IMPACT OF IDENTIFYING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ZARIA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KADUNA STATE.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to examine the Impact of identifying children with learning disability in primary schools in Zaria local government area of Kaduna state, it is guided by one research question and research objectives among which are to examine the impact of identifying children with learning disability in the study area and to determine the ways of placing children with learning disability in Primary schools in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The population of the study is all the teachers in selected primary schools of Zaria local government area while the sample comprises 100 teachers and 3 headmasters. A summary conclusion and recommendation were drawn among which are that the Government, private organizations and individuals concerned should endeavour to address the obstacles on children with learning disability and enlighten the school administrators on how to teach and care for the disabled children and their need for recognizing individual differences in students and the need to deal with them accordingly so also Parent should provide necessary assistance and psychological support for children with learning disability to overcome their emotional thinking.

Keywords: Learning Disability, Early Identification and Special Education.

Introduction

Education is the instrument which brings about change in the social scenario and aids change and progress of self, thereby contributing to building a healthy nation. Proper care and education are the basic right of every child and a doorway to access other rights. Whereas 'Education for all' remains a distant dream and for the disabled, it is even more remote in Nigeria. Poor achievements in reading, comprehension and basic mathematical functions were and continue to be issues of concern for Nigeria's primary education. These facts make it clear that the unsatisfactory level of children's achievement could be due to the learning problems or learning difficulties (interchangeably used) faced by them. There are certain instances of poor performance despite average and above-average intelligence, sufficient teaching-learning instruction and instructional materials, proper motivation adequate home environment, and social and cultural opportunities (Karande and Kulkarni, 2015).

All around the world, the field of impact of identifying children with learning disability and its clients always faces all forms of problems and barriers that range from physical, social, and economic to attitudinal. These barriers in the field often exclude its beneficiaries from acting fully and effectively in their environments or societies. Persons with special needs lack equal access to public and basic resources like the right to education; the right to employment; right to social integration. These persons suffer stigmatization and negative attitudes from society; poor health care systems and above all legal support systems become a fantasy. All these are due to the non-recognition in the field of impact of identifying children with learning disability face globally. In 2006, an international disability movement took a bold step with the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Adebisi, (2016).

The United Nations works to change the attitudes and approaches of the societies and governments of all nations to impact identifying children with learning disability issues towards ensuring that persons with special needs have full equality and participation in public and social lives. This design of the convention of the United Nations has the intention to break all barriers facing the impact of identifying children with learning disability and its beneficiaries. It is also a human rights instrument that contains a development dimension, which is intended to realize equality and participation of persons with special needs in all development processes. Very recently, the UN General Assembly has emphasized that the genuine achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Education for All (EFA) and other globally agreed development goals, needs the integration and inclusion of the rights and opinions of persons with special needs in all endeavours at national, regional and international levels UNESCO (2016).

The trend in social policy in many countries of the world during the past three decades in the impact of identifying children with learning disability has been on promoting inclusive programmes and how all barriers facing persons with special needs are removed, and to combat exclusionary and discriminatory practices (Disabled People International, (DPI, 2018). The fundamental principle of impact of identifying children with learning disability is that all children with special needs learn in at least restrictive environment, regardless of any difficulties and differences they may have (UNESCO, 2003). But, throughout the world, children with special needs are often marginalized or, indeed, even sometimes excluded from the scheme of things (Ainscow & Haile-Giorgis, 2018).

Children with learning disabilities often struggle with various areas of academic performance. During the elementary school years, a discrepancy between ability and achievement begins to emerge in students with learning disabilities. Often puzzling to teachers, these students seem to

have strengths similar to their peers in several areas, but their rate of learning is unexpectedly slower (Vandeh, 2018).). These problems usually persist from the primary grades through the end of formal schooling, including college (Ahmed, 2019).

Kayode, (2022) noted among other problems facing Children with learning disability that they seem to be denied access to tools and assistance that will make them to become more effective and sufficient. They experience challenges and barriers with parents, who sometimes neglect them while some seem to have little passion for the expenses of other counterparts. Meanwhile, at the early stage, some were taken care of but were later left to fend for themselves not minding the consequences.

Objective of the study

1. To determine the ways of identifying children with learning disability in primary schools in Zaria local government area of Kaduna state.

Research Question

1. What are ways of identifying children with learning disability in primary schools in Zaria local government area of Kaduna state?

Conceptual Framework

The term 'children with specific learning disabilities' means those children who have a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell Eleweke, (2020).

Learning disabilities according to Ahmed (2019) are defined in practical, medical and legal terms, the common theme in all three definitions is that a learning disability is a disorder in one or more

basic psychological processes that may manifest itself as an imperfect ability in certain areas of learning, such as reading, written expression, or mathematics.

According to Kayode (2022), learning disabilities are differences in a person's brain that can affect how well they read, write, speak, do math, and handle other similar tasks. Different groups may define "learning disability" differently, often depending on the focus of the organization.

Having a learning disability, or even several disabilities, isn't related to intelligence. It just means that the person's brain works differently from others. In many cases, some intervention treatments can help a person with learning disabilities read, write, speak, and calculate just as well or better than someone without these disabilities.

Signs of Learning Disabilities

Many children have trouble reading, writing, or performing other learning-related tasks to some extent this does not mean they have learning disabilities. A child with a learning disability often has several related signs, and they don't go away or get better over time. The signs of learning disabilities vary from person to person. Generally common signs included here are for informational purposes only; the information is not intended to screen for learning disabilities in general or a specific type of learning disability (ARC, 2010).

According to (ARC, 2010) the common signs that a person may have learning disabilities include the following:

- Problems in reading and/or writing
- Problems with math
- Poor retentive memory
- Problems with paying attention

A child with a learning disability also may have one or more of the following:

- Acting without really thinking about possible outcomes (impulsiveness)
- Difficulty in saying a word correctly loud or expressing thoughts
- Problems with school performance from week to week or day to day

Speaking like a younger child; using short, simple phrases; or leaving out words in sentences.

Educational Challenges to Disable Children

According to Anumonye, (2011), Educational obstacles related to hearing impairments stem from communication. A student with a hearing impairment may experience difficulty in:

- The subjects of grammar, spelling and vocabulary
- Taking notes while listening to lectures
- Participating in classroom discussions
- Watching educational videos
- Presenting oral reports

Underscoring the difficulty that students with hearing impairments may have in presenting oral reports are the potential language development problems linked to hearing impairments. Arizona's Department of Education's Parent Information Network notes that "Since children with hearing impairments are unable to receive some sounds accurately, they often cannot articulate words clearly.

Comparing Specific Learning Disabilities with Learning Difficulties

There are many reasons why a child or adult may struggle to learn. The generic term "Learning Difficulties" refers to the 20 to 25% of students who exhibit problems acquiring academic skills as a consequence of a range of causes. These include: intellectual disability, physical or sensory deficits (e.g. hearing impairment), emotional or behavioural difficulties, and inadequate environmental experiences. Students may also display learning difficulties if they have not been

provided with appropriate educational opportunities or have received ineffective instruction in the classroom Lindsay, (2017). Individuals with a primary difficulty in maintaining attention and concentration are also likely to show weaknesses in academic achievement due to their difficulties in attending to the learning environment. The learning difficulties associated with a Specific Learning Disability cannot be attributed to the causes listed above. A specific learning disability results from an impairment in one or more of the psychological processes related to learning. The difficulties experienced by an individual with a specific learning disability are unexpected to their other skills. These difficulties are likely to be resistant to intervention and will persist into adulthood, Lindsay, (2017).

Methodology

In this aspect, the researcher uses descriptive survey research as the research design. The population of the study comprises all the teachers in selected primary schools of the Zaria local government area involved in the study. The sample of this study which was randomly selected involved 100 teachers and three 3 headmasters chosen from Haruna Soba LEA. Dakace, Zaria, LEA primary school, Dambo, and LEA primary School, Kakeyi, Zaria the sample was used for the study. The questionnaire was used in collecting the data for this study and the questionnaire was designed in two (2) sections for both the teachers and the Headmasters. The method of data analysis was frequency distribution and a simple percentage statistical tool, A percentage frequency distribution is a display of data that specifies the percentage of observations that exist for each data point or grouping of data points, the analysis was represented in tabular form for easy understanding and it consists of the number of respondents and the corresponding percentage.

Results and Analysis

Respondents' opinion on the Impact of identifying children with learning disability in primary schools in Zaria local government area of Kaduna state.

N	Item Statement	Agreed		Disagreed		Total
		SA	A	SD	D	
	ildren with learning disability cannot compete with other children because of their disability	80	80%	20	20%	100%
	sable children will always need someone beside them before they can do what other children do	41	41%	59	59%	100%
	ntifying children with disability will be easy to note because of the ways they behave in the classroom	65	65%	35	35%	100%
	sable children sometimes perform better than the able ones in classroom activities because of the talent they have	55	55%	45	45%	100%
	ildren with learning disability find it difficult to understand the teacher	78	78%	22	22%	100%
	sable children sometimes were understandable to others most especially their teachers in the school	90	90%	10	10%	100%
	ildren with a learning disability are to be cared for as they need the care in the school environment	85	85%	25	25%	100%
	sable children are well known in the school because some are intelligent and perform better in creative work	76	76%	24	24%	100%
	ildren with learning disability are recognized as they approach the school environment	68	68%	32	32%	100%
	e majority of the teachers who teach disabled children identify their problems better than the parent	83	83%	17	17%	100%
	ildren with a learning disability were found misbehaving while the teacher was teaching in the classroom	46	46%	54	54%	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The table above states that, 80 respondents representing 80% agreed that Children with learning disability cannot compete with other children because of their disability, while 20 of the respondents representing 20% disagreed with the statement. Item 2 stated that 41 of the respondents representing 41% agreed that disabled children will always need special care beside them before they can do what other children do. While 59 of the respondents representing 59% disagreed with the statement. Item 3 shows that 65 of the respondents representing 65% agreed that Identifying children with disability will be easy to note because of the ways they behave in the classroom, while 35 of the respondents representing 35% disagreed with the above statement. In item 4 it indicates that 55 of the respondents representing 5% agreed with the statement that disabled children sometimes perform better than the able ones in classroom activities because of the talent they have. While 45 of the respondents representing 45% disagreed with the statement.

Item 5 stated that Children with a learning disability are difficult to understand by the teacher. 78 of the respondents representing 78% agreed with the above statement while 22 of the respondents disagreed with the statement. In item 6, 90 of the respondents representing 90% agreed that disabled children sometimes were understandable to others most especially their teachers in the school, while 10 respondents representing 10% disagreed with the statement. Item 7 stated that children with learning disability are to be cared for as they need the care in the school environment, 85 of the respondents representing 85% agreed to the above statement while 25 of the respondents also disagreed with the statement. Item 8 states that Disable children are well known in the school because some are intelligent and perform better in creativity work 76 respondents representing 76% agreed that disabled children are well known in the school because some are intelligent and perform better in creativity work, while 24 respondents representing 24% disagreed with the statement. Item 9 states that Children with learning disability are recognized as they approach the school environment and 68 respondents representing 68% agreed with the above statement, while 32 of the respondents representing 32% disagreed with the statement. Item 10 states that the majority of the teachers who teach disabled children identify their problem better than the parents where 83 respondents representing 83% of the population agreed while 17 respondents representing 17% disagreed with the statement that the Majority of the teachers who teach the disable children identify their problem better than the parent. Item 11 states that Children with a learning disability were found misbehaving while the teacher was teaching in the classroom, 46 respondents representing 46% agreed with the statement while 54 respondents representing 54% of the population disagreed with the statement that Children with learning disability were found of misbehaving while teacher is teaching in the classroom.

Conclusion

This study has highlighted various issues relating to the Impact of Identifying Children with Learning Disability in Primary Schools in Zaria Local Government Area of Kaduna State. Therefore, the study concludes that there is a need to combat the continuing disregard for disabled students (Children) in the school. Finally, school administrators should as a matter of urgency take necessary action on their part and parents should be aware and enlightened on the ways of caring for disabled children as this will make them feel like another human being.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

Government, private organizations and individuals concerned should endeavour to address the obstacles to children with learning disability and enlighten the school administrators on how to teach and care for the disabled children. This has to do with adequate provision of instructional materials especially in the public schools where children with learning disability are, there is the need to recognize individual differences in students and the need to deal with them accordingly.

Parents should provide necessary assistance and psychological support for children with learning disability to overcome their emotional thinking. There is also the need to keep enlightening the parent's importance of home structures on the life of children. Parents should understand the implications and consequences of being disabled and thus mobilize all resources to curtail the problems arising from the situation.

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