

Analysing the Perceptions of Teachers' and Parents' on the Causes and Consequences of Slow Learners' Early Learning Difficulties in Karachi Pakistan

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Abstract

The development of a nation cannot occur without first addressing the issues of education. Students can learn at varying speeds, from very quickly to quite slowly. Children who fall below the norm for their age group in terms of cognitive development are categorized as slow learners. They have trouble meeting the academic standards of a traditional classroom setting. Educators and researchers from all around the world are beginning to clarify the components of slow learning and conduct extensive studies on slow learners at all levels of schooling. This research looks at pre-schoolers who are slow learners in specific areas of Karachi, as well as the activities and beliefs of both parents and educators that contribute to the problem. The purpose of this research was to determine how teachers and parents perceived the problems and difficulties faced by slow learners and to identify potential solutions to improve their learning. To achieve the objective researchers employed qualitative research design and used a questionnaire to gather information from preschool educators and parents. Findings of the study highlight the importance of characteristics including memory impairment, lack of self-assurance, a lack of social support, and a hesitant disposition in causing learning difficulties. The importance of fostering in children a passion for learning is widely acknowledged by parents. A teacher's ability to provide a learning environment that caters to each student's unique needs and strengths is crucial to the academic success and happiness of slow learners. Unfortunately, there are times when this isn't feasible for a number of reasons. Further support for slow learners is found in individualized lesson plans, extended study periods, learning through projects, and the use of interactive media (such as games), oral instruction, and collaborative projects.

Keywords: Slow Learners, Cognitive Abilities, Weak Memory, Isolated Personality, Shyness, Academic Expectations.

Introduction

A child who is labelled as slow-learner does not need to attend a special school. He may require additional time and support in a traditional school setting. Like any normal toddler, he has the capacity to absorb information. A slow learner is someone who takes more time than the typical child to grasp new concepts. Sluggish learning can be traced back to a number of different factors, but the most common ones include a lack of brain development and personal circumstances like illness, missing school, negative environmental factors, and a fear complex on the part of teachers. Spotting slow students is the first step. The solution is to provide specialized curriculum for students who are learning at a slower pace. When teaching a new skill to a slow learner, it's important to modify each step carefully. If the subject is given in a new way, even slow learners can pick it up rapidly. Two forms of education, tutoring and rehabilitative training, were employed to reach this goal. Reasons, challenges, and solutions for teaching students who progress slowly are explored in this research. Students whose cognitive capacities are significantly lower than average are referred to as slow learners. They struggle to meet the standard classroom challenges. The most important outcome is helping delayed learners achieve their full potential as adults. So, all factors affecting the well-being of the slow learners and their surroundings should be taken into account. Children who learn at a

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slower pace than the average child are not mentally retarded and do not require special education services. They participate in regular classroom instruction with no further accommodations made for them beyond a tailored version of the curriculum designed to accommodate their slower processing speeds. Relationship building between students and teachers is one of the first educational strategies used to support slow learners (Malik, Rehman, & Hanif, 2012; Ishaq, Zin, Rosdi, Abid, & Farooq, 2019). Having them in the front of the classroom, setting realistic objectives with them, rewarding them when they achieve those goals, showing them love and appreciation, and celebrating even the smallest of their triumphs are all great ways to build a rapport with them (Dasaradhi & Rajeswari, 2016; Borah, 2013; Malik & Hanif, 2012). Those that learn at a slower pace tend to be reserved and shy, with low levels of self-assurance. Students with low cognitive abilities are often the targets of bullying, prejudice, and a teacher's fear complex, all of which contribute to a lack of ingrained confidence. What students and teachers learn and put into practice is of greater importance than what the teacher teaches. Students need to have contact and communication that is obvious, intelligible, easy, and convincing (Turi, Ghani, Javid, & Sorooshian, 2017). Because they are unable to follow up with the lesson, students who learn at a slower pace tend to keep to themselves and look down when studying. Communication and persuasion with students should be straightforward, simple, and effective. Students who learn slowly have a shorter attention span. Because most classroom instructions are verbal and last for around thirty minutes, students who learn at a slower pace need the teacher to accommodate their needs by providing a more condensed version of the material. The child needs to be instructed in proper behavior.

One of a teacher's most challenging responsibilities is identifying students who are working at a slower pace. They could tell at a glance if a student has difficulties communicating, by looking for signs like stuttering, delayed language development, spelling and grammar issues when attempting to speak in complete sentences, reading difficulties, incorrect word pronunciation, and a general lack of focus and participation in class discussions. To cite this entry: Chauhan, S. (2011) Students who take longer to absorb new material often fall behind their peers in their required coursework. (i.e., Urdu and English), where the majority of students are learning at a faster pace, they need more time to understand the concepts and then write them to complete their tasks on time. Teachers should avoid giving negative feedback to students in a regular classroom setting because it can have a chilling effect on a student's confidence and motivation to learn. These students do not have a cognitive impairment, but they do require additional support from their teachers in the form of time, repetition, and materials. Certain subsets of these people include those who display signs of neurological impairment or brain damage, such as aphasia (can see and read the words but cannot say what they means-can bear words but cannot give their meaning-can hear and see words but cannot write). Disabilities in reading and writing, known as dyslexia and dysgraphia, are two examples of the more specific learning impairments that fall under the "umbrella" concept of "learning disabilities." Dyslexia is a form of specific learning disability that hinders a person's ability to read and use language cognitively. Reading comprehension, memory, writing, spelling, and even speech may all be affected to varying degrees. Furthermore, it is possible for it to coexist with other related conditions. The term "language-based learning disability" is commonly used to describe dyslexia. However, dysgraphia is a learning disability that affects one's ability to write legibly. Problems with writing can include illegible handwriting, poor spacing, and insufficient spatial planning on paper, misspelt words, trouble composing sentences, and trouble thinking while writing. As a result, students' fundamental understanding of many subjects suffers and they have trouble catching up. Any competent educator ought to know what to expect from a child who is experiencing learning difficulties in the classroom. As a result, it's crucial to identify these students early on, get a proper diagnosis of their learning disabilities, and provide them with individualized instruction.

The value of parents in their children's education and social growth is widely acknowledged. It's important to lay a strong foundation in the first few years of school for a child's future success. The bulk of the research is dedicated to improving educational settings by bolstering and facilitating parental participation. Research on the topic of parental involvement has shown that it has many positive effects on a child's growth and development, and has also shed light on the correlation between parental involvement patterns and children's outcomes in school and in their emotional well-being (Gadsden, 2013). Parenting refers to the set of behaviors, beliefs, and routines employed by adults in charge of bringing up young children. Home-school relationship refers to the formal and

informal ties that parents have with their children's schools. Parents whose children show the most positive engagement with peers, adults, and learning are those whose parents are actively involved in their children's early educational setting and have fewer obstacles to participation (McWayne, Hampton, Fantuzzo, Cohen, & Sekino, 2004). Goals for education in the early years of life frequently focus on parents' roles in assisting their children with language and literacy development. Even when parents assist their children in developing the skills necessary to complete the activities, the children reportedly show less interest. As a general rule, parents seem to place a high value on their children taking part in any kind of extracurricular activity. They also think the school's extracurricular offerings are enough to keep their kids interested. However, parents still need guidance in identifying their children's interests and developing strategies for putting those interests into practice.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research was to determine how teachers and parents perceived the problems and difficulties faced by slow learners and to identify potential solutions to improve their learning.

Research Questions

What do parents and educators think about the difficulties slow learners confront and how to find potential solutions to enhance their learning?

Literature Review

Every classroom has a wide variety of students from various backgrounds who have varying interests, perspectives, and approaches to learning. In addition to their books and supplies, several of these students also bring a lot of emotional baggage to class. It's not surprising, however, that due to these underlying differences among students, academic outcomes and classroom conduct can vary widely. This means there will always be those students who struggle to keep up in class. Teachers don't always put in the time and effort necessary to help students who aren't actively engaged in their own learning. The intellectual and emotional needs of slow learners must be met in order to effectively handle their behavioral and academic problems. Students who are working at a slower pace can be helped to create high-quality work and develop a constructive attitude towards schoolwork and classroom behavior (Bodang & Lengkat, 2021). Students who struggle in necessary subjects may need specialized support. They are not less capable than other students; they simply take more time to adopt and carry out new tasks. If you're a teacher in a developing country, one of your top priorities should be building up your country's human resources so you can better understand how students' intelligence, skills, and aptitudes affect their ability to learn. Educators and students in Pakistan are often criticized for falling short of their full potential due to a lack of resources. Some of the best educators don't have the resources they need to identify students who are falling behind the rest of their class, such as slow learners, and assist them in reaching their full potential. Because of this, educational facilities can't confidently send out graduates who are ready to succeed in the real world. A teacher's ability to notice the signs of slow learners is crucial in overcoming these obstacles. How can educators' best accommodate their students' wide range of experiences and perspectives, and encourage their development as learners and people? How might they expand their pedagogical horizons and deepen their skills to benefit student learning as a whole? In other words, teachers need to show compassion and empathy for their students while also employing effective methods and techniques.

The several categories of slow learners and their distinguishing features have been investigated (Chauhan, 2011). There are two groups of slow learners, and those who need a more private or isolated environment are one of them. It is believed that these children have significant socio-psychological deficiencies and mental retardation, in addition to one or more forms of educational backwardness, as a result of their limited capacities. They need specialized educational facilities, such as separate classrooms or schools, to receive the attention and help they need to succeed. A second kind of sluggish students includes individuals who require assistance with an overall, systemic framework. These children' learning difficulties and academic underachievement have diminished to the point where they are effectively accommodated within the framework of our current educational institutions. They usually exhibit both a general and a specialized form of backwardness. The student who is not meeting expectations is struggling in all subject areas. An interdisciplinary strategy or a uniquely tailored learning environment can meet the needs of slow learners. Multimedia lessons are helpful for students who learn slowly since they help to keep students engaged and increase classroom attendance. It's vital to take into account how well the

position caters to the skillsets of slow learners and piques their interest and participation. Creative and practical pursuits appear to foster the development of healthy focus and work habits. Even while schools place a heavy focus on reading and writing standards, it is essential to keep in mind that these are only ancillary abilities when it comes to actual language competence. Children's ability to talk and understand what is being spoken to them is more important. Some students who take their time to learn fall short in this area and struggle to put their thoughts into words. Students who study slowly have difficulty finding and combining words. Mood swings, timidity, and a lack of self-assurance are common factors in their inability to speak their minds swiftly. This makes it difficult for slow learners to comprehend and articulate concepts. Youngsters develop their learning capacities at their own pace (Borah, 2013). When a child is a slow learner, it can be seen on the child's face or in the child's body, as they exhibit a variety of signs of a variety of illnesses or other conditions.

There are several potential causes of a sluggish learning curve. Variations in academic achievement and behavior are common results of the following underlying differences among slow learners. Individual differences include things like a lack of natural intelligence or other cognitive abilities, a history of illness that prevented them from attending school regularly, the presence of previously undiagnosed physical deformities, or other similar causes. Dislike of the teacher via, unpleasant parental attitudes to school produce in the child similar adverse attitudes, feelings of inadequacy, a lack of confidence in oneself and a lack of a drive to succeed, extreme shyness, and anxiety all contribute to low academic performance. Environmental variables include insufficient resources at home for developing academic abilities, an inadequate diet and lack of sleep, unsupportive parenting, and inadequate educational chances at school (due to big class sizes), inadequate instruction, and an unsatisfactory home-school fit. Constant upheaval of the educational system, with its attendant alterations to methodology and curriculum, as a result of frequent school transfers. (Emotional factors) include dislike of the teacher through, negative parental attitudes to school create in the child similar adverse attitudes, feelings of inadequacy, a lack of confidence in oneself and a lack of a drive to succeed, extreme shyness, and anxiety, all of which contribute to low academic performance. Several physical qualities and dimensions of the physical environment have been found to have varying effects on students' behaviour and attitudes (Mendell & Heath, 2005). Children's brain and social development are intertwined with their surroundings (Moore, Oates, Hobson, & Goodwin, 2002). Since children are the foremost experts on their preschool setting, a holistic approach should be taken during the planning phase. In classrooms where basic needs aren't met, teachers may be less invested. To ensure that everyone's needs are met, it's important to get input from everyone involved—parents, kids, and teachers.

Empirical studies

These specialized classroom strategies for students with learning disabilities, such as slow learners, have been introduced in Pakistan, particularly in the province of Punjab. Rana, Jehanghir, Rehman, Ishaq, and Abid (2021) expressed that the term "activity-based learning" (ABL) refers to a set of teaching methods that place an emphasis on the student's active participation and real-world application. Experiential learning describes this kind of teaching method. With an ABL framework, students and their education become the primary focus while tackling challenging tasks. The learner gains practical experience and their knowledge base is enlarged. Working to improve the skills of slow learners and encourage creative thinking in a wide range of disciplines is an excellent strategy (Khan, Muhammad, Ahmed, Saeed & Khan, 2012). One characteristic of slow learners is that they take information more efficiently through visual and aural means than through verbal ones; hence, visual and aural aids in the classroom can aid in the gradual acquisition of concepts (Ruhela, 2014; Manichander, 2018). There should be a sufficient number of researchers that proposed number of progressive learning strategies for multiclass students, as (Sebastian, 2016; Er, Venkatesan, Wang, & Chien, 2017). The significance of bringing children with low cognitive abilities up to speed with their more able peers was emphasized by Malik, (2009) experimental study, which also suggested modifying the curriculum and employing new instructional strategies. The years between birth and age six are formative years for children, making early childhood education all the more crucial. During their first three years of life, children are cared for in a wide range of institutions, from kindergartens to childcare centers. Children spend the majority of their preschool years in kindergarten, therefore the environment has a large bearing on their growth. Preschool education focuses on playschool or preschool-based programs to provide children age's three to six a head start

in life and aid in their development through this crucial early stage of schooling. Slow students can make more progress in school if teachers put more effort into improving instructional practices including lesson planning, assessment, classroom management, and student engagement. A fear complex on the part of teachers is a major contributor to slow learning since it causes students to lose their confidence, self-esteem, and enthusiasm for school. Because of their negative preconceptions of school, these kids are constantly looking for methods to avoid going there. These students need a specialized instructional tempo, more input, corrective and supportive assistance, and revised content, all evaluated within a range of modifiable variables.

Research Methodology:

The overarching technique for integrating the conceptual research concerns to relevant and doable empirical research is called the research design. In the course of this study, a qualitative research design (Creswell, 2014) was utilized in conjunction with a phenomenological method. The gathering of information on the topic under investigation was the major objective of this style of study. After obtaining consent from each participant, one of the researchers went to the five private schools that were randomly selected as the sample and filled out survey questionnaires with 65 parents and 35 teachers. The researchers made sure that every ethical concern, including the protection of the data and its confidentiality, was addressed. Data was obtained from teachers and parents at five different private schools located in district west Karachi, Pakistan, in order to accomplish the research objective of this study. During the course of the inquiry, the observations were also conducted at a number of different times throughout the duration of the study. In order to collect data, researchers make use of things like questionnaires, observations, and interviews that were prepared in accordance with the research phenomenon. The data collected from samples are then attempted to be generalized to the population as a whole (Fowler & Cosenza, (2009). Phenomenological research was chosen for this particular investigation for a number of reasons, the most important of which was that the method represents an effort to collect and quantify the lived experiences of preschool teachers and parents. It is concerned with the objective characteristics of educators and parents, such as the emotional and behavioral attributions, administrative provisions, and practices. Specifically, it is concerned with these things. The responses from both the teachers and the parents were collected through the use of a questionnaire. Questions were based on the individuals' own experiences and points of view. These students do not have an intellectual disability; (1) the slow-learning child is not considered to be mentally retarded; (2) these students do not have an intellectual disability; (3) the role of the teachers and parents; and (4) positive and supportive relationships with students are taken into consideration when identifying the children whose academic performance is below the average expected for their age group. The perspectives of both teachers and parents are taken into consideration when identifying the children whose academic performance is below the average expected for their age group. (5) Traits shared by individuals who have difficulty acquiring new information, and (6) the dynamic between educators and parents of slow learners. For the purpose of this analysis, the researchers counted a sample of preschool teachers and parents who were possibly reachable. The population consisted of both teachers and parents. For the purpose of the research, a total of one hundred respondents were chosen through the use of purposive sampling technique.

Analysis and Results

Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis of the data led us to the conclusion that slow learners are people who do not have intellectual disabilities or mental retardation, but who are unable to make significant progress in relation to their age in terms of their pedagogical performance. Even though they learn at a more gradual pace than the typical youngster, they are nonetheless capable of achieving a satisfactory level of academic accomplishment. According to the findings, a lack of recall is considered to be one of the most common complaints made about slow learners by 64 percent of those who participated in the survey. Where identifying slow learners and determining the root causes of their slow learning are frequently neglected, despite the fact that 79% of people agree that remedial instruction is most appropriate for slow learners. Slow learners are frequently misidentified as introverts, despite the fact that 74 percent of respondents felt that slow learners have a substantial inability to explain their ideas through words. People have a tendency to confuse introversion with an inability to express ideas, which is why this phenomenon occurs. The capacity to communicate is unrelated to the trait of introversion, which is a characteristic of one's personality. However, people do not realize that slow

learners are capable of expressing their ideas if they are provided with the appropriate opportunities and guidance. This is the most important responsibility that parents have. It is inappropriate to use an authoritative tone with your children when you are speaking to them. In the lives of slow learners, the role that parents play is of the utmost importance. People have shown that they are 85% in agreement with the statement that parents who are aware of what their child is working on at preschool have a better understanding of their child's level of competency and the areas in which they need to improve in order to improve their child's confidence and ability. When it comes to bringing behind-the-curve students to the forefront, the relationship between the teacher and the student is instrumental. This will lead to higher levels of achievement than those students who have more conflict in their relationships. It is a widely held belief that one of the most effective methods is to encourage slower learners to seek assistance from their peers in the form of tutoring. The comparison of slow learners to their contemporaries is certainly one of the most absurdly executed trends, and it inhibits the ability of slow learners to deal with the challenges posed by their conditions.

Recommendations

- It has been suggested that students who are slower to learn could benefit from receiving additional attention.
- A positive transformation may result from the application of motivation, praise, and rewards to the individuals involved.
- Since emotional intelligence is given a significant amount of weight in the modern world, having a full-time psychologist on staff at a school and attending regular counselling sessions are both strongly suggested.
- If you want to boost their self-assurance, encourage them to participate in an extracurricular activity that interests them and that will help them feel accepted in society.
- Learners who are taking their time should be encouraged to share their ideas. Increase the number of students' oral participation in activities in which they are encouraged to express their ideas.
- Learning through projects can be helpful for students who progress more slowly than others. The performance of slow learners can be improved and their skills elevated through the execution of activities that are both simple and group-based.
- In order to pique students' interest in the material they are studying, plan and execute relevant activities. Encourage students to complete activities and homework with easier difficulty levels first, and then gradually increase the level of difficulty so that students may become familiar with the topics at a more leisurely step.

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