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REVIEW OF RESEARCH



LEARNING DISABLED CHILDREN IN INDIA

Dr. Har Narayan¹ and Dr. Anju Agarwal²

¹Assistant Professor in B.Ed College – Ghaziabad Institute of Management and Technology, Duhai (Ghaziabad) U.P India.

²Associate Professor Faculty of education and Allied sciences in M.J.P Rohilkhand University Bareilly (U.P) india.

ABSTRACT:

Shepard et al., (1983) aimed at describing the characteristics of school-aged children whom educators had identified as learning disabled (LD). A probability sample of 800 was selected from the population of all children served as learning disabled in the state of Colorado. A coding form was used by trained coders to extract relevant features from the case files of the children. The sample was characterized by (1) distributions of single variables (e.g., below grade level achievement, discrepancy between IQ and achievement, medical indicators), and (2) hierarchical classification creating clusters or subgroups within the LD sample. Fewer than half the sample exhibited characteristics consistent with definitions of LD in federal regulations and professional literature. Included in this group were subgroups of hyperactive, brain-injured children, children with significant discrepancies between IQ and achievement and those with signs of perceptual processing disorders. Slightly more than half the sample did not match conventional definitions of LD but exhibited learning problems such as language interference, emotional disorders, or mild retardation. The inclusion of the latter groups among the learning disabled is a particular problem in the validation of the construct

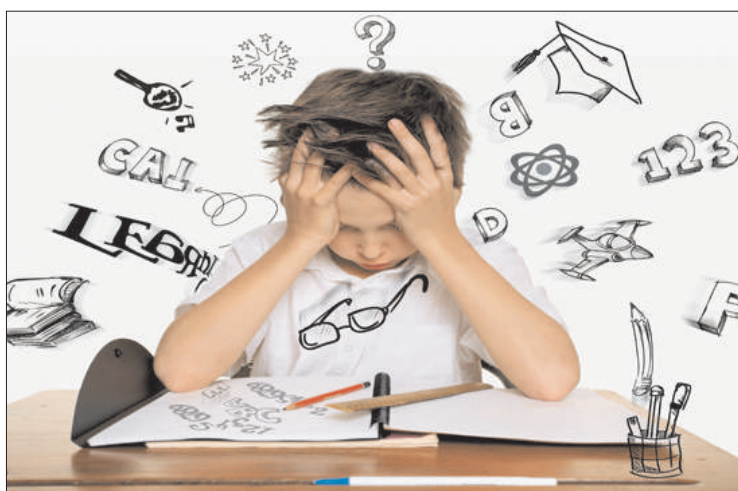
and will confound research on prevalence rates and treatment efficacy.

KEYWORD: *characteristics of school-aged children , achievement, medical indicators.*

INTRODUCTION :

Sharma, (2004) examined the personality characteristics of 180 boys and girls of ages 8, 9, and 10 with learning disabilities (LD) in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade in urban and rural primary schools of Andhrapradesh, India. The

subjects were identified based on their scholastic achievement on a spelling dictation test, an oral reading test, a reading comprehension test and an arithmetic test developed specifically for the purpose, along with mental ability tests - Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices and Draw-A-Man. An adapted version of the Children's Personality Questionnaire (CPQ) was administered to the subjects with LD and a comparison group of children without learning disabilities (NLD). Examination of scores



obtained by LD and NLD subjects on the CPQ portrays the LD child as having problems in social and emotional adjustment. Further, the older LD children tended to show a more maladaptive behavioral disposition than the younger, and there was a significant gender effect among LD children.

Sanghavi and Kelkar, (2005) aimed to study and compare the performance of normal and learning disabled children (LD) on Beery and Buktenica's Developmental; test of Visual-Motor Integration (DVMI); to provide occupational therapy intervention for improving visual-motor integration in the LD children and observe the effectiveness of therapy. Three groups were assessed on DVMI. Normal children (n=80) were assessed in groups. Experimental group and control group, each consisting of 16 LD children were assessed individually. Experimental group was given occupational therapy intervention in the department and supplementary therapy by parents, guided by therapist, regularly for 12 weeks. OT intervention included ergonomic factors, gross and fine motor activities. Control group was given counseling about OT program for 12 weeks. Post therapy, patients were re-assessed on DVMI and raw scores obtained were analyzed in order to examine the efficacy of OT program. It was found that normal Indian children aged 10 to 14 years attain mean raw score in DVMI at younger age than normal American Children. It was evident from DVMI raw scores that improvement in experimental group was more as compare to control group ($P < 0.001$). Thus occupational therapy has wide scope in treating learning-disabled children with the help of O.T. program.

Pryfogle, (2014) explored the Northern Ugandan Langi mothers' regard for education in the aftermath of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) conflict and occupation and in the on-going experience of adversity. As both targets and victims of LRA savagery, the Langi and Acholi people have endured over 22 years of war, displacement, and devastation. This phenomenological study specifically identified 9 Langi mothers who were survivors of LRA perpetrated atrocities and live today in adverse village environments. The study used guided interviews and art with storytelling/narrative to elicit a rich, thick, essence of lived experience and to answer the question: How have the experiences of adversity influenced the Northern Ugandan mothers' regard for education and their roles in their children's education? This study's findings revealed themes of resilience in relationship to adversities associated with LRA attacks and IDP camp life. The findings also revealed themes of regard for or valuing of education as demonstrated by the mothers' determination to raise funds for their children's education. Arguments are made for the connection of adversity and valuing of education.

1. Learning Disabled Child and Class-Inclusion:

Agarwal et al., (1991) found in rural primary school children observed for two years, 12.97 per cent of those having IQ greater than or equal to 90 to have poor achievement in arithmetic test and teacher's assessment. These learning disabled children had impaired perceptual maturity and conceptual grasp as observed on MISIC (Indian modification of WISC), Bender Gestalt test and Piaget's test. On WISC Bannatyne categories learning disabled children scored highest in verbal conceptualization (similarities, vocabulary, comprehension), followed by spatial (picture completion, object assembly, block design) and sequencing (arithmetic, digit span, coding) abilities. These children on Bender Gestalt test made more errors particularly distortions (distortion of parts, incorrect number of dots, shape of design lost etc). They also showed delayed development on Piagetian tasks class inclusion, conservation (for length, substance, liquid and number) ordinal relation and one to one correspondence. These observations indicate impaired perceptual maturity, conception and information processing deficit.

Carter et al., (2005) reported that there is an increasing demand for the assessment of speech and language in clinical and research situations in countries where there are few assessment resources. Due to the nature of cultural variation and the potential for cultural bias, new assessment tools need to be developed or existing tools require adaptation. However, there are few guidelines on how to develop 'culturally appropriate' assessment tools. To review the literature on cross-cultural assessment in order to identify the major issues in the development and adaptation of speech and language assessments for children and to illustrate these issues with practical examples from our own research programme in Kenya. Five broad categories pertaining to cross-cultural assessment development were identified: the influence of culture on performance, familiarity with the testing situation, the effect of formal education, language issues and picture recognition. It was outlined

how some of these issues were addressed in our research. The results of the review were integrated to produce a list of ten guidelines highlighting the importance of collaboration with mother tongue speakers; piloting; familiar assessment materials; assessment location; and practice items and prompts. There are few clinicians and assessors, whether in the UK or abroad, who do not assess or treat children from a culture different to their own. Awareness of cultural variation and bias and cooperative efforts to develop and administer culturally appropriate assessment tools are the foundation of effective, valid treatment programmes.

Resing et al., (2009) aimed to explore whether dynamic testing of indigenous and ethnic minority children could provide information concerning changes in their strategy use during testing. It was hypothesized that dynamic testing with graduated prompting and trial-by-trial-assessment could reveal the development of children's strategy use while tested. The participants were indigenous Dutch and ethnic minority children. Trial-by-trial-testing provided information of how strategy use developed during training. Experimental-group children showed significant changes towards more advanced strategies. Ethnic minority children showed most strategy changes during training, initially needing more prompting but progressively requiring less. The study provided insight into strategy use during and after training. Pretest strategy level was found to be the first predictor of posttest strategy level, followed by condition and ethnicity. Age, gender, and intelligence test scores did not change this order. The relatively short dynamic intervention provides insights into children's strategy use and their response to prompting, particularly for ethnic minority children.

Kok, (2011) informed that to prepare young generation for challenges of a competitive and rapidly changing world, education systems of Singapore and in many countries in East Asia are focusing on developing children's thinking and learning skills. This research study examines effects of a cognitive programme, Bright Start Cognitive Curriculum for young children, on kindergarten children's cognitive functions and their learning effectiveness. The study adopted an experimental, pretest posttest design with an experimental group of 43 children and a control group of 37 children. Bright Start Cognitive Curriculum was systematically implemented over a period of six months with children from experimental group. Children from the control group had their regular integrated thematic curriculum. The study used a combination of methods to collect data, involving measurements of children's pre and post tests performances on cognitive tasks, analyses of video recordings of teaching observations and teachers' feedback of children's performances in class. The findings of the research study suggest that children from experimental group showed greater improvement in all the cognitive tasks from pre to post testing than the children in the control group. The children's response to mediation scores in the experimental group were positively correlated with their post test scores. The experimental teachers scored higher in all three essential components of Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) than the control teachers; with marked difference between the two groups in the criteria of transcendence. However, the control teachers scored better in affective involvement, which is not one of the essential qualifying components of MLE.

Gligorovic and Buha, (2013) reported that the ability to generate and flexibly change concepts is of great importance for the development of academic and adaptive skills. This paper analyses the conceptual reasoning ability of children with mild intellectual disability (MID) by their achievements on the Wisconsin Card Sorting Test (WCST). The sample consisted of 95 children with MID aged between 10 years and 13 years 11 months. The following variables from the WCST were analysed: number of categories completed, initial conceptualisation, total number of errors, non-perseverative errors, perseverative errors, number of perseverative responses, and failures to maintain set. The observed WCST predictive variables account for 79% of the variability in the number of categories completed ($p < .000$). Total number of errors was the most significant predictor of performance on WCST. There is a significant progress of conceptual abilities between the age of 13 years to 13 years 11 months, compared to other assessed age groups. Results of research suggests that development of mental set flexibility is the basis of progress in conceptual abilities, thus intervention programs should offer specially designed activities that vary in their attentional demands, content, conceptual patterns, and actions required.

Shukla, (2014) offered suggestions on the strength of findings obtained in present study with those pointed out by Piagetian school of thought and others, the following with a view to bring an improvement in the status and standard of the child who should be accepted as the "thinking child" and who should be trained in the skill of "learning to learn" and "learning to think". 1. In view of the fact that rich socio-economic status availables

to the privileged urban children in their homes and neighbourhood as well as the enriched instructions made possible to them through better schooling, effective guidance and stimulating socio-economical climate at home and in the school in comparison to their counterpart rural x students who have rather deprived of such facilitative~actors, it is suggested that compensatory instructional programmes be effectively organized for the rural and they should be encouraged to participate in the social deliberations. (ii) Following Piagetian school of thought pertaining to horizontal decalage, it is essential to introduce course-content in accordance with the local needs and resources. Such learning experiences should emerge from the socio-economic status in which they are brought up and to which they should contribute. The school curricula in concept formation and acquisition of conservation should develop strictly in accordance with the horizontal decalage following the age norms on one hand and taking into consideration the locale variation as the potential source of variation on the other. Rather, this suggests for a separate curricula in science and human! ty with a new to meet the locale variations as well as with the aim of utilizing the locale potentiality acquired from the locale e richness inherent in a particular locale. (iii) Enough opportunities should be made available to the pupils and sufficient freedom should be granted to to them so that the sense of self direction should be included to its maximum. In this regard, in Indian schools and homes where a critical comments negative approaches and convergent values and norms had to be radically changed by bringing about a behavioural modification in attitude change among the parents and teachers as well as among the school authorities and other concerned persons. (iv) Since training has one failed probability serious attempts should be made to inculcate a sense for acquiring richer conservation.

2. Learning Disabled Child and Propositional Reasoning:

Robergea and Flexera, (1980) administered three paper-and-pencil logical reasoning tests and a word knowledge test to 80 adolescents (40 boys and 40 girls). Analyses of correct responses revealed developmental trends which complement previous research on the logical reasoning abilities of children and adolescents. Implications for the study of propositional reasoning and the theory of formal operations are discussed.

Kaufman and Kamphaus, (1984) examined the construct validity of the Sequential Processing, Simultaneous Processing, and Achievement scales of the K-ABC in factor-analytic investigations of 2,000 2.5–12.5 yr old children. Ss were a representative national sample stratified by sex, race, SES, geographic region, and community size. Analysis of the 10 Mental Processing subtests for 11 age groups produced 2 significant factors per age with clear-cut Sequential and Simultaneous dimensions emerging for each group. Furthermore, analyses of all 16 subtests produced 3 factors corresponding to the 3 K-ABC scales for ages 4 yrs and above. Correlations of processing factors with Achievement subtests provided insight into the relationship of sequential/simultaneous processing abilities to different achievement areas. In general, the factor analyses provided strong support for the construct validity of the K-ABC.

Mehan, (1998) placed the study of face-to-face interaction in educational settings in historical context. The major themes of interactional analysis – that social and cognitive structures are constructed in social interaction, human behavior is context-specific, cultural discontinuity helps explain educational inequality, and learning is a sociocultural process – are reviewed, and the contributions of these findings to theory, methodology and pedagogy are assessed. The paper concludes with a discussion of two unresolved issues: the integration of social structure and interaction in interactional analysis and the reconciliation of conflictual and consensual dimensions of learning.

Siegalet al., (2001) reported that research on propositional reasoning (involving ‘theory of mind’ understanding) in adult patients with aphasia reveals that reasoning can proceed in the absence of explicit grammatical knowledge. Conversely, evidence from studies with deaf children shows that the presence of such knowledge is not sufficient to account for reasoning. These findings are in keeping with recent research on the development of naming, categorization and imitation, indicating that children's reasoning about objects and actions is guided by inferences about others’ communicative intentions. We discuss the extent to which reasoning is supported by, and tied to, language in the form of conversational awareness and experience rather than grammar.

Gülpinar, (2005) reported that in recent years, the use of electrophysiological studies,

neuropsychological tests and imaging techniques, providing opportunity for the researchers to study the brain both structurally and functionally, have provided considerable amount of knowledge, which resulted in important changes in educational areas. During this period, through the impact of constructivist approach, three significant concepts have come into prominence: "Individual differences", "conceptuality" and "complexity". In this regard, an important part of educational studies has focused on understanding the learner with his/her differences, complexity and wholeness within a socio-cultural context. Similarly, brain studies have provided important new framework for rethinking about the educational studies and learning models. Considering these three concepts (i.e. "individual differences", "conceptuality" and "complexity"), the present review tries to analyze the outcome of the brain research, to discuss the principles of Brain-Based Learning with the possible consequences and implications on education and, in the light of Brain-Based Learning principles, to evaluate the constructivist learning models such as Experiential Learning, Multiple Intelligence, Collaborative Learning, Self-Regulated Learning.

Banks et al., (2006) summarised the results of a research project that used a scenario about sex selection of embryos for social reasons as a basis for discussion groups with lay people. The aim of the research was to examine the processes by which non-professionals make ethical evaluations in relation to a contested area in medical genetics. We note in particular the role played in the discussions by expressions of instinct; making distinctions; rational argument; reference to principles; use of personal experience; analogies and examples; slippery slope arguments and meta-reflections. The implications for developing processes of public consultation and debate are also considered.

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