

# **DIFFERENTLY ABLED AND COVID-19: A STUDY ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 'HOME-SCHOOLING' PROGRAM BY CDMRP FOR ITS COMMUNITIES**

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## **ABSTRACT:**

The Community Disability Management Rehabilitation Programme (CDMRP) aims to provide comprehensive, evidence-based disability management and rehabilitation services to children with developmental disabilities (including prevention, early intervention, treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation) through a community approach. CDMRP also acts as an authentic platform to conduct need-based training and awareness program areas of disability and rehabilitation.

**Objective of the Study:** The main objective of the study is to apply IEC (information, education and communication) strategy to analyze the modes of communication implemented by 'CDMRP' during the lockdown period to give home-schooling to their communities.

**Methodology:** This study employed a qualitative case study as an approach to explore the various communication strategies used by CDMRP in implementing home-schooling therapy for differently-abled children.

The project's central aim was to throw light on understanding various communication tools devices and used by CDMRP that could be used to educate and empower the caregivers to support the child with disabilities. All the educational campaigns of CDMRP, especially the campaign 'A School at Home' during the nationwide lockdown, were analyzed.

The project also looked into Teaching Learning Kit and the instruction manuals produced to aid children with disability and their caregivers. The University of Calicut along with NIEPID Secunderabad, distributed these TLM Kits to more than a thousand three hundred students.

The study analyzed another mode of communication tool used by CDMRP during the lockdown. The Youtube channel uploaded 46 videos during the Covid 19 period for the differently-abled children and their caregivers. These videos were categorized into seven segments addressing different areas such as parental guidelines, daily Living Activities Training, Behavior Problem, Speech Therapy training, Physiotherapy Training, Occupational Therapy and Motor skill training; ADHD Management -Attention Building Task and Learning Disability Tasks.

### **Scope of the study**

This study identified the communication modes which can help in providing therapy to the differently-abled community during the time of crisis. The study also analyzed the methods taken by CDMRP to bring the stakeholders under one umbrella in providing telerehabilitation sessions for the differently-abled community.

### **Significance of the study**

CDMRP thus took the initiative to change their services from conventional mode to the virtual platform. Exploring the process in which CDMRP provided rehabilitation services through a virtual platform helps to give an insight into the possibilities of virtual mode in delivering rehabilitation services to needy people, and it will also help other similar service providers to adopt this approach to deliver rehabilitation services. The study also shows the relevance of virtual communication modes which help in delivering the services where multiple platforms and different modes of content delivery can help to complete the communication process and help in educating the client and in turn help in delivery the therapy to the child through his or her caregivers/parents. As far as rehabilitation services are concerned, parents and their role and involvement play a vital role in differently-abled child's behaviour management.

**FINDINGS:** Telerehabilitation could result in imparting training to differently-abled child's caregivers as per the child's requirement as there were professionals including educators, psychotherapists, speech therapists, physiotherapists and occupational therapists within the telerehabilitation team. This was evident in the video channel that was started by a mother of a differently-abled child based on the telerehabilitation therapist's advice. Besides telerehabilitation facilitated parents who usually could not continue regular therapy sessions as they found it difficult to take their differently-abled child to the rehabilitation clinics every week. Tele rehabilitation could solve this issue as therapists started to call these parents and gave instructions to continue the therapy sessions at home.

**CONCLUSION:** By understanding the reach and effectiveness of virtual communication tools in home-schooling for differently-abled students this study intends to understand the relevance of virtual communication modes in delivering services to differently-abled students. CDMRP has used different mediums to reach out to parents and caregivers, trainers. Using different modes of communication such as Youtube, Telephone conversations, Whatsapp tools, E-Documents, posters and brochures, CDMRP was able to provide manuals and guides for parents. Regular follow-up programs through tele-rehabilitation centers, tutorials using audio-visual presentations were also used. The two tier communication process involved active participation from parents and instructors / therapist.