

TRAINING COURSE ON MENTAL RETARDATION

1995

BY T. R. PRIYANI SUSANTHA

SRI LANKA

---

## Information and comments on training course

In the first period of training course we have learned Social welfare service, Education, Laws, Health Service in Japan through interesting lectures. The social welfare service in Japan mainly developed after world war 11, and most of the system of social welfare based on laws enacted at that time in Japan. There are two kinds of organization which carry out their function and promote social welfare. One is public organization. Other one is voluntary organization. Public organizations are by the national and local governments and voluntary organizations including social welfare Juridical persons. This is one of the characteristics in the operation of social welfare service in Japan.

The Ministry of Welfare is the central administrative body related to the social welfare at the national level. The department that deals with social welfare bureau, the children and families bureau and the division of health and welfare for the elderly. In regard to private organization of welfare. Social welfare juridical persons who are authorized by the prefecture governors or the Ministry of Health and Welfare, play the most important role as operating organs of social welfare services. Many of Social Welfare juridical persons operate

institutions and provide social welfare activities. The social welfare service administration has long characteristics. Besides operating national facilities, the national government deals mainly with planning, guidance, supervision, and subsidizing as for the actual operation of social welfare services. Guidance and supervision for social welfare services are dealt with the local governments and the national government, shares considerable amount of responsibility. Namely financially support. The local government also has its own activities for the promotion of social welfare of the people community.

Second of period training I have learned the social welfare in Osima Colony through the interesting observations. Osima colony has well organized programs for the mentally retarded people. The two weeks practical training in this colony gave me very good knowledge in handling mentally retarded people.

School For Children with mental retardation Attached to Tokyo Gakugei University.

Educational Services for the mentally retarded

Second period of training I have been stading the school for children with mental retardation attached to Tokyo Gakugei university.

The ministry of Education is responsibale for the Provision of educational Services for the mentally retarded in Japan . Special education is provided by special school and in special classes held in ordinary elementary and lower secondary schools from 1993 and part time special classes (resources room) have been included in the special education system. There are three type of school for blind children,for deaf children and school for the other disabilities. Special classes are set up mainly for children with disabilities. They are divided in to seven types of classes,these for children with mental retardation,physical disabilities,health impairements practical sight, hearing difficulties, spesch improvements, and emotional disturbances.

School for the children with mental retardation is provides continnous school education from kindergarden through the upper secondary education taking a stand of life long education for children with any degree of mental retardation including those with multi-handicpps. The school has close co-operation with the special education section attached to the

university. The school for children with mental retardation was approved and named . TOKYO GAKUGEI DAIGAKU FUZOKU YOGOGAKKO. attached to the Tokyo Gakugi Daigaku .was established in 1960.

At present there are four department ,namely Kinder garden , Elementary school, Lower secondary school and upper secondary school. There are 85 student and thirty teachers. Theyare taught with daily living skills, Japanese language, Art, Maths, Music. Lower secondary and upper secondary pupils are taught how to live independently in the society. There is a good relationship between student and teachers and parents. There is a parents teachers association which does quite a lot of work for the improvement of the school.

## personal Point of View

Japan has good support system of social welfare for mentally retarded people. There are already many facilities existing in the community. Such as rehabilitation centers, hospitals, day care centers public health centers.

In Sri Lanka the Ministry of Health, Social services and Ministry of Education are the key ministry which provide services for the mentally retarded people. Non governmental Organisations also play a wide role to rehabilitate these type of disabled in our country. These services include Institutional care and rehabilitation, vocational training, special and integrated education, charity allowances free medical facilities and community based services. In a developing country like Sri Lanka high priority has to be given to economic development, and while the mentally retarded receive low priority in allocation of funds in the national budget. There are inadequacies in the budgetary provision have to be met with foreign donations. In Japan private organisations play an important role in providing social welfare services such as shelter work shops, half way houses, Group homes which are mostly needed in the community. According to my view this kind of programmes are very important for handicapped people to lead an independent life in the community.

With referance to the field of mentally retardeation Japan is at a higher level compared to other developing countries. During the 4 weeks practical training programm,I have observed this fact very clearly. The situation Sri Lanka is at a very lower level with regrad to the above mentioned fact. Daily living skills programms, welfare factories, shelter workshop, halfway houses etc. given a good service for the Mentally retarded persons to become independent in the society. Such programms can be introduced in Sri Lanka,however at present there is no such programms in fuction. But for the physically handicapped people they are very well organised programms. Such situtation is encouraged in Sri Lanka by giving 3 percent priority for the physically handicapped people when they apply for jobs in state sector.

#### Institute For Mentally Retarded Girls in Sri Lanka

After returning back to my country, I have the obbigation to serve in such a Institution as the OFFICER IN CHARGE. The institute is the only organisation in Colombo direct for the mentally retarded girls in Sri Lanka run by the Government. This institute was in collaboration with the home for aged at Mirigama. At present the facilitise given to this institute very inadquate. In addition the two institutions( namely home for the aged at mirigama and mentally retarded girls home

in Colombo) does not function smoothly ,since responsibility both the institution been supervised by the same officer. Due to these reasons it has been divided to supervise and organise the mentally retarded girls home to function as a independant organisation. My status in Sri Lanka would be to take over the responsibilities of this newly separated independant home for the mentally retarded girls.

Present situation of the institute of Mentally retarded girls.

At present there are 75 inmates in between 8 to 35 age group. About 65 of them are young women. Most of them been abondent. About 50 of them are mentally retarded and 25 of them are severly mentally handicapped. At present Government is supplying the medical facilities, clothing ,and food. In addition a government teacher given nonformal education for one hour twice per week. This institute is comparabale to a hospital without much attention to the inmates. I feel this is insufficient for the well being of the institute.

My Training Programm in Japan and how it applied to the Institue  
of Mentally retarede girls in Sri Lanka

(1) I would introduce Daily living skilled programs.

First I would educate my staff members with my knowledge obtained in Japan. Then I will join with them put into pratice by introducing the daily living skilled program on a stepwise manner. To start with I would teach them about clanliness ,to wash their faces, bodies,cloths etc. These facts I would ask my staff members to train them daily so that they will become independant to carryout them by themselves.

(2) Secondly I would advice my staff members to train them to keep their enviromrent clean and to prepare their meals independantly. At present the situation is such that the meals are prepared by some other staff members and they are served with the meals. Under these condition the mentally handicapped girls willnot get any oppertunity in preparing their meals.This fact can be overcome ,If I and my staff members join in training them in small groups to prepare the meals. This would also encourage them for joint work to prepare and share meals as a group.

(3) Thirdly my work plan in to give them a vocational training. This could be accomplished in collaboration with the Ministry of Education in Srilanka. The vocational training programs are

,cooking craft,needlework, agriculture, mushroom cultivation etc. From such programs I and my staffmembers would select the best girls to be employed in the functioning of the shelter workshops. They also can be sent to the nearby factories for employment ,so that they will receive a monthly salary.This could further extended for them to start a group home with in the community on a small scale with the help of a one staffmember, under my supervision.

Girls who become independant after joining the nearby factories employment, could be encourage to live in the vicinity of the nearby boarding houses.This will enable them to live with other girls who are not handicapped.Such situation will encourage the handicapped girls to become independent like nonhandicapped girls. However they need supervision and counselling in managing their income and other difficulties while being.

(4) My intensions are to introduce a shelter workshop as part of the institute.Once they are accustomed to prepare a small meal I would encourage them to prepare lunch packets or start on a small bakery etc. This would enable them to obtain an income. this money could be saved in a bank account under their names. Latter would help them in buying their needs.

The theoritical and practical knowledge giving to me during my short stay in Japan. I would utilise in the following manners.

First I would invite above programs and practical experience witing my Institute. I will use this as a sample in expanding such programs, with the help of ministry of Social Welfare in Sri Lanka.

#### COMMENTS ON THE TRAINING

During my short Training program I would like to mention that it has been very well organised. I gained good knowledge and practical experince. I hope to apply such knowledge suitable to my home country Sri Lanka.

Lastly I would extend my many thanks to JICA -JAPANESE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGENCY and JLMR - JAPANESE LEAGVE FOR THE MENTALLY RETERDED. I also like to thank all the officers and everybody who supported in carrying out the training program.