

Knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers in selected schools at Kollam District

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Abstract

A descriptive study was conducted to assess the knowledge regarding childhood Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) among school teachers in selected schools at Kollam district. A non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted, and a purposive sampling technique was used to select a sample of 100 school teachers working in lower and upper primary schools who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. Data were collected using a socio-demographic proforma and a structured knowledge questionnaire consisting of 25 multiple choice questions. The results showed that 4% of the teachers had very good knowledge, 21% had good knowledge, 36% had average knowledge, and 39% had poor knowledge regarding childhood ADHD, with a mean knowledge score of 12.45 (SD = 4.31). Chi-square analysis revealed a significant association between knowledge and medium of instruction ($\chi^2 = 10.730$, df = 3, $p = 0.013$), while no significant association was found between knowledge and other socio-demographic variables such as age, gender, teaching experience, type of school, educational qualification, subject taught, and class teacher status. The study concluded that a considerable proportion of school teachers had inadequate knowledge regarding childhood ADHD, highlighting the need for structured training and awareness programs to strengthen teachers' ability to identify and support children with ADHD.

Keywords: Childhood ADHD, knowledge, school teachers

Introduction

Childhood is a crucial period of growth and development during which cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns are formed [1]. During this stage children develop skills such as attention, self-control, communication, and problem-solving, which are essential for academic success and healthy social relationships. The school and home environment play a major role in this development, and teachers, who interact with children on a daily basis, are well placed to observe deviations from expected developmental milestones and to support children's behavioral and social growth [2, 3].

Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is one of the most common neurodevelopmental conditions affecting children and can significantly interfere with learning, behavior, and social relationships. It is characterized by the co-occurrence of inattention and hyperactive-impulsive behavior and affects approximately 3% to 5% of children globally, with 30% to 50% of those diagnosed in childhood continuing to show symptoms later in life [4]. A recent umbrella review of meta-analyses covering more than 3.2 million participants estimated the global prevalence of ADHD in children and adolescents at approximately 8.0%, with prevalence roughly twice as high in boys as in girls [7]. Because ADHD symptoms are frequently most evident in the classroom, teachers occupy a critical position in the early identification and referral of children who may need clinical assessment [5, 6]. Well-informed teachers can facilitate timely referral for diagnosis, and early identification helps prevent complications such as poor academic performance, low self-esteem, behavioral problems, and associated mental health difficulties. Several studies conducted among school teachers across different

countries have reported considerable gaps in ADHD-related knowledge, underscoring the need to assess and strengthen this knowledge base so that teachers can better support affected children [8, 9, 12].

Statement of The Problem

A descriptive study to assess the knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers in selected schools at Kollam district.

Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers.
2. To find out the association between knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers with selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant association between knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers with selected demographic variables.

Operational Definitions

Knowledge: The understanding and awareness that school teachers have regarding childhood ADHD, including its definition, causes, signs and symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment, as measured using a structured knowledge questionnaire.

Childhood ADHD: A neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity in children aged 6–12 years, including observable behaviors such as difficulty focusing, restlessness, distractibility, and

impulsive actions that may interfere with classroom functioning.

School Teachers: Individuals currently teaching at the primary or upper primary level in selected schools.

Assumptions

1. School teachers have varying knowledge regarding childhood ADHD based on their education, training, and teaching experience.
2. Teachers' knowledge plays an important role in early identification, referral, and classroom management of children with ADHD.

Methodology

Research Approach

A quantitative research approach was adopted for this study, as the aim of the investigators was to assess the knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers in selected schools at Kollam district.

Research Design

A descriptive research design was used.

Setting of the Study

The study was conducted in selected schools at Kollam District, Kerala.

Population

The population comprised lower and upper primary school teachers working in selected schools at Kollam District.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of 100 school teachers who fulfilled the inclusion criteria and were available during the period of data collection were selected using a purposive sampling technique.

Criteria for Selection of Sample Inclusion Criteria

- School teachers working in selected schools at Kollam District.
- Teachers willing to participate in the study.
- Teachers available during data collection.

Exclusion Criteria

- Teachers who had undergone formal training on ADHD.

Tools and Technique

Tool 1: Socio-demographic proforma covering age, gender, teaching experience, type of school, medium of instruction, educational qualification, subject taught, and class teacher status.

Tool 2: A structured knowledge questionnaire consisting of 25 multiple choice questions used to assess knowledge regarding childhood ADHD. Interpretation: 0–40% – poor knowledge; 41–60% – average knowledge; 61–80% – good knowledge; 81–100% – very good knowledge.

Content validity was established through expert review by five experts across the departments of Community Health Nursing, Adult Health Nursing, Child Health Nursing, and Mental Health Nursing. Reliability of the knowledge questionnaire was established by the split-half method and the tool was found reliable. A pilot study was conducted among

ten lower primary school teachers at Vazhappally School, Kollam.

Data Collection Process

After obtaining ethical approval, the main study was conducted during February–March 2026. Permission was obtained from the concerned school authorities and verbal consent was obtained from each participant after explaining the purpose of the study. Data were collected from 100 school teachers of selected schools in Kollam district using the structured knowledge questionnaire, with doubts clarified during each data collection session.

Results and Discussion

The findings are organized under the following sections:

Section A: Distribution of socio-demographic variables.

Section B: Distribution of knowledge scores among school teachers.

Section C: Association between knowledge scores and demographic variables.

Section A: Distribution of Demographic Variables

- Among the 100 school teachers, 28% belonged to the age group 20–30 years, 31% to 31–40 years, 25% to 41–50 years, and 16% to 51–60 years.
6% of the subjects were male and 94% were female.
- 35% had 0–5 years of teaching experience, 30% had 5–10 years, and 35% had more than 10 years of experience.
- Regarding type of school, 17% worked in government schools, 28% in aided schools, and 55% in unaided schools.
- 84% of the teachers used English as the medium of instruction and 16% used Malayalam.
- Regarding educational qualification, 55% held a D.Ed., 27% held a B.Ed., and 18% held a postgraduate qualification.
- Regarding subject taught, 48% taught language subjects, 13% taught science, 19% taught mathematics, 11% taught social science, and 9% taught other subjects.
75% of the teachers held class teacher status, while 25% did not.

Section B: Knowledge Scores

Among the 100 school teachers, 4% had very good knowledge, 21% had good knowledge, 36% had average knowledge, and 39% had poor knowledge regarding childhood ADHD (Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency, percentage, mean and SD of knowledge among school teachers (n = 100)

Knowledge Level	Freq.	%	Mean	SD
Very good knowledge	4		4%	
Good knowledge	21	21%	12.45	4.31
Average knowledge	36		36%	
Poor knowledge	39		39%	

Section C: Association with Demographic Variables

Chi-square analysis revealed a significant association between knowledge and medium of instruction ($\chi^2 = 10.730$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.013$). No significant association was found between knowledge and age ($\chi^2 = 8.435$, $df = 9$, $p = 0.491$), gender ($\chi^2 = 4.268$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.234$), teaching experience

($\chi^2 = 11.203$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.082$), type of school ($\chi^2 = 3.636$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.726$), educational qualification ($\chi^2 = 2.316$, $df = 16$, $p = 0.889$), subject taught ($\chi^2 = 7.591$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.816$), or class teacher status ($\chi^2 = 5.153$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.161$) (Table 2).

Table 2: Association of Knowledge with Socio-Demographic Variables (n=100)

Variable	df	χ^2	p
Age	9	8.435	0.491
Gender	3	4.268	0.234
Teaching experience	6	11.203	0.082
Type of school	6	3.636	0.726
Medium of instruction	3	10.730**	0.013
Educational qualification	16	2.316	0.889
Subject taught	12	7.591	0.816
Class teacher status	3	5.153	0.161

**Significant at $p < 0.05$

These findings are consistent with earlier work in this area. Srignanasoundari *et al.* found that among 100 primary school teachers in Kanchipuram district, a majority had poor to fair knowledge of ADHD and only 40% had good knowledge, reflecting a similar knowledge gap to that observed in the present study.[8] Similarly, Redha and Ahmad, in a study among primary school teachers in Kirkuk City, reported that while general awareness of ADHD was high, only 44.5% of teachers demonstrated good overall knowledge, and identified a significant association between gender and prior ADHD-related training with knowledge scores, broadly supporting the present study's finding that specific demographic factors, rather than all socio-demographic variables uniformly, are linked to teachers' knowledge [12].

Conclusion

The present study assessed the knowledge regarding childhood ADHD among school teachers in selected schools at Kollam district and examined its association with selected demographic variables. The findings revealed that among the 100 school teachers, only 4% had very good knowledge and 21% had good knowledge, while 36% had average knowledge and 39% had poor knowledge regarding childhood ADHD. A significant association was found between knowledge and medium of instruction, while no significant association was observed with the other socio-demographic variables studied. These findings indicate a considerable gap in teachers' knowledge of childhood ADHD and emphasize the importance of structured training and awareness programs, particularly considering the influence of medium of instruction, to strengthen early identification, referral, and classroom management of children with ADHD.

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