



Article Type: Review Article

Article Ref. No.: 21082500725LR

<https://doi.org/10.37948/ensemble-2021-CSI1-a011>



LEARNING DISABILITY IN INDIA: A REVIEW

Nimisha Beri¹✉, Kunwar Udit Vikram Singh²

Abstract:

Education is the fundamental right of each and every child in India as stated in right to education act 2009. Last two decades are important in providing basic education in reach of every child through different plans like 'sarvshikshaabhiyan' and 'samgrashikshaabhiyan' by government of India. Without considering the education of children with special need the goal of education for all cannot be achieved. In the education of divyang children government came forward with many legislations and provisions in last few years. Learning disability is the recently recognized area of special education in India as the government of India notified learning disability as a disability in 2016, in person with disability act 2016. This review paper will present an overall picture about the status of learning disability in India, its historical perspectives, prevalence in child population of India and policies by state and national government. This paper will also provide the detail about tools and techniques in screening, diagnosis and strategies used for educating children with learning disabilities in India.

Article History: Submitted on 25 Aug 2021 | Accepted on 20 Sep 2021 | Published online on 25 Sep 2021

Keywords: Learning Disability, BCSLD, DTLD, Prevalence, Screening and Diagnosis

1.0 Introduction:

Learning disability as clear from its name is a disability to learn but not due to the environmental, physiological and communication barriers. It is somewhat related to the neurological processing of information. Learning disability is neurological disorders arising due to the dis-functioning of central nervous system which leads to the lack of learning in one or more areas as reading, writing, mathematical calculation, sometimes in social interactions too. These learning disabilities are not the direct impact of the person's other handicapping conditions.

Psychologist Samuel A. Krick was the first to use the term "Learning disability" at an education conference in Chicago in 1963 (Hammill, D. D., 1990). In India psychologists and educationist became familiar with the term learning disability in the last decade of 20th century. Psychologists and educationalist gave their concern to this new type of intellectual disability but there were no rules and regulation till 2009 about learning disability in India. In 2007 a Hindi movie, "Tare Zameen Par" came on screen, showing a child struggling for education on his own due to some

1 [Author] ✉ [Corresponding Author] Professor, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, INDIA.
E-mail: nimisha.16084@lpu.co.in

2 [Author] Ph.D. Scholar, School of Education, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, INDIA

This article was presented in the International Conference on 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity: Issues, Concerns and Challenges' on 25th September, 2021 (via Virtual mode), organized by the School of Education, LPU, Punjab, INDIA in collaboration with the Department of Education, Dr. Meghnad Saha College, West Bengal, INDIA.

© 2021 Ensemble; The authors



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License



psychological problems and the term Dyslexia became familiar to the common people of India. Later in 2009 government of India gave recognition to the learning disability as a disability in India through the amendment in Person With Disability Act, 1995. In last few years there are increase in awareness and identification of learning disability in India but it is considered exclusively in urban areas. Most of the research related to identification and recognition of learning disability was done by private agencies and NGOs. In India the Person With Disability Act, 2016 gave the proper recognition to the learning disability as a disability. Still learning disability need more concern from government, NGOs, medical experts and educationists.

2.0 Prevalence of Learning Disability:

The educationists working for learning disability assume that 5% to 15% of school going population is suffering from this disability. There are researches that indicate the percentage of students having learning disability.

Choudhary, M., Jain, A., Chahar, C., & Singhal, A. K. (2012) in their study in Bikaner on 500 students from 3rd to 5th by the dyslexia assessment questionnaire (DAQ) found that prevalence of learning disability is 10.25% of school going children. Prevalence is higher in boys (11.40%) than girls (7.14%).

Arun, P., Chavan, B. S., Bhargava, R., Sharma, A., & Kaur, J. (2013). A cross-sectional study on 2402 students from 7th to 10th standard of 10 schools in Chandigarh revealed that 38 students have learning disability that showed 1.58% of prevalence of learning disability in the study. Tests of intelligence (Malin's Intelligence Scale for Indian Children and Standard Progressive Matrices), and NIMHANS Index for specific learning disability (SLD) battery were administered.

Padhy, S. K., Goel, S., Das, S. S., Sarkar, S., Sharma, V., & Panigrahi, M. (2016). This cross-sectional study was done on 3rd and 4th grade students studying in government schools using Specific Learning Disability-Screening Questionnaire (SLD-SQ) and Brigance Diagnostic Inventory (BDI) part of NIMHANS Index of Specific Learning Disabilities in three stages. Total 108 children out of the total screened (n = 3600) were confirmed to have learning disability on final stage using BDI, which showed prevalence 3.08 % of the total population.

Pratibha, Garg, M. (2016) studied prevalence of learning disability among pre-school children in Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh using teacher screening and case study method and found that 33.33% pre-school children have one or more type of learning disability.

Kumari, R., Ojha, A. A. R. P., & Dubey, G. P. (2018) A cross-sectional study was conducted on 250 randomly selected government schools of Eastern Uttar Pradesh, India. Out of 7,427 students overall portion of students having learning disabilities was found to be 30.76% (2285). On the basis of gender, prevalence of learning disabilities was 45.42 % among boys and 54.52% among girls.

Chordia et.al (2019) found in their school based cross sectional study, conducted in Ponducherry that after screening by the teachers and applying NIMHANS index 36(7.5%) out of 480 students screened were having learning disability. Boys (9.6%) were having more problem in number than girls (4.9%).

From the studies it is found that the prevalence of learning disability in India varies from 2% to 33%. There is no national level research that reveals the prevalence of learning disability at national level. Studies are limited to district and regional level only. There is a huge requirement to conduct a research at national level to know the actual prevalence of learning disability in India.

3.0 Screening and Diagnosis of learning Disability:

Learning Disability is the latest in India still few researches developed the different tools for screening and diagnosis of learning Disability.

Behavioural checklist for screening the learning disabled (BCSLD) by Smriti Swarup and Dharmishta H. Mehta, It is a screening tool of learning disability in the child. The checklists consist of 30 items, positive and negative, to be filled in by the teacher.

Diagnostic Test of Learning Disability (DTLD) by Smriti Swarup and Dharmishta Mehta. The test diagnoses learning disability in ten areas—from Auditory/Visual Perception to Cognitive areas. It consists of 10 sub-tests. It is to be individually administered on the age group 8-11 years old.

NIMHANS Index for Specific Learning Disabilities, It has test of reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic abilities, to identify children with disabilities in these areas. The NIMHANS index for SLDs is a battery of tests used for confirming the diagnosis of SLD. It consists of two levels: Level 1: (5–7 years of age); Level 2: (8–12 years)

Specific Learning Disability: Comprehensive Diagnostic Battery (SLD:CDB) by Dr. Manju Mehta and Dr. Rajesh Sagaris a comprehensive battery that assesses ability of reading, writing, spelling and comprehension, arithmetic to diagnose specific learning disability it is applicable for the children of age 6 years to 13 years.

Specific Learning Disability- Screening Questionnaire (SLD-SQ) by Uday K Sinha this is suitable for children 5 to 15 years. It is a screening tool for early identification of specific learning disability

Learning Disability Battery (LDB-BB) by Rajshree Bhargava and R. L. Bhardwaj. The questionnaire has three parts: part I consisted questions related to Dyscalculia, part II consisted questions related to Dysgraphia and part III consisted questions related to Dyslexia. This is used to diagnose the specific learning disability in children of age group of 7 to 15 years.

Government of national capital territory of Delhi, Health and family welfare department via circular no. F.no.24/misc.policy/disability/dhs/nhc/1039-45 02/05/2019 and Directorate of education; inclusive education branch (leb) via circular no. No. F.240/dde(eb)/adm.n.cell2019/3124-29 24/05/2019 approved these hospitals and institutions for the purpose of issuance of disability certificate to the person with learning disability.

- Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalya, Geetacolony, Delhi.
- Institute of human behaviour and allied sciences (IHBAS), Dilshad garden, Delhi.
- Govind Ballabh Pant hospital, 1, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg, Delhi.
- Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, Cannaught Place, Delhi.
- Vardhman Mahavir Medical College, Safdarjung Hospital, &, Sri Aurobindo Marg, Ansari Nagar, East Block c-1, New Delhi.
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Sri Aurobindo Marg, Ansari Nagar, Ansari Nagar East, New Delhi.
- Janak Puri Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi.
- Baba Saheb Ambedkar Hospital, Rohini, Delhi.

Kamala, R. (2014). Explained that central board of secondary education (CBSE) provides facilities for the student having learning disability. The rights of the learning disability students mentioned by CBSE are as follows:

- Extra time will be given to the students with specific learning disabilities during examination.
- Students with specific learning disabilities are not having compulsion to study second language and exempted from the work experience subject.
- They are permitted to use calculators for mathematics calculation during examination.
- For the students with dyslexia, the question paper will be read out during examination.
- Students with specific learning disabilities are exempted from spelling errors.
- Students with specific learning disabilities are exempted from drawing maps, graphs, figures, charts etc.in the written examination. They will be given supplementary questions to complement the marks.
- Students with dysgraphia are allowed to use writers during examination.
- Students with specific learning disabilities studying in X standard are exempted from studying algebra and geometry and allowed to substitute with standard VII mathematics and work experience subject.
- Grace marks of 20% should be given in one or two subjects for those students with specific learning disabilities who have failed in the examination.
- Students with specific learning disabilities are exempted from writing answers in detail during examination.
- For students with learning disabilities of standard 1st to standard 9th and standard 11th, along with the written test, the students shall also have an oral test for unit and semester examinations.

4.0 Conclusion:

Though research related to learning disability in India is still in infancy, there is a lot of to explore. We have prevalence studies limited to local and regional level. There is a huge need to know the proportion of student having learning disability in the child population of India. There is lack of uniform procedure to screen out and diagnose Learning disability at national level. Efforts are made in the direction of recognition, screening and remediation of learning disability but they are limited to urban and developed areas. According to RTE 2009 and Samagar Shiksha Abhiyan getting primary education is the right of each and every child but this goal cannot be achieved without catering this hidden group of special needs. It is more difficult to screen and facilitate these children in rural India as there is a lack of normal school education facilities. As stated, that learning disability is the neurological disorder which leads to lack in learning after having all appropriate experiences required for the learning, it become more difficult to recognise students having learning disability or not, in rural India. Even there is less data and tools related to learning disability but we have made a foundation with these researches to move forward in the field of learning disability in India. We have to be committed to students having learning disability to realise concept of the inclusive education and inclusive society.

References:

Arun, P., Chavan, B. S., Bhargava, R., Sharma, A., & Kaur, J. (2013). Prevalence of specific developmental disorder of scholastic skill in school students in Chandigarh, India. *The Indian Journal of Medical Research*, 138(1), 89.

Chordia, S. L., Thandapani, K., & Arunagirinathan, A. (2020). Children 'at risk' of developing specific learning disability in primary schools. *The Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, 87(2), 94-98.

Choudhary, M., Jain, A., Chahar, C., & Singhal, A. K. (2012). A case control study on specific learning disorders in school going children in Bikaner city. *Indian Journal Of Pediatrics*, 79(11), 1477-1481. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12098-012-0699-7>



Government of national capital territory of Delhi, Health and family welfare department, circular no. F.no.24/misc.policy/disability/dhs/nhc/1039-45 02/05/2019 and Directorate of education; inclusive education branch (IEB), circular no. No. F.240/dde(eb)/admn. celll2019/3124-29 24/05/2019

Hammill, D. D. (1990). On defining learning disabilities: An emerging consensus. *Journal Of Learning Disabilities*, 23(2), 74-84.

Kamala, R. (2014). Specific learning disabilities in India: Rights, issues and challenges. *Indian J Appl Res*, 4(5).

Kumari, R., Ojha, A. A. R. P., & Dubey, G. P. (2018) Prevalence of Learning Disability among Tribal, Rural and Urban School Going Children of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. *Journal of Nehru Gram Bharati University*, 07 (01 & 02),1-10

Padhy, S. K., Goel, S., Das, S. S., Sarkar, S., Sharma, V., & Panigrahi, M. (2016). Prevalence and patterns of learning disabilities in school children. *The Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, 83(4), 300-306

Pratibha, Garg, M. (2016). Prevalence of Learning Disabilities among Pre-School Children in Faizabad District (Uttar Pradesh). *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR) Reading*, 5(3), 788-790.

