CHAPTER - III

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM, OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES
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The present research is an attempt to determine the effect of reinforcement, punishment and both techniques in the management of temper tantrums in mentally retarded children.

It is clear from the review of the previous work done in the area of mental retardation that mentally retarded children exhibit more behaviour problems. Although such children may be extremely pleasant when things are going well, they often lack the capacity to tolerate frustration and are easily provided by threats to self-esteem and self-image and by not having their own way. A large number of studies have been conducted evaluating the efficiency of behaviour modification techniques with mentally retarded individuals.

3.1 BACKGROUND FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

It is observed from the past researchers that the emphasis on habilitation of the mentally retarded during the last few years have led to a substantial increase in the amount of research devoted to training adaptive skills. Earlier research studies were concerned in reducing the inappropriate behaviour in general.
Mental retardation is a problem of major social significance, as prevalence estimates range from 1% to as high as 11% or 12% Dingman and Tarjan (1960) indicated that the actual prevalence may be higher.

A survey of the review materials indicate that very few studies were focussed on decreasing maladaptive behaviours. It is observed that many studies have been conducted on increasing adaptive behaviour.

Many research work done previously revealed that more studies were conducted with severely and profoundly mentally retarded individuals Whiteman & Scibak (1981)

Carr Edward (1987) suggested that severe behaviour problems like aggression, self-injury and tantrums are a means of communicating for mentally retarded/autistic children who do not know other ways of making their needs known.

Bijou (1963) discussed several ways in which intermittent reinforcement and extinction may operate to delay progressive changes in behaviour.

It is also observed that severe punishment stops ongoing behaviour Azrin and Holtz (1966)
Many research work done previously made use of behaviour modification techniques on maladaptive behaviour. Robinson and Robinson (1976).

It is also observed from most of the earlier studies that extinction procedures have been moderately successful in decreasing self-injurious behaviour. Bucher and Lovas, 1968; Corte et al 1971; Lovaas and Simmons (1969).

Inspite of the vast literature generated by research on behaviour problems and behaviour modification techniques, another important aspect that has not been studied by earlier investigators is temper tantrum most commonly found behaviour problem in mentally related children. Considering this aspect it is planned by the present researcher to focus on this particular behaviour problem in mentally retarded children.

3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out if there is any significant difference between the pre, post and follow-up rating of temper tantrum using reinforcement, punishment and both.

2. To find out if there is any significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally retarded in temper tantrum.
3. To find whether there is any significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally retarded using reinforcement, punishment and both techniques.

Based on the review of the work done in the field of mentally retarded by a number of researchers and the results given by them, the following facts have been observed.

1. Aggressive behaviour of mentally retarded persons was considered a major source of concern (Matson and McCartney, 1981).

2. Less females than males were being treated for aggressive behaviour (Quay and Werry, 1979, Rutter, 1977).

3. O'Leary and Wilson (1975) reported that tantrums are maintained by the consequences that they usually evoke.

4. Robinson and Robinson (1976) have shown that the retarded may be more likely to encounter maladaptation behaviours because of their limited ability to cope with various forms of environmental stimulation.
5. Matson and Dilorenzo (1984) reported that a wide variety of reinforcement and punishment procedures have been employed to treat problem behaviour.

In the light of the results of these studies, the following hypotheses have been formulated for testing.

3.3 HYPOTHESES FRAMED FOR INVESTIGATION

1. There will be a significant difference between the pre, post and follow-up ratings of temper tantrums using reinforcement techniques.

2. There will be a significant difference between the pre, post and follow-up ratings of temper tantrums using punishment.

3. There will be a significant difference between the pre, post and follow-up ratings of temper tantrums using both techniques reinforcement and punishment.

4. There will be a significant difference between all four levels of mental retardation in the frequency of temper tantrums.

5. There will be a significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally retarded in temper tantrums.
6. There will be a significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally using reinforcement techniques.

7. There will be a significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally retarded using punishment.

8. There will be a significant difference between mildly mentally retarded and profoundly mentally retarded using both techniques – reinforcement and punishment.

9. Reinforcement group will significantly differ in temper tantrums when compared to the punishment group.

10. Reinforcement group will significantly differ in temper tantrums when compared to the group that receives both reinforcement and punishment.

11. There will be a significant difference between the groups that use only reinforcement, punishment and both techniques.