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**EFFECT OF PANDEMIC ON LEARNING DISABILITIES ON SCHOOL GOING STUDENTS**

Authored By

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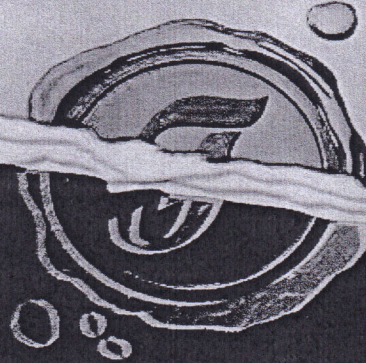
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**EFFECT OF PANDEMIC ON LEARNING DISABILITIES ON SCHOOL GOING STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

Learning disabilities are neurological disorder and this neurological disorder affected on students performance Now a days, parents are more aware about the learning disability problem of their children. In this pandemic situation, parents and special educators have to work on this because the school is on online mode and leaning disabled students need more help in reading, writing and mathematical problems from teachers and special educators. In online schooling sometimes students faced connectivity problem. In this pandemic situation, students are facing mental, emotional, anxiety, physical problem and it is effecting on their school performance. In this pandemic these students faced negativity and it decreased their motivation level. The aim of the study was to find out impact of pandemic on learning disabilities on school going children. Objective of the study was to search effect of pandemic on learning disabilities on school children. Hypothesis of the study was before pandemic students were significantly better performer than the pandemic students. Total sample of the study was 60 students and both male and female students were considered as participant. The data were treated by student's 't' test. For this study, diagnostic test of learning disabilities and it was developed by Swaroopa and Dharmista. The result of the study was student from before pandemic situation and students from during pandemic situations differ significantly from each other. The conclusion of the study was students from before pandemic situations were good performer than the students from during pandemic situations.

**Keywords:** learning disabilities, pandemic, words, numbers, students.

**Introduction**

Learning disability and pandemic are negatively related to the school children. They are facing lot of mental and physical issues than earlier situations. Many students with learning disabilities reported finding it difficult to cope with the present situations and they think that their life is very restricted than before pandemic situation.

Learning disability is neurological disorder. It is relatively old phenomenon in India. After watching Aamir Khan movie "Tare Jamin Par" parents are more aware about the learning disabilities problem and serious about their children problem. Nearly 10% students are affected by learning disabilities and they are unable to read their class level reading material.

It is believed that, the first definition of learning disability was first proposed by Kirk (1988). By the early 1960s many professionals had begun to recognize as the common element among these perceptual and language problems seem to be inability to learn that was not caused by low intelligence and environmental factors. The cause seems to be dysfunction in the brain or central nervous system that affected the way child process information. Consequently, a meeting was held in Chicago and Kirk as the kin of speaker recommended the term learning disability to include all children with perceptual and/or language problems. He defined this term as, "a retardation, disordered, 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 behavioral disturbance and not from mental retardation; sensory deprivation or cultural or instructional factors (Kirk, 1988).

In 1966 S. D. Clements as the director of the task proposed a definition based on the earlier examples of Strauss and Kirk. This group chose to use the term minimal brain dysfunction (MBD) and defined the dysfunction as follows, "children of near average, average or above average, general intelligence with certain learning or behavioral disabilities ranging from mild to severe which are associated with deviations of the functions of central nervous system. These deviations may manifest themselves by various combinations of impairment in perception, conceptualization, language, memory and controlled of attention, impulse or motor function (Clements, 1966).

Careful examination of this makes it clear that, several aspects of the early definitions are included in this definition. Apart from this some other attempts were made for defining learning disabilities. In 1968, National Advisory Committee on Handicap children was established. The purpose was to establish a

decision which was include all the children who needed services but exclude other low achieving children whose poor performance was not related to disability. Under Kirk leadership the following definitions of learning disabilities was proposed by this community, "children with special learning disabilities exhibited a disorder in one or more basic of psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written languages. These may be manifested in disorders of listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling or arithmetic. They include conditions which have been referring to as perceptual handicap, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, developmental aphasia etc. They don't include learning problems which are view primarily to visual, learning or motor handicaps or mental retardation, emotional disturbance or environmental disadvantage (Kirk, 1988).

Researchers in this field recognized that, the cognitive processing perspectives were on medically base in that the learning than in the interaction between the child and the learning environment. Of course, their do seem to be several types of neurological disabilities (Leonard, 2001). But none of these early perspective received singular validation as the major one as in the field of learning disabilities.

#### **Causes of learning disabilities:**

- Causes of learning disabilities are many but the main cause relates to the nervous systems.
- Heredity: Learning disabilities often run in family.
- Problems during pregnancy and birth: anomalies in the developing brain, illness or injury, fetal exposure to alcohol or drugs, low birth weight, oxygen deprivation, or by premature or prolonged labor.
- Accidents after birth: head injuries, malnutrition, or by toxic exposure (heavy metals and pesticides).

Types of learning disabilities:

#### **• Dyslexia:**

Dyslexia is experienced by children of adequate intelligence, as general language deficit which is a specific manifestation of wider limitation in processing all forms of information in short term memory, be they visually or auditorally presented. Some of the major symptoms of the dyslexia are as follows,

- Difficulty in pronunciation of words
- Difficulty in carrying out sequence of direction problem in stating, thoughts in an organized way, confusion about the organization of letters in words or poor reading comprehension.
- Confusion over left and right
- Difficulty following 2 or 3 step instructions.

#### **Dysgraphia:**

Dysgraphia is defined as difficulty in automatically remembering and mastering the sequence of muscle or motor movements needed in writing letter or numbers. It is a neurological disorder or learning disability characterized by writing disabilities and exists in varying degrees ranging from mild to moderate, some of the major symptoms of the dysgraphia are:

- illegible handwriting,
- avoiding writing or drawing task,
- unfinished or omitted words in sentences,
- inconsistent species between words and letters etc.

#### **Dyscalculia:**

Dyscalculia is a term which refers to a wide range of life long learning disabilities involving maths. The major symptoms of dyscalculia are:

- they are good at speaking, reading, and writing, but slow to develop counting in math problem solving skill.
- They have good memory for printed words but difficulty in reading numbers or recalling numbers in sequence etc.
- Good with general math concepts, but frustrated when specific computation and organization skills need to be used.
- Difficulty playing strategy games like chess, bridge and role playing video games.

#### **Agraphia:**

Agraphia is the inability and loss of the ability to write and spell. Agraphia is a neurological disorder involving the loss of ability to write. There are number of brain areas which interact and which are responsible for various aspects of the ability to write.

**Alexia:**

Alexia is acquired type of sensory aphasia where damage of the brain causes a patient to lose ability to read.

**Learning disabilities and pandemic:**

Before the COVID-19 (Who.int 2020) outbreak and subsequent pandemic, this particular Learning Disability Service was a busy place with regular day to day and urgent clinical work. The COVID-19 pandemic has had significant ramifications across the world. In turn this has had an enormous impact on the Service. The restrictions made by governments will likely have a variety of consequences on people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) across the world. These will include the effect of this pandemic on care and support, welfare benefits and finance, social and emotional supports and physical and mental health. The Learning Disability Service mentioned is a UK based service for people with IDD. (Using UK based terminology it is described as the Learning Disability (LD) Service.) The service is run by the National Health Service (NHS) and covers a population of approximately 660,000 people (Nrsotland.gov.uk 2020). It provides care for people with IDD of all ages in both the inpatient and outpatient settings. There is one inpatient unit providing to the community covered by the NHS territorial board. (Nicola Hyghes and G. Aderson, 2020). *According to UNESCO (2020), school closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have affected over 1.5 billion students and families. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented multiple challenges for teaching students with disabilities in an online instructional environment, but there are also opportunities for collaboration, training, and communication for special educators to meet the needs of their students. (Clinton Smith 2020)*

For many schools, the transition from face-to-face instruction to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic was not their finest hour, particularly for underresourced, underserved rural schools. surveyed a nationwide sample of 477 school systems. Of those surveyed, a mere 27% of rural schools reported expectations of teachers to provide instruction to students, compared with more than 50% of urban schools. Prior to COVID-19, Showalter et al. (2019) completed an evaluation the state of rural education in the United States. Findings indicate that although overall National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) performance is on par with the national average, rural schools in impoverished areas score significantly lower than their more adequately resourced peers. Texas is currently working to improve special education identification procedures and services provided through a corrective action plan (CAP) initiated by the U.S. Department of Education (Texas Education Agency, 2019). Despite funding difficulties and challenges with serving students eligible for special education during a pandemic, there are districts that leveraged the strengths of rural communities to meet student and family needs. Commerce Independent School District is one exemplar. The purpose of this article is to highlight successes and lessons learned to offer guidance to districts as we continue to navigate challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the present study we are finding the impact of pandemic on learning disabilities on school students.

**Aim of study:**

Aim of the study is to find out the impact of pandemic on learning disabilities on school going children.

**Objective:**

- To study the impact of pandemic on learning disabled students.

**Hypothesis:**

- Students performance is less in pandemic than before pandemic.

**Material and Method:****Sample:**

The total sample comprised of 60 Ss only. Their age range was 8 to 10 years, and their educational standard was either 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Tools used:****Diagnostic Test of Learning Disability:**

The scale was constructed and developed by Swaroopa and Dharmistha. It consisted of ten different types of learning disability and each sub test is measuring different areas. Cognitive abilities measure the ability to manipulate the stimuli in reversed order. The test of memory measure which is the necessary facilitator for almost all the learning. The reliability coefficient obtained by the test retest method is 0.79.

**Procedure:**

For collecting data the Ss were called in a small group consisted of 5 to 10 each. Their seating arrangement was made in a classroom; sufficient distance between the two Ss was kept, so, that one cannot peep into the answers written by the other. Once the Ss had taken their seats rapport was formed through informal conversation. The important instructions were given to the Ss regarding the test and second data were used as online mode and telephonic call.

**Research design:**

Comparative design was used for the study.

**Statistical Treatment:**

The data were treated by student's 't' test.

**Results and Discussion:**

‘t’ test table

Group 1	X	8.56	t = 13.80**
	s	1.00	
Group 2	X	5.80	
	s	1.06	

From the above table it is shown that group 1 had mean value of 8.56 and standard deviation had 1.00 and group 2 had mean value of 5.80 (s= 1.06). It is clearly indicated that, both groups means group 1 and group 2 are differ significantly from each other. In the present study the difference between the two groups are observed and the computed ‘t’ valued obtained 13.80 is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the group 1 performance is significantly better than group 2.

**Suggestions:**

Following suggestions were drawn for the study:

- Psychologist, counselor and special educator must work for the learning disabled students.
- Schools must take serious action in this pandemic situation to help the learning disabled students.
- Special educator has to give weekly plan to the students and take follow up from the parents.
- Parents and special educator and students have atleast two or three online session in one week.
- Once in a week, class teacher has to interact with parents for the progress of the students.

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