STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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Abstract

Numerous academics have proposed several instructional methods in the last few years in an attempt to improve the educational system for children with intellectual impairments. The use of rationalist and behaviourist approaches for educating children with intellectual impairments, as discussed in this article, is a hot topic of discussion. Many academics have argued that the two methods should be used exclusively. Nevertheless, to effectively organise instructions and teaching, this study suggests using concepts from both methods. This article provides a summary of key constructivist and behaviourist views, as well as their implications for pupils with intellectual impairments. Lastly, the article summarises the methods and gives several suggestions for educating cognitively challenged students in the classroom. Further, it discusses different ways to understand students with intellectual disabilities and how to teach them effectively.

Keywords: Intellectual Disabilities, constructivist and behaviourist theory, Assessment strategies

1. Introduction

Intellectual disabilities come in a variety of forms, each with different degrees of severity. Intellectual impairment is most often identified in childhood and has long-term consequences for a person's development. Intellectual impairment is defined as a substantial reduction in one's capacity to comprehend new or complicated information, acquire new skills, and operate independently, as well as in social functioning. Some individuals with minor intellectual disabilities may be able to acquire sufficient living skills and live independent lives as adults. The kinds and degrees of individuals with mental and functional impairments, as well as the reasons for disability, vary significantly[1]. A person's intellectual, social, and other functioning skills are all affected by genetic diseases. "Around 75% of people with intellectual impairments have relatively little symptoms, whereas 25% of people with intellectual disabilities have mild, acute, or severe symptoms".

There are many debates in exceptional education over the two major instructional viewpoints: constructivism and behaviourism. While some academics advocate for the adoption of a single teaching method, successful methods of providing order in the classroom combine ideas from many viewpoints. It is common in the educational sector to question a viewpoint, reject it, and adopt the current trend as if the initial viewpoint had no significant ideas. Effective educational

methods, on the other hand, almost always include concepts from many viewpoints. To get the greatest outcomes in the teaching-learning activities, it is critical to combine concepts from constructivism with behaviourism. Nonetheless, rather than depending only on one technique, it is preferable to organise the content and teaching approaches according to the particular student, the activities, as well as the educational experience. As a result, special education teachers may find it easier to educate learners with intellectual disabilities if they include components from both constructivist and behaviourist viewpoints. As a result, the emphasis of this article is on intellectual impairments and even some of the educational difficulties that these children face. The goal of this study is to see if constructivism or behaviourism is the better method for educating cognitively challenged children[2][16]. It also uses traditional research to better understand the implications of intellectual impairment and the traits linked with intellectually challenged pupils. The article wraps up by outlining constructivism and behaviourism, as well as the many methods that a teacher may use to incorporate all children with intellectual impairments in the learning experience.

The best way to understand kids with intellectual disabilities
An intellectual disability is a wide term that encompasses a wide range of skill levels, and severity levels, including assistance needs. It may affect a person's capacity to operate intellectually and adaptively.
Solving problems, the ability to effectively communicate, and the capability to understand are all instances of intellectual processing difficulties. Particular difficulties, including cleanliness, routines, or even day-to-day social skills, may all be part of adaptive functioning and behaviour.

The following are among the most frequent reasons for Intellectual Disabilities:

- **Genetic disorders** - generated most frequently by faulty genes acquired from a parent or by mistakes in the synthesis of genes during growth. Down syndrome, PKU, and Fragile X Syndrome are examples of Intellectual Disabilities that fall into this group.
- **Pregnancy difficulties** - as a consequence of the baby not growing correctly within the mother, there are a variety of reasons for Intellectual Disabilities as a consequence of pregnancy difficulties. This may be caused by drinking while pregnant or getting a severe illness.
- **Birth complications** - in protracted or difficult deliveries, when the infant may not be receiving sufficient oxygen, the likelihood of the kid having Intellectual Disabilities increases dramatically.
- **Health problems** - a variety of illnesses and health concerns, such as measles or whooping cough, may cause intellectual impairments. ID due to illness may also be caused by starvation, poisoning, or an absence of availability to timely medical treatment.

Intellectual impairment is not an illness, nor is it a mental health issue. Over 3 million children in the United States have an intellectual impairment that necessitates special schooling or even other

accommodations for them to thrive and learn successfully in regular schools[3]. Although there is no treatment for Intellectual Disabilities, there is an indication that with more patience and time, children and adults with this condition may achieve and accomplish a lot in life and school.

2. Change for Scholars with Intellectual Disability

Kids having intellectual disabilities require extra assistance and adjustments in their surroundings, and also in the actions they participate in. Here are some changes that can assist kids with intellectual disabilities in studying more effectively.

2.1 A Peaceful Work Environment

Using this area solely for learning can also assist the kid in establishing a study pattern and realise that when he sits there, he is expected to focus on the task or job at hand, rather than play.

2.2 Productive Tasks

Educate them on important skills like how to cook an egg or even how to make their route to a relative's house.

2.3 Idea Persistence Throughout the Day

To learn and retain an idea, children with intellectual impairments must study it in a variety of methods and have the chance to practice it many times.

2.4 Student-to-Teacher Ratio

These kids need extra help and supervision as they engage in their tasks. For every three kids with intellectual impairments, there must be at least one teacher.

2.5 Experiential Learning

Utilizing all of their perceptions to study improves their ability to acquire and remember knowledge.

2.6 Security Precautions

Sharp scissors, knives, and other cutting implements should be placed out of range. Hazardous substances, such as cleaning fluids, must also be avoided. Medications should be stored out of the range of children. Additionally, ensure that none of the youngsters lock themselves in any room[4]. If a kid has a habit of putting little pearls or even other toy pieces in their mouth, they should be

kept far away from them. If the kid has convulsions, you may want to consider cushioning the furniture's edges to prevent harm.

2.7 Timetable

Short exercise periods must be included in the program, and physical and sitting tasks should be alternated. The program should also include certain elements of self-care such that children become more autonomous in the areas of putting on and taking off footwear, going to the bathroom, and eating themselves.

3. How to integrate intellectual disability techniques into your teaching in five different ways

Although there are numerous basic methods and recommendations for using Intellectual Disabilities in the school, putting those ideas into practice and incorporating them into your program is a separate story. However, in traditional institutions, striking a compromise between offering assistance to kids and delivering a well-rounded educational experience is critical.

With little interruption and great outcomes, these five approaches provide easy[5], efficient methods to integrate parts of Intellectual Disabilities-suitable standards into any schoolroom:

3.1 Take little moves

Begin by dissecting every lesson into its most basic, essential elements. These steps may be given to Intellectual Disabilities students while a larger class is being taught to ensure that they stay up and acquire the same knowledge as their classmates. This technique is quite successful in reducing stress and encouraging engagement.

3.2 Include additional physical learning opportunities.

This approach may be useful for all of your pupils to assist them in building their understanding in a more well-rounded manner, whether it's utilising tangible objects to assist understanding in sciences or mathematics, or just providing a direct means for students to link their education to the actual world.

3.3 Begin a review journal or chart.

Quick and regular feedback may be very beneficial to students with Intellectual Disabilities. A review book or chart may be used to keep track of that input, enabling the learner to see their progress in black and white.

3.4 Promote the use of music in the school.

Music may be an important component of any pupil's learning and growth, but it can be particularly motivating for those with Intellectual Disabilities[6]. Using music to accompany ideas or courses may help students remember knowledge and become more engaged in the topic.

3.5 Incorporate visual stimuli

Intellectual Disabilities students consider it simpler to concentrate when they have been visually engaged in the learning process, whether it's just sketching the idea you're presenting on a whiteboard or giving them a video or photo material to examine.

With intellectual disabilities being such a prevalent problem for many kids, it's critical to guarantee that they get the same amount of attention and care as any other students regarding their schooling. At the very same moment, teachers, academics, and families must collaborate to guarantee that every kid has the greatest possible learning atmosphere.

4. Initial methods for assisting children with intellectual disabilities

4.1 Dissect the Information.

Expect pupils to not learn it all at once when they are given new material. Instead, divide the educational job down into manageable chunks. Begin by introducing each learning activity one at a moment. This keeps the learner from being overwhelmed. After you've accomplished one step, go on to the next[7]. Many learning methods use a progressive, step-by-step technique that directly helps children with intellectual impairments. As pupils get more used to the classroom, the only change required is to increase the amount and intensity of the different phases.

4.2 Enabling children to roam about as they study. The bulk of pupils cannot learn unless they are actively engaged in their studies.

Prolonged oral conversations and presentations on abstract ideas are likely to be ignored by children, according to studies. Most individuals, on the other side, are kinesthetic learners who learn best by doing "hands-on" tasks. Students with Intellectual Disabilities benefit from a hands-on method and learning occurs when knowledge is tangible and visible. There are many methods to explain the idea of air pressure, for example, air resistance may be discussed in the concept by teachers[8]. They may be used to explain the pull or air pressure, that makes a descending item slow down. Instructors may also illustrate air resistance by lowering anything from a platform equipped with a parachute. Furthermore, by conducting an activity, instructors may directly question pupils regarding their feelings about air resistance. The kids may be required to design and test their parachutes. Most pupils remember more when they have personal experience with air resistance. Air resistance is better understood via direct feeling rather than theoretical reasoning.

4.3 Turn learning into a visual experience.

Pupils with disabilities perform better in classes that utilise visual elements. Since learners can observe an example for school projects, using charts, images, and graphs may significantly improve their learning opportunities. These images also assist kids in comprehending the appropriate actions to display. Charting pupils' performance, for instance, is extremely useful since kids have a beginning and finishing point.

4.4 Consider quick response a priority.

Educators should give a direct and quick assessment to students with Intellectual Disabilities, just as they would in any general classroom since they need instant input on how they are doing. This information enables children to connect their actions to the teacher's reaction. Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities find it difficult to establish a link between action and reaction when input is interrupted[9]. As a result, the learning potential is lost.

4.5 Make Modifications and Modifications to Reach the Learning Objectives

Students with ID, like some other disabled students, need adjustments and adaptations to succeed in the classroom. Students with disabilities often need assistance in the following categories:

- The passage of time
- Placement
- Resources
- Directions
- Student reaction

5. Assessment strategies

Assessment methods may need to be adjusted for students with intellectual disabilities. You may explore other evaluation methods after you have a good understanding of how the impairment affects learning. Equality of chance is not a given result when evaluating different modes of evaluation, but it is the goal. You must not reduce your expectations to facilitate students with disabilities, but you must provide them with a fair chance to show what they have understood:

• Enable project constraints to be extended.

• Preserve pupils' work using technology, such as digital photography, tape, and video.

• It may take kids longer to organise their ideas and order information. They will benefit by talking about their designs, paying special emphasis to the proper links and linkages between ideas.

• Promote students to contribute early draughts of projects so that they may get comments as part of the formulation phase.

• Disabled students will need more periods in an assessment to read and analyse problems as well as prepare their responses. Some pupils may want to have their test questions read to them. Several

learners may find it more convenient to dictate their responses to ascribe. They'll need a location that's both peaceful and distraction-free[10].

• Maintain written examination directions and phrases inside question papers as brief as possible. Main points, lists, and separate sections in questions are more probably to be properly understood.

• Short answering questions will be a better measure of their understanding since students with intellectual disabilities find it very hard to comprehend multiple choice questions in a manner that enables them to comprehend minor variations in the order of terms.

• To aid in test practice, students will benefit from such an examination schedule that includes some days among examinations.

• Many kids with IDs are habitual misspellers who struggle to utilise dictionaries.

6. Behaviourist Theory and Practices

Watson (1913), in The Behavioural Algahtani 1033 Learning Theory, clearly orchestrated the shift toward behaviourism and out from utilitarianism. Watson was enabled to create a connection between animals and their surroundings by using Pavlov's discoveries on animal reactions to inputs. It was hypothesised that even if animals such as dogs could be trained as well as taught to react to signals, then humans might also be trained to react to similar actions. While imprinting is restricted in its ability to shape behaviour since it requires the presence of a reaction, the introduction of compensation may be beneficial. When a person acts in a particular manner, a prize is awarded[11]. This is referred to as positive behaviour modification. In the instance of a pupil, the instructor may utilise incentives including such candies to guarantee that they do their assignments. In the school, the behaviourist approach emphasises providing clear and direct teaching. This method has received a lot of flak in the general studies community, but it shows promise when applied to children with intellectual disabilities.

Rather than focusing on the bad elements of the method, as is the case in general education, it is critical to examine the good components of behaviourist theory to enhance the educational students' experiences with ID. Trying to break down the process into manageable activities that children with intellectual disabilities may accomplish is a behaviourist theory-based strategy. Rather than presenting a broad subject in science about sound, the instructor may break down the lecture into smaller chunks. For example, the instructor may begin by introducing a single scientific method exercise, including the description of the issue, before moving on to the next step. Pupils with intellectual impairments benefit from the approach since they are recognized to struggle with learning complicated information. Excessive knowledge frustrates individuals and slows down their learning. When dealing with more difficult assignments, such as writing, the instructor may utilise modelling, which is among the methods advocated by behaviourists. For instance, in a writing task, the instructor may choose to describe and demonstrate each stage for students to grasp the criteria and key ideas.

Behaviourists think that just naming and providing a few instances of pre-writing methods or editing is insufficient. Aside from showing for the whole class, the instructor may also go the extra

mile and show each step to individual pupils. For example, while writing essays on "My First Day in School," the instructor may encourage pupils to discuss ideas and create a visual depiction of what happened on their first day of school[12]. The modelling approach entails the instructor providing examples of events that are expected to happen during the first day of schooling and then using those instances in sentences to form a cohesive paragraph. During the first day of school, pupils with intellectual impairments will utilise such images to reflect on their situations and write related thoughts about those events. Specific teaching techniques necessitate a lot of practice and evaluation of new information until learners grasp new ideas. Learners may drill and practice until they master new material using direct teaching techniques. Whenever it relates to memorising items and processing the information, pupils with intellectual impairments struggle. As a result, detailed teaching is the most effective approach for ensuring that these pupils retain ideas and absorb knowledge to comprehend abstract ideas. Furthermore, the strategy necessitates structure and methodical preparation. Due to their difficulties in information processing, paying close attention, and remembering concepts, children with intellectual impairments benefit from teacher-directed and controlled classes.

Whenever students understand what to expect from a class or subject, they perform better throughout the learning experience. Their attention then turns to fresh knowledge being given to connect it to what is previously understood. Because of its comprehensive character, the combination of constructivism and behaviourism affects the learning process, and instructors may fully address deficiencies in intellectual performance and adaptability qualities. This is accomplished by providing explicit instructions in a variety of cognitive domains outside of the regular curriculum[12]. Although these skills are primarily utilitarian, they are critical for children with intellectual impairments to achieve future autonomy. Money management, time governance, self-advocacy, cleanliness and self-care, leisure activities, social involvement, as well as vocational training are among the other skill categories. Pupils with intellectual impairments may successfully learn ideas in these domains by combining constructivism and behaviourism in an organised environment depending on the ability sets being presented. This learning method helps pupils with intellectual impairments gain skills in practical fields that they can use in their everyday lives. After the students have mastered the abilities, the instructor may include additional options to concentrate on generalisation.

6.1 Key ideas for utilising constructivist theory to educate children with intellectual disabilities

To make the material more relevant to pupils, it really should be linked to real-life scenarios. Educators should use examples and illustrations to go from the familiar to the unfamiliar. By providing explicit descriptions and direction, high-level thinking skills may be included[13]. Educating using pictures is the most effective method to provide good explanations to intellectually challenged youngsters.

6.2 Key ideas for utilising behaviourist theory to educate children with intellectual disabilities

Every stage of a procedure or specific event should be modelled and explained to pupils. This will guarantee that kids are learning and practice different topics at the same time. If at all feasible, pupils should be permitted to copy the teacher's basic models. Modelling also increases imagination and enhances creative abilities.

7. Conclusion

Due to various inadequacies in the cognitive and educational domains, pupils with intellectual disabilities need instructors to utilise innovative methods in the teaching and learning process. Educators ought to get acquainted with the trends of weaknesses and strengths of pupils with intellectual disabilities to guarantee an optimal understanding of topics. Such children, on the whole, have issues with their cognitive processing and responsive conduct. To address the requirements of children with intellectual impairments, educators may mix constructivism with behaviourism methods. Both approaches encourage instructors to create content including directions depending on student requirements, specific subject, and educational experience[14]. To avoid the problem of generalisation, the most efficient method to get optimum outcomes is to split complicated portions of the topic into smaller pieces. In addition to going from the familiar to the unfamiliar, pupils will gain as much from the learning experience if instructors connect the knowledge to real-life situations. Instructors must concentrate on a few concepts for courses involving complicated subjects due to the sheer limitations of pupils with intellectual disabilities[15]. They must also organise the tasks that will be incorporated in the education process such that learners may participate actively. This may be done, for instance, by employing diagrams or drawings that are extremely successful at teaching both simple and complicated ideas.

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