

## Need to Develop a Home-based Intervention for Specific Learning Disorder in Indian setting

Sir,

Specific learning disorder (SLD) affects specific abilities in children with an otherwise normal academic development. Worldwide, the prevalence of SLD has been estimated to be around 5%–15%,<sup>[1]</sup> whereas in the Indian context, it affects approximately 0.38%–15.2% children.<sup>[2]</sup> Comorbidity has also been documented.<sup>[3]</sup>

Last few decades, SLD has gained recognition as a disabling condition among children by parents and teachers in India. Several attempts have been taken by the National Educational Boards (ICSE and CBSE) and other state governments as granting benefits and provisions to accommodate this invisible handicap. In addition, few nongovernment organizations and special educators have also started to provide remedial programs and remedial classes for these children. However, these resources and efforts are still insufficient and inadequate to deal with the burden of this problem. Sometimes, these resources are expensive and difficult for families to access. Moreover, in view of limited trained workforce and resources, parents need to equip themselves with the skills to empower their children.

It is often considered that parents are the first teacher of their children and are playing a vital role in the child's overall development. They are also one of the main stakeholders who have a great potential to contribute their child's academic success.<sup>[4]</sup> Unfortunately, parents generally do not know how to assist their children in schoolwork and academic success that leads inadequacy in parents.<sup>[5,6]</sup> However, scientific evidence does suggest that parents can be trained to impart remedial skills for child's academic issues.<sup>[6,7]</sup> Therefore, a home-based intervention modules should be developed so that parents or significant caregiver can learn strategies

through which SLD issues can be tackled. Western researches on parent-implemented intervention have reported the effectiveness of the parent tutoring in the improvement of reading fluency, skill acquisition of basic word recognition, spelling, and mathematics facts and have found generalization of these skills from home setting to the school setting.<sup>[6,8,9]</sup>

Home-based intervention displays several advantages. First, learning/training is held in everyday home environment, a strain-free and convenient environment, where parents can offer one-to-one attention to immediate modification and feedback, resulting in an extension of the learning environment.<sup>[10]</sup> Second, uncomplicated, effective, and affordable nature of home-based intervention. The content and procedure of the intervention tasks/activities are very simple, easy, and reasonable to learn. Parents do not require very extensive training to learn these activities that make them confident and expert and lead to further significant and rapid change in child's learning skills. Third, a holistic package for the management of academic and behavioral problems of children and parents' stress as well. Fourth, it is a time-efficient approach that overcomes the issues of travel time for remedial session at clinic or hospitals. Parents save their time, energy, and money that lead motivation to full involvement in intervention. Fifth, the teacher–student ratio at school is quite disproportionate and has limited workforce, i.e., school counselor, remedial teacher, and professionals who cannot give frequent one-to-one attention to the child's SLD problem. In that view, home-based intervention reduces teachers' and professionals' burden and supports them in the management of SLD.

In summary, home-based intervention is a cost-effective and time-efficient method. To meet the child's and parents' needs and to reduce the teachers' and professionals' burden, it is necessary to develop an alternative approach in the form of home-based intervention for the holistic management of SLD.

Thank You!

**Financial support and sponsorship**

Nil.

**Conflicts of interest**

There are no conflicts of interest.

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<p><b>Website:</b> www.ijpm.info</p>	<p><b>Quick Response Code</b></p> 
<p><b>DOI:</b> 10.4103/IJPSYM.IJPSYM_93_17</p>	

**How to cite this article:** Sahu A, Bhargava R, Sagar R, Mehta M. Need to develop a home-based intervention for specific learning disorder in Indian setting. Indian J Psychol Med 2017;39:548-9.

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