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The Comparative Study on Academic Achievement of Learners with Reading Difficulties Compared to Learners without Reading Difficulties in Selected Primary Schools of Wolaita Zone Damot Gale Woreda

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to investigate Comparative Study on Academic Achievement of Learners with Reading Difficulties Compared to Learners without Reading Difficulties in Selected Primary Schools of Wolaita Zone Damot Gale Woreda. Co-relational research design was used to employ this study and six teachers and eight students (4 learners with reading difficulties and 4 learners without reading difficulties) were used to collect interview data using snowball sampling technique and done with the assistance of school principals. Sixty students were selected to collect questionnaire data by using simple random sampling technique. Teachers were purposively selected by snow ball sampling technique. Data were collected via interview, document analysis and questionnaires. The study disclosed that comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties: learners with reading difficulties were low achievers in academic achievement and status compared with that of without difficulties. Finally, the findings of the study recommends that all teachers should be able to identify learners who with reading difficulties in the classroom. It is worth remembering that not all learners with reading difficulties display the same characteristics.

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Keywords

Reading Difficulties, Learners with and without difficulties, Academic Achievements

Introduction

In current education system, much emphasizes placed on the skills of reading and academic successes. Academic success is largely dependent on literacy skills. Children who experience difficulty with reading are likely to find it hard to reach their academic potential at school. It may be couched by teachers that the child arriving in grade has the requisite language and literacy skills needed to cope in an academic setting. Research finding has shown that students with reading difficulty are generally low

academic achievers (Daneman, 1991; Stanovich, 2000; Gardner, 1991; Naglieri, 2001; SavilleTroike, 1984; Wells, 1986; Kokong, 1991). Children who read effectively have access to numerous sources of written material which, in turn, enables them to increase their general knowledge, in their vocabulary and their language skills (Elley, 1991; Krashen, 1993; Vivas, 1996). Learning to read is not a natural process like other developmental achievement, but it is a lengthy process that takes several years and requires careful instruction and learner's perseverance. Reading is a basic skill for

all academic subjects and failure in school can be traced back to inadequate reading skills (Rowling in Lerner & Johns, 2009:382). Therefore, reading skill is directly related with academic achievement and one can say that better readers can achieve better academic success.

Problem statement

Pretorius (2000:35) states that "Students need to be good readers in order to be able to 'read to learn'". She states that reading is important for learning because it gives readers independent access to information in an information-driven society and that it is also a means of constructing meaning and acquiring new knowledge. In research during graduate studies at UNISA, Pretorius (2000) found that inferences on reading shows the better the students at reading, the better they performed academically. Her findings showed evidence for differences in reading ability in Relation to academic performance.

BohIrnann and Pretorius (2002:204), in their research amongst group of students enrolled for a mathematics bridging course, found that "Weak readers are only achieving reading comprehension levels of 50% or less, which effectively means that half of what they read they don't properly understand, with direction on sequences for their academic achievement." Thus, this study intended to achieve the following objective of the study: to compare academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties in selected Primary Schools of Wolaita Zone Damot Gale Woreda.

Materials and Methods

The choice of research design depends on the objectives of research in order to be able to answer the research questions (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, to conduct this study, the researcher will employ correlational research design. Because, correlational design is a technique which helps researcher to establish a relationship between two closely connected variables. Two different groups are required to conduct this research design method. There is no assumption while evaluating a relationship between two different variables and statistical analysis techniques are used to calculate the relationship between them. To correlate between English languages learning strategy with students' academic achievement it is better to use co relational design. Bearing this importance in mind and the researcher proposed to employ co relational research design.

Research setting

This study was conducted at Damot Gale Woreda selected three primary schools namely Taba, Gacheno and Ade Damota Primary Schools. The criterion for the selection of schools is based on the information given from woreda education office due to their weak performances for consecutive two years from 2015-2016 semester and annual school performance evaluation for the low academic achievement in grade 8 regional examination report, students' disciplinary cases, high dropout rate, weak students' class achievement results, supervisors report on learners with reading difficulties, the school accessibilities in order to find it easy to implement the findings of the research as well as relation to the research problems.

Participants of the study

Participants were purposively selected from sampled schools. Six teachers were selected for interview from three sampled schools and three principals were selected from three schools. Besides, eight students were selected for interview, among those four were learners with reading difficulties and the remaining were learner's without reading difficulties. The selection criteria for learners with reading difficulties focused on what literature says. According to Kirk, Gallagher, Anastaiow, and Coleman (2006) identification of learners with reading difficulties is based on the following assessment tools: Faulty auditory perception without hearing impairment, slow auditory or visual processing, Inability to distinguish or separate the sounds of spoken words, Lack of knowledge of the purpose of reading, failure to attend to critical aspects of the word, sentence, or paragraph and failure to understand that letters represent units of speech.

Sampling techniques

Teachers were purposively selected by snow ball sampling technique and done with the assistance of school principals. Thus, 6(six) teachers from three (3) contextual areas/ schools chosen, because they were assigned in teaching language subjects and they have knowledge about literacy skills and certified in EGRA short term training from Arbaminch teachers training college on how to teach and meet the need of diversified learners in regular classroom setting including learners with reading difficulties. Those teachers who accepted to participate in the study that qualified as a research participant and recommended by school administrations

for their annual academic performance. This provided an opportunity to the researcher to see the available practices and challenges that face teachers in teaching reading skill to learners with reading difficulties in selected primary schools.

School principals included in this study selected by available sampling technique because they are small in numbers, managers and instructional leaders' in their schools and have knowledge and rich information about the problem under study. Parents of learners with reading difficulties and students were purposively selected because of their representativeness to the characteristics of the population and have rich information to the problem under study.

On the other hand, for quantitative data, students were selected by cluster sampling technique from each of 30(thirty) sections. In three selected primary schools there is 1-8 grade level and 60 sections. Among these sections the researcher investigated 5-8 grade level students' academic achievement. There are also 30 (thirty) sections from grades5-8. From each section the researcher selected 1(one) learner with reading difficulties and 1(one) learners without reading difficulties the total 2(two) learners selected by simple random method. Therefore, 30 (thirty) learners with reading difficulties and 30 (thirty) learners without reading difficulties total of 60 (sixty) participants selected by simple random method from each 30 sections from grades 5-8.

Tools of data collection

To collect valuable and relevant data, two important instruments of data collection were employed. These are semi-structured interview, non-participant observation, document analysis and questionnaire. These tools were developed primarily to meet the objectives of the study.

Methods of data analysis

This research yield both qualitative and quantitative data. Miles and Hubrman (1994) suggest that careful data display is an important element of data reduction and selection. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency and dispersion. The statistics were used included frequency counts, mean scores, percentages and standard deviations. The most common computer software which is statistical package used by social sciences at this present time is SPSS software (version

20) for windows was used. The recorded interviews transcribed and changed into textual form, observational & teaching documents and records reports and notes are read analyzed and interpreted in readiness for coding in relation to the answers of the structured questions. The data from interviews and observation are sorted according to themes. The data from analysis of document review are tabulated and analyzed accordingly.

Results and Discussions

Data analysis on teachers interview

The above table 1 shows sex composition, age and educational level of the participant teachers. The total numbers of teachers participated in this study are six, of them four are males and the rest two are females. Regarding to the age, one informant fall under 25-29 two informants age range is between 30-35, the rest two informants age is also from36-40and one informant age is ranges above 40. Regarding the educational level, all informant teachers participated in this study were diploma holders.

Teachers' experience and attitude to learners with reading difficulties

For interview question "How long have you taught literacy?" Teacher B replied that he has 6 years of teaching experience while Teacher A replied he has 23 years of teaching experience. Teacher C replied that he has 8 years of teaching experience while Teacher D replied that he has 9 years of teaching experience. Teacher E and F replied that they have 8years of teaching experience. Teacher B replied that he has more than 6 years of teaching experience and he has taught literacy for 2 years only. All participants replied that they understand that learners with reading difficulties have equal right to get education and those learners are present in their class.

Comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties

Teacher F replied for the question how the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties that, the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties is less than that of learners without reading difficulties. Not only academic, in terms of psychological condition they are depressed mood, inferiority complex

and their social interaction to their peers is poor and they are not motivated to other students.

Teacher A and B from school A respond that the impact of reading difficulty makes them low achievers in academic performance and most of learners with reading difficulties are drop out in their academic progress compared to learners without reading difficulties.

Interview report from school principals

The above table 2 shows sex, age and educational level comparison of the participant school principals. The total numbers of principals participated in this study are three, all of them are males. Regarding to the age, one informant age range is 30-35 and the other one age is also from 36-40. One informant age is ranges above 40. Regarding the educational level, all participated school principals in this study were BA degree holders.

School principals' attitude to learners with reading difficulties

All school principals are asked to reply whether or not their learners have reading difficulties. They replied to their attitude to learners with reading difficulties is positive to support them and they do the best things to improve their reading difficulties. Principal B and C replied that we do awareness creation about learners with reading difficulties in collaboration with stake holders and their parents to include in school environment without any discrimination.

Comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties

All School principals responded to the question how the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties that; learners with reading difficulties are low academic achievers in all grades and in all subject areas compared to learners without reading difficulties. Their academic status and psychological conditions compared to learners without reading difficulties, learners with reading difficulties are not motivated in their learning; sometimes they missed their classes. The impact of reading difficulty makes them low in academic achievement and leads them to discriminate from school environment.

Finally, the researcher gave chance for the respondents' if they have any recommendation about teaching learners

with reading difficulties, they endorsed that language teachers are more responsible for teaching learners with reading difficulties. They should give proper support and assessment. Generally to effective instruction and particularly to teach reading skill to learners with reading difficulties, class size and text materials should take in to consideration. The other is concerning curriculum and pre-primary school. Curriculum should be revised; it should concern the developmental and psycho social stage for learners. The case of curriculum related problem is a contributing factor for learners reading difficulty. The last is teaching reading skill methodology should be developmental model of teaching reading skill and consider bottom-up/text model/ approach which strictly focus on phonemic awareness and phonics to decoding skill and combining letter and sound relationship particularly for grades1-4 and there should be awareness raising training for teachers in the area of free-promotion policy.

Interview report from learners with reading difficulties

The above table 3 shows sex compositions, age and grade level of the participant students. The total numbers of learners with reading difficulty participated in this study are four, two males and two females. Regarding to the age, two participant ages range from 7-14 and the other two participants' age is ranges from15-20. Regarding the grade level, one participant's grade level is from 1-4 and the rest three participants' grade level is from 5-8.

Comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties

All learners with reading difficulties to the question how your academic achievement compared to your peers, they replied that our academic result is lees compared to learners without reading difficulties. Learner with reading difficulty A also replied that my achievement problem is due to my reading difficulty. He cannot read from the black board during examination and simply I copy from my friend. My friend is not showing me all answers; hence he has poor academic achievement. Both learners with reading difficulties B and C to the question, what is your engagement in assignment and class activities compared to learners without reading difficulties, they replied that our participation compared to our peers is less. Learners without reading difficulties do not want to work with us. They also discriminates us.

Even if in our cooperative learning our participation is poor, hence our academic result is poor.

Interview report from learners without reading difficulties

The above table 4 shows sex compositions, age and grade level of the participant students. The total numbers of students participated in this study are four, two males and two females. Regarding to the age, two participant ages range from 7-14 and the other two participants' age is ranges from 15-20. Regarding the grade level, one participant's grade level is from 1-4 and the rest three participants' grade level is from 5-8.

Students attitude to learners with reading difficulties

All Students responded to the question "Do learners with reading difficulties in your school?" they replied yes. Student A responded that in my class room grade 4 sections A 3/4th or 75% students are learners with reading difficulties. And again Students respond to the question "what is your opinion to learners with reading difficulties?" student B and C responded that most of learners with reading difficulties are disturbing in the class. Student C responded to his opinion to learners with reading difficulties, learners with reading difficulties are those students have low self esteem, do not work their home and class works, they don't read books and are low participants in the class activities. Student B also responded that learner with reading difficulties are those learners have not the interest and motivation in learning.

Academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties

Students A, B and C replied that learners with reading difficulties are low in classroom activities. They are not willing to participate with us in group work and cooperative learning. Always they miss their classes. Student A and B responded that learners with reading difficulties missed their class during reading assessment. Student A also responded that learner with reading difficulties in my class missed their lesson and reading assessment due to fear of oral reading assessment. They are not motivated and interested to learning and their frequency of absenteeism is high compared to us.

All students A, B, C and D selected from the three schools responded that the academic result of our achievement in all subject is greater than that of learners with reading difficulties. Student A responded that the

academic achievement of my result in all subjects is greater than learners with reading difficulties. She replied that, because of low motivation and lack of interested to learning most learners with reading difficulties academic achievement result is less compared to our academic result.

Interview report from parents

The above table 5 shows sex composition and age of the participants. The total numbers of parents participated in this study are three and all of them are males. Regarding to the age, one participant ages range from 30-35 and the other one participants' age is ranges 40-45 and the other one participant age is above 46.

Parents' attitude to learners with reading difficulties

When asked their children have reading difficulties, three parents to the question they responded yes. And for the second question, their opinion about learners with reading difficulties parent A responded that in my opinion learner with reading difficulty has low interest and motivation to his learning. He is not properly attending teachers' lesson and most of time he has disciplinary problem. Parent C responded that learner with reading difficulty has low motivation to his learning and by nature he is attacked in any kind of impairment.

Comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties

Parents A and B replied that learners with reading difficulties are academically low achievers compared to learners without reading difficulties. Their social interaction is also poor, psychologically they are depressed mood, poor assignment engagement and class activities, not motivated and interested in their academic progress. All parents replied that learners with reading difficulties have high disciplinary cases as they seen them in during school PTA members.

Quantitative results

Document analysis

Demographic background of students selected for document analysis

This part of analysis start with describing the demographic backgrounds of students of the two

categories/ learners with reading difficulties and learners without reading difficulties/ selected for the analysis of document review. Learners with reading difficulties selected for this study using oral reading assessment tool; by recording reading words rate per minute. Quantitative result compares the academic status and achievement of Learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties for supporting qualitative result and to answer the research question, how the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties in selected primary schools. The academic status and one year academic achievement result comparison from roster of school and personal document shows 60(sixty) students academic achievement and out of these, 30 (thirty) are learners with reading difficulties randomly selected from 30 sections and the rest 30 are learners without reading difficulties randomly selected in the same procedure to that of learners with reading difficulties out of three selected schools. The selected students sex distribution, age group, grade level/section, and residence indicated in the table below.

From the table 6, learners with reading difficulties randomly selected from the three schools for analysis of document review regarding to sex distribution, male 14(fourteen) female 16(sixteen) total 30(thirty). The percentage of male learners with reading difficulties selected for the study is 46.67% and female is 53.33%. Learners without reading difficulties are male 18 (fourteen) female 12(ten). The percentage of male students randomly selected for the study is 60% and female is 40%.

Regarding to age, learners with reading difficulties, ages from 11-14 or net enrollment rate are 16 and percentage is 53.34 % the rest 14 students and their percentage 46.66% are on the age of gross enrollment rate which is their ages is 15 years and above. Learners without reading difficulties ranging from the age 11-14 are 23 and their percentage is 76.67 % and only 7 students and 23.33% are students of their age is on gross enrollment rate, which is ages 15 and above.

Learners with reading difficulties selected for the analysis of document review from grade 5 male students are 4 and percentage is 13.3%. Female students are 5 and percentage is 16.67%. Learners with reading difficulties selected for this study from grade 6 are male 5 and the percentage is 16.67% and females are 2 and percentage is 6.67%. For grade 7 males are 4 and the percentage is 13.34% and female are also 4 and the percentage is

13.34%. Learners with reading difficulties selected for the analysis of document review from grades 8 are male 1 and percentage is 3.34% females are 5 and the percentage is also 16.67% respectively.

Regarding to learners without reading difficulties, selected for this study from grade 5 males are 5 and percentage is 16.67% and females are 4 and the percentage is 13.34%. Learners without reading difficulties selected for this study from grade 6 are males 4 and the percentage is 13.34 % and females are 3 and percentage is 10%. From grade 7 males are 5 and the percentage is 16.67% and females are also 3 and the percentage is 10%. From grades 8 males selected for this study are 4 and the percentage is 13.34% and females are 2 and their percentage is 6.67%.

From the table 7 above, the percentage of learners with reading difficulties in each grade level from the total of selected school students can be shown as follows. The percentage of learners with reading difficulties in grade 1 is 57.7% and grade 2 is 60.7% respectively. The percentage of Learners with reading difficulties in grade 3 is 58.4% and that of grade 4 is 45.1%. Therefore, the number of reading difficulty students is decreases across moving to one grade level to another grade level. The numbers of learners with reading difficulties decreases from grade 1 up to grade 4 except for grade 2. This show from grades 1 up to grade 4 there is high number of students in reading difficulty and the severity of reading difficulty is more in early grades particularly grades 1-4.

The percentage of Learners with reading difficulties among the total students in grade 5 is 21.13% and grade 6 is 17.32%. The percentage of learners with reading difficulties in grade 7 is 15.6% and that of grade 8 is 12.16% respectively. From this one can conclude that the severity of reading difficulty is decreases, when students progress from one lower grade level to upper grade level. At grades 1-4 level the percentage of learners with reading difficulty is 55.64%. This means more than half of primary school first cycle students have reading difficulty. On the other hand, the percentage of learners with reading difficulties in grades 5-8 level is 16.8%. When the researcher compared the number of learners with reading difficulties to grade level, the number of learners with reading difficulties in grades 1-4 is 3(three) times more than that of the number of learners with reading difficulties in grades 5-8. That means; the degree of severity of reading difficulty is more in grade levels 1-4 compared to grade level 5-8.

From the table 8, the researcher compared academic status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties in selected schools of grade levels from 5-8. Comparison regarding to repetition and school dropout rate, 280 and above learners with reading difficulties are repeated and dropout from school in consecutive five years. Among those 201 are learners with reading difficulties and remaining 79 are learners without reading difficulties. From this we can conclude that the impact of reading difficulty exposed learners with reading difficulties to school dropout, repetition, psychological problems and other related disciplinary cases that make them academic under achievement.

Regarding to oral reading assessment; Learners categorized under reading difficulties, oral reading rate per word per minute is 0wpm (zero word per minute). They cannot read even single words per minute. Therefore, the average oral reading rate of words per minute for learners with reading difficulties is 0(zero) compared to learners without reading difficulties. The average oral reading rate of word per minute for learners without reading difficulties is 30-50 wpm.

Regarding to psychological conditions, from 342 learners with reading difficulties, 296 learners are psychologically in depressed mood, not motivated and interested to their learning. The rest 46 learners with reading difficulties are motivated to their learning. From this can conclude that most of learners with reading difficulties are not interested and motivated to their learning.

Regarding to absenteeism from school, out of 316 students 242 learners with reading difficulties are regularly absent 2-3times per week and 26 learners without reading difficulties are regularly absent 2-3 times per week. The other comparison scale is late coming to school. From table 9 above, the researcher also compared late coming rate of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties. Among 270 schools regular late comers 232 are learners with reading difficulties and the rest 38 are learners without reading difficulties. From this can conclude that most learners with reading difficulties are late comers to school or regularly absent 2-3 times per week.

The table 9 shows that the comparison of each subject academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties. There are 6(six) subjects that are common to grades 5-8

learners. The researcher interested to investigate academic achievement of grades 5-8 level to achieve the objective of the study under the comparison of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties in selected schools.

Therefore, as showed in the table 9, samples of 60 students from the two categories, The mean scores of each subjects of learners without reading difficulties is greater than that of learners with reading difficulties. This shows that learners without reading difficulties are high achievers in their academic performance and learners with reading difficulties are low achievers in their academic performance. As a result, reading is the academic area and most often the impact of reading difficulty is associated with academic failure and under achievement.

The table 11 shows that the comparison of average means score and standard deviation of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties. The average mean score of six (6) subjects for learners with reading difficulties academic result is 51.18 and that of learners without reading difficulties is 84.87. The standard deviation of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties is 4.33 and that of learners' without reading difficulties is 6.19. This shows that learners with reading difficulties are low in their academic results and the impact of reading difficulty that leads to low in academic achievement compared to learners without reading difficulties.

To compute T-test, the researcher formulated null (H0) hypothesis and alternative (H1) hypothesis. H0: there is no significance difference in mean scores of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties. H1: there is significance difference in mean scores of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to learners without reading difficulties.

T-test of obtained value from the table 12; t_{ob} value = 42.11 and to find critical value, first of all by calculating degree of freedom(df), simply $(n1-1)+(n2-1)$ which is 58 and the table value for 2-tailed test is $t_{cr} = 24.406$. Therefore, t_{ob} value = 42.11 > $t_{cr} = 24.406$. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and our result, H1 is accepted. Therefore, there is statistically a significance difference in the mean scores of academic achievement of learners

with reading difficulties compared to that of learners without reading difficulties. From the table 12 above, 33.68989 is the difference in the mean score for the two categories and p value=0.027.

From this can inferred that the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties is less compared to

learners without reading difficulties. Therefore, the researcher can conclude that the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties is low compared to that of learners without reading difficulties and statistically a significance difference in mean scores for the two categories.

Table.1 The demographic background for teachers

Description	Interviewees	Frequency
Sex	Male	4
	Female	2
Age	25-29	1
	30-35	2
	36-40	2
	Above 40	1
Level of Education	Diploma	6
	BA Degree	-

Table.2 The demographic background for school principals

Description	Interviewees	Frequency
Sex	Male	3
	Female	-
Age	25-29	-
	30-35	1
	36-40	1
	Above 40	1
Level of Education	Diploma	-
	BA Degree	3

Table.3 The demographic background for learners with reading difficulties

Description	Interviewees	Frequency
Sex	Male	2
	Female	2
Age	7-14	2
	15-20	2
	Above 20	-
	Grade level	1-4
	5-8	3

Table.4 The demographic background for students

Description	Interviewees	Frequency
Sex	Male	2
	Female	2
Age	7-14	2
	15-20	2
	Above 20	-
Grade level	1-4	1
	5-8	3

Table.5 The demographic background for parents

Description	Interviewees	Frequency
Sex	Male	3
	Female	-
	30-35	1
Age	40-45	1
	Above 46	1

Table.6 Students background information selected for document review

Learners with reading difficulties randomly selected from three schools					Learners without reading difficulties randomly selected from three schools				
No.	Id. No. and residence	Sex	Age	Grade & section	No.	Id. No. and residence	Sex	Age	Grade & section
1	A- urban	F	12	5A	1	A1- urban	F	13	5A
2	B- urban	M	16	5B	2	B1- urban	F	14	5B
3	C- urban	M	13	5C	3	C1- urban	M	12	5C
4	D- urban	F	14	5D	4	D1- urban	M	13	5D
5	E- urban	M	17	5E	5	E1- urban	F	12	5E
6	F-urban	F	13	6A	6	F1- urban	M	13	6A
7	G- urban	F	16	6B	7	G1- urban	F	17	6B
8	H- urban	M	14	6C	8	H1- urban	M	15	6C
9	I – urban	M	15	7A	9	I1 - semi-urban	F	14	7A
10	J-urban	F	17	7B	10	J1-semi-urban	M	13	7B
11	K-urban	F	19	7C	11	K1-semiurban	M	13	7C
12	L-urban	M	17	7D	12	L1-semiurban	F	15	7D
13	M-urban	F	14	8A	13	M1-semi urban	M	14	8A
14	N-urban	F	17	8B	14	N1-semi-urban	M	14	8B
15	O-semi-urban	M	13	5A	15	O1-semi-urban	F	12	5A
16	P-semi-urban	F	15	5B	16	P1-semi-urban	M	13	5B
17	Q- semi-urban	M	14	6A	17	Q1- rural	M	13	6A
18	R- semi-urban	M	13	6B	18	R1- rural	F	12	6B
19	S-semi-urban	F	15	7A	19	S-rural	M	13	7A
20	T-semi-urban	M	13	7B	20	T-rural	F	14	7B
21	U-semi-urban	F	14	8A	21	U-rural	M	16	8A
22	V-semi-urban	M	16	8B	22	V-rural	F	14	8B
23	W-rural	F	14	5A	23	W-rural	M	13	5A
24	X-rural	F	15	5B	24	X-rural	M	11	5B
25	Y-rural	M	13	6A	25	Y-rural	F	12	6A
26	z- rural	M	14	6B	26	Z- rural	M	18	6B
27	AA-rural	F	13	7A	27	AA1- rural	M	14	7A
28	BB-rural	M	16	7B	28	BB1-rural	M	15	7B
29	CC-rural	F	14	8A	29	CC1-rural	F	15	8A
30	DD-rural	F	15	8B	30	DD1-rural	M	14	8B

Table.7 2009 E.C/2016 selected school student’s data according to their category

Grade level	Total number of students			Learners with reading difficulties			Percentage	Learners without reading difficulties			Percentage
	M	F	T	M	F	T		%	M	F	
1	367	401	768	212	231	443	57.7	155	170	325	42.3
2	283	254	537	156	170	326	60.7	127	84	211	39.3
3	305	315	620	174	188	362	58.4	131	127	258	41.6
4	278	288	566	116	139	255	45.1	162	149	311	54.9
1-4	1233	1258	2491	658	728	1386	55.64	575	530	1105	44.36
5	283	299	582	64	59	123	21.13	219	240	459	78.87
6	250	264	514	49	40	89	17.32	201	224	425	82.68
7	243	219	462	42	30	72	15.6	201	189	390	84.4
8	243	234	477	34	24	58	12.16	209	210	419	87.84
5-8	1019	1016	2035	189	153	342	16.8	830	863	1693	83.2
1-8	2252	2274	4526	847	881	1728	38.18	1405	1393	2798	61.82

Table.8 comparisons in academic progress and status to students of two categories

No.	Comparison rating scales	Learners with reading difficulties			Learners without reading difficulties		
		Total number of students	Grade level	Average academic status	Total number of students	Grade level	Average academic status
1	Repetition rate/ analysis of 5 years school document from 2004-2008 E. C	342	5-8	280 students repeated more than 2times. Among those 201 are learners with reading difficulties.	1693	5-8	79 students repeated from 2005-2006 E.C
2	Assessment of average oral reading rate in wpm	342	5-8	0 wpm	1693	5-8	30-50 wpm
3	Absenteeism rate/analysis from regular attendance	342	5-8	316 students absent 2-3 times per week. Among those, 242 are learners with reading difficulties.	1693	5-8	26 students absent 2-3times per week.
4	Inferiority complex/analysis from students portfolio& personal document	342	5-8	81 students have lack of self esteem among those, 73 have difficulties.	1693	5-8	Only 8 students have lack of self esteem
5	Disciplinary cases/ from school document	342	5-8	146 students are top disturbers in their classroom among those, 139 have difficulties.	1693	5-8	7 students have charge on discipline
6	Psychological conditions/ from students portfolio and school document	342	5-8	342 students are psychologically in depressed mood and not motivated to their learning among those, 296 have difficulties	1693	5-8	36 students are not motivated in their learning
7	Late coming /analysis from regular attendance	342	5-8	270 students are 2-3times late comers per week among those, 232 have difficulties.	1693	5-8	28 students are 2-3 times late comers per week
8	Interest of working in group with peers from school and personal document	342	5-8	7 students are interested in group work and have social interaction with peers	1693	5-8	1686 learners are interested in group working and have social interaction with peers
9	Dropout rate/ from 2008 E. C school annual report	342	5-8	285 students are dropped 2-3 times in 5 years	1693	5-8	42students dropped 2-3 times in 5 years

Table.9 comparisons of academic achievement results of the two categories of students from school document/roster review

No.	Subject	Category of students	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Amharic	Learners with reading difficulties	30	49.3697	7.14114
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	83.0917	8.88152
		Average		66.2307	18.78696
2	English	Learners with reading difficulties	30	50.0523	6.45353
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	83.1447	9.23552
		Average		66.5985	18.46108
3	Mother tongue	Learners with reading difficulties	30	53.5000	6.18954
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	89.3250	7.25019
		Average		71.4125	19.26042
4	Mathematics	Learners with reading difficulties	30	44.8223	9.26130
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	80.4333	8.83614
		Average		62.6278	20.07350
5	Biology	Learners with reading difficulties	30	54.2977	6.56677
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	86.7583	8.43011
		Average		70.5280	18.00043
6	social studies	Learners with reading difficulties	30	55.0487	6.94404
		Learners without reading difficulties	30	86.4770	7.41388
		Average		70.7628	17.37350

Table.10 Statistics of average mean and standard deviation of two categories

No.	categories	N	Average mean score	Std. Deviation
1	Learners with reading difficulties	30	51.1818	4.33221
2	Learners without reading difficulties	30	84.8717	6.19659

Table.11 Independent simple T-test for equality of variances and means

NO.	Average	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
1	Equal Variances assumed	5.142	.027	42.11	58	.000	33.68989
2	Equal Variances not assumed	-	-	24.406	51.882	.000	1.86438

Academic Achievement and Status of Learners with Reading Difficulties

All respondents replied that the academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to that of learners without reading difficulties is lower. The finding from analysis of document review also showed that the academic achievement result of learners with reading difficulties is low in all subjects compared to learners without reading difficulties and the analysis result showed that there is statistically significance difference between score mean of academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties compared to that of learners without reading difficulties.

Research has shown that students with reading difficulty are generally low academic achievers (Daneman, 1991; Stanovich, 2000; Gardner, 1991; SaviileTroike, 1984). Children who read effectively have access to numerous sources of written material which, in turn, enables them to increase their general knowledge, in their vocabulary and their language skills (Elley, 1991; Krashen, 1993; Vivas, 1996). As finding from analysis of document review confirms that disciplinary cases, late coming to school, school dropout, lack of self esteem and related academic problems that are impact of reading difficulty on academic achievement and fall under learners with reading difficulties.

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

Research summary

The study revealed that comparison of academic achievement and status of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties: learners with reading difficulties were low achievers in academic achievement and status compared with that of without difficulties. This was the impact of reading difficulty on learners with reading difficulty what they share such behaviors: school dropout, absenteeism, late coming to school, disciplinary causes, inferiority complex, low self esteem, psychologically depressed mood, low engagement in assignment and poor in social interaction with their peers. Accordingly, statuses make learner with reading difficulties to discrimination and poor in their academic performance.

Conclusion

In three selected schools when the researcher compared academic achievement of learners with reading difficulties to that of learners without reading difficulties, learners with reading difficulties have low academic achievement result in all subjects. The data from

document analysis also shows that learners with reading difficulties under problems in their academic status. The impact of reading difficulty on learners affects low in academic achievement. Hence, learners with reading difficulties are exposed to school dropout, inferiority complex, low self esteem and these problems leads them to discrimination from their peers in the school environment.

Recommendations

From the research results and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are suggested.

All teachers should be able to identify learners who with reading difficulties in the classroom. It is worth remembering that not all learners with reading difficulties display the same characteristics.

Teachers should have some knowledge on phonological awareness as pupils begin to learn how to read. This will assist them to apply intervention measures at early stage which might rescue.

Teachers should use different techniques of teaching methods in order to reach all learners' diverse needs within the classroom including learners with reading difficulties.

Parents should work collaboration with schools/teachers and should value for their children learn and they should work in identification, assessment and intervention mechanisms to their children.

Teachers should practice in teaching learners with reading difficulties in regular schools with special attention and awareness to meet individual needs. It involves knowing the preferred learning style of each child in the classroom. The concerned bodies should capacitate the capacity of teachers and learners are paramount.

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