***Assignment***

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**Subject: Educational psychology**

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**Topic Name: Individual differences**

**UNIVERSITY OF SARGODHA SUB CAMPUS BHAKKAR**

**•Nature , types , causes and measurements of individual differences**

***Drever James***

“Variations or deviations from the average of the group, with respect to the mental or physical characters, occurring in the individual member ofthe group are individual differences.”

***Skinner, C.E.***

“Today we think of individual differences as including any measurable aspect of the total personality.”

**Types of Individual Differences:**

**1. Physical differences:**

Shortness or tallness of stature, darkness or fairness of complexion, fatness, thinness, or weakness are various physical individual differences.

**2. Differences in intelligence:**

There are differences in intelligence level among different individuals. We can classify the individuals from super-normal on the basis of their intelligence level.

**3. Differences in attitudes:**

Individuals differ in their attitudes towards different people, objects, institutions and authority.

**4. Differences in achievement:**

It has been found through achievement tests that individuals differ in their achievement abilities. These differences are very much visible in reading, writing and in learning mathematics.

These differences in achievement are even visible among the children who are at the same level of intelligence. These differences are on account of the differences in the various factors of intelligence and the differences in the various experiences, interests and educational background.

**5. Differences in motor ability:**

There are differences in motor ability. These differences are visible at different ages. Some people can perform mechanical tasks easily, while others, even though they are at the same level, feel much difficulty in performing these tasks.

 **6. Racial differences:**

There are different kinds of racial differences. Differences of environment is a normal factor in causing these differences. Karl Brigham has composed a list on the basis of differences in levels of intelligence among people who have migrated to United States from other countries.

On the basis of these average differences between the races, the mental age of a particular individual cannot be calculated since this difference is based on environment.

**7. Differences due to nationality:**

Individuals of different nations differ in respect of physical and mental differences, interests and personality etc. ‘Russians are tall and stout’; ‘Ceylonese are short and slim’; ‘Germans have no sense of humour’; ‘Yellow races are cruel and revengeful’; ‘Americans are hearty and frank’; Indians are timid and peace-loving’ and the like observations enter into our common talk.

**8. Differences due to economic status:**

Differences in children’s interests, tendencies and character are caused by economic differences.

**9. Differences in interests:**

Factors such as sex, family background level of development, differences of race and nationality etc., cause differences in interests.

**10. Emotional differences:**

Individuals differ in their emotional reactions to a particular situation. Some are irritable and aggressive and they get angry very soon. There are others who are of peaceful nature and do not get angry easily. At a particular thing an individual may be so much enraged that he may be prepared for the worst crime like murder, while another person may only laugh at it.

**11. Personality differences:**

There are differences in respect of personality. On the basis of differences in personality, individuals have been classified into many groups.

**Causes of Individual Differences:**

**Some of the main causes of individual differences are as under:**

**1. Heredity:**

One of the most significant and chief causes of individual differences is heredity. Individuals inherit various physical traits like face with its features, colour of eyes and hair, type of skin, shape of skull and size of hands, colour blindness, baldness, stub-finger and tendency to certain diseases like cancer and tuberculosis, mental traits like intelligence, abstract thinking, aptitudes and prejudices. Now it is an admitted fact that heredity differences result in the quantity and rate of physical as well as mental development being different and different individuals.

**2. Environment:**

Environment significantly influences individual differences. Changes in child’s environment are reflected in the changes in his personality. Psychologically speaking, a person’s environment consists of sum total of stimulation which he receives from conception until his death.

Environment consists of physical, intellectual, social, moral, political, economic and cultural forces. All these forces cause individual differences. Modern psychologists believe that individual differences are caused by both heredity and environment. Personality is the outcome of mutual interaction between heredity and environment.

**3. Influence of caste, race and nation:**

Individuals of different castes and races exhibit very marked differences. It is generally seen that son of a Kshatriya has a more of courage in him while the son of a trader has the traits of business.

Similarly individuals of different nations show differences in respect of their personality, character and mental abilities. These are the outcome of their geographical, social and cultural environment. Many studies have shown the existence of differences between Americans and Negroes, Chineese and Japaneese, English and Indian individuals.

**4. Age and intelligence:**

Physical, intellectual and emotional development is caused by the growth in age. Many individuals differ because of the differences in intelligence. Individuals who are below the average in intelligence and mental age find much difficulty in learning and the average intelligent persons can learn quickly.

**5. Temperament and emotional stability:**

Some people are by temperament active and quick, while others are passive and slow, some humorous and others short tempered. Emotional stability of the individual is differently affected by physical, mental and environmental factors. Differences in emotional stability cause individual differences.

**6. Other Causes:**

Interests, aptitudes, achievements, sentiments, character, educational and home background lead to individual differences.

**7. Economic condition and education:**

Individual differences are caused by economic condition of the parents and the education of the children. It is not possible for the children of two economic classes to have a similarity and equality.

**Measurements of individual differences**

1. **Limited size of the class:**

Generally there are 50 or more than 50 students in a class. In such a large class, it is not possible for the teacher to pay individual attention to the students. The size of the class should be small. It should be divided into various units so that after class-room work their various difficulties may be found out.

1. **Proper division of the class:**

Now there are separate classes for the students, who have different intelligence. While bringing about this classification, the teacher should keep in mind the difference in age, interests, emotional and social qualities.

**3**.**Home task:**

The teacher should assign home task to the students while keeping in view the individual differences.

**4. Curriculum:**

The curriculum should be modified to suit the needs of all types of children. A large number of subjects should be included in the curriculum so that education can be provided to each child according to his interests, needs and abilities. Curriculum should not be rigid but it should be flexible.

If we lay down the same curriculum for all the students, the brilliant students will not be able to have full mental diet, and the backward students and the students of lower I.Q. will lag far behind in the class, and they may start playing truancy from the school.

**5. Methods of Teaching:**

Methods of teaching should be chosen on the basis of individual differences. It is not advisable to use the same method of education in the case of all children-gifted or backward.

**6. Educational Guidance:**

Teacher should impart educational guidance to the students while keeping in view their individual differences. He can assist them in the selection of educational career, selection of subjects, selection of books, selection of hobbies and co-curricular activities and in many other areas connected with education.

**7. Vocational Guidance:**

While keeping in view the individual differences the teacher can guide the students in the vocation that they should adopt.

**8. Individual Training:**

Many plans and techniques for individualizing instructions have been advocated.

**Conclusion:**

 Thus, the problem of individual differences can be tackled with multi-dimensional tasks. As teachers, we must be aware of students’ individual differences such as differences in culture, ethnicity, intelligence, languages, learning styles, etc. It is because it may enhance students’ understanding or limit their opportunity to learn from the school environment. These factors should be taken into consideration when we plan teaching and learning process in the classroom.