Studying the Effect of IEP Teaching Method and Task Process Method on the Self-esteem and Academic Achievement of the Students with Learning Disabilities

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Abstract: This study aimed to examine the effectiveness of IEP teaching methods and task-process method on the self-esteem and academic achievement of the students with learning disabilities. In this study, 26 primary school students with learning disabilities were selected and divided into two control and experimental group. The control group was trained using task-process method while the experimental group was trained using IEP teaching method. The research design was developed as two pre-test and post-test by comparing the results between the control and experimental groups. The statistical method used in this study was the analysis of covariance. The results obtained from this study showed that the effect of the factor on the subjects is significant. In other words, the IEP teaching method used to train the experimental group had a greater effect on the self-esteem and academic achievement of the student compared to the control group in which the task-process method was used for training.

Keywords: Learning Disabilities, IEP Learning Method, Task - Process Learning Method, Self-Esteem

INTRODUCTION

Learning is considered as one of the most important factors determining human behavior.

If human being’s innate reflections were set aside, other behaviors and activities that he carries are certainly the product of learning (the human beings’ behaviors and actions originated from two sources including his innate reflection and what he learns in life). There are various by which the human being can learn how to behave and commit various activities. However, a large part what human being learns nowadays is gained in educational institutions. It is often heard from the teachers that some students have weak performances in certain courses; as a result, apparent differences can be seen between their performances in those courses they perform weakly and other courses they perform strongly. This raises so many unanswered questions in both the students’ minds and parents’ minds.
However, unfortunately this issue would not be resolved in most of the cases. As a result, the student might fail or drop out of school.

These individuals are classified in certain category of exceptional children known as learning disabilities. This category includes significant percentage of the students.

The main problem with these kinds of children lies in the fact their special situation cannot be easily recognized in early childhood and preschool period unlike other disorders. It is clear that this issue is not impossible and it is probable that their situation may be recognized in early childhood. However, it should be noted that this group of learners are aware of their disability to do homework as thoroughly as their classmates do.

They also suffer from this failure. This situation leads to destruction of positive self-concept in them since experiencing repeated failure in a course in the school lower their sense of positive self-concept as well as their self-esteem. As the parents and teacher compare them with other normal children and their siblings and peers blame them for their disabilities, it is probable that they may be prone to have negative self-image about themselves. This may have irreversible personality and mental health consequences on the child's mind.

Learning disability refers to mental retardation, growth delay or disorder in one or more than one processes of speech, language learning, reading, writing, arithmetic problems, or other school subjects. This is the result of psychological disability, which may be due to either cerebral malfunction or behavioral or emotional disorders. Learning disabilities are not caused due to mental retardation, sensory deprivation, or cultural and educational factors. Learning disabilities generally refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders that cause major problems in the skills including learning, listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical calculations. Children with special learning disabilities may represent major psychological disorders that may lead to having difficulties in processes such as understanding or using verbal or written language. These disorders may be represented as difficulties in hearing, thinking, speaking, reading, and writing, spelling or calculating. These include the kind of circumstances that refers to perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain malfunction, dyslexia, developmental aphasia, etc. These disorders do not include the learning problems that are primarily due to visual, hearing or motor disabilities, mental retardation, emotional disorders or environmental deficiencies.

It can be stated that with respect to these definitions, one way of treating learning disabilities lies in using the Individualized Education Programs (IEP). This kind of program is an extensive plan, which includes various training and process activities. This program was developed in order to help the students to overcome their weaknesses in specific educational fields. IEP is a written plan, which is developed by the IEP team or case consultative group. This aims to determine
specific educational and process goals as well as specific training materials based on individual differences between the students.

It is important to develop the kind of training material, which helps the children with special educational needs to increase their self-esteem. It also essential that teachers who train these children try to raise their students’ self-esteem, especially the students with learning disabilities. This is considered as a vital and valuable asset relevant to the most important factors that help the trainers to promote the learners’ talent and creativity (this is considered as an important factor, which help to promote the talents and innovation in the learners). The individuals with learning disabilities gradually become discouraged and disillusioned at school due to the negative attitudes of the parents, negative experiences in dealing with their normal peers and successive failures in the school. Such a sequence of failures and problems cause the fact that the individuals with learning disabilities may have feelings of worthlessness about themselves. As a result, these feelings lead to severe damages to their self-esteem.

Research conducted in this area has shown that children who have learning disabilities probably experience negative cycle of low self-esteem. Their motivation and perseverance to do homework may decrease as well. This makes them experience more failure.

The results from research conducted on the impact of IEP teaching method on 10 students with autism who were studying in the school showed that the academic achievement of the students increased from 40% to 100% using IEP teaching method. Other learning method that is common nowadays is the task analysis approach, which emphasizes on the sub-skills used by the learner to do the task. Process trainers focus their efforts on improving the students’ mental performance. The task-process learning approach integrates the key concepts of both approaches.

According to the above material and the importance of the effect of the teaching methods on students' self-esteem, the researcher sought to examine the impact of IEP teaching method and task-process teaching method on self-esteem of students with learning disabilities in order to identify which one of these methods is more effective.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The research method included a two-level factorial design. This study included two control and experimental groups. In each group, two pre-test and post-test procedures were carried out. The control variables (educational level, IQ, socioeconomic status, etc.) were also similar in both groups.

| Table 1. The two groups plan with pre-test and post-test (self-esteem) |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| **Experimental group (E)**      | O1    | X*    | O1    |
| **Control group (C)**           | O2    | X     | O2    |
In the present study, the statistical population included the students studying in primary school in second educational district in Bandar Abbas. This consisted of 60 male and female students with learning disabilities who studied in the schools. The sample was randomly selected from the statistical population. In total, 26 students were selected from which 13 students were trained using IEP teaching method while the remaining 13 students were trained using task-process teaching method. The tool used to collect data was Cooper Smith self-esteem questionnaire. This questionnaire is widely used in recent years in psychological research. The form A of this questionnaire includes 58 items from which eight items are lie detectors. In total, 50 items refer to the four scales of individual self-esteem, social self-esteem, familial self-esteem and educational self-esteem. This scale gives the individual a total score in addition to four subscales. It is obvious that the minimum score an individual can obtain is equal to zero while the maximum one an individual can obtain is equal to 50. The individuals who earn more scores on these tests have higher self-esteem. Therefore, the individual who earn the score greater than 25 have high self-esteem while the one who earn the score lower than this value have lower self-esteem.

In several number of studies, the high validity and reliability of Cooper Smith self-esteem questionnaire were cited. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was obtained as 0.521 in this study.

RESULTS

In the present study, the research hypotheses were examined using analysis of covariance. Before implementation of analysis of covariance, the presuppositions to this method were tested. No violation of the terms was observed in testing the presuppositions. The outputs of analysis of covariance are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

| Table 2. Evaluating the assumption of equal variances in the self-esteem variables |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| F test          | df between the groups | df within the groups | Level of significance |
| 8.98            | 1                | 24              | 0.01             |

According to the table, since the level of significance is obtained as 0.01 which is lower than 0.05, it can be concluded that the given data are questioning the assumption of equality of error variances (or the given data show that the assumption of equality of error variances is rejected).

| Table 3. Correlation between the auxiliary random variable (self-esteem pretest) and dependent variable (self-esteem posttest) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                | df | Mean | F test | Level of significance | Eta square |
| Self-esteem pretest | 1  | 7.64 | 5.62   | 0.02             | 0.19        |
| The main effects of the group | 1  | 13.14| 9.66   | 0.01             | 0.29        |
The results obtained from the data in Table 3 indicate that the level of significance of the self-esteem pretest is equal to 0.02. Moreover, it shows that the main effect of group (experimental - control) is less than 0.05. This implies that the auxiliary random variable (self-esteem pretest) have a significant relationship with the dependent variable (self-esteem posttest). Thus, the scores obtained from the posttest were adjusted and the effect of the auxiliary random variable (self-esteem pretest) was statistically removed (Table 4).

Then, it was found out the factor has a significant effect on the subjects of the groups. Moreover, the adjusted mean scores indicate that the IEP method can significantly affect the students’ self-esteem in the experimental group.

**DISCUSSION**

The results obtained from this study showed that the factor has a significant effect on the subjects of the groups. Moreover, the adjusted mean scores indicated that the IEP method could significantly affect the students’ self-esteem in the experimental group. Furthermore, it was shown that using IEP method in the experimental group has a greater impact on students' self-esteem compared to using task – process method in the control group. This result is in line with those obtained from previous studies 1, 12, 13.

Based on the results obtained from the statistical data and the research conducted in this area, it can be concluded that IEP learning method can be used as a more comprehensive and effective way to further increase students' self-esteem compared to task - process learning method. Promoting and enhancing self-esteem of the students using IEP learning method is the result of teamwork of several factors such as parental support, special teachers, special education, and counselor and rehabilitation staff. This leads to the result that using IEP learning method lends more effective results than task-process method.

**REFERENCES**


