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Narendra Kumar Sumeriya
Professor, Dasmesh College of
Nursing, Faridkot, Punjab,
India

Hemant Kumar Saini
Associate Professor,
University Institute of
Nursing, Jalalabad,
West Punjab, India

Hemlata Saini
Nursing Tutor, Govt. College
of Nursing, Alwar, Rajasthan,
India

Corresponding Author:
Narendra Kumar Sumeriya
Professor, Dasmesh College of
Nursing, Faridkot, Punjab,
India

A study to assess school teachers' knowledge on behavioral and emotional problems of children, Punjab

Narendra Kumar Sumeriya, Hemant Kumar Saini and Hemlata Saini

Abstract

Aim: The aim of the present study to assess school teachers' knowledge on behavioral and emotional problems of children, Punjab.

Methods: The descriptive design was used to assess the school teachers' knowledge on behavioral and emotional problems of children, Punjab. The study subjects were selected from primary schools of Punjab. The population for the study includes school teachers who are handling the students in the age group between 6-12 years. The sample selected for the present study was 50 school teachers who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study.

Results: The knowledge of school teachers on behavioral problems of school children shows that 11 [22%] of school teachers having moderately adequate knowledge and 39 [78%] of them have inadequate knowledge and none of the school teachers had adequate knowledge regarding behavioral problems of school children among school teachers. The mean and standard deviation of the study is 15.74 ± 5.51 . In association, the level of knowledge among school teachers on behavioral problems with selected demographic variables reveals that none of the demographic variables are non significant with the P value < 0.05 .

Conclusion: The study concluded the need of educating the primary school teacher in handling the children with emotional and behavioral problem so that every aspects of the child development is considered and taken care.

Keywords: School teachers, behavioural, emotional problems

Introduction

Normal behaviour of a child is socially, physically, culturally and mentally appropriate. Abnormal behaviour of children is not easily acceptable and mistreated by the society. The growing years of a child are perhaps the most difficult time a family ever has, because during these years a child deals with various concepts of life like family belonging, discipline and social norms. It is difficult to differentiate between mischievous children and a child with behavioural problem^[1]. Children are our future and our most precious resources. The quality of tomorrow's world and perhaps even its survival will be determined by the well-being, safety and the physical and intellectual development of children today^[2]. To predict the future of a nation, it has been remarked, one need not consult the stars; it can more easily and plainly be read in the faces of its children. According to World Health Report 15% of children have serious emotional disturbance. Epidemiological study of child and adolescent psychiatric disorders conducted by ICMR indicated the overall prevalence of mental and behavioral disorders in Indian children to be 12.5%. Mental disorders account for 5 of the top 10 leading causes of disability in the world for children above 5 years of age^[3]. Besides the increase in number of children seeking help for emotional problems, over the years, the type of problems has also undergone a tremendous change. Indian studies also reflect similar variability^[4]. Studies conducted in rural and urban areas of different part of India suggest prevalence range from approximately 1.16% to 43.1%. School teacher is the second mother to every child. So children listen to every point that teacher teaches, the unhealthy child cannot be expected to take full advantage of schooling. Health education must remain mainly in the hands of the teacher and the school health workers. Health education is a part of general education^[5]. A growing understanding of the physical, mental, emotional and normal nature of the children is the essence of professional teaching ability. Emotional behavioral problems are widely prevalence in any school children. Teacher can have an immense impact on young children's health as reported by UNESCO.

There are almost 43 million teachers around the world at the primary and secondary level. Every day at least 5-6 hrs^[6]. It is the school teacher who comes in contact with school children. If school teacher have knowledge regarding emotional and behavioral problems it will help the teachers to identify problems as early as possible and take remedial measures promptly. Care of school age child is not only important in itself, the school system also offers an excellent country wide network and entry point for a comprehensive health program. The quality of human resources of any country is largely determined by the quality of its child development services. The etiological factors for mental health problems of children are usually biological risk factors, genetic risk factors, family relationship risks, experiential risks and social environmental risk factors^[7]. A number of specific biological factors are associated with behavioral and developmental problems, mainly they contribute to behavioral & emotional problems. Teachers plays very important role in early diagnosis of mental health problems, giving reference to medical personal and also promotion of mental health among children in their schools. Schools children will spend their more time with their respective school teachers. School plays a crucial and formative role in the spheres of cognitive, language, emotional, social and moral development of children. There is now a growing recognition that schools have a significant role in promoting mental health. Teachers are powerful groups who have in their process of education studied the nature of individual growth. This has equipped them to be in a position to shape and reshape behaviors that are warranted^[8]. Teachers have been utilized for school health programs in health status assessment and health education. Since there is considerable shortage at mental health professionals, schools teachers can make important contributions in the promotion of mental health of children. The opportunity that teachers have for interpersonal relationship greatly contribute to the mental health of children^[9].

Material and methods

The descriptive design was used to assess the school teachers' knowledge on behavioral and emotional problems of children, Punjab. The study subjects were selected from primary schools of Punjab. The population for the study includes school teachers who were teaching the students in the age group between 6-12 years. The sample selected for the present study was 50 school teachers who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for the study.

Methodology

Before starting data collection, researcher obtained

permission from the school, management. Investigator introduced themselves to the School teacher and developed professional therapeutic relationship with them. The data was collected through the self-structured questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge of behavioral problem of school children, among school teachers.

Data analysis

The data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The descriptive statistical analysis was done in terms of mean and percentage distribution for the selected demographic variables of school teachers and the inferential statistical analysis was done to associate with the knowledge on behavioral problems of school teachers.

Results

The knowledge of school teachers on behavioral problems of school children shows that 11 [22%] of school teachers having moderately adequate knowledge and 39 [78%] of them have inadequate knowledge and none of the school teachers had adequate knowledge regarding behavioral problems of school children among school teachers.

The mean and standard deviation of the study was 15.74 \pm 5.51. In association, the level of knowledge among school teachers on behavioral problems with selected demographic variables reveals that none of the demographic variables are non-significant with the P value < 0.05. The major findings were the age of the school teachers reveals that 22 (44%) of the school teachers belongs to the age group of 40 and above and 5 (10%) of them were 35-40 years of age, Sex of the school teachers shows that 19 (38%) of them were males and 31 (62%) of them were females, Educational qualification of the school teachers states that 24 (48%) of the school teachers have completed their under graduation and 26 (52%) of the school teachers have completed their post-graduation, Marital status of the school teachers states that 39 (78%) of them were married and 11 (22%) of them were unmarried, Type of family of the school teachers shows that 27 (54%) of them were nuclear family, 22 (44%) of them were joint family and 1 (2%) was in extended family, Type of residence of the school teachers shows that 37 (74%) of them from urban, 13 (26%) of them from rural, Teaching experience of the school teachers reveals that 8 (16%) of them have 0-1 year experience, 3 (6%) of them have 2-3 years of experience, 1 (2%) of them have 4 years of experience 3-4 years of experience and 38 (76%) of them have more than 4 years of experience, The previous knowledge of the school teachers and the table shows that 22 (44%) of them have previous knowledge and 28 (56%) of them does not have previous knowledge.

Table 1: Level of knowledge on behavioral problem

Level of knowledge	Frequency (N=50)	Mean SD	Percentage
Inadequate knowledge	39	12.69 \pm 3.62	78%
Moderately adequate knowledge	11	19.86 \pm 2.15	22%

Table 2: Association between the of level of knowledge with basic parameter

Basic profile of the teachers		Level of knowledge		Total	x ²	
		Inadequate knowledge=39	Moderate knowledge=11		Chi square Test	P Value
Age in year	Below 30	12	1	13	3.77	4.22
	30-35	9	1	10		
	35-40	3	2	5		
	Above 40	15	7	22		
Gender	Male	8	11	19	2.98	0.21
	female	31	0	31		
Educational Qualification	UG	21	3	24	2.02	0.29
	PG	18	8	26		
Marital Status	Married	30	9	39	2.85	0.21
	Unmarried	9	2	11		
Type of Family	Nuclear	21	6	27	0.823	0.72
	Joint	17	5	22		
	Extended	1	0	1		
Residence	Urban	29	8	37	0.55	0.63
	Rural	10	3	13		
Teaching Experience	0-1 Year	5	3	8	1.41	0.61
	2-3 Years	2	1	3		
	4-5 Years	1	0	1		
	More than 4 Years	31	7	38		
Previous Knowledge	Yes	16	6	22	1.59	0.37
	No	23	5	28		

Discussion

Teachers have an immense impact on young children's mental health. They enjoy a very important position in the formation of healthy mind in then as reported by UNESCO. There are almost 43 million teachers around the world at the primary and secondary levels. The size alone of the teacher population is of public health significance. It is in this context the importance of a teacher becomes vital in safeguarding the mental health of children^[10]. The present study shows that 11 [22%] of school teachers having moderately adequate knowledge and 39 [78%] of them have inadequate knowledge and none of the school teachers had adequate knowledge regarding behavioral problems of school children among school teachers. The mean and standard deviation of the study was 15.74 ± 5.51 . The results of the present study was supported by the earlier study carried out by Angela F.Y on the prevalence of emotional and behavioural problems among primary school children. This study revealed that parents and teachers rarely had knowledge on emotional problems of primary school children. There is a need for developing programs to train, sensitize and mobilize teachers regarding child psychological, emotional, and behavioural problems^[11]. The findings of the study were negatively correlated with findings of National Longitudinal Survey Of Youth (1979), predicted the school age problem behaviour and early childhood factors, explained that child's risk factors for developing behavioural problems were gender, temperament and motor/cognitive development, mother's risk factors were age at the birth of the child, education and parenting ability and environmental risk factors were income and home environment^[12, 13]. The second objective of the study is to associate the level of knowledge on behavioral problems of school children among school teachers with the selected demographic variables. The association of the level of knowledge among school teachers on behavioral problems with selected demographic variables reveals that none of the demographic variables are non-significant with the P value < 0.05.

Conclusion

The study concluded the need of educating the primary school teacher in handling the children with emotional and behavioral problem so that every aspects of the child development is considered and taken care.

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