CHAPTER III: PROVISIONS FOR MENTAL RETARDATION IN INDIA

3.1 NATIONAL POLICY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Persons with disabilities also constitute the population of a country. They also take the role of a citizen of our country. Like other citizens, they have the right to have a better quality of life and should have equal opportunities legally. The Constitution of India ensures equality, liberty, freedom, justice, dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with disabilities. For the welfare of them, Indian Government develops National Policy on disabilities to address issues faced by them. There is a need to make a special policy for the persons with disabilities to take care of them effectively. It helps in changing the perception of the society towards them and enables them to participate fully in the various activities of the society. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India is taking main role in developing these policies. Along with their help, Non-Governmental Organisations specially engaged for the welfare of the persons with disabilities are taking initiatives to provide care and support according to the National Policy. The policy focuses mainly on their rights than charity.

The Government of India enacted three legislations for persons with disabilities.¹ They are –

Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, which provides for education,

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employment, creation of barrier free environment, social security, etc.

(a) National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability Act, 1999 has provisions for legal guardianship of these four categories and creation of enabling environment for as much independent living as possible.

(b) Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 deals with the development of manpower for providing rehabilitation services.

Seven National Institutes are working for the development of manpower in different areas of handicapped to develop extensive infrastructure. Among them, National Institute for Mentally Handicapped is in Secunderabad, Andhra Pradesh.

As the present study is on the education of the mentally retarded children, focus will be mainly on the educational policy. In the National Policy Statement No. II B, serial no. 20,\textsuperscript{2GOI} it is clearly written that “Education is the most effective vehicle of social and economic empowerment. In keeping with the spirit of Article 21A of the Indian Constitution guaranteeing education as a fundamental right and Section 26 of the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, free and compulsory education has to be provided to all children with disabilities up to the minimum age of 18 years.”

Policy Statement No. 48 again says, "It will be ensured that every child with disability has access to appropriate pre-school, primary and secondary level education by 2020."

National Policy for Persons with Disabilities also focuses on the prevention of disabilities, rehabilitation measures (early detection and intervention, counselling and medical rehabilitation), economic rehabilitation for them and about their employment and their wages, women with disabilities, children with disabilities, barrier free environment, issuing of disability certificate, social security, promotion of NGOs, collection of regular information on persons with disabilities, sports recreation and cultural life. Principle areas of intervention are on the prevention, early detection, human resource development and social protection. In short, the Government is developing these policy statements for the persons with disabilities to enable them develop fully like other normal people and enjoy the human rights.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment supports the special schools and Ministry of Human Resource coordinate all matters relating to the education of persons with disabilities. There are some acts guaranteeing the rights for persons with disabilities.

3.2 ACTS GUARANTEEING THE RIGHTS FOR THE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

After considering the National Policy for the persons with disabilities and the related statements to the present study i.e. about the

education of the mentally retarded children, discussion can be focussed now on the Acts guaranteed by the Constitution and central Government for the rights of the persons with disabilities. To give them equal treatment, to live independently in the society with dignity in accordance with their skills and talents, the Government guaranteed by Acts especially for them to promote equality in all areas of life. They too have the right to enjoy the fundamental rights and duties of a citizen. They deserve it. Only pity, alms and charity will not satisfy them. They are also an integral part of the society and can contribute significantly towards the growth and development of the society. The Act is for the welfare of the persons with disabilities for effective enjoyment of the rights. So, the main focus of the National Policy is to protect them from the psychological and social hurdles.

The United Nations General Assembly by resolution no. 3447 (XXX) of 9th December, 1975 recognized the rights, and declared the rights of the disabled. It might be regarded as the most important document containing international commitment on the protection of the following human rights of the disabled persons.4

(a) Right to respect for their human dignity (Para 3 of declaration);

(b) Right to enjoy some civil and political rights as other human beings (Para 4 of the declaration);

(c) Their entitlements to the measures designed to enable them to become as self-reliant as possible (Para 5 of the declaration);

(d) Right to medical, psychological and functional treatment, including prosthetic and orthotic appliances, to medical and social rehabilitation, education, vocational training and rehabilitation aid, counselling, placement service, and other services which will enable them to develop their capabilities and skills to the maximum and will hasten the processes of their social integration or reintegration (Para 6 of the declaration);

(e) Right to economic and social security and to decent level of living (Para 7 of declaration);

(f) Right to get their specific needs and considered at all stages of social and economic planning (Para 8 of the declaration);

(g) Right to live with their families or foster parents and to participate in all social and cultural activities (Para 9 of the declaration);

(h) Right to be protected against exploitation or discrimination of any form (Para 10 of the declaration);

(i) Right to have legal aid for the protection of their persons and prosperities (Para 11 of the declaration);

(j) Right to organisations of disabled persons to be consulted in matters concerning them (Para 12 of the declaration)

Adoption of the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities by UN General Assembly in December, 1993 is another important international instrument in support of advocacy and
realization of these rights. India has undergone challenges in the area of recognition and grant of human rights to disabled persons. For this, legislative support is one of the most important means of achieving the objective to ensure full access and to protect the disabled person.

In India, Ministry of the Law, Justice and Company Affairs initiated a bill titled “The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation), 1995” received the assent of the President on 1st January 1996. It is an Act to give effect to the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of the People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region. Whereas the Meeting to launch the Asian and Pacific decade of disabled Persons 1993 – 2002 convened by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific held at Beijing on 1st to 5th December, 1992 adopted the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region; and whereas India is a signatory to the said Proclamation; and whereas it is considered necessary to implement to the Proclamation aforesaid. It extends to the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

It was on 30th December, 1999 that an Act of Parliament called the National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999, No. 44 of 1999 received the assent of the President and is published for general information. It is an Act to provide for the constitution of a body at the national level. The Head Office of the Trust is at New Delhi, and the Board

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with the previous approval of the Central Government, establish offices at other places in India. The Board shall consist of a chairperson to be appointed by the Central Government from amongst the person having expertise and experience in the field of autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disability, nine persons to be appointed in accordance with such procedure as may be prescribed from amongst the registered organisations out of which three members shall be from voluntary organisations, association of parents of persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disability and from associations of persons with disability members.

Eight persons not below the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India nominated by the Government to represent the Ministries or department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Woman and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, Finance, Labour, Education, Urban Affairs and Employment and Rural Employment, and Poverty Alleviation, Members, ex-officio; three persons to be nominated by the Board representing the associations of trade, commerce and industry engaged in philanthropic activities, members and the Chief Executive Officer, who shall be of the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Member – Secretary, Ex-officio.

Chapter III of this National Trust Act, highlights the objectives of the Trust\(^7\) as –

(a) To enable and empower persons with disability to live as independently and as possible within and as close to the community to which they belong;

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7. Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, What can we do to ensure the Rights of Disabled People, National Trust, New Delhi, 2000, p. 29.
(b) To strengthen facilities to provide support to persons with disability to live within their own families;

(c) To extend support to a registered organisations to provide need based services to provide need based services during period of crisis in the family of persons with disability;

(d) To deal with problems of persons with disability who do not have family support;

(e) To promote measures for the care and protection of persons with disability in the event of death of their parents or guardians;

(f) To evolve procedure for the appointment of guardians and trustees for the persons with disability requiring such protection;

(g) To facilitate the realisation of equal opportunities, protection of rights and full participation of persons with disability; and

(h) To do any other act which is incidental to the aforesaid objects.

Hence, the National Trust is working for the development of the persons with disabilities along with the assistance from the state governments and the voluntary organisations.

The United Nations General Assembly, in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities highlights about the right to education, in the Article no. 24, as States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realising this right without

discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, State Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning directed to:

(a) The full development of human potential and sense of dignity and self-worth, and the strengthening of respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and human diversity;

(b) The development by persons with disabilities of their personality, talents and creativity, as well as their mental and physical abilities, to their fullest potential; and

(c) Enabling persons with disabilities to participate effectively in a free society.

In realising this right, States Parties shall ensure that:

(a) Persons with disabilities are not excluded from the general education system on the basis of disability, and that children with disabilities are not excluded from free and compulsory primary education, or from secondary education, on the basis of disability;

(b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live;

(c) Reasonable accommodation of the individual’s requirements is provided;

(d) Persons with disabilities receive the support required, within the general education system, to facilitate their effective education;

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Effective individualized support measures are provided in environments that maximize academic and social development, consistent with the goal of full inclusion.

These rights enable persons with disabilities to learn life and social development skills to facilitate their full and equal participation in education, and as members of the community.

The persons with disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Bill, 1995 was passed in December, 1995 and it came into force on 7th February 1996. The Act provides for the Constitution of the following Committees.

(a) Central Coordination Committee
(b) Central Executive Committee
(c) State Coordination Committee
(d) State Executive Committee

(A) THE CENTRAL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

It consists of: Central Minister in charge of welfare, secretaries and certain officials of Government of India, three MPs, three persons nominated by Government of India, four persons nominated by States, and five representatives of NGOs. The function of the Central Coordination Committee is to review and coordinate the activities of all governmental and non-governmental organisations – to develop national policy and advice the Central Governments, to ensure barrier free environment in public places, work places, public utilities, schools and other institutions and to monitor and evaluate impact of policies and programmes.

(B) THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

It consists of the Secretary to Government of India, the Chief Commissioner for persons with disabilities, certain officials of Government of India, five persons nominated by Government of India, five representatives of Non-Government Organisation. The function of the committee is being responsible for carrying out of the Central Coordination Committee.

[Note: The other two Committees relating to the State will be discussed in the next chapter on the role of the State Government.]

The Government guaranteed Acts for the persons with disabilities; they are also enjoying the rights with the support of the voluntary organisations. They enjoy the rights recognized to the human being.\(^{11}\)

a) Right to life  
b) Right to education and training  
c) Right to work and employment  
d) Right to housing  
e) Right to leisure time activities  
f) Right to culture  
g) Right to information  
h) Right to health  
i) Right to decent income  
j) Right to circulate freely

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\(^{11}\) Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, What can we do to ensure the Rights of Disabled People, National Trust, New Delhi, 2000, p. 3.
The purpose of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity (as given in Article 1. of the Convention). After a brief study of the acts guaranteeing the rights for the disabled, the study on the mentally retarded children in India and its status can be studied.

3.3 MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN IN INDIA

After considering the acts guaranteeing the rights for the disabled, the status of mental retardation in India can be discussed. The prevalence rate of mental retardation in the population surveyed is found to be 2%.12 There is no systematic National Survey conducted to determine the prevalence of mental retardation in India. But it has been estimated that about 20 million persons are mildly retarded and about 4 million persons are moderately and severely retarded. In terms of category divided as untrainable, trainable and educable, the population of mental retardation is also distributed. 5% of the population of the mental retardation covers the untrainable group, 20% of them covers trainable group and 75% of them covers the educable.13

These educable groups, if proper care and attention is provided, there will be development and progress in respect of the economic and social activities, and they can enjoy their life to the fullest. At first, they were considered ill, fools and bad omens and they were outcasted but due to the


development, their conditions are also considered to provide them full care and support. As a result, now-a-days in India, there are over 600 schools for the mental retardation, unevenly distributed among the States. But, according to Thakur Hari Parsad Institute of Research and Rehabilitation for the Mentally Handicapped (THPI), India still needs to address the rehabilitation of over 18 million people with mental retardation, after applying the 2% to the present national population that exceeds 900 million.\textsuperscript{14} In rural areas, the incidence of Mental retardation is 3.1% and in urban, it is 0.9% within 0 – 14 age group.\textsuperscript{15}

It becomes a must for the Government to frame policies to look after the persons with mental retardation with or without associated disabilities for their welfare and development. More and more rehabilitation centres and special schools should be established to provide care and support to educate and train them so that they can become economically and socially independent. Number of special schools should also be well – trained to equip the needs. According to the policies framed by the Government of India, there is an aim to provide life – long care, training and support to the mentally retarded children. Regarding the prevention, many programmes are being taken up to be done at pre – conception stage, pre – natal stage, peri – natal stage and post – natal stage. Prevention at early childhood and infancy is also one encouraging factor with the growing rate of coverage of children from 0 – 4 years under immunization programme of the country. The immunizations against measles, mumps, rubella and whooping cough have not only reduced the incidence of the specific diseases but may be

\textsuperscript{14} Status of Mental Retardation in India, THPI, Hyderabad, 1\textsuperscript{st} ed, 1997,p. 9

\textsuperscript{15} Panda, K.C., Education of Exceptional Children, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1997 ,p. 78
considered instrumental for prevention of mental retardation as a consequence of these dreadful disease.

Propaganda for consumption of iodised salt in public sector or media is also to indicate possibility of low incidence of mental retardation. The number of centres giving early detection and early intervention services in India are negligible. It needs to be added for better result. There are many other programmes taken up for their development, but the main focus of the study is on their education. Factors relating to their education will be highlighted in the present study. Public education is also taken up as a special step in order to prevent the adverse effect of unwanted condition arising out of the society regarding the mentally retarded person. Many voluntary organisations are getting supports from the Government Agencies at Central, State and Local level committee. Many activities giving awareness to the people are also conducted to bring out the mentally retarded child to educate and train them. The parents whether they are educated or uneducated came to know about the mental retardation and most of them know the value of educating and as a result, admit their children to the rehabilitation centres and voluntary organisations to make them well – trained.

In the rehabilitation centres and special schools, the trained teachers are teaching the mentally retarded children. There is still a wide disparity between the need for special schools and trained personnel and the present status of availability. The Government has established vocational Rehabilitation Centres. Persons with Mental retardation after getting trained from such centres have been offered access to participate in some contract works. Possibilities of entry into Government jobs are ruled out giving some relaxation. More than 200 NGOs are now involving in services of vocational training and offer training for male and female
trainees. To strengthen the process of mentally retarded children, there is need for human resource development, to take up programmes to prepare teachers and their trainings in specific fields. State and Central Governments sponsored welfare schemes for their development nationally. Comparing to the past status, the present status of mental retardation in India is quite satisfactory as Governments are taking many initiatives. Now, opportunities provided to the mentally retarded children can be discussed in brief.

3.4 OPPORTUNITIES PROVIDED TO THE MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

After a brief discussion on the status of Mental Retardation in India, the opportunities received by mentally retarded children will be discussed. Keeping in view their needs, the Government has provided some provisions to give more support to fulfil their needs and preserve their identities. There are State and Central Sponsored Welfare Schemes for persons with disabilities to give some social benefits. Many voluntary organisations are also making efforts to provide assistance through a variety of programmes to give some special concessions or assistance wherever feasible in various fields like education and training, welfare and rehabilitation, medical and health etc. There is some relaxation in various fields relating to the disabled person to provide care and support. Some of them are highlighted here \(^{16}\) i.e. the parent or guardian of a person with mental retardation is entitled to income tax remission of a slab of Rs. 2000 or the annual actual cost of rehabilitation, whichever is less income.

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\(^{16}\) Status of Mental Retardation in India, THPI, Hyderabad, 1\(^{st}\) ed, 1997, p.24.
tax. Another Government order offers the facility of waving parents
the transfer in place of work for parents with sons/daughters with
mental retardation if it adversely affects the continuance of
education or training of the said son or daughter. A scheme of
authorising a mentally retarded son or daughter as the beneficiary
for the pension of a Government Employee has also been introduced.
Travel concession by train to the tune of 75% to the person with mental
handicap and to an escort is offered by the Indian Railways. The State
Road Transport Corporation in many States offer travel concessions with
escort in local and inter-district buses. Import of goods which are not
manufactured in India which are essential for any rehabilitation
services for persons with mental retardation are also exempted from
import duty. Major social benefits like support for independent living,
alternate residential care, health care, legal protection, etc. are not still
adequately provided through a naturally applicable mandatory provision.

There is a 100% income tax exemption for contributions made
to some organisations which are engaged in research and deemed
eligible for the scheme as a resource mobilisation modality to augment
the Government and NGO’s efforts in these lines. Persons with mental
retardation who also need appliances and aids for mobility are offered
free apprehences like aids, crutches it based on certain norms of the
Government.

Under the National Trust Act, it is clearly given about the
responsibility of the Central and State Governments to give facilities to
the disabled person (here in the present study, disabled meant the mentally
retarded children) the opportunities they are receiving on education are: 17
SCHEMES ON EDUCATION

a) Ensure that every child with a disability has access to free education till he/she attains the age of 18 years.

b) Promote integration of students with disabilities in normal schools.

c) Promote setting up of special schools in all parts of the country.

d) Equip the special schools with vocational training facilities.

e) Make schemes for conducting part time classes for disabled children who could not continue on whole time basis.

f) Impart non-formal education and arrange education through open schools and open universities.

g) Supply free of cost, special books and equipment.

h) Initiate research by Governmental and Non-Governmental agencies for designing new assistive devices, teaching aids and special teaching materials.

i) Develop teacher training programmes specialising in disabilities.

j) Make provision for transport facilities to disabled school children.

k) Removal of architectural barriers from schools, colleges and other institutions.

l) Supply of books, uniforms and other material to school children with disabilities.

17. Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, What we can do to ensure the Rights of Disabled People, National Trust, New Delhi, 2000, p.23.
m) Grant scholarships.

n) Arrange placements for children with disabilities.

o) Suitable modification in the examination system for blind students.

p) Curriculum for the benefit of children with disabilities.

q) All institutions to provide amenities for blind students.

r) Reserve 3% of seats for persons with disabilities.

At the time of employment, some opportunities are given to them. They are given below:

a) Identify and reserve certain posts not less than 3% for persons with disability;

b) Review the list of posts identified within every three years;

c) Out of the reserved posts 1% each should be for (i) blind, (ii) hearing impaired and (iii) locomotor disabled;

d) Government, local bodies, Governmental undertakings to furnish information to employment exchanges on vacancies reserved for persons with disability. The employment exchange has power to inspect records of employer;

e) Vacancies reserved for persons with disability which cannot be filled up due to non-availability of candidates shall be carried forward;

f) Formulate schemes for imparting training and appointment to the persons with disability and by relaxation of age limit;
g) Provide incentives to the employers in the public and private sectors to ensure that at least 5% of the work force is comprised of persons with disability; and

h) Dispensing with the service, reduction in rank, denial of promotion shall not be done on the ground of disability.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION SCHEMES

Government and local authorities shall reserve 3% of all poverty alleviation programmes for the benefit of the disabled persons.

ALLOTMENT OF LAND

Preferential allotment of land in favour of persons with disabilities at concessional rates for:-

(a) Housing,
(b) Setting up of business and special recreation centres,
(c) Establishment of schools and research centres, and
(d) Establishment of factories by entrepreneurs with disabilities.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

1. Establishments in transport sector shall take steps to adapt rail compartment buses, vessels and aircrafts to permit easy access to disabled persons.

2. Adapt toilets in rails, air craft and waiting rooms to permit wheel chair users to use conveniently.

3. Provide auditory signals at red lights in public roads.

4. Provide slopes in pavements for easy access for wheel chair users.
5. Engrave on the surface of Zebra crossing and edges of railway platforms for blind.

6. Provide warning signals at appropriate places.

After a brief study of the opportunities, the financial acts and budgetary allocation of the mentally retarded children can be studied.

3.5 BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN AND THEIR CARE SERVICES.

The Central Government make to the National Trust a onetime contribution of rupees one hundred crore for a corpus, the income whereof may be utilised to achieve the objects of the Trust. Chapter VIII of the National Trust Act describes about the funds allocated.¹⁸

a. There shall be constituted a fund to be called National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Fund and there shall be credited thereto (i) all money received from the Central Government; (ii) all money received by the Trust by way of grants, gifts, donations, benefactions, bequests and transfers; (iii) all money received by the Trust in any other manner or from any other source.

b. All money belonging to the fund shall be deposited in such banks or invested in such manner as the Board may, subject to the approval of the Central Government, decide.

Role of the Government and Voluntary Organisations in the Education of Mentally Retarded Children in Manipur

c. The funds shall be applied towards meeting the administrative and other expenses of the Trust including expenses incurred in the exercise of its powers and performance of duties by the Board in relation to any of its activities under section 10 or for anything relatable thereto.

The National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC) incorporated by the Ministry of Welfare, Govt. of India on 24th January, 1997 under section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 as a company not for profit has its objectives as

a) To promote economic development activities for the benefit of the disabled persons.

b) To promote self-employment and other ventures for the benefit/economic rehabilitation of the disabled persons.

c) To assist, subject to such income and/or economic criteria as may be prescribed by the Government from time to time, the disabled individuals or groups of handicapped individuals by way of loans and advances for economically and financially viable schemes and projects.

d) To grant concessional finance in selected cases for the disabled persons in the country in collaboration with Government Ministers / Departments. At State level to the extent of the budgetary assistance granted by the Government of India to the company.

e) To extend loans to the disabled persons for pursuing general / professional technical education for training at graduate and higher levels.

f) To assist in the upgradation of technical and entrepreneurial skills of handicapped persons for proper and efficient management of production units.

g) To set up training, quality control, process development, technology, common facility centres and other infrastructural activities for the proper rehabilitation upliftment of disabled persons in support of their economic pursuits.

h) To assist the State level organisations to deal with development of disabled persons by way of providing financial assistance and in obtaining commercial funding or by way of refinancing.

The National Trust provides a range of relief and care services through relief institutional care. For the establishment of relief institutions, there is the Relief and Reach Scheme which has been drawn up to facilitate the setting up of local institutes through voluntary organisations. The scheme supports these components of services like selective staff support, medical and health care support, building (construction or rent) support furniture and furnishing for rest and recreation support and living skills training support.

Eligibility for the organisations for funding assistance are²⁰,

a) Organisation / Association must be a Registered Organisation and also be registered with the National Trust.

b) Be running for at least 2 years.

c) Be a legally constituted body.

d) Not be running for profit to any individual or body of individual.

e) Be run as close to the community sought to be serve as is possible.

3.6 EDUCATION OF MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

Though the mentally retarded children are known to be a slow learner but are capable of growth, development and learning. They have unseen potential abilities which can be developed by means of providing proper education and training. Education must be provided to them which need special methods for teaching having essential contents applicable for their capabilities. It makes them possible of developing his talents not to its fullest extent but to some degree and helps in managing his daily activities. It helps to prevent anti-social behaviour. If proper education is provided, they could even get a suitable job or can do something independently to earn livelihood. The education of persons with mental retardation is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Welfare. The Education Commission of India (1964-1966)\textsuperscript{21} was the first to suggest about the education of the handicapped children and the constitution as directive on compulsory education includes handicapped children also. So, their education should be an inseparable part of the general educational system.

The objective of imparting education to mentally retarded children is to prepare him for adjustment to a socio-cultural environment designed

to develop his mind by using all possible abilities, and realise his self-concept to become a productive integrated and useful member of the society. The primary goal of education for such group is to increase self-sufficiency by teaching functional academics and other skills needed in everyday life across home, work, and leisure domains. It means there will be all-round development of their personality by teaching the art of living and vocational competence. For their education, the method should have practical basis, so all the methods used to teach the general normal children could not be applied to them. Special method is required to be applied to the education of the mentally retarded children and even the curriculum should be very special one to educate them. This form of education is termed as Special Education. Whatever to be taught should be in terms of simplicity. Only simple English, practical arithmetic, simple dramatic work, choral speech, dancing or cooking, toilet training, grooming, physical training, careful and simple sex education, simple moral conduct, social and emotional adjustment and simple things of day to day care should be taught to the mentally retarded children.

Regarding the education of the mentally retarded children, there are two categories i.e. educable and trainable mentally retarded children. Mild mentally retarded children are under the educable category; and moderate mentally retarded children are under the trainable category. Some of the severe group are also under the trainable group. The nature of the care and the training is different for the different category of the mental retardation and due consideration has to be properly given to their motivational need.
There should be different curriculum for the different category of mental retardation. Proper special care and assistance for small skills such as sitting-up, standing, handling things, bathing and toileting is needed. For these reasons, only the trained psychologists, educationists and special educators after giving through many experiments, tests and researches could decide the type of curriculum needed along with facilitating environment. In short, the pattern of imparting education should be classified according to levels. So, according to the classifications of mental retardation, educational provisions are also classified. Mildly retarded children can receive special education (up to level III and IV std.). Early identification and intervention has been added for the benefit of mildly retarded and would help in bringing cognitive, affective and psychomotor changes.
A discussion on Educational Provisions for the mildly retarded is that the general educational goals are applicable for their educational programmes. The objectives of education for these children are self-realisation, human relationships, economic efficiency and civic responsibility. The following guidelines are suggested for the mild group.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{TABLE 3.1: Education guideline for mild group of mental retardation}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>System and Area of Concentration, Preschool Centres, Anganwadis, ICDS exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre – School (Age 3 to 6)</td>
<td>Communication skills, self-help and specialization skills, perceptual exercises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary (Age 6 to 9)</td>
<td>Integrated school system, special development of basic skills, resource room teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Age 9 to 12)</td>
<td>Formal academic training in reading; written and perceptual training and development; children should be placed in regular classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (Age 13+)</td>
<td>Pre-vocational training skills, formal learning. Sheltered workshop situation is also recommended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the moderately retarded, special educational programme aiming at giving training in self-care needs along with the three Rs. They are more dependent in acquiring social skills and have problem in adjustment. Motor skill, language, conceptual and integration should be taught and can be trained in many crafts and also in very simple jobs. The educational

provisions for these children are primarily meant for making them vocationally productive by placing them in sheltered workshops. The following programme is shown below: 23

**TABLE 3.2: Educational guidelines for moderate group of mental retardation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Children</th>
<th>Area of Concentration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre – School (Age 3 to 6)</td>
<td>Half day classes, development of self-help skills, speech and language development, motor and socialisation skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary (Age 6 to 9)</td>
<td>Five hours of schooling a day; training in pre-school level skills; development of visual and auditory skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Age 9 to 12)</td>
<td>Full day classes; functional academic training; reading, writing and arithmetic; physical education and skill development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary (Age 13+)</td>
<td>Training in pre-vocational and vocational skills in sheltered workshops. Development of community relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children with profound or severely retarded need to be institutionalised and need constant and custodial care. They cannot be educated nor trained in any skilled activity. The educational provisions for them are meant for the development of self-help skills or communication skills. Sensory technique is used for these children. Behaviour modification techniques and reinforcement techniques are applied for development of behaviour and teaching toilet skills. They are to be further trained in sheltered workshops. In India now, more than 600 special educational institutes for the mentally retarded children are working. Attempts are being made to open more special education and also to train the teachers especially so that they can easily educate these children. But there is also the need of mainstreaming or integrating these children with the normal children. It will be very helpful to study about the role of the integration.

### 3.6.1 NORMALIZATION AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION

The mentally retarded children cannot reach high in the educational qualifications as their mental level is too low. They do not know even how to take care of themselves. But they can be trained in such a way, that in terms of schooling which should compulsorily consists of the practical
working, vocational and manual work and to take good care of themselves; only simple education is not required but socialisation should be included along with the above mentioned criteria. So, in their educational system, “Normalization and Integrated Education” is a very important to bring social interaction with the other normal children. A brief explanation of these two concepts has been given one after another.

NORMALIZATION

Normalization means that the mentally retarded children have the same right as other normal children. Only the educational system should be changed. They should be given education having special curriculum in a normal situation along with socialization. It is a process of interaction. It is a good pattern to bring the mentally retarded children in a normal way to function properly as possible as they can.

Some findings of normalization as given by some renowned personals are, GRUNEWALD’s statement, “The principle of normalization is applicable both to the development of the retarded individual (child or adult) and to the needs of the parent.” NIRJE commented as, “Normalization envisages making available to the mentally retarded patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream of society.”

Fig.3.2: Mentally retarded students with the other normal students
Normalization is making available to all mentally retarded people, patterns of life and conditions of everyday living which are close as possible to the regular circumstances of the society. There should be proper planning and management of services for persons with mental retardation. They should be allowed to experience normal routines of the day basing on age appropriate activities.

Normalization also implies that persons with handicaps have the right to services and facilities being made available to them as much as that of the normal persons.

INTEGRATED EDUCATION

In educational philosophy, school curriculum is to consider social acceptance and thus give priority to social training. Mentally retarded children, who are to be given special education, can be integrated with general education so as to match with the curriculum. Then, there will be social interaction between them and the normal one. But they cannot be put together in the same class room because of the differences in the teaching methods and the level of intelligence. They would not be able to go with the other children in general studies. But these children who are admitted to special schools be integrated in general schools as soon as they acquire the skills of communications, daily living skills and basic academic skills.

Government has recommended for special resource teacher classrooms and agreed to bear all the required expenditure involved here in integration. Many countries are favouring this educational special scheme, which recognises that mentally retarded children need to be integrated in such activities of games, physical education and other recreational school activities. Despite all the goodness, there are various difficulties that come on the way of integrating the mentally retarded children among the normal
school children. Non-institutionalised school is more beneficial for them. The severely retarded and profoundly retarded children cannot be included in the integration programme. The mildly retarded and some educable moderately retarded children should be integrated. But to meet the needs of all types of the levels of the retardates, there must be well-established comprehensive system of the institutions, special schools, special sections and rehabilitation cum vocational training centre. They must be given proper care and education experimentally to teach about the art of living and nature of the culture in order to make them get along in the society easily.

Integration enables him to be and to feel himself as being a member of society and also enables him to be felt that and experienced as much by other. No individual is regarded worthless. Any contribution, however, small made by a disabled individual, adds to the enrichment of the society.

3.6.2 INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The special education of the disabled children is now known as Inclusive Education of Disabled Children (IEDC). Disabled children are human being like others. Only because of the fact that they are different, they should not be discriminated. Disabled children, too, have full rights to get education in mainstream school. Inclusive education means that every student in a school in the ordinary settings irrespective of their strength and weakness will become a part of the school community; all the children should be treated equally. It will lead to the development of social skills and better social interaction because here, the learners are exposed to real environment of the society. Regarding this matter, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) is developing Comprehensive Action Plan on the Inclusion in Education of Children and Youth with Disabilities.
National Council of educational Research and Training (NCERT) is conducting training programme for imparting education to disabled and literate person. It will help the teachers to deal easily with the problems of the student. Teachers should always have positive attitude towards every student irrespective of caste, creed, sex, condition and avoid discriminatory measures and include the children with disabilities in the inclusive education programme. There are schemes for children with special needs such as Integrated Education for the Disabled Children (IEDC) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Some objectives of inclusive education are highlighted as follows: 24

a) To enroll all disabled children in general schools.

b) To reduce number of dropouts of disabled children in IED schools – general and specific.

c) To provide access to secondary education for disabled children with resources support.

d) To provide access to secondary education for children with intellectual disabilities both in special schools and IED general schools.

e) To focus on training programmes in pre – service and in – service teacher education in order to meet the special needs of disabled children in general school.

After considering the provisions of mental retardation in India, the provisions of mental retardation in Manipur can be studied in the next chapter.