

Meeting the Challenges before the naturally challenged

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Abstract

The thrust of this paper is to familiarize teachers, parents and those working with challenged children, with the concept of disability so that they can bring light in their life. With the introduction of NEP-2020, it has become all the more necessary to understand the naturally challenged and meet their challenge. The first part of the paper deals with the concept of disability; the second portion deals with different type of disability in the area of Physical; Mental; Emotional ; Social and Moral parts of personality. The third portion deals with the intervention for dealing with disability namely Medical; use of Aids; Educational intervention; Rehabilitation; Psychological Counseling for parents and the child to cope with the stress of the challenge. This in brief is how we can cope with the Challenges before the naturally challenged and bring hope in their lives.

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Introduction

Nature is replete with exceptionality. For our convenience we talk of averages or so called normalcy. But if we study individuals, we find that the able are always speckled with some portion of disability. At one point of time Adler had upheld that we all have our own specialized organ inferiority. In children too we find that each child has his/her own peculiar susceptibility to disease. In lower forms of life there is survival of the fittest and thus the weaker or disabled don't last. But in human beings, medical advancement has made it possible for most people even with disability to survive post birth also. Longevity also has been made possible as a wonder of medical science which means disabilities related to old age also form part of humanity.

Not much attention was given to the special needs of such in individuals till people like Thomas Addison & Helen Keller showed to the world that with multiple handicaps too, they could contribute a lot to the world. 20th Century saw a considerable awakening to the care of people with special needs. In 1981 the United Nations declared it to be "The International Year of the Disabled Persons." Different organizations such as medical, technical, community health workers, educationists, scientist, government & NGOs environmentalists architects, are coming forward, joining hands to improve the lot of the differently

abled. The Rehabilitation Council of India, (RCI) was set up as a registered society in 1986, to formalize standardizing & regulating the training of professionals in the field of - rehabilitation & special education. The 86th Constitutional Amendment made Education a Fundamental Right, which lead to 'Universalization of Elementary Education', making elementary education free and compulsory. The New Education Policy – NEP-2020, has further laid emphasis on the education of the naturally challenged persons (chapter 6).

Disability is a BIG Challenge and we have to Convert it into ABILITY.

A number of organizations have come up to cater for the special needs of the people with handicap, such as NPRPD, Portage, office of Chief Commissioner for persons with Disabilities. Government of India, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, & such like are taking a keen interest in improving the lot of the differently abled. At the government level too there has been an awakening and a reservation of 3% has been made in government jobs for them. The NEP 2020 gives special devotes the entire chapter 6 to this. Danijela S. Petrovic (2017), also said "In many countries around the world, one of the major challenges for the education systems is the implementation of inclusive education (IE). It is believed that teachers are of crucial importance for successful implementation of IE. In order for

IE to be efficient, it is important that students with special educational needs (SEN) are accepted by their peers

According to the World Health Organization's classification (1976 and 1980), disability may be classified as:

- Impairments: loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function
- Disability: any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being;
- Handicap: a disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or a disability, that prevents the fulfillment of a role that is considered normal (depending on age, sex and social and cultural factors) for that individual'.

According to DSM-IV, developmental disorders include:

- Autistic disorder,
- Rett's disorder,
- Childhood disintegrative disorder,
- Asperger disorder
- DD not otherwise specified
- Pervasive developmental disorders: class of disorders characterized by-
- Impairment in Social interaction
- Impairment of imaginative activity
- Impairment of verbal and nonverbal communication skills
- Limited number of interests and activities

Mohan, (2002, 2002a,) classified Disability under 5 major heads:

- Physical; Mental; Emotional ;Social ;Moral:

Physical Disabilities can be grouped into following:

- Visual Impairment from partial blindness to total blindness.
- Auditory Impairment from partial hearing disorder to complete deafness.

- Orthopedic Impairment can be multiple and of any part of the body.
- Motor Disorders are functional Impairments
- Sexual & physical Abuse such as rape, violence, torture afflicted on others & self.

Mentally challenged

- Mental Retardation such as having low IQ.
- Learning Disability: *Dyslexia can be of various types, like Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, Dysnomia*
- Non-verbal Learning disorders (NLD) Poor motor coordination, Visual-spatial organization, Non-verbal communication
- Cognitive Disabilities

Emotional Disabilities & Social Disorders

“Autism is a type of pervasive developmental disorder (PDD). It interferes with a person's ability to communicate with and relate to others. Autism is a lifelong condition that results in some degree of social isolation.” (Medical Encyclopedia). It interferes with a person's ability to communicate with and relate to others. Autism is a lifelong condition that results in some degree of social isolation. Signs of autism almost always develop before a child is 3 years old, Typically, parents first become concerned when they notice their toddler does not respond or interact like other children of the same age. The severity of autism varies. Some individuals need assistance in almost all aspects of their daily lives, while others are able to function at a very high level and can even attend school in a regular classroom.

Emotionally Disturbed Behavior Disorders like having mood swings, depression, and low self esteem.

- Socially maladaptive behavior having poor social skills.
- Selfishness such as lack of concern for others.
- Aggression or violent behavior and anger.

Morally maladaptive behavior.

This includes delinquent and Psychopathic behavioral tendencies. Criminal behavior, Moral apathy, Defiant Disorders, Violence can be classified in many ways.(Mohan .2002a) and Nalwa and Mohan 1999). Such as using foul & abusive adjectives for oneself & others; hurting oneself & others physically, suicide, homicide, sexual violence.

INTERVENTION for dealing with disability

Disturbance in any of these areas of development need to be taken care of otherwise they tend to contaminate other areas of life also. Interventions have to take place in a Gestalt manner. A physically challenged child may also face emotional disturbances. Interventions should be as early as possible. Most of the physical disabilities can be detected very early – soon after birth.

INTERVENTION for dealing with Disability is classified below:

Intervention (Medical)

- Regular Medical check up
- Medication.
- Measurement of disability- the extent of damage.
- Hospitalization if required
- Surgery where required like ophthalmic, orthopedic, auditory, neurosurgery where required.

Intervention (Aids)

- Visual aids, like lenses, sticks,
- Auditory aids, like hearing aids, audiometer, computer, etc.
- Orthopedic appliances like wheel chairs, walker, and calipers. Special furniture chairs, tables etc. Bathroom Aids
- Computer software for learning, speech etc.

- Creating barrier free environment for the handicapped such as Ramps Vertical lifts and elevators, accessible vehicles.

Intervention (Educational)

Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005, NCFTE 2009& RTE), have posed great challenges before the teaching community as well as the institutions providing pre-service training to future teachers. The government through NEP 2020 has tried to improve the quality, & preparation, of teachers.

According to UNESCO, inclusive education is seen as “*a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities,*”

in: Constitutional Amendment of India makes Inclusive Education a Fundamental Right (NEP 2020). Three important aspects of UEE are:

- Access, enrolment and retention of all children in 6-14 years of age.
- This goal of UEE, has further given a new thrust to the education of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), provision of aids and appliances,
- teacher training, resource support,

Apart from this there should be a provision of:

- Special day Schools
- Residential schools with specially trained teachers.
- Integrated education with supplementary help.
- Diagnostic prescriptive center.
- Resource teachers to supplement regular teaching

Intervention (Rehabilitation)

Table I: Rehabilitation spheres & Strategies

Vocational training.	Special educational preparatory programs are required which is need based according to the type of disability. The deaf, blind & orthopedically handicapped need specialized training commensurate with the disability and its quantum.
Training for managing money.	Making money is one thing but managing it is another thing. Hence awareness as to where they can have access to the disability friendly banking or money saving utilities is essential.
Learning to market things produced by them.	Special training for entrepreneurship is required here. Such as research in the consumer requirement, Technical know- how and specialized training, Infrastructure required, Marketing survey, the requirement regarding manpower, know how about human resources and its management.
Protecting legal rights for rehabilitation of such individuals.	There are a number of legal provisions for the disabled but when it comes to the implementation part, much is below the optimum line. Making them aware of where they can seek legal redress is of paramount importance.
Information about support systems.	An intensive program regarding providing awareness as to availability of resources, supports, agencies available to lend support.
Special employment bureaus for dealing with placement of disabled individuals.	Special employment bureaus that are disabled friendly, having ramps, seating arrangements, place to park wheel chair etc; people manning the bureaus should be friendly & willing to help the needy.

The jobs in the organized sector & government sector are far less than the registered number of people in the employment bureaus. As such more emphasis these days is on self-generated work. This holds true in the case of the disabled people also. But for this a specialized training is required to become an entrepreneur.

Intervention (Psychological)

Counseling for parents is required to Cope with the Stress of Parenting a challenged Child. The reaction of family of such a child can be many folds. Some of these can be very detrimental for the development of the child.

- Shock is the first reaction.
- Denial - Some Parents deny that their child has a disability and thus take no step to help he child cope with the limitation.
- Anger - Some parents become angry when a Child has a Disability. They say “why me”?
- Dealing with sorrow & grief: - it may be temporary or it may be chronic, a realization nearly every day of how their lives are

different from those of families with normal children.

- Ambivalence. Another reaction parents may have toward their child is ambivalence.
- Blaming others for the disability or curse their destiny.
- Instead of facing the reality they start going to quacks.

Acceptance: when they accept it then they start Interventions. In order to reach this stage parental Counseling is a must.

Every state should have at least one parent advocacy centre which is. Nonprofits. They can help you prepare for important school meetings and do other things to get more resources for your child. Connect with other such parents. Get behaviour advice. Go to a counsellor Build a support plan. Improve child rearing. (Mohan, V. & Nalwa, K. (1996).

- Counseling for emotional integration of the child, and learning social adjustments, (Mohan, V., (1994).
- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies wherever need;

- Do Relaxation exercises
- Learn to use “self-talk” to calm themselves
- Sex education is a must to help such children to cope with puberty, protect themselves from untoward happenings; such children are an easy prey for rapist & other sexual offenders. (Mohan, 2017)

With what potential a child comes into this world may not be in our hands but what we can do with a challenged child is in our hand. All the five interventions make a child self sufficient, independent, and productive and a happy individual. This is how we can cope the Challenges before the naturally challenged and move from darkness to light.

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