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## **A Case Study of Dyslexia Child at the Primary Education Level in Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

This research was a case study and only one primary school female student was taken as the sample of the study, i.e., a 5<sup>th</sup> class student of Islamabad Model College for Girls F-6/2, Islamabad. Tests and a questionnaire were adapted. The instrument consisted of seven different tests regarding the problem of the child.

These tests were i) Reading Test; ii) Writing Test; iii) Mathematical Test; iv) Memory Test; v) Intelligence Test; vi) Performance Test; and vii) Visio-Attention Test. These were used as tool for the collection of data from the girl child and her teachers.

The questionnaire for teachers had 16 questions regarding the girl student's problems, her study progress and behavior in school and classroom.

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Results indicated that the dyslectic child was facing problems in almost every area of study at the primary level in Pakistan, specifically reading. The problems faced by the dyslectic child can be removed, to some extent, with the help of positive and cooperating attitude of parents and teachers. Speech therapy and psychiatrist sessions were also recommended.

**Key Words:** *Dyslexia*

## **Introduction**

Dyslexia is a chronological neurological disorder due to which difficulty occurs in reading, learning and spelling. Noteworthy indicators are poor learning, tendency to write words or letters in reversal order and scribbled handwriting. According to Psicologia (2001) comparative analysis of several definitions of dyslexia revealed that reading discrepancy was the only common and major symptom of dyslexia. Among all the signs of dyslexia, reading incompetency is the most significant. Dyslectic children have a great tendency and inclination towards letter-reversal. Dyslexia affects a child's ability to read, write and understand the basic language. Some of the symptoms of dyslexia are: Letter or word reversals when reading, such as was/saw, b/d, p/q), Letter or word reversals when writing, Difficulty in repeating what is said to them, Poor handwriting or printing ability, Poor drawing ability, Reversing letters or words when spelling words that are presented orally, Difficulty comprehending written or spoken directions, Difficulty with right - left directionality, Difficulty understanding or remembering what is said to them, and Difficulty understanding or remembering what they have just read (Fischer, Liberman, and Shankweiler, 1978).

It is very important for teachers to present an early evaluation and identification of dyslectic children (Christo, Catherine, Davis and Brock, 2009). Communication with the dyslectic child is also significant (Marshall, Abigail, and Vincent, 2009). It is important for a dyslectic adult to gain control over his or her own life (Mc Loughlin, Leather and Stringer, 2002). The needs of dyslexia students are not the responsibility of one individual rather the responsibility rests with school staff, subject professionals and school administration (Peer, 2001). If the problems and needs of dyslectic students are not addressed properly, learning ability is drastically affected because of being labeled as dyslectic even at the university level (Pollak, 2005). Good counseling is the basic source to manage dyslexia. Effective counseling combined with effective teaching skills makes dyslexia manageable (Scott, 2005).

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The present study explores the issues, problems and difficulties faced by the dyslectic individual girl child at the primary education level in Pakistan. Research was conducted as a case study of this dyslexia child at the primary level in Pakistan.

### **Objective of the Study**

- To analyzed the general and specific problems of the dyslexia in children at the primary education level.
- To give measures for the improvement of the facilities for the dyslectic children.
- To create awareness about the significant signs of dyslexia.

### **Rationale of the Study**

Rationale of the study is as follow:

- The study will provide valid guidelines for teachers, parents, and policy makers and Government.
- Conducting this study will create awareness about the general and specific problems of dyslectic children.
- Researchers' aim is to make others aware about how to deal with dyslectic children.
- The study will explore the ways through which teachers will be able to cure the disease through their behavior.

### **Methods and Procedures**

The nature of the research is a case study. As it was a case study, only one primary girl student was taken as the sample of study. Tests and a questionnaire were adapted, modified and used as a tool for the collection of data from the girl child and her teachers. The instrument consisted of seven different tests regarding the problem of the child. These tests are; i) Reading Test; ii) Writing Test; iii) Mathematical Test; iv) Memory Test; v) Intelligence Test; vi) Performance Test; and vii) Visio-Attention Test. The questionnaire for teachers consisted of almost 16 questions regarding the girl student's problems, her study progress and behavior in school and classroom. Data was collected through questionnaire and tests, from the student and teachers. The data was collected from the 5<sup>th</sup> class student of Islamabad Model College for Girls F-6/2. Self-data collection

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technique was applied. The data was analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives of the study.

## **Presentation and Analysis of Data**

### **Analysis of Tests**

#### **1. Reading Test**

The reading test consisted of four paragraphs entitled as “The Independence Day”. In the test the girl student made 194 mistakes and read 31 words correctly.

#### **2. Writing Test**

The Writing test consisted of 20 items out of which the fifth grade girl student made 14 mistakes.

#### **3. Mathematical Test**

In the Mathematical Test the girl child was asked to write backward counting from 100-50. In this test she made 38 mistakes.

#### **4. Ascending Order in Math**

In the Ascending Order test, the subject was asked to write the figures in ascending order. Five items were presented in which she made 3 mistakes.

#### **5. Descending Order in Mathematics**

In the Descending Order Test, the girl student was asked to write the figures in descending order. Five items were presented and she made mistakes in all of them.

#### **6. Memory Test**

In the Memory Test, forms of verbs were asked to memorize. Five items were presented. She learned only three of five items.

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## **7. Word Opposite in English**

Five items were asked regarding word-opposites. Ten items were presented and the girl student was able to answer only four correctly.

## **8. Intelligence Test**

In the Intelligence test 5 shapes were presented. The subject was asked to identify them. She identified two correctly.

## **9. Identification of Occupation Pictures**

In this test ten occupation pictures were presented and the girl was asked to identify by the subject. She identified five out of five.

## **10. Visio-Attention Test**

In Visio-attention test, five items were presented and the subject was asked to response. The girl student of fifth grade answered three correctly out of five.

## **11. Participle Test**

In this test, five items were presented. The girl answered three correctly out of four.

## **12. Prepositions of English**

In this test, six items were presented. The girl child was asked to fill in the blanks with suitable preposition. She answered three correctly out of six.

## **13. Performance Test**

In this test, the subject was asked to arrange the sentences in logical order by looking at the given picture. Five items were presented. She arranged two correctly.

## **14. Picture Description**

In this test, the subject was asked to write 8-10 lines in the description of the given picture. The girl student was able to write 3 lines only.

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## **Data Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire**

### **15. Teacher Qualification**

Teachers' qualification shows that 62.5 percent were with M.Phil. degree, 25 percent of the teachers had M.A degree and 12.5 percent had M.Sc degree.

### **16. Handwriting**

The result shows that dyslectic girl student's handwriting was sloppy with poor letter formation as 87.5 percent of the teachers agreed that the handwriting of the student was sloppy and 12.5 percent disagreed.

### **16. Difficulty in Math**

The result shows that dyslectic child had difficulty with keeping numbers lined up when adding, subtracting, multiplying or dividing. 87.5 percent of the teachers said that the fifth grade girl student had difficulty in math and 12.5 percent disagreed.

### **17. Different from Other Children**

The result shows that there was a history of letter reversals in the dyslectic child and it was greater than what was noticed in non-dyslectic children of the same age. 100 percent of the teachers agreed that the dyslexia student had a history of letter reversals and this was different from the non-dyslectic children of the same age.

### **18. Spelling Words**

The result illustrates that 62.5 percent of the teachers agreed that the dyslectic fifth grade girl student forgets spelling of the words they just had learned and 37.5 percent disagreed.

### **19. Attitude of a Dyslexia Student**

The results indicate that 75 of the teachers' opinion was that the girl dyslexia student's attitude was not appropriate in relation to non-dyslectic children and 25 percent agreed.

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## **20. Study Progress**

The results represents that 100 percent teachers were not satisfied with dyslexia student's study progress.

## **21. Parents Cooperation**

The results signify that 62.5 percent of the teachers agreed that parents of dyslexia student of fifth grade were cooperative and 37.5 percent disagreed.

## **22. Confusion of Speaking**

The results illustrate that 50 percent of the teachers agreed that the girl dyslexia student gets confused speaking in front of the class and 50 percent disagreed.

## **23. Difficulties with spelling**

The result demonstrates 87.5 percent of the teacher's responses agreed that the girl dyslexia student had difficulty in spelling and 12.5 percent negative response.

## **24. Reading words**

The results show 75 percent the positive response of the teachers that the girl dyslexia student missed out the words and 25 percent negative response.

## **25. Difficulty Reading Aloud**

The results explain that 87.5 percent of the teachers agreed that the fifth grade dyslexia student had difficulty in reading aloud and 12.5 percent disagreed.

## **26. Difficulty to Copy from Board**

The results indicate that 87.5 percent of the teachers agreed that the girl dyslexia student had difficulty to copy from board and 12.5 percent disagreed.

## **27. Skip Lines**

The results show 75 percent negative responses of the teachers as the fifth grade dyslexia student skipped lines while reading and 25 percent response were positive.

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## **28. Special Guidance and Attention**

The result shows 50 percent of the teachers agreed that they were giving special guidance and attention to the girl dyslexia student whereas 50 percent disagreed.

## **29. Positive Behavior of Teacher**

The result indicates that 63% of teachers agreed to the opinion that their positive attitude can play a significant role in removing dyslexia student's problem whereas 37% disagreed.

## **Discussion**

Dyslectic child encountered problems with a large margin as compared to the non-dyslectic students. The child also used more time and effort to fulfill a task than other non-dyslectic children. Dyslectic individual needed five times more effort than that of non-dyslectic individual. The responses of teachers indicated that the dyslectic child faced problems in writing clearly, solving mathematics problems, had problem of letter reversal, forgot spellings that were learned recently, there was confusion in speaking, missing words while reading, difficulty in reading aloud and difficulty to copy material from the board. The research indicated that positive and encouraging behavior of parents as well as teachers played a significant role in solving dyslectic children's problems. The study explored the general and specific problems a of dyslectic child at the primary level of education. The study offers some guidelines for measures that may be taken to facilitate better performance of dyslectic children in schools at the primary level of education. Awareness has also been created about the problems of dyslectic children.

## **Conclusions**

Following are the conclusions:

1. There are many problems faced by the fifth grade girl dyslectic student during reading, writing, identifying things and understanding multiple questions.
2. Dyslectic children need extra time, guidance and attention in the completion of their given task by the teachers and their parents.

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3. Dyslectic children face problems while attempting mathematical sums and learning things, as their memory needs improvement. They also encounter hurdles in learning spellings.
4. The inability to read the words in text accurately and frequently is the primary impediment to reading comprehension in children with dyslexia. It is also concluded that difficulties in the phonological domain may be primarily responsible for the difficulties that these children experience in mastering the alphabetic principle. More observation is needed here.
5. The study concludes that letter or word reversal is a very significant symptom of dyslexia.

### **Recommendations**

1. Teachers may provide guidance to the students and communicate to their parents in order to improve their performance.
2. Proper counseling from specialists in psychology and speech/language pathology should be made available. Dyslexia students need more attention and consideration than the non-dyslectic students.
3. Speech therapy should also be conducted for dyslexia students.
4. Parents should provide extra time or special attention to them in order to provide academic assistance.
5. The focus should be on capabilities rather than deficiencies of dyslectic students.

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