“Being disabled should not mean being disqualified from having access to every aspect of life.”

- Emma Thompson
CHAPTER -II

DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
2.0 Introduction

It is difficult for exceptional children to benefit by normal classes in regular schools. Their need for special learning methods, special syllabi, and special teachers makes special education a necessity. It is also important to make the mentally and physically disabled children independent and self–confident by giving them special education. They can be made useful members of society by giving them education according to their specific needs. Special Education helps parents, teachers and educational planners in understanding the problems as well as the educational, social and physical needs of the exceptional children. This, in turn, provides exceptional children with a chance for better adjustment in society. Special Education is found necessary because exceptional children should develop according to their abilities and potentials.

2.1 Defining Special Education

According to Hallahan and Kauffman, “Special Education means specially designed instruction that meets the unusual needs of an exceptional child. Special materials, teaching techniques, or equipments and/or facilities may be required. For example: children with Visual Impairment may require reading materials in large print or Braille; students with Hearing Impairment may require hearing aids and/or instruction in sign language; those with physical disabilities may need special equipments; those with emotional disturbances may need smaller and more highly structured classes; and children with special gifts or talents may require access to working professionals. Related services– special transportation, psychological assessment, physical and occupational therapy, medical treatment, and counseling
may be necessary if special education is to be effective. The single most important goal of special education is finding and capitalizing on exceptional children’s abilities.” [Hallahan and Kauffman; 1991; pp 4-5]

Heward (2000) states, “Special Education is a profession with its own history, cultural practices, tools and research base, focused on the learning needs of exceptional children and adults. But, at the level where exceptional children most meaningfully and frequently contact it, special education is an individually planned, specialized, intensive, goal directed instruction. When practiced most effectively and ethically, special education is also characterized by the use of research–based teaching methods, the application of which is guided by direct and frequent measures of student performance.” [cited in Mangal; 2007; p 29]

Therefore, Special Education is that specifically planned and organized education that is imparted in a special way to all types of exceptional children irrespective of the nature of their exceptionality in proper tune with their well–diagnosed special needs for helping them to develop their potentials and adjust as well as progress in the life as effectively as possible.

2.2 Education and Special Education

Education in its broadest sense is a process which aims at developing and enriching the total personality of the child by providing a well–rounded programme of academic excellence, vocational orientation and cultural fulfillment. General education involves the typical classroom setting, wherein the teachers address the needs of the class
as a whole and implements procedures and teaching methods regardless of the differences between the students.

Education has to be organized on grounds of utility. The needs of the exceptional children are different from the needs of normal children. Therefore, their educational needs are to be given utmost priority and for this purpose special education becomes more essential than general education. Special Education is meant for children whose special needs necessitate an individualized programme of education. The aims of special education are basically the same as for any kind of education; but there is a difference in the order of priorities. In the education of ordinary children whose development is within the normal range, it is appropriate that educational progress should be the main aim of the teacher— which should not mean that other aspects of personality development are neglected. In the education of children with special needs, the first priority is to promote the optimum development of the child’s capacities and personality. Proper education generally enables a handicapped child to overcome largely his/her disabling condition and turns him/her into a useful citizen.

It is essential that special education should be an inseparable part of the general education system mainly because the primary task of the education of the handicapped children is to prepare them for adjustment to a socio-cultural environment designed to meet the needs of the normal children.

Special Education uses quite a different approach from general education, although some areas overlap. General education involves presenting the standard curriculum set by education authorities using standard teaching methods. Special Education, on the other hand, uses a certain special curriculum which caters to a certain special student
type. For example: teaching self-help skills or training in reading and writing Braille, an important part of curriculum for severely handicapped children (Blind), forms an important part of Special Education but it is not offered in general education. Also, the method of teaching used differs according to the specific needs of children with some handicap. However, the differences in methodology do not influence the content or goals of education. Special Education services mainly provide the additional support or assistance that a child with special needs may need to be successful.

2.3 Principles of Special Education

The principles of Special Education may be summarized as follows:

- **Individual Differences**: Often differences that are specific regarding education are noticed among children. Special Education is required to meet these specific educational needs.

- **Zero Reject**: Children irrespective of their disabilities should be provided free and appropriate education.

- **Non-Discriminatory Evaluation**: Children who need Special Education have to be clearly identified so that appropriate services are provided to them as early as possible. Each child must be examined individually before being placed in a special education programme. Re-evaluation at regular intervals to assess his/her progress and difficulties in learning is also mandatory.

- **Individualized Education Programme**: Students with special needs require individualized education programme which
would match their current level of functioning and their special needs.

- **Least Restrictive Environment**: Children with handicaps must be educated, as much as possible, with children who are not handicapped in the regular classroom. The regular classroom provides the least restrictive environment.

- **Due Process**: Parents of the handicapped children have the right to evaluate the work of the school, modify the programme of the school to meet the special needs of their children, and if they are not satisfied with the school’s services, they have the right to withdraw their children from that school for a better programme in any other educational institution.

- **Parental Participation**: Special Education can be made more effective with active participation of the parents in the educational programme designed for the handicapped children.

2.4 **Development of Special Education**

The history of Special Education deals with the educational and institutional arrangements formally established first in the 18th century. The gradual development of Special Education can be classified into seven eras:

- The era of exclusion characterized by extermination and abandonment. The Greek civilization was following the practice of infanticide, that is, killing deformed infants by naming their practice as exposure. The earliest era of treating
disability was, therefore, marked by hostility towards the disabled.

- The era of acceptance where children with special needs were treated as subject of amusement and use. Many of the disabled children were being used as commodities for serving as beggars, prostitutes and slaves. Similarly, many families and entertainment establishments like circus companies began to make use of dwarfs and other types of children with disabilities and deformities as exhibition subjects or jesters and fools.

- The era of legal discrimination and witchcraft, during which the church and rulers of the European society established discriminatory laws depriving the disabled people of their right of inheritance, and forbidding them to testify in a court of justice, making a deed, contract, note or will. The disabled persons were almost made a subject of crude humour by prohibiting them to play any role in the social life. Not only Europe, but the world as a whole remained in this era for quite a long period, as late as the 18th century. Under this ideology, it was believed that the illness and sufferings were due to evil spirits clouding this earth in the guise of witches.

- The era of Sympathy and Asylum– Institutionalization, during which attempts were made to stop the abuse of the disabled children. Disabled children were now regarded as those poor souls who have been denied opportunities to lead a normal life on account of the annoyance of the Almighty for committing sins. They were now treated as subjects of sympathy. A wide number of institutions, including the mental hospitals known
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by the term lunatic hospitals were seen to be coming into existence throughout the globe.

- The era of Isolated Settings (Special Schools) was marked by some genuine efforts in the direction of Special Education for the disabled population. The Renaissance movement brought a new era of hope to the disabled population and also some of the major ideas influencing special education were established during this period. Effective procedures in terms of providing special education in the segregated settings were devised all over Europe, U.S.A. and Canada for the education and training of the diversified disabled population. The decision for establishing separate schools were taken mainly on two grounds:
  - The needs and problems of disabled children were diverse and different from the normal children. They needed individual attention and specialized settings for their proper adjustment and progress.
  - The segregation was also planned for keeping the non-disabled away from the negative influence of the disabled.

As a result, by the end of the 18th century, special education was accepted as a branch of education and separate schools were established.

Pedro Ponce de Leon (1520-1584), a Spanish monk and scholar employing his own devised methods, established a school for the Deaf children of noble families in Spain. Thomas Braidwood, (1715-1806) established a Special School for the Deaf students in Edinburgh in 1760. Samuel Heinicke
developed the Oral Method of teaching the Deaf children emphasizing lip reading and speaking skills in 1778. Inspired by their counterparts in Spain and Britain, separate schools for the Deaf were also established in France. Abbe Charles Michel De l’Epoes founded the first school for the Deaf in Paris in 1760. Abroise Sicard is well-known for developing sign language for the education and training of the hearing disabled. John Braidwood, nephew of Thomas Braidwood, opened a school for the Deaf in New York. Even though the school was short-lived, yet it paved the way for the establishment of New York Institution of the Deaf and Dumb in 1818. The first school for the Deaf in the U.S.A. was started by Gallaudet in 1817. This school, today, is known as the American School for the Deaf.

In the history of Special Education, the other category which captured the attention for the establishment of special schools after the Deaf was that of Blind children. Valentine Hauy, by resolving to teach the Blind people dignified ways of earning a living, established the first school for children who were Blind in Paris. His curriculum included reading and writing, music and vocational skills. He made use of embossed Roman characters for enabling the Blind to read. Later on following his footsteps other educationists used letters cut out of wooden blocks or cardboard or letters cut in relief or incised into wood or wax that simulated the normal alphabet. In 1829, Louis Braille invented the Braille system; the backbone of the education of the Blinds worldwide. Inspired by Hauy, a number of institutes for Blind children were founded in
France, Britain and the other countries of the western world including USA. The first British school for Blind children was established in Liverpool in 1791 by Edward Rushton. This school was totally focused on teaching trade skills and learning of music to make the Blind children capable of earning their living and their respect in the society. London School for the Blind established in 1799 also followed the same curriculum. In USA, Samuel Gridley Howe established the Perkins School for the Blind in 1821. Famous Special Education personalities like Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller were pupils of this institute. Another significant development in the education of the Blind children came in 1862 with the development of the Snellen Chart by Herman Snellen, a Dutch ophthalmologist. Attempts in the direction of providing education to the mentally retarded began in 1800 by Dr. Jean Marc Gaspard Itard. He initiated the approach of rehabilitation–education through specific sensory motor exercises. His approach was later popularized by Dr. Edward Seguin. Dr. Seguin along with his contemporary educator Esquirol opened a private school for the mentally retarded in 1830. Maria Montessori in Italy and Ovide Decroly in Belgium opened new educational avenues to the mentally retarded by advocating Seguin’s idea that mental retardation was essentially an educational problem rather than a medical problem. In many states of the USA, Seguin and Samuel Howe were mainly responsible for the development of Special Education. In 1848, Howe established his experimental school for the feeble–minded in Massachusetts. After that in 1850,
the Massachusetts School of Idiotic and Feeble–minded children was permanently established by the State Legislature and in 1854 New York State funded the state’s first school for mentally retarded children.

During this era attention was paid only to the care and education of the most pronounced categories of disabled namely Deaf and Dumb, Blind and Mentally Retarded. The other kind of disabled children were almost unnoticed mainly because they were less problematic to themselves and others.

- The era of Segregated Settings– Special classes was characterized by a shift from the isolated settings of special schools to the segregated settings of special classes within the normal/regular schools. It was a result of the increasing demand for equality of educational opportunity for all children irrespective of their disability in the regular schools run by the Government or funded and supported by public money. Also, the evolving of certain new categories of exceptional children, like children with emotional disturbance and learning disabilities, made the state authorities and the public think about the education of these children since no special schools were available for them. By the year 1910, in many Western Countries including USA, segregated classes for the disabled in regular schools were being organized. From the late 19th century, special educators in the United States of America began to respond to the needs of children with disabilities in public schools. In 1879, by way of Public Law 45-186, funds were provided for the American Printing House for the Blind to develop materials in Braille. Grass root organizations
comprising both parents and professionals were formed along with the American Association of Instructors of the Blind and American Association on Mental Deficiency (which later came to be known as the American Association of Mental Retardation). In 1920, vocational rehabilitation services authorized for veterans of World War I were extended to civilians (PL 66-236). In the 1930s and 1940s parent groups started coming together and two of the most influential parent advocacy groups were the National Association for Retarded Citizens organized in 1950 and the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities organized in 1963. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the parent advocacy groups were securing local ordinances to protect and serve the individual with disabilities in their communities. For example: Individuals with Blindness got the right-of-way when crossing the street with the first white cane ordinance in Peoria, Illinois in 1930.

Even though non–compulsory, yet by mid–century all states had a legislation providing for education of children with disabilities. In the late 1950s, federal money was allocated for educating children with disabilities and training of special educators marking the formal involvement of the federal government in research and in training special education professionals. Provisions for production and distribution of captioned films for the Deaf were made in 1961.

- The era of Inclusive Settings– Regular Classes, that is educating all types of children whether exceptional or normal together in the regular classes of the mainstream schools,
represents the modern era and the latest development in the history of Special Education. Special Education services expanded rapidly after the World War II both in numbers and types of children served. Legislative measures, parental involvement, early education or pre–school education for the handicapped children all took off, including the education of those suffering from Cerebral Palsy, the Learning Disabled and Physically Handicapped. By the 1970s the facilities were available for all categories of the handicapped in the advanced countries of the world. Several Acts have been enacted, since then, to facilitate the education of children with special needs.

2.5 Acts facilitating Special Education

In 1971, federal support was reinforced and extended to the state level when the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Persons (PARC) filed an action suit against their Commonwealth. This suit, resolved by consent agreement, specified that all children between the age group of 6 to 21 were to be provided free public education in the least restrictive alternative which later became the Least Restrictive Environment clause of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (1973) provides basic civil rights, protection for qualified individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance. It states that:

- It is illegal to deny participation in activities, benefits of programmes, or to in any way discriminate against a person with disability solely because of the disability;
Individuals with disabilities must have equal access to programmes and services;

Auxiliary aids must be provided to individuals with impairment in speaking, manual or sensory skills.

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975) put forth

- Students with disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate public education;
- Schools must have on file an individualized educational programme for each student with disability;
- Parents have the right to inspect school records of their child, and when changes are made in a student’s educational placement or programme, parents must be informed. Parents have the right to challenge what is in records or to challenge changes in placement;
- Students with disabilities have the right to be educated in the least restrictive educational environment;
- Students with disabilities must be assessed in ways that are considered fair and non-discriminatory.

Through the Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983, incentives were expanded for pre–school special education programmes, early intervention, and transition program for older students.

1986 Amendments to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act

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1986 Amendments to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act

- Lowered the age of eligibility for special education and related services for all students with disabilities to age 3;
Recommended the extension of all rights of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act to pre–schoolers with disabilities;

Stated that each school district must conduct a multidisciplinary assessment and develop for each preschool child with a disability an individualized family service plan.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990) is a reauthorization of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. It

- Adds two new disability categories (traumatic brain injury and autism) to the definition of students with disabilities;
- Adds a comprehensive definition of transition services;
- Includes provisions to make assistive technology more widely available.

The World Conference on Education for All (EFA) held at Jomtien, Thailand in March 1990, arrived at the fundamental principle that all should have the opportunity to learn. Children and adults with disabilities do have the right to education, and have the right to be a part of the mainstream education system.

Americans with Disabilities Act (1992) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, services rendered by state and local governments, places of public accommodation, transportation, and telecommunication services.

The UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for persons with Disabilities (1993) gave powerful support for the development of inclusive education for disabled pupils world–wide. It emphasized that, at a minimum, students with disabilities should be
afforded the same portion of educational resources. States should aim for the gradual integration of special education services with mainstream education.

In 1994, UNESCO, the UN’s Education Agency, published the Salamanca Statement, a declaration on the education of disabled children, which called for inclusion to be the norm. It adopted a framework for action on special needs education by declaring that “education policies at all levels, from the national to the local, should stipulate that a child with disability should attend the neighbourhood school that is the school that would be attended if the child did not have a disability.” [cited in Mangal; 2007; p 66]

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act reauthorization (1997) provides for strengthened parental rights, nonbiased testing, and disciplinary procedures for students whose misbehaviour is a manifestation of their disability. Special Education coverage was extended to the categories of autism and traumatic brain injury.

No Child Left Behind: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2001) provides for highly qualified teachers, use of research–validated teaching methods in all classroom, and accountability for the academic performance through yearly high–stakes testing.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) changed the identification procedure of learning disability and added provisions for aligning the law with No Child Left Behind: Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB: ESEA). It also stipulated that students with disabilities participate in annual state or district testing and required high qualification standards for teachers, and research based interventions.
The Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act, 2004 was passed to ensure that persons with special educational needs can be educated wherever possible in an inclusive environment, that they can have the same rights to education as persons who do not have special education needs and to ensure that such persons are equipped by the education system with the skills they need to participate in a society and to live independent and fulfilled lives.

The goal of Assistive Technology for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 was to provide assistive technology to persons with disabilities, so that they can more fully participate in education, employment, and daily activities on a level playing at par with other members of their communities. Under the law, each U.S. state and territory receives a grant to fund an Assistive Technology Act Project (ATAP). These projects provide services to persons with disabilities for their entire life span, as well as to their families or guardians, service providers, and agencies and other entities that are involved in providing services such as education and employment to persons with disabilities.

Special Education Act (2007) proposed establishing at least one Special Education Center (SPED) for each school division and at least three SPED centers in every school divisions for children with special needs, creating the implementing machinery thereof, providing guidelines for government financial assistance and other incentives and support and for other purposes.

At the World Forum, “Universal Primary Education by the year 2015” has been adopted as one of the Millennium Development Goals by the countries of the world.
International Work by both the World Bank and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has also shown that it is far more expensive to operate dual system of ordinary and special education than it is to operate a single inclusive system.

Various attempts have been made and various Acts have been proposed to ensure education of individuals with disability.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The World Disability Report, 2011 stated that about 15% of the population in the world suffers from some kind of disability. Among them 2-4% are severely disabled. [www.cbrforum.in]

Prevalence of disability is more in the Developing Countries. According to United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 80% of persons with disabilities live in Developing Countries. Inspite of all the provisions and the various initiatives a large number of individuals who are disabled encounter significant difficulties in their daily lives.

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