

Knowledge regarding School Phobia among Teachers of Selected Government Schools, Bharatpur

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ABSTRACT

Background: School phobia is defined as absenteeism or child refusal to attend school or difficulty in attending classes or remaining in school for an entire day. Various stressors trigger school phobia, including problematic family dynamics, parents marital discord, impending school-based changes, family-based transitions, illness, and traumatic experiences. Thus, the objective of the study is to find out the knowledge regarding school phobia among the teachers of selected government school.

Methods: A descriptive, cross-sectional research design was used. Non-probability consecutive sampling technique was used for the study. Sample size was 65 of selected 2 government schools. Data were collected through the self-administered – structured, questionnaire. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 16 and descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: The findings of the study revealed that more than half (55.6%) of the respondents had inadequate level of knowledge regarding School Phobia. The present study showed that there is no significant association between level of knowledge and selected variables i.e. age, gender, ethnic group marital status, educational level, exposure with school phobia and training

Conclusions: This study concluded that only two fifth of the teachers tends had adequate knowledge regarding school phobia. Therefore, structured teaching planning, training, awareness programme should be conducted to improve the knowledge regarding school phobia.

Keywords: Knowledge, School phobia, Teacher

INTRODUCTION

School phobia is defined as absenteeism or child refusal to attend school or difficulty in attending classes or remaining in school for an entire day, which manifests in children and adolescents from 5 to 17 years of age.¹ Many factors trigger school phobia, which including separation anxiety, problematic family situation, school-based changes, bullying, family-based transitions, illness, and traumatic experiences.² Some common causes school refusal include separation anxiety, Jealousy over a new infant sibling, decline in grades, fear of teachers and other causes. Students are commonly shows features as complaining of crying, headache, stomach ache, feeling sick, fever, an adolescent who misses the bus every day, complaining of lose clothes, book, notes.³ School refusal is a serious emotional problem that is associated with significant short-and long-term effect on children's social, emotional and educational

development. It is also a complex syndrome that can be influenced by the child's temperament, the situation at school, and the family situation. It is often associated with co-morbid psychiatric disorders such as anxiety and depression.⁴

Globally approximately up to 8% of all school aged children have school refusal. The prevalence of childhood disorder is 11.1% in Indian (Kafle, Vaidya, Chhetri, Mehrotra, Panta, 2010).⁵ A study conducted in Norway among students aged 12 to 13 years, they found that 3.6% had refuse to attend school (Havik, 2015).⁶ Similarly, study conducted in Nepal, showed as much as 14% of children claim to have dropped out of school because they were afraid of their teacher which is one of the causes for school phobia.⁷

At Mangaluru, India, only 4% among 100 primary teachers had adequate knowledge, 17% had inadequate knowledge

and 80% had moderate knowledge regarding behavioral problems of children which also included school phobia .⁸Teachers have significant role in educating child along with that, they are considered as second guardian who directly deals with the child’s behavior and activities. A teacher puts the best efforts to help every child achieve optimal academic performance.⁹ Teachers are recognized as often being the first adults outside the family unit to identify mental health concerns, and parents often rely on them for guidance and support in these matters .¹⁰ In the context of Nepal, there is no evidence regarding knowledge about school phobia among teachers. Even exact data regarding school phobia is not available. Still there might be phobic student studying in general school. So, the researcher found the need to assess the knowledge of teachers regarding school phobia among school teachers in Bharatpur Metropolitan.

METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional research design was used to find out the knowledge regarding school phobia among teachers. Study was conducted in 2 selected government schools of Bharatpur, Metropolitan city i.e. Annapurna Higher Secondary School Parbatipur and Bhanu Secondary School Paharilotar. The population of the study include all the teachers of selected 2 government school Bharatpur-21, Chitwan. Total population of the study were 65. Non- probability consecutive sampling technique was used for the study. Researcher included all teachers by using census method. Inclusion criteria for this study were all the teachers who was willing to participate in the study.

The self-administer structure questionnaire was used to collect data. The tools were divided into two parts: part I and part ii. Part I includes 11 question related to sociodemographic information. Part ii includes 20 question related to knowledge regarding school phobia.

The content validity was established through review of the available literature, peer review and subject expertise. Pretesting of the tool was done among 10 teachers of Trijudhha secondary school Birgunj which was excluded from the main study.

Approval was taken from the Research Management Cell of Birgunj Nursing Campus. Permission was taken from the principle of concerned school i.e. Annapurna higher secondary school and Bhanu secondary school. Informed consent was obtained from the respondent before collecting the data Respondents was explained that their participation to this study was voluntary and can withdraw from the study at any time if they wished

without any compensation. Confidentiality of the collected information was maintained. The data was collected from date 2079/09 /07 to 2079/09 /21. The time taken was 10-15 min for each respondent.

The obtained data were edited, coded, and organized before entry into the computer system. Data entry and analysis was done using the computer software statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 16. The finding was analyzed using descriptive statistic for demographic information and inferential statistics chi square analysis through statistical package for social science version 16 to find out association between dependent and independent variables as applicable.

RESULTS

Table 1: Respondents socio-demographic characteristics n=65

Variables	Number	Percent
Age (in years)		
20-30years	18	27.7
30-40 years	30	46.2
40 above	17	26.2
Mean ± SD : 37.7 ± 9.25		
Range : 23-59		
Sex		
Female	35	53.8
Male	30	46.1
Marital status		
Unmarried	47	72.3
Married	18	27.7
Ethnicity		
Brahmin / Chhetri	47	72.3
Janajati	12	18.8
Dalit	6	9.24
Highest educational level		
Bachelor degree	37	47.7
Master and above	28	52.3
Teaching experience		
1-5 years	15	24.0
5-10 years	19	28.3
10 years above	31	47.7
Class teach by teacher		
1-7 class 8-10 class	15	24.0
11-12 class		
Exposure to phobic children		
Yes	43	66.1
No	22	33.8
Training		
No	65	100.0

Table 1 illustrate that less than half (46.2%) of the respondents belong to the age group (31-40) years. The mean age respondents was 37.7 and standard deviation was 9.25. Majority of respondents (72.30%) were Brahmin/ Chhetri whereas 9.3% were Dalit. Likewise, more than half (52.3%) of the respondent were passed master degree.

TABLE 2: Respondents' knowledge regarding general information on school phobia n=65

Variables	Number	Percent
Meaning of school phobia		
Child refuses to go school due to fear of school [#]	39	60.0
Afraid from teachers	26	40.0
Type of disorder		
Psychological disorder	41	63.2
Behavioural problem [#]	20	30.8
Intellectual disorder	4	6.0
Common age group		
School age group [#]	34	52.3
Preschool age group	20	30.8
Adolescent age	11	16.9
Incidence of school phobia		
Same in boys and girls [#]	44	67.7
High in girls	8	20.0
High in boys	8	12.3

[#] Correct answer

Table 2 illustrate respondents' knowledge regarding school phobia the majority (60%) of the respondents had knowledge that the meaning of school phobia is child refuses to go school due to anxiety or fear of school. Similarly, majority of the respondents (63.07%) correctly respondents that school phobia is the psychological disorder. Likewise, more than half (52.30%) of the respondents had knowledge about common school age. As regards to the incidence of school phobia 67.7% correctly responded on same in girls and boys.

TABLE 3: Respondents' knowledge regarding causes and symptoms of school phobia n=65

Variables	Number	Percent
Cause of school phobia*		
Afraid of teachers [#]	50	76.9
Educational failure [#]	39	60.0
Separation anxiety [#]	30	46.1
Excessive use of technology [#]	21	32.0
Bullying*	17	26.0
Factors influencing of school phobia *		
Change in family background [#]	52	80.0
Harassment at school [#]	42	63.7
Good relation with friends	22	33.8
Fear of reward	13	20.0
Physical symptoms school phobia *		
Headache [#]	53	81.5
Stomach ache [#]	38	58.4
Nausea vomiting [#]	21	32.3
Excessive laughing [#]	12	18.4
Enthusiastic	11	16.9
Psychological symptoms of school phobia *		
Crying ,shouting ,screaming [#]	51	78.4
Stay away from reality [#]	28	43.0
Angerness attempt to harm [#]	25	38.4
Palpitation [#]	25	38.4

*Multiple responses, [#] Correct answer

Table 3 represent respondent's knowledge regarding cause, influencing factor and symptom of school phobia where, majority (76.9%) of respondents gave correct response to the cause of phobia. Most of the respondent (80%) were answered that change in family background as the factor influencing the phobia. Regarding physical symptoms, both headache and stomach ache were reported to greater extent. More than three-fourth of respondents (78.4%) answered the Crying, shouting, screaming were psychological symptom of school phobia.

TABLE 4: Respondents’ knowledge regarding prevention of school phobia n=65

Variables	Number	Percent
Preventive Measure At school*		
Discussing the issue with parents [#]	32	49.2
Allow to express their feelings [#]	32	49.2
Gradually exposure to the school environment [#]	30	46.1
Identify the trigger factor [#]	29	44.6
Preventive Measure At home*		
Understand what they want to avoid [#]	44	67.6
Talk with child [#]	39	60.0
Ignore child phobic behaviour [#]	11	16.9
Don’t let stay at home [#]	7	10.7
Assess child condition [#]	43	66.2
Give time to child [#]	42	64.6
Listen what they express [#]	41	63.1
Teach them to face challenges [#]	40	61.5
Interact with faculty [#]	33	50.8

* Multiple responses, # Correct answer

Table 4 displays, the respondent’s knowledge regarding prevention of school phobia where, less than half (49.2%) of respondent are answered that both discussing the issue with child, allow them to express their feeling are the preventive measures at school and 67.6% of respondents believed with talking and understanding their avoidance. Similarly, majority of (66.2%) respondent correctly responded with assess the child condition, give time to them are also preventive measures of school phobia as a parent.

Table 5: Respondents’ Level of Knowledge Regarding School Phobia n=65

Level of knowledge	Knowledge score	Number	Percent
Inadequate (<50.00%)	<32score	36	55.4
Adequate (>50.00%)	>32 score	29	44.6
Total		65	100.0

Table 5 represent more than a half (55.4%) of respondent had inadequate knowledge regarding school phobia. Likewise, one fifth (44.6 %) of respondent had adequate regarding school phobia

Table 6: Association between level of knowledge on school phobia and selected demographic variables n=65

Variables	Inadequate Knowledge no (%)	Adequate Knowledge No (%)	Chi square (X ²)	P Value
Age group				
20-30 years	17 (68.0)	8 (32.0)	2.930	0.231
30-40 years	12 (44.4)	15 (55.5)		
Above 40	7 (53.6)	6 (46.2)		
Gender				
Male	15 (50.0)	15 (50.0)	0.654	419
Female	21 (60.0)	14 (40.0)		
Marital status				
Married	13 (43.3)	17 (56.7)	3.275	0.070
Unmarried	23 (65.7)	12 (34.4)		
Ethnic group				
Brahmin/ Chettri	23 (48.9)	24 (51.1)	2.856	0.091
Janajati	13 (72.2)	5 (27.8)		
Educational level				
Bachelor level	21 (58.8)	16 (41.2)	0.790	0.674
Master and above	15 (53.6)	13 (46.4)		

DISCUSSION

This study showed that (55.4%) of the respondents had inadequate knowledge regarding school phobia among the school teachers and (44.6%) of the respondents had adequate knowledge which is contrary to the study conducted at Iraq where most of the respondent (above 85%) had poor knowledge regarding school phobia.¹⁰ Similarly another study conducted in Mangaluru, India showed that only 3% among 100 primary level teachers had adequate knowledge which is contrary to this study.¹¹ Likewise, a study conducted in Vadodara, among 60 school teachers, only 49.40 had average knowledge regarding selected common behavioral problems of children which is similar with this study.¹²

The study conducted in school of Venezuela revealed that (17.7 %) of children are having intense fear of school and high rates of emotional and psychological symptoms as well as somatic complaints in students with school refusal behaviour which is slightly lower than present study (38.4%) .¹³

The present study showed that there is no significant association between level of knowledge and selected variables which is contrary to the study conducted in Baghdad city, Iraq, by Khudhair & Sahel there was

statistical significant association between teachers knowledge on school phobia and gender ($p=0.02$), level of education (0.034), and teaching experience ($p=0.02$).¹⁰

CONCLUSIONS

The study conclude that more than half of the teachers tends to have inadequate knowledge and there is no association between level of knowledge and selected variables such as age, sex, ethnic group, educational level, teaching experience, training. So, structure teaching planning, training, awareness programme should be planned and implemented to improve and provide the knowledge about school phobia to teachers.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest

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