

**Sharing Experiences to Welfare Services  
for Mentally Retarded Children and  
Youths in Rural Area of Hulu Selangor.**

**Malaysia**

By:

Zainon Ghazaley

Social Worker

Ex- JICAParticipants ( 1988)

# Introduction

- ✚ Attended the Course of Mentally Retarded Persons in Japan in 1988. Attending lectures and visiting Facilities in Tokyo, Hokaido( Oshima Colony) and Facility at Okayama South of Japan.
- ✚ Appreciation to JICA, JLMR and the Government of Japan in providing the training and guidance for the advancement of services for the Mentally Retarded Persons for the developing countries participants.
- ✚ I consider myself one of the lucky Malaysian who had gained some knowledge from the training and have tried to implement the programme for the benefit of Mentally Disability Persons in Malaysia.

# Principal of Normalization

- At the training I learned this principal of Normalization and it was really attracted me.
- This is a fundamental principle for the delivery of Welfare Services to the mentally retarded in every country of the world.
- Normalization means “ **to emphasize respect for people with handicaps as persons, and to treat them to the greatest extent possible in the same manner as other people**” ( Tadashi, 1985)

# Implementation of Programme at Training Centre of Mentally Retarded Youths at Johor Bharu, Malaysia ( 1989-1990)

- First approach was Staff training . Important to give them basic knowledge focused who are the Mental Retarded Persons and discussions topics like **dehumanization vs dignity**.
- **De humanization** is defined as being treated like a prisoner, rather like a resident , being expected to participate in childish games, regardless of the residents' feelings in the matter, having residents' symptoms discussed in their presence, as if they were not there ( Tagaya, 1985 ).
- **Dignity**, is first of all, is having privacy for dressing, in the lavatory, and in the shower. Dignity is receiving encouragement and occasional words of praise ( Tagaya, 1985)

# Training The Residents

## ( Age 14 to 40 years)

- Using the **principal of Normalization** as guidance to some implementation of training programs for the residents.
- Training in **Activity Daily Living** – Self-Help Skills for example folding the blankets, bedding, tooth-brushing, bathing, personal hygiene, dressing and undressing, washing face and hands, eating etc.
- **Educational and Vocational Training**- wood-craft, gardening, agriculture, sewing, cooking and on job training ( at umbrella factory).
- **Leisure Activities** – Morning exercise with music, night outing ( dinner outside institution), Film Show at Cinema, Traditional Dancing, Disco Dancing, Attending Concerts of Popular Singers, traveling, Foot Ball Friendly Matches.

# Implimentation of Programmes in The Rural Community of Hulu Selangor

- **Project** – Community Based Day Care Centre for Mentally Retarded Children at Kuala Kubu Bharu, Hulu Selangor ( baby to 18 years old).

## Implementing Stages

1. Meeting with Parents to form Support Group for parents of Mentally Retarded Children. Exploring their feelings and problems . Using action oriented approach , the parents were encouraged to take action over their needs of opening a Day Care Centre for their own children.
2. Facilitating Parents to elect their Operational Committee Members to start the project and financially supported by their brothers,sisters and relatives.
3. Meeting with related Government Agencies like Welfare Department, Health Department, Town Municipal Agency, District Office, Hospital etc.
4. Find suitable building- Old Government Quarters (Bangalow)
5. Training of workers for the Day Care Centre .

# Implimentation of Community Programmes of Day Care Centre

5. Financial Assistance from Rottary Club RM 10,000.
6. In 1991 the Day Care Centre was opened with 40 students ( Some travel about 60 KM to the Centre)
7. Elect State Minister's Wife as "Patron"
8. Officiate by Minister of Selangor State on the same day received donations from public RM 15,000 .
9. Total Donations received RM 25,000, The Day Care Centre was managed by the parents of Mentally Retarded Children in the Community with the help of two permanent trained workers.
10. After a year, another Branch was opened at Felda Sg Tinggi also runs by the parents support group.

# Program in The Day Care Centre of Mentally Retarded Children

- Health services by Government Doctor
- Special Education by Trained Teacher(Volunteer) and NGO'S Organization
- Basic Physiotherapy .
- Training Activity Daily Living ( bathing, dressing, eating, toileting etc
- Leisure Activity – games, physical exercise, music, outing and picnic by the sea side.
- Based on Individual Assessment.
- Toy's Workshop runs by the parents with the help of NGO -Malaysian Care.

# Implementation of Program

## Group Home

- **Project: Group Home** for the Mild Mentally Retarded Youths at Kuala Kubu Bharu, Hulu Selangor.
- **Objectives:** To consider their potential ability to live independently in the community.

### Implementing Stages:

1. Choosing a house nearby shopping facilities. House rental paid by Welfare Department.
2. Meeting with neighborhood giving information of Group Home and the objectives of the program.
3. Choosing 3 Mild Mentally Retarded Youths volunteering to stay in Group Home and introduced them to nearby neighbors.

# Activities at Group Home

4. Elect a Care Taker at initial stage of the Group Home to train them for independent living.
5. Training **Activity Daily Living** – Self-help skills like personal hygiene, house cleaning, washing dishes and clothes, simple cooking, shopping and marketing etc.
6. **Leisure Activities** – simple indoor games, watching Television, vegetables gardening, activities with neighbours like going for prayer.
- 7.

# Conclusion

- After my training in Japan in 1988, has given me the strength to initiate the first two community based program for Mentally Retarded Persons in rural area.
  - 1.Two Day Care Centers organized by the Support Group of Parents Of Mentally Retarded Children in Hulu Selangor.
  - 2.The first project of Group Home for the Mentally Retarded Youths in Malaysia.
- The projects were successfully opened and had given most benefits to the Mentally Retarded Children and youths in rural area of Hulu Selangor and lessened the burden of their parents in caring of their Mentally Retarded Children and youths.