

Proper Identification and Educational Provision for Exceptional Children

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Abstract

We are human being. As we human being we know that children differ from each other in a variety of ways. They differ from each other physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally. Children may be so distributed that a majority of them may be classified as average or normal. There may also be a few children who may be found to deviate mentally, socially, educationally or physically from the normal children to quite an appreciable extent. Such children distinctly require proper identification and special educational care and their adjustment problems have to be tackled in a specialized manner. These deviated children are often designated as exceptional children. In this study paper we would like to clearly express that about the concept, identification of exceptional children and its nature, types, problems and educational provision as per needs. As methodology we have used secondary data and required information are collected from different secondary sources.

Key words: Exceptional Children, Types, Problems, Provision, Suggestions.

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I. INTRODUCTION

It is true that a child comes to this earth with its own unique abilities and capacities of body and mind. Among this child some are fortunate enough to have extraordinary abilities or capacities, while others are average or even suffer from so many deficits and deficiencies since from the birth. This gap between the abilities and capacities of the children related to their learning, adjustment and development found at the time of their birth may further be widened by the nature of the environmental differences encountered by them in their nourishment and education. It is a nature that especially each child is different from another in all aspects like - physical, mental, intellectual and social. It is the main function of education to develop the child in the best possible manner. In this field it is very necessary that how can identify and who can be called 'exceptional child'? It is the matter. So, as a parent as well as a teacher first of all we must proper identify the exceptional children and its significant problems.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study is mainly based on descriptive method which provides a method of analytical study. Through this descriptive method here we have tries to analyse the types, problems, educational provision and measurable suggestions of exceptional children. As methodology we have used secondary data and required information are collected from different secondary sources like - Books, Research articles, Internet, Journals, Magazine, thesis etc.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Generally in the field of research as well as in project work the objective is most significant. An objective is the point of

something. It is tell us what we expected to do under what condition it will be achieved. It gives the way to go forward. So, the main objective of the present study is to how can identify the exceptional children, what will be their problems and how can solve facing their problems. Also an attempt has been made to critical analyze the proper educational programme for exceptional children.

IV. CONCEPT OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The exceptional or special child is different in some way or the other from the average child. In very simple terms, an exceptional child is one who may have problems or special talents in thinking, seeing, hearing, speaking, socializing or moving. A special exceptional or child has a combination of special abilities or disabilities i.e., exceptional children may be portrayed as the children in possession of an exceptionality of some positive, negative or multiple nature. On account of such exceptionality, they appear to deviate significantly from other average of their age and grad. So, totally in simple sentence we can say that those children are not normal they are called exceptional children. Especially an exceptional child is he who deviates from the normal or average child in mental, physical and social characteristics.

Generally exceptional children are may be superior or imbecile as well as idiot rather than general or normal child. Actually they are quite deviant, distinct and different from the children of their age and grades including those who are termed as average or normal children. Their difference or deviation from the normal or average children is so marked and distinct that can be recognized, distinguished and

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separated them easily. So the term exceptional children is thus a quite generic term that includes the exceptional who show superiority or inferiority in almost all the aspects of one's growth and development - physical, mental, social, emotional, moral and behavioural etc. So we can say that exceptional children may be the extra-ordinary talented children or backward children in any work or education field.

V. IDENTIFICATION OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

It is true that every child is unique. Children have their own strengths and weaknesses. Their development progresses according to certain sequences and it is natural that some children may excel in certain areas but have deficiencies in other areas. So in this field it is necessary that the proper identification of those that children. How can we determine that a child has some special needs, that he/she is slightly different from their siblings? Further, how can we understand such exceptional or especial children? Early identification of exceptional children is indispensable so that correction can be provided at early stage itself before the problem becomes worse or complicated. So in the field of proper identification of exceptional children we can follow in the two significant aspects like identification by parents and identification by teachers.

We can also call the parents to identify the difficulties of their child. They might feel that their child is facing trouble in learning, reacting etc. They can discuss the matter with teacher. If the teacher agrees with the parent then their discussion can lead to a formal evaluation of the child. This can make sure if he really needs special education services or not. Sometimes, during the early school years teachers identify if a child needs special education or not. They recognize the special needs of the children and then treat them with special care and give them special services in the classroom. As a parent we can immediately identify our children differently or not develop normally, the most important thing is to accept that help is needed and it is important to be as soon as possible to help the child and give the best conditions to continue developing. So we can properly identify the exceptional children through their some significant nature performed by them. We can indicates like these nature as follows -

- An exceptional child deviates from the average child.
- Exceptional children are not like average skilled children. They are deviates physically, mentally, emotionally and socially from normal growth and development.
- Educational practices and services are diverted in order to develop child's maximum capacity. Exceptional children cannot be benefited from regular classroom teaching programmes because they think something special and do work away from normality.
- Exceptional children require modification in the schools practises and they have different needs to maximise their abilities. They belong to both the extremes of physical, mental, social, emotional and educational achievement.
- Attention, interest, emotion as well as aim in life of the exceptional children are difference with normal child.

VI. TYPES OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

We know that those children are not normal they are called exceptional children. So, we may adopt the following type or classification and labelling of the exceptional children for the purpose of providing them the needed special services.

- 1) Learning or Academically Exceptional Children
- 2) Mentally or Intellectually Exceptional Children
- 3) Physically Exceptional Children
- 4) Delinquent Child
- 5) Socially and Emotionally Exceptional Children.

The children who fall at lower extreme of the normal distribution of educational attainment trait are known as backward. Slowness refers to individuals who for temporary or long standing reasons, function educationally below the average of their peer groups. They are also termed as educationally or scholastically backward. Thus educational backwardness is a specific term whereas backwardness is a general term. The cause of backwardness may be due to heredity and environmental factors. On the other hand learning disabled is one of the significant types of exceptional children. Actually learning disabilities may be defined in practical, medical and legal terms. The common theme in all three definitions is that a learning disability is a disorder in one or more basic psychological processes that may manifest itself as an imperfect ability in certain areas of learning, such as reading, written expression, or mathematics. This children who possess the Intelligent Quotient below 75, they do not show improvement among the average in ordinary school.

Mentally or Intellectually exceptional children are characterised by low or high intelligence in comparison with normal children and there are various degrees of this exception. Especially it refers to significantly sub-average intellectual functioning resulting in or associated with impairments in adaptive behaviour and manifested during the developmental period. Mentally or Intellectually exceptional children need not be a life-long condition, especially for those whose degree of exception is relatively mild. Furthermore, early educational programming can prevent some children from being diagnosed so. Mentally or Intellectually exceptional children can be divided sub type - Gifted, Creative, Mentally retarded or disable like - idiot, imbecile and moron etc.

Children who have very high Intelligent Quotient or those who have special abilities in different fields like sport, music, literature etc. are called gifted children. Giftedness refers to cognitive (intellectual) superiority, creativity and motivation in combination and of sufficient magnitude to set the child apart from the vast majority of age mates. Especially an individual whose IQ is above 130, is usually known as Gifted children. Gifted children show proficiency in the activities that they are involved in. Gifted children are the assets of incalculable value to the society. They can contribute best to the promotion of art and science and can develop science, philosophy, education and meth-physics in a variety of ways. So it is defined that talented or gifted children are those children who are found to possess or demonstrate a consistent remarkable performance in any worthwhile area of human activities capable of making them quite exceptional and

special in comparison to their age peers and thereby requiring special provisions in terms of their care and special education for helping them in their adequate adjustment and actualization of their potentialities of talents for the welfare of their self and the society. Various types of gifted children are like - socially talented, physically talented, mechanically talented, educational talented, linguistically talented, artistically talented and musically talented etc.

Creativity refers to the ability to express novel and useful ideas, to sense and elucidate novel and important relationships, and to ask previously unthought-of but crucial questions. Mental retardation refers to significantly sub-average intellectual functioning resulting in or associated with impairments in adaptive behaviour and manifested during the developmental period.

An individual who is affected with a physical impairment that in any way limits or inhibits his participation in normal activities may be referred to as physically exceptional. This impairment can be serious type or light in nature. For example - Impaired vision, impaired hearing, impaired speech, orthopedically handicapped, brain injured etc.

Every child is different from one another. Some very bright, some normal and some others are very dull or mentally retarded. But whatever their physical and mental capabilities are, if they deviate from the desired or accepted social norms, they are called Delinquents. These children are not abnormal but their thinking, feelings, needs and hopes remain suppressed and these are to be understood compulsorily to escape from any harm. It refers to a deviant form of behaviour from the accepted or desired standards of social norm. Such behaviour is liable to be penalized. Delinquents can have high, average or low I.Q. It is only that these children are maladjusted in the social environment. From psychological point of view, all those children, between the ages of 15 and 18, who indulge in anti-social activity, create danger to life of others just for a fun or hinder or create obstruction in the activities of others, forcibly take away the property of others or cause damage to the property of others are juvenile delinquents. On the other hand in social point of view, it is a pattern of adjustment that deviates from the code of conduct, society is attempting to enforce.

One of the significant types of exceptional children is emotionally and socially exceptional. Emotionally exceptional children are those children who deviate markedly and chronically from most of the children of their age and social groups in terms of their emotional make up and behaviour seriously affecting their adjustment to their self and the social surroundings including their educational performance in the schools and adaptability in life situations so much so as requiring special educational and adjustment measures for their proper development and well-being. They are too much different and deviant from the most of the children of their age and social groups in terms of their emotional make up, behaviour and adjustment. Actually emotionally exceptional children include those with behaviour problems and those who are socially maladjusted or the delinquents. The causes of emotional disturbance or social maladjustment are a breakdown in the family constellation, a developmental disturbance, an economic, social or ethnic or religious conflict, unhappy home and

school life generating all sorts of emotional insecurity, overcrowding in houses and schools, lack of individual attention, absence of individualized instruction, primitive discipline and ego-deflating methods of teaching or handling at home.

VII. PROBLEMS OF EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Generally all children have certain basic needs. The needs of children are often accompanied by or result in certain problems. The needs and problems of exceptional children are similar to and at the same time different from those for exceptional children. It is natural for these to experience the same basic needs and problems as experienced by the otherwise normal children of their age and grade. In addition to these basic needs and problems, however, they also have some extra needs and problems, described as special, which are necessarily associated and caused on account of their being too different and exceptional from the other children of their population. So, the problems of exceptional children are indicated as follows –

Problems of Physical and Psychological Needs: One of the most significant problems of exceptional children is physical and psychological needs. Specially satisfaction of these needs are essential for one's survival, maintenance of physical well being, bringing new generation on the earth and performing overall physical and biological functions as a human being. So in this field some significant needs faced by the exceptional children. For example - need for sufficient rest, need for enough work and sleep, need for the intake of oxygen as matter of essential survival, need for getting relief and treatment after getting ailment or injury etc.

Problem Socio-psychological Needs: Socio-psychological needs is the significant problem of exceptional children. These needs although are not so important for the immediate survival of the children. In this field some needs faced by the exceptional children like - need for self actualization, need to love and to be loved, need for social approval and being dominated, need for belongingness and social company, need for getting education and experiences of life etc. Especially, as long as the children feel at home in the satisfaction of the basic needs, they remain on the right track of their adjustment and development, but if this equilibrium is disturbed on account of some or the other blockage on the path of the satisfaction of these needs, the children get maladjusted and as a result may fall victim of the one or the other physical and sociological problem.

Problem of Special Learning Capacities: Generally, it is true that educationally backward children, handicapped children and gifted children are in need of specific facilities for their optimum development. Educators feel the importance of designing special instruction for the benefit of special children. Exceptional children deviate too much from their non-exceptional peers with regard to their capacities, nature and requirements of learning. Especially a group of disabled children like learning disabled, mentally retarded, sensory, communication ally and emotionally deficient who may have difficulty learning in one way or the other. The redressed of such specific needs of these diversified groups of exceptional

children thus may become an urgent necessity of any programme and provision for chalking out special measures for them.

Problem of need Free and Appropriate Education: Exceptional children need free and appropriate education to maximize their capabilities. Such education should not be provided to them out of sympathy or as a privilege granted to them. Education is a basic human right and this must be granted to them just as we provide free and compulsory education to non-exceptional children.

VIII. EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

We know that exceptional child is he who deviates from the normal or average child in mental, physical and social characteristics. Like these types are Backward Children or Slow Learner, Mentally or Intellectually Exceptional Children, Physically Exceptional Children, Delinquent Child, Socially and Emotionally Exceptional Children, Gifted Children... etc. So, in this field how can we identify the exceptional children's? It is the main matter. First of all as a parent as well as a teacher we should properly identify the particular children. After that we can think about their proper educational provision.

VIII. A. EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR LEARNING OR ACADEMICALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Slow learner or backward and learning disabled is the main types of learning or academically exceptional children. The backward or slow learner is capable of achieving a moderate degree of academic success though with additional time and help. They are capable of being educated in the regular class with few adaptations. Actually, in order to help educationally a backward child, it is necessary to find out, at first, the cause or causes of his backwardness. Once the cause or causes have been discovered, we should plan an integrated course of action with a view to educating him. Especially the difficulty is that most of these children are not diagnosed as slow learners until they attend school and begin to fail. This calls for early identification, diagnosis of their learning difficulties and proper instructional provisions for them.

In the field of teaching learning process many of the lessons learned by children have to be unlearned, before they can understand the advanced subject-matter. So for backward children or slow learner some of the significant aspects can be followed their educational benefit. Like these significant aspects are carefully guided instruction, individual instruction, tutoring, remedial instruction, development of good work habits, special methods of teaching, healthy environment and elastic curriculum etc.

On the other hand the learning disabled children are the potential children. Different learning disabled children have the different problems. So some educational programme may be afforded while teaching to the learning disabled children. Like these programmes are – special curriculum, role of the teachers and psychologists, medical check-up, community participation, character training, methods of teaching etc.

VIII. B. EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR MENTALLY OR INTELLECTUALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Generally, in the field of mentally or intellectually exceptional children we can indicate three significant types. These are - Gifted children, Creative children and mentally retarded or disabled children.

It is very important that to first identify the gifted children from a group. The gifted children need special help due to his high intellectual capacity. It helps to fulfil the typical needs and develop his special talents. Anyway the educational provision for the gifted children can be includes the indicated aspects. These aspects are - Suitable curriculum, Special schools, Provision for incentives, Summer schools, Guidance and Counselling, Enrichment opportunities like - creative pursuits and projects, assistance of informal agencies, reorganization of curriculum, group oriented method, individual enrichment etc.

Creativity is an essential attribute for the development of creative potential. So in the field of educational provision for creative children should be encouraged so that they do not fear examination and encouraged to participate in debates. Children should be provided with effective guidance and to bear problems. Children should be provided with affectionate and secure environment. Also children should be given opportunities for self-expression and given opportunities for the expression of ego.

For mentally retarded children there are various educational provisions. They are Regular classroom, Special class, Special school, Home based instruction, Residential Institution, Hospital service etc.

Generally mentally retarded children are usually benefits from regular classroom placement they trainable mentally retarded children. They are requires some support services from itinerant teachers who visit the schools and work with the child on a part time basis. Consulting service for the regular classroom teacher to handle these children effectively is also provided by itinerant teacher helps educable mentally retarded to be successful in the regular classroom.

Educable mentally retarded children with severe academic problems may be placed in special class. The children with good adaptive behaviour remain in the special class for academic work and effective by mingle with classmates for physical education, art, music and other activities in which academic skills are not crucial. Children who are in need for intensive instruction in academic area and adaptive behaviour may be placed in full time placement in a special class. Besides, this placement service is appropriate only for children who cannot profit from integration in regular schools. These children suffer from severe academic problems and adaptive behaviour. They are in need of individual attention and training in daily living skills. These individuals' needs are effectively met in special school placement services.

On the other hand home based provision is generally provided only to those who cannot attend school because of a medical or physical problem, when a child required complete bed care. Most home based instruction is short-term and provided only while the child is recovering from a temporary, illness or disorder.

VIII. C. EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR PHYSICALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Physically handicapped it is necessary to conceptualize some basic terms related to it. These are Impairment and Disability. The types of physical handicapped are hearing impairment, Speech impairment, Visual impairment, and orthopaedical handicapped etc.

Hearing is the main sensory pathway through which speech and verbal communication develop. For the hearing impaired children some educational provisions, special arrangements can be made to meet their needs. These provisions are proper use of hearing-aid, Provision of Auditory Training, Provision of Lips Reading/Speech Reading, Role of Parents etc. We know that hearing process is the most important aspects of human beings. The hearing aid should be selected according to the degree of hearing loss. Hearing impairing children may be provided with hearing aids of both the individual and group type for their auditory training. One of the most important educational aspects of hearing impaired children is auditory training. Through this training particular impaired children can enable their necessary matter and perception of various speech sound is possible.

Identification is the joint responsibility of the class-room teacher, the speech-language pathologists, the parents and teachers. So, in this field the following educational principles can be made for speech impaired children. They are Role of the Parents, Role of the Teachers, Provision of Speech Therapy, Provision of Extra-curricular Activities etc. Specially, the role of parents is the most important aspect of speech impaired children. So, parents should be involved in their child's learning and made to keep a record of each activity of the child.

The problem gets more acute and server depending upon the degree of their visual impairment. So, the education of the visually impaired children is need special attention and provisions quite different from the children who have normal vision. One of the most important aspects of educational provision of visually impaired children is special classes. Special classes should be introducing for the education of visually impaired children. The school must be centrally located and good transportation facilities must be available. Because visually impaired children are taught along with the normal peers without any discrimination with essential adaptation carried out for communication and mobility. Braille system is another one of the educational provision of visually impairment children. Totally blind and severely visually impaired children should essentially be helped in acquiring Braille literacy. Braille can be produced by dots one at a time by hand on a Braille state with the help of a stylus.

VIII. D. EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR SOCIALLY AND EMOTIONALLY EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Emotionally disturbed children are those children who deviate markedly and chronically from most of the children of their age and social groups in terms of their emotional make-up and behaviour seriously affecting their adjustment to their self and the social surroundings including their educational performance in the schools and adaptability in

life situations so much so as requiring special educational and adjustment measures for their proper development and well being.

Specific educational measures are needed for the proper academic and social development of the emotionally exceptional children. Leaving aside the more severe cases like schizophrenia, autism, neurosis and uncontrollable properly educated in the integrated/inclusive set-up with some needed support for the treatment of their behavioural problems. Their curriculum should essentially be the same as of their non-disabled peers but however they should be given special attention for overcoming their deficits, regarding the learning of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic and essential social skills.

IX. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

From the foregoing discussion now we would like to conclude that education of exceptional children is a challenging filed. In this field especially in the field of their educational provision some suggestive measures can be made for their future effective life.

- First of all the curriculum for slow learners should be elastic as possible and suit the needs of the individual child. Curriculum should be such as it prepares him for life and makes him intelligent citizen, competent worker rather than scholar. Also a school should provide a reasonable free and healthy atmosphere. There must be the provisions for variety of approaches to the various subjects. The slowness which is due to the bad environmental factor is to be removed by making the environment healthy for the child.
- Generally the learning disabled children do not take the profit from the methods of teaching meant for the average learners in the class. So the method of teaching should be such that the learners take active interests and develop positive attitude towards learning. Teacher should also provide varied of experiences. Besides, the learning disabled children have different kinds of educational and emotional problems. All those problems can be solved by the consultation of the psychologists. Some psychological conflicts and mental tensions of the learning disabled children need a sheer study; those children need special attention and valuable guidance to take the advantages from the different school programmes.
- Especially in the field of mentally exceptional children the curriculum should be designed differently from the one of the average student. It should include more activities which help to bring forth the creative abilities of the children; it must motivate them to investigate and explore and lay greater emphasis on critical thinking and logical analysis. Such subject must be included which help them to develop the powers of abstraction, conceptualization and synthesis. Advance studies of maths, science, language, fine art etc. should be included to cater to their high cognitive abilities. Besides programmes, both curricular and co-curricular should be stimulating and must lay greater emphasis on their creative expressions and proper insight into learning situations. Each child must be given individual assignments within a stipulated time limit.

- A teacher has to play a significant role in teaching such children in the regular classroom. So the regular teacher should be familiar with the behavioural characteristics of mentally retarded children for purpose of indentifying and referring them to the psychologist for assessment. The teacher should encourage retarded children to make use of verbal mediation in learning the tool subjects. The retarded child should rehearse verbally what he is to learn and remember. Verbal mediation is a very useful learning strategy for learning concepts and problem solving.
 - In the field of hearing impaired children there is a range of inclusive teaching strategies that can assist all students to learn but there are some specific strategies that are useful in teaching a group which includes students with hearing impairment. Encourage students with hearing impairment to seat themselves toward the front of the lecture theatre where they will have an unobstructed line of vision. This is particularly important if the student is using an interpreter, lip-reading, relying on visual clues or using a hearing aid which has a limited range.
 - Visual aids are most effective technique of teaching learning process. So, any videos or films used should, where possible, be should be captioned. When this is not possible, the teacher may need to consider alternative ways for students with hearing impairment to access the information. Besides, there is need to seat hearing-impaired students where there is an unobstructed view of the teacher. The teacher should try to repeat comments and questions asked by other students who are not in the range of vision of the hearing-impaired student.
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