

# A Study To Assess The Effectiveness Of Iec Package On Awareness Regarding Learning Disability And Its Coping Strategies Among Primary School Teachers In Selected Schools At Chennai.

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## Abstract

A "learning handicap" is an inexplicable difficulty in gaining fundamental academic abilities in a person of average intelligence. These abilities are necessary for academic and professional success, as well as coping with life in general.

**Objectives:** To determine the level of awareness among primary school teachers on learning disabilities and coping methods prior to the exam. To determine the level of knowledge of learning disabilities and coping methods among primary school instructors after the exam. To compare the degree of awareness of learning disabilities and coping methods among primary school teachers before and after the exam.

**Methodology:** This research adopted quasi experimental (one group pre-test – post-test) research design. The data collecting tool consisted of structured questionnaire to measure primary school teachers' knowledge on learning disabilities and coping strategies that was self-developed and validated by the content experts.

**Findings:** Pre-test levels of learning impairment and coping methods among primary school teachers revealed 91% of them had insufficient awareness, while 8 % had moderately acceptable awareness. The post-test revealed out of 60 teachers, 56 % had adequate knowledge, while 43 % of the teachers showed fairly adequate awareness towards learning disabilities and coping methods. The study's findings indicated a significant difference in instructors' pre- and post-awareness of learning disabilities and coping methods ( $t= 26.6$  at  $P 0.000$ ).

**Conclusion:** The study findings revealed that the intervention was effective in improving the knowledge on learning disabilities and coping strategies which in turn will improve the overall quality of life of the children with learning disabilities in future.

**Keywords:** Learning disability, IEC package, awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies, primary school teachers

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There are children who can learn and not learn at the same time. Some students apply little or no effort to school tasks while they commit considerable time and effort to demanding, creative activities outside of school. These behaviors are typical of some students who are simultaneously gifted and learning disabled. This is not surprising, because the "experts" in each of these disciplines have difficulty reaching agreement. Some still believe that giftedness is equated with outstanding achievement across all subject areas. Recent advances in both fields have alerted professionals to the possibility that both sets of behavior can exist simultaneously (Baum, 1990).

Learning disabilities are problems that affect the brain's ability to receive, process, analyze, or store information. These problems can make it difficult for a student to learn as quickly as someone who isn't affected by Learning disabilities. (Jennifer Zubler, MD, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2020). Children or young people who have a learning disability are aware of what goes on around them. However, their ability to understand and communicate may be very limited, and they find it hard to express themselves (Lynnes, 2013).

For a parent, it can be very distressing to find out that their child has a learning disability. It may be hard for them and other members of the family to understand why their child has learning disabilities. They may not understand the full extent of the problems. (Gina Kemp, et al., 2020)

As the children with learning disability find it difficult to adjust in schools, teachers are also challenged (and charged) to find ways and provide them with the very best instruction possible. The best sources of assistance and the most promising pool of resources are to be found right there in the school. General and special educators working creatively, sharing ideas and strategies, tapping related services providers and others including speech- language therapists, psychologists, and occupational therapists, implementing progress- monitoring activities and sharing responsibility for needed adjustment in instruction. These are ways to ensure that students have the best opportunities to succeed, and these are the ways to help educators and administrators create learning communities, pooling resources and sharing expertise to the benefit of all (Bachrach,2016).

Germano and Capellini, (2008) highlighted in his study that audio visual computerized remediation program for students with dyslexia was effective in improving the post-test score of their knowledge. Similarly another study revealed that computer assisted instructional program was more effective in solving the real life problems and improved internalization of the real life situations among the students (Miranda, et. al., 2008). Brook et. al., (2009) in their study highlighted that the score for attitude and understanding of Learning disability children was relatively low (72.5%) for both groups, whereas Group B teachers scored higher. The overall scoring for positive attitude was 75%.

The school is one of the most organized and powerful systems in the society which presents opportunity to work through it and to influence the health and wellbeing of those who come in contact with it. It is also vital for nurses in safe guarding and promoting the mental health of children and early identification of deviations from normal (Fazel, et al., 2020). This is especially true in Indian settings where there is a considerable shortage in mental health facility for children. Thus will be a dynamic force, instrumental and indispensable in assisting the teachers to learn, recognize and to help children with learning disability. Hence the researcher felt that it is important to understand the awareness of primary school teachers regarding learning disabilities as they are handling the children more than their parents and therefore it is essential that they should have awareness regarding the learning disabilities in children. The results of the study would guide the primary school teachers to handle the children with Learning disability (Sasmita Ghimire, et.al., 2017).

## METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach was used for assessing the effectiveness of IEC package on awareness regarding Learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers. The research design adopted in this study was one group pretest- posttest design.

**Independent Variable:** In this study independent variable was Information, Education, Communication (IEC) package on Learning disability and its coping strategies.

**Dependent Variable:** The dependent variable of the study was Awareness of the primary School teachers regarding learning disability and its coping Strategies.

**Extraneous Variable:** Extraneous variables were Age, Age group of students handled, Formal training in teaching, Experience of work, Exposure to In-Service training.

**Research setting:** The study was conducted at 4 selected private schools at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The average numbers of teachers at each school were 35, among those 15 primary school teachers were taken for the study.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DATA COLLECTION TOOL

The tool consisted of 2 parts

**Part 1** Structured questionnaire to elicit the demographic variables.

**Part 2** Structured questionnaire to assess the awareness regarding learning disability and its coping Strategies among primary School teachers.

**Part1** Demographic variables consisted of 5 items such as Age, Age group of students handled, Formal training in teaching, Experience of work, and Exposure to in-service training.

**Part 2** Structured questionnaire to assess the awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies consisted of 30 items.

## SCORING:

Each correct answer carried a score of 1 and incorrect answer a score of 0. The total score was 30. The score was interpreted as

LEVEL OF AWARENESS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Inadequate awareness	< or = 50%
Moderately adequate awareness	51 – 75%
Adequate awareness	>75%

**Table 2:** Interpretation of scores

## VALIDITY OF THE TOOL

The research tool was validated by experts from the field of mental health nursing department. The tool was validated for the appropriateness, relevancy, and accuracy of the tool.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The study was approved by the Institutional Ethical Committee (IEC), and due permission was obtained from the Correspondents and Principals of the schools prior to the data collection. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before starting data collection. Assurance was given to the subjects that anonymity of each individual would be maintained.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Population was the primary school teachers working in schools. Pre-test was done by administering structured questionnaire to assess the awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies. Followed to the pre- test, IEC Package was implemented using flash cards and flyers. The number of participants in each session was 15 members and the method of teaching used was lecture cum discussion method. After one week of interval, the post test was done using the same tool. The data was analyzed by using both descriptive (mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (paired 't' test, Chi square).

## RESULTS

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage distribution of pretest level of awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers.

N=60

Level of awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate awareness	55	91%
Moderately adequate awareness	5	8%
Adequate awareness	0	0%

Table 2 illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of primary school teachers pre-test level of awareness of learning disabilities.

In the pre-test level, the researcher found that 91% of primary school instructors had insufficient awareness, 8% had fairly adequate awareness, and no one had adequate understanding of learning disabilities and coping methods.

**Table 3:** Frequency and percentage distribution of post test level of awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school.

N=60

Level of awareness	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate awareness	0	0%
Moderately adequate awareness	26	43%
Adequate awareness	34	56%

Table 3 illustrates the frequency and percentage distribution of primary school teachers' post-test degree of awareness of learning disabilities and coping methods.

In the post-test level, the analysis showed that 43% of primary school teachers had fairly adequate awareness and 56% had adequate awareness of learning disabilities and coping methods.

**Table 4:** Comparison of pretest and post test level of awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers.

N=60

Variables	pretest		Post test		't' value
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation	
Awareness	11.3	2.99	23.1	2.61	26.1 P<0.000 Highly significant

Table 4 compares pre and post test level of awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers.

Table 4 contrasts the level of knowledge of learning disabilities and coping methods among primary school teachers before and after the exam.

The study indicated that among primary school teachers, the mean awareness score before the exam was 11.3, with a standard deviation of 2.99, and the mean awareness score after the test was 23.1, with a standard deviation of 2.61. The average level of awareness among elementary school teachers was to be statistically highly significant with 't' value 26.1 at  $p < 0.000$  level.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the objective of the study, pre-test level of awareness regarding Learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers was assessed. The results of the analysis revealed the pre test level of learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers revealed that in the pre test 91% primary school teachers had inadequate awareness, 8% had moderately adequate awareness and none of them had adequate awareness.

In the post test, 43% had moderately adequate awareness, and 56% had adequate awareness about learning disability and its coping strategies. The post-test level of awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers revealed majority of the teachers gained adequate knowledge and awareness with regards to learning disabilities and its coping strategies. The mean awareness scores of primary school teachers was found to be statistically highly significant with 't' value 26.1, at  $p = 0.000$  level. Cumulatively, the study showed a significant difference between the pre test and post test awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies among primary school teachers. However, his study is limited to Indian settings and was unable to take bigger samples for the investigation due to time restrictions.

## CONCLUSION:

The results of the study concluded that IEC package was effective in providing awareness regarding learning disability and its coping strategies. Thus the study reveals that an established plan, especially training the teachers how to handle those children's with learning disability, can make significant change in the outcome of such commonly occurring disability among children.

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## Conflicts of interest

No conflicts of interest.

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