

The Pain of the Slow Learners

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Abstract

Slow learners are characterized under the exceptional children but they are different from the disabled child or god gifted child because disabled child have the difficulty to understand the things because of the disability and mostly they have the high intelligence quotient. Level or creative in compare to the average child.

Slow learners are those who learn more slowly than their peers, yet do not a disability requiring special education.

The teachers have the prime duty to help them because the ratio of the slow learners in classroom is more than the gifted child. The god gifted child able to search their destination through the high creativity or high intelligence quotient level.

But the slow learners don't have this type of possibilities and because of these they feel the guilt and isolation from the society or family and at last when they don't able to find any way to get out of this frustrations they get into depression or suicide committed case are generally the result of this cause..

It is totally up to the teachers, parents and society to provide the help needed for slow learners to progress.

KEYWORDS: - Frustration, Difficulties, Low Self Esteem, Isolation, Emotional Instability.

INTRODUCTION: THE SLOW LEARNERS

Slow learners are not dumb. They probably differ little from other students in terms of their potential. Slow learners have the same potential as the average students, but they probably differ in what they know, their implication in their daily life, in their motivation, in their position in the face of academic setbacks, and in their self respect as students in the class room I front of his/her teachers as well as classmates. (Daniel T. Willingham 2011).

Slow learners are those students who are unable to accomplish what is expected of their age group. Burt (1937) classifies them as students who are unable to cope with the work normally expected of their age group.

Carroll, (2004) "Slow learners are students with below average cognitive abilities and who struggle to cope with the traditional academic demands of the regular classroom".

These students remain in the lowest rung of the ladder. They found weak in almost all the subjects. They usually score less than 25 percent in the tests.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SLOW LEARNER AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

A slow learner is a child of below average intelligence, whose thinking skills are below normal for her/his age. And other hand, a child with specific disabilities, is one of average or above average intelligence who has specific difficulties which can make learning very difficult.

Slow learners will always be behind their chronological appropriate peers- which don't mean they can't be expected to improve. It just means it will be slow. But children with a specific learning disability can, with the right help, be expected to attain chronological appropriate academic levels in time. And in these two conditions I'll emphasize the slow learner whose thinking skills are below normal for her/his age.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SLOW LEARNERS

Slow learners are difficult to identify because they are no different in appearance and can function normally in most situation. They usually have normal physical dexterity, adequate memory and possess these qualities. Sometime parents find it difficult to understand how their child can be a slow learner. The main characters of slow learners are as following by assembling from a variety of sources Brennan (1974), Haigh (1977), Griffin (1978).

1. **Low self esteem:** - slow learners have self esteem and do not expect to be successful and are thus dependent and in need of constant reassurances. They are impulsive and inflexible in their thinking and often jump to conclusions. They unable to take decision by own.
2. **Personal behavior:** - They have poor social skills, lack pride in their personal appearance and having too much frustration aggressive and anxiety. Inability to express ideas through language is another significant characteristic of slow learner. A slow learner lacks imagination and foresight. He finds it very difficult to foresee the consequences in future.
3. **Difficulty to understand the complex things:** -They do not set long term goal for themselves and have difficulty in planning ahead. It occurs due to lack of concentration (Burt, 1946). This weakness in what may be termed as long term memory hampers the educational progress of slow learners who need to go over the material more times before it is fixed in their mind, and more frequent revision is required to foil forgetting. The reason for their poor memory is that they are slow to perceive and use possible association. The efficiency of initial learning is important as well as actual retention and recall. These are all influence by attitude, interest and emotional states.
4. **Poor concentration skills:** -Flavell (1977) &Wellmen (1977) define memory as a series of cognitive process, including recall and recognition, knowledge, cognitive strategies and met memory. Slow learners have poor concentration problem they often have a short attention span and poor concentration skills. Slow learners have problem to linked new information from the old and having difficulties transferring information learned in one situation to other situation.
5. **Lack of confidence:** -Process of in taking of knowledge for these students is climbing a mountain and this load of expectation lead them to the feeling of stress, clumsy and in appropriate movements. Slow learners are often hyperactive, uninhabited, attention,

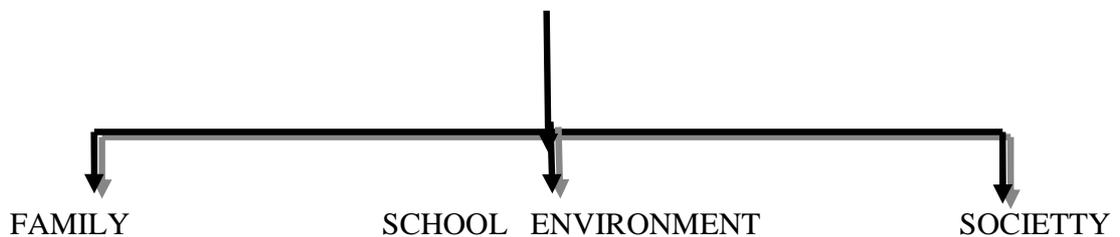
seeking, disruptive or lethargic and exhibit wide mood swings. They have lack of confidence and they tend to be disorganized and easily frustrated.

6. **Indicators of adjustment:** -likely the other student slow learner also indicates the good adjustment of physical, emotional and cultural aspect but in the real sense they need a push to overcome their mental blockage of being struggling. They may be good at-
- **Physically-** Like sports, extra-curricular activities etc.
 - **Emotionally-** Social, outgoing, popular etc.
 - **Culturally-** Community identity, family, religions etc.

FACTOR AFFECTING THE SLOW LEARNERS

Factor which affects the slow learners most is his/her surrounding atmosphere. So according to his surrounds we divide the factor into three types:-

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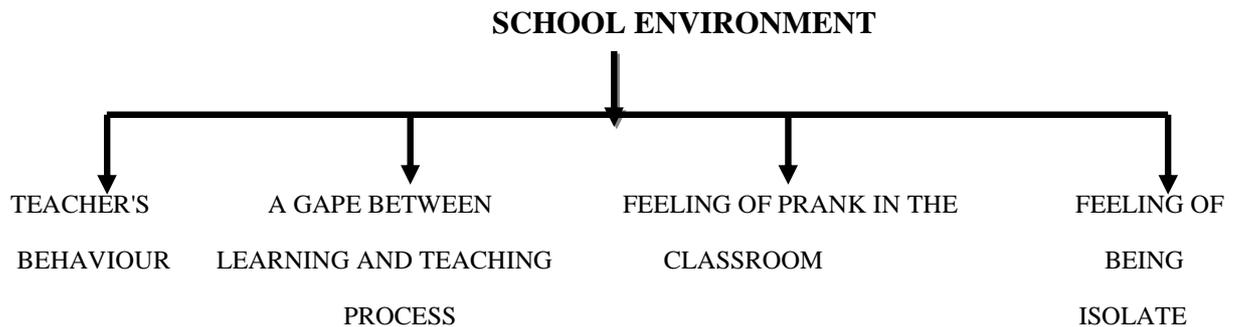


➤ **FAMILY: -**

- **Family Atmosphere-**Family is one of the most important factors which affect the slow learners. In family the comparison, separation and expectation problems are generally shown.
- **Comparison with others-** They compare their child with neighbor and cousin's child because of this comparison the child feels the embarrassment because of his/her backwardness.
- **Separations of parents-**The separation or divorce of parents causes emotional instability, psychological impairment and lower the academic performance of children.

Children are the worst sufferers and innocent victims of broken homes who are forced to live with one parent which also affect their learning. (Douglas B.D. 1994) because of all this, they are in limbo condition. They don't even know what is right? What is wrong? The emotional instability overcomes their learning process.

- **SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:-**School environment is another factor which affect the slow learners most which are following types:-



a) **Teacher's Behavior:** - The main factor which affects the slow learner is the teacher's behavior in the classroom, how teacher treat a child in front of his classmates because of his backwardness.

Slow learners always disturbed by their image in front of their teacher. Teachers always ask the simple questions but they don't even able to answer the simple question and then teacher asset their image as an idiot box in the classroom.

b) **A Gap between Learning and Teaching Process:** - A gap between learning and teaching process is also there. The teacher teaches the class for the average I.Q. level children, but the slow learners cannot match up themselves with the average teaching process because of the complexity of the subject.

c) **Feeling of being Prank in The Classroom:** - The other students always make the prank of slow learners; they always try to tease them because of these slow learners feels disgusted.

d) **Feeling of being isolated:** -In process of education majority of students display the common indicators of acquiring knowledge but in case of slow learners their adjustment lack with the common expectation of teacher .Above all this reasons or environment of the school the child feels isolated.

➤ **SOCIETY :-**

a) **The negative impact of the society-** Society see them as the mentally retarded children because of their low vision or capacity to express themselves which makes the children too frustrated and started blaming themselves. This negative impact makes them the isolation feeling and they also cut themselves from the society.

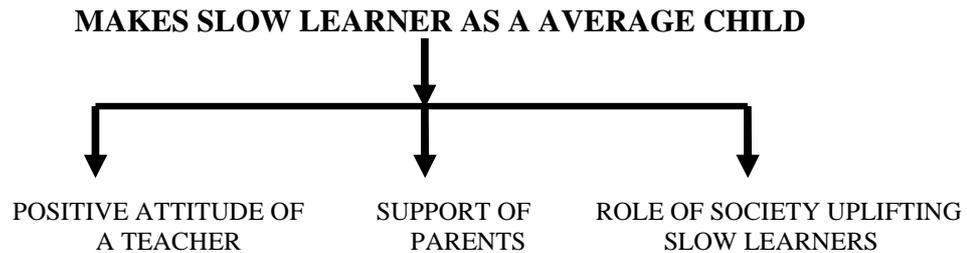
b) **Inability to express ideas-** Tansley and Guilford (1962) state that knowledge and development of student lies in the reading and writing, but due to the fact of lack of sensory acceptance this reading and writing became a nightmare to them, difficulty in combining words, emotional reluctance become the reason their backwardness in their expression.

c) **Criticizing attitude of the society-**Society is the second environment where an individual present himself and try to prove its worthiness. But all the assumption collapse when society react negatively compare to the individual mental assumption. Feeling of insecurity, isolation being carried away all to the problem of individual. The presence of negative people and criticizing attitude develop the feeling of getting shattered down in front of people.

METHODS TO HELP THE SLOW LEARNER FROM THE PAIN THEY FACE: -

The goal of helping a slow learner is not to get them performing at grade level, but to get them performing at their highest level possible. This level is different for all students, whether they are a slow learner, average or above average.

We helping them into following three types:-



a) **POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF A TEACHER:** -

- **Build the confidence:** - Slow learners are very conscious about themselves and they are very well aware of their weakness in comparison with the fast learners. So the first responsibility of the teacher is to build up confidence among these children. Encouraging words and positive reinforcement may bring about a positive impact on the slow learners and will boost them to perform best. Teachers should also find the reason behind their backwardness with the help of case study. From this teacher have the possibility to find out the actual reason of his student's backwardness. Whether he's actually a slow learner or condition makes him slow learner.
- **Encourage them to do all around development:** -Teaching is a challenging profession that requires a lot of patience, innovation and motivation from the teachers in order to bring about an all round development among their students.
- **Cope up them into mainstream:** - Slow learners cannot cope up with the lessons taught inside the classroom. So there comes the greatest or toughest challenge for a good teacher to guide and help the slow learners in fetching good grades and come out with great achievements.
- **Give extra effort:** -A good student can always get good grades on his own merit which requires very little effort on the teacher's part. But to help a slow learner fetch a good and suitable grade is a challenge that marks the qualities of a good and understanding teacher.
In cases where efforts have been made to cope up, interventions usually allowing student to built confidence in their approach; however these are taught us whole words (equivalent to pictures), rather than as ordered groupings of letters. (Browder & Xin, 1998; Katims, 2000).
- **Provide the feeling of equality:** -Inside the classroom teacher must never make slow learner feel neglected or unwanted as it might create a feeling of inferiority among these learners which might lay an effect on their grades. Teacher must pay

equal attention to slow learners and may make them sit in the first row if situation requires.

- **Current perspective implication of new technique:** -Education doesn't meet its demand as don't work according to the time. Proper involvement of modern methods and techniques add to the entertainment of educational activity. They are as following-
 - Word drill
 - Response cards
 - Sentence repetition
 - Phonic drills
 - Audio tape words
 - Word definition drill
 - Provide variation in assignments
 - Continuous assignment evaluation
 - New test (oral and written)
 - Correction of mistakes

b) SUPPORT OF PARENTS: -

- a) **Proper environment**-A minimum amount of stress at home also can promote an environment without distraction which many slow learners need when they are working homework assignment.
- ❖ **Assisting parents with home strategies**-“The desire to be a learner is one most important trait of good principal” reports Helene Dykes a principal in Laguna Nigel, California (Hopkins, 2006). School success depends on the mutual understanding of parents, teachers and school management that's how parents role become vital in the development of their child.
- b) **Role of parents**-Parents should supported their child and create an atmosphere to show his importance in their life, that feeling makes child quite important person in family and he makes efforts to go forward in his studies or emotional as well.
- ❖ **Develop patience**-Not meeting the demand of parental expectations the feeling of negligence and inferiority lead the child away from the parents. They need to know their parents and have faith in their capabilities regardless of their learning ability.
- ❖ **Expect and accept** – Knowing the capability of students, parents should make their level of expectation and accepting their weakness of child provides a platform of experimentations for child's exploration.
- c) **Parent's initiatives**-The parents should understand that they never compare their child with others or their own children as well because each and every child has his own capability to understand the things around him.
- ❖ **Opening the door of communication**- Communication is totally a social process involving all the members of society, slow learner's negligence break this process and add to their misery. A good discussion effective decision making and guidance enables child to overcome their problems.

- ❖ **Developing empathy and compassion-** Experiencing the stress of slow learners parents and teachers should prepare a mentality of accepting the fact and develop a vision of understanding their pain. Providing proper opportunity and effective communication develop a empathic communication and feeling of compassion.

c) ROLE OF SOCIETY UPLIFTING SLOW LEARNER :-

1. **Adding to educational process-**As we know slow learners are not included in main stream but it's our role to provide them a common platform where they can represent their skills, interest and all their requirements which they required for their development good thinking and vision can also help them to do their best.
2. **Role of the society-**Society's role became so vital that they can stand back for their encouragement and support, they only need a platform where they don't feel threaten being scattered around.
3. **Mental awareness-** The main role of society to solve or neglect their problems and provides them the beneficial aids for their development.

CONCLUSION:

➤ Slow learners are very weak in intellectual because of the backwardness they faces in the classroom, society and from parents. So the teacher has the most important role to connect them in the mainstream and through experience should be provided that will enable the student to relate activities in class to his world outside of the classroom because the slow learners must see some reason for working on an assignment other than satisfying the teacher.

➤ Slow learners pass through a mental block where they feel insecurity and threatened of being isolated from the society. Education is a boon for their remedial of mental block.

➤ Proper education and attitude towards this concept allow achieving a new horizon of perfection. Every single child is unique in itself it all need to work for their development to the perfect manner. So, the teachers, parents and the society should have to change their attitude towards the slow learners. They should have to change their complex behavior into positive aspect.

➤ Introduction of special curriculum, proper individual attention, special method of teaching, co-curricular importance and diversified causes and proper guidance service can help slow learner to join the main stream.

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