EFFECTIVENESS OF COMPUTER ASSISTED INSTRUCTION TO PROMOTE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH MILD MENTAL RETARDATION WITH REFERENCE TO TEACHING MATHEMATICS

Abstract

Inclusive education is a current development in the process of education to accommodate all marginalized children into regular class in the nearby schools indiscriminating community, economic condition, disadvantaged due to disabilities or learning difficulties. Efforts are made to develop the strategies to implement inclusive education for the children with disabilities. In the present study an effort is made to experiment a modern strategy to teach mathematics that could promote inclusive education for Children with Mild Mental Retardation (CMMR). The objectives of the study are:

- Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) elicits gainful learning behaviour in CMMR.
- It is helpful in promoting positive perception about inclusive education among the stakeholders.

It followed quasi-experimental design with pre test-post test equivalent group followed by a survey. Participants of the study are 70 CMMR studying in grade I through V in 41 inclusive schools in Kolkata and North 24 Parganas districts of West Bengal. Tools used in this study are Binet-Kamat Test of Intelligence, Grade Level Assessment Devices (GLAD) for Children with Learning Problems in Schools, A parallel test to GLAD, An Indigenous Software Package, Rating Scale, and Interview Schedules. The quantitative data were analyzed through nonparametric tests and qualitative data were analysed by careful coding and inferring the responses to the question and statements in the interview and rating scale.

Results show that CAI has a) significant role in teaching identification money to the CMMR, b) helped achievement of various operational skills in Mathematics, c) been helpful for resistance to extinction of learning, d) promoted enhanced peer interaction by CMMR, e) improved motivation for learning Mathematics, learning other subjects, and being in the school, f) encouraged the teachers and special educators to use this as tool for instruction, g) helped to change parental perception about sociability and involvement of the CMMR in school, h) raised enthusiasm among non disabled peers to learn Mathematics and i) finally created an inclusive culture in schools. The intervention brought a new thought to the teachers, special educators and parents. This study opened questions to future researchers to find out its effectiveness in teaching other subjects through CAI and also to expand its use to teach children with other difficulties and non disabled.

Key Words: inclusive education, children with mild mental retardation, and computer assisted instruction.