

# **A Learner with Difficulties in Education to Be a Successful Learner by Counselling**

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## **Abstract**

Learning is a lifelong process. In education process every child requires happy learning. We know that all the children are not happy at learning due to different reasons. Those reasons may be due to physical factors, home environment, school environment, psychological factors, poor memory skills etc. With inspiring quotation from Stephen Hawking, Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change. However difficult life may seem, there is always something we can do and succeed at. So learner's difficulties in education can solve through counseling. By knowing their strengths and weakness, counseling will help and can bring the change in their knowledge. Any learner with difficulties in education may change their attitude towards their studies by motivating and make them too confident in their academic achievement by inspiring stories of successful persons. This change is possible and to make them a successful learners in their education by counseling.

**Key words:** Academic achievement, Attitude, Inspiring, Learning, strengths

## INTRODUCTION:

**Education**, discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in schools or school-like environments as opposed to various non formal and informal means of socialization (e.g., rural development projects and education through parent-child relationships). Education can be thought of as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists term socialization or enculturation.

The attempt to apply scientific method to the study of education dates back to the German philosopher Johann Friedrich Herbart, who called for the **application of psychology to the art of teaching**. But not until the end of the 19th century, when the German psychologist Wilhelm Max Wundt established the first psychological laboratory at the University of Leipzig in 1879, were serious efforts made to separate psychology from philosophy. Wundt's monumental *Principles of Physiological Psychology* (1874) had significant effects on education in the 20th century. Besides the specific applications of measurement, counselling, and clinical psychology, psychology contributed to education through studies of cognition, information processing, the technology of instruction, and learning styles.

**Counsellor Education** is a field focused on the preparation of students to professionally apply the theory and principles of guidance and counselling for the personal, social, educational, and vocational development of others. Its emergence and development has been tied with the evolution of counselling as a unique professional field.

The primary focus of counsellor education is the training and preparation of professional counsellors; this includes recruiting and training the future generations of academic professionals who will teach the curriculum of counselling theory and practice. Educational contents often include issues and trends related to multiculturalism, neuroscience, and other clinical considerations such as trauma and abuse assessment.

Education has a vital role in the development and abilities of students. With education expected of individuals (students) can develop to their full potential-potential qualified personal. Indicators of school success in carrying out his task can be seen from the achievement of high academic achievement and a variety of specialized skills possessed by learners and not the least of which involves issues related to academics. While students are required to continue to improve academic achievement, during busyness and density of both school assignments academic assignments and extracurricular activities are followed by the students, so students need to follow the guidance and counselling services in schools to improve academic achievement. With such conditions it is necessary to investigate in depth whether the guidance and counselling itself may play a role in improving the academic achievement of students in school. School counsellors address the academic and developmental needs of all students, not just those in need, by collaborating with students, parents, school staff and the community School counselling programs exhibit some characteristics like: Foundational

mission and goals, School counsellors design, implement, and maintain guidance programs that align with the educational mission and philosophies of their schools and school districts. These programs help every student develop competencies in academic achievement, personal and social development, and career planning.

## **What is a learning difficulty?**

A **learning difficulty** (also referred to as a learning disability) can be described as an issue with the brain's ability to process information. Individuals who have a learning difficulty may not learn in the same way or as quickly as their peers, and they might find certain aspects of learning, such as the development of basic skills, to be challenging. Because learning difficulties cannot be cured, their effects may impact an individual's performance throughout life: academically, in the workplace, and in relationships and daily life. Intervention and support, which may be supplemented by counselling or other mental health care services, can help an individual with a learning difficulty to achieve success.

Does “learning difficulty” mean the same thing as “learning disability”? Is it different from the language of “differences” or “lack of ability”? The term “learning difficulties” refers to students who can have trouble with learning. The acts of reading, comprehending, inferring, questioning, memorizing and recalling knowledge can be laden with difficulties.

## **WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING?**

Students can experience difficulties with learning for many different reasons. These include, for example, hearing and visual impairments; physical impairments; emotional, social or behavioral difficulties; prior education experiences; experiences at home; attention and concentration issues; and cognitive or intellectual difficulties. The impact of such difficulties may be short term or long term. These difficulties can be seen across various domains of education. Students may struggle with written expression and constructing meaning from language, or with the fine motor skills required for handwriting. Difficulty with mathematics may present as an inability to learn basic mathematical concepts including addition, time tables and mathematical problem solving.

Reading difficulties include neurological deficits in decoding letter symbols and words, word recognition or phonological processing issues, or difficulties with comprehension. Misinterpretation of sound, touch and movement, and the inability to successfully receive, interpret and integrate sensory stimuli can lead students to actively seek or avoid sensory information, thereby impacting their ability to make sense of their learning environment.

Difficulties in learning indicate an individual's need for alternative learning methods. They are not indicative of intelligence level and are not the same as intellectual difficulties—learning challenges that result from sensory handicaps; developmental delays; or cultural, economic, or environmental disadvantages. While some learning difficulties are mild, others may have a severe impact on an individual's academic performance. However, **behavioural teachings tailored specifically to the type of difficulty can help an individual develop strategies to address and work with a challenge, and intervention can be of significant benefit.**

### **POSSIBLE CAUSES OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:**

It is not clear what causes learning difficulties, but researchers believe genetic influences, brain development, and environmental effects may all be likely to have some impact on their development. While learning difficulties often appear in families, researchers are uncertain whether this is due to genetic causes or if this recurrence appears because children typically learn from and model their parents. Brain development before and after birth might also have an impact on the development of learning difficulties, and children who were born prematurely, had a low birth weight, or who sustained a head injury may be more likely to have a learning difficulty. Environmental effects such as toxins and poor nutrition in early childhood are also considered to be potential factors in the development of a learning difficulty.

### **TYPES OF LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:**

A learning difficulty might often be termed a "hidden disability." A person challenged by a learning difficulty is generally of average or above average intelligence, and many can hide the fact that certain aspects of academic learning give them issue for years, leaving these issues unaddressed until high school or later. The difficulty arises in the gap between the individual's potential for achievement and ability to achieve, which is often hampered by a difficulty in receiving or processing information.

Learning difficulties can be verbal or nonverbal. Verbal learning difficulties affect one's ability to read, write, or otherwise process spoken or written words, while nonverbal learning challenges can make it harder for an individual to process visual information or master abstract concepts like fractions. Some learning difficulties can also make it difficult for an individual to focus.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual classifies learning difficulties under the diagnosis of "Specific Learning Disorder," differentiating between conditions marked by impairment in reading, mathematics, or written expression. This diagnosis occurs more often in males than in females.

The Learning Disabilities Association of America lists these specific learning difficulties:

- **Dyslexia:** A condition that can affect reading fluency and comprehension, writing, spelling, speech, and recall. Dyslexia might occur along with other related conditions and is also known as a language-based learning disability.
- **Dysgraphia:** An individual with dysgraphia might find it difficult to write legibly, space words consistently, spell, compose, think and write at the same

time, or plan spatially (on paper). Specifically, this condition affects handwriting and other fine motor skills.

- **Dyscalculia:** This condition may influence one's ability to develop math skills, understand numbers, and learn math-based facts. It can be difficult for individuals with dyscalculia to comprehend math symbols, organize or memorize numbers, tell time, and count.
- **Auditory processing disorder (central auditory processing disorder):** Individuals with this condition may have difficulty recognizing the differences between sounds, understanding the order of sounds, recognizing where sounds have come from, or separating sounds from background noise.
- **Language processing disorder:** This condition, a type of APD, makes it difficult for individuals to give meaning to sound groups in order to form words and sentences. It relates to the processing of both expressive and receptive language.
- **Nonverbal learning difficulties:** These typically make it difficult for individuals to interpret facial expressions and body language. Visual-spatial, motor, and social skills may all be affected.
- **Visual perceptual/visual motor deficit:** Those with dysgraphia or a nonverbal learning difficulty might also have a visual perceptual/visual motor deficit, which can impact the way a person understands visual information, the ability to draw and copy, hand/eye coordination, and the ability to follow along in text or on paper.

Attention deficit hyperactivity is not considered a learning difficulty, but research shows between 30% and 50% of children have both ADHD and a specific learning difficulty. When these two conditions occur together, learning can become even more challenging.

#### **HOW LEARNING AND INTELLECTUAL DIFFICULTIES DIFFER:**

An intellectual difficulty is characterized by significant limitations to intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour with onset before age 18. Generally, an IQ test score below 75 can be said to indicate a limitation to intellectual function. With an intellectual difficulty, adaptive behaviour—conceptual, social, and practical skills—may also be limited.

An individual with a learning difficulty usually does not experience these same limitations. Those with learning difficulties may often exhibit above-average



intelligence, as determined by an IQ test, and they may have developed strategies on their own to either hide or cope with a learning difficulty.

Though neither intellectual nor learning difficulties can be cured, awareness and a variety of supportive techniques can enhance and improve the condition of an individual with either difficulty.

### **THERAPY AND SUPPORT FOR LEARNING DIFFICULTIES:**

An individual diagnosed with a learning disability may find the diagnosis difficult to cope with, as might that person's family. When learning issues have been present for some time, the person diagnosed may find the diagnosis to be a relief, especially when the diagnosis occurs later in life. However, one might fear becoming labelled or worry that plans and potential careers may be impacted.

Parents may worry that a learning disability will prevent their child from succeeding in school, but this is not necessarily the case. Teachers, mental health professionals, and specialized professionals are frequently able to work with students who have a learning difficulty or other academic concerns. These professionals can help to identify areas of difficulty and develop specialized learning plans and strategies, such as an IEP (**individualized education program**), in order to adjust learning and education strategies to best fit that student's strengths and accommodate for areas of weakness. When a child's needs cannot be adequately addressed in the original classroom, a child may be placed in a different classroom—for all or part of the school day—to receive specialized instruction, often on an individual level.

Coping with the challenges of a learning issue can be difficult. Children and teens may experience anger, frustration, anxiety, or stress as a result of the difficulty. They may become frustrated when they study extensively but receive low test scores; experience anger and stress when it is difficult to understand an assignment or become anxious at the beginning of each new school year. These emotional issues can often compound the issue and may worsen it but speaking about these and other emotional concerns to a counsellor or therapist can be helpful. A therapist can also help individuals understand that although learning disabilities are lifelong, many methods of help and support are available. A child can also learn effective coping mechanisms to manage the difficulty and any resulting emotional issues.

Occupational therapy can be helpful to children who have trouble with motor skills, while educational therapists work with school-aged individuals to improve skills in reading, writing, and math. Speech therapists work with children who have language-based or reading comprehension issues and can help them improve their ability to understand and communicate in social situations. Solution-focused counselling may be appropriate for older children and teens who are aware of their difficulties, as a solution-focused therapist will be able to support youth as they address a difficulty and help them determine what might be working for them and what could be improved upon. Children and adults may also do well in therapy

groups or support groups, and play therapy can help young children learn interaction skills, which may occasionally be lacking in the presence of a learning difficulty. Counselling can also be helpful when those with a learning difficulty feel shy, anxious, or otherwise find it challenging to express themselves to others. Because emotional distress can occur as a result, talking through these anxieties in therapy may prove beneficial.

### **How to cope with these difficulties in learning?**

The student must listen and watch as the lesson begins. Handouts are distributed, chapters to be completed are announced and scrawled on the board in small illegible handwriting or placed brightly on the interactive whiteboard. By now, as other students settle down to read, to learn, to memorize, some students, those with additional learning needs or difficulties, may question whether they are on task.

*Did I hear that right?*

*Am I doing what I'm supposed to?*

*Why is everyone else working and I'm not?*

These are thoughts that enter their consciousness, let alone the thoughts that whiz through their subconscious quizzing them.

*Are you getting this?*

*Isn't this all too hard?*

*Why are you bothering?*

Some students may display an exacerbation of twitchy, fiddling behavior, such as pencil twirling, or repetitive tapping on the keyboard. Perhaps others have physiological reactions, becoming sweaty and flustered. Other students may vocalize their self-talk, mumbling and moaning that "it's too hard" in the desperate hope that a fellow student, a teacher, an aide or a parent may come and assist them. The adoringly titled "class clown" may begin to distract themselves with irrelevant tasks, sometimes distracting other learners.

Place these same students in a classroom that focuses on a topic they love and the difference is amazing. They focus harder, persist longer, rise to more challenges, raise their hand for help and participate in class discussions. Their self-talk moves from negative to positive, fostered by the engaged classroom and teachers who appreciate and seek out each individual learner regardless of ability or difficulty. These are the good lessons, the good days.

Students with additional learning needs face myriad difficulties. Perhaps they can't see the board clearly, hear the teacher over the voices of their peers, or write down the instructions in time. Feelings of frustration, irritation and stress can flourish in such situations.

### **So, what do we do?**

We teach resilience. We model coping strategies. We reinforce the strengths in each individual learner. We involve family, peers, the community of the school and their staff. We focus on what the student *can* do, what they enjoy, what jolts that spark in their eyes. We accept that each learner will have bad days, but we can motivate and engage them again soon. We get to know our students, we take pride in their achievements and set their next goal. These all possible through an effective counseling sessions.

### **HOW COUNSELLING HELPS IN MAKING A SUCCESSFUL LEARNER:**

The Counselling believe that sound education involves the development of the whole student. This includes the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of students' lives. Counselling services are accessible to all students and their families.

The Primary School program strives to provide continuity of services from preschool through grade 5. Counsellors provide **support to students, teachers and parents through individual contact and group meetings**. Counsellors facilitate attitudes and social and emotional competencies through classroom contact and small group or individual skill building activities. Parenting workshops are offered throughout the year and counsellors are available to meet with parents concerning their child's academic and emotional development.

Senior School Counsellors ensure that all students in grades 6 through 12 receive **support in academic, career, and personal-social development. They collaborate with teachers, students, administrators and families to optimize student success and achievement.** For those students requiring student support services, school counsellors, along with other support services and administration, facilitate the Primary School Child Study Team (CST) and the Senior School Student Study Team (SST) processes where student needs are discussed, and individualized assistance plans are created.

### **Effectiveness of School Counseling:**

Many states have made important strides in class-size reduction, higher academic standards, greater accountability and improved teacher preparation. The important missing link in these initiatives to improve student learning is the need for more school counselors and other student support services, such as school psychologists, school social workers, and school nurses. In many states, students' access to counselors varies by grade level, and some school districts have no counseling programs at all. When counseling programs exist, counselors are often asked to add administrative duties such as testing,



supervising, monitoring and class scheduling. School counselors provide counseling programs in three domains: academic, career and personal/social. Their services and programs help students resolve emotional, social or behavioral problems and help them develop a clearer focus or sense of direction. Effective counseling programs are must to feel free from the difficulties in learning.

**Special programs to help promote successful learners:**

- New Student Orientation program to feel welcome and prepared upon admissions into school any time during the academic year.
- Academic Counselling to help students and parents acquire knowledge of curricular choices, plan a program of studies, and interpret academic opportunities.
- Career counselling to help students acquire information and plan for appropriate education and training for career choices and post-secondary goals.
- Personal/Social Counselling to assist students in developing an understanding of themselves and to respect the rights and needs of others.
- Individual counselling to help with personal difficulties which impede personal growth and satisfaction, as well as academic success.
- Peer Helper and Ambassador Programs train students in problem solving, decision making, and conflict resolution.
- Academic Support Programs such as the Homework Club support students with extra help and strategies to improve academic performance across curricula.
- Small Group Sessions focused on specific areas of identified need.
- Parent Education to support parents with frequent topics and discussion circles.

**Set realistic expectations:**

Although counseling may result in significant improvement in your academic performance, you may not go from earning all C's and D's to earning straight A's. It is more likely that your improvement will be subtle and gradual. For example, after a few months of counseling, you may notice that your GPA has risen from a 5.2 to a 5.6. Or, you might notice that after using some of the strategies your counselor has taught you, you improved your math quiz score average from 60% to 80%. You might also notice little things, such as being able to retain more of the information that you read or hear in class or feeling less overwhelmed by your schoolwork. Keep in mind that counseling takes time to take effect. While using the strategies that you learn in your counseling sessions may provide some immediate benefits, you may not see the effects of these strategies for a few months. Try to be patient as you continue to attend counseling and use the strategies that you learn.

**EXAMPLE CASES OF SUCCESSFUL LEARNER BY COUNSELLING:**

- **CASE1:**

- **Dyscalculia in Seventh-grade child:**

- Vamsi, 12 years, who had dyscalculia diagnosed with the condition the year before, he was troubled in keeping up in class. His teacher had reported that he was not achieving at the same level as his classmates and that he may need to be held back a year. His parents were worried his learning difficulty might negatively affect his entire life and prevent opportunities he might otherwise have access to. The researcher assures them that dyscalculia does not necessarily bar success. He told to Vamsi's parents that there were many different simple techniques that could help children with dyscalculia to achieve in the classroom, and they begin to work together to identify what will work best for Vamsi. The researcher also referred Vamsi and his parents to a support group for parents of children with dyscalculia. Meeting with other parents and hearing how their children cope with the challenges of dyscalculia help Vamsi's parents gain more confidence about his future. After a few meetings with the researcher, Vamsi finds it less challenging to keep up in the classroom, and his teacher also reports improvement.

- **CASE2:**

- **Multi learning difficulties with Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and Dyscalculia in 9<sup>th</sup> grade child:**

- Adithya, 14 years, had suffered from reading, writing and maths calculations. He just passed in most of subjects. His parents found that the scores in concerned subjects are not genuine as he was not able to read and write and unable to perform basic mathematical operations at his age. His Class teacher had reported to his parents that requirement of individualized extra teaching. His parents were worried and depressed about his child. At the time the researcher had suggested his parents that need not worry about the problem and it could be changed through counselling. In this case the school teachers were unable to help the child due to multi difficulties. But the researcher took it challenge and started counselling sessions. Researcher motivated the child and parent by found the child strengths and transformed those into education to build positive attitude and way to success. After meetings with teachers peer groups and parents researcher made the child as successful learner in few months even though child suffering from multi difficulties in learning.

- **CASE3:**  
**Difficulties in learning with stammering in 10<sup>th</sup> grade child:**

**Paul Stanley, 15 years**, had been suffering from stammering. Due to this speech disorder he felt inferiority complex and he was unable to clarify his doubts during class or after class. This leads to get low score in maths subject and he failed at last. He was also getting low scores in remaining subjects and not interested in studies and spend his most of the time with peer group. His activities with peer group made him sad situation and his parents felt that they were helpless and worried about his studies and future. Then the researcher motivated the parents and the child by expounding successful stories. The researcher created belief in his parents that stammering was not an obstruction for learning and also suggested that it could be overcome by counselling and to be a successful learner. The researcher changed the negative attitude on studies and made him successful learner his academic subjects as well as his career.

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