

Handicapped Childhood and Inclusive Education

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Handicapped word in its literal mean, lack of organ or imputation of one or more than one organ in human body (Outer or inner body). In the present era handicappedness is not just a similar word of lacking organs (medical model of handicappedness) in human body, this lacking condition create an emotional and social world of disability for a person in which a handicapped person compelled to spend his/her life by experiences of life. Unfortunately people concentrate and consider on the lacking of organ in a person's body but not on emotional and social impacts of this handicappedness.

So this is important here to understand - what is Handicappedness?

Is the lacking of organ is handicappedness? or imputation of organs is so much problematic as it's assumed by our society? Or it just the condition of human body (Internal or outer), Or it make a person disable to live a normal life, Or it make a person disable to that extent, where his/her existence becomes the synonym of sympathy and mercy etc.

Here one fact emerge that handicappedness is a biological term, and the disability is a social term. In another words Handicappedness is exist in real sense and disability is a socially created form. It can created by handicapped person ownself, by their family members, and by all other society. Disability is a phenomenology based concept. Process of socialization changes the handicappedness into disability. And this is very harmful situation as, the situation of handicappedness is not enhance as much with growing age, as the disability enhance all over the life through experiences. We know that Human is a social animal. Human is a creation of five elements of nature, which are water, air, fire, earth and sky known as Panch Bhoot Tatvas in Hindu mythology. Intermixing of all these five elements creates the human existence. When human takes existence in nature (on earth) he breath, he eats, wear clothes etc. for these basic needs, he takes the help of others, as without the help of others, he can't survive on earth. The existence and surviving of human, depends on the cooperation of all livings and non livings on earth.

This dependence and cooperation become the bases of all social relationships among human beings. Smooth co-

operation among all the human and other living beings gives birth to healthy and happy relationships in society and it helps to develop a human being into an all round personality. Sometimes a human has problems regarding this co-operation and relationship management etc.

Social Behaviour problems:

To maintain social behavior among the society, to fulfil their personal needs and to help others for completing their needs comes under the social behavior. How people demand support from others and how they support others is depend on their views and attitude towards life. Views and attitudes of life basically depend on the physical and mental strength of a person. For having a better understanding, I sub divided this research proposal into the categories which are as follows :

- a) Physical disability problem
- b) Mental Problem
- c) Other Problems (social, economic and cultural status related problems)

Physical Disability Problems

Physical disability consist non working of organs (inner or outer organs) and lack of organs, as : Lame, Blind, Deaf and Dumb. Disability gives negative effects on smoothness of daily routine in a person's life. Physical handicapped have some social problems in maintaining social relations and balance of co-operation with others. As in general They need extra help and social understanding from others. In some cases they need extra care and facilities.

Mental Problem

Some people have mental behavioral disorder, Nervous system problem etc. They knows as mentally handicapped people. These people needs special attention and cares from others. Because by their selves they are unable to understand their personal needs and other's needs in limitations of time and space.

Other Problems

Various kinds of social, economical environment and cultural status of family affect the social growth of a physically challenged person. As richness or poorness of a family. Both these conditions develops completely different behavioral patterns in human nature as - well develop and luxury life style, and excess of resources may provide facilitative environment to physically challenged person, in which he/she can develop fully in all the possible manners. But in the environment of poorness, the situation will be opposite.

Presently disability is seen as a disability discourse. It looks towards disability in various forms as physical, psychological, social, moral, cultural, spiritual and religious etc. This perception, expands the meaning of disability in all aspects of human life. We can see this in two ways :

It tells about that a handicapped person lives his/her handicappedness in all field of life. And there is not a single aspect of life where he/she can spend life fully in a perfect form. The shadow of handicappedness in form of disability always exist with him/her in its full mode of negativity.

And the another way to see the disability discourse is in itself very surprising that normal physically healthy people (who seems to be healthy and not handicapped in stereotype means) have face disability in various ways :

May be the person has a lack of stamina to concentrate in his/her work or managing the personal or social behavior in the life etc.

A person may have a dark complexion and he/she face a complex in personal self. As a girl of 4th standard in a Primary school, when she rejected by her teacher as performer (as saraswati in cultural function of school) because of her dark complexion, expressed her views: “ After that rejection I always live in this depression that If I want a regardful social acceptance I have to make myself intelligent in academics. I always even now to always live in a stress that to present my self better and better, and because of this notion I never allow my self to live a normal or relaxed life, I am always live this condition (dark complexion) in my life”

In an another example: A woman who finished her doctorate said “ I have stopped smiling with open lips when I was in 10th standard, because my teeth are very ugly, and also smelled. I always hasitate to talk with a person.

These all are also examples of handicappedness, which hampered a person to pursue a smooth and confident life.

Creation of disability starts from childhood of a handicapped person. A general notion of childhood is that it's a life stage of a person which comes under the loving and caring shadow of parent love. But when we understand it deeply we came to know that , economical perspectives, cultural and ethical values etc also influence the childhood identity of a person in

a great extent. This great influence work indirectly and timely works indirectly.

Childhood identity or vast understanding of self generally becomes the base of future adulthood. In childhood time, a child learn to

- See the world, on the bases of his/her personal perception, which is timely attacked by the outer world view even.
- To understand the different phenomenas of life where he live and experience.
- To develop the different perspectives of thoughts and attitudes etc.
- To develop attitudinal nature toward the maintainance of relationships and inter-relationships of life.

Human starts to learn these facts from the childhood, it's a very sensational stage of life. In sach a sensative stage if a child suffered by handicappedness + effects of its disability, creates very entangle identity of a child.

A handicapped child's identity becomes a mixture of self and others views. Everyone knows this fact but nobody understand it.

There are some experiences of handicapped children which reveal some facts about their understanding of self:

In the age of 3-4 years, when a handicapped child is rejected by his/her friends from their playful activities. This rejection hurt the ego of handicapped child.

Dhruv age 8 years:

All children do not allow me to play with them in all games. They say that my long jump is very good with help of cretches so I always win. So they conditioned me always that play with us without cretches. How can I (starts to weep)?

Ankita age 6 years: (based on observation and interview)

In the whole lunch time she moves (crippled way) by taking the support of a wall. During the movement in corridor she is always in the position to escape herself from the pushes of the running children.

My observation is based on the visit of 10 MCD Schools :

Teachers are not aware about the mental and physical needs and requirements of the handicapped students as a child. They always under estimate the needs of handicapped child as a future compatible citizen of society.

Maximum numbers of teachers seems to be un interested to take handicapped student in their classes. Teachers take handicapped students as problem:

Problem in sitting arrangement

Problem in arrangement in extra curricular activities.

Problem to give special attention to them.

If the child is deaf and dumb or blind such students has a problem in social adjustment. They needs special operates for studying. Its tough to manage. And there is a great problem specially for security purpose (specially in the case of girl student). Many teachers avoid to give admission to the handicapped children in their school even.

Many parents feel theirselves inferior as the parent of a handicapped child. In the same manner teacher also feel degraded as the teacher of a handicapped students.

Generally teachers are unaware about these general facts also :

- What are the laws for the welfare of handicapped students?
- How many NGO and govt institute are keenly working for the welfare of the handicapped students? Even teachers are unaware about their names and addresses.
- Not only the teachers but school as the educational institute and education offices are also unaware about these facts in concern of the working agencies (which work for the handicapped children). Even majority of the parents do not know about the such NGO's etc.

In the case of a handicapped child/person conditioned are appreciated largely. After getting so much appreciations of these conditions handicapped child forgets about their basic traits or qualities. Even they are unable to identity their weaknesses too. They are unable to analyse theirselves truly. And generally spend their life on the basis of others perceptions.

In such a unaware and insensitive environment of family, school and society, its tough to make happy and healthier experience of life for a handicapped child as a person. These is need to great work with a vast sensitivity. Some rules and acts in concern of Disability are following – In a society where Disability is not welcomed, there talking about inclusive education is a tough process. So there was a great need to legislate some acts and rules etc to their life (Disable's life) smooth and easy specially in society level. By which they can have a confidence and faith that thay can too survive in this world with regardful human dignity. There are some following enactments :

Article 45 of Indian Constitution said that “ The state shall endeavour to provide within a period of 10 years from the commencement of the constitution for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years.

Education for weaker sections

Article 15, 17, and 46 safeguard the educational interests of weaker sections of the Indian community.

Article 15 states “ Nothing in this article or in clause(2) of Article 29 shall prevent the state for making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and

educationally backword classes of citizens or for the schedule casts and schedule tribes.

Right to Education Act 2009 –

It states that, Education is a fundamental right of each and every child of India between the age of 6 to 14. This comes under the Article 21A in Indian constitution. The government has the responsibility to make sach conditions in which children can properly avail this right of education.

Secular Education

Article 25(1) of the constitution guarantees all the citizens the right to have freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate religion.

Article 28(1) state that “ No religious instructions shall be provided in any educational institutions if wholly maintained out of state fund”.

Article 29(1) state that “ No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds, on the grounds only of religion, race, cast, gender, language or any of them.

Article 30 states that “ The state shall not, in granting aid to educational Institution maintained by the state or receiving aid out of state funds, on grounds only of religion, race, cast, language or any of them.”

Right to education

Article 41 state that “ All the citizens have equal right to education.” It states that “ The state shall , within the limits of its economic capacity and development , make effective provisions for the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of employment, old age, sickness and disablement.

Instructions in mother tongue

Article 26(1) state that “ Any section of the citizens, residing in the territory of India or any part there of , having a distinct language, script or culture of its own, shall have the right to converse the same.

Article 337 state that This provide for special provision with respect to educational grants for the benefits of Anglo Indian community.

Article 350A directs “ It shall be endeavour of every state and every local authority to provide the adequate facilities for instruction in mother tongue at rthe primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority group.

Special rules and Acts in concern Handicapped children (In concern of their inclusive education in School)

Rehabilitation council of India Act (RCI- 1992)

The need of creating barrier free environmemnt was felt in RCI Act and provision were also made to provide barrier free

architectural design so that children with special need may not face problem to attend school.

Person with Disability Act- 1995

Persons with disability Act gave paramount importance to create barrier free environment. Recommendation has been made in Person with Disability Act 1995 to build barrier free environment as it is one of aims of this act. Barrier free environment enables people with disability to move about safely and freely, and use the facilities within the built environment.

This Act also made the provisions of -

- free education in appropriate environment to every child with disability till the age of 18.
- Government at different levels to take steps to equip special schools for children with disabilities with vocational-training facilities.

National Curriculum Framework (NCF-2005) :

National Curriculum Framework has also given great emphasis on creating architectural barrier environment at school level so that no child could face difficulties in attending school. We can also see the commitment made in the framework which has been mentioned below-

- Disability is a social responsibility –accept it
- No selection procedure to be adapted for denying admission to learners with disabilities. Children do not fail, they only indicate failure of the school.
- Accept difference – celebrate diversity.
- Inclusion is not confined to the disabled. It also means non-exclusion.
- Learns human rights..... Conquer human wrongs.
- Handicap is a social construct, deconstruct handicap.
- Make provisions – not restrictions, adjust to the needs of the child.
- Remove physical, social and attitudinal barriers.

Partnership is our strength such as school – community – school-teacher, teacher’s teacher, teacher-children, children-children, teachers-parents, school systems and outside systems.

General provisions for the Handicapped people in concern of education :

Extra 30 minutes should be allotted to the handicapped students in the examination hall.

Handicapped person can have a subordinate person to write or for doing other physical help as for taking the person to the wash room or provide drinking water facility etc.

Every school or concerned government building must have a ramp with supportive system. Ramp must be exist in a walkable condition for the handicapped person.

There should be a Disable friendly washroom facility exist in School premises.

The right to education of person with disabilities until 18 years of age is laid down under a separate legislation – The person with Disability Act.

Disability studies is an academic discipline that examine the meaning, nature and consequences of disability, as a social construct.

The NPE 1986 was followed by plan of action in 1992. The POA suggested a pragmatic placement principle for children with special needs. It is postulated that child with disability can be educated in a general school only and not in special school.

Some enabling legislation in this regard is Rehabilitation Council of India Act, Person with Disability Act, National Trust for the welfare of persons with Autism, Cerebral Retardation and multiple Disability Act 1999.

Integrated education for Disabled Children

This scheme is known as IEDC, it provides for the following :

Actual expense on books and stationary upto Rs 400 per annum

Actual expense on uniform upto Rs 200 per annum, transport allowance up to Rs per month, Reader allowance of Rs 50 per month in case of blind children upto class 5th .

Escort allowance for severely disabled children with lower extremity disability at the rate of Rs 75 per month. Actual cost of equipment subject to a maximum of Rs 2000 per month for five years.