

ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS OF SOCIALLY DEPRIVED ADOLESCENTS: A NEED FOR FLEXIBLE CURRICULUM

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Abstract

Socially deprived adolescents are children of lowest strata of society and they have lived in the inferior cultural environment which has deprived them of academic skills and attitudes and they are lead to maladjusted behaviour. The society could no longer think of them as their wards and their products. Society is unmindful of this maladjusted adolescent's future. The basic needs like individual care or attention, love warmth, feeling of security etc. are not adequately met in an institutional set up. Due to this reason the child develops poor mental health and shows undesirable behaviours. These adolescents have got lesser opportunities for interaction with normal class mates as their social backgrounds are differing and not at all a match as they belong to different and mutually conflicting social system. So they may create personal, social, psychological and educational problems to society. The present education system is not giving importance to meet the needs of socially deprived adolescents. So they have not been entirely integrated into the main streams of the educational system. Much work and efforts are needs to be done to develop programmes and practices for socially deprived adolescents. A desirable curriculum should be created for empowering the socially deprived adolescents and innovative practices are included. It is our duty to bring these deprived groups at par with advanced sections of society. Teachers should possess a welcoming attitude towards their deprived students and should give them ample opportunities to share their emotions and desires freely. Providing real life situations in the classroom teaching will generate immense interest in the students and this will help to develop a favourable attitude towards learning. Multicultural student's demands syllabi of multi culturally oriented which shall give them avenues to perform at par with socially advanced adolescents.

Key words: Socially deprived adolescents, adjustment and curriculum

Introduction

Every child is consisted with problems and it has to become very difficult for him to achieve satisfactory results without assistance. There would be hardly an individual who does not need assistance. There are two sets of differences which are involved in all situations those among children and those among course of action open to them. There is always a confrontation between needs and opportunities. Thus there arises a situation of balancing them, which needs assistance. According to Jones, everyone needs assistance at some time of great crisis. There always have been and will continue to be people with an occasional need for help of experienced associates in meeting situations especially in socially deprived adolescents. Education can be considered as powerful instruments for the social change in a desirable way. Adjustment problems of socially deprived adolescents play an important role in the total development of the children. Such problems can adversely effect upon learning and behaviour of the child. The child is unable to cope up successfully with the external field. In this situation the child is mentally disturbed and showing maladjustment.

The poor adjustment at school leads to perversion and juvenile delinquency. The personality of the students as reflected in their adjustment is an important concern of the educator. The ability to adjust to the demands of family and classroom living depends upon the individual's capacity to tolerate frustration as well as on the availability of substitute satisfaction.

Society can no longer neglect them as they are society's part and parcel in future. The basic needs like individual care, attention, love warmth, feeling of security etc. are not properly met in an institutional set up. As a result, they grow up with poor mental health and adjustment problems. It is evident that personality of an individual is most affected by deprivation. It may in turn be useful to develop and implement suitable schemes and reforms to overcome their maladjusted behaviour and will help them to become a well adjusted personality. Thus they can grow up without having any severe psychological problems and become successful members of the society.

Meaning of socially deprived adolescents

Social deprivation is the reduction of culturally normal interaction between an individual and rest of the society. There are many factors and causes namely poverty, mental illness, poor education, and low socio economic status. Socially deprived children are brought up in inferior cultural environment that deprive them of the skills, attitudes and acceptable behaviour and they are failure in schools either academically or behaviourally. These students who face irrelevant frustration at home, in the community as well as in the school due to their poor physical, social, economic, intellectual and emotional features feel insecure in groups.

The ultimate aim of education is to bring desirable modification of behaviour and school and home act as agencies to mould behaviour. An individual is not born adjusted or maladjusted. It is his physical or mental or emotional potentialities that influenced and directed by the factors of the environment in which he finds himself that adjustment or maladjustment gradually develops. If an individual could not adjust, he will meet adverse effects upon the learning behaviour which occupies his mind not only hinder him from doing whatever he is supposed to do at particular moment but also sometimes lead to indiscipline in some cases and at times manifestation even to antisocial activities.

All of the children, the home and its surrounding are the first learning environment they experience throughout their early life. The home environment has a major factor that influences the overall development of the child. In home the child interacts with other members of the family, availability and quality of resources in the home largely determine the nature of these interactions. Economic opportunities, unemployment, educational choices and career, self esteem, identity development, development of interpersonal skills and so on are some problems faced by socially deprived adolescents. As a result of these problems, they arise so many needs to satisfy with the help of parents, teachers and peer groups.

Social deprivation is a process of social rupture or destruction in which groups as well as individuals alike become detached from various types of social functions and relations. It is widely acknowledged that education has an important role to achieve a greater degree of social justice. Social deprivation is the reduction or prevention of cultural behavior of an individual and his interaction between him and the rest of the society. In another way socially deprived refers to those adolescents abandoned by his or her community, or the culture because of certain circumstances, traits or characteristics.

The educational institutions are expected to equip children to the best of their ability for securing a meaningful place in society and thus fostering a process of developing an egalitarian society. However, a large number of children are still excluded from the educational system and hence cannot participate meaningfully in the economic, political and cultural life of their communities. A well adjusted individual feels satisfied with his surroundings. He fits well at his health, home, school and its discipline, co-curricular activities and method of teaching etc. But in the case of socially deprived adolescents they are not fit well on above factors. Socially deprived adolescents are likely to be encounter difficulties in many ways. They may not learn to bank on their own worth or to feel confident about their own resources. They may show a highly competitive streak, as though they continually need to prove themselves by superseding others. In this period, they want to satisfy many psychological needs.

Factors related to achievement in socially deprived adolescents

(i) Curriculum

A curriculum may refer as prescribed course of studies; which student must fulfill in order to pass a certain level of education. This category denotes academic load, co-curricular activities, right time schedule, learning methods and frequent exam. Due to inappropriate learning method and heavy academic load the socially deprived adolescents have low academic achievement.

(ii) School atmosphere

The school atmosphere means the facilities required in school for better learning process. A healthy school atmosphere provided motivation to learning. It involves infrastructure facilities of school, teaching aids, supplementary reading materials etc. The ineffective use of the above factors will lead to low academic achievement.

(iii) Teacher influence

The teacher is considering as second parents of child. The teachers have a strong influence towards the child leading to a desirable modified behaviour. The learning method, content, knowledge, and behaviour of teacher influences the child.

(iv) Peer influence

Peer group is one of the most influential agencies in the life of the child. Peer group helps to develop a rational conscience and a scale of value. It helps the members to identify their social roles and facilitate learning. It also helps to develop the qualities of leadership and loyalty. The peer group influence affects the interest in studies to a large extent.

(v) Home Environment

Home is the basic institutional unit of society; primarily responsible for child rearing functions. When family fails to fulfil this responsibility to children everyone suffers. Families are responsible for providing physical necessities, emotional support, moral guidance, and building self esteem and resilience. Positive home environment sets routines, rituals and traditions. It enhances the good communication skills inside and outside the home and build self esteem and problem solving skills. And also it strengthens the hope of a better career. (Forehand &Long,2002).

(vi) Parental influence

Parents play an important role in their children's development. It is vital to create environment that will promote early adolescents to grow up with good qualities, responsibilities, and rights. Parental involvement refers to different forms of participation in education and with schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations. More active form of parental involvement produces greater achievements and benefits than mere passive ones.

Goals for the education of socially deprived adolescents

The school should focus on helping young people develop the habit of using their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be comprehensive if such a claim is made at the expense of the schools central intellectual purpose. Schools should be learner centered, addressing students social and emotional development, as well as their academic progress. The school's academic goal should be simple that each student master a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. Curricular decisions should be guided by student interest, developmentally appropriate practice and the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement.

The goals for education in generally are the following

- (a) Encouraging the development and practice of critical thinking
- (b) Helping learners begin the process of career development whether through vocational guidance, vocational education or additional academic development
- (c) Providing learners with experiences that enhance their citizenship skills, sense of responsibility and understanding of and concern for the world about them.
- (d) Helping students to become self directed, life long learners
- (e) Assisting learners to become self actualized and secure in their identities.
- (f) Assisting learners in making the transition to the world of work to participation in their communities and to the world of future.
- (g) Strengthening the social fabric with their contributions for the development of the quality of fellow people in particular and intellectual wealth of the nation.

Need for flexible curriculum

Every class room contains students with varied back grounds, interests, attitudes and learning styles. These basic differences in learners often cause variations in their academic achievements. There would be always some students in every class who struggle to keep pace with the rest of the class. With appropriate teaching strategies socially deprived students can be motivated to produce good work and develop a positive attitude towards learning. Teacher can deepen their knowledge and expand the professional practice to enrich the learning experience for all students by using different teaching strategies. Socially deprived adolescents struggle to cope with the traditional academic demands of the regular classroom. They may not benefit much from the usual teaching techniques employed in the class. If the teachers will give time to think over these children, definitely will come out with a solution in their hand. 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 those students. Inside the class room there will be a mixed section of learners based on their level of intelligence and performance criteria. The difficulty that confront every teacher is how to provide suitable education to socially deprived adolescents learners in the lowest rung of the ladder who are found in every classroom at every grade and level. With appropriate teaching strategies those students can be motivated to produce good work and develop a positive attitude towards learning. In generally, the flexible curriculum should have the following the characteristics

- Flexible learning programs have a curriculum that is purposeful, relevant, enjoyable and individualized. This means the content of learning is meaningful for students.
- Staff provide significant support for learning, enabling young people to master new knowledge and skills. The strong relationships and supportive atmosphere in flexible learning programs also empower students to help each other.
- Relationships between staff and students, as well as among students, are characterised by genuine and mutual respect, trust and care.
- In order to ensure that young people's life circumstances do not inhibit their opportunity to succeed, flexible learning programs provide practical support. This includes support with housing, transport, legal issues, health, food and childcare.
- Flexible learning programs constantly reflect on their practices, listen to student feedback and make changes based on these.

Conclusion

The progress of society depends upon the nature of the education being provided to the child in the school. The present system of education to evaluate and find that it failed in evaluating the values of life and in the absence of permanent values of life the child generally behaves as a maladjusted. The curriculum committees should promote better individual behaviour through their expert designs of educational programmes which will maintain a good relationship with socially deprived adolescents. The growing need for independence and privacy of socially deprived adolescents are to be recognized by the teachers. Maintain a warm, supportive and conducive atmosphere at school. Help them to do their homework, discuss the values of education and career options with them. This will help to establish a close contact with teachers. The teachers should encourage the socially deprived adolescents to take part in school activities so that the child can develop self concept, self confidence, self image and so on.

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