



EFFECTIVENESS OF PSYCHOEDUCATION ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AMONG TEACHERS IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A STUDY PROTOCOL

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ABSTRACT

Background: Learning disabilities (LD) are very big challenge for the school teachers. Teachers play a vital role in identifying children with learning disabilities. The teacher should understand that, in his earlier and younger days, he/she too was a student with several deficiencies. Learning disabilities are life long, but if teachers identify them, they will be in a position to deliver specialized instructions so that the children can learn compensatory stratagems to overcome their limitations. **Objectives:** To evaluate the effectiveness of psychoeducation on knowledge regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities among teachers in selected primary schools. **Methodology:** Pre-experimental, one group Pre-test Post-test design will be used. 60 teachers will be selected by simple random sampling from selected primary schools of Nagpur, Maharashtra, India. The period of the study will be one month. The tool will consist self-structured knowledge questionnaire based on early identification of children with learning disabilities. Validity and reliability of questionnaire and intervention will be assessed by appropriate procedure & statistical methods. After pre-test and administration of psychoeducation regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities, post-test will be conducted on 7th day. Descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to analyse the collected data. **Expected results:** About 40 to 45 % improvement in the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities will be expected. **Limitation:** Selected primary schools of Nagpur city only will be included in this study. **Conclusion:** Psychoeducation will improve teachers' knowledge regarding identification of learning disabilities and enable them to develop positive attitude towards children with LD which in turn leads to acquiring competencies to handle the children.

KEYWORDS : Psychoeducation, Learning disabilities, Knowledge

INTRODUCTION:

Specific Learning Disability is one of 21 categories of disability which has been included in the current 'The Rights of Persons with disabilities Act 2016' as during the years it sent alarm bell for the parents, educators, and professionals. It is believed that approximately 5% of all public school students are identified as having a learning disability (LD). An early diagnosis is necessary to prepare, plan and execute the remedial actions.¹

As per the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (RPWD, 2016) "specific learning disability" means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological process involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations and includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and development aphasia, but does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantages.²

In the school setting, psychoeducation, applied to the classroom, is a method of teaching teachers and students about children's behaviour and emotional difficulties. It aims at training teachers in helping emotionally troubled and behaviourally disordered students gain emotional and behavioural self-control.³ In this study psychoeducation refers to the method of teaching teachers about on knowledge regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities.

A cross sectional study was conducted by Deenu Chacko, Karunakaran VidhuKumarin Ernakulam District, Kerala, India (2020) on the prevalence of specific learning disorder among school going children. The study done among children studying in the fourth standard to the seventh standard in

private (both financially aided by government and unaided by the government) and government schools in Ernakulam district. Study findings revealed that the prevalence of SLD was 16.49%. The prevalence of impairment in reading (12.57%), written expression (15.6%), and mathematics was 15.6%. It suggested the need for early detection and remedial measures for children with SLD.⁴

Deena Daniel, Angel Ruth et al. (2019) conducted the study to assess the level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers. Non experimental descriptive research design and quantitative research approach was used. The sample was 150 primary school teachers of selected schools of Pune city and sampling technique was non probability technique. The study results revealed that 57.33% had average knowledge, 41.33% had poor knowledge and only 1.33% had good knowledge regarding learning disabilities. Analysis suggested that the primary school teachers of the selected schools had average knowledge regarding learning disabilities.⁵

In a study conducted by Ms. Lalzampuii, Mrs. Darshana Kumari, Mrs. Jaya Gawai (2019) on effectiveness of self instructional module on knowledge regarding selected learning disabilities in primary school children among primary school teachers, an interventional analytical approach with one group pre-test post-test research design was used. 60 samples were selected from selected primary schools by a non-probability purposive sampling technique in Vidarbha region. To collect data structured questionnaire was used. Study results shown that the pre-test knowledge was 45.65% and the post-test knowledge score was 88.1%. It shows that there was inadequate knowledge to primary school teacher's regarding learning disabilities in children.⁶

As per the recommendations of above studies, teachers are unaware about learning disabilities. The lack of necessary facilities for identification, along with delay in referral and remediation results in severe damage to their self-esteem and

motivation to study leading to academic, emotional, and behavioural problems. In such circumstances the teachers play major role as they are the people who stays with the child during their developmental period and important role in moulding 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 disabilities 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.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess knowledge regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities among teachers in selected primary schools.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of psychoeducation on knowledge regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities among teachers in selected primary schools.
3. To associate the study findings with selected demographic variables.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

Study Design: Pre-experimental one group pre-test post-test design

Study Setting: The study will be conducted in selected primary schools of Nagpur District, Maharashtra, India.

Participants: Primary school teachers of selected primary schools.

Estimation of Sample size:

$$N = \frac{(Z_{(\alpha/2)} + Z_{\beta})^2 (P_1(1 - P_1) + (P_2(1 - P_2)))}{(P_2 - P_1)^2}$$

$$Z_{\alpha/2} = \text{at } 99 \% (CI) = 2.576$$

Represents the desired level of statistical significance

: Represents the desired power = 2.576 for 99 %

Proportion for mean knowledge P1 (Before): =45.65% = 0.4565 (As per ref.article)^o

Proportion for mean knowledge P2 (After): 88.11 % = 0.881 (As per ref.article)^o

Clinically Relevant Difference = 42.65 % = 0.4245
 $N = (2.576 + 2.326)^2 \cdot ((0.4565)(1 - 0.4565) + 0.881(1 - 0.881)) / (0.4245)^2$

Minimum Sample Size (N) required = 46
 Considering (30 % drop out), Sample size N = 46 + 14 = 60

Sampling Technique: Simple random sampling.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Primary school teachers who will give
- consent to participate in study.
- Teachers who can read, write and
- speak English.

Exclusion Criteria:

Teachers who have attended previous training regarding learning disabilities.

Hypothesis:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test knowledge scores of psychoeducation regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities among teachers.

H₁: There is a significant difference between the pre-test and

post-test knowledge scores of psychoeducation regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities among teachers.

Data Collection Tool:

Section A: It includes demographic variables. age, sex, qualification, teaching experience, marital status.

Section B: It includes self-structured questionnaire on knowledge regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities.

Description Of Tool & Knowledge Assessment: Primary school teachers' knowledge will be assessed by pre and post-test using self-structured knowledge questionnaire (multiple-choice questions). The questionnaire will cover the concept, causes, types, early identifying signs and symptoms of learning disabilities. Validity and reliability of tool will be assessed by appropriate procedure & statistical measures. Validity over the questionnaire will be established for build up through both the construct & content manner to seek for the results what has intended purposely for the inferences & conclusion to measure. Knowledge assessment will be categorize as poor if the score is < 33 %, average if it is 33.01 to 66 %, and good if it is > 66.01%.

Description Of Intervention: The intervention is psychoeducation designed to improve the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities. The program will aims to equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify signs and symptoms of children with learning disabilities and provide appropriate support. The program will make use of realistic scenarios and power point presentation, charts, flashcards. The psychoeducation will involve interactive lectures and discussions. The lectures cover the concept, causes, types, early identifying signs and symptoms of learning disability. The panel of experts from psychiatry and mental health nursing will judge the content validity of psychoeducation for relevancy and adequacy of content. Pilot study will be conducted to assess the reliability of the psychoeducation.

Study Procedure And Data Collection:

The study shall be conducted only after the approval of IEC. Investigators will visit the research area and will obtain the necessary permission from the concerned authorities. Primary school teachers who fulfill inclusion criteria shall be assigned to the study. Written informed consent shall be taken from the participants. Individually participant will receive a code number and self-administered questionnaires. A self-administered questionnaire will be used to obtain information on the socio-demographics of participants. Thereafter, baseline knowledge will be assessed. Ensuring proper spacing of participants in research studies is a common practice to minimize the potential for copying or sharing information during data collection. This approach helps maintain the integrity and validity of the study results. Thereafter, investigators will deliver psychoeducation regarding early identification of learning disabilities for the participants on same day. After seven days post-test will be conducted.

Data Analysis

All results will be calculated using SPSS version 26. Overall results for the outcome variables will be listed in tables and graphs for both descriptive (Mean, mean percentage, Standard deviation), & inferential statistics (Paired t - test will be used to find the significance difference between two groups (before & after), association results will be analysed using chi square analysis).

EXPECTED RESULTS

Expected improvement in the knowledge will be about 40 to 45

% after administration of a psychoeducation regarding early identification of learning disabilities. There will be positive or negative correlation between knowledge regarding early identification of learning disabilities and selected demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

Present study findings will be supported by the result of study conducted by Deena Daniel, Angel Ruth et al. (2019) that there was a highly statistically difference in primary school teachers' knowledge between pre-post and after psychoeducation.⁴

The conclusion of these study will be reinforced by another study by B. Rajesh, Jasline.M (2020) in schools of Palvoncha, where improvement in teachers' knowledge was observed. It will help teachers for early identification of learning disabilities among school children.⁷

CONCLUSION

Investigators expect primary school teachers, who will intervened with psychoeducation regarding early identification of children with learning disabilities to be empowered with knowledge. Psychoeducation will improve teachers' knowledge regarding identification of learning disabilities and enable them to develop positive attitude towards children with LD which in turn leads to acquiring competencies to handle the children.

Consent And Ethical Approval

Approval will be obtained from Institutional Ethical Committee. Written consent will be taken from the subjects for participation in the study. Primary school teachers will be instructed that their participation in this study is entirely voluntary and they may opt out at any moment. Prior permission will be taken from head of the selected primary schools. Throughout the Study, confidentiality will be maintained. The study's findings will be disseminated to participants and published in a peer reviewed journal.

Competing Interest

Authors have declared that no competing interest exit.

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