



Full Length Research Article

ASSESSING PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH MENTAL RETARDATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights personality characteristics of mentally retarded children projected on Rorschach Ink Blot Test. Projective techniques are characterized by a global approach to the appraisal of personality, give composite picture of whole personality and measure latent and unconscious aspects of the personality. In the present study, the researcher has employed the Random purposive sampling technique. There were 45 boys and 35 girls in the sample. Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices Test developed by J.C. Raven (1962), Draw-a-man test developed by F.L. Goodenough (1932). Observation schedule for mentally challenged children (self-constructed), Teachers Interview schedule (self-constructed), Parents Interview schedule (self-constructed) and Rorschach Ink Blot Test developed by H. Rorschach (1921) were used for exploring the personality characteristics of mentally challenged children. It was found that they are at borderline between neurotic and psychotic personality organization. They are Stimulus – determined and extroversion in nature, weak in perceptual ability, undifferentiated Intelligence and poor imagination power, poor self-concept, poor stability, weak in tightening with realities resulting inadequate control, ruled by immediate needs for gratification rather than by long-range goals, ill developed ego, deprived of awareness of affectional anxiety, unable to control their behaviour and want immediate satisfaction facing much frustration, emotionally weak and feel need for approval and affection, stereotyped view of the world and narrow range of interests.

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INTRODUCTION

Mental retardation is a widely prevalent disorder, often heart-breaking in its emotional costs to families and in the lifelong economic burdens it imposes on them and on society. A proper and careful assessment of personality only can help in drawing appropriate interventional strategies. Projective techniques are characterized by a global approach to the appraisal of personality. They give composite picture of whole personality. Also they measure latent and unconscious aspects of the personality. Donald et al. (1978) administered Rorschach and structured tests of perception as indices of intellectual development in mentally retarded and nonretarded children. The ability of projective tests to access the patient's inner mental life provides a very helpful diagnostic aid, especially for persons with mental retardation. Nuovo and Colucci et al. (1997) found that mentally retarded persons WISC-R scaled

scores and Rorschach cognitive indices are different measures of intellectual functioning. Therefore, as researcher in the field of education, she thought about the possibilities in the field in which a new venture could be evolved and concentrated on the issue related to the personality characteristics of Mentally Challenged Children through Rorschach Ink Blot Test.

Objectives of the Study

In order to explore the Rorschachian measures of Mentally Challenged Children, following objectives were determined:

- To explore the quantitative relationships among Rorschach factors of Mentally Challenged Children.
- To draw the psychogram among Rorschach determinants of Mentally Challenged Children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, the researcher has employed the Random purposive sampling technique. The sample selection procedure used in the study is shown in the following flow diagram:

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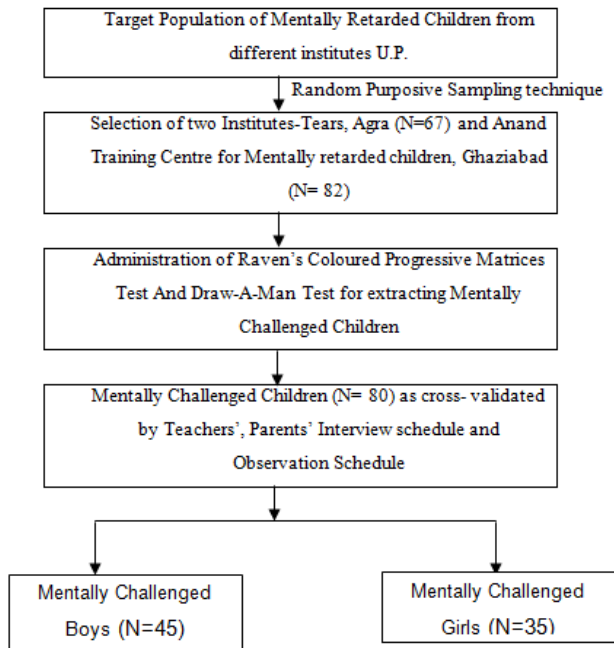


Fig. 1. Schematic Representation of the sample selection of Mentally Challenged Children

Tools and Techniques Employed in Study

The following tools have been employed for the purpose of sample selection in present study:

- Raven's Coloured Progressive Matrices Test developed by J.C.Raven (1962).
- Draw-a-man test developed by F.L. Goodenough (1932).
- Observation schedule for mentally challenged children (self-constructed).
- Teachers Interview schedule (self-constructed).
- Parents Interview schedule (self-constructed).
- Rorschach Ink Blot Test developed by H. Rorschach (1921) - This projective test was used for exploring the personality characteristics of mentally challenged children.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Rorschach responses obtained from Mentally Challenged Children were interpreted with the help of quantitative relationships among different Rorschach components. These relationships give an integrated picture or total configuration of personality. Here, personality constructs of Mentally Challenged Children were studied by drawing psychogram and different quantitative relationships among Rorschach factors. Mean values of frequencies on each Rorschach factors were calculated for drawing psychogram and calculating percentages and proportions required for interpretation of quantitative relationships. Fig. 2 shows that Mentally Challenged Children responses are concentrated at the center. Right side of the psychogram has more responses than left hand side indicating that the Mentally Challenged Children are largely influenced by outer determinants i.e., they are stimulus determined and extratensive in nature. More responses in center of the psychogram imply that they

see blots only in outline and they lack of restructuring the material in the light of their own needs and experiences. They have limited kind of perception. Their emotional life dominates over fantasy life.

Table 1. Quantitative Relationships among Rorschach Factors in Mentally Challenged Children

| SN | Rorschach Factors | Marks Mean) |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 1. | Total Responses (R) | 20.6 |
| 2. | Total Time (T) | 2685.75 Sec. |
| 3. | Average Time per response (T/R) | 130.37 |
| 4. | F/R | 67.23% |
| 5. | FK + F + Fc R | 71.23% |
| 6. | A + Ad R | 41.019 % |
| 7. | (H + A) : (Hd + Ad) | 10 : 1.36 |
| 8. | Popular Responses (P) | 0.525 |
| 9. | Original Responses (O) | 0.00 |
| 10. | FC + 2CF + 3C (Sum C) | 2 2.05 |
| 11. | M : Sum C | 0.38 : 2.05 |
| 12. | (FM + m) : (Fc + c + C') | 1.11 : 1.65 |
| 13. | W : M | 4.7 : 0.38 |
| 14. | M : FM | 0.38 : 0.85 |
| 15. | M : (FM + m) | 0.38 : 2.22 |
| 16. | FK + Fc F | 0.10 |
| 17. | (Fc + cF + c + C' + C'F + FC') | 1.65 : 2.35 |
| 18. | (FK + Fc + Fk) : (K + KF + k + kF + c + cF) | 0.9 : 1.35 |
| 19. | FC : (CF + C) | 1.40 : 0.93 |
| 20. | W | 11.35% |
| 21. | D | 72.94% |
| 22. | D | 5.40% |
| 23. | Dd + S | 2.97 % |

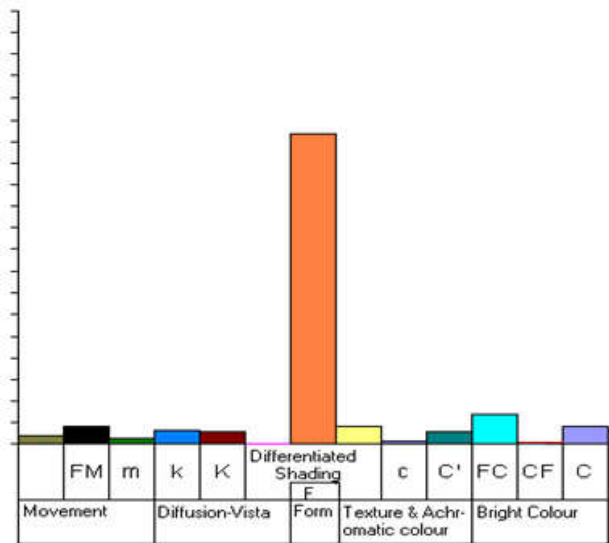


Fig. 2. Psychogram For Mentally Challenged Children

Table 1 clearly indicates that they have low intellectual level and poor imagination power, poor stability. M responses (M=0.38) show that these children are not properly adjusted in their surroundings. They do not control their behaviour and want immediate satisfactions facing much frustration. (FM=0.85). Their ego neither tolerate nor assimilate archaic impulses. They have no good empathetic relationship with other human beings. Moreover, it can be said that their self-concept and self acceptance are very poor. They are not emotionally integrated. Proportion of M:FM=0.38:0.85 reveals there is neither simple acknowledgement of impulse nor is imaginal ability available either in the sense of long range foresight or escapist fantasy. Their ego is developed so little that the person may act irresponsibly without ego

participation. Greater number of FM +m than 1.5M indicates that their tensions are too strong to permit them to utilize their inner resources for the constructive solution of everyday problems of living (M:FM+m = 0.38:2.22). Mentally Challenged Children are guided by basic drives rather than by long range goals. Their intelligence is undifferentiated and they are badly integrated in personality organization or in a severe anxiety state (F%= 67.23%). Minus form level responses are indication of weakness in tightening with realities resulting inadequate control. This is further indication of psychotic function.

Mentally Challenged Children are deprived of awareness of affectional anxiety and introspective efforts are rarely done by them (FK=0.07). They are unable to find satisfaction in any interpersonal relationships. They are dependent on others as infantile way. FK+Fc:F=0.10 indicates the tendency of Mentally Challenged Children to be denial, repression or underdevelopment of the need for affection. Their socialized responses tend to be superficial and are unable to allow themselves a strong emotional reaction. SumC (2.05) hints out their reactivity to emotional stimuli is little controlled. They are too little responsive to influence with the environment. FK+F+Fc=73.05% shows insulated rigidity of constriction. They feel difficulty in making close and warm affectional contacts. Mentally Challenged Children have low degree of interest in seeking relationships between the separate facts of experience and achieving an organized view of the world (W=11.35%). It is also supported by ratio W:M=4.7:0.38. They face disappointment in the gap between aspiration and the ability to achieve. Under emphasis on d% (5.4%) shows a low level of interest in the minutiae of experience. They stick to the practical, everyday problems and common-sense view of things because they are not capable of a more integrated view.

High A% indicates a stereotyped view of the world and narrow range of interests. Also it shows low intellectual level. Chromatic responses are much greater than achromatic responses, points out that these children are emotionally weak and feel need for approval and affection. (Fc +cF+cC'+C'F+FC':FC+CF+C=1.65:2.35). They have used more undifferentiated determinants in their responses rather than differentiated responses (FK+Fc+Fk : K+KF+k+kF+c+cF=0.9:1.35) predict their anxious nature. They have affectional needs that are poorly integrated within the personality organization which indicates a seriously disrupting influence and a sign of poor adjustment in the world. Their tendency towards colour responses rather than shading appears to be correlated with recognition ability not interpreting. Deficiencies in shading reactions have more serious implications for prognosis and adjustment and also directs towards ego weakness. Food responses were also given by the children in a significant quantity indicating need fulfillment nature for their basic demands. They are more interested in concrete objects (more obj responses). They have given more responses to Pl category presenting nature loving behaviour. They have uncontrolled affective reactions (Bl responses). Pure C responses are indicators of a lack of emotional control. Colour concepts as Blood/Fire are regularly accompanied by strong indications of intensely-felt subjective discomfort. These children are unproductive (R=20.6%) and have slow mental process (T/R= 130.37 per sec). They are

unable to see the world in the same terms as other people do. This indicates loosen tie with reality of world (P=0.53). It appears as a negative indicator for the total adjustment of these children. They are at borderline between neurotic and psychotic personality organization.

Table 2. Personality Characteristics of Mentally Challenged Children at a glance

| SN | Personality Characteristics |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Stimulus – determined and extroversive in nature |
| 2. | Lack of restructuring the material in the light of their own needs and experiences. |
| 3. | Weak in perceptual ability. |
| 4. | Low intellectual level, undifferentiated Intelligence poor imagination power, poor self-concept, poor stability. |
| 5. | More recognition ability rather than interpretation. |
| 6. | Unproductive and have slow mental process. |
| 7. | Lack of creative impulses. |
| 8. | Weakness in tightening with realities resulting inadequate control. |
| 9. | Ruled by immediate needs for gratification rather than by long-range goals. |
| 10. | Face disappointment in the gap between aspiration and the ability to achieve. |
| 11. | Ill developed ego. |
| 12. | Deprived of awareness of affectional anxiety. |
| 13. | Emotionally weak and feel need for approval and affection. |
| 14. | Feel difficulty in making close and warm affectional contacts. |
| 15. | Low degree of Empathy i.e., they are unable to share and understand feelings of others. |
| 16. | Feel affectional needs which are poorly integrated within the personality organization. |
| 17. | Low degree of interest in seeking relationship between the separate facts of experience and achieving an organized view of the world. |
| 18. | Stereotyped view of the world and narrow range of interests. |
| 19. | Unable to control their behaviour and want immediate satisfaction facing much frustration. |
| 20. | At borderline between neurotic and psychotic personality organization. |

Moreover, these children have been found directed towards external environment. These findings are supported by *Zigler & Hodapp* (1986). They found in their study that many children with mental retardation continue to be outer-directed as a means of avoiding failure, and others in their environments may faster dependence by readily providing the direction. Further discussing, the mentally challenged children have been found unable in establishing close interpersonal relationship and affectional contacts, have low degree of empathetic relations, low degree of interest in achieving an organized view of the world, have stereotyped view of the world, emotionally weak and their reactivity to emotional stimuli is little controlled.

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