

Teachers' Knowledge And Assessment Methods Of Pupils With Dyslexia In Ilorin West Local Government Area Of Kwara State

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Abstract: For the purpose of providing answers to the problems that students are having with their education. Researchers in Kwara State's Ilorin West LGA looked into educators' understanding of Dyslexia and how they evaluate students with the learning disability. The survey method used was a descriptive one. In order to gather this information, we gave the teachers the Teachers' Knowledge for Dyslexia Test (TKDT). Teachers of students with special needs verified the accuracy of the test. The dependability level of .81 was determined using PPMC. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, percentage, frequency count, and ANOVA were used to analyse the data obtained and test for the study questions posed at the 0.05 significance level. A number of findings were made, including that there was no statistically significant difference in teachers' knowledge of students with Dyslexia by level of education ($F(2; 287) = .120; P > 0.05$). The results indicate that educators' understanding of students with dyslexia is limited at best. There was a recommendation that educators be pushed to participate in ongoing professional development.

Keywords: Dyslexia, Teacher Knowledge, Assessment Method, and Other Learning Disabilities

Introduction

Reading, writing, and arithmetic may be more difficult for those with learning disabilities because of neurologically based processing issues. A person with a learning disability may have trouble taking in new information or using what they have learned to do practical tasks. Different people with Learning Disabilities have different strengths and weaknesses; some have trouble with reading, while others do not.

Those who struggle with dyslexia may not make it through elementary school without special help, according to research cited by the International Dyslexia Association in 2003. Dreams are dashed, and precious time is wasted. But studies showed that with the right help, kids with Dyslexia might improve their reading, writing, spelling, and math skills (Polit & Beck, 2004). According to Russell (2017), it begins before adulthood and has a lasting influence on development, reducing the ability to grasp new or difficult information, gain new skills, and cope independently. A person with a learning impairment may have trouble with communication, numeracy, or motor control. Verbal and nonverbal information may be affected.

According to studies, dyslexia and dysgraphia affect 80% of students who require specialised instruction (National Center for Statistics, 2008). According to surveys of parents, Demir (2005) found that one-third of first graders were at risk for dyslexia and dysgraphia. However, first-grade teachers reported that 25% of their students showed signs of increased difficulties with reading and writing (Demir, 2005). It has been established that students with Dyslexia can benefit from reading education if it is delivered in a structured and individualised manner by a qualified educator (Moats & Foorman, 2003). According to the literature, a student's reading proficiency who is dyslexic is also influenced by his or her teacher's expertise (Hellendoorn & Ruijsenaars, 2000). The purpose of this study is to provide insights into how educators understand and evaluate students with dyslexia and dysgraphia.

As the most prevalent kind of learning difficulty traceable to the brain, dyslexia has gained widespread acceptance as a serious issue. The individual with dyslexia also possesses strengths and areas of skill that, when channelled appropriately, provide for success, hence the term "specific learning problem" (Sutton & Shield, 2016). The International Dyslexia Association (IDA, 2002) defines dyslexia as a neurological disorder characterised by difficulty with precise and fluent word identification, poor spelling, and decoding skills, and the need for appropriate classroom education to overcome these issues. It is not possible, regardless of financial situation, to separate children who have Dyslexia from their parents. Despite the federal government's advocacy for free education for all and the UBE scheme's implementation of that advocacy, students must have their parents/guardians complete the enrollment process on their behalf. Dyslexia is a neurodevelopmental condition that does not fit into any established diagnosis (Chloe 2012). It's a type of learning deficit characterised by a discrepancy between a child's innate potential and how well they perform in school.

Research conducted by Julie in 2016 examined elementary school teachers' familiarity with learning difficulties (LD). Conclusion Educators have deep understanding of the signs and symptoms of learning difficulties and of how to best support their pupils in the classroom. The knowledge and expertise of primary school teachers in working with students who have learning difficulties was investigated by Radiate, Mumpuniarti, and Pujaningsih (2017). In order to better understand the discrepancy between

actual intervention and timely education services, the study aimed to collect preliminary data on how primary school instructors are dealing with children with learning difficulties. The study found that educators incorrectly assumed that all students who struggled in school had general learning challenges rather as unique learning issues or learning disabilities.

Simple-minded educators have a limited understanding of learning impairments. Typically, this is due to the following factors: To begin, not enough time is spent in teacher education courses on the topic of special education and how to best support students who have disabilities. Second, in general, educators in mainstream classrooms do not experiment with alternative strategies for reaching students who struggle in school because of learning difficulties. Lastly, school districts do not fund professional development opportunities for educators who work with students who have special needs (Arukesamy, 2017). Teachers in elementary schools, where learning difficulties are most common, need to know more about the phenomenon than their secondary school and high school counterparts and be able to identify students with learning difficulties in their classes using scientific criteria and the most advantageous assessment methods.

From infancy through the early elementary years, developmental evaluations can shed light on a kid's skill set, letting educators tailor lessons and activities to her specific needs. Evaluation decisions should be guided by the evaluation's objective, and both should take place within a consistent educational framework that encourages the flourishing of all students. It is difficult to capture children's talents and capacities, especially at any one point in time, due to the rapidity with which they develop from infancy to age eight (Zaslow, et al, 2000). Young children's evaluation requirements differ greatly from those of older children or adults as a result of their rapid and unpredictable growth and change. Teaching and assessing young children often involves professionals employing derivatives of strategies employed by older people, which might have negative effects on the students. All too often, testing young children results in inaccurate assessment. Methodologies for evaluating children's progress should accommodate a range of developmental stages if they are to yield valid results (Neisworth & Bagnato, 2004). Researchers noted a lack of studies examining instructors' knowledge and evaluation techniques for students with dyslexia and dysgraphia, controlling for factors like years of experience in the classroom and level of education.

Teachers' levels of education and training have a direct impact on their classroom attitudes, demeanour, communication, goals, and methods, as well as on their ability to pursue further education and training. Previous studies have outlined the five domains (domain, emotions, IT, communication, and environment) in which educators need to excel (Selvi, 2010). As the person ultimately responsible for putting educational policy into practise, a teacher's level of expertise is crucial. According to Harris and Sass (2009), many school administrators think that seasoned educators have a greater impact on student learning than those with less time in the classroom. Therefore, the biggest concentration of inexperienced instructors is found in preschools, which is often seen as a key cause of imbalance between schools and thus a target for redistribution, as noted by the Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER, 2007). On the other hand, kids can gain in intangible ways from their exposure to new teachers since they represent a source of new energy and talents. Teachers with a wealth of experience are assumed to have a wide repertoire of teaching methods and techniques in addition to a wealth of years in the profession. Most students have the ability to set priorities and selectively address a variety of important instructional concerns (Hagger and McIntyre, 2000).

The study only focused on the Effutu District in Winneba, where there were already established programmes for professional development. He mentioned the district's prototype inclusive schools. A total of 40 educators from six of the eight inclusive pilot schools in the region took part. Semi-structured interviews and a 15-item dyslexia scale based from the Validated Dyslexia Belief Index were used to assess teachers' perceptions and understanding of dyslexia. According to the descriptive analysis, the mean score on the questionnaire was lower than 48 points, the threshold at which respondents were assumed to have reasonable opinions and extensive knowledge regarding dyslexia. A closer look uncovered widespread misunderstandings and false beliefs regarding Dyslexia held by educators in the Effutu District. The study also found that instructors with a Master's degree in education had a considerably higher mean score than teachers with a certificate in education, and that special education teachers need training in Dyslexia, but that this training did not significantly contribute to fewer misconceptions. The results and their implications for training programmes are discussed. (Diana, 2014).

Researchers looked at how well-trained professors affected physics pupils in high school. The purpose was to find out if a teacher's prestige has any bearing on their pupils' physics test scores. As a descriptive research method, the survey is being used. One hundred physics students from Ekiti State's senior secondary schools and their respective physics professors were used as a sample for this study. All of the students and teachers had been preparing for the 2009/2010 West African School Certificate Examination. Each institution's annual results were summarised using the biological data collected by the school's physics professors. At the 0.05 significance level, four assumptions were developed and analysed. Inferential statistics have been used to examine the aggregate data. Students in classes taught by professors with more education scored higher than those in classes taught by teachers with fewer credentials. In addition, research shows that professionally trained educators lead to improved student performance in physics (Owolabi & Adebayo, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Facilitate the learning of students who struggle with dyslexia. Eighty percent of students who require special education have dyslexia or dysgraphia, according to some estimates; a survey of first-grade instructors found that 25 percent of primary school students exhibited increasing difficulty with reading and writing. There is a wide variety of causes for these situations, all of which make a difference in how teachers approach their lessons. Educational stakeholders have adopted several exercises, including lessons, extra-moral classes, and a vision, to provide answers to pupils' learning issues. However, there is still an issue with literacy. The purpose of this study was to investigate how teachers in West Ilorin evaluate their pupils' reading abilities.

Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State

Research Question Three: What are the teachers' most commonly adopted methods of assessing pupils with Dyslexia

Research Question 5: What is the significant difference between the Knowledge of teachers and the method of assessing pupils with Dyslexia in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State based on educational qualification?

Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey as its research design. All elementary school teachers in Kwara State's Ilorin West Local Government Area participated in this survey. 290 elementary schools were chosen through a random sample process. Researchers used the Teachers' Knowledge for Dyslexia Test (TKDT) to interview educators about their experiences with the learning disability. Some professors in the special education department checked the devices to make sure they were reliable. Within two weeks, 20 copies of the final manuscript were tested by randomly selected students from outside the sample schools. The reliability was then established as .81 using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, percentage, and frequency count as well as inferential statistics such as Variance analysis The hypotheses for this study were tested via an ANOVA at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question One: What is the teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia in Ilorin West Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 1: Table showing the level of teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia

Dispersion	Score	N	Mean Score	Remark
Minimum	5	290	10.59	Low level of Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia
Maximum	30			

Key: 0.00 – 24.99 = Low High: 25.00 – 50.00

Table 1 shows the level of teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia. The minimum score was 5, while the maximum score was 30. Then the mean score was 10.59, which indicated that teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia was low.

Research Question Two: What are the teachers' most commonly adopted methods of assessing pupils with Dyslexia?

Table 3: Table showing the most commonly adopted method of assessing pupils with Dyslexia

S/N	Assessment Methods	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean
1	No Assessment	90(31.0)	99(34.1)	101(34.8)	1.96
2	Close format Assessment	153(52.8)	127(43.8)	127(43.8)	2.49
3	Paper and Pencil	189(65.2)	83(28.6)	18(6.2)	2.59
4	Oral	232(80.0)	45(15.5)	13(4.5)	2.76
5	Standard reading comprehension measure	38(13.1)	175(60.3)	77(26.6)	1.87
6	Observation	209(72.1)	40(13.8)	41(14.1)	2.58

7	Retelling	148(50.3)	97(33.4)	47(16.2)	2.34
8	Portfolio	51(17.6)	152(52.4)	87(30.0)	1.88
9	One on one	206(71.0)	52(17.9)	32(11.0)	2.60
10	Reading Test	55(19.0)	74(25.5)	161(55.5)	1.63

The approach with the highest mean score is the one most often used to evaluate students for Dyslexia. The most popular strategy for identifying students with Dyslexia in Kwara State's Ilorin West Local Government Area is outlined in Table 3. Oral (Mean = 2.76) has the greatest mean when compared to the other two modes. As a result, in Ilorin West LGA of Kwara State, the majority of educators chose for Oral while evaluating students for Dyslexia.

. **Research Question Three:** What is the significant difference between the Knowledge of teachers and the method of assessing pupils with Dyslexia in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State based on educational qualification?

Table 5: Table showing the difference in the level of teachers' Knowledge of pupils with Dyslexia based on educational qualification

Source	Sum of Squares	Def	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.025	2	4.013		
Within Groups	9592.320	287	33.423	.120	.887
Total	9600.345	289			

Differences in instructors' knowledge of students with dyslexia by level of education are displayed in Table 5. There was no statistically significant variation in teachers' knowledge of students with Dyslexia by degree of education ($F(2; 287) = .120; P > 0.05$). Since the result has a significant value greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is not rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that teachers in the Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State have little knowledge about students with Dyslexia. This could be because of professors' extensive expertise and credentials or because they attended a relevant seminar. This research corroborated the results of studies conducted by Julie (2016) on the knowledge of learning difficulties among primary school teachers (LD). This study concludes that teachers have a deep understanding of the signs and symptoms of learning difficulties and of how to best support children with these challenges in the classroom. The results of a study by Rudiayatu, Mumpuniarti, and Pujaningsih (2017) on teachers' knowledge and experience with primary school students with learning difficulties disagree with these findings. The purpose of this study was to examine the chasm between actual intervention and timely education services by providing primary school instructors with preliminary data on how they handle children with learning impairments. According to the findings, educators' perceptions of students' learning difficulties have been inaccurate. This may have occurred because they have not participated in any learning disability-related seminars or conferences.

Another study found that in the Ilorin West LGA of Kwara State, the majority of schools use an oral assessment when screening for dyslexia in their students. This result ran counter to the ones obtained by Lawrence (2012). This study investigated a child in danger using a hybrid methodology that included survey research, case study analysis, and action research. Using an intake interview, a diagnostic test, an error analysis, and a think-aloud clinical interview, the researchers were able to pinpoint the child's most pressing symptoms. Some examples of these difficulties are as follows: inefficient use of the four arithmetic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division); confusion between the units, tens, and hundreds; treating each column as a separate problem; place value problems; incorrect alignment of numbers; poor eye-hand coordination leading to dysgraphia; and memory lapses. Dyscalculia, Dyslexia, low self-esteem, low self-efficacy, and math anxiety were also suggested as potential causative factors by this study.

There was no statistically significant variation in teachers' knowledge of students with Dyslexia by degree of education ($F(2; 287) = .120; P > 0.05$). Owolabi and Adebayo (2012), who investigated the effect of instructors' expertise on their students' physics performance in high school, were found to have reached a conclusion at odds with the findings of the present study. Findings showed that students in classes taught by professors with advanced degrees outperformed those in those taught by teachers with less education. In addition, research shows that professionally trained educators lead to improved student performance in physics.

Conclusion

Teachers' poor levels of knowledge regarding students with dyslexia problems were attributed to their lack of participation in professional development events.

Recommendations

As a result of the discussion, it was suggested that:

1. In order to better assist students with learning difficulties, educators should be encouraged to participate in ongoing professional development opportunities.
2. Teachers should be given the opportunity to learn more about students with learning difficulties by hosting seminars, conferences, and workshops on the topic.

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