

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN COPING WITH AND ENSURING LEARNING IN SLOW LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT:

The student we call a slow learner is not in need of a special education but he is likely to need some extra time and help in regular class room. So the principal objective of this paper is to understand the slow learner and to inspire his learning through a human touch. The burning problem in teaching in a classroom is to deal with the slow learner. Mushrooming of schools and colleges increases the number of learners but fails to impart quality education. The paper focuses on the suggestions- motivation, planning, and change of activities, individual attention, good explanation and personal inquiry - to imbibe and instill great encouragement to slow learners. In spite of all these, there are other co-curricular activities which build confidence of the slow learners, they are: sports, cultural activities, group discussions, debates, dramas and telling stories. It also discusses how a teacher can really change the attitude of slow learners to make their life better. To conclude, teaching slow learners is a penance, because it is a slow process at best demanding great patience and unlimited enthusiasm, it must be kept in mind however that slow learners are not stupid, they are simply slow, immature youngsters, but his success with them however small will be a joy forever.

Keywords: Slow Learners, Role of Teacher & Learning.

Introduction:

Teaching is an art which is the golden key to knowledge, comprehension and wisdom. The teacher represents the voice of teaching. The teacher is the future of a nation. Once the great saint of the world Sri Swami Vivekananda said, “The destiny of a nation is shaped by the teachers in class rooms”. From this, we may know that how much responsibility a teacher has. If a doctor does a mistake some patients die. If an engineer neglects some buildings collapse. If a Police neglects some thefts will take place, but if a teacher neglects the whole class i.e. the society spoils, consequently the moral degeneracy increases in the society. Therefore, the duty of a teacher plays a vital role in teaching and learning activity. We may see a plenty of slow learners in schools and colleges due the influence of the unscientific way of teaching and lack of the teacher’s interest in teaching. The teacher who teaches merely is not a real teacher; a real teacher is the one who teaches the students by knocking their door of knowledge and who awaken their conscience which in turn makes them self-reliant and strong.

The main intention of this paper is to focus on the slow learners in higher education and creating interest among them in learning activity. Here are some tools and techniques which enhance the slow learners’ interest in the class room.

Understanding the background of the students:

Firstly, the teacher should have enough matter of the background of the student. Without any background, the teacher will not be able to understand the student. The purpose of this would be to open the lines of communication between you and the students. Talking to your students can range from a conversation about their dog to something as simple as asking how their day is going. By talking the students personality starts to show through in the way they express themselves verbally and nonverbally. When a student responds to you verbally there are also nonverbal cues the teacher can take, like body language. Is the student open and using hand gestures, confident in what they say, or maybe uncomfortable speaking out loud? Based on just talking to the students the teacher can decide various teaching strategies to help his/her students.

Giving concrete and interesting examples:

While teaching, giving examples is very important. It eases the teachers’ hard work. The teacher has to give the visual and interesting examples. A Chinese proverb says “A good teaching aid equals to

a thousand words.” Keeping this in view the teacher should have to prepare very good teaching aids. Then the learners learn the lessons interestingly.

Teachers can apply this strategy by using concrete examples when teaching abstract concepts, then asking students to come up with their own, correcting any examples (or parts of examples) that aren't quite right, and looking for more. Encourage students to continue this practice when they study.

Encourage the understanding level of the slow learner:

The teacher should never neglect the slow learning students. He has to support his little efforts. Then the slow learners get some hopes and some interest in the class, and the teacher can hold his students rightly in his class.

A few DONT'S:

- Do not reprimand in front of the class. You may do that in private.
- Do not emphasize writing, concentrate on reading. Oral education is more beneficial for them.
- Do not let them quit trying. Encourage them to continue their hard work to complete their tasks even if it means postponing it.
- Do not be overprotective. Let their slow learning not become their introduction.

Reward the positive answers:

A real teacher never neglects any answers of students; he appreciates them. The teacher should always concentrate on the slow learners' answers. He has to encourage them with the small rewards. Psychologically it affects students to have interest in the class which also helps the teacher to teach easily.

An effective behavior modification system within the classroom often includes rewards. Students are motivated to achieve and conform to appropriate behaviors when either intrinsically or extrinsically rewarded. Those students who prefer intrinsic motivation enjoy praise, personally challenging projects and accomplishing educational tasks just for the love of learning. An extrinsic approach

requires more tangible rewards such as pencils, erasers, stickers and sometimes candy. The type of reward given to students must be fair and consistent for all students but also must vary for each task.

Planning the syllabus:

It is very important for the teacher that he has to list out the students (slow learners). According to that list he has to plan a syllabus based on what they need. The syllabus should contain basic knowledge of the subject. This helps address the short attention spans of slow learners. Also, these students should be made to feel that some of the instruction has been designed with their specific interests or experiences in mind. Oral or written autobiographies at the beginning of the year, or simple inventories in which students indicate their hobbies, jobs, and unusual trips or experiences can provide the structure for the lesson plans, special projects, or extra-credit assignments in the year.

Individual attention:

Giving individual attention for each and every one plays an important role in learning and teaching activity. The teacher must have to take special interest on each student. It is easy for the teacher to know the activities of student. Then the teacher can create good interest among the students, he can mark the daily progress of the students.

The foremost job of a teacher should be to identify the problem area by giving individual attention dealing with slow learners. A student may be troubled with both physical and emotional imbalance. You need to reach beyond the shell of a stressed student and touch him at the raw till he explodes about the predicament he is undergoing. Once you recognise the problem area it will be much easier for you deal with such students who are slow at learning.

Modern technology:

Now-a-days a variety of modern technology programs are available. By using them, we can create a variety of teaching aids and create a lot of interest in the classes. Using of smart board, power point presentation, computers increase the interest among the students. Then the teacher can teach effectively.

The following are some technological methods used to assist slow learners;

Audio and Video Instruction: Slow learners need extra time for remedial and enrichment activities. They can listen to the audio instruction based on their subject units in the free hours. They can take them home and make use of according to their convenience. Also they can listen to relevant educational radio programme which also has positive effect on the slow learners learning. The video instruction provides unique experience to the slow learners in the presentation of instructional content. It penetrates more deeply into human character with an immediate excitement than any other single medium.

Computer Assisted Instruction: Computer assisted instruction is a kind of individualised instruction administered by a computer and its roots has in programmed instruction and in the behavioural theories of learning. CAI programmes stress drill and practice exercise, others teach students facts and concepts.

Mobile Applications: The students are to be instructed to download some educational related apps in the mobile phone to learn and practice at home.

Motivation:

Students who are not motivated will not learn effectively. They won't retain information, they won't participate and some of them may even become disruptive. A student may be unmotivated for a variety of reasons: They may feel that they have no interest in the subject, find the teacher's methods un-engaging or be distracted by external forces. It may even come to light that a student who appeared unmotivated actually has difficulty learning and is need of special attention.

Motivating the students is very easy by telling the moral stories, biographies of great people such as MK Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda, Subhash Chandra Bose, Bagath Singh and many more. Such great people's principles, ways of life and their goals impress the students easily. Then the students have good interest in the classes.

Conclusion:

Thus by using all the above methods a teacher can create enough interest in the slow learners in every class. The teacher should work hard willingly. Then we can mould the students as much as possible. The objective of the paper is not only to create greater awareness but also to initiate

discussions about the slow learners. It is also very important for further research to start on this initial study to develop guidelines to assist teachers in supporting slow learners.

References:

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