

ENRICHMENT OF ADVERSITY RESPONSES- A KEY ELEMENT OF SUCCESS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Adversities are part of every one's life. One's belief about adversity and his response towards it is of utmost importance. Adversity Quotient (AQ) is the capacity of an individual to deal efficiently with the adverse conditions in one's life. These abilities are the need of the hour. Today's education must equip students to become more resilient. This paper discusses the theoretical background and importance of developing Adversity Quotient in students and teachers.

Keywords: Adversity Quotient, Resilience.

INTRODUCTION

In the present competitive world we may have to face many unexpected events, the outcomes of which may be either positive or negative. Also we have to deal with many situations which are either challenging or adverse. How one responds to it and turns it in to opportunities determines the performance of the individual. For any individual the struggle against adversities will continue throughout their life even after the school life. So, education imparting must be the one which will enable them to overcome their adversities and challenges.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF ADVERSITY QUOTIENT

Stoltz (1997) introduced and invented the concept of Adversity Quotient (AQ). It is a measure for gauging how people respond to and deal with adversity. AQ is an emerging conceptual framework for understanding and enhancing all facets of success. AQ predicts performance, motivation, empowerment, creativity, productivity, learning, hope, emotional health, physical health, resilience, attitude, response to change. AQ is the science of human resilience (Stoltz 1997).

According to American Psychological Association, Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences.

Dimensions of AQ

- Control - It is perceived control, the extent to which an individual can influence an adverse situation.
- Ownership -The extent to which one feels themselves accountable and responsible to any adversity and try to do efforts to bring improvement into it.
- Reach -It is the perception of how far the adversity reaches into other areas of one’s life.
- Endurance -It reflects how long adversity would influence a person.

There are three categories of people based on their response to adversities.

- Quitters- Escape from challenges; they tend to give up if worse situation arises. When adversity hits them, they are incapable of responding appropriately and fail to overcome any challenges.
- Campers- Cope well in depressing events but have less drive. Campers do not reach for more than what they have. They seek to preserve what they have.
- Climbers-- Seek and accept challenges. Climbers never lose hope despite many obstacles’ life is putting on their path. They learn from each challenge and grow.

(Stoltz, 1997)

Why AQ is important for students

Determining student’s AQ is likely to provide greater understanding and better prediction of academic achievement. Researches shows that measurement of AQ might be a better index of achieving success than IQ, not just for academic achievement in education, but in other related social skills (Zhou, 2009; Williams, 2008).

The ability of a student to handle adversities will influence their behaviour at school. In case of students, adversities include various hardships in society, peer pressure, unfavourable school climate, poor social relationships at home, gender discrimination, disordered family environment, loneliness (Nikam & Uplane 2013). So, there is a need to condition students so that they can see beyond difficulties and develop skills to maintain hope.

If students are not able to deal with the adversities, they will fall into several psychological disturbances which directly affect their physical and mental health. AQ has been found positively correlated with school performance and school climate (D’souza2006). It has a positive and strong relation with academic wellbeing (Khairani & Abdullah 2018).

Role of school in strengthening Student's Resilience

- Daily interaction with students must be maintained by the teachers
- Support system for learners in terms of school counsellors
- Development of relationships with peers and staff must be encouraged
- Regular feedback to children
- Provide opportunities for holistic development of the child
- Identify low AQ students and give them proper guidance in vocational, personal, social and educational problems.

Enhancement of AQ of teachers

Teachers experience struggle to meet the demands arising in the occupational settings. School is one of the sources of stress and adversities for teachers (Hema & Gupta, 2015). Studies show that AQ has been found positively related to School Performance and Teachers Competency (Bautista 2015). It is inevitable for teachers to encounter difficulties, demands, complexities and adversities in life while dealing with students at school. Hence it is important to devise appropriate and timely teacher support mechanisms and professional development programs in order to improve teacher's AQ for the purpose of enhancing student's academic performance. (Mwivanda & Kingi 2018).

CONCLUSION

Adversity exists in Society, Workplace and in Individual level and can be external or internal in nature. Thus, measuring Adversity Quotient and then improving it can smoothen day to day lives of each individual. So, education must prepare students to face adversities by making them aware of their potential to handle such situations. School as an organisation and teachers as a constructive force play an important role in creating a resilient community environment for the benefit of students. (Vakharia 2007).

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