

Parent's and Teacher's Reaction towards Problems Faced by Children with Learning Disabilities

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Abstract: *These Learning Disability is a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Learning that the child has a disability can be one of life's most significant stressors for the parents. Teachers may have to face a lot of distractions in classroom daily and the problem will be more with children with learning disabilities. The present study is conducted to understand the parent's and teacher's reactions towards problems faced by children with learning disability. The study samples were identified purposively from different schools of Hyderabad using Learning Disability Diagnostic Inventory (Hammill and Bryant, 1998). The parents of the identified children and teachers were administered with Parental Reaction's towards learning disability and Teacher's reaction towards learning disability respectively. The results revealed that consequently more number of boys have problems and were from low income families. Among different types of learning disability, mostly children had mixed disability problems. High correlation was found between parental reactions and Teacher's reaction towards problems of learning disability. The results were discussed with limitation of small sample size*

Keywords: Learning Disabilities, Parent's Reaction, Teacher's Reaction, Problems, Children, Stress.

1. Parent's and Teacher's Reaction towards Problems faced by Children with Learning Disabilities

Learning disability (LD) is a general term that describes specific kinds of learning problems. A learning disability can cause a person to have trouble learning and using certain skills. The skills most often affected are reading, writing, listening, speaking, reasoning, and doing math. Learning disabilities vary from person to person. One person with LD may not have the same kind of learning problems as another person with LD. One person may have trouble with reading and writing. Another person with LD may have problems understanding math. Still another person may have trouble in each of these areas, as well as with understanding what people are saying (National Dissemination Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities [NICHCY], 2004). Learning disabilities do not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; mental retardation; or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997).

Adjustment problems of children with learning disabilities:

Usually learning Disability children face other associated problems like Psychological, Behavioral, Academic, Social problems and Sleep disorders. To cop up with these problems children have make adjustments in academic, home, Emotional and Social areas.

1.1 Types of Learning Disability

Learning disabilities can be categorized either by the type of information processing that is affected or by the specific difficulties caused by a processing deficit. Learning disabilities usually fall within four broad categories: **Spoken**

language-listening and speaking, **Written language-**reading, writing and spelling, **Arithmetic-**Calculation and concepts, **Reasoning-**Organization and integration of Ideas and thoughts. Learning disabilities can be divided into three broad categories: developmental speech and language disorders, academic skills disorders, and other (such as coordination disorders). Each category includes more specific disorders, which are described below.

1.2 Parent Reactions to a Child's Disability - Reactions to a Child's Disability

Learning that the child has a disability can be one of life's most significant stressors for the parents. Parents' reactions to learning that a child has a learning disability can range from relief to despair and everything in between. Further, parents' responses may shift and change depending on many factors such as the level of disability, the family's coping skills, the parents' ability to work together to meet the needs of the child and of each other.

1.3 Parents Experience Stress when their child has a Learning Disability

The level of stress that parents experience if they have a child with a learning disability can be detrimental to the whole family but especially the child who has been diagnosed with the disability. It is extremely hard for the parents to cope with the responsibility of having a child who has a learning disability. Teachers also play a significant role. Depending on the severity of the learning disability the child might require extensive support in school by the teacher. Parents need to be available to help their child with homework. In order to benefit the child, it is important to assess the severity of stress the parents are experiencing and furthermore take action to help them. Hence it was planned to assess the parental reactions and stress they experience, so

that counseling can be given in areas which require more help.

- a) If a parent's stress is reduced there is a higher chance that the child's progress will increase. In order to ensure that parents can give their child their full undivided attention, these services are available for parents who have children with learning disabilities. There are groups that are organized to help parents with their concerns with their child's learning disability. These schools help and much more supportive of their child and are able to cope with issues concerning their child's prognosis. Though special schools address specific needs of children with learning disability, there is no much awareness about these schools among parents and teachers. More over there are very less number of schools catering to special education. Hence it was planned to explore whether the special schools can reduce the intensity of the problems of children with learning disabilities and also the stress faced by the parents. It is often hard for parents to express that they need supportive services. These services are vital because if the parent's needs are not met it could potentially lead to neglect or abuse to the child who has learning disabilities. The parent's level of stress should be evaluated numerous times when going through treatment to assess the success. Pinpointing the exact stressors can allow the treatment to be more valuable.
- b) A special education program should be customized to address each individual student's unique needs. Special educators provide a continuum of services, in which students with special needs receive services in varying degrees based on their individual needs. Special education programs need to be individualized so that they address the unique combination of needs in a given student.
- c) Schools use different approaches to providing special education services to identified students. These can be broadly grouped into four categories, according to whether and how much contact the student with special needs has with non-disabled students. Schools like Inclusion, Mainstreaming, Segregation and Exclusion.
- d) A special school is a school catering for students who have special educational needs due to severe learning difficulties, physical disabilities or behavioural problems.
- e) Special schools provide individualized education, addressing specific needs. Student: teacher ratios are kept low, often 6:1 or lower depending upon the needs of the children. Special schools will also have other facilities for the development of children with special needs, such as soft play areas, sensory rooms, or swimming, which are vital for the therapy of certain conditions.

1.4 Problems Faced by Teachers in Classroom

Teachers may have to face a lot of distractions in classroom daily and the problems will be more with children with learning disabilities. They may have to deal with uninterested students or they may suffer from burden in absence of parents support. But good teachers always remain committed to their profession and try solving these problems.

Teachers have a great responsibility and to meet this responsibility, teachers need support and help. Parents and

school administration should communicate properly with teachers for betterment of students and class discipline. Since almost five percent of all students in our nation's public schools are classified as having specific learning disabilities (SLD), every teacher can expect to find students with learning disabilities in the classroom. Success for these students requires a focus on individual achievement, individual progress, and individual learning. If teachers have proper knowledge on the learning disabilities, they can help students in facilitating learning process.

1.5 Teacher Role

Learning is a change in behavior. Teachers understand the operation of the learning process. Senses expose the pupil to a world around them. These sensory stimuli are relayed to the brain for processing which causes altered behavior patterns. It is not just an accumulation of facts. It is an aggregation of knowledge and understanding that causes these changes in behavior. Pupils learn by doing and using as many senses as possible. A teacher stimulates a pupil's senses to accomplish learning. Teachers are on constant alert for failure to meet the desired objectives. Failure to accomplish these goals of learning can be attributed to the teacher or pupil. In this article, a possible procedure for identifying a pupil with a learning problem is offered.

1.6 Management

The management of the student with learning disability (LD) begins with quality instruction, even before the student is identified as having an LD. If parents, teachers do not have knowledge of problems it may account for the student learning failure. It is known that early intervention with quality instruction improves outcomes for all students with learning failure (including those with LD) and that it is more difficult to educate students with LD when they are older [7]. Thus, the results will help to provide quality instructions with less stress by parents and teachers. The results will help to advice policy makers to extend the special schools to other areas, so that children with learning disabilities can be benefited early and get benefit of special education.

2. Objectives

The major objective research is to assess the "Impact of special education on management of problems".

The specific objectives of the present research is

- To assess and identify the type of learning disability among children.
- To see whether there was any significant differences in the parental reactions of stress related learning disability.
- To see whether there was any significant differences in the teacher's reactions of stress related learning disability.
- To assess whether there was correlation between parents and Teacher's reactions of stress related to learning disability children.

Based on the above objectives the null hypotheses were framed.

- There was no significant difference in the parental reactions of stress related learning disability.

- There were no significant differences in the teacher’s reactions of stress related learning disability.
- There was no correlation between parent’s and Teacher’s reactions of stress related to learning disability children.

3. Methodology

Tools and Materials:

1. Learning Disability Diagnostic Inventory – (Developed by Hammill and Bryant, 1998)
2. Parental Reaction towards Children’s Behavior Scale (Developed by the Investigator)

3.1 Samples

The samples were selected from school children in Hyderabad. Who were studying 3rd, 4th and 5th standard. The reason for choosing Hyderabad was that it is the only place in the state having special education schools for learning disabilities. 20 schools were identified randomly and children with specific learning disability were identified using Learning Disability Diagnostic Inventory and also with the help of school teachers. Later the house addresses of children were collected from school authority and the investigator visited the homes of identified children. After establishing a rapport with the parents, the parents were asked to go through the Parental Reaction towards Children’s Behavior Scale and rate their reactions on a three point scale ranging from Always, Sometime, and Never. The data collection is in progress. So far 50 children were identified, based on the data collected so far, the present paper is discussed.

4. Results

The data so far collected was pooled and statistical analysis was conducted.

Table 1: Distribution of Samples

Gender	No.		%	
	Boys	33	66	
	Girls	17	34	

Table: 1 shows the Distribution of Samples Among the children who were identified as having Learning Disability, majority (66 per cent) were boys and 34 percent were girls. However the sample size is small and data on a large sample will be helpful for generalization.

Table 2: Education of parents

Education	Parents			
	Father		Mother	
	No	%	No	%
Illiterate	14	28	23	46
Upto 5 th class	2	4	-	-
6 th to 10 th class	9	18	10	20
Intermediate	6	12	6	12
Graduate	10	20	8	16
Post Graduate	9	18	3	6

Table -2 shows the education of parents. Nearly half of the samples (46 per cent) of mothers and 28 per cent of fathers

were illiterates and only a very few mothers (6 per cent) and fathers (9 percent) had PG education. Illiteracy and poor socio economic status may be the reasons which might have made children to reach 3rd – 5th standard without identification which is evident from table -3

Table 3: Shows income of Family

Income (Rs)	Parents	
	Total No.	%
>Rs. 10,000	33	66
10,001-20,000	8	16
20,001-30,000	6	12
30,001-40,000	-	-
40,001-50,000	1	2
50,001-60,000	2	4
60,001-70,000	0	0

Table – 3 Shows income of Family, in this table it is indicating that majority of the children from below 10,000 Rs family income and very few children from high income group families.

Table 4: Shows Occupation of Parents

Occupation	Parents			
	Father		Mother	
	No	%	No	%
Daily Labor	14	28	10	20
Business	8	16	-	-
Private Employee	23	46	2	4
Govt. Employee	0	0	-	-
Professionals	5	10	1	2
House wife	-	-	37	74

Table – 4 Shows Occupation of Parents, in this data it is clearly indicating that majority of fathers are private employees and daily labor and none of them are government employees. Majority of mothers are house wives and less number of mothers are working.

Table 5: shows the distribution of sample across the type of disability

Gender	Type of Disability				Total
	Dyslexia	Dysgraphia	Dyscalculia	Mixed	
	N %	N %	N %	N %	N %
Boys	9 18	6 12	6 12	12 24	33 66
Girls	4 8	3 6	2 4	8 16	17 34
Total	13 26	9 18	8 16	20 40	50 100

Table-5 shows the distribution of sample across the type of disability. From table it is evident that majority of boys and girls have mixed problems which means combination of more than one disorder. Next to it Dyslexia that are more. Comparatively boys have more problems in writing (Dysgraphia) and mathematics (Dyscalculia).

Table 6: Mean and S.D of Parental Reaction Scale

S. No.	Parental reaction score		
	Area	Mean	S.D
1	Academic	43.54	6.2309
2	Home	38.08	7.868
3	Emotional	40.48	3.903
4	Social	49.86	8.136
	Total	159.9	16.48

Parents were asked to mention their reaction through Parental Reaction Scale. The scale has four areas of assessment of stress such as academic, home, emotional, and social. The parental reactions were rated on three point scale and the reactions of each area and in total are presented in table – 6. From table – 6 it is clear that parents perceived more problem in social and academic areas. That shows that parents are more worried about social and academic problems of children.

Table 7: Mean and S.D of Teachers Reaction Scale

Area	Teachers reaction score		
	N	Mean	S.D
Academic	50	39.94	5.6112
Home	50	35.46	6.562
Emotional	50	40.06	3.904
Social	50	38.02	7.133
Total	50	153.48	15.813

Teachers were asked to mention that reactions through teacher’s reaction towards children behavior scale. The scale has four areas of assessment of stress such as academic, home, emotional and social. The teacher’s reaction were rated on three point scale and the reactions of each area and in total are presented in table no. 7. From table-7 it is clear that teachers perceived more problems in emotional and academic areas. That is teachers are needed to concentrate on those areas of problems.

Table 8: shows significant difference in parental reactions related to children with learning disability and t-test was conducted

Area	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Significance
Academic	Boys	33	43.69	5.855	0.246	0.510
	Girls	17	43.235	7.0846		
Home	Boys	33	38.394	8.7354	0.44	0.12
	Girls	17	37.4706	6.0324		
Emotional	Boys	33	40.456	4.0550	0.65	0.948
	Girls	17	40.5294	3.71008		
Social	Boys	33	37.7576	6.17470	0.065	0.948
	Girls	17	37.8824	6.86369		
Total Score	Boys	33	160.30	18.8289	0.280	0.781
	Girls	17	159.117	11.03904		

Table – 8 Shows significant difference in parental reactions and t-test was conducted. From this table it is evident that there was no significant difference in the parental reaction with Learning disability between boys and girls and the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 9: Table significant differences in teacher’s reactions reactions related to children with learning disability and t-test was conducted

Area	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	significance
Academic	Boys	33	40.0303	5.4993	0.157	0.850
	Girls	17	39.7647	6.0985		
Home	Boys	33	35.1212	7.19704	0.558	0.881
	Girls	17	36.1176	5.02546		
Emotional	Boys	33	40.000	4.06971	0.150	0.58
	Girls	17	40.1765	3.67823		
Social	Boys	33	38.637	7.2708	0.863	0.881
	Girls	17	36.824	6.9123		
Total Score	Boys	33	153.789	17.425	0.211	0.850
	Girls	17	152.8824	12.5692		

From the abovetable it is evident that there was high correlation between parental reaction and teacher’s reaction towards problem of children with learning disability. The correlation coefficient values $r=0.720$ which was significant at 0.01 level. Test the hypothesis – Karl Pearson correlation coefficient was conducted.

5. Conclusions

- Comparatively more number of boys have problem with learning disability than girls. However the sample size is small for generalization
- Majority of children with learning disability belongs to illiterate parents and are from poor income families
- Parent perceive more problem in social and academic areas of children
- Teachers perceive more problems in emotional and academic areas of children
- Among different type of learning disabilities mostly children had mixed disability problem.
- No significant difference was found in the parent’s perception of problems between boys and girls with regard to learning disability.
- No significant difference was found in the teacher’s perception of problems between boys and girls with regard to learning disability.
- High correlation was found between parental reaction and teacher’s reaction towards problems of learning disability.

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