

BEST CLASSROOM PRACTICES FOR IMPROVING THE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

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Abstract: Present Paper intend to clarify various class room practices for improving the culturally disadvantaged children. In this paper the author explained the characteristics of the culturally disadvantaged children and various class room practices like interactive talks, role play, questioning techniques, speech ect. So she tries to explain the importance of these practices.

Index terms: interactive talks, role play, questioning techniques, speech.

I. Introduction

Indian education survives and thrives only when it tries to fulfil the aspirations and ideals of the constitution of India. Our Constitutional mission is to design India as a democratic, socialist, socio-economic nation. Naturally, our public funded education should be committed to being subservient to that grand objective. Hence the concepts- access, equality and quality have been recognised as the three fundamental functional norms of our educational system. The egalitarian spirit of our constitution reflects in our curriculum frameworks both at national and regional levels. Overtime, Indian education has shed off the esoteric and elitist vestiges bequeathed from colonial masters. As the progress of the man in the street has become the yardstick of the overall progress of the country, the educational advancement of the poor and marginalized sections of our nation has become the genuine yardstick of our educational progress. So, addressing the educational issues of culturally disadvantaged children is a solemn duty of our educational system. Practical measures have to be designed and implemented in this respect.

The Supreme Court decision of 1954 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 originally augmented the scope and broadened the commitment of Public education responsibilities to the disadvantaged. The present educational system is still not sufficiently meeting the needs of the disadvantaged children and they have not been entirely integrated into the main stream of the educational system or the work world. Gunnings (1976) states that “The environment is the key factor in shaping peoples’ attitudes, values and beliefs”. These students are not provided with the teaching and learning techniques, strategies and programmes that would offset the disadvantages imposed upon them by historical circumstances and environmental conditions.

The New Education Policy (1986) has emphasised that all imbalances and disparities should be removed from all sectors. The policy specially emphasizes investment in the development of young children, particularly children from the disadvantaged sections of the society as education occupy a prominent place in the demography of any country. The development of any nation therefore depends upon the developments of its children. Many disadvantaged students never master the basic educational skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic in their early school years, the hopelessness in their homes and communities is reflected many

times in the classroom. Because they do not read or understand easily, they cannot keep up with their class work. By the time they reach high school, intelligence test scores, school marks and teacher evaluation have designated them as slow learners, even though such a designation may not reflect their true mental abilities.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

The main general features of the culturally disadvantaged children are low income and unemployment, little formal education, poor housing, inadequate sanitary conditions, starvation, insufficient medical care, poor clothing facilities and large families with inadequate living space.

A famous quotation attributed to Charlotte K Brooks, which gives a typical picture of a culturally disadvantaged child in Britain and the USA in the 1960's.

“He is essentially the child who has been isolated from those rich experiences that should be his. This isolation may be brought about by poverty, by meagreness of intellectual resources in his home, and surroundings, by the incapacity, illiteracy or indifference of his elders or the entire community. He may come to school without ever having had his mother sing him the traditional lullabies and with no knowledge of nursery rhymes, fairy stories or the folklore of his country. He may have taken few trips perhaps the only one the cramped, uncomfortable trip from the lonely shack in the tentant farm to the teeming, filthy slum dwelling and he probably knows nothing of poetry, music painting or even indoor plumbing”

CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Important Characteristics

1. Progressive decline in intellectual functioning in school
2. Cumulative academic achievement deficits
3. Premature school termination and high dropout rates
4. Reading and learning disabilities
5. Poor language learning
6. Inadequate social learning and observation in the absence of model
7. Low attention span and distraction in learning
8. Lack of abstract and state sequence of events in a learning situation
9. Inability to classify and form logical concepts in capacity to verbalise events and solutions
10. Lack of analytic ability which is essential for learning
11. They show belief in external factors such as luck, chance, fate etc. rather than their own self and activity
12. They cannot delay gratification. Immediate tangible and non- contingent rewards are their need.
13. They have a high sense of avoidance for failure than striving success.
14. They have poor self concept , low achievement aspiration and low need achievement including lack of desire for self actualization.

15. They have a high sense of avoidance for failure than striving success.

16. Lack of proficiency in higher form of cognitive learning and transfer.

In this study, the investigator mainly intended to understand the family relationships among culturally disadvantaged children. Most of the culturally disadvantaged children are from broken families. They are identified as one who confronts a sustaining inadequacy of basic necessities of life. Also he or she is subject to environmental stresses which are detrimental to his or her wellbeing. Also such children are denied the basic and universal rights of children. They include a stable home, loving and supportive parents who provide the material needs such as protection, clothing, adequate diet and play space, fresh experience to stimulate language and mental growth, recognition and an encouraging atmosphere and contact with other children and adults.

Apart from the situations and conditions mentioned above as the background which necessitate this investigation, the investigator has a great deal of direct personal experiences confronting problems of culturally disadvantaged children attending schools. Being the Principal of a college of Teacher Education offering B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses, she has obtained many occasions to listen to the tell-tale accounts of culturally disadvantaged learners by the teacher student during their reflective sessions in between and after their teacher internship programmes.

Moreover, during the visits made by the investigator together with her colleagues in the college to the mentor schools where the teaching internship programmes were being run, she was able to observe the problematic learning, interpersonal social behaviour, family relationships, attitude towards parents, family atmosphere etc. She witnessed many students lagging far behind in their productive skills in English as well as mother tongue which ultimately resulted in low academic performance. The resultant inferiority feeling and low self-esteem changed them in to reserved community of students who were not making effective interactions even among their own classmates. It is our duty to bring these disadvantaged populations at par with the advantaged sections of the society.

The present paper tries to explain the following best practices that can be used in the classroom for improving the family relationships of culturally deprived children and thereby improving their learning conditions.

1. Interactive Talks
2. Role play
3. Questioning technique
4. Skit
5. Speech
6. Video Clippings
7. Short Films
8. Slide Show
9. Case study

1. **Interactive talks**

It is a talk or question to get information or learn about that person. For this video clips, newspaper reports and slide shows and short films explaining various terms of family relationships such as father-mother relation, father-son, mother-son, father-daughter, mother-daughter, relationship with elders, grand parents relation between siblings etc. Through this we can highlight the basic ideas regarding the concepts of human relations. Meaning of human life is achieved in and through relationships. After presenting all these we elicit the responses from the students.

2. **Role play**

It is another important practice for showing the importance of family relationships. Role play is the act of imitating the character and behaviour of someone who is different from yourself, for example as a training service group members can interact each other through role play. For this first arrange a class that starts with a role play. The different characters represent different ways of interpersonal communication such as child-parent, adult-adult, adult-child etc.. After this a discussion is arranged. From this we can understand different ego states and life positions. Also role of negative and positive strokes are stressed.

3. **Questioning Technique**

Refer to the different ways in which questionnaires are presented to individuals while doing research on a particular topic. If it is properly constructed and presented to the individuals, generate valuable information in response. It is also used to find examples from their day today life. After this a description of Transactional Analysis is given. How Transactional analysis is useful in building and maintaining meaningful relationship is explained.

4. **Skit**

A skit is a short performance in which the actors make fun of people, events and types of literature by imitating them. Skits are presented representing both complementary and crossed communication modes. Group discussion can be arranged on the ill-effects of crossed communication on family relationships. Participants are divided into groups and each group is asked to prepare a skit on the concept of family.

5. **Speech**

Each participant is asked to prepare a short speech on the significance of family relationship. The important and distinctiveness of family relationships are to be highlighted in their speech. After the presentation, an appreciation discussion is conducted. The well-presented speeches are praised. After this appreciation note on speeches are presented.

6. **Video-clippings**

A video-clip depicting strong parent-child relationship is shown to the participants. A discussion follows, exploring different aspects of the relationships between mother and child; father and child. The class concludes with the message for strong theming the parent child relationship in order to get an easy survival and happiness. A video clip emphasising significance of sibling relationship is also presented. It tells the participants how sibling rivalry ruins the family. The participants are asked to identify the problems caused by

sibling rivalry. This gives the message that concept of home flourishes when the sibling love and empathy improve.

7. Short Films

A short film is any motion picture not long enough to be considered a feature film. It is defined as “an original motion picture that has a running time of 40 minutes or less, including all credits”

The participants are shown a short-film featuring how old age people are ill-treated at home and often sent to destitute asylums. It also gives the participants an opportunity to understand the concepts of broken home. They are encouraged to identify the problems of a broken home and how broken homes affect the social life.

8. Slide Show

It is a presentation of a series of still images on projection screen or electronic display device, typically in a pre-arranged sequence. The slide show highlights the basic ideas regarding the concept of human relations. Different types of human relationships, meaning of human life achieved in and through relationships, concept of empathy, the part played by various relationships in the fulfilment of human life etc..

9. Case Study

Case studies are depth in investigations of a single person, group, event or community. We can conduct it through observations and interviews.

By implementing all these classroom practices, we can make aware of the culturally disadvantaged children, the importance of human relationships in both individual and social life. It also enables the participants to recognize different forms of human relationship and the role of empathy in making and maintaining them. It also helps them to develop relationship skills and an understanding about the nature of blood and love relationships. Most of the culturally disadvantaged children are from broken families and with poor family environment. Through all these programmes they can understand the various roles of family members, their relationships, their influence and commitments. It helps to strengthen the family relationships and thereby helping them to improve their learning conditions. It is noted that one of the main reasons of the educational backwardness of culturally disadvantaged children is their poor family background and relationships.

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