Abstract

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The study is an exploration on the means to enhance happiness in children with mental retardation through developing intimate relationships. The overindulgence of the elders in the life of children with mental retardation result in a number of issues, as these children have to move in the framework developed by the elders. This put them under pressure and frustration. The emphasis on the development of skills for these children result in considerable negligence towards the relationship needs, blocking the spontaneous expression of the emotions, especially joy and happiness. The present study has adopted a qualitative case study method through grounded theory approach in contrast to the quantitative approach to the issues relating to the children with mental retardation.

Through the exploratory and the case focussed stages, the researcher reached at some psychological insights regarding the issues that affected the children with mental retardation. The researcher attempted to build intimate relationships with selected 11 children. A pattern of relationship building was conceptualised through this attempt of forming intimate relationships. Though all the participants could develop a strong bond, the relationship building process varied between children primarily depending on their past relationship experience. The initial behaviour (resistance-invitation) was the benchmark for further interaction. The reestablishment of attachment security in the new relationship resulted in enormous behavioural changes for the children. The alternative intervention this research proposes is to reduce the resistance of the children by getting involved into the worldview of the children through a process of love, care and unconditional acceptance. This process of relationship building has important bearing for the educational intervention for the children with mental retardation.