Nurturing Enabling Environment: A View Beyond Technological Determinism

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Introduction:

There is awareness about the need to recognize and celebrate diversity and individuality. Distributive justice is an important imperative in the contemporary times. Leaving out any group from the fruits of education would be detrimental for peace in society and sometimes may lead to a socio-civil war. An examination of the predominant school system indicates that it is a heritage of the industrial society. It is based on age-grade model aiming for a uniform product which emphasizes on uniform curriculum and practices. This system is not adequate, relevant and appropriate for the needs of a society in the post industrial period. One of the by products of such a system is marginalization of those unfit for the system. The teachers teaching in the normal school are yet to be adequately equipped to deal with individual differences and to cater to differentiated instruction and multiple intelligence. What to talk about teaching and dealing with special children? The special children thus formed a group which was isolated in this system Some attempts are made to address their needs though they are not adequate.

Trends in addressing the needs of the special group:

Policy of exclusion was based on the belief that the disability was due to some kind of deficiency which could be cured by different types of medical professionals. This led to a sympathetic approach and to the establishment of special schools. The consequence of this was discrimination. The uniform factory model of schools could not accommodate such different students and hence the responsibility of their education was mainly left to the NGOs and other voluntary organization. This approach had advantages of its own in terms of provision of special ancillary services for the different disabilities. The dealing was one to one ensuring personal attention. Comparison with the normal children was avoided. It helped the medical profession as it enabled a closer study of this special group.

Policy of integration evolved after the issues of human rights, democratic society, equity and social justice and equal opportunities to all were raised.
This led to the integrated education for the disabled which meant educating the disabled children along with the general school students with provision for extra help for the disabled children. The term inclusion describes the process of education in which the disabled are given educational experience as close to that of non-disabled as possible. There are two basic differences between the integrated education and the inclusive education:

- Inclusive education expanded the scope of education for all children in regular school which included children with disabilities.
- It talked about improvement in education system so that it could include all children

An understanding of the trends on education of the special groups can be obtained from the following table: