

Enhancing Intrinsic Motivation and Parenting to Help Underachieving Students to Perform Well in School.

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Abstract: This article shares some of the research findings on how intrinsic motivation can be enhanced in areas of self-regulated learning, self-efficacy, locus of control, self-concept, self-esteem, self-worth, cooperative versus competitive learning, moderate risk taking, and the effect of effort and praise. In other words, children who are parented with patience, understanding, affection, and respect will help them to become the best they can be and to accomplish their goals with self-motivation. An array of recommendations from research finds is summed up towards the end of this article. This is thought to be useful and applicable to our context. However, they are by no means the answer to the predicament of the status of achievement in school.

Introduction

The examination oriented nature of schooling in Malaysia has made students engage more time preparing themselves towards passing it. This has enormous implications on their future. Although this linkage appeared to be very important, yet the examination results thus far showed quite a low performance especially among primary school children. Fortunately, performance is better in secondary schools. Observations suggest that students do not seem to be motivated to learn more or to make use of what they already learn.

Definition of terms

The term underachievement is generally used to describe academic performances well below the expectations raised by results of an intelligent test (Blishen, 1969:783). In some cases the IQ score may be lower on the second testing but in other circumstances it will probably be personality factor which cannot be adequately measured by an IQ test, such as low level of aspiration, maladjustment or poor motivation are serving to depress the child's actual performance. In this sense, the knowledge that a child is under-achieving can be a valuable diagnostic tool for teachers and can lead them to pay more attention to the child's motivation and personal adjustment in school, as well as any problems in his life at home. For the purpose of this article, it is the low level of aspiration and lack of motivation that often become pertinent among underachievers in our context.