



## UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF LEARNING DISABILITIES: ITS CAUSES, CHALLENGES AND WAY OF TACKLING

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### ABSTRACT

Education is widely acknowledged as one of the most vital undertakings in individual's life to live smoothly. The mastery over the indispensable educational skills like reading, writing and arithmetic is pre-requisite for accomplishment in both school and in society. Notwithstanding all individual are not same doer and consequently some are superior and some are average or above average. Unfortunately we all usually deny the child who possesses less ability in doing work due to their dullness. An outsized proportion of children suffer from these difficulties and hence they cannot acquire these academic skills. It may occur in child due to the neurological dysfunction of brain structure. These difficulties in writing, reading and speaking are often termed as Learning disability due to what they have been ignored in their society. Nonetheless they may able to perform different activities rather than learning even in more creative way, yet we do not accept them due to our ignorance about learning disabilities. Thus it is needed to know about learning disability and its various aspects. Therefore the present paper aims at providing a comprehensive knowledge on the same which will contribute the parents and teachers to way-out for tackling them as it should be.

**KEYWORDS:** Learning Disability, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, Dyslexia, Creativity, Education.

### INTRODUCTION :

Learning disability occurs in the child due to neurological dysfunction of brain structure which affects a person's ability to receive, store, process and retrieve information and certain skills like reading, writing, speaking, listening, reasoning as well as doing mathematical calculation. Learning disability has a prolonged impact on individual life, which interfere every aspects of life. These effects build a huge gap in child and he may go far from the mainstream of educational spheres. Such children cannot make a good academic record as well as unable to cope with social relationship with their surroundings fruitfully. We often mark them as a slow learner in the educational sphere generally. They are always suffer from low self esteemed, low self confidence, frustration, and struggle with underachievement as well as have limited friends as comparable to non disable peers. Nobody tries to understand what kind of problem a child has. Even our parent also shows their ignorance about learning disability and they cannot deal with their wards effectively and always rebuke a child for their silly mistake. Problem of learning disability can be minimizing through proper teaching strategies and medical intervention but before that we have to know about various aspects of learning disabilities. By knowing its many aspects we can recognize them and can able to deal with them effectively which lead them to be more fit with the society. This paper is attempted to illustrate the different aspects of learning disability.

### WHAT LEARNING DISABILITY MEANS?

Samuel Kirk in 1963 first coined and defined the term Learning disability and he defined that Learning disability refers to a retardation, disorder or delayed development in one or more of the process of speech, language, reading, spelling, writing or arithmetic resulting from a possible cerebral dysfunction and or emotional or behavioural disturbance and not from mental retardation, sensory deprivation, cultural or instructional factors.

National Joint committee of learning Disabilities (USA, 1981) defines Learning disability as a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorder manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influence (e.g. cultural difference, insufficient instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of these condition or influence.

### VARIOUS TYPES OF LEARNING DISABILITY

Learning disability has multifaceted views and dimensions to be occurred. Here some of the categories are laid down.

- **Dyslexia:** Reading disorder is called Dyslexia. It is usually characterised by difficulty with the reading alphabets, word recognition, speaking, spelling, comprehension and decoding print. A student might have difficulty recognizing and comprehending word form text book because decoding printed word from the text book is become too much harder to them. Sometimes it is called "word Blindness" as a child may have acute difficulty in comprehending written passage. Problem of learning disability varies from person to persons. A child with reading disorder might have difficulty/problem such as reading, speaking, and reversal alphabets during the time of reading viz. p for q, n for u, b for d etc, reversal monosyllable word like on for no, was for saw, unable to recall known words, If you tell a story to a child and latter ask a question to him retell a story with respect to sequence and steps he may unable to reproduce this task.
- **Dyscalculia:** Arithmetic disorder is called Dyscalculia. It is generally characterised by difficulty in learning mathematics. A student suffering from such disability might have problem recognizing numerals and symbols. Common sign of arithmetic disorder include: difficulty with applying and remembering arithmetic operation in such a way, recalling dates, address schedules, math rules and formulas, unable to recall dance steps sequences or playing rules for sports/games and reading analog clock, unable to count score during games as well as estimating budgeting, unable to distinguish between right and left, may find difficulty in multiple steps calculation viz. long multiplication and division.
- **Dysgraphia:** acute writing disorder is called Dysgraphia. It is usually associated with difficulty in writing. It makes difficulty in child motor and information skill due to what one may unable to write his own thought and imagination on a piece of paper. A child with dysgraphia fought in writing complete and grammatically correct sentence and shows poor hand writing. Signs that your child might having problem include, dysgraphia affected a ability to produce neat and clean hand writing, speed in writing and often commit many spelling mistake, he may feel pain in fingers during writing, pencil grip is too awkward, always refusal to write when he ask to fulfil a written task, using mixing print while writing, used to talk with himself while writing.
- **Dyspraxia:** A problem associate with the child fine motor skill (cutting, writing) and gross motor skill (running, jumping) is termed as dyspraxia. Due to this a child unable to output information from the brain accurately. In order to run, jump, write and cut something smoothly braining function is required to communicate with our limbs to do action completely. A child affected by Dyspraxia might have

following symptoms: Problem with eye hand coordination, manual dexterity, balance, trouble with scissors and buttons.

- **Dysphasia/Aphasia:** Language based disorder is called Dysphasia/Aphasia. It may affect child ability to understand and produce spoken language. We know that language is the medium of expression through which one can express his thoughts, ideas and emotions so on. To communicate with other it is required to organize thoughts into the brain and calling upon the right word to verbally express something with someone else. A person with Language based disorder might have problem such as difficulty with verbal language skill, unable to retell a story, may have a problem in fluency of speech, unable to grasp the meaning of word as well as direction.
- **Auditory processing disorder:** it occurs when variety of disorder link with the brain function of a child which make difficulty in child's information processing ability and consequently they unable to reproduce again whatever they hears. A child suffering from Auditory processing disorder does not mean that he/she has been affected by hearing loss rather we have to grasp that he/she has a hearing problem due to functional anomaly of brain resulting the child hearing ability. Signs of Auditory processing disorder includes: confuse by background noises, may found difficulty with following direction, unable to identifying and interpreting distinct sound, mispronounce word which is look like similar sounding, may found difficulty in anticipating how a speaker will end a speech.
- **Visual processing disorder:** it is a difficulty take to mean visual information. It exerts child's disability of receiving, processing, recalling and expressing information accurately and timely. It does not mean that a child has poor eyesight due to brain dysfunction but he may unable to processing visual information. Common symptoms associate with Visual processing disorder viz. A child may unable to recognized information from books, charts, maps graphs and confronted with problem in organizing essay information from variety of sources into one copulative document or solving arithmetic problems, frequently mistake letters and numbers which look like a similar in shape, unable to copy word accurately, he may found difficulty in writing with respect to margins.
- **Attention Deficit hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD):** Concentration and focus disorder is called Attention Deficit hyper-activity Disorder (ADHD). A child affected by this may have lack of attention, often express mushy and hyper-active. These children always bear low self esteemed, negative self concept, mood instability and humour tantrums. Due to lack of attention they often get reward from the society like "slow learners" and show poor academic achievement. Their energy should be channelized in desired activity. Such children are capable of working in a small group. These children should be given an opportunity to seat in front of bench in the classroom and provide various types of interesting activity to do. They are unable to concentrate for long activity. Small activity should be given them by the teachers. Visual instruction should be provide them as well as activity that do not require sitting continuously. A student with Attention Deficit hyper-activity Disorder(ADHD) might have problem sitting still, loses interest quickly, staying focused, following instruction, staying organize and completing homework
- **Executive Functioning –Deficits:** An Executive Functioning –Deficits is a learning disability which is related to the challenges of executing functions. A student having such problem involves inability to plan, organize, strategies, recall details and manage time and space accurately, difficulty in setting priorities, following schedules. Such hallmarked features found among learning disable child.

### CAUSES OF LEARNING DISABILITY

The reason that contributes to learning disability is a long list. Some notable doers are outlined hereunder:

- **Genetic/Hereditary factors:** Genetic factors play a major role for generating learning disability among the child, which alter the brain function of an infant child that adversely affects one or more areas related to learning. Research shows that many characteristics found among learning disable child who is transmitted from generation to generation such as emotional imbalance, memory disorder, speech and

thinking disorder run in families. Genetic research shown evidence that while genes is associated chromosomes 6 and chromosome 15 are play a vital role in formulating learning disability among child.

- **Organic or psychological:** neurological dysfunction of central nervous system in brain, spinal cord and message receiving nerves mostly responsible for causing learning disability among the child. A child might have learning disability due to such organic factors, any mistakenly brain injury may found in the child during and after birth causing neurological dysfunction that may badly affect one child's learning ability. Moreover using alcohol, drug by pregnant mother let neurological dysfunction to the developing foetus and children. Sometimes Diabetic, meningitis, cardiac arrest, paediatric AIDS may cause neurological dysfunction in the growing child.
- **Environmental factors:** erroneous educational, social, cultural, and physical environment may lead to learning disability in the child. A child who is suffering from learning disability is always discourage by parents, teachers and get social rejection from every aspects which diminish child motivation and self confidence and shove the child may go in learning disability gradually.

### SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OF IDENTIFYING LEARNING DISABILITY

What symptoms do learning disabled possesses is highly essential to comprehend. Some of them are disclosed underneath:

- Learning Disable child has average standard ability
- They may able to read but unable to write this is to say they are unable to write and read simultaneously in a time.
- They posses Poor memory power
- Awkward handwriting
- Less engage in learning task and express disinterest
- Less willing to take risk in learning situation
- Lack of confidence about their ability to learn
- Cannot manage multiple instructions
- Easily frustrated with challenges work task
- Weak in solving mathematical problem
- Unable to learn and remember alphabets or words or names or numbers
- Problem in learning the concepts, symbols, and abstract materials
- Lack of social adjustment
- Impulsive and Hyper-activity
- Difficulty in visual perceptions
- Problem in focusing, sustaining and shifting attentions
- Unable to cope with organizational function

### HOW TO DEAL WITH LEARNING DISABILITY?

The teacher, parents and guardian should have the positive attitude towards the treatment or tackling the disabled child. If they willing to deal with such children they can and for this the following guidelines and role of various personality have been discussed hereunder:

- **What teacher can do?** Teacher plays a crucial role in any kind of teaching learning process. All the responsibility of the pupil's development bears by him.
  - a) While teachers guide a learning disable child he should play the roles cited here e.g. while teaching in the class room he should write a word on a black board and ask the pupil to study. Then remove the word from blackboard and ask the child to write form their memory. A letter B, for example, can be given and ask to child to write as may word as possible beginning by B.

- b) To minimize mathematical disorder from the child teachers should provide explicit instruction in a small group and exchange students to represent the information in math problem e.g. Teachers should use manipulative to facilitate the student's formation of mental concept regarding numeral and their operations. Teacher should use web based and software technology viz. project text, graphs, charts, image for computing mathematical problems.
  - c) If a teacher want to taught process of addition to the child, he may use different concrete teaching strategies like keep two beads and four beads  $2+4=6$ ,  $00+0000(\text{Beads})=6$ , then ask a child to count and write the total number of beads. At one time students verbalize that two beads and four beads make six beads.
  - d) Many students in the classroom may have problem with reading so teacher should lead them to acquire encoding, decoding, increasing fluency and comprehension. During the time of teaching teacher should write a letter b and d produce sound together by b and ask the child to recognize correct one, which enabling them to acquire proper concept regarding alphabets.
  - e) Poor academic achievement of students is the result of writing disorder. Therefore while teaching in the classroom he should speak grammatically correct language then elaborate on pupil's ideas.
  - f) He should use clipboard and instruct the child how to hold a pencil on a paper with respect to lines and margins. Phonemic games should be used by the teachers to minimize auditory processing disorder
- **What parents can do?** Parent should have positive attitude toward learning disability.
    - a) If their wards suffering from learning disability they don't let them to seem that life of them is totally spoil. Instead of this parents should identify their strength, special talent and weakness as well as making guess in which areas they may get more success rather than lament. Parent should develop a good study habits regarding research report, books, journal, and encyclopaedia related to learning disability for searching solution and prescribe new solution to others.
    - b) They should develop clear understanding regarding learning disability in mind viz. causes of L.D, symptoms, remedial measure, teaching methods and strategies as well as consult with the expert teachers, doctors, and therapist's to overcome the problem of learning disability. So they can help their wards by their own expertise in the field of learning disability.
    - c) Learning disable child may complete their daily task haphazardly, so parent should help them to develop competency in time management and setting schedule precisely. While a learning disable child get success in any assign task, enjoy with him/her. This activity will develop self confidence, motivation and positive attitude in their mind.
    - d) Parent should always encourage your child actively participate in sports, games, music, recitation ,writing easy ,poem and other co-curricular activities and share his/her experience whatever he /she experience from said activities.
    - e) Parent should motivate their child to go in field for practice daily exercise and ask them to take healthy food with full of nutrition as well as minerals. This will help them to develop their mental faculties.
    - f) Parent should identify their child's own learning style because some learning disable student may learn by seeing; observing, reading and doing. So parent can boost a child to recognize his primary learning style.
    - g) Parent should regularly talk with the child ask him to make a list his weakness, strength and special talent and also share strength, weakness and special talent with your child this will build confidence, positive self concept in the child.

### ARE LEARNING DISABLED CHILDREN CREATIVE?

Learning disabled children may have the creative ability that is nowadays acknowledged widely over the world. They are not a prescription for failure. With the right kinds of instruction, guidance and support, there are no limits to what individuals with learning disable can achieve. (Sheldon H. Horowitz). Various study also indicates that the children with learning disability especially dyslexia can produce significantly

more original ideas in response to some extent than the non-learning disabled Child. It was asserted by different research that the children with dyslexia within the may have higher than average ability on certain dimensions of creativity, and that these abilities could be drawn on when educating such children (Kate Cockcroft & Melanie Hartgill, 2004). Even some studies revealed that the children with learning disability seemed to have less task determination, but on other creative strengths they were as capable as the average child (David, et al, 1979).

The admired image that men of distinction are learning disabled promotes an impression of optimism just about the learning disabilities field. Albert Einstein, for example possibly the greatest scientist of all time, is usually at the top of the list of famous dyslexics.

## CONCLUSION

Aforesaid discussion lead to conclude that learning disability is a brain based disorder which manifest learning obstacle in many areas in individual life viz. reading, writing, speaking, spelling, visual, auditory, fine motor skill and doing mathematical calculation. Parent and teachers should deal affectionately with disable child which will make them confident. Learning disable child require always effective community support for their prosperous achievement. It is the duty of parent as well as teachers to provide appropriate teaching strategies and modern aids and appliance to overcome the problem of learning disability from the children. Researches also have shown that learning disable children too have creative potential to produce innovative thing as comparable to general child. So we have to understand this essence about the ld child and here the present paper likely to be granted as an important one.

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