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## Extra time won't serve purpose: Experts

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Merely granting additional time to a slow learner during an examination may not be of much help to him/her, said experts in the backdrop of the Bombay high court declining to allow a HSC student to take the help of a writer for his board exams.

The court based its decision on rules framed by the Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, which allow a writer only to a student who is deaf/dumb or blind or physically handicapped or spastic. The Board has said that it would give an additional time of 20 minutes, per hour, to the student. Experts working in the field of medicine and the ones associated with non-profit organisations say since such students face difficulty in grasping, analysing, remembering or even reproducing, they should be allowed to avail the assistance of a writer during exams.

According to Dr Samir Dalwai, developmental pediatrician, New Horizons Child Development Centre, the average intelligent quotient of a slow learner varies between 70 and 85. "If any provision that can help us estimate their true potential, then it should be given."

Sonali Saini, founder of Sol's ARC, said people have a misconception about slow learners that they are slow. "But they have difficulty in writing content, which requires higher skills. Hence, giving concession in time may not be of much help to them."

Last year, Sol's ARC, a learning centre for special children, wrote to the Board, requesting the authorities to provide adult writers to slow learners during SSC/HSC exams. It has also requested that such students be given the option of dropping a language and using calculators. It has also requested that such students be given the option of dropping a language and using calculators.

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