

GUIDANCE AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS AMONG STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

In not only nursery schools, but at all levels of education and even in various forms of employment settings, there are individuals, who experience challenging behaviours. When the individuals experience various forms of challenging behaviours, they aim to overcome them and work efficiently towards the achievement of desired goals and objectives. The main objective of this research paper is to understand the challenging behaviours among nursery school students and what kinds of measures need to be put into operation by the teachers to overcome them. Various forms of challenging behaviours do prove to be impediments within the course of achievement of academic goals. They impose unfavourable effects upon students as well as their parents. But it is vital for the parents to put into operation the measures and approaches, which would enable their children to overcome challenging behaviours. In nursery schools as well, the teachers are required to implement the teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies in such a manner, which would enable the students to learn efficiently and overcome various kinds of problems and challenges. The main areas that have been taken into account in this research paper include, types of challenging behaviours, measures to curb challenging behaviours and guiding students with challenging behaviours through curriculum and instructional strategies.

Keywords: Academic Concepts, Challenging Behaviours, Guidance, Measures, Nursery Schools, Students, Teachers

In nursery schools, the students are in the age group of two plus to five years. When they get enrolled in nursery schools, they are given playthings and when they have familiarised themselves with the school environmental conditions, they are imparted information and learning in terms of lesson plans, academic concepts, and extra-curricular and creative activities. When the students are participating in these activities or when they are playing or learning a lesson, it is vital for the teachers to adequately guide them. The teachers need to pay attention towards all students in class and make sure that they are able to acquire an efficient understanding. When the students find certain concepts difficult and challenging, it is apparent that they would lack interest and enthusiasm towards learning. In such cases, it is vital for the teachers to put into operation the measures and approaches that would be effectual and worthwhile in overcoming the challenges. Therefore, it can be stated that curriculum and instructional strategies need to be implemented in such a manner that students can be appropriately guided and challenging behaviours can be overcome.

In some cases, the individuals form the viewpoint that working in the field of early childhood education is manageable. The reason being, the lesson plans and academic concepts that are taught to the students are easy and one does not have to be concerned in terms of preparing the lesson plans or working meticulously. When the individuals have acquired training related to the field of early childhood education, one may find employment in this field. In other words, one has to possess

adequate educational qualifications and competencies in order to find employment in this field. But dealing with students is not an easy task. The students need to be under constant supervision throughout the school timings and in some cases, they also experience challenging behaviours, which need to be overcome. Therefore, it is vital for the educators to up-grade their knowledge and competencies and carry out their job duties satisfactorily. The primary objective of the educators is to lead to effective growth and development of the students.

TYPES OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

Challenging behaviours are the behaviours that prove to be impediments within the course of learning and development of the students. These behaviours interfere with the development and maintenance of reciprocal, positive and nurturing relationships with the parents or the caregivers. Apart from teachers, it is the responsibility of the parents to identify the challenging behaviours of the children and implement measures and approaches to overcome them. When the child experiences a challenging behaviour, it is apparent that he or she will experience problems in understanding academic concepts and may be unable to participate in extra-curricular and creative activities. Therefore, it is vital for the parents to pay attention and make provision of adequate solutions. The various types of challenging behaviours have been stated as follows:

Aggression and Frustration – When the children depict aggression and frustration, these are regarded as challenging behaviours. These behavioural traits are even depicted in children, even when they are below two years of age. When the children are young, they have not developed the ways to communicate with others. Therefore, when they are in need of something, they depict aggression and frustration. It is usually alarming for the parents to see their child depicting these behavioural traits. But it is regarded as the common feature of development. As the parents generate awareness in terms of ways to make the children disciplined and setting apart correct from incorrect, then they will be able to curb these behavioural traits among their children (Yousefi, 2016).

Introversion – In the field of early childhood education, the children realize that outside their home also there are individuals, whom they need to interact with. The development of introversion among students is regarded as one of the most critical challenging behaviours, as when the children will not interact with others, they will be unable to learn and enrich their overall quality of lives. Introversion imposes many unfavourable and detrimental effects upon the mind-sets of the children and they tend to develop the feelings of anger and frustration. Therefore, it is vital for the parents to make sure that children do not remain in seclusion and interact with others in an effective manner within as well as outside the home. Outside the home, the places include schools, parks, and relatives, friends and community members.

Negative Behaviours – Children depict some negative behaviours, which are regarded as challenging. These include, not answering when someone is asking a question, not sharing with others, screaming when someone has taken their thing, depicting impatience, not smiling or wishing others and not depicting any manners and etiquettes. These negative behaviours are disturbing to the parents of the children. But when other individuals experience these behaviours, even they feel disturbed. It is vital for the parents to make provision of support and assistance to the children in overcoming these

negative behaviours. They need to teach positive behaviours to the children and implement measures to reinforce them (Collier, 2018). As when they are not checked on time, they may assume a major form, when the child grows. Therefore, in order to form good terms and relationships with others, it is necessary to overcome negative behaviours.

Learning Disabilities – Learning disabilities are the disabilities that are experienced by the children regarding learning. When they are unable to acquire an efficient understanding of the academic concepts and experience problems and challenges in doing well academically, then it is stated that they are experiencing learning disabilities. These disabilities are regarded as major barriers within the course of achievement of academic goals. These disabilities are regarded as challenging behaviours as the children are not able to understand the lesson plans and do well academically. It is vital for the parents and teachers to implement measures and put into operation the teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies in a manner that will help the children to overcome learning disabilities. Hence, they will be able to acquire an efficient understanding of lesson plans and do well academically.

Speech Disabilities – Speech disabilities are the disabilities that children experience while speaking. This disability affects the ability of the children to produce sounds that create words. Types of speech disabilities include stuttering, apraxia and dysarthria. The causes of speech disabilities are, weakening of muscles, brain injuries, degenerative diseases, autism and hearing loss. Disabilities are regarded as barriers within the course of effective communication. This disability prevents the individuals from making correct speech sounds. The individuals in this manner are unable to express their thoughts and feelings to others (Gill, 2019). This is apparent that when children will experience speech disabilities, they will be unable to not only acquire education but will be unable to interact with others. Hence, it is regarded as a challenging behaviour.

Visual Impairments – Visual impairment is also known as vision impairment or vision loss. It is a decreased ability to see the degree that causes problems, which may not be overcome completely by the use of assistive devices such as spectacles. Some also include, those who have the decreased ability to see, because they do not even have access to assistive devices. When the children experience visual impairments, it is apparent that they will experience problems in viewing learning materials. The main causes of low vision and blindness are eye diseases, such as, macular degeneration, cataract and glaucoma. Other eye disorders, eye injuries and birth defects can also cause the loss of vision. Therefore, it can be stated that loss of vision is regarded as a major challenge that children may experience.

Hearing Impairments – Hearing loss results in the most common manner from genetic defects in new-borns and from the ear infections or earwax in older children. Hearing impairments are caused due to loud noise or wear and tear on the hairs or the nerve cells in the cochlea that send sound signals to the brain (Shah, 2019). When these hairs or nerve cells are damaged or missing, electrical signals do not get transmitted in an efficient manner and hearing loss takes place. When the children do not respond to sounds, experience difficulties in communicating with others or are slow in beginning to talk, then their hearing may be impaired. Hearing impairments is challenging among children. Within the classrooms, when they will be unable to pay attention towards what the teacher is teaching, it is

apparent that they will be unable to understand the concepts. The children with hearing impairments make use of assistive devices, such as, hearing aids. Through their utilization, they are able to overcome the challenges.

Inability to Walk – Since the stage of early childhood, some children are unable to walk. When they are unable to walk, they are either assisted by their parents at home and even when they need to go out or they make use of wheelchairs. Research has indicated, these children usually do not get enrolled in schools. As in schools, when they will be unable to participate in activities, then parents usually do not get them enrolled in schools. Inability to walk is challenging for the children. The main reason being, young children take pleasure, when they get engaged in activities such as, playing on the swings, running, dancing, and so forth. Therefore, when they will be unable to walk, they will not be able to participate in these activities. Hence, this challenging behaviour is unfavourable upon the lives of the children as well as their parents.

Work Pressure – Work pressure is considered challenging to the students to a major extent. When the children feel that they are experiencing work pressure, they do not tend to possess a pleasant attitude. In schools, the teachers are instructed that they should not put any work pressure upon children. The children should be encouraged to participate in activities that would be pleasurable and motivating to them. At home as well, the parents need to see that the children should not get involved in tasks and activities, which would cause pressure and stress. When they are engaged in play, timings need to be noted and it needs to be ensured that they do not feel fatigued. Therefore, it can be stated that children should not be pressurised to participate in tasks and activities neither within home nor in school.

Vulnerability and Apprehensiveness – Research has indicated that in nursery schools, children feel vulnerable and apprehensive. When they are taken to school by their parents and when they leave them and return, they usually develop vulnerability and apprehensiveness. This is regarded as the challenging behaviour as they tend to depict behavioural traits, such as, crying, and screaming for their parents, especially mothers. In order to curb these types of challenging behaviours, it is vital for the teachers to possess a pleasant attitude and deal with students in a calm manner. They usually implement certain ways such as, giving playthings to the children, showing them images and pictures on the computer, getting them engaged in music and dance activities and so forth. Therefore, it can be stated that implementing soothing methods will help the teachers and children in overcoming vulnerability and apprehensiveness within the school environment.

MEASURES TO CURB CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

When the children experience challenging behaviours, then various measures that need to be put into operation to curb them have been stated as follows:

Eliminate Involvement of Children in Perilous Situations – When the children experience challenging behaviours, the teachers in school and parents at home need to make sure that the children are not involved in risky or dangerous situations. When they are involved in perilous situations, they usually tend to get disturbed and as a result the challenging behaviours would get reinforced.

Therefore, it is vital for the parents and teachers to promote pleasant environmental conditions. If the child is behaving in the manner that may impose detrimental effects on him or others, then the parents and teachers need to prevent him from getting involved in such situations. For instance, when the children are getting involved in play and other leisure activities, it needs to be ensured that they are suitable to them (Children with Challenging Behaviour, 2010).

Change the Place or Location – There are cases, when the behaviours of the children takes place in certain places or locations or in the presence of other individuals. In such cases, there is need to change the place or location. By changing the places or the locations, the parents may be able to curb the behaviour of the children. They need to expose the children to such kinds of places or locations, where they feel comfortable and pleasurable. On the other hand, socialization of the children may also take place with individuals, in the presence of whom they feel comfortable. Therefore, changing the place or location and creating a suitable environment for the children is one of the important measures of curbing challenging behaviours (Children with Challenging Behaviour, 2010).

Medical Treatment – When the children experience challenging behaviours due to which they experience barriers within the course of implementation of tasks and activities, then it is vital that they will require medical treatment and counselling and guidance from medical practitioners. When the children experience visual impairments or hearing impairments or speech disabilities or learning disabilities or when they are not ambulatory, then it is vital for the parents to consult medical practitioners. Satisfactory medical treatment will enable the children to overcome the challenges and carry out their job duties in a well-organized manner to enrich their lives. Therefore, it can be stated that consulting medical practitioners and making use of assistive devices is one of the important measures of curbing challenging behaviours.

Communicate effectively with the Children – The parents, teachers, relatives, friends as well as other members of the community are required to communicate in an effective manner with these children. When they perform a task or behave in a manner that is not acceptable, such as, depicting aggression and frustration, then too, the other individuals need to handle them in a calm manner. These children need to be communicated with in terms of various aspects, which may arouse pleasure and contentment within them. They need to be communicated with in terms of various factors, which would be favourable to them. Furthermore, the children need to be prepared to adjust with other individuals within their homes and schools. Therefore, effective communication with the children is one of the important measures in curbing challenging behaviours.

Teach Alternative Behaviours – The parents and teachers are required to teach alternative behaviours to children. When knowledge is provided to them in terms of alternative behaviours, it needs to be ensured that they are favourable and promote positivity. In this case, it is vital to tell the children what their parents and teachers want them to do and they should not tell the children, what they do not want them to do. When the parents, other family members and teachers are teaching alternative behaviours, they need to speak in such a manner, which may motivate the children. For instance, when the child is encouraged to study, then he can be told that if he concentrates on his studies, he will be rewarded with a gift. Therefore, teaching of alternative behaviours is one of the important ways of curbing challenging behaviours.

Develop Consistency – The children need to develop consistency among themselves, particularly the ones, who experience challenging behaviours. The consistency need to be in terms of one's daily routine and behavioural traits. The parents need to help the children to develop consistency in their daily routine, particularly in setting the time for all tasks and activities, such as, sleeping, playing, studying, eating and so forth. On the other hand, it is vital to possess a calm attitude and overcome aggression and frustration. The parents, especially mothers are responsible in the development of daily routine tasks among children and they need to help them in maintaining their daily routine. Therefore, it can be stated that development of consistency is regarded as crucial in curbing challenging behaviours.

Use Humour and Games – The use of humour and games are regarded to play an important part in overcoming the feelings of anger and frustration. Getting involved in humorous activities and playing games is pleasurable for the children. In nursery schools, after the teachers have imparted information to the children in terms of an academic concept in the first period, in the next period, they are encouraged to participate in play activities. These help in stimulating the mind-sets of the children and overcome the challenging behaviours. At home as well, parents, older siblings and other family members make use of humour and games to help the children in overcoming challenges. Therefore, it can be stated that using humour and games are regarded as important in curbing challenging behaviours.

Promote Discipline among Children – It is vital for the parents and teachers to promote discipline among children with challenging behaviours. When they are implementing measures to promote discipline, they should not depict any form of strictness or punish the child. As these factors may impede their psychological approach. But in promoting discipline among these children, it is vital to communicate with them, what is better and worthwhile. In other words, these children should be encouraged to get engaged in tasks and activities, which would enable them to become more disciplined, perform their tasks and activities in a well-organized manner, maintain effective terms and relationships with other individuals within as well as outside the home and overcome problems and challenges. Therefore, it can be stated that promoting discipline among children is regarded as important in curbing challenging behaviours.

Obtain Feedback Regarding Academic Performance – The parents are regarded as the first teachers of their children, they are the ones, who need to adequately guide and lead them in the right direction. Facilitating acquisition of education among children and helping them to do well in school is regarded as one of the indispensable factors, which are focused upon by the parents. When the children are unable to do well in school and experience setbacks in their academic performance, this is of major concern to the parents. Hence, it is vital for them to obtain feedback from the teachers regarding the academic performance of their children. The parents need to make sure that challenging behaviours do not prove to be barriers within the course of their academic performance. Therefore, when they obtain feedback regarding the academic performance, they are able to implement measures and approaches, which would enable the children to overcome challenges and do well. One of the effective measures is obtaining counselling and guidance from experts and professionals.

Promote Socialization – It is comprehensively understood that loneliness is a chronic and a distressful state for children. In order to lead to their effective growth and development, it is necessary to promote socialization. The parents take their children to parks and other places, where they can socialize with other children as well as interact with adults. Whereas, in schools, the teachers make provision of knowledge and understanding to the students in terms of academic concepts and also promote socialization. Socialization is beneficial to the students in number of ways. They are able to augment their understanding in terms of various factors, their mind-sets gets stimulated towards learning, they take pleasure in attending schools and are able to enhance their communication skills. Therefore, it can be stated that promoting socialization is one of the ways of curbing challenging behaviours.

GUIDING STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS THROUGH CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

When the students experience various types of challenging behaviours, then parents are vested with the responsibility to conduct analysis, identify the causes and put into operation the methods and strategies, which would be beneficial and favourable to them as well as the children in eliminating challenging behaviours and prevent them from assuming a major form. Since the time of birth till toddlerhood, it is essential for the parents to make provision of appropriate medical treatment to the children. During the stage of early childhood, there are occurrence of many health problems and illnesses. Therefore, consulting medical practitioners is vital in promoting good health of the children. Children are sharp observers. They usually understand what they observe, therefore, it is vital for the parents at home as well as teachers in school to create pleasant and amiable environmental conditions. The individuals need to communicate with each other in polite and decent manner and curb any kinds of conflicting situations and disputes. As when children observe these, their mind-sets may get influenced in a negative manner. Within schools, the teachers are vested with the responsibility of implementing the curriculum and instructional strategies in a manner, which would be advantageous to the students. The areas in terms of which these are implemented have been stated as follows:

Academic Concepts – The main objective of nursery schools is to make provision of knowledge to the children in terms of academic concepts, so they are able to develop the foundation for learning. The children with challenging behaviours are also provided with information in terms of academic concepts, so they are able to develop a foundation for acquisition of education and bring about improvements in their lives. The academic concepts that are imparted to the students include, alphabets, numbers, lines, environmental factors, such as, plants, flowers, animals, birds, vehicles etc., family, home, shapes, colours and so forth. The children with challenging behaviours usually require support and assistance from their parents to acquire an efficient understanding of academic concepts. When the parents are unable to find time, then private tutors are hired at homes. When these children have acquired an efficient understanding of academic concepts, they are able to feel pleasurable and contented. They usually form the viewpoint that they will be able to achieve academic goals and objectives and enrich their overall quality of lives.

Diet and Nutrition – Diet and nutrition is an important concept in terms of which the teachers need to impart information to the students. Research has indicated that children depict interest and enthusiasm for sweets and other food items, which are not very healthy. But teachers and parents need to impart them information in terms of differences between healthy and unhealthy food items. The children need to understand how healthy food items would be advantageous and unhealthy food items need to be consumed in moderation, as consuming them frequently may have detrimental effects upon health. In some nursery schools, teachers write diaries in terms of lesson plans and academic concepts that are been taught to the students. In diaries, they also provide information in terms of diet and nutrition. In this manner, parents are able to generate information in terms of diet and nutrition that needs to be provided to the children.

Manners and Etiquettes – Manners and etiquettes are important concepts that are focused upon during the early childhood stage. The teachers impart knowledge to the students in terms of various types of manners and etiquettes. These include, sharing one's things with others, waiting patiently for one's turn and giving others a chance, smiling and wishing others in school as well as in the community, speaking the truth, not being untidy, not asking parents for things, which are not needed, such as, clothes, playthings and eatables, possessing a pleasant attitude and a helping nature, realising one's responsibilities, assisting parents by maintaining cleanliness and communicating with others in an appropriate manner. When the children are able to put into practice these manners and etiquettes, they are able to maintain effective terms and relationships with others as well as overcome all the problems and challenges that may arise within the course of acquisition of education.

Extra-Curricular and Creative Activities – In nursery schools, the primary focus of curriculum and instructional strategies is upon the effective implementation of extra-curricular and creative activities, as they develop motivation among children towards learning, make them feel pleasurable within the school environment and help them in overcoming the challenges that may take place within the course of learning. Various types of extra-curricular and creative activities that are taught to the children include, dancing, playing of musical instruments, singing, role playing, drawing, painting, colouring, yoga, taekwondo and so forth. Research has indicated that participation of the children in these extra-curricular and creative activities is pleasurable. Even when they experience challenges and disabilities, they take pleasure, when participating in these activities. It is vital for the teachers to possess adequate information and be well-equipped in terms of these activities. When the teachers will be knowledgeable only then, they will be able to guide and lead the students in an appropriate manner.

Rhymes, Poetries and Stories - Rhymes, poetries and stories are regarded as important concepts on which the curriculum and instructional strategies need to focus upon. The teachers usually take out time on daily basis to make provision of knowledge in terms of rhymes and poetries to the students. When they feel that students have become well-equipped with one rhyme or poetry, they proceed towards the other. Whereas, telling them stories is stimulating. When the teachers tell them stories, they develop curiosity and attentively listen. There are organization of competitions as well regarding rhymes, poetries and stories. When the teachers feel that students with challenging behaviours too are able to participate in competitions, they encourage them. Usually, when the students do well in competitions, they are rewarded. Therefore, when students with challenging behaviours do well, they

get rewarded and feel elated. Therefore, rhymes, poetries and stories need to be focused upon on regular basis.

Arts and Crafts – Arts and crafts are regarded as concepts, which are of utmost significance. The various kinds of arts and crafts that are taught in nursery schools to normal children as well as the children with challenging behaviours are, colouring a picture with crayons on paper, hand painting, spray painting, sand painting, scribbling with crayons, cutting and pasting objects, using vegetables and fruits for painting, using pencil sharpening for making crafts, painting clay pots and drawing of simple objects, such as, shapes, fruits and so forth. This is apparent that when the children are engaged in the production of arts and crafts, they will need support and assistance from their teachers. When the teachers will make provision of adequate help, the students will be able to acquire an efficient understanding and stimulate their mind-sets towards learning. When students are engaged in preparation as well as observe colourful objects around them, they develop motivation towards learning.

Sports and Physical Activities – The participation of children in sports and physical activities is encouraged. When they participate in these activities, they are able to benefit in number of ways, such as, maintaining good health, remaining active, and when they are really good, they may even take them up as careers. In nursery schools, even water sports are encouraged. Research has indicated that when students are not ambulatory, in other words, when they experience challenges in walking, in such cases as well, they are able to effectively participate in water sports. In such cases, children are good at swimming. Therefore, it can be stated that participation in sports and physical activities are important on which curriculum and instructional strategies are focused upon.

Group Discussions – In order to facilitate learning among students, it is necessary to encourage their participation in group discussions. When the children participate in discussions with their fellow students, they are able to augment their communication skills, develop a social circle and acquire an efficient understanding of academic concepts as well. Research has indicated, when students are unable to acquire an understanding of lesson plans, when the teacher is teaching, they are able to understand them when they interact with fellow students. Group discussions enable the students to develop constructive viewpoints in terms of learning, individuals and overall school environmental conditions. The children with challenging behaviours are also able to do well academically as well as develop positivity and constructivism.

Maintaining Cleanliness – The nursery school children tend to depict untidiness. Therefore, teaching children how to maintain cleanliness is important aspect of curriculum and instructional strategies. This concept is focused upon within homes and schools. Therefore, parents at home as well as teachers in school need to provide them understanding that they need to maintain cleanliness. When they have finished their play, they need to keep the playthings in their proper places, they should not scribble on the walls or desks and maintain cleanliness. This concept also needs to be taught to the children with challenging behaviours. But when the parents and teachers are teaching them this concept, they need to pay attention and implement it. It is up to the students to develop interest for learning.

Housekeeping Tasks – The students are imparted with knowledge in terms of housekeeping tasks. They need to assist their mothers through getting engaged in housekeeping tasks, which are manageable. These include, keeping toys and playthings at their proper places, keeping clothes in the cupboard, cleaning the tables and other furniture and assisting elders of the family by giving them certain things, which they may ask for, such as a glass of water. Information in terms of housekeeping tasks are imparted to the children by parents as well as teachers in school. Research has indicated that involvement of children with challenging behaviours in housekeeping tasks is also recognized to a major extent. One of the reasons that they are imparted information and are encouraged towards these tasks is that they will be able to develop the knowledge and competencies, as housekeeping is an important aspect that all individuals need to be aware of.

CONCLUSION

In nursery schools, there are students who experience challenging behaviours. These behaviours prove to be impediments within the course of acquisition of education. But these children need adequate support and assistance from parents and teachers in overcoming challenging behaviours. The various types of challenging behaviours are, aggression and frustration, introversion, negative behaviours, learning disabilities, speech disabilities, visual impairments, hearing impairments, inability to walk, work pressure, and vulnerability and apprehensiveness. Measures to curb challenging behaviours are, eliminate involvement of children in perilous situations, change the place or location, medical treatment, communicate effectively with the children, teach alternative behaviours, develop consistency, use humour and games, promote discipline among children, obtain feedback regarding academic performance and promote socialization. The parents as well as the teachers need to remain informative in terms of these measures.

The areas in terms of which the teachers are putting into practice the curriculum and instructional strategies are academic concepts, diet and nutrition, manners and etiquettes, extra-curricular and creative activities, rhymes, poetries and stories, arts and crafts, sports and physical activities, group discussions, maintaining cleanliness and housekeeping tasks. The information in terms of these factors are imparted by the teachers as well as parents to not only normal children, but also to children with challenging behaviours. Finally, it can be stated, when the children experience challenging behaviours, they need to be provided with assistance from parents and teachers and measures need to be implemented to overcome the challenges, so they are able to acquire education and bring about improvements in their lives.

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