

A STUDY ON LEARNERS WITH READING AND WRITING PROBLEMS IN THE CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The study's goal was to look into the approaches employed to instruct students who had reading and writing difficulties in a typical classroom. How students are with reading and writing difficulties taught in a typical classroom was the study's major question. Cognitive processes of brain are affected by numerous factors such as genetic and neurobiological which may alter the functioning of brain causing difficulties in learning. The basic learning skills like reading and writing are of great significance in the foundational years. Individuals who are having these difficulties are not as quick as their peers' and might find certain aspects of learning challenging. Problem in reading occurs when a pupil experiences difficulty in reading single word, comprehension, sounding out letters/words. While, difficulty in writing arises when a learner is not able to communicate his ideas in writing, mistakes in spelling and incorrect framing of sentences. Moreover, sometimes, due to mirror writing or writing letters upside down, it gets really difficult to read their handwriting.

Early identification of these difficulties can do wonders for the kids and gives them more time to combat with it. However, due to bigger class size and pressure of huge syllabus to complete, students with these difficulties gets remain unnoticed. Therefore, it is important for the class teacher to have some knowledge of common reading and writing problems learners face and acknowledge them at the time of assessment and teaching for early identification of the issue. This paper is based on learners with reading and writing problems in the classroom.

The study makes it seem obvious that the effectiveness of the management in the school is essential for the overall administration of the school. Everyone has different duties and responsibilities in a learning environment, thus the head teacher should make sure that all staff members are engaged in well-organized collaborative work for everyone's benefit. So, all students should have access to the opportunities regardless of their differences. As a result, the school's responsibility is to treat each student fairly, value them, and provide them with a high-quality education that will help them achieve. Therefore, teachers should consider how learners who have difficulties with reading and writing might succeed in an inclusive classroom without being isolated from their peers.

Keywords: Cognitive processes, learning skills, reading, writing, knowledge

Introduction

It implies that students with special needs ought to be allowed to enrol in traditional schools, which ought to have the capacity to accept them within a child-centered pedagogy capable of meeting their demands. Regular schools with this inclusive viewpoint are frequently seen as the most efficient way to get rid of discriminatory beliefs, develop friendly communities, promote an inclusive society, and guarantee that all kids get an education. In addition, they increase the effectiveness and, hence, the cost-effectiveness of the overall educational system while providing an effective education to the vast majority of children. According to the Salamanca Statement (1994) and Ainscow and Booth (1990), inclusion starts in kindergarten, the first year of formal education.

In the middle of the twentieth century, the International Union began to develop official papers on human rights for education. This was followed up with a comprehensive education plan for all pupils. In the process of providing education for children with SNE, inclusive education became a central problem. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises every child's right to education (UN, 1948).

The Concept of Reading

Reading is a permanent skill which is used in school as well throughout life. It is a necessary life skill and certainly important for a child success in school and during whole life. That is why, greater attention is provided to learners in their foundational years. According to Gough and Tunmer, 1986 the two major elements of simple reading model are decoding and language comprehension.

R (reading comprehension) = D (decoding) x C (comprehension)

Therefore, learners with high decoding ability but low linguistic comprehension and vice-versa will not be considered as a good reader. Both of the above, represents that the student has problem either in decoding the text or understanding the true meaning of the context (Gough and Tunmer, 1986). The model acts as a structural background to understand and conceptualize the process of reading and can assist in diagnosing reading problems among students. (Fonyuyshey,2019). Further, the simple reading model suggests some key processes or components which can be used to measure the reading level such as Linguistic awareness, phonological awareness (PA), morphological awareness.

Partanen and Siegel (2014) has elaborated the upper version into five skills which are essential for reading development namely phonological awareness, Letter knowledge/word recognition, rapid automatized naming, Working memory and other language skills (syntax, grammar).

The elements of reading

Phonic awareness: the ability to recognize sounds in spoken words. It is considered to be a strong factor predicting the reading success and failure (Badian, 1995).

Letter knowledge: the ability to identify and recall alphabets, letters and words.

Rapid automatized naming: the speed of naming the objects when shown to them such as colours, fruits and vegetables.

Working memory: the ability to process, remember and retrieve information from memory.

Other linguistic skills: it includes semantics (meaning of the word), syntax (usage of grammar) and morphology (rules of word formation) respectively.

The concept of Writing

Writing is a process to communicate one's idea and thought. It is an essential skill which is required not only in academics but to interact with outside world. Writing is a complex process and it gets harder for learners having learning difficulties. The mechanism of writing development follows a sequences of progression in early childhood. Kids who experience difficulties in foundational writing skills are probably more prone to display delays because of their capabilities to match there peers' progress in writing (chung et al., 2020). Pupils are taught to about colours, shapes and scribbling for the development of basic visual-motor coordination skills in play-way. Basically, it is just the beginning or practice of making kids ready for school. The knowledge and awareness of alphabets, 2 letter words, 3 letter words, short sentences and complex sentences starts from kindergarten and continues till school age.

Literature Review

Chordia et al., (2020) The present study aimed at analysing the proportion of kids aged between 5 to 7 which are at risk of developing learning difficulties and also examines the socio-

demographic factors of risk. The study was conducted in 6 primary schools in Puducherry in 3 phase where 480 pupils were assessed. In first stage, screening were done by teachers using Specific Learning Disability – Screening Questionnaire, later, vision, hearing and IQ test were conducted and lastly, pupils were screened with NIMHANS SLD index. Out of 480 students, 36 kids were assessed positive. The proportion of boys was 9.6% which is comparatively higher than girls. Also, learners in government school (12.1%) were more affected than private school. The most common problem aroused in screening questionnaire was Punctuation and capital letters whereas NIMHANS assisted in diagnosing dysgraphia. Researcher highlighted that learning disorders has vast occurrence in Indian society. However, children remains undiagnosed because of inadequate knowledge among parents and educators. Researcher concluded that proper screening should be made compulsory at levels and remedial teaching institutes must be opened with affordable charges.

Troeva (2015) the primary purpose of the research is to identify the strategies needed to be applied by teachers to incorporate students with dyslexia in a regular classroom. The researcher highlighted that the main area in which students with reading problems lag behind is inadequate phonic awareness. The study with the help of review of literature recognises that using multiple senses for learning phonics, step-by-step instruction system, supportive learning environment, boosting their confidence could be possible options to be applied in classrooms. The choice of method used must be decided keeping in mind strengths and weaknesses of the students.

Arun et al., (2013) The aim of the present study was to evaluate the prevalence of learning disorder among children at senior secondary level. The study was conducted in phases and data collection was done from 10 schools in Chandigarh. The criteria for selection was scholastic performance of current and last year. 2402 students were assessed out of which 124 students were selected in Phase -I and 108 learners for phase-II on the basis of teachers' screening proforma. The researcher applied two tests namely Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children and Standard Progressive Matrices and NIMHANS Index for specific learning disability (SLD) to assess the occurrence of learning disorder. The results revealed that in phase I, 38 kids have specific learning disability. Most of them have mixed type of problems and more boys were struggling with this disorder. The study concludes that disability remains unnoticed till this later age. Therefore, the instrument can be used to screen the kids.

Mogasaleet al., (2012) The main purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyscalculia among children at primary level of education. The study was done in Belgaum city of south India. The researcher has applied multi-stage cluster sampling technique to randomly select children aged between 8-11 years studying in third and fourth standard. Researcher has used 6 level screening technique for identification of children suffering from above mentioned disorder. The screening test includes scholastic records, vision test, hearing test, physical examination, intelligence quotient test, reading, writing and numerical ability test respectively. The findings disclose that 15.17% children have learning disabilities. 12.55% had writing and spelling disorder, 11.2% had reading difficulty and 10.5% were experiencing arithmetic problem.

Karande et al., (2011) reviewed vast literature available on the specific learning disability (SpLD). It includes difficulty in possessing information which in turns leads to difficulty in reading, writing and calculations. The researcher highlighted that about 5 to 15% of school kids get affected by this disorder. The awareness regarding these difficulties has been increased in last 10 years. Still, it's a really long way to accommodate these kids in the mainstream education system and offer them various assistance programmes and options so that their full academic

potential can be achieved. For accomplishing the goal of inclusive education system, teachers and school management ought to be trained for early detection of pupils struggling with disorder. Moreover, schools should take initiatives for constructing resource room, purchasing material and instrumental aids and employing special educators to make sure that remedial training is easily accessible at reasonable prices.

Saravanabhavan and Saravanabhavan (2010) the present study was focused on analysing the knowledge level of teachers regarding learning disabilities in India. The data were collected using a questionnaire from 347 teachers in total. Out of 347, 144 were teaching in two regular schools, 38 were providing their services in two special schools and 165 were student teachers gaining their education to become teachers in future. After data collection, One-way (ANOVA) was applied and results demonstrated that the knowledge level of teachers in regular schools was different and higher from other groups. Student teachers have lowest knowledge about the learning disabilities. The variables such as experience of teacher and acquaintance with people facing this problem doesn't have any significant influence on knowledge level of teachers.

Ramma and Gowramma (2002) conducted a research study to identify and classify children facing mathematical problems. The researcher applied procedures from two independent studies done in India on kids at primary level. The researcher eliminated all other potent causes of mathematical failure and included only the cases of dyscalculia. The statistic came out was 15 cases out of 251 in one study and 78 heads out of 1408 were struggling with calculations and numbers. In a latter study, students with reading and writing problems were also identified and the figure was 40 out of 78 which more than half of the total pupils surveyed.

Shah et al., (1987) the study was organised in one of the English medium school in Bombay. The purpose of the study was to examine the learners with learning disorder. 49 students were struggling with the problem. The researcher administered various test starting from clinical examination to mirror image, reading, writing and dictation test were done. A performa regarding children academic achievement, emotional and behavioural issues were given to teachers and parents. On the basis of Critchley's criteria, it was found that one child was suffering from dyslexia. The researcher suggested to develop suitable test for early diagnosis of reading problems among kids. Moreover, researcher highlighted that tests done in initial classes such as KinderGarten and Grade-1 might not be considered reliable. A significant number of children experiences these difficulties, an early detection and positive attitude towards such children with helpful coaching can undoubtedly reduce the suffering of affected children, parents and educators.

International context

Fritsch et al., (2021) examined the importance of timely discovery of learning difficulties with an instrument named as Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test, 6th edition. The outcome of the study propounded that learners with dyslexia have less phonological skills in comparison to others. Moreover, researcher asserted that these differences are indeed present at the time of literacy process begins. Early identification assists in implementing preventive and individual training to students for proper reading development.

Firat and Bildiren (2020) piloted this study with the aim of exploring and explaining the strengths and weaknesses of a student struggling with learning difficulties starting from its kindergarten to university level education. The study used mixed approach (case study, semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions) to collect detailed information from the respondent. Participant has a family history of learning difficulties but his disability is self-discovered when entered university. It was observed that respondent has certainly faced

problems in reading, writing, calculations, directions and short-term memory during all levels of education. The disability has adverse effects on social skills, family relations and future professional life.

Axelsson et al., 2019 conducted a study with the purpose of identifying factors which influences reading and writing developments among children. Researcher converted it into 9 themes namely child's abilities & interests, genes and parents' capabilities, parents and grandparents involvement, teacher proficiency, school environment, reading material and games, Montessori activities initiates reading & writings, siblings and peers influence and additional support provisions.

Partanen and Siegel (2014) directed a longitudinal study to measure the long term effects of early intervention of reading difficulties has on students reading skills. The results shows that 22% children in a kindergarten school in Canada were discovered as at-risk. However, it significantly reduced to 6% in Grade-7. Therefore, researcher concludes that early identification and quality instruction has a desirable impact on decreasing the reading difficulties.

Hansen et al., (2014) examined the outcomes of an intervention aimed at creating phonological awareness among kindergarten children which were facing learning difficulties. The training program applied multiple techniques of teaching incorporated in their regular schedules. A small group of six children were syllable segmentation, first sound identification, and phoneme segmenting. The outcomes of the study disclosed that the action had positive influence on the kids and assisted them in gaining on each skill.

Ogano (2012) A research conducted on a school in Norway concluded that teachers adopted numerous techniques to help disable kids in ordinary classroom such as assistant teacher, instructional technology (computers, audio books) buddy system, resource room, open and supportive classroom environment, learning by showing and many other useful strategies. Clearly, the school follows inclusive education and results shows that it has desirable influence on struggling kids.

Smart et al., (2011) conducted a longitudinal study to analyse learning difficulties among kids aged from 7 to 14 years using school achievement and intelligence tests under Australian temperament project. Students who were diagnosed with reading disorder at 7 years were again tested at the age of 13. Results revealed 50% students still had the same disorder and 80% had some kind of learning disorder. The factors causing persistence of these problems are intelligence and early behaviour problems (reading disability), severe reading problem and family socio-economic status (spelling disorder) and intelligence, early behaviour problems and family status (mathematical difficulties).

Ziolkowska (2007) conducted a case study in her own classroom with some sixth grade students who were struggling with reading and writing difficulties. Teacher applied small group instructions (6 students), close observations and writing reflective journals has assisted the guide in recognising the students reading and writing behaviours. Researcher believes that as soon as the difficulties appears, support should be provided to them as early as possible. Delayed detection of learning difficulties will make it harder to provide assistance to children. With timely intervention, schools, teachers and even parents can provide them with remediation programs namely reading classes, special education classes, or repeating a grade.

Krishnakumar et al., (2006) started this study to measure the usefulness of individual educational plan for children suffering from academic failure. The research was conducted on children who were visiting child guidance centre because of academic backwardness. Out of total kids regularly attending these sessions, 12 of them were recognized as slow learners while 6 of

them have minor mental retardation symptoms. Their present level of academic activeness and intelligence quotient were the criteria of above diagnosis and these test were done twice (before training and after training) by the assessor to determine the effectiveness of individual training. Findings of the study disclosed that a great amount of improvement was seen in academics as well as in the self-esteem of these kids. The researcher highlighted that this study can act be a model for setting up resource room in schools to provide personalized education to slow learners. **Harris and Denet (2006)** conducted this research to examine the impact of multi-sensory language based program has on students who are facing difficulties in reading. The sample for the study were taken from Louisiana school districts. In this study, the students using this program of language development were compared with students who were using traditional methods of studying language. The researcher used Developmental Reading Assessment Test (DRA) and the IOWA Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) for investigation. The results demonstrated that multi-sensory language based program have a noteworthy impact on dyslexia pupils. The researcher concluded that such method can be used to improve academic achievement among learners.

Bijl et al., (2005) conducted a study with the purpose of comparing two teaching strategies of sight word instruction in a school where accommodates learners with mild to severe learning disability. A total of thirty-three students were examined on the basis of their language skills and alphabet knowledge. It was found that learners are able to recognize and learn sight words with both of the techniques used to disseminate knowledge.

Moccia (2005) aimed at examining the impact of reading programs have on children with disability. There were two different reading programs organized for students with disabilities in middle school. 37 learners participated in personalised learning intervention, 47 were part of Wilson reading system and they were compared with same number of students in general education reading from the overall population of 500 kids of class 8 and 9. Results indicated that reading programs have an impact on student performance.

Sternberg (1999) has asserted that taking remedial measures in the initial stages can significantly reduce children population that can meet diagnostic criteria for learning disorder. However, researcher believes that the additional support provided to kids struggling with difficulties gives importance only for academic outcomes and other areas such as music, dance, and art remains ignored by school management. The strength and weakness of every child is different, hence, assistance programmes should made keeping that in mind.

Baker et al., (1987) investigates the influence of home and family environment has on reading abilities of children. Study propounded early encounter with literacy encourages reading inclination among kids. Moreover, positive socio-emotional environment of family has a desirable impact on reading skills. Shared reading sessions and parents' beliefs regarding reading as an enjoyment also have significant influence on children reading experiences.

Fonyuyshey (2019) conducted a study with the aim of analysing the effectiveness of direct teaching method on students with reading disability. The researcher has reviewed all the literature available on this topic. The researcher highlighted various factors affecting the reading skills namely complexity of the text, vocabulary, speed, interest and motivation of the learner plays a significant role in development of reading skills. Moreover, researcher concludes that direct teaching has a desirable impact of dyslexic kids.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the influential factors affecting the reading and writing development of children.
2. To compare the teaching methods and curriculum of two different schools

3. Learn what instructional strategies, methods, and directions teachers use to help students who are having difficulties with their reading and writing.

Research methodology

The study used a qualitative approach. The goal was to gather rich data by researching the phenomenon in a natural environment. This was done in an effort to get as much information as possible from the professors. According to Patton (2002), the qualitative technique offers the opportunity to get sufficiently close to the participants and the situation to accurately record what is occurring. Qualitative research was selected due to its key characteristics since it "typically emphasises words rather than quantification in the secondary data collection and in the analysis of data" (Bryman, 2004: 266).

Research design

The researcher applied qualitative techniques to get the answers of the research questions. Qualitative method was used to collect rich data and have in-depth knowledge of the research problem and strategies. As the study can be categorised under the domain of social-sciences and deals with studying human behaviour especially children. Therefore, qualitative research technique was used to collect as much information as possible.

Social skills in supporting learners with reading and writing problem

Students with learning disabilities often struggle academically and believe that they are failures in life. This has a negative impact on their self-esteem, causing problems with their social skills. In contrast, their capable classmates appear to be socially competent, with well-developed receptive and expressive language skills, great self-esteem, and a sense of control over their life. Teachers must pay close attention to their students' needs.

Encourage learners to learn using their strengths rather than their deficiencies through social skill development, peer group debates, or corporative learning. This can be accomplished by incorporating all of these into teaching and learning methodologies (Alberta Education, 1996).

Learners who have difficulty reading and writing may struggle with receptive and expressive language abilities, as well as visual-motor, auditory, and visual processing. Memory, study, and organising skills, as well as attention span and social skills, may all be lacking. Teachers should be aware that students with reading and writing issues may have their own unique learning profile, as well as varying degrees of difficulty. It is critical to resolve and provide support to each student based on his or her strengths and requirements (Alberta Education, 1996).

Learners with reading and writing problems

This study examines the instructional strategies used in the classroom to help students who struggle with reading and writing. One of the learning disability subcategories included in special needs education is problems with reading and writing. The learning process is impacted by a combination of strengths and weaknesses, which becomes clear when accurate and fluent word reading and/or writing develop very slowly. The widespread consensus is that as students' progress through primary school, they eventually move from the stage of "learning to read" to "reading to learn." For a sizable portion of students, however, this is not the case, and as they move through the elementary years, they continue to struggle with their reading fluency. Since the reading difficulties affects every subject covered in the curriculum, it undermines the self-esteem of these students since they feel embarrassed when asked to read and are unable to access knowledge or do well on tests. Some educators who work with students who struggle with reading and writing are unsure of the best strategies to use, and the students themselves are unaware of the issue.

Peer support in the learning process of reading and writing

The relationships between students in the classroom, particularly during class activities, can inspire learning. When the task is challenging and calls for problem-solving abilities, the less able students receive assistance from their more capable colleagues, which encourages collaboration between them. According to Strickland et al. (2002) and Webb and Palinscar (1996) in Anita et al. (2008) & Isaacs (2012), this engagement is likely to stimulate students to collaborate with one another and to support one another's learning processes. It also helps them feel like they are a part of a larger family.

They learn to organise their knowledge or replies by exchanging ideas as they learn by asking questions and seeking clarification from one another. Peer contact can also lead to cognitive conflict, which motivates students to critically analyse their ideas and explore alternative approaches to the issue at hand (O'Connor and Vadasy, 2011).

Due to their friends' freedom of expression, some kids also take pleasure in the lessons they learn from them. Peers develop social connections and their emotional health as a result of their contact. As they exchange knowledge, this teaches children to be compassionate and kind towards one another (Anita et al., 2008).

Peer support has some drawbacks, despite the fact that many academics encourage it because it fosters learning. For instance, some students may choose not to participate because their more capable peers will complete the task on their behalf. They may also use the occasion to socialise rather than learn. They may also fail to answer the question because they are rushing to finish before others. Finally, they may consider not participating altogether.

Teachers' collaboration during the reading and writing lessons

In what is commonly referred to as team teaching, additional instructors, teacher assistants, or special educators are enlisted to provide students with additional help beyond that provided by the subject or classroom teacher while the lesson is in progress. The additional classroom teacher is in a position to support and enhance the normal classroom/subject teacher's instructional strategy in light of the curriculum and delivery techniques (O'Connor and Vadasy, 2011).

An effective teaching and learning method that promotes debate and idea exchange is collaboration amongst teachers during the lesson. It demonstrates cohesion and a positive working environment. As they compare their approaches to solving problems and pinpoint their areas of skill, it is crucial for each person's personal development.

Through teamwork, teachers may sense the support of other teachers while they cater to the unique requirements of each student in the classroom. In order to help the students, it encourages teachers to take constructive criticism from their peers and admit their flaws without feeling embarrassed. This is so that they may better understand their own strengths and weaknesses (Anita et al., 2008; O'Connor and Vadasy, 2011).

By working together, teachers can share ideas about effective teaching strategies and increase their understanding of how to engage all students in the classroom. In order to assist in providing support for students, the instructor will have a further resource. By encouraging students to help one another and accept criticism positively, a teacher who engages in sharing, partnerships, and peer support learning will attempt to bring this type of learning in the classroom. They will also discover that each person/teacher have some expertise that other team members can use (Strickland et al., 2002; Anita et al., 2008).

Parent involvement in supporting to reading and writing

When their child is diagnosed with a condition or challenge, parents may respond in a variety of ways. Having a child who struggles with reading and writing can be difficult for the parents, and

as it may take them some time to come to terms with the issue, each parent's response may be different. Teachers can aid parents by providing them with information about the issue and support. In order for both sides to better understand the students' educational needs and aptitudes, home-school dialogue should be encouraged to continue. Given that parents are the team members that spend the majority of the time with their children at home, their contribution is crucial (Saskatchewan Education, 2004; Kirk et al., 2006 & Issacs, 2012).

A multidisciplinary team that may include special educators, peers, the learner's teacher, therapists, and parents develops and oversees various intervention programmes for students with impairments. As co-workers in the learner's educational programme, parents have three key roles. They can provide experts with information about the child that is essential for the program's growth because they stay with the child at home and watch over him or her (Kirk et al., 2008). Following some instruction from team members like teachers on how to teach specific skills, like daily living tasks and academic skills, they play a vital role in the teaching process, especially at home. Last but not least, they are in a position to support their children's learning by putting the skills they are taught in school to use at home, ensuring that schoolwork and homework are connected.

Conclusion

It is clear that the withdrawal approach is used to provide individualised attention to students who are having difficulties with their reading and writing. So even if the remedial poses a risk to inclusion, it benefits the student. According to the findings, students can learn from a variety of sources, including people, computers, books, and games. It's important to understand each student's preferred learning style in order to meet their distinct and special demands. The assumption that learning would be more successful when the teaching and learning environment is conducive to the student's preferred learning style appears plausible. This is true because when people can play to their strengths, they learn more effectively. Even though it may seem like common sense, this is a crucial assumption for students who may find it difficult to adapt to a teaching method and learning environment that places a strong emphasis on their inadequacies. Teachers can effectively support students with reading and writing difficulties in accessing the curriculum by using learning styles.

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