

# THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

By

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## ABSTRACT

*Psychology plays a significant role in the life of each and every human being. Starting from childhood, if psychology of learning is utilized positively it would play a vital role in the building up of a bright career of a child. The explosion of information technology has been exercising far reaching influence on the area of educational psychology. So the teachers have a responsible role in providing subjects according to the maturity level of the students and develop them into better citizens of India. This article discusses the aspects and scopes of Educational psychology in each phase of students' education. It also advocates the right approach that can be used by parents and teachers to create a better student community.*

*Keywords: Educational Psychology, Learning Process, Learning Situation, Learning Experience, Adolescents.*

## INTRODUCTION

The term Educational Psychology is the combination of two words, that is Education and Psychology. Psychology is the science of behaviour. It aims at studying the behaviour of individual and the group. Education on the other hand, implies the modification of the behaviour of an individual. Learning includes providing activities and subjects according to the maturity level of the students. In the learning process, educational psychology deals with the nature of learning and how it takes place. It considers the experimental evidences to explain the role and nature of reinforcement, forgetting, problem solving, transfer of training and the learning of concepts, skills and attitudes.

### Educational Psychology

Educational Psychology implies the application of principles and practice of Psychology to the various dimensions of education with a view to modify the behaviour of the learner in an educational environment so that he/she amicably adjusts himself/herself with the society with maximum of satisfaction and security. Crow and crow defines it as, "Educational Psychology describes and explains the learning experiences of an individual from birth through old age". Starting from

childhood, if it is utilized positively it plays a vital role in building up a bright career of a child. But its negative application leaves the child stranded for the whole life. Hence, a lot of steps have been taken more seriously now-a-days in the inception of the education of children. So a dire liability falls on the shoulder of the teachers to shape the life of their disciples in such a way that they are able to cope with the situations ahead. It is also the responsibility of the parent to educate and shape their children in such a way that they could become psychologically matured.

### Scope of Educational Psychology

The explosion of Information Technology (IT) has been exercising far-reaching influence on the area of educational Psychology. New and novel situations need a variety of efficient approaches to the educational matters. The most significant areas that are covered by educational Psychology are:

- Learner Growth and Development
- Learning
- Personality and Adjustment
- Evaluation and measurement, and
- Techniques and methods in Educational Psychology

## Parents and Psychology of Learning

An elementary knowledge of educational Psychology would prove very useful to the parents who are undoubtedly the first teachers in the following manners.

- The knowledge of educational Psychology points out that the parents should bear in mind the maxim "Love the child and the child will love you, Hate the child and he will hate you".
- It helps the parents to understand the process of development and growth of their children.
- It acquaints the parents with the emotional, mental and physical needs of the children.
- Educational Psychology impresses the parents of the necessity of providing wholesome environment to their children to make them lead a happy life and to be free from anxiety.
- It enables the parents to know that repression and punishment will adversely affect the mental health of children.
- It also helps the parents to understand themselves and their roles and responsibilities towards their children.

## Adolescents and Psychology of Learning

Adolescents aged between 10-19 years account more than one-fifth of the world's population. In India, this age group forms 21.4 percent of the total population. The early adolescence (9-13 years) is characterized by a spurt of growth and the development of secondary sexual characteristics. The mid-adolescence (14-15 years) stage is distinguished by the development of a separate identity from parents, of new relationship with peer groups and the opposite sex and of experimentation. In the late adolescence (16-19 years) stage, they have fully developed in physical characteristics (similar to adults) and have formed a distinct identity and have well formed opinions and ideas. Hence, learning depends on the age group of the children and the different stages of education.

## Teachers and Psychology of Learning

Psychology of learning includes providing activities and

subjects according to the maturity level of the students. In the learning situation, factors of classroom psychology such as class-room management and discipline, techniques and aids which facilitate learning, methods of teaching, evaluation techniques and practices, guidance and counselling play a crucial role.

The Psychology of learning is concerned with

- Acquisition and change of our patterns of behaviour
- How those processes take place most efficiently
- How learning of different kinds can be measured
- What conditions help us to retain what we learn and use it appropriately in new situations
- How learning varies with different levels of ability.

Many kinds of learning "content" are involved in school work from simple muscular responses to highly complex intellectual process. Hence, a teacher's need for studying the psychology of learning is obvious. As Educational Psychology is concerned with Human Factor of learning, and the concepts which are derived from experimental work in psychological laboratories, theoretical knowledge of the subject alone cannot help the class room teachers to deal with the students. Their knowledge in theory should be connected with class room practice.

## Psychology of Motivation and Learning

Behaviour of men is controlled by some motives and every human behaviour is "motivated". The teacher, in order to make his teachings effective should have a good knowledge of motivation and its effect on learning. It would also help him to study individual difference among students. Learning is a behaviour which is aroused by a wish of fulfilling a necessity. It is difficult to teach without any knowledge about motivation. It arouses interest of learners and makes them attentive and interested. So, for better learning outcome, the teacher should arouse interest in the students.

Secondly, Reward is the best incentive to make the student an expert. It arouses interest in him and motivates him to master the skill. Praise is a commonly used motivation. It is the duty of parents and teachers to motivate the child to learn, by praising and appreciating

his right moves and achievements, rather than insulting on their drawbacks. Next comes the Competitive attitude, which makes the child not only to reach his destination sooner, but also to show a better performance. There is no doubt that competition accelerates learning process and the parents and teachers have to make sure that the competitive spirit in children are safe and not deviating them from social norms. Finally, teachers should give opportunities to feel the students of their importance as, every individual is aware of his self-respect and so it is the responsibility of the teachers to teach them to be careful in not running down one's personality before others.

## Role of Government in Education

### *Elementary Education*

The Indian Government has passed the constitution 86<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act 2002, to make elementary education a Fundamental Right for children in the age group of 6-14 years. It is proposed to bring in a follow up legislation with detailed mechanism to implement this Act. Table 1 gives the details of the progress of enrolment from 1950-51 to 2003-04 in the Primary level (Class I-V Age 6-11) and the middle level (VI to VII Std Age 11-14 years). Over a period of 50 years, about 8400 lakhs of children have been enrolled in the elementary schools.

Year	Primary Level	Middle Level	Total	Cumulative Total
1950-1951	161	31	192	192
1960-1961	283	67	350	542
1968-1969	419	125	544	1086
1979-1980	523	193	716	1802
1989-1990	651	322	973	2775
1999-2000	715	421	1136	3911
2000-2001	584	342	926	4837
2001-2002	672	426	1098	5935
2002-2003	727	457	1184	7119
2003-2004	766	458	1224	8343

Source: Compiled from India year book 2006.

**Table 1. Elementary Education Progress of Enrolment in lakh pupils**

### *Plan Expenditure on education*

In line with the commitment of augmenting resources for education, the allocation for education has over the years, increased significantly. The plan outlay on education has increased from Rs. 151.20 crores in the First

Five year plan to Rs 43,825 crores in the Tenth Five year plan (2002-2007). The expenditure on education as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) also rose from 0.64 percent in 1951-52 to 3.74 percent in 2003-2004. The outlay for education in the Tenth Five year plan of Rs 43,825 crores is higher than the Ninth plan outlay of Rs 24,008 crores by 1.76 times. Since the government is keen in educating the people, the allotment of funds for education increases year after year.

## Conclusion

Schools exist for the purpose of providing meaningful experiences through which the growth of the child can be promoted most effectively. No one denies the fact that the child can and does- learn many useful and important things out of school. However, such out-of-school experiences tend to be haphazard, uncoordinated and not sufficiently organized.

Hence the role of the Government in providing good education, and the parents and teachers role in augmenting it further is very crucial. Although the creation of an effective learning situation is a basic professional taste of the teacher, his responsibility cannot stop there, and needs to be correlated with the psychology of learning.

Learning must have a purpose. It must be organized towards the child's present and future life needs. Learning problems must be chosen in accordance with each child's abilities and life goals. One must apply his knowledge of the principles of learning and motivation to teach each child in the classroom, and groom him to be a better individual.

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