

Harnessing the Interest of Children with Special Needs to Maximise Learning Potential

Dr . Eunice Tan

Singapore University of Social Sciences

Abstract

This study looks at an alternative to the approach and method of working with a child with special needs. The strength-based approach to education embodies a paradigm shift. It is a strategy to move away from a deficit-based methodology which inadvertently may lead to an extensive list of things that the child cannot do or is unable to do. What is a strength-based approach in education? A strength-based approach in education focuses on students' positive qualities and contributions to class instead of the skills and abilities they may not have. Most schools are focused on the child's special educational needs, rather than the whole child. Parents interviewed have said that they have to engage external tutors to help hone in on their child's interests and strengths. This presentation will look into the different ways in which strength-based approached can be implemented in a classroom and how to use these strategies to maximise learning in a child.

Keywords: interests; positive attributes; special needs; strategies; strength-based