

Identification of Reading Disabilities (Dyslexia) in Schools



Education

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ABSTRACT

The study was designed to investigate the prevalence rate of Reading Disabilities in Children in Kurukshetra district of Haryana. The sample for the study was selected purposively i.e. Public Schools of Kurukshetra District. The researcher used standardized tools for data collection. The findings revealed that the prevalence rate of Reading Disabilities in Children of Grade VI in schools is 7.20 percent. This rate seems to be quite alarming, which needs immediate attention of all concerned such as policy makers, administrators, teachers & parents.

INTRODUCTION

Learning Disabilities involve neurological disorders that interfere with a person's ability to store, process or produce information and create a 'gap' between one's abilities and performance. Children with LD are generally of average or above average intelligence. Learning disabilities can affect one's ability to read, write, speak or compute and can impede social skills.

An individual is identified as Dyslexic when a significant discrepancy exists between intellectual ability and reading performance without an apparent physical, emotional or cultural cause. Reading Disabilities are neurological disorders and occur when an individual's reading achievement is marked by below the level of person's intelligence, age and educational opportunities. This disorder is not due to a physical disability or a sensory impairment. Instead, it is a problem in how the brain processes the information as the individual is reading. Reading is one of the most important skills, which requires the child to recognize the word and decode the printed letters to match letters and words with sounds and comprehend the meaning of what is read. Learning to read is a controlled activity carried on under the guidance of a teacher. Through reading, the experiences of the reader are extended, his power of thinking is stimulated and he is enabled to interpret life more intelligently and accurately.

In India LD has attracted widespread attention only during the last two decades or so. It has been observed that reading disorder is one of the most significant contributory factors of LD. As such, reading occupies pivotal role in the process of learning. Reading is an indispensable factor in daily life of students. The study finds that children with Learning Disabilities face a host of academic difficulties including reading spelling, writing [both mechanical and composition] and mathematics as well as non-academic difficulties including visual motor problems, perceptual problems [Visual/auditory discrimination, figure/ground discrimination] problems with memory [auditory/visual], phonological processing difficulties and language problems.

The first casualty is self-esteem, children with Reading Disability soon grow ashamed as they struggle with a skill that their classmates master easily. Reading Disabilities in children are kept from exploring science, history, literature, mathematics and the wealth of information that is presented in print. Even people with mild reading impairment do not read for fun. Their difficulty is painfully obvious when they try to read out loud. Children with Reading Difficulties stop and start frequently, mispronouncing some words and skip others entirely.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify children with Reading Disabilities.
2. To find out the prevalence rate of reading Disabilities in children in schools.

Delimitations of the study

The present study is confined to –

1. forty-eight Reading Disabilities in Children.

2. children in the age group of 10 to 11 years.
3. public schools of Kurukshetra Town in Haryana.
4. children having IQ 90 to 110.

Research Methodology

The design of the study involved the survey research method to collect data and then screening and identifying the subjects on the basis of Previous Academic Records, Teacher's observation checklist, Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children (MISIC), Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorders (DTRD) and finally drawing out a sample of 48 Reading Disabilities in children. It took six weeks to identify the sample.

Sample

A Purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of both the schools and subjects for the present study. Five English medium public schools of Kurukshetra town in Haryana and 48 subjects of the age group [10-11 years] of grade VI were selected through this technique.

Analysis of Data & Interpretation of results

In order to locate children with LD in reading, 666 students of grade VI 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 complementary subjects i.e. showing discrepancy in results were taken. The number of children on this basis came to 318. 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 of the 318, 173 were screened out. (as shown in Table-1)

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH READING DISABILITY TABLE-1

Identification Tools	Number of Children Tested	Number of Children Identified
Previous Academic Records	666	318
Teacher's Observation Check list	318	173
MISIC Intelligence test	173	62
Diagnostic test of Reading Disorders (DTRD)	62	48

After screening out the children on the basis of previous academic records along with teacher's Observation Checklist, Children level of intelligence were measured by a standardized intelligence test i.e. MISIC. In order to measure Intelligent Quotient [IQ] of children, adapted Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children [MISIC] was administered on the short-listed 173 students. On the basis of this test, 62 students were finally identified as learning disabled by eliminating the extreme cases since learning disability includes only average intelligence.

Finally, a standardized Diagnostic Test of Reading Disorder [DTRD] was administered on the selected students. Out of the

62 students, and a final sample of 48 children having Reading Disability was identified.

PREVALENCE RATE OF READING DISABILITY

Table-2 presents the prevalence rate of reading disability among Grade VI students in five schools under investigation. This rate varies from 5.94 to 8.92 percent in five selected school with mean percentage, 7.20.

TABLE-2
PREVALENCE RATE OF READING DISABILITY

Schools	Total no. of students in Grade VI	Reading Disabled Children	
		Number	Percentage
School I	158	11	5.94
School II	182	12	6.25
School III	58	6	8.33
School IV	80	9	8.57
School V	188	10	8.92
Total	666	48	7.20

The important point to underscore in this regard is that LD cannot be cured but can be overcome with appropriate remedy at the right time. Children with special needs require support, with some supplementary services for encouragement to overcome their disabilities.

On the basis of the analysis the prevalence rate of LD in reading among grade VI students has been found to be 7.20 percent. This rate varies from 5.94 to 8.92 from one school to the other.

Educational Implications

Every research has some implications, be it theoretical or practical or even related to immediate context. The present study is of immense importance to remediate reading disability among the children with LD. It has been found in the present study that the prevalence rate of LD children of Grade VI is 7.20 percent. This rate seems to be quite alarming, which needs immediate attention of all concerned such as policy makers, administrators, teachers, parents and mass media professionals.

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