Emphasis is now placed upon highlighting the social aspects of disability. The newly devised classification has abandoned the word 'disability' and 'handicap' altogether and replacing these terms with 'activities' and 'participation'. It emphasises the dynamic relationship between the health condition of the individual, together with their own 'personal' characteristics as well as the broader social environment.
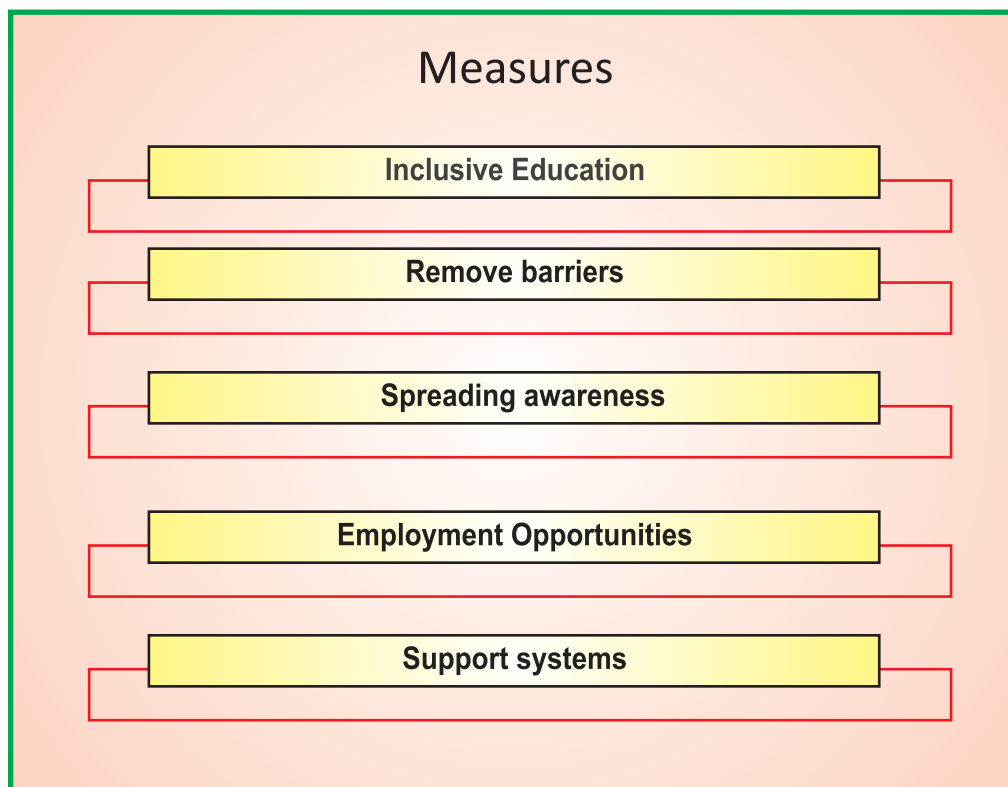
Problems encountered by the differently abled people

1. **Social oppression gives rise to institutional discrimination:** Differently abled people have been subjected to multiplicity of oppressive social attitudes which includes access and opportunities in relation to work, housing, education, transport, leisure work and support services. Inhospitable physical environment, negative social attitudes that disabled people encounter, result in oppression, exclusion and discrimination of the disabled people.

2. **Poverty and disability:** Persons with disabilities can often experience problems arising from their health conditions, poverty, as well as, barriers in accessing services like education, employment, transport etc. These difficulties get aggravated in financially disadvantaged population and create a vicious cycle contributing to increased vulnerability and exclusion of disabled people from their participation in society.

3. **Segregation and Isolation:** Attitudes of the non-disabled are proving to be a major barrier in the social integration of persons with disabilities. The more severe and visible the deformity, the greater is the aversion and segregation towards the disabled. Inaccessible environment create disability by creating barriers to participation and inclusion, e.g., a wheel chair user in a building without an accessible ramp or elevator.
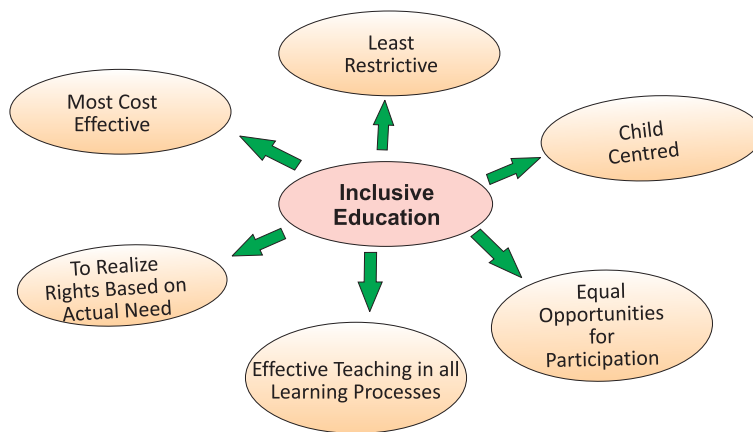

Attitudes of avoidance and shame need to be changed

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Recent developments to promote inclusion with anti-discrimination legislations, equal opportunities and policies and programmes of positive action for the welfare of the disabled are widely recognised. However this would be only possible with a committed and dedicated manpower working for them and towards this objective. The Rehabilitation Council of India was set up in 1986. It is an autonomous body to ensure uniform standards of training professionals in the rehabilitation of disabled persons. It has been given statutory status through an Act of Parliament, namely **The Rehabilitation Council Act**, which enables the Rehabilitation Council to regulate the training of the rehabilitation professionals. The Act provides for monitoring the training of rehabilitation professional and personnel promoting research in rehabilitation as special education as additional objectives of the ACT.

Measures

- Inclusive Education
- Remove barriers
- Spreading awareness
- Employment Opportunities
- Support systems

Measures

- **Inclusive Education :** Inclusion is an effort to make sure that students with disabilities go to school along with their friends and neighbours while also receiving whatever specially designed instruction and support they need to succeed as learners and to achieve high standards. It means creating conducive learning environment for children with special needs. Education for such children needs planning and adaptation in the curriculum to increase educational opportunities for persons with disabilities. Inclusion presents this challenge not just for students with disabilities but also on behalf of students who are different in other ways. Different culture, languages, interests, etc. are ways of learning and all need accommodation and adjustments form educators.

Practicing Inclusive Education

- **Removal of Barriers** We have moral duty to remove barriers to participation and to invest sufficient funding and expertise to unlock the vast potential of people with disabilities. Changing the way we all think about disability is within our reach. We have to ensure that the disabled people have the right opportunities, enabling environment, rehabilitation and support services, adequate social protection, inclusive policies and programs and enforceable new standards and legislation to benefit them and wider community. The rights of people with disabilities are best promoted by people with disabilities themselves.

- **To Provide Employment Opportunities** Development of human resources through skill development and inclusive training strategies is crucial for the process of inclusion. Small enterprises provide employment opportunities to people with disabilities and help lift them out of poverty. The government must recognise the training needs of the people with disabilities and formulate

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legislation and set labour standards which respect the rights of the people with disabilities to be gainfully employed and earn income.

- **Strong Support System**   Support system implies a network of people who provide an individual with practical or emotional help. It gives the person a feeling that there are people who care for her/him, and are ready to provide assistance whenever required. Support can come in many forms-emotional backing, information, companionship, financial aid and advice. Support can also come from many sources, such as family, friends, neighbours, state and non-governmental organizations. For people with disabilities, a reliable support system is a basic requirement for participating in society as it makes them feel that they are part of mainstream.

- **Spreading Awareness**   Raising awareness regarding disability must be a regular component in professional courses and even policy makers and social workers need to be informed about the need for inclusion of the people with disabilities which ultimately would bring them empowerment.

Inclusion is different from past efforts of mainstreaming and integration. Mainstreaming was an effort to return students in special education classrooms to general classrooms while integration seeks to move students with disabilities into general classrooms. But just getting into general class rooms is not enough as teachers need to change teaching styles to meet the needs of students.

Conclusion

Though we are dealing with various social issues but old age and disability are the prominent one which are to be taken care of. Problems of old age are relatively less in societies where family ties are strong. In India, old people are taken care of in a better way and still command respect. On the other hand, around the world people with disability not only face physical barriers but social, economic and attitudinal barriers also. We have to achieve the goal of securing social justice and empowerment of all the citizens of India and full participation of the people with special needs in nation building.

Glossary

- **Impairment:** It refers to the loss or abnormality of psychological, physical or anatomical structure or function at the system or organ level that may or may not result in disability.

- **Disability:** It implies the consequences of impairment in terms of functional performance and activity.

- **Handicap:** It refers the disadvantage to the individual resulting from an impairment or disability that presents a barrier to fulfilling a role or reaching a goal.

- **Gerontology** It is a field of science that aims to understand the process of aging and the challenges encountered as people grow old.

Exercises

I. Objective type questions

A. Multiple choice questions

1. The imposing of power by young on elderly of the family creates?
   (a) Love   (b) Tension
   (c) Stress   (d) Conflict

2. What does the shift in family structure makes elders feel?
   (a) Neglected   (b) Poor
   (c) Angry   (d) Weak

3. By which act does the maintenance and welfare of parents and senior citizens take place?
   (a) Senior Citizen's Act 2009   (b) Senior Citizen's Act 2008
   (c) Senior Citizen's Act 2007   (d) Senior Citizen's Act 2006

4. What is the other name for Continuity theory?
   (a) Undeveloped theory   (b) Developing theory
   (c) Development theory   (d) Non Continuity theory

5. The term_____ carries with it the connotation of a deficiency – mental, physical or sensory.
   (a) Blindness   (b) Mental retardation
   (c) Disability   (d) Cerebral palsy

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6. Children with physical disability whose non-sensory physical limitations or health problems interfere with school attendance or learning have:

(a) Orthopaedic disability   (b) Cerebral palsy

(c) ADHD   (d) Learning disability

7. Embracing which model do the disabled individuals assert a positive identity not only in being disabled but also in being impaired?

(a) Social model   (b) Affirmative model

(c) Politics of disablement model   (d) Structural model

8. The rights of people with disabilities are best promoted by:

(a) Family and friends   (b) Formulating various policies

(c) People with disabilities themselves   (d) Social and government construction

B. Fill in the blanks

1. The study of social and sociological aspects of aging is called....................

2. Arthritis, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease etc. are age related ....diseases.

3. One of the most challenging phenomenon worldwide in 21ˢᵗ century is ....population.

4. The new housing system for the elderly is known as ....

5. The ....department can take an active role in preparing employees to face retirement and old age issues

6. .... is a condition where a person suffers from total blindness or visual acuity not including 6/60 or 20/200 vision.

7. The first policy statement in India which recognised the rights of people with various impairment is equal opportunities is ....

C. True/False

1. The Parents' Maintenance bill was passed in Himachal Pradesh. ☐

2. The inequality between the young and old in society is explained in the Modernization theory. ☐

3. Old age people do not have any role problems. ☐

4. The old age people experience financial insecurity at this age. ☐

5. Old age people are not considered much productive due to age factor. ☐

6. The People with Disabilities Act 1995 recognises the need to replace emphasis on medical rehabilitation with emphasis on social rehabilitation ☐

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D. Match the columns

Column A	Column B
Withdrawal from society	Activity Theory
Change in Socio-economic status	Social Problems
Elders should be more active	Disengagement Theory
Field of study that aims to study the process of aging	Economic Insecurity
Unable to sustain themselves	Gerontology

III. Very short answer type questions

1. According to United Nation what is the cut off age for 'older population'?
2. How much would India's elderly population go up to by 2020?
3. On which day is the UN International Day for Older Persons celebrated?
4. Which are the five stages of a person's life?
5. What is the age of retirement in India?
6. What do you understand by the term disability?
7. Distinguish between handicap and impairment.
8. What is inclusion?
9. What is learning Disability ?
10. Define Social model in your own words.

iv. Short answer type questions

1. What are the physical signs which mark an individual as old?
2. What are the causes of loneliness and depression found among the old age people in society?
3. How inclusion is different from integration?

V. Long answer type questions

1. How does the Government help in the rehabilitation of the old age popluation ?
2. Highlight the housing and health problems faced by the old age people in our society?

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3. What do you understand by 'Social Security benefits'?

4. Write about the disability discourse in India in your own words.

5. Disability need not to be an obstacle to success. Discuss.

VI. Very long answer type questions

1. Write a detailed note on the theories of ageing.

2. Explain the various problems faced by old age people in society.

3. How can the problems of the old age people be solved?

4. Write a note on types of disability.

5. What are the problems encountered by the people with special needs?

6. In what way legislation can play an important role in empowering the people with special needs ?

PROJECT

Visit an Old Age Home and an Institute for people with special needs and make a Project Report on their problems and solutions.

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