article and appropriate training and educational needs of parents of mentally retarded children were extracted.

**Results:** Different methods to educate families of children with special disabilities are applied, Including:

- Anger management training significantly positive relationship with the child's mother has affected her mentally retarded children with disabilities.

- Training of cognitive - behavioral life skills parental stress significantly reduces the feeling of inability to play a parental role.

- Another way use the Show method of treatment group (GMT) is. GMT is a successful alternative therapy is appropriate in building renovations. GMT can significantly reduce stress mothers are mainly composed of mentally retarded children.

**Conclusion:** Family education classes can be awareness and acceptance towards backwardness and characteristics of parents to raise their children, Feelings and reactions that can be occur are often parents themselves, for they make clear and teaching strategies to reduce the tension between family members, Optimal interaction between parent and child increases and can have a major impact on family health.

**Keywords:** Education- Mentally retarded children -Families of mentally retarded children

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Submission Date: 2014/6/1

Accepted Date: 2014/7/19

### Introduction

There are people with low social abilities in every culture ,these people have some problems regarding adaptability with the environment ,and they need special care[1].Mentally retardation is one of the most significant ,complicated and difficult problems and difficulties in children and teenagers in modern human societies which remains until adulthood[2],and it is a relatively common disorder which afflicts 3% of the society [1].

The incident rate of mentally retardation varies in different races and it is reported as; 3/7 in every thousand births in European countries and up to 5/9 in every thousand births in non-European countries [3].

A child can make development of the next generation and every child's birth can affect family's dynamism. Parents and the other members of the family should bear great changes for adaptability with the new member [4].

Presence of a mentally retarded child is along with caring difficulties for the family and especially stressful experiences for the parents [5], such a poor condition prevents family to have their common functions such as; children's training, social relationship, occupation, leisure time and marital relationship desirably.

Nowadays ,a lot of families are suffering from having a mentally retarded child for problems such as; heavy economic costs marital disputes and differences ,limitations in social relationship ,bearing others' commiseration and sympathetic behaviors ,appearance of behavioral incompatibility with other children and problems in decision making for having another baby [6], all of these problems cause pressure and stress for the family especially for mother[7].

However lack of mental stress is equal to inaction and immovableness and its result is difficulty in human growth and flourish. Although a little mental pressure is necessary for mobility and effort in a human being, continuous and acute mental pressure can put an individual's overall health at risk.

Great or continuous mental pressure will have abundant negative effects on person's performance and activities. People who suffer from mental pressure and are not able to deal with that ,are going to have problems physically ,mentally and behaviorally [1].In addition, family is a social system that disruption in every member of it can lead to disruption of all the system, and it can result in new problems in the family or cause intensification of the



child's retardation and different problems and deprive him/her of having a healthy environment for optimal growth and actually it can cause a vicious cycle .Also the results of the researches indicate that; mothers with mentally retarded child face with child's behavioral problems more than fathers and because of this they experience more stress and they need more support .But ,unfortunately this matter is not considered in many countries except in some developed ones.[7].

Volery and Billy[1985] stated reasons that determines the necessity of presenting training services for parents .In their opinion ,parents of mentally retarded children experience and bear lots of intensive mental stress and tension ; this matter determines the need to technical and training services[8].

When the parents face with their child's retardation, they seek a place or persons who guide them about the way of encountering and dealing with such a phenomenon [4].For helping them, at first, it is necessary to determine family's training needs carefully regarding taking care of these children to be able to present training services according to their needs. Because of this, the aim of this research is identifying the training needs of family with a mentally retarded child.

**Method**

This study is conducted through mini-review method. In this study, researcher tried to review the existing literature regarding training needs of the families with mentally retarded child. This research purposefully and by focusing on the research questions retrieved, evaluated and integrated searching required information. The question that this study was searching for its answer was this

:"What are training needs of the families with mentally retarded children?" the searching strategy was identifying related published articles from 2007 to 2011.Thus electronic searching was done in two Persian and English languages and by using key words "Education ,mentally retarded children ,families of mentally retarded children ,and in databases of : "Pub Med-Eric-Cochrane-Science direct SID-Irandoc -Iranmedex".

Inclusion criteria include: "all the written articles in English and Persian". All accomplished articles and studies between 2007 to 2013, as well as anonymous articles, review part of the book, recommendations, letter to the editor, historical articles, non-academic articles, dissertations and articles written in a language other than Persian and English were excluded from the study.

For surveying the quality of the collected articles by two of researchers, different dimensions of the articles, specially their research method and data validity were reviewed, and finally six articles had the inclusion criteria and eventually, whole text of these articles were abstracted, synthesized and then categorized based on having the main focus on answering the research question.

**Findings**

The resulted achieved from the six selected articles (table 1), indicate that; needs of the families with mentally retarded children are include three dimensions: acceptance, stress management and supportive resources.

Acceptance: one of the important needs of the parents with mentally retarded children is their disability in accepting this reality that their child is suffering from mentally retardation ,and this is an obstacle for providing proper

**Table 1.** The characteristics of the reviewed researches about educational needs of the families with mentally retarded child

Study [reference]	Publication year	Method and measurement tools	Main findings
Abedin,A[5]	2010	Designing in semi-empirical form ,with pretest and posttest and pursuit tests ,even in control group _Parenting Stress Index(PSI)	GMT: Decreases the intensity of the parent's stress, in meaningful way .It seems the group movie therapy lead to effectiveness, by simple recognition, affection and behavioral modeling.
Shokoohi-Yekta,M [9]	2010	Semi-empirical with pretest and posttest without control group of Anger Evaluation Scale. State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory.	Indicates the effectiveness of anger management teachings based on behavioral-recognition procedures in decreasing the mother's anger.
Shokoohi-Yekta,M [10]	2010	Without a control group _Anger Evaluation Questionnaire _Multidimensional Anger Inventory	After the teachings of anger management, the parents indicated a meaningful decrease in intensity and occasions of the anger, in anger provider situations that are related to their children .This changes remained after an annual pursuit.
Shokoohi-Yekta,M [11]	2010	Semi-empirical with pretest and protest in the control group _Anger Evaluation Scale - Multidimensional Anger Inventory.	The intensity and occasions of revealing the decreased anger and using the control methods of the increased anger that indicates the effectiveness of anger management techniques.
Shokoohi-Yekta,M.[12]	2011	Semi-empirical which used from EX Post Facto designing _Multidimensional Anger Inventory _Demographic information Questionnaire.	The results indicate meaningful connection between teaching level by anger stimulation and interior anger .Exactly, the mothers with higher education level, indicate lower anger stimulation and interior anger. Didn't find any meaningful differences between the anger of the mothers with diverse engagement position.(housekeeper or jobholder)
Tavakolizadeh, J.[11]	2012	Empirical with pretest and posttest of control group _General Health Questionnaire(GHQ 28)	Rational-behavioral teachings have an important positive effect on interior conditions of the mothers with mentally retarded child. Thus this stress Decreasing method ,is a suggestion for this mothers for teaching rational_ Behavioral programs.

role of caring responsibilities, and these parents need to control their negative emotions and therefore they have to have adequate and comprehensive information and recognition about mentally retarded children, and they should know how to behave regarding teaching and training such children, so these parents really need to consultation and guidance of committed and sympathetic authorities, aware, acquainted and intelligent friends. Holding family training sessions can increase the level of parent's awareness and acceptance towards mentally retardation and their children's characteristics, these classes can clarify the emotions and responses which often the parents express and they can decrease families' stress, increase optimal parents-child optimal interaction and influence family's health remarkably through teaching strategies.. Thus they are going to be able to learn how to achieve the required resources to help their disabled child.

**Stress management:** it cannot be denied that parents with disabled children are encountered with intensive stress and mental pressure, but what is important is to seek procedures that such families can adapt and agree with this problem through them.

Teaching relaxation strategies can decrease stress of the family members, also by changing and correcting parents' insight towards these children, optimal parent-child interaction can be increased and it also can influence family's health remarkably. Therefore they will be able to learn how to obtain required resources for helping their disabled child.

**Supportive sources:** One of the reasons of parents' adaptability problems in the society is inadequate support by the society.

Parents of these children intensively need support and information. Based on the accomplished researches, the first priority of providing services is informing and teaching the mental-social, therapeutic and medical supports and need to social and financial information and supports.

Teaching and creating family's supportive networks lead to decrease of parents' anxiety, increase of family's health level, and improvement of mental health indexes "family's stress and social acceptance", increase of mothers' social adjustment and decrease of stress, anxiety and depression.

When these types of the supports are present in the society, in one hand cause growth of disabled child in different aspects, and on the other hand, because of decrease of child's dependency to the family, the level of the family's stress decreases, so this matter itself results in more consistency in them.

## Discussion

Birth of a new child in a family is counted as a time for happiness and celebration in that family. Parents see lots of their dreams and ambitions in their newborn baby. Birth of a mentally retarded child, can be an affecting and profound event for a family. There are great evidences which show family members experience a broad range of emotions in response to a mental retardation diagnosis such as: renouncement, shock, anger, sorrow and grief, guilt, embarrassment, depression and fear [13]. The most

important problems and difficulties of such parents include: (1) The problem of acceptance of the child's mental retardation; (2) the resulting exhaustion of nursing and vigilance; (3) the related issues to the leisure time; (4) family's financial problems (5) Medical, didactic and rehabilitation issues [14].

Continuous care of such children is stressful for the family members and to the great extent it depends on child's conditions (sex, age, level of mental retardation), and available family sources. Also, economic-social condition of these families and enjoying social, familial and economic supportive sources are directly related to family performance.

Provision of a required supportive and truth worthy network for the families and preparation of special services to answer their needs are the responsibilities of the specialists that deal with mentally retarded children. This matter requires recognition of the effects and difficulties due to living with a mentally retarded person. The care team by recognition of these effects can provide different strategies to remove the existing obstacles and problems to make the family structure suffer from the least possible damage and also nurses can influence more in care planning of these children and support of their families besides the other members of the medical team through providing nursing services at home, and obtaining multidimensional recognition of patients' difficulties and problems [2].

There are several researches emphasizing on informing and teaching as the first servicing priority. These subjects include: Better recognition of the characteristics of a teachable mentally retarded child, awareness of specific disability of the child, recognition of the parents' characteristics and their common reactions, quality of dealing with the child, quality of the child's teaching and... [15].

Among the different methods which have been used for teaching families who have a child with a kind of exceptive disability include: 1. Teaching anger management significantly influenced mother's positive relation with her mentally retarded and stupid child [5, 11, 10]. 2. Behavioral-recognition teachings of life skills significantly decrease parents' stress and their sense of disability in playing their parental role [9, 5, 1].

3. Another method is using the group movie therapy (GMT). GMT is a successful choice in providing proper therapy rehabilitation. GMT can lead to stress decrease of mothers with mentally retarded children [5].

Mothers who have a mentally retarded child experience abundant different mental stresses. The effect of having mentally retarded children on mothers depends on their perception of the problem and their ability of dealing with this problem. Usually these mothers have many illogical ideas about themselves. It is necessary to provide some methods for increasing their resistance. These methods can result in increase of self-assurance and decrease of anxiety and stress. Behavioral-recognition teachings lead to remarkable development of mental health and its different elements (decrease of physical making, increase of social

performance ,decrease of anxiety and depression) in mothers with mentally retarded children and it can be used as a therapeutic method .It seems that these teachings lead to change in people's beliefs and provide the knowledge of dealing with the problems of having a mentally retarded child ,so mental stress decreases. Also, the medical group can decrease stress by providing sympathy and sharing difficulties [9, 1].

Holding workshops of teaching anger management decreases mothers' anger in interacting with their children. These workshops can decrease stimulation of public anger in these mothers [10, 11]. GMT is effective for decreasing parent's stress especially in mothers with a teachable mentally retarded child. Watching the main character in the movie ,who is dealing with difficulties related to having a disabled child with a group of the people who have the same problems is effective in decreasing mother's social isolation and as a result it affects improvement of their relations with the other members of the family .Sharing common problems with each other ,interlocution and feedback reception ,support and unanimity from the other members of the group are the key factors for mothers' mental health improvement and they make flexibility against stress. The movie can have both emotional and t physical effect through positive and negative stimulation of the emotions and change the levels of Neuroandorphins and stress hormones. So, GMT method may be effective in decreasing mothers' depression.

Observing a behavioral self-effect pattern, by indirect learning may be lead to increased adequacy and efficiency. Watching a successful role pattern and having animism with that and, internalizing positive messages of the movie, can result in a positive effect on mother's role, interest in her child, decrease of limited role and improvement of the sense of self-effectiveness and efficiency in the parents. These matters may be possible through change in the levels of understanding mother's behaviors and motivation.

As a result, it seems that GMT is an effective and durable method in decreasing parent's stress and it's subsets in mothers with teachable mentally retarded children. For lengthening the effect of training programs in form of mental teaching for mothers with mentally retarded children, holding continuous sessions after getting results from the interventions are required[5].This matter should be mentioned that; the surveys indicated that there is a positive relation between e women's mental health and their educational level. Mental health in women, who are working, is directly related to their satisfaction of their work benefits. Also findings indicate that housekeeper mothers experience higher level of anger rather than working mothers[12].

## Conclusions

Results achieved from data analysis of the reviewed articles in this study indicated that; needs of the families with mentally retarded children include three dimensions: Excitations control, stress management and lack of

adequate supportive sources. Correct perception of the problems of families with mentally retarded children not only teaches these children's parents, but also teaches the specialists who work in relation to these people, to change their attitude towards educational planning .In addition, any type of planning in this field is doomed to failure without considering family and parent's effective role.

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