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Identification of Dyslexic Children at Primary Level

Education

KEYWORDS: Learning disability, Dyslexia, identification, Primary Level, reading skill.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to identify the dyslexic children at primary level in Sonepat District of Haryana. Purposive sampling was used for selecting the sample for the study. Private schools of Sonepat District were surveyed by the researcher. The findings of the study revealed that there are 10.58% dyslexic children at primary level. This rate is shocking. It draws attention of policy makers, administrators and teachers.

Introduction

Learning disability is related with neurological disorders that interface with a person's ability to learn or get information and lack one's behind in achievement. Reading is one of the most important skills a child learns at school which requires the child to recognize the word and decode the printed letters to match letters and words with sound and comprehend the words with sounds and comprehend the meaning of what is read.

Reading involves the identification of written or printed symbols which serves as stimuli for recall of meanings built up through the reader's past experience. (Bond and Tinker, 1979). Gray (1960) suggested that there are four main components of reading act: - (i) word perception, (ii) comprehensions of ideas represented by the word, (iii) reaction to these ideas and (iv) assimilation or integrations of the ideas with previous knowledge or experiences. Reading is a languages process that involves a sender, a receiver and received meanings and printed representation of the meanings. Reading problems in such children are manifested as extreme difficulties in acquiring reading sub-skills such as word identification and phonological decoding. Such difficulties have been estimated to occur in proximately 7% to 15% of school age children (Benton & Pearl, 1978; Harris & Sipay, 1990; Shastry, 2007; Shaywitz et al., 1992) and tend to be accompanied by specific deficits in cognitive abilities related to reading and other literacy skills. Deficits in phonological coding continue to characterize dyslexic readers throughout adolescence (Shaywitz, Fletcher, Holahan, Shneider, Marchione, Stuebing, Francis, Pugh, et al., 1999). Investigators in the field strongly assert that there is a deficiency within the phonological module, a specific component of the language system, which underlies dyslexia. Because of impairment within this system, subjects are unable to translate and identify words (Shaywitz, 1998).

Justification of the Study

The number of children enrolled in the school has increased in the past decade due to the awareness of the importance of education. However many children drop out from school due to poor academic achievement when the skill in self help motor communication and social areas are appropriately performed by the children and he / she is found poorly on academe aspects to such an extend that and he / she is unsuitable to the age appropriate class and it becomes a concern to the parents. This problem in the child may not be due to intellectual impairment alone, but due to other problems in the learning process. Dyslexia is often a misunderstood, misdiagnosed secret shame for those individuals who are identified with this condition. The impact of this diagnosis on the individual as well as their families causes much confusion among these individuals as well as among all of the scientific fields (educational, medical and psychological) dedicated to helping the child and their family. In India, learning disability has attracted attention only during the last decode. Keep in mind these factors, one current challenge for both researcher and participating educators is to develop, disseminate and implement methods for teaching reading that will help all children acquire adequate reading skill.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify dyslexic children at primary level.
2. To find out the prevalent rate of dyslexic children at primary level.

Research Methodology

Research Methodology was based on the survey method. Dyslexic children were identified on the basis of previous academic record, Malin's Intelligence Scale and Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorder (DTRD) by Smriti Swarup and Dharmishta H. Mehta.

Sample

Purposive sampling was used for the selection of students. Four English medium public schools of Sonepat in Harayana were selected .43 dyslexic children were identified from the selected schools.

Tools Used

Measuring Tools: - Three types of measuring tools were used for the identification of the dyslexic Children in the present study.

- Previous academic record in English.
- Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children (MISIC): An adaptation of the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children developed by Malin in 1971.
- Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorder (DTRD) by Smriti Swarup and Dharmishta H. Mehta (2003).

This test measured reading disorder through two levels i.e. level-I and level-II each consisting eight items which are elaborated as follows.

Statistical Techniques Used

Descriptive statistics - Percentage was used by the researcher to analyze the data.

Section I deals with the identification of children with reading disability.

Section II deals with the prevalence rate of reading disability.

Section I : Identification of Dyslexic Children

It is clear from table 1 that in order to identify dyslexic children, students of grade IV were assessed on the basis of their previous academic records. The students scoring below average or average marks in English (Language) and good in other corresponding subjects were taken. Further, these students were short-listed or their assessment was confirmed on the basis of observation of teacher teaching them English. The students who were showing poor performance in English were screened out.

TABLE -1 Identification of Dyslexic Children

Identification Tools	Number of children Tested	Number of Children Identified
Previous Academic Records	396	135

MISIC Intelligence Test	135	60
Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorders (DTRD)	60	43

After screening out the basis of previous academic records, level of intelligence were measured by a standardized intelligence test. In order to measure Intelligent Quotient (IQ) of children, adapted Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children (MISIC) was administered on the short –listed 135 students. Finally, a standardized Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorder (DTRD) was administered on the 60 students. Out of the 60 students, 43 dyslexic children were identified at primary level.

Section II Prevalence Rate of dyslexic children at primary level

Table 2 presents the prevalence rate of reading disability among Grade IV students in these schools under investigation. This rate varies from10.18% to 11.45% and mean percentage is 10.85.

TABLE -2 Prevalence Rate of Reading Disability

School	Total Number of Students in Grade IV	Dyslexics Children	
		Number	Percentage
School I	112	12	10.71
School II	108	11	10.18
School III	80	9	11.25
School IV	96	11	11.45
TOTAL	396	43	10.85

The presents study has great importance. The findings of present study show that the prevalence rate of dyslexic children of grade IV is 10.58 %. This rate is quite alarming. It needs attention of all concerned such as policy makers, administrators, teachers, parents and mass-media professionals.

Conclusion

Every child has potential of learning. So dyslexic children can also learn. These types of children can learn with different methods, strategies and approaches. Dyslexia can be over come with appropriate remedy at right time. Children with dyslexia required special learning material, support, along with supplementary services to overcome their reading disability.

The present study is important for teachers and educationist to identify dyslexic children at early stage. It can be helpful for them to take better steps and news methods for proper reading of English languageTeachers must ensure that planning about the teaching and learning material, its implementation and evaluation process is according to the child's needs.This study has great importance for policy maker also. The policy maker should make policies according to the needs of special children. When policies are framed, it may be kept in mind that special programmes should be developed to overcome the learning disabilities of special children. Encouragement should be given to the writers and publishers of instructional materials and text books for learning disabled children. The government must also play role in implementation of the policies framed by state and center.

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