

The Impact of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on Students' Socialization: A Gender Based Study

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Abstract

This study is conducted to examine the effect of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on students' socialization with reference to their gender. This study emphasizes the importance of understanding the differences in the lived experiences of male and female students with DLD, and how the analysis can shed light on their social worldview. Using a quantitative approach and a questionnaire, the study investigated two groups of 20 male and 20 female students with developmental language disorders from two schools for children with special education needs in Gujrat. All participants were chosen through purposive sampling. The analysis of the coded data was conducted using SPSS software, version 16, to reveal statistical insights into the socialization of the students and their gender. It was found that overall, the children with DLD showed low levels of socialization, however, disorder may manifest in different ways in males and females. Interestingly, those with milder forms of the disorder display stronger social abilities in comparison with those with higher severity levels of the condition. DLD can create unique challenges for social interaction, depending on the severity and type of the disorder. Moreover, in boys and girls with DLD there might be differences in social interactions. The study reveals that DLD is far more prevalent in girls than in boys indicate that more girls are likely to be diagnosed with the disorder and their social interactions fall within the low range. Furthermore, the severity of DLD seems to be inversely related to social competence, with milder cases exhibiting better socialization skills. This research is very important since it explores the effects of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on the social lives of male and female learners. Thus, in analyzing gender differences in the experience of DLD, the study contributes to coaching potential interventions about how DLD appears in specific social contexts. The results highlight the need to estimate the degree of difference in severity and its connection with social competence that is helpful for the further education of children with DLD. Finally, this research adds to the development of an effective strategy in meeting the needs of students with Developmental Language Disorder.

Keywords: Developmental Language Disorder, Socialization, Disabilities, Communication Disorder.

Introduction

The evolution of humans is marked by our unique capacity for acquiring and wielding language. The ability to learn and utilize language stands as a cornerstone of our journey as a species. Essentially, language is a system of symbols and rules that allows us to share information, express

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emotions, and understand each other. It is vital for learning and navigating the social world. While experts debate the specifics of language acquisition, everyone agrees that kids have an inborn ability to learn languages just by being around people who speak them. Therefore, it is easy to see how anything that disrupts this ability can have major consequences in many areas of life. It might seem like problems with learning your native language would be easy to recognize, but that is not always the case.

Many people are not aware that some children struggle with learning a language, and these difficulties often go unnoticed. DLD is a condition that can persist into adolescence, impacting their social lives and education (Laasonen et al., 2018a). It is surprisingly common, affecting more children than well-known conditions like autism and ADHD, yet it remains lesser known to the public. Several prior studies prove that DLD has a greater prevalence in boys than in girls and some even have a ratio of 2:1 or 3:1 at the very least. This means that female students are likely to be infected by DLD; however, the cause of this gender variation is still under research

In their 1978 study, Bloom and Lahey argued that language involves three key components: 1. Structure: how words are put together (syntax, morphology, phonology). 2. Meaning: understanding and using vocabulary and knowledge of the world (semantics). 3. Context: how language is used in social situations (pragmatics). Children with (DLD) can struggle in any of these areas, both in understanding (receptively) and expressing themselves (expressively). While the exact cause of DLD remains a mystery, researchers suspect a genetic link due to its more frequent occurrence in families with a history of the disorder (Bloom & Lahey, 1978).

Previously, the children having trouble with language development went by many names, to align with international best practices the item "Developmental Language Disorder" (DLD) is preferred. Boys might be more vulnerable to language disorders due to some biological reasons. For instance, certain research findings allude to the indicators that cerebral variations, hormonal effects (including testosterone levels), and hereditary factors may play a role in the heightened incidence of DLD among boys.

Before this shift, the Department of Education and Skills has set strict guidelines for diagnosing SLI. A child had to score within the average or above range on non-verbal intelligence tests, while also demonstrating significant language difficulties (two standard deviations below the average) in at least one area on a standardized language assessment (Kilroy, 2002).

In 2001, the World Health Organization's ICF framework changed the way we understand communication disorders like DLD (Saffran, 2001). Instead of simply focusing on impairment, it takes a much broader view, considering biological, individual, and social factors. The ICF sees a child's language skills as intertwined with their ability to use them in real-life situations and influenced by home and school environments. This shift highlights the unique experiences of each child with DLD and shows how it can affect various aspects of their development beyond just language.

The culture, social norms, and economic factors in Pakistan influence the community's perception of the disabled, especially females with special needs, and plays a crucial role in their lives. However, some progress still has been made when it comes to awareness and advocating for the rights of individuals with disabilities, there are still numerous hurdles to overcome.

It can be seen that there is limited awareness and knowledge of the status and the development possibility of disabled people. This can lead to their socially marginalization and exclusion from normal education, employment, and social interaction.

Any person who is considered having a disability, especially in his/her working capacity, is patronized by people who underestimate talents and possibilities. Such social limitations can negatively affect their self-esteem and their prospects for development.

Unlike their counterparts in other South Asian countries, females with the special needs in Pakistan suffer a double jeopardy of their status being a female as well as having the special needs. These factors put them in a vulnerable position compared with male students, based on an intersectionality of factors. The female persons with disability are even more marginalized in society, where their needs and rights are not considered at all. They are denied better chances to get education, vocational training or any chance that enable them to mix with other people.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the difficulties related to Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on social inclusion of learners among peers in particular, exploring the specific issues that students with DLD encounter during development of friendship, fostering and maintenance of relationships. Furthermore, the proposed research seeks to analysis of how DLD influences boys' and girls' social relations by comparing their Social Skills, Interaction and Peer Relation Patterns. In pursuit of the answer to this question, the present research aims to investigate the extent to which severity levels of DLD affects the social competence and, in doing so, determine the specific support requirements for students with the learning disorder that can help towards enhancing socialization for all affected persons.

Research Questions

- To what degree do the difficulties associated with Developmental Language Disorders impact the social integration of students within their peer groups?
- In what ways does Developmental Language Disorder affect social relations in boys and girls differently?

Literature Review

An exhaustive review of prior research in this domain is undertaken before the commencement of this study. Nicolson and Fawcett think DLD might come from having trouble learning things automatically, like steps in a task. Kids with DLD struggled with remembering things in order, both with words and non-words, but were okay with sorting things based on chance. (Lukacs & Kememy, 2014) This suggests specific non-verbal skills might be affected, but not all. Instead of just affecting language, DLD might also touch some non-verbal thinking skills. (Laasonen et al., 2018b). DLD might also mess with brain speed, short-term memory, and "working memory." (Archibald, 2017). DLD and dyslexia frequently coincide which leads some to believe that both are caused by the difficulties of working with time-based information (Laasonen et al., 2002). A huge amount of evidence researches the connection between language impairments and problems in the social an emotional development. A research study in the early 90s in America pointed that there was a clear relation between communication disorders in children and learning and psychiatric disorders (Prizant et al, 1990). One study identified language disorder at 50% in preschool and school aged children that they described as having mental health disorders and called for the association of language and early childhood mental health disorder (Cohen et al., 1998). The social part could also influence the diagnostic results as boys receive the DLD diagnosis more often while their language difficulties are louder or more problematic. Girls with similar

situation would most likely be diagnosed at a slower rate because their symptoms may not be as blatant and may be seen as resulting from something else.

Beitchman et al. (2014) argued that the investigations of children who experience language problems revealed that children would continue experiencing difficulties throughout their educations. These difficulties are learning disability, academic achievement, and higher rates of psychiatric disorder. The difficulties, which some children have on language problem, may also apply to the regulation and interpretation of the emotions as both of these processes involve a certain kind of inner speech (Hubert et al., 2016). Self-speech play an important role in regulating and understanding emotions, this shows that children with language delay might have problems in these areas. Moreover, DLD affect a child in many other ways; for instance, it leads to the development of low self-esteem in children. Concerning the profiles of peers of children with DLD presenting and proving, McKinnon, D. H., & O'Connor, P. (2020) found that boys and girls do differently the severity of DLD and various social settings. The consequences may accumulate over time and impact a child's social interactions and psychological well-being.

The author of the study under consideration was Sullivan (2016) and in this research the main aspects have been investigated with the focus on the social skills of children with DLD nonlinear relations of social competence across gender have been compared and the possibilities of educational practices and interventions have been analyzed.

Might not engage in definite peer rejection like boys, but girls with DLD might develop social isolation and anxiety problems that become more evident as children develop and progress to adolescence where interplay and language use take new and different forms.

Any kind of communication problem that may be related to shyness or fear-related inhibition predisposes children to having problems both in the initiation as well as the maintenance of their friendships. The research also agrees that children with DLD are prevented from interaction to social life as they are unable to initiate or participate in group discussions. (Bolter & Cohen, 2007). Communication disorders in general, and especially those in language expression, may harm the parent-child relation and affect the functioning of the whole family. Difficulty in meaning use results to communication impairments, especially in children, in which parents find it difficult to understand and manage their communicative attempts appropriately according to Clegg et al. (2005). Students suffering from DLD find difficulties compared to their typically developing peers, suggesting significant challenges in managing behavior and emotions. Extensive research demonstrates a clear link between early language development and subsequent behavioral patterns in children (Chow, 2018). Hollo et al. (2014) examined the language skills of 1,171 children diagnosed with emotional and behavioral disorders. Surprisingly, a whopping 81% of these children scored below average on formal language assessments, with nearly half (47%) exhibiting severe language difficulties. Interestingly, none of these language impairments had been identified before they participated in the study. Additional, specific learning disorder, particularly, DLD is characterized by potentially more prominent externalizing behaviors in boys (e. g., hyperactivity, aggression), and this, in turn, affects their ability to make meaningful contacts. These behaviors might lead to the boys having fewer friends, or having more negative interactions with classmates. Bishop (2017) focused on the trends and patterns of DLD in children, especially the gender issues in social use of language and other communication problems involving boys and girls. Specifically, this study examined social experience of children with DLD but sees gender disparity in social skills of children and peer interaction resulting in different social experience.

While girls are diagnosed with DLD less often, the girls with the condition may be faced with different issues from the boys. Girls may absorb their problems more, which may cause such

problems as social isolation, anxiety or low self-esteem. This kind of internalization can affect their ability to build and maintain interpersonal relationships despite having less apparently problematic interactions or language disorders. According to Conti et al. (2015), gender acts as a moderator of social relatedness and as for how the differences in the degree of the disorder impact on acceptance by children at various ages were shown.

The observation looks at Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), the manner in which students relate with others specifically Children diagnosed with DLD and general way this impairs social relations. This study focuses on the multifaceted relationship between Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) and the way students learn to engage in social relationships to learn how DLD influences students' engagement in social tasks.

Research Methodology

The method applied in this study that is quantitative method comprising self-administered questionnaires proves appropriate for the study of socialization of students with DLD. Consequently, in the present study, a Likert scale of 1 – 5 is used thus meaning that the participants are able to express the extent of their perception towards each statement with sensitivity. The use of this approach enables calibration contribution in the improvement of the social issues of data collected. The 20 male and 20 female participants mean that the results are likely to show possible gender differences in socialization. In addition, the applied analysis through the help of the SPSS program provides a proper statistical assessment, which makes it possible to define descriptive statistics and frequency rates that show profound info about the social conditions of students with DLD. In general, this approach links quantitative and qualitative information with each other and ensures a coherent approach toward developing conclusions on how DLD affects socialization between genders.

Data Analysis

The subsequent section is dedicated to a detailed examination of the research data through statistical analyses. These analyses are performed using SPSS, which proved instrumental in the creation of informative visualizations (graphs) and frequency tables.

The data collection underwent a comprehensive analysis within SPSS, involving data processing and statistical calculations.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Sr.	Questions	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I have experienced many challenges in communication during social interactions	Male	71.85	7.56
		Female	78.45	8.12
2	Language difficulties affect my ability to make friends	Male	89.75	7.02
		Female	92.30	6.34
3	I feel comfortable in participating in group activities that involve verbal communication	Male	88.20	6.98
		Female	80.50	7.75
4	I avoid social situations due to concerns about language difficulties	Male	81.20	9.21
		Female	85.60	6.95

5	I faced bullying from peers due to my language disorder	Male	74.10	7.65
		Female	77.90	8.21
6	Language disorder influences my self-esteem in social situations	Male	76.30	6.95
		Female	82.75	7.45
7	I perceive the impact of language difficulties on my ability to make and maintain friendship	Male	66.85	8.74
		Female	73.20	9.23
8	I enjoy the same position with pupils who are developing normally	Male	79.10	7.85
		Female	75.65	8.35
9	Language challenges influence the choice of social activities or hobbies	Male	68.40	10.40
		Female	60.25	9.80
10	I am reluctant and face hesitation in starting a conversation	Male	69.75	7.85
		Female	75.50	8.90

The students with Developmental language disorders concur through their responses that they have experienced many challenges in communication during social interactions, Language difficulties affect their ability to make friends, and they avoid social situations due to concerns about language difficulties. They often face bullying from peers due to their language disorders, which influence their self-esteem in social situations. They perceive the impact of DLD on their ability to make and maintain a friendship. Language challenges influence their choice of social activities or hobbies. They are reluctant and face hesitation in starting a conversation. When it comes to other aspects of social interaction, the pupils are divided in their opinions. Some disagreed while others seemed neutral or unconcerned. This suggests that pupils with developmental language disorders may struggle with actively participating in social interactions. The consistency of their responses (low standard deviation) indicates that this pattern may be fairly common among this group.

Findings

The findings imply that DLD affects male and female students differently. Girls with DLD are more affected in their oral and written language abilities as compared to boys. This difference indicates that girls can be ranked as being more negatively impacted on their interactional functioning because of DLD compared to boys. The scores in females may suggest higher levels of problems in social interaction, social awareness, and participation in social activities. Such difficulties may be attributed to the fact that girls with DLD may have comparatively greater problems when it comes to developing and maintaining friendships. The significance level computed from the independent samples t-test results therefore imply a significant difference in the level of social interaction ability for girl and boy children with DLD. This implies that DLD has a more negative impact on girls in social situations. Girls with DLD may face more specific difficulties in social interaction, perception of signals, and relationships with peers, which may be explained by the greater severity of language and, consequently, communicative problems in females with DLD. This type of interpretation will make it obvious that according to the study, girls are more impacted by DLD in terms of social interaction, indicates the p-values of the statistical test conducted and explains into detail how those findings translate to the real world.

The study emphasizes the crucial role of fostering social interactions for children grappling with language difficulties, especially those with less severe cases. The severity of a child's language difficulties negatively impacts their social behavior, while increased social interaction can be a positive influence, particularly for children with milder forms of the disorder. Children with milder language disorders can benefit more from social interaction than those with more severe cases.

Analysis of the Findings

The research outcomes of this study profile important discoveries about the impact of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) on male and female students, including identifying differences in the girls' experience. The findings that girls with DLD perform worse in nearly all aspects of oral and written language compared to boys explain how gender might influence the expression of language impairment. This could be caused by social and developmental factors: while girls are less affected by social disability and are more sensitive to the social context of interactions, manifestations of language disabilities affect their interactional competence.

Gender Differences in DLD Impact

It was found in the course of the study that girls with DLD encounter more critical difficulties in the sphere of social activity, interaction, and consciousness. It may be as a result of communication patterns and social interaction which are with girls being expected to be sociable, their interpersonal communication skills are valued more than the boys'. By increasing the girls' preservative awareness of their communication problems, they become more frustrated and withdraw more from the social situation.

The statistical significance reported here in the independent samples t-test argues the claim that impact of DLD is same on both sexes. The presented p-values show that the distribution of social interaction abilities in boys and girls with DLD is significantly different suggesting that intervention and support should be gendered.

Social Interaction and Friendship Development

Greater obstacles to emergent and stable friendships which girls are reported to have could be due to their increased verbal communication need in societal situations. Friendship interactions may involve certain subtle signals, as well as choosing words, with which girls with DLD can have significant difficulties. This can result in social exclusion, which already suffers from the lack of supportive peers on top of that.

According to the study, the extent of language problems has a direct detrimental effect on mannerisms. In case with children with more moderate DLD, the subjects will receive an important and necessary source of support in the form of an increase of social interaction that can help them to develop language skills and social competence. On the other hand, children with higher degree of disorders may get overwhelmed when presented with these conditions, and may rather avoid than join in the activities.

Real-World Implications

Therefore, the results of the present study stress the need for the encouragement of students' social contacts in school and therapy, especially for girls with DLD. Hence, the interventions should tailor efforts at enabling safe practicing of the appropriate social skills without chances of a negative result. Ninety-three percent of preschool children with ASD may benefit from structure in play dates and activities, and obedience and social skills training.

Furthermore, the educators and practitioners to have insight regarding the special difficulties that the girls with DLD experience. For instance, using approaches that promote social stories, plays, and peer modeling may enhance social understanding and self-esteem in social environments.

Importance of Severity in Social Development

The study also finds out that social interactions improve the learning of language in children with milder cases of DLD than in children with moderate and severe cases of DLD; this means that targeted social interaction improves language and social skills among children with the disorder. Specifically, it is worthwhile to discuss the programs intended to stimulate children's peer communication since the emotional and social aspects can be the critical factors in the identification of these children. Instead, for children with severe DLD, it may require more one on one approaches that are aimed at teaching basic aspects of communication before overall social communication and interactions.

In sum, the outcomes of the research presented in the current article underscore the importance of global and severity-sensitive approaches to child DLD. Thus, understanding any given difficulty that girls go through enables the educators and practitioners to change the social course and quality of the lives of these children for the better. Consequently, the focus on encouraging social contacts especially for children with relatively mild disorder suggests that there is potential for enhancing practice on social related adjustment in children with DLD.

Results and Discussion

The analysis reveals that Students with language disorders may struggle to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly, making it difficult to initiate conversations or participate actively in discussions. This can lead to feelings of isolation and exclusion. According to the scores obtained by the subjects, it can, therefore, be inferred that girls with Developmental Language Disorder are more negatively impacted on, in terms of social interaction, than boys with similar difficulties. This would suggest that girls with DLD could potentially have even greater difficulties with socio-pragmatic communication difficulties that can then result in significant specific learning difficulties affecting their social interactions and friendships. It is therefore necessary to provide a specific support, which should be oriented at the enhancement of social skills particularly girls with DLD. Auditory processing disorders can impede comprehension of real-life conversations and can interfere with jokes, sarcasm or subtle gestures. It results in miscommunication, misunderstanding and equivocal social relations or interaction. Lack of simple and extensive varied vocabulary and inability to form complex grammatical constructions. It restricts academic language and thus social communication and interaction of a child. A significant number of learners with language disorders are at one time laughed at and bullied for their communicative disabilities. They can awaken a cycle of mortification, shame, and social phobia and thus become a limiting factor to correct social relations.

Of course, that means they're disconnected from others in the same way two ends of a bridge can't meet because key segments were never built; they will not be able to join the rest of society and partake in its positivity. Through negative interactions in social context students may develop negative self- attributes such as perceptions of being different or incompetent which are bad for social participation and self- esteem.

Communication barriers can affect performance in a group project or bring delays in answering questions in class which in turn affect grades while having difficulty in solving problems with other students. Downplays the regular involvement in social activities and consequently shrunk

interaction result in students' minimal development of social skills such as communication, problem solving and interpersonal relations hence low social advancement. Nevertheless, there is evidence that social life may be affected for students with language disorders in a way that is different depending on the extent of the difficulty and the type of the language disorder, and their own personality and communication style.

Conclusion

Consequently, this research finds that children with DLD may elicit few social interactions reaffirming the deep and extensive manner in which this developmental language disorder may affect children's social lives. It is found that girls who have DLD experience significantly more social and interactional difficulties than boys who have DLD are. The low social interaction scores observed in the females might mean that the extent of the problem in regard to interaction and communication with other people is severe. The effect that social isolation has on their development is prodigious. Language disorders affect their picture, eradicating their overall academic performance, social interactions and learning, specifically reducing or eliminating shared learning as well as learning social skills. The friendships they miss out on aren't just the lost moments of amusement; they are lost chances of practicing compassion, communication, and conflict, and social skills. A lack of social capital can remain consistent through the rest of their lives and affect their future relationships, academics, and jobs. There are always inaccuracies and misunderstandings that sprout and grown like thorns between them when they talk and this causes much frustration and stagnates the social interaction process. This keeps the two equal partners in a way that their individuality, instead of being cultivated, is slowly eroded. Teasing and bullying are painful when they are inspired by ignorance, and scars run deep. The attitudes they develop about themselves in this type of bubble can be quite negative and unkind – viewing themselves as clumsy, useless, or just plain odd. This internal storm comes back as a prophecy, worsening their situation and hindering their process of integration with other people and preventing them from escaping from the loneliness they so much fear. Specifically, it is suggested that by highlighting these children's difficulties, supporting them, and appreciating their individual voices. Consequently, children with DLD will be seriously disadvantaged in aspects of social development.

The findings of this study reveal that there are wide social concomitants of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) most especially with girls experiencing discrete difficulties than boys. Some studies show that girls with DLD are more socially impaired than boys with DLD: they start making friends and struggle to maintain only-aged friendships. Not only does this lost opportunity for social interaction affect what the kids get out of playing with other children – their immediate social experience – but it also has drastic conservations for the rest of their development.

When a child is diagnosed with DLD, he or she typically does not get critical socialization skills such as the ability to sympathize, solve problems and express themselves. Of equal importance is the hope for an academic outcome, as lack of social interaction means limited opportunities for knowledge sharing and their promotion to the next academic level. The friends these children cannot make are not simple occasional human interactions; they are lifeline intermediaries.

Loneliness has significant consequences; children with DLD learn that they don't get important desirable social behaviors and responses, with the basis of relationships of empathy, negotiation or positive interaction. It also has negative academic implications as they can lack social life and thus miss on the very thing that will enable them get a better education; group learning. The

meaningful friendships these kids lost while failing to connect with peers are not just lost time but important tender age developmental skills that contribute to their EI and social competency. Such internal battles also increase the risk of some severe outcomes for a child with DLD including low self-worth, and being bullied which only aggravates a child's sense of isolation, and poor self-image. While this independence could be beneficial overall in certain aspects, there is also this stigma now attached to these difficulties relating to communication, that might mean that there are more feelings of inadequacy in these people, and this continuation of withdrawal when it comes to social scenarios. This internal conflict really illustrates a pressing requirement for tailored interventions that tackle the large systemic aspects of DLD and also engage in therapeutic matters referring to the psychological and social development of these kids. Educators, parents and practitioners should acknowledge the many challenges of DLD in order to tailor appropriate support to enable these children flourish better within their social environment. For us, this means building inclusive settings, teaching social skills, and engaging in peer interaction to develop social competence. If the strength and voice of children with DLD are celebrated then some or all of their social disadvantages may be overcome, thereby improving their health and life chances. A more complete response to such issues will contribute to a fairer and friendlier ground, able to harness the potential of all children including those with language difficulties.

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