

## Slow Learners Academic Performance Improving Through Effective Teaching Strategies

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Article Info	Abstract
<p><b>Article History</b></p> <p>Received: January 07,2026</p> <p>Accepted: April 09,2026</p> <hr/> <p><b>Keywords :</b> Slow Learners, Teaching Strategies, Compensatory Teaching Strategies, Remedial Teaching Strategies</p> <p><b>DOI:</b> 10.5281/zenodo.19486085</p>	<p><i>There are different kind of learners some are fast, moderate while other are slow learners (SLs). These SL are also essential members of the society. To cope with the society the SL needs to acquire appropriate education which core component is teaching strategies. This study was based on two objectives i.e. to explore the responsible factors of SLs and to demonstrate the effective teaching strategies for SLs. The study was descriptive in nature based on qualitative research. The data were collected through interviews and case study from convenient sampling technique from grade 9 and 10 girls of government high school Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The findings of the study were themed in Personal, Environmental and Emotional factors which affect the academic performance of SLs. It was also noticed from the study that language deficits, family background, Lack of home facilities, improper classroom management, non co-operative parental attitude, feeling of inadequacy, lack of confidence in self were the main responsible factors. The teachers are suggested to incorporate the compensatory and remedial teaching strategies that can enhance the academic achievement of SLs in overcoming the feelings of insufficiency and can help in boosting their self-esteem and the most important thing is the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which is the key to success for such type of learners.</i></p>

### Introduction

Education serves as an essential part in the development and enhancing of capabilities and potentialities as well as contributes to the physical, mental, emotional and social development of the learners (Pujar & Gaonkar, 2008). There are different types of learners some are gifted, moderate and slow learners (SL) classified on their capacities and intellectual (Muppudathi, 2012). The SLs are the one who acquire basic academic skills but, at a rate and depth below average as compared to the same aged peers of the class (Madtha, 2015). This student needs supplementary time, additional rate of repetition and extra resources from school and home for required success (Muppudathi, 2014). Furthermore we can say that slow learners are one of the children with special needs, (Yilmaz, 2009) not disability (Ralhan, 2020). Painagoni (2018) stated the term "disability" as low intellectual abilities but not so low to be categorized as mentally disable ones, such students have no restraints for learning but have their own psychology and speed of seeking knowledge. In realism these students are being a regular student, thus only establishing that they are not bodily or psychologically disabled but only pace disabled. The only problem with them is that they learn ideas and attain developmental landmarks at a pace slower than their peers (Sudhakar, 2017).

Standing at the point that every behavior has a cause and significance, the behavioral characteristics of SLs are due to some factors present either within or outside the child. These multi-factors may be personal (long illness, physical defects, low cognitive development), environmental (classroom management, family issues like poverty and illiteracy) or emotional (insufficiency, anxiety, lack of confidence and past failure) (Vasudevan, 2017).

### Characteristics of Slow Learners

Edward (2021) stated multi-characteristics of SLs such as a SL has short attention span, unable to retain learning task and tend to learn slow. They often portray anti-social characteristics like, immature, unstable and aggressive behavioral attitude. More often expose auditory, visual-motor and language issues. Velasquez (2020) considered that learning speed of SL mostly affected by previous learning. Lack of proper background of the lesson the SL is unable to catch the present learning. Impartial anticipation also makes believe we are SLs. Mindset and beliefs have great impact on learning which caused lack of focus results slow learning. Salomi and Sundaram (2018) further added that SLs are mostly sensitive and innocent, having poor concentrating skills. They always preferred to work at their own pace without any interference those results unable to learn on their own. In this way they lose track of time, showed no interest in having long time goals and at the end they lose the chance of mastering skills. Borah (2013) affirmed that SLs rottenly having poor vocabulary skills, abhor the

schooling, shay, perplexed and mood of lowliness. They are unable to tackle many-sided and compound learning problems.

### **Responsibilities of Teachers at SLs**

The prime role of teacher is to identify the SL in the class, design proper evaluation chart, highlight the factors and implement relevant strategies to defeat it. All SLs do not follow the same approach, a good teacher utilized multi-strategies in every stage that attract and maintain the interest of SLs (Salomi & Sundaram 2018). Dasaradhi et al., (2016) study found that special instructional pacing; recurrent criticism, remedial instructions and modified learning materials are required to enhance the academic achievements of SLs. Hence, can be groomed and flourished by incorporating some modified and remedial teaching strategies (Painagoni, 2018). They required special concentration of parents and teachers in order to overcome the unhappiness and personal insufficiency that are consequences of severe educational and social failures (Chauhan ,2011). According to Muppudathi(2014),“ teachers must fulfill some responsibilities like boosting confidence among slow learners, finding out the main reason behind their weak performance, giving extra time and care, arrangement of special learning resources, maintenance of cumulative records, repetition, peer tutoring and encouragement so that they can flourish as academically and socially well-developed citizens of society”.

The current study was conducted in order to find out the causes behind the problems faced by the female slow learners, particularly in district Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan and to explore the teaching strategies that can be facilitated to enhance the academic performance of slow learners belonging to those areas.

### **Objectives of the study**

- i. To highlight the factors that affects the academic achievement of slow learners.
- ii. To explore effective teaching strategies for slow learning students.

### **Research Questions**

- I. What are the factors that are responsible for the problems faced by slow learners?
  - i. Are the personal factors root causes of the problem?
  - ii. To what extent are the environmental factors responsible for the problem?
  - iii. Can the emotional factors be the main cause of the problem?
- II. Are there any teaching strategies that can enhance the Academic achievement of slow learners?
  - i. What accommodations can be made in the existing teaching strategies?
  - ii. What remedial strategies can be adopted to overcome the challenges faced by slow learners?

### **Significance of the study**

The study will be highly significant for the teachers in order to overcome the challenges of enhancement of “slow learners’ academic performance”. Beside this, the study will facilitate and guide parents in order to tackle the problems related to slow learning abilities in their child.

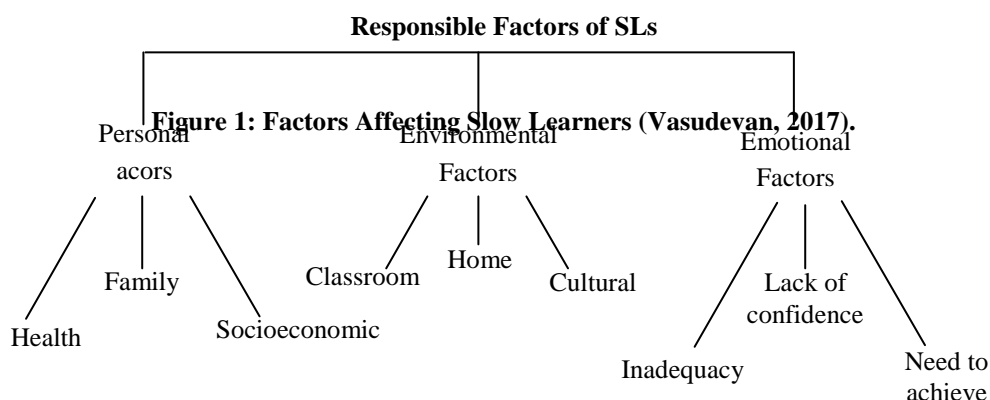
### **Research Methodology**

The study was descriptive in nature based on qualitative research, which include a case study of ten (10) slow learners of Government Girls High School Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. For the purpose to determine the factors affecting the academic performance of slow learners’, student profiles were developed in the light of studied literature and data was collected through scheduled interviews and classroom observations. Convenience and purposive sampling technique were adopted for sample selection. The collected data were coded, from which three themes were developed which are enlisted as personal, environmental and emotional factors. The personal factors were sub-divided into further three categories i.e. health, family and socio-economic factors. The environment factors were also sub-divided into three parts i.e. classroom, home, cultural factors. Similarly the emotional factors were also divided into inadequacy, lack of confidence, and need to achieve; which were further analyzed.

### **Ethical Consideration**

In order to maintain the ethical consideration, confidentiality and easiness for the researcher at place of sample name number were given to each sample.

## Theoretical Framework



**Figure 1: Factors Affecting Slow Learners (Vasudevan, 2017).**

### Finding and discussion

The study showed that all the three factors i.e, Personal, Environmental and Emotional affect the academic performance of SLs but in different ways, in some students personal factors are the root cause of the problem, whereas some of the students are more affected by environmental factors and most of the student's academic performances are declined because of the emotional reasons.

### Findings and discussions related to Research Question 1:

Research question one asked: Are the personal factors root causes of problem?

In order to get an answer to this research question, two research instruments were used, few factors were examined via classroom observations whereas other ones were inquired through scheduled interviews based on questions designed in the light of work done in previous researches, the questions were subdivided into three categories health, family background, socio-economic status.

Students' Code	Health	Family Background	Socio-economic Status
1.	AD. MD. CA	AD	----
2.	AD.MD	AD	----
3.	CA.MD.WH	----	WH
4.	MD	----	SB
5.	CA	----	----
6.	AD.MD.WH	AD	WH.SB
7.	MD	----	----
8.	MD	----	----
9.	MD	----	SB
10.	MD.WH	----	WH.SB

Attention Deficit(AD), Memory Deficit(MD), Weak Health(WH), Careless Attitude(CA), Socially Bound(SC).

According to Ralhan (2020), "No student is weak or bright by birth; it's the way we feed the knowledge and how they imbibe it which makes them so." To explore the answer of such research questions Chauhan (2011) in her research study on the psychology of SLs discussed that the slow learners have limited cognitive capacity, they have short attention span, and they cannot concentrate on teacher's instructions for more than thirty minutes. This creates a knowledge gap in basic concepts and skills and reduced comprehension ability across a wide spectrum of academic areas (Ralhan, 2020). In this research study, findings of the classroom observations were that the SLs had attention deficits and the reasons behind were different in students i.e., respondent 1, 2 and 6 had attention deficits due to family tensions whereas in respondent 3 and 5 these deficits were due to their careless attitude, According to Chauhan (2011) the SLs have poor memory power whereas Dasaradhi *et. al.*, (2016) in their research study discussed that SLs have habit of memorizing things very slowly and forgetting things very quickly the findings of this research study showed that all the students except respondent 5 and 7 had memory deficits, most of the students used to take too much time to memorize new concepts. According to research study of Chauhan(2011) SLs have difficulty in finding and combining words, they can't express ideas with clarity this research study also indicated that almost all of them had language deficits to a large extent due to which whether they had taken short or long time span for memorization they remained unable to express the learned concepts in proper words..

Vasudevan (2017) in his research conducted on SLs pointed some of the causes behind the low academic performance of SLs i.e. Personal factors such as Long illness, Absenteeism and undetected physical defects, The interview sessions in present research study revealed that the reason behind absenteeism of respondent 2, 6 and

10 was their weak health whereas other respondent 1 and 3 were irregular due to their careless attitude and all the other students were regular so the health was the cause of slow learning behavior. Farooq *et. al.*, (2011) in their research work concluded that Parent's education and Socio-economic status has profound effect on student's overall academic performance, The gathered data in this research showed that a slow learning child not only faces educational challenges but social and personal challenges as well (Ralhan, 2020), such as family background was the root cause behind the low academic performance of all the students as the parents of majority hadn't clear even the matriculation examination so they couldn't build up their basis of language and other types of knowledge and still can't guide them in their studies in any way that's why these students take too much time to grasp any concept. "Many parents feel apprehensive about their child's pace of learning and put pressure on them. This is a wrong practice"(Ralhan, 2020). Socio-economic status had effect on the academic performance of some students i.e. 4, 6, 9 and 10 respondents depicted that they were socially bound to help their families in cooking, washing and caring of their siblings, so they cannot concentrate on their classroom learning.

### Findings and discussions related to Research Question 2

Research question two asked: To what extent the environmental factors responsible for the problem?

In order to get answer to second research question scheduled interviews were conducted, the questions asked were divided into three categories, and first one was related to home environment, second one to the classroom environment and the third one to the cultural environment.

Students' Code	Classroom Management	Home Environment	Cultural Environment
1.	----	LPS, LF	----
2.	CC, CT	FE, FT, LPS, LF	----
3.	----	FE, LPS, FT, LF	----
4.	CT	LPS, LF	ER
5.	CC, CT	FT	----
6.	CT	LPS, FT, LF	----
7.	CC, CT	----	BO
8.	CC, CT	----	EX, R
9.	----	FT	----
10.	CC, CT	FT	----

Crowded Class(CC), Cultural Teaching(CT), Low Physical Space(LPS), Lack of Facilities(LF), Family Environment(FE), Extra Responsibilities (ER), Brother Opposition(BO), Family Tension (FT).

According to Sudhakar (2017), "Not every child learns the same way or at the same pace. Not every child excels in the same areas; some are better readers while others are fascinated with numbers. Does this make one child smarter than another? Definitely not!" such debates need proper answers. Vasudevan (2017) in his research study pointed some of the environmental factors behind the low academic performance of SLs that were the improper classroom management, low quality of teaching, poor home facilities, incompatibility between home and school, non-cooperative parental attitude and cultural issues of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa specifically for female. Mathew (2020) discussed that any efforts by the teacher to neglect or sideline SLs can become counterproductive. The normal classroom procedures are often inadequate to deal with the learning and behavioral problems of this group. The same situation was faced by respondent 2,5, and 7, they stated that they were not understand the teachers' lesson due to crowded classroom environment.

Ans..... We have cultured teaching-learning process, so we are sitting behind, not able to listen the teacher or sight the board.

The problem, however, is that not all children can adapt to such a rigid style of learning. Some children just cannot cope with the fast-paced and rigid approach that is characteristic of conventional teaching. Due to this, a gap forms between their true ability and their performance level and such children are then dubbed 'Slow Learners'(Muppudathi 2014).

Analyzing the spatial ability of students is important for teachers as an effort to improve the quality of learning for slow learners(Permatasari et al 2018). Multi-task teaching is an essential for SLs. except 1, 3, 9 all remaining girls were grumbling for teaching style of their teachers.

The present research study showed that the home environment has affect on the academic performance of SLs in different respects. Respondent 1 has peaceful family environment but the low physical space and lack of facilities are the vital barriers in her way to success.

Ans... we are poor, father is unable to cover the food charges and utility bills. They are unable to provide tuition or other type of educational facilities at home.

Respondent 2 family environment is not peaceful in addition the inadequate physical space and facilities at home are also a cause behind her low academic performance. Respondent 3 depressed family environment due to father's death, lack of physical space and necessary facilities are the root cause of the problem. In case of Respondent 4 the inadequate physical space and home facilities in addition the extra responsibilities at home due to her mother's ill health are the reasons behind the problem.

Ans... my mother is suffering from cancer; I have the caring responsibilities of my little siblings. I want to do my secondary school education.

In case of Respondent 5 home environment is not cause behind her low academic performance in any way. Respondent 6 academic performance is often affected by the inadequate physical space and lack of facilities at home. In case of Respondent 7 except brother's opposition she has no such problem in her family environment that is causing hindrance in her way to success. Respondent 8 home environments is not responsible for her slow learning behavior. Respondent 9 Family tensions due to the death of both parents and extra responsibilities at home are the root cause of the problem. Respondent 10 home environments is not a cause behind her low academic performance.

It is concluded that the main hurdle in slow learning is home and cultural aspects. Majority girls are belonging to low socio-economic background, due to which they cannot afford educational facilities at home.

### **Findings and discussions related to Research Question 3:**

Research Question three asked: Are the emotional factors responsible for the problem?

To get the answer of this sensitive question the classroom observation and interview were arranged. The three divided categories of emotional factors i.e. feelings of inadequacy, lack of confidence and need to achieve (Vasudevan 2017) were arranged to judge the answers.

<b>Students' Code</b>	<b>Inadequacy</b>	<b>Lack of Confidence</b>	<b>Need to achieve</b>
1.	CA, LSM	IS	SE
2.	----	ED, MD	SE
3.	FI	ED, MD	----
4.	FI	IS	SE
5.	----	----	----
6.	CA, LSM	ED, MD	----
7.	FI	IS	SE
8.	CA, LSM	IS	----
9.	----	ED, MD	SE
10.	FI	ED, MD	SE

Feeling of Insufficiency(FI), Lack of Self Motivation(LSM), Careless Attitude(CA), Emotional Disturbance(ED), Mental Disturbance(MD), In-security(IS), Self Esteem(SE).

According to Muppudathi(2014),“Slow learners are very sensitive and self-conscious as they are very well aware of their weakness in comparison with the fast learners”.There are multi-reasons for such situations like, If the child experiences too many of the unpleasant emotions and very few of the pleasant ones, it will distort his outlook on life and encourage the development of an unpleasant disposition (Salomi & Sundaram, 2018)

The current study showed that emotional factors were the main cause of the low academic performance of SLs but the reasons behind were different for different students. Salomi and Sundaram (2018) highlighted their research findings regarding inadequacy of SLs as, “the slow learners have a short attention span with which they cannot concentrate for long time. They have the problem of short memory and they do not remember what they learn. They get bored easily and develop no interest towards learning process”. The respondent 3, 4, 7 and 10 had feeling of insufficiency due to their low academic performance despite of all their efforts put forth and extreme hard work where as the reason behind the low academic performance and as a consequence the feeling of inadequacy in Respondent 1,6 and 8 were their careless and irresponsible attitude, lack of self-motivation, no goal setting and hence no insecurities related to future life. The feeling of insufficiency has lowered down their self-esteem, so these students don't participate in classroom activities and the past failures have created a fear of failure in them, this fear is the main hurdle in their way to success.

According to Salomi and Sundaram, (2018) research findings the child who does not receive affection from others is likely to become self-bound, and this prevents him from having an emotional exchange with them. If the child is ignored and proper care is not provided then the child builds a negative emotion and initially avoid his parents and later on other people, and they isolate themselves from the outerworld. Furthermore, a neglected child feels rejected, and unsecured .It may affect the developing skills of the child to socialize with other children. Participants 1, 5, 7, 9 and 10 faced the same problem, they depicted that they did not receive teachers' attention during classroom learning, the teachers ignorance made them isolated. This situation generated negative aspects in them like, rejected personalities, insouciance and unconstructive thinker.

The response of all students except Respondent 5 showed that their Parents didn't have negative attitude towards their studies and none of their peers had taunting or discouraging attitude, though the responses regarding the teacher's demotivating attitude varied from respondent to respondent the majority of the respondents were responses indicated that the teacher's demotivating attitude lowers down their self-esteem to a much higher extent and also shatters their own self-motivation to proceed forward due to which they get forced to think that they are unable to achieve the success and hence to do something better in their lives. Mushtaq *et. al.*, (2012) research findings are also witnessed that family stress is the main factor that effects student

performance this research study revealed that in case of Respondent 2,3, 6, 9, and 10 the family tensions were the cause of emotional and hence mental disturbance while the rest of the respondents had insecurities related to future.

In present era defective vision is the major problem in SLs. The children spent their most of the time in watching and playing games on mobile phone that caused sight issue. These students are not able to follow class assignment from writing boards that also affect their growth and development. This condition affects their self-esteem and level of confidence. They want to achieve the success but due to non-proper treatment left them behind in class (Salomi & Sundaram, 2018). Participants 1, 2, 4, 7, 9 and 10 having same sight issue affected their confidence and they left behind in class assignment caused failure. The findings indicated that emotional factors were the root cause of the problem.

#### Research Question 4

**Are there any teaching strategies that can enhance the Academic performance of slow learner?**

##### 1) What accommodations can be made in the existing teaching strategies?

There are various strategies for tackling such cases, but in accessible situation there are two main types are important (Dasaradhi *et. al.*,2016).

##### 1. Compensatory and Remedial Teaching

Sudhakar (2017) defined the compensatory teaching as *an instructional approach that alters the presentation of content to circumvent a student's fundamental weakness or deficiency. Compensatory teaching recognizes content, transmits through alternate modalities (pictures versus words), and supplements it with additional learning resources and activities (learning centers and simulations, group discussions and co-operative learning).* **Compensatory teaching** is the necessary alterations in instructional methods in terms of presentation of the content in order to overcome the weaknesses of slow learners whereas while the same author defined **Remedial teaching** as *an alternate approach for the regular class room teacher in instructing the slow learner. Remedial teaching is the use of activities, techniques and practices to eliminate weaknesses or deficiencies that the slow learner is known to have* is to use such teaching practices that can overcome the fundamental deficiencies of slow learners.

All the factors behind the low academic performance of slow learners can't be accommodated by compensatory or remedial teaching strategies i.e, as far as family background, socio-economic status and home environment are concerned. The factors other than those can be tackled with appropriate teaching strategies. i.e,

Among personal factors health issue can be handled by giving such students extra time and notes of the missed work. According to Dasaradhi *et. al.*, (2016) teachers must not hesitate to spend extra time after school hours to help out the slow learners that are left behind others. In order to handle attention deficits Paul(2016) in his research study suggested that fun environment using innovative teaching strategies must be utilized to grab the attention of such students, that is by designing attractive and informative audio visual aids and by organizing group activities in the class. The Dasaradhi *et. al.*, (2016) pointed in her research study that memory deficits can be tackled by giving them memory tips on how to recall', when, how and what to learn and the appropriate methods to write systematically. The other way to improve memory is to use pneumonics that aid students a lot in memorizing difficult words, According to research study conducted by Muppudathi (2014) the repetition of same thing over and over again helps in memorization of detailed concept in bits or chunks. Chauhan (2011) suggested that ample use of audio, visual aids can provide students variety of experiences, the students who cannot learn by listening can memorize if visual representation is available for them, and language deficits can be tackled by giving them tips and assigning them short assignments that focus on writing practices, Paul (2016) in his study pointed that the use of simple vocabulary in instructions and directions allow to overcome the language barriers.

The teaching strategies that can be used to handle the classroom environment factors according to Paul (2016) a helpful environment must be build up for the students in which students must be encouraged to ask question and provide them opportunity to ask for help, The second teaching strategy that is found to be effective in enhancing the academic performance of slow learners according to Muppudathi(2014) is peer tutoring, students learn more from same aged peers and feel comfortable to share their problems with them, but tolerant and caring peers must be selected for this job that can help and guide the slow learners in appropriate way. The cooperative learning in mixed ability groups according to Paul (2016) must be incorporated to enhance the academic performance of slow learners because the group activities allow the students to interact and benefit from each other. Chauhan (2011) in her work on the psychology of slow learners emphasized the need of motivation; the children can learn more quickly and better if they are motivated in a sensible way. According to Malik (2012) the

teacher must utilize some extra time to find out simple ways in which the concepts can be taught to slow learners in easiest and simplest ways.

The teaching strategies that can be used to tackle the emotional factors that are the cause of low academic performance of slow learners according to research study conducted by Khatoun and Akhter (2010) stated that motivating students to participate in classroom activities and appreciating them even for small performances can boost up their courage and help in overcoming their feelings of insufficiency, Paul (2016) suggested that the organization of group discussions and group activities, encouraging and praising slow learners whenever they make attempt to participate and reacting politely to their responses if they are incorrect can help a lot to enhance the academic performance of slow learners. In addition breaking down difficult tasks into simpler ones allow the slow learners to learn the concept step by step. According to Chauhan (2011) the teacher must use appreciation even on smallest performance in order to eradicate the fear of failure and utilize extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to restore self confidence in slow learners. In order to overcome the insecurities related to future teacher must inculcate the habit of self-motivation, Dasaradhi *et. al.*, (2016) concluded that teachers must encourage student to set goals in their lives, and help them in making time table for every day work so that they get into habit of setting goals and making effort at the right time that can help them in overcoming the insecurities of future by making effort within due time.

## 2) What remedial strategies can be adopted to overcome the challenges of slow learners?

According to Chauhan (2011) remedial teaching refers to the incorporation of teaching techniques, practices and strategies in order to eliminate the basic deficiencies that the slow learners are known to have i.e., basic listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, attention and memory deficits.

Farooq *et al.*, (2011) research study discussed that the basic reading and writing skills of slow learners can be enhanced by practice and drill method, that is more and more reading in the class and more work assigned for written practices can improve their performance.

According to research study conducted by Paul (2016) students with attention deficits can be tackled by incorporating tasks and activities that add fun to their lessons and by using variety of techniques to suit different student learning styles i.e., audio, visual and kinesthetic.

Memory deficits according to Khatoun and Akhter (2010) can be handled by repeating the same thing over and over again so that slow learners can grasp the concepts in chunks and can memorize things by continuous repetition; the second strategy that can be incorporated is the use of pneumonics which can improve the memory a lot.

## Recommendations

1. The teachers are recommended to incorporate the compensatory and remedial teaching strategies that can enhance the academic performance of slow learners such as cooperative learning and group discussions that can help in overcoming the feelings of insufficiency and can help in boosting their self-esteem, teachers must use attractive and interest provoking audio and visual aids to increase the attention span of slow learners and to handle all types of learners i.e. audio, visual and kinesthetic, and the most important thing is the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation which is key to success for such type of learners.
2. The upcoming researchers need to perform in-depth study in the current and relevant fields.
3. The sample needs to be extended to regional, provincial and national level.

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