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Assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers

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Abstract

Introduction: Learning disabilities effects the basic learning skills in such cases the children may be weak in their academic performance but may excel in extracurricular activities. In such cases the parents and the teachers demotivate them which lead to depression and other major problems The main aim of the study is to assess the level of knowledge of primary school teachers regarding learning disability. And the objectives of the present study was to assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability and to associate the findings with selected demographic variables.

Material and methods: Non- Experimental descriptive research design was adopted. The research approach is quantitative. The population adopted in the study was teachers teaching in the selected schools of Pune city. The sample was primary school teachers and the sample size is 150. The sampling technique is non –probability technique. The inclusion criteria for the research is teachers those who are teaching in Semi –English or English medium schools, teachers those who are teaching all the subjects, teachers who are teaching from 1st to 4th std and teachers who have experience of more than one year. The exclusion criteria is teachers who are teaching in schools for specially abled children. The tool was divided into two sections. The tool was given to five experts for validity. The reliability was carried out and the correlation coefficient was found to be 0.8036 and pilot study was carried out and the tool was found to be feasible.

Result: A total of 150 samples were included in the study. A structured questionnaire was distributed to the samples. The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions and each question carried one mark. Majority of the sample 57.33% had average knowledge, 41.33% samples had poor knowledge and only 1.33% sample had good knowledge regarding learning disability. Fisher's exact test was used to find out the significance with demographic variables. Only medium of instruction which significant with the findings.

Conclusion: Analysis revealed that the primary school teachers of the selected schools of Pune city had average knowledge regarding learning disability.

Keywords: Learning disability, knowledge, primary school teachers

Introduction [1-2]

Learning is the process of acquiring various skills and gaining them in a methodological and systematic way. When these skills are applied in the day to day life then the learning is considered to be successful and appropriate. The process of learning starts when the child or the infant learns to cry for their basic needs like food and elimination. In the later stages the child acquires his/her milestones and learns to talk, interpret the languages, write etc. Problem in talking, interpreting languages, writing, hearing together is called as learning disability.

The study was conducted by Justine James. *et al.* (April 2018) to assess the percentage of learning disability students in India it was found that 1%-19% of the students was suffering from learning disability [1].

The problems can be manipulated easily by the teachers and the parents in the earlier stages of the life. The parents as well as the teachers need to assess if the developmental milestones are appropriate or not. From the birth till the teenage the parents as well as the teachers play a vital role in acquiring the milestones of the child.

In children with learning disability the developmental milestones may not be normal, they do not develop in the normal rate when compared to the children without learning disability. In some cases the parents will not accept the condition of their children even though they find some abnormalities in the child because they think that the problems may get settled as the time goes.

In some cases due to social stigma the parents may not disclose about the child's problem because they feel that the child has some mental illness and they do not go for proper treatment

for the child. In such cases the teachers should play an essential role in finding the problems of the specially abled child and helping them to find the solution for their problems.

Need of the study

Learning disability is the disorder associated with the nervous system which hinders the learning skills such as writing, reading, calculating etc. In such cases the children would be weak in their academic performances, due to reduced concentration and attention span but they can perform well in other extracurricular activities.

It is the responsibility of the parents and the teachers to encourage them and not to demotivate them because of their disabilities. In India we can see that parents and the teachers pressurize the children regarding the academic performances which leads to anxiety and stress in students. "According to study conducted by Sibnath Deb. *Et al.* (Jan 2015). They assessed the stress in the academics caused due to the parental pressure among Indian high school students. The sample size was 190 and they concluded that about two-third of the students were stressed because of the pressure from the parents related to academic performance [2].

The children belonging to the age group 6-10 in which they can be easily molded hence it is the duty of the teacher and the parents to understand their disability of the children and mould them accordingly and motivate them and make them skillful to earn for their daily living.

When a parent is given knowledge about the learning disability they may apply the knowledge in their own children and the relatives whereas in case of teachers the teacher apply her knowledge to the group of students in her class and also spread the knowledge to other teaches as well as to the parents which more beneficial when compared to the knowledge given to the parents.

Objective of the study

- 1) To assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers.
- 2) To associate the findings with selected demographic variables.

Methodology

A non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted to conduct the study among 150 primary school teachers in selected areas of Pune city with non-probability sampling technique.

Sample criteria

Inclusive criteria

- Teachers those who are teaching in semi-English or English primary schools
- Teachers those who are teaching all the subjects
- Teachers who are teaching from 1st to 4th Std
- Teachers those who have an experience of more than one year

Exclusion criteria

- Teachers those who are teaching in schools for specially abled children.

Description of the tool

Section I

This section contains the demographic details of the samples which include age, gender, qualification, experience and

medium of instruction.

Section II

The tool was constructed to assess the level of knowledge of learning disability among the primary school teachers. The tool consisted of 25 questions and each question had four alternatives among which one was right. For each right answer one mark was given and for incorrect answer zero marks was considered. The time limit for every sample to solve the questionnaire was 20 minutes. the sample who achieved marks between 0-8 was graded as poor, and marks between 9-16 was considered as average and the samples who scored between 17-25 was graded in good category.

Results

150 primary school teachers were selected for data collection from selected areas of Pune city.

Section I

Table 1: The description of the samples according to demographic variables, (n=150)

Demographic Data		
Section	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1. 20-30	40	26.67
2. 31-40	82	54.67
3. 41-50	22	14.67
4. 51-60	6	4
Gender		
1. Male	6	4
2. Female	144	96
Qualification		
1. B.ED	42	28
2. D.ED	76	50.67
3. M.ED	13	8.67
4. Any other	19	12.67
Experience		
1. 1-3 years	42	28
2. 4-6 years	59	39.33
3. 7-9 years	23	15.33
4. ≥10 years	26	17.33
Medium of Instruction		
1. English	111	74
2. Semi-English	39	26

Table no 1: shows the distribution of demographic data where majority of the samples (54.67%) were in the age group 31 – 40, majority of the samples (96%) were females, majority of the samples (50.67%) had completed their D.ED, maximum number of samples (39.33%) have an experience of 4-6 years and for majority of the samples (74%) the medium of instruction is English.

Section II

Assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers.

Table 2: The level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers. (n=150)

Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Poor	62	41.33
Average	86	57.33
Good	2	1.33

Table no 2: shows that majority of the samples i.e. 86 (57.33%) had average knowledge of learning disability, 62

samples (41.33%) had poor knowledge and only 2 (1.33%) samples had good knowledge regarding learning disability.

Section III

To associate the findings with selected demographic variables.

Table 3: Association of findings with demographic variables, (n=150)

Demographic Variables	Fisher's exact Value	P value	Significant/non-significant
Age	2.5125	0.867066	Non –significant
Gender	1.035333	1.035333	Non –significant
Qualification	7.578619	0.270628	Non-significant
Experience	5.790612	0.44705	Non-significant
Medium of instruction	80.8021	0	Significant

While associating the data regarding the knowledge of learning disability among primary school teachers with selected demographic data it was concluded that demographic variables like age, gender, qualification, number of experience where not associated with the knowledge regarding learning disability using Fisher's exact test and only medium of instruction is associated with the knowledge of primary school teachers.

Discussion

The findings of the current study had been analyzed on the basis of the research objectives. Majority of the samples i.e. 86 (57.33%) had average knowledge regarding learning disability, 62 (41.33%) had poor knowledge and only 2 (1.33%) had good knowledge regarding learning disability. The mean value of the current study is 9.51 which shows that majority of the samples had average knowledge regarding learning disability. The standard deviation for the present study is 3.17. In today's competitive world education is given a lot of importance and teachers are the guiding lights of the children. Parents and teachers play a very important role in molding the child in their earlier stages of life. Hence it is essential for the teachers to know about various problems that the child may face and help the child as well as the parents to fight against those problems. Teacher's knowledge regarding learning disability helps them to find out any abnormalities in the child and help them to overcome these problems in their earlier stages of their life so that they can cope up with the realities and situation that they face in their further life.

According to the study conducted Nsreen A Alahmadi and Mogada El Sayed El Keshky (November 2019) Knowledge of primary school teachers regarding specific learning disability in Saudi Arabia. The sample size was 902 it was found that majority of the teachers had average knowledge ^[16].

In the current study majority i.e. 57.33% had average knowledge regarding learning disability and 41.33% had poor knowledge hence workshops, seminars, distribution of booklets about this condition can enhance the knowledge which can be proved beneficial for the future generation.

Association of the data was done between knowledge regarding learning disability and demographic variables like age, gender, qualification, years of experience where not associated whereas medium of instruction was been found associated with the knowledge of learning disability using Fisher's method.

Conclusion

The present study was to assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers in selected schools of Pune city. It was found that majority of the samples i.e. 57.33% had average knowledge regarding learning disability and 41.33% samples had poor knowledge

and least number of sample i.e. 1.33% had good knowledge regarding learning disability. Mean for the present study is 9.51 and the standard deviation is 3.17. And association was found between medium of instruction and knowledge of learning disability.

Limitation

1. The study is limited to the time frame mentioned.
2. Non-Probability sampling technique minimizes the generalization of the study.

Recommendation

1. A study can be carried out in a large population.
2. A study can be conducted to check the prevalence of learning disability.
3. A comparative study can be carried out on knowledge of primary school teachers between urban and rural areas.
4. A study can be conducted to assess the knowledge regarding learning disability among parents of school going children.
5. A similar study can be conducted on secondary school teachers.

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