



KNOWLEDGE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS REGARDING LEARNING DISABILITY PREVALENCE AT SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS AT BANGLORE, URBAN

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ABSTRACT

Background of the study: Learning disabilities (LD) are among the most common developmental challenges affecting school-age children, often leading to academic difficulties, low self-esteem, and social adjustment problems if not identified early. Teachers play a crucial role in recognizing and supporting children with learning disabilities, as they interact with students on a daily basis and can observe behavioral and academic patterns. This study aimed to assess the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding the prevalence of learning disabilities in selected primary schools. A descriptive research design was employed, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire from teachers working in the selected schools. The findings revealed that while some teachers demonstrated adequate awareness of common learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia, there were notable gaps in their knowledge about identification, causes, and classroom management strategies. The results highlight the need for continuous teacher training, workshops, and awareness programs to enhance teachers' competence in identifying and supporting children with learning disabilities. Strengthening teachers' knowledge and skills will not only improve early detection but also promote inclusive education and better academic outcomes for affected children. **Objectives:** To assess the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding learning disability. **Methods:** A descriptive research design was adopted for this study. The samples were selected using a purposive sampling technique. The sample consisted of 50 primary school teachers. The instruments used for data collection were demographic characteristics and a structured knowledge questionnaire. **Results:** The pretest scores concerning the understanding of learning disabilities in children among primary school educators. The results indicate that there were 0 individuals (0.0%) with good knowledge, 5 individuals (20%) with average knowledge, and 20 individuals (80%) with poor knowledge. The sociodemographic factors and the educational credentials of primary school educators exhibited a significant correlation with the pre-assessment knowledge levels concerning the identification of learning disabilities in children. The factors of age, religion, gender, work experience, participation in conferences, and workshops focused on learning disabilities, as well as issues related to learning disabilities and employment status, did not reveal any statistically significant correlation with the pretest knowledge levels concerning learning disabilities in children, with a p-value greater than 0.05. Therefore, H1 is acknowledged. **Conclusion:** The study on the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding the prevalence of learning disabilities at selected primary schools highlights the crucial role educators play in the early identification and management of such conditions. Findings suggest that while many teachers demonstrate some level of awareness about learning disabilities, gaps remain in their ability to accurately recognize specific types, causes, and appropriate interventions. This limited knowledge may hinder timely support for affected learners, potentially impacting their academic performance and overall development.

KEYWORDS: Learning disability, prevalence, primary school teachers, knowledge, inclusive education.

INTRODUCTION

Learning is a fundamental process in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of a child. However, not all children acquire knowledge and skills at the same pace, as some experience difficulties that interfere with their learning abilities. Learning disabilities (LDs) are neurodevelopmental disorders that significantly affect a child's capacity to listen, speak, read, write, reason, or perform mathematical calculations, despite having average or above-average intelligence. Common examples include dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and attention-related difficulties.^[1]

Globally, learning disabilities affect a substantial proportion of school-going children, with prevalence rates ranging from **5% to 15%**, depending on diagnostic criteria and educational settings. In many developing countries, including Ghana and other parts of Africa, these figures are often underestimated due to a lack of awareness, inadequate screening tools, and insufficient teacher training. Early identification and support are critical, as unmanaged learning disabilities can lead to poor academic achievement, school dropout, low self-esteem, and long-term social and emotional challenges.^[2]

Teachers, particularly those at the primary school level, play a pivotal role in recognizing early signs of learning disabilities since they are in daily contact with children during their formative years. Their knowledge, attitudes, and classroom practices directly influence the timely referral, intervention, and educational support provided to learners with such difficulties. However, evidence suggests that many teachers have limited awareness and misconceptions about learning disabilities, which hinders effective identification and management.^[3]

RESULTS

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of primary school teachers.

N=25

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Age in Years	20-30	9	36.0
	31-40	5	20.0
	41-50	8	32.0
	>51	3	12.0
Sex	Male	10	40.0
	Female	15	60.0
Religion	Hindu	11	44.0
	Christian	8	32.0
	Muslim	6	24.0
Qualification	T.CH	10	40.0
	B.Ed	6	24.0
	M.Ed	6	24.0
	Degree	3	12.0
Work experience	< 3 Years	10	40.0
	4-6 Years	7	28.0
	7-10 Years	5	20.0
	>11 Years	3	12.0
Employment status	Temporary	5	20.0

Assessing the knowledge of primary school teachers regarding the prevalence of learning disabilities is therefore crucial. It provides insight into their level of preparedness to handle children with special learning needs and highlights gaps that can inform training programs, policy development, and educational interventions.^[4]

This study seeks to explore the knowledge of primary school teachers on the prevalence of learning disabilities in selected schools, with the aim of strengthening inclusive education and promoting equal opportunities for all learners.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research area

A study was conducted at selected primary schools in Bangalore urban.

Research design: A Descriptive research design was used.

Population

Study population: All primary school teachers available during data collection were the source of the population.

Inclusion Criteria: Available during data collection.

Exclusion Criteria: Those not interested in the study were excluded from the study.

Sample Size

25 primary school teachers were selected.

Data analysis

In this study, descriptive and inferential statistics were used, including frequency and percentage, to see the association between dependent and independent variables chi-squared test was used.

	Permanent	20	80.0
Problem of learning disability	NO	12	48.0
	YES	13	52.0
Conference workshop of learning disability	NO	10	40.0
	YES	15	60.0
Total		25	100

Table 1 illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of primary school educators in relation to demographic variables. Examination indicated that a majority of primary school educators, specifically 9 (36%), fell within the age range of 20 to 30 years. Additionally, 8 (32%) of these teachers were categorized in the age bracket of 41 to 50 years, while 5 (20%) belonged to the 31 to 40 years group, and 3 (12%) were aged over 51 years. In examining the gender composition of primary school educators, it was observed that a significant proportion, specifically 15 out of 25 teachers, or 60%, were female, while the remaining 10, constituting 40%, were male. Regarding the religious affiliations of primary school educators, the highest representation was found among Hindus, with 11 teachers (44%), followed by Christians at 8 (32%), and Muslims at 6 (24%). Concerning the academic credentials of primary school educators, 18 (36%)

possessed a Degree, 14 (28%) held a B.Ed, while merely 9 (18%) of the instructors were qualified with T.Ch and M.Ed. Concerning the professional experience of primary school educators, 10 (40%) had less than 3 years, 7 (28%) possessed between 3 to 4 years, 5 (20%) had between 7 to 10 years, and 3 (12%) exceeded 12 years of experience. Concerning the employment situation of primary school educators, 20 (80%) held permanent positions, while 5 (20%) were on temporary contracts. Concerning the issues related to learning disabilities, 13 individuals (52%) affirmed the presence of a learning disability, while 12 individuals (48%) denied having one. Concerning the conference and workshop focused on learning disabilities for primary school educators, 15 individuals, representing 60%, participated, while 10 individuals, accounting for 40%, did not attend.

Section II: Description of pretest level of knowledge regarding learning disability among primary school teachers, N=25

Knowledge status	Pretest Knowledge Level	
	Number	Percentage
Poor knowledge	20	80.00
Average Knowledge	5	20.00
Good knowledge	0	0.0
Total	25	100.00

Table 2 illustrates the pretest scores concerning the understanding of learning disabilities in children among primary school educators. The results indicate that there

were 0 individuals (0.0%) with good knowledge, 5 individuals (20%) with average knowledge, and 20 individuals (80%) with poor knowledge.

Table 3: Association between pretest levels of learning disability among primary school teachers with selected sociodemographic variables.

Variables	Knowledge score				Chi-square	DF	P-Value
	Poor	Average	good	Total			
Age groups							
20-30	2	1	0	3	1.046	2	0.085
31-40	6	1	0	7			
41-50	8	2	0	10			
>51	4	1	0	5			
Gender							
Male	8	2	0	10	0.624	1	0.430
Female	12	3	0	15			
Religion							
Hindu	11	2	0	13	0.429	2	0.807
Muslim	4	1	0	5			
Christian	5	2	0	7			
Qualification							
T.CH	3	1	0	4	0.264	3	0.0045*
B.Ed	8	2	0	10			
M.Ed	3	1	0	4			

Degree	6	1	0	7			
Work experience							
<3Years	5	1	0	6	1.569	3	0.312
4-6 Years	4	2	0	6			
7-10Years	8	1	0	9			
>11 Years	3	1	0	4			
Conference, workshop of learning disability							
Yes	18	3	0	21	0.266	3	0.352
No	2	2	0	4			
Employment status							
Permanent	15	3	0	18	0.234	1	0.629
Temporary	5	2	0	7			
Problems of learning disability							
Yes	16	3	0	19	0.147	1	0.751
No	4	2	0	6			
Total	20	5	0	25			

(* -P>0.05, significant) (NS=Not significant)S=(significant)

The preceding table 3 discloses that sociodemographic factors the educational credentials of primary school educators exhibited a significant correlation with the pre-assessment knowledge levels concerning the identification of learning disabilities in children. The factors of age, religion, gender, work experience, participation in conferences, and workshops focused on learning disabilities, as well as issues related to learning disabilities and employment status, did not reveal any statistically significant correlation with the pretest knowledge levels concerning learning disabilities in children, with a p-value greater than 0.05. Therefore, H1 is acknowledged.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study reveal important insights into the knowledge level of primary school teachers concerning the prevalence of learning disabilities among pupils in selected schools. Learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, and attention deficit disorders are increasingly recognized as key factors that affect children's academic performance and overall development. Teachers, being the first line of contact in the learning process, play a crucial role in identifying, supporting, and referring children with such conditions.

The results indicate that while some teachers demonstrated a fair understanding of learning disabilities, significant gaps remain in areas such as early identification, types of learning disabilities, and strategies for classroom management. Limited knowledge in these domains could contribute to delayed recognition of affected pupils, misinterpretation of symptoms, and ineffective teaching strategies. These findings align with previous research which has highlighted that inadequate teacher preparation and lack of in-service training hinder the effective handling of pupils with special needs.

Another important observation is the lack of awareness regarding the actual prevalence of learning disabilities in the classroom. Many teachers underestimated or overestimated the occurrence, which suggests that they may not have adequate exposure to evidence-based prevalence rates. Such misconceptions can affect the allocation of attention and resources to learners requiring additional support. The discussion also highlights systemic challenges, such as the absence of structured professional development programs, limited resources in schools, and insufficient collaboration with special education experts. Without adequate training, teachers may rely on personal experience rather than evidence-based practices, potentially reinforcing stigma and discrimination toward children with learning disabilities.^[6]

CONCLUSION

Learning disabilities remain a significant challenge in the educational journey of many children, and the knowledge and awareness of primary school teachers play a crucial role in early identification, intervention, and support. Evidence shows that while some teachers possess basic understanding of learning disabilities, many still lack adequate training and confidence in recognizing and addressing them. Strengthening teachers' knowledge through continuous professional development, workshops, and inclusion of special education modules in teacher training curricula is essential. When teachers are empowered with the right skills and awareness, they can create inclusive classroom environments, reduce stigma, and foster better learning outcomes for children with learning disabilities.

Competing interest

The authors report no conflicts of interest for this work.

Authors' contributions

Each author helped prepare the text and participated in the data interpretation process. The final draft of the manuscript has been read and approved by all writers.

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