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RESEARCH PAPER

Analysis of Reading Comprehension Difficulty among Disable Students: Evidence from Private Elementary Schools in Karachi

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Abstract

The objectives of the study are to analyze how students with reading difficulty can be assisted to help them become confident readers. The other objective of the study is to draw a guideline for teachers for improving the reading comprehension skills of elementary school students. This research uses Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory to provide insight into how social interactions, peer collaborations, and teacher help work in collaborative learning settings. Doing in-depth interviews and observing classes are examples of qualitative methods that can help one learn more about the real-life experiences of dyslexic students. The benefits of joint learning are explored in this study, which adds to the body of research on teacher support in inclusive education. Insights into how joint learning can greatly affect inclusive teaching methods are shown by the real-world examples. The results are very consistent with the social constructivist theory, which says that learning in a group is significant. Students work together to improve their cognitive development by using what they already know using collaborative reading tasks advocated by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. While traditional scaffolding is important, teacher support goes above and beyond to encourage dynamic and interactive processes in collaborative situations in reading. It is suggested that school management create rules that prioritize collaborative learning and that teachers use collaborative strategies as part of inclusive education to improve reading skills in English. Working together with teachers and other professionals is strongly urged to make sure that each student's needs in reading are met in collaborative settings.

| **Key Words** | Disable Students, Elementary Schools Reading Comprehension, Reading Difficulty |

Introduction

Theory Reading and understanding written material are important for doing well in school because it shapes a student's educational path. This skill is especially important in elementary school, where building good reading skills sets the stage for future academic success (Ciullo et al., 2019). Still, different students, especially those with disabilities, have different ways of getting better at reading comprehension. In the past few years, academics and policymakers have paid more attention to tests of reading comprehension (Capin, et al., 2022). A lot of schools use these tests to see how well their students are doing in school, find students who have trouble reading, decide which students should move up to the next grade level, and see how good their teachers are. Most people agree that it can be hard to make accurate tests because reading comprehension is complicated and there are things that cannot be seen happening during a reading test. Recent questions about the reliability of reading comprehension tests have

caused a lot of debate (Al-Rimawi & Al Masri, 2022). Experts in reading (Dewi, 2023.3)and (Elhoweris 2017) assert that reading comprehension problems include a lot of different issues, from having trouble reading words to having trouble understanding and figuring out what they mean. Unfortunately, these problems often show up in different ways, making it hard for these students to fully grow in their academic pursuits (Akyol et al., 2021).

Reading comprehension is difficult for students in elementary school with disabilities (Hall et al., 2023). Learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, and other cognitive impairments can cause difficulties decoding words, detecting context, and extracting meaning from written materials. As a result, these students typically confront the arduous task of staying up with their classmates in school. This can lead to emotions of academic frustration and, in the long term, have a negative impact on their educational progress (Almutairi, 2018). It is very important to understand and help elementary school students with disabilities who have trouble reading and understanding. This is important for their education and for the good of society. As Kampylafka et al. (2023) says good reading skills are necessary to be an active member of society, move up in your job, and stay healthy overall. Getting involved in these problems at the right time and tailoring your method are very important for giving students the skills they need to survive in a world that is getting more complicated and focused on written material. Not paying enough attention to these problems not only makes it harder to do well in school, but it also makes society less fair overall (Alturki, 2017).

Literature Review

Reading comprehension issues in elementary school kids, especially those with challenges, are a complicated issue that has a big impact on future learning and academic success (Kocaj et al., 2022). Its aims are to describe reading comprehension problems, give an outline of earlier research on this subject focusing on disabled elementary school students, look at related theories and models, and find gaps in the existing literature that this study will fill. People have reading comprehension problems when they cannot understand, analyze, or draw conclusions from what they read (O'Connor, 2018). It is not enough to just understand words; you also must come to conclusions, see how ideas relate to each other, and get the main idea of a book. For elementary school students with disabilities, these problems can show up in a number of ways, such as having trouble decoding, understanding words, and figuring out how sentences are put together (Boardman et al., 2016).

Reading comprehension assessments often use multiple-choice or closed-ended questions to gauge student's understanding, but Collins et al. (2018) attempted to find out whether these types of questions contribute to the achievement gap between reading difficulties and typically developing students. A total of eighty-two studies were found to have fulfilled the inclusion criteria after a thorough literature assessment. In all studies, students in Grades K-12 were tested on reading comprehension, both those who had reading difficulties and those who were typically developing. Capin et al. (2021) examined the problems fourth graders had when they could not understand what they read. The point of this study was to find the mental blocks that could be causing these issues.

A strong capacity to read words fluently may improve reading comprehension. The reason behind this is because when reading aloud becomes second nature, the reader's cognitive resources may be better allocated to comprehending the text's meaning. Many children who have learning disabilities (LD) struggle to become fluent readers, which affects their ability to understand what they read. Stevens et al. (2017)

gathered a collection of nineteen study articles that examined reading fluency interventions for students with learning disabilities in kindergarten through fifth grade. The focus of the studies was on results related to reading speed and understanding. It was found that repeated reading, multicomponent treatments, and audiobook support can all help readers read faster and understand what they are reading better. The results got much better with the help of clear performance expectations, performance feedback, group practice, simplified texts, and a model for fluent reading.

Bartlett came up with schema theory in 1932, and Anderson and Pearson (1984) used it to explain how people understand what they read. Individuals use mental representations, or schemas, to understand new knowledge. Schemas help us organize and make sense of our events. Finding or building the right models can be hard for disabled students, which makes it harder for them to make connections between new information and what they already know. Students with disabilities who have trouble participating in conversations or building schemas may be having trouble because they have problems learning or thinking. One example is a student who was diagnosed with dyslexia and had trouble integrating new information into their current mental framework, which could lead to knowledge gaps. We can learn more about the different ways students' thoughts work by looking at how schema theory is used with students who have certain problems

The Simple View of Reading, which was created by Tunmer (1986) says that reading comprehension is made up of two parts: comprehension and an awareness of words. This way of thinking says that reading comprehension includes both understanding language on your own and being able to figure out what written words mean. Problems with understanding information (like dyslexia) or problems with language comprehension (like language disorders) can cause delays in reading comprehension. Students with disabilities may not be able to understand or remember what they read, which could hurt their general reading skills. A student with attention deficit disorder, for example, might find it hard to focus, which makes it hard for them to understand what they are reading. Researchers can teach more about the unique problems that elementary students with disabilities face by looking at how these disabilities affect the parts of the Simple View of Reading (Hoover & Tunmer, 2018). According to Stanovich's Interactive Compensatory Model, which was first suggested in 1980, different cognitive processes, like decoding, language knowledge, and prior knowledge, work together to make up for each other. This affects overall comprehension. Some people can make up for their weaknesses in another area by being good at something else. During the reading process, different parts of the brain change and interact with each other in a dynamic way.

Many times, students with disabilities have both brain strengths and weaknesses. One student who has trouble decoding might be able to make up for it by using complicated language or depending on what they already know. Examining the changing ways that students with disabilities deal with problems can help researchers understand how they are able to change and get around certain problems (Izzah et al., 2021). A lot of the research that has been done so far gives us a general idea of why disabled children have trouble understanding reading comprehension. It is important to learn more about how challenges like dyslexia or ADHD make it hard to understand what other people are saying. There is some writing about interventions, but not a lot of in-depth study on how well they work in the long run (Barton-Hulsey et al., 2017). It is important to know which interventions make changes that last in order to make schooling better. A lot of the time, the literature doesn't have enough different points of view, like the views of disabled children (Quinn et al., 2023). Using qualitative study that

looks into these students' real-life situations could help us understand the problems they face and how they deal with them. While problems in school are well known, the social and mental effects of reading comprehension problems on disabled elementary school children are not as well studied. Looking into the mental and emotional effects can help with developing all-around assistance plans.

Theoretical Framework

Society and Culture by Vygotsky is where this study gets its basic idea. It is emphasized in this theory that society, social relationships, and the zone of proximal development all affect how we think and learn (Bauer, 2018). Psychologist Lev Vygotsky said that learning is social experience and that people learn new things by talking to people who know more than them. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory says that culture and society have a big impact on how we learn and think. So, getting together with other people is a good way to learn new things. One of the most important ideas in this theory is the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Some things students can do on their own, but not all of them. They need help from someone smarter than them. Every person and every situation learn in their own way, and social settings are very important for mental growth (Panhwar et al., 2016).

Comparing how different groups of people affect learning to read can help us understand why some disabled elementary school students have trouble understanding what they read. It can be hard for disabled students to deal with some issues. They can learn a lot from the way they talk to their teachers, friends, and people who can help them (Jamali et al., 2021). Using Vygotsky's sociocultural theory as a guide, the first objective is to find out what kinds of reading literacy issues disabled elementary school students have. The study wants to find out how social ties, both inside and outside of school, can help and hurt reading comprehension issues. This is because learning is a social experience. This is consistent with Vygotsky's idea that how we learn, and grow is shaped by the people we are around. Vygotsky's idea of the "zone of proximal development" is linked to the second study objective, which is to discover what keeps students having trouble understanding what they read. With shared learning, group tasks, and scaffolding as topics, the study wants to discover how these approaches can be used to assist students who are having trouble in their ZPD. These fit with Vygotsky's idea that people learn best when they do things that are in their ZPD (Daneshfar & Moharami, 2018). Vygotsky thought that teaching should depend on how much the student was growing at the time. This aligns with the third study objective of examining the current support and correction systems. Sociocultural theory is used in the study to look at how well methods work by looking at how they create a safe space for students to learn how to understand reading.

Sociocultural Theory by Vygotsky is very helpful for this study because it shows how brain growth and social relationships are always changing and affecting each other. Based on this theory framework, the study shows that the social setting affects how well disabled elementary school children learn. Vygotsky's focus on the ZPD also leads the study of collaborative learning methods and individualized interventions, since it is known that for help to be effective, it needs to match the learner's current skills and growth potential. This theory framework assists in selecting qualitative research methods that show how students with disabilities connect with others and their lives. Along with participant notes, interviews, and observations, we gain insight into the social aspects of reading comprehension issues and how well group therapies work (Rogers et al., 2022).

Material and Methods

The study employed a research survey to measure how well the explored outcome fit into the research paradigm set by the researcher. The prime research sampling procedure included purposive sampling. This study included students in elementary grades who had been told they had problems that made it hard for them to understand reading. The standards for inclusion were meant to help students who had learning disability, an attention deficit disorder, or another cognitive problem and found it hard to understand what they read. Schools that help kids with a wide range of learning needs were asked to send people to take part. Purposive sampling was used for this study, which means that people who meet the inclusion criteria and can give rich insights into the daily experiences of students with disabilities who have trouble understanding what they read are selected (Roberts et al., 2020). Students and their parents were asked for informed permission, with the main points being that involvement was voluntary and privacy would be protected.

Research Instruments

In-Depth Interviews

Interviews with some framework were used to collect most of the data. People who took part in the study were asked about their reading comprehension problems, including what kinds of problems they have had and how they saw them. The questions were about their reading experiences, how challenges affected their level of English language reading, and how they felt about working together to learn.

Observations

Observations made in the classroom added to the interview data by giving more information about how people interacted with each other during reading-related tasks. The observations were mostly about how the students connected with each other, how interested they were in reading, and how teachers helped students work together to learn. There was careful observational notes made to record the delicacies of social encounters.

Procedure

Participant Recruitment

Schools that met the standards for participation were asked to collaborate. Official permission from the institution were received, and special education teachers and school officials helped find possible participants as was advocated by Rosales (2020).

Informed Consent

Elementary students and their parents were asked to give their informed consent. The consent process stressed that involvement was optional, information would be kept private, and people could quit at any time without any effects.

In-Depth Interviews

Each person had an individual interview in a private and comfortable space, making sure that there was a good chance for open and honest conversation. There was a set of questions that guided the semi-structured interviews, but individuals were also free to talk about their own experiences.

Observations

Observations of the classroom happened during certain reading tasks. The researchers were fully participative in the entire process in the natural setting, recording peer partnerships, student interactions, and instructor practices for supporting children with impairments while they read.

Results and Discussion

Thematic Analysis

Qualitative data from interviews and observations were analyzed using thematic analysis (Sanders et al., 2019). This step included finding, analyzing, and reporting on patterns (themes) in the material in a planned way. Firstly, the data was coded to identify important sections. Then, these codes were put together into larger themes that represented how the participants dealt with reading comprehension issues and working with others to learn.

Member Checking

A confirmation method called "member checking" was used to make the results more reliable. The participants were able to look over the initial analysis and give feedback on it. This repeated process ensured that the readings match the views and experiences of the people who took part.

Reflexivity

Throughout the study, reflexivity was kept up, recognizing that the researcher's point of view affected how the data was interpreted. Regular writing and reflections were done to make the study process more open and self-aware. It is very important to be reflexive in qualitative research because it acknowledges that the researchers shape how the data is interpreted.

Ethical Considerations

The study followed ethical rules to protect the subjects' rights and well-being. People were given their informed permission, with a focus on privacy and the fact that involvement is voluntary (Sanders, 2020). Due to the sensitive nature of talking about problems with reading comprehension, especially among students with disabilities, the participants' mental health was given the utmost priority.

Study Rigor and Trustworthiness

Triangulation

Three different types of evidence were used to make the results more reliable. There were more than one source of data used to cross-check and confirm the conclusions. These sources included interviews and observations. The study was more reliable and valid because of triangulation.

Dependability and Confirmability

Upholding a thorough audit trail guaranteed dependability and confirmability. Transparency and research replication were made possible by the systematic recording of choices, data gathering, and analytic procedures.

Transferability

Although generalizability may not be the primary goal of qualitative investigations, attempts were made to improve transferability. To allow readers to evaluate the findings' relevance to comparable circumstances, a thorough explanation of the participants, techniques, and context was included.

The classroom notes and in-depth interviews used for the qualitative analysis showed how elementary school students with disabilities lived when they had trouble understanding what they read in a group setting. These were the main themes that were found in the data that showed how all the different parts worked together.

Social Interactions and Peer Collaborations

Discussions and classroom notes that went into detail for the qualitative analysis shed light on the real lives of elementary school disabled students who had trouble understanding what they read when they are working with others. Using key themes from the data, the results showed how the different factors worked together. A student said it so beautifully: "We read as a team when we read together. My friend can help me if I don't grasp something by answering my questions. It eases the difficulty of reading." Peer partnerships are important, and observations in the classroom provided complementary perspectives. Collaborative projects, paired reading sessions, and small-group conversations highlighted the students with disabilities' active participation. These group projects helped build a sense of community in the classroom, which is similar to Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which stresses the importance of social relationships in the development of the brain.

Teacher Support and Scaffolding

Individuals consistently emphasized how important it was to have teacher help when dealing with comprehension problems (Swanson et al., 2015). According to the interviews, successful teacher scaffolding, which includes clear teaching, guided asking, and personalized feedback, helps students understand what they are learning. This created a safe setting for learning because students knew that teachers were always ready to help when needed. One student said, "It's like a lightbulb going on when my teacher helps me understand what I'm reading." There's less stress and more confidence in me. Classroom observations confirmed how important it is for teachers to help students work together on reading activities. Actively moved between student groups, offering advice, asking questions that made students think, and giving each student one-on-one help. Teachers talking to students created a good learning environment and gave disabled students a sense of academic confidence.

Impact of Collaborative Learning on Reading Behaviors

Positive changes in reading habits as a result of collaborative learning activities were a common theme in conversations with participants. Student noted more interest, better methods for understanding, and more motivation. An ongoing theme was a renewed devotion to reading, which was credited to the fact that the learning activities were engaging and group-based. According to one student, "I like reading more now that I can share my thoughts with my friends." People don't just read by themselves; they go on a reading journey together. Findings confirmed the stated changes in reading habits. While working together on tasks, students became more involved by actively taking part in talks, sharing their ideas, and helping each other. The shared learning setting created a sense of group success, which made students feel better about reading.

Individual Differences in Collaborative Preferences

Overall, feedback on collaborative learning was good, but different people had distinct preferences. There were some students who said they liked working one-on-one and said that smaller groups or reading with a partner worked better for the way they learn. Recognizing and respecting these different preferences became an important part of creating collaborative solutions that work and include everyone. "I like working with a partner, but not with a lot of people," said one student. It's easier for me to concentrate, and I feel better.

Observations confirmed that people have different preferences when they work together. Some students did better in talking with a lot of people, while others were more involved and busier in discussions with fewer people. It became clear that recognizing and accommodating these differences between people is an important part of making collaborative education more inclusive and successful.

Discussion

Social Interactions and Peer Collaborations

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory fits in perfectly with the idea that social relationships and working together with peers are the best ways for students with challenges to improve their reading comprehension. The results show that reading tasks where students work together make them feel encouraged and connected. These exchanges make it clear that group learning is not only a way to teach, but also a way to help students feel like they are part of a community and explore their ideas together. The qualitative data show how collaborative reading involves two people helping each other. The more students debate and talk about a topic, the more they learn about it themselves and help their peers learn. The theory in the research supports the social constructivist view, which says that people learn together in social settings (Vaughn et al., 2019).

Teacher Support and Scaffolding

Existing study on how important teachers are in today's open educational setting backs up the idea that teachers play a key role in helping students understand what they are reading. In-depth qualitative views look at the specific ways teachers help students with disabilities, such as through clear teaching, guided questioning, and personalized comments. These show how teachers help students with disabilities in several ways (Yilmaz & Melekoglu, 2022). According to the study, giving students power means having teachers who are helpful and help students learn. It looks like focused help from teachers is both an academic solution and a way to boost students' confidence and sense of skill in how they approach reading tasks, based on the data. Supporting teachers can help disabled students do better in school and in social and emotional areas, according to study that has already been done.

Impact of Collaborative Learning on Reading Behaviors

Previous study on how important teacher is in today's open educational setting backs up the idea that teachers play a key role in helping students understand what they are reading. Teachers help students with disabilities in many ways, as shown by in-depth qualitative studies that look at the specific methods they use, such as clear teaching, guided asking, and personalized feedback (Wanzek et al., 2020). The study shows that teachers who are helpful and help their students learn are very important for making them strong. When teachers give students focused help, it seems to work as both an academic intervention and a way to improve their confidence and sense of how well they can do reading tasks. It fits with study that already exists and shows that helping teachers

can help disabled students do better in school and in their social and emotional development.

Individual Differences in Collaborative Preferences

Open educational practices need to be more complicated because people have different ideas about how they like to work together (Wanzek et al., 2020). Collaborative learning is generally thought to be helpful, but it can be harder to use when students have different ideas about what works best. Tailored education stresses how important it is to change how you teach to meet the needs of each student. An inclusive learning situation is one in which everyone's thoughts are heard and valued. It's good for disabled students who learn and feel comfortable in different ways to have them work together in different ways, like reading with a partner or in smaller groups, the results showed.

Findings

Inclusive Educational Practices

The results have big implications for making sure that everyone can go to school. Researchers have found that working together in the classroom is a great way for disabled students to feel like they belong and are a part of things. By following the rules of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), teachers can use these group activities to make learning spaces that all students can use, even those who have different learning styles and interests (Boardman et al., 2016). People can be taught using collaborative learning, which is also a basic idea for making a learning place where everyone feels welcome and involved. Collaborative techniques should be taught to teachers so that they can use them in their lessons.

Professional Development for Educators

The study supports the idea that teachers should always be learning, especially about how to make school more welcoming for everyone. Overall, inclusive education would be much better if teachers were taught useful ways to help disabled students work with other students. Professional development classes for teachers should not only teach them about inclusive practices, but they should also show them how to use collaborative learning in the real world. Teachers can make schools where all students, even those with disabilities, can do well by giving workshops, classes, and other chances to keep learning.

Policy Implications

The study suggests that policies should change their minds so that open education policies put teamwork at the top of the list. Using collaborative methods when planning lessons and teaching teachers is a great way to make schools more welcoming. It might be a good idea for policymakers to give schools the tools and help they need to run good joint learning programs. This might mean giving teachers tools for working together to learn, spending money on their professional growth, and giving schools reasons to use practices that are welcoming to everyone (Alnemr, 2022).

Relating Results to Existing Literature

Social Constructivist Framework

The study's results align exactly with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and the social constructivist theory in general. It was Vygotsky who said that learning doesn't happen in a vacuum, but in a sociocultural setting where people have important relationships with each other. The main ideas of the study agree with this intellectual

view, demonstrating that social constructivism ideas hold true in real life. Within Vygotsky's theory, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) thought is very significant. What a beginner can't do on their own but can do with help from someone more skilled is known as the ZPD. Group reading tasks described in the paper show how the ZPD ideas can be used. Students can use the information and help of their peers by working together. Social interactions help the brain grow, so this makes for an active environment to teach (Panhwar et al., 2016).

Teacher Support in Inclusive Education

The research reveals that teachers participate in group reading activities by giving advice, creating fun questions, and giving one-on-one help. Making the classroom a safe place for everyone is important for both teachers and students, as this shows. This is consistent with the ideas of inclusive education (Almutairi, 2018). The research describes a setting for group learning that demonstrates how open approaches can be used. Lots of children need teachers to feel safe and welcome. Teachers helping their students is not just a normal way to teach. Disability students' lives are directly affected by this process, which is based on relationships and engagement. When we talk about inclusive education, we stress that teachers need to change how they teach to meet the needs of all students and make groups where everyone feels valued and supported.

Conclusion

Finally, this study examined how difficult it is for elementary school students with disabilities to understand what they read when they use collaborative learning methods. The most important results show how social relationships, working together with peers, and teacher help can change things in a collaborative learning setting. The study, which is based on Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, fits perfectly into the social constructivist theory. It shows how important it is to learn in a social way through useful interactions. Students can really feel the focus on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) when they work together on reading tasks, using what they already know to help each other learn and grow.

In addition, the study adds a lot to what is known about how to help teachers in inclusive education. This study goes beyond the known importance of successful teacher scaffolding to put light on the specific ways in which teachers can help students work together to learn. The article stresses that working together with a teacher is more than just a way to teach; it's also a way for teachers and students to build relationships and connect, which has a big impact on the lives of disabled students. In collaborative learning settings where teachers actively participate, guide, and provide personalized support, inclusive practices show that all students have equal educational possibilities. This study has real-world effects on inclusive teaching methods, teacher professional development, and policy decisions. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) concepts show that collaborative learning is a powerful way to help students with disabilities feel like they join and get involved. Training programs that give teachers good ways to help students with disabilities work together should be at the top of professional development plans for teachers. There is a call for a paradigm shift at the policy level that puts collaborative learning at the center of inclusive education policies and builds these strategies into the design of curriculum and teacher training programs.

Recommendations

As part of inclusive education, it is very important for teachers to use ways of collaborative learning. As part of teachers' professional growth, they should learn how to run successful cooperative events. In turn, this would teach them how to help students

make friends and give each student individualized help. It is important to support a flexible approach that respects and considers everyone's choices when people are together. Teachers should do tasks with their students to make the classroom a place where everyone feels welcome and supported. A lot of what makes open education possible is the work of policymakers. Based on the study, it is suggested that policies and guidelines for education include ways for students to work together to learn. You should set aside money to make training programs, support systems, and tools for working together to learn. It's important for schools to have policies that stress how important it is to make learning spaces that meet the needs of all students and push them to do so. By including joint learning in bigger educational policies, policymakers can help make learning spaces more open for everyone. The people who work with teachers, like special education teachers and support staff, should make sure that joint learning methods work well. Given extra help and tools in groups is a good way to make sure that each student's unique needs are met. To make sure that disabled students can do group projects that fit their hobbies and learning styles, teachers and other adults can help plan and carry them out. Practitioners, teachers, and support staff must regularly communicate and work together for collaborative solutions to be effective.

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