EXECUTIVE FUNCTION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

Executive functions are an umbrella term for the neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation. Some of the skills of executive function include components of reasoning, attention, planning, inhibition, set-shifting, working memory and the ability to regulate interference (Pennington, Ozonoff, 1996). The development of executive function emerges in late infancy, goes through marked changes during the ages of 2 through 6, and does not peak until around age 25. A person's executive functions are shaped by physical changes and also by ongoing experiences which means that as a person matures they develop better executive functioning skills with practice.

Many children have difficulties with one or more executive functions and are often undiagnosed. But their problems are usually identifiable through school. Children with executive functioning difficulties often manifest as Alternative Learners, or students who struggle in traditional classrooms. Intervention is crucial to students with various aspects of executive deficiencies to increase their functioning academically, socially, and to provide them with skills to develop independence and autonomy across the lifespan. This paper attempts to explain the significance of executive functioning in education.

Key words: Education, Executive functions, Children, traditional class room.