



INTRODUCTION

The term "mental retardation" is often misunderstood. Some think that retardation is diagnosed only on the basis of below-normal intelligence (IQ), and that persons with mental retardation are unable to learn or to care for themselves. Actually, in order to be diagnosed as a person with mental retardation, the person has to have both significantly low IQ and considerable problems in everyday functioning. (American Academy of Child Adolescent Psychiatry, 2007).

The essential feature of mental retardation is below average intellectual functioning (IQ less than 70) accompanied by significant limitations in areas of adaptive functioning such as communication skills, use of community resources, self Direction, academic skills, work, leisure, health and safety, (Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, 2008).

Adaptive skill areas include communication, self care, performance of home living activities, social skills, leisure, attention to health and safety, self direction, academic functioning, ability to use free time, use community resources and work, (Daily, etal., 2004).

Love and acceptance to the retarded child is as important to him as to any other child. Like all children, he needs help in growing up – only he needs more help and he needs it longer, (Klossner and Hat field, 2006).

Mental retardation can occur in any family regardless of its social, racial or intellectual background. It can be found in the poor home or the rich home and may result from an injury, an illness, a genetic defect or from unfavorable emotional, cultural or health factors – or from perhaps



over a hundred causes not yet known. Some causes of mental retardation occur because an individual may receive little or no stimulus, child does not have the opportunity to learn, daily environment is so deprived that he does not receive the intellectual stimulus he needs. Unfavorable health factors are other causative features in mental retardation include inadequate prenatal care and postnatal care and poor nutrition during the child's formative years, (Schmittzehe, 2007).

WHO and UNESCO (2004), view CBR as a strategy that can address the needs of people with disabilities within their communities in all countries. Nurses play a major role in identifying children with mental retardation in early infancy periods and can help to identify children with mental retardation through history taking, observation and developmental screening during early child hood, (Scharer, 2007).

School nurses often care for children who have been previously diagnosed with mental retardation but may also be instrumental in identification of these children as the teachers and care givers often speak with the nurse when a child seems unable to keep up with academic work, (Luther, 2008).

Significance of the study

The Ministry of Education provides special service, for children with disabilities. It introduced educational services for the visually, hearing and mentally impaired through 165 specialized schools and 204 schools with at least one or more special class rooms for children with disabilities (Social Research Center, 2008).

The Ministry of Health and Population provides services that focus on the early detection of disability and the early therapeutic intervention



through periodic vaccinations. Early intervention and rehabilitation services are provided at mother and child care centers, hospitals and other institutes specializing in disability related treatment (Japan international co-operation agency, 2009).

According to the (Central Agency for Public Mobilization and statistics, 2008), there are approximately 3.5 million persons with different types of disabilities in Egypt, and about 60% of them are mentally retarded .The number of children per 100,000 was 900 in urban and 500 in rural and in kaluobia governorate there are 112300 persons with disabilities, about 80697 of them are mentally retarded.

Governmental efforts in special education cover only 4%. However the ministry of education is slowly involving itself in efforts to introduce inclusive education through United Nations educational, scientific, cultural and non governmental organization, (Social research center, 2008).