

Understanding Children with Learning Disabilities in The Classroom

U. PRIYA LATHA¹, B. WILLIAM DHARMA RAJA²

¹ M.Ed Student, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

² Professor & Head, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

Abstract- *This article explains how learning disability affect on one's ability to know or use spoken affects on one's ability to know or use spoken or communication, do mathematical calculations, coordinate movements or direct attention learning disabilities are ignored, unnoticed and unanswered such children's needs are not met in regular classes. They needed special attention in classrooms. Learning disability is a big challenge for student in learning environment. The teacher's role is very important for identifying the learning disability. Some common causes and symptoms are there for children with learning disability. The classroom and teacher leads to main important role in identification and to overcome their disabilities.*

Indexed Terms- *Learning disability, Classroom, Teachers*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education promotes all round development of the child. Education is the tool which is used for the realization of individual and social aspiration and for meeting personal challenges. The National Policy on Education (1986) has made an important contribution towards developing educational opportunities for the children with disabled. Students of today are the citizen of tomorrow and they are going to be the pillars of the country (GOI, 1986). National Education Policy 2020 emphasis for barrier free access for all children with disabilities which was recommend as per the Rights of Person with Disabilities (RPwD) Act (GOI, 2020).

Learning disability is a challenge for any school and teacher. If the learning disability is ignored, unnoticed and unanswered such children's needs will not be met in regular classes. Identification of a child with learning disability is the first step to reduce the

learning disability. Then only the teachers are able to distinguish them from normal students. Learning disabilities Association of America views of "Learning disability is due to genetic and/or neurobiological factors that alter brain functioning in a manner which affects one or more cognitive process related to learning. These processing problems can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing, and math" (Learning disabilities Association of America, (n.d.).

II. LEARNING DISABILITY – CLASSIFICATION

Learning Disability Association of America (n.d.) has classified learning disabilities as follows:

- Dyscalculia - It affects the ability to understand arithmetic concepts
- Dyslexia – It affects the ability to processing language
- Dysgraphia – It affects the writing ability and motor skills
- Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities - This affects verbal cues like facial expressions or body language and may have poor coordination.
- Oral / Written language disorder – Learning disabilities that affect an individual's understanding of what they read or of spoken language.

III. LEARNING DISABILITY – CAUSES

The exact causes of learning disabilities are completely not clear, but anatomical and brain imagery studies show differences in the way the brain of a person with learning disability develops and functions. Learning disability may occur pre-natal or during birth or early childhood. Learning disability as an inherited condition affects the brain development

due to transmission of certain genes from the parents. Chromosomal abnormality is also an important genetic cause for the development of learning disabilities. Mother's illness during pregnancy (Jeyasingh, 2019), the mother's intake & certain drugs during pregnancy, contact with radiation in pregnancy time or early childhood (Mental Health Foundation), pre-mature birth, low birth weight, complication during birth resulting in a lack of oxygen to the brain, malnutrition, stress during early childhood, exposure to toxins such as lead (Paint, ceramics, toys) (White Swan Foundation, 2015). and injury (accident) in early childhood affecting brain development are some of the prominent causes for learning disabilities.

IV. LEARNING DISABILITY – SYMPTOMS

Many children have trouble in reading, writing or performing other learning-related tasks at some point. This does not mean they have learning disabilities. A child with a learning disability often has several related signs, and they don't go away or get better over time. The symptoms of learning disability also vary from person to person.

Some signs and symptoms of learning disability are:
(i) Early childhood: Children having difficulty with zippers, buttons, tying shoe laces; delayed early language development; problem with rhyming words and recognizing the difference between similar sound words or segmenting words; difficulty with pronunciation; difficulty copying from the board or a book; finding it hard to find the correct word; trouble learning shapes, days of the week, the alphabet and numbers (Poonam & Anand, 2016); problem in writing and drawing tasks; inconsistent space between letters or words; poor understanding of uppercase and lowercase letters or similar type of word. *(ii) Middle childhood:* A child may not be able to remember content; due to memory problem with money handling; difficulty in merging sounds to make words; trouble in telling time; illegible handwriting; easy distract in from the sound; omitting or not finishing words in sentence; repeating the letter in the word (Ibid). Interchanging the letters and numbers in the sentence; troubling learning new language; *(iii) Pre-adolescent Stage:* Difficulty in organisation; bad handwriting; troubling with comprehension reading as well as math concepts; difficulty in following class

discussion and poor class participation; difficulty with reading out loud; difficulty in left and right; difficulty with syntax structure and grammar; gap between written and understanding; trouble to keep track of thoughts already written down (NICHD, 2018).

V. SKILL AFFECTED BY LEARNING DISABILITY

- **Motor Skills:** It has been observed that some of the children with learning disabled lack motor skills. They have poor hand-motor coordination like holding a pencil or pen in hand is in difficult for them, and sometimes they hold them in an inappropriate way. They may also find it difficult to perform the mechanical operation as they may not be able to hold the equipments properly.
- **Spatial Ability:** Children with learning difficulty may have difficulty in understanding the directions and locating new places. They may also lack spatial ability which may hamper their chances of being good architects, and areas of directionality (left, right, front and back) are a weakness among the children with learning disability (Ibid).
- **Dealing with Mathematics:** Children with learning disabled may also be good in oral maths but due to poor reading skills they may not be so good in written maths. They might face problems in dealing with descriptive mathematics, engineering, chemistry or physics problems that rely on written text rather than numbers or formulas.
- **Dealing with Creativity:** The Children with learning disabled may also be creative. There is no child who does not possess one or the other ability. Instead of rebuking and scolding the child for not performing like others, his ability should be identified, recognized and they could be given an opportunity to develop (Mol, 2016).
- **Problems in Memory:** Memory involves visual memory as well as auditory memory. Children with learning Disability are weak in both types of memories. They cannot repeat what they see or hear. This memory disorder make their learning

process is very slow. They get easily distracted due to their very poor memory (Mona, 2016).

VI. IDENTIFICATION OF LEARNING DISABILITY

Identification process is not easy in detecting learning disability, especially as they can go undetected in early stages of childhood and even at the stage of schooling. Learning disability is could be diagnosed during the elementary school stage itself. A child may be diagnosed to have problem and finds it difficult to while facing in learning grammar and syntax or to read longer and more complex material (Agrawal & Rao, 2010). More significant is the successful outcomes of early intervention than the one that is initiated later (Hinton, 2006).

Early intervention pre-supposes early identification. At present, there is little knowledge about the universal screening procedure to guide referrals for schools. The Schwab Foundation for learning has a grade specific checklist to help identify “at risk for learning disability” children. This list is comprehensive and usually followed by organization working in the field of learning disability (SchwabLearning, 2002).

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan provides a manual with checklist for learning disability which acts as a helpful tool for initial screening by teachers in the schools however, at present, the assessment itself is being used as a screening/identification procedure. The children are referred for assessment by the teacher/school for reasons of failure, underachievement or behavioural problems for the same reasons, parents may take the child directly, and avail of examination concession that exists children with learning disabilities. In rural areas, there is low awareness of Learning Disability and practically less assessment facilities (GOI, 2006). National Policy Education (2020) ensure equitable access and opportunities for all students with disability Assessment and Certificate agencies, including the proposal for new National Assessment Centre, PARAKH for which will guidelines are formulated recommends appropriate tools for conducting such assessment, from the foundational stage to higher education. (GOI, 2020).

VII. ROLE OF SCHOOL

Most classrooms have children with learning disabilities who need continuous support. Teachers must help them by identifying using screening procedures of learning disability to mitigate plan learning disability. Specific action should be included to use appropriate technology allowing and enabling children to work at their own pace. Schools may also provide resources for the integration of children with disabilities requirement with special educators and training & resource centers. Different categories of children with disabilities have different needs. School and School complex should work and extend support like accommodate and modification with support mechanisms tailored to suit their needs of children with disabilities ensure their full participation.

CONCLUSION

Learning disability is not curable and doesn't go away. Instead, they tend to grow more problematic. If not recognised early learning disability may prevent young children at school level from getting help, they need to reach their potential. Children with learning disability lack in confidence and become more frustrated. They often held back as they are unable to meet the academic requirement to pass to the next grade in classroom. Early diagnosis in classroom not only improves the child's ability to reach their academic potential, but also prevents the development of low self-esteem and behaviour problems that further interfere with their ability to learn. So, understanding of learning disability is very important. Without early diagnosis in classroom by teachers their potential to develop the skills that are needed to have a normal, successful life as an adult can be greatly reduced.

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