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Assessment of Teachers' Knowledge toward Communicable Diseases in Primary School

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Abstract--- Methods: *A descriptive study design was conducted on primary school teachers, starting from December 2019 to the march 2020 in order to identify the scope of primary school teacher's knowledge, concerning communicable diseases.*

Non probability (purposive) sample of (250) teachers were selected from (50) Primary Schools from Alhawija district in Kirkuk Governorate. The data were collected by the investigator who interviewed teachers in their primary schools, and filled out the constructed questionnaire formats which designed for the purpose of the study.

Results: *The findings revealed that level of teachers' knowledge was low about communicable diseases in general, which considered not enough to prevent spread communicable diseases in primary schools.*

Conclusion: *This show that the primary school teachers have poor knowledge related to communicable diseases.*

Keywords--- *School Teachers, Communicable Diseases.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Communicable diseases are infectious diseases (body invasion) by different organisms, such as viruses, bacteria and fungi, and parasites are referred to as infectious diseases. Infectious diseases can spread directly or indirectly from individual to individual. Infectious diseases usually found in children are often contagious and can spread rapidly from person to person (Faraj and Khalifa, 2015).

There are a variety of communicable diseases like measles, salmonella, hepatitis B, and others. These are caused by viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites, and can be caught easily by someone else by direct or indirect communication. There are many ways of transmitting communicable diseases, such as coughing, communicating with blood plasma, flying through the air and biting insects (Arif and et al., 2018).

Internal air quality (IAQ) is important to human health because most human activities occur in the internal environment, such as classrooms at primary school. The air in the classroom can be a source for the following micro-organisms that lead to the injury rate for those of school age Children more susceptible to air pollution in indoors than adults because they are exposed to an unspecified amount of indoor air pollutants in school environments (Enitan and et al., 2017). Internationally adopted children are at increased risk of infectious diseases in their countries of origin because of chronic conditions and increasing access to preventive health care, such as vaccines. The suggested screening for newly arrived international adoption should be identified to pediatrics and other child care providers (Obringer and Walsh, 2017).

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II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Schools play an important role in promoting children's and society's health. Health education is one way to improve health but more can be achieved by schools. Several schools have become schools for health promotion and the Ministry of Education encourages all schools to be safe and child friendly (Faraj and Khalifa 2014).

Since the advent of immunizations, the incidence of infant communicable diseases has declined significantly. The use of antibiotics and antitoxins further decreased severe complications caused by such infections. Infectious diseases do occur, however, and nurses need to be familiar with the infectious agent to identify the disease and develop effective prevention and supportive measures (Hockenberry and Wilson, 2015).

In the schoolroom, communicable diseases are increasingly emerging among pupils, printing needs to be obtained and advice for germ protection in school (Starr, 2015). The health effects of infectious diseases affecting children of school age as a result of poor hygiene practices and insufficient sanitation facilities in public primary schools remain of concern to the poorest and middle-income countries (Dadebo, 2018)

Vaccines avoid many serious and lethal diseases and reduce the overall incidence of the disease in heavily vaccinated populations. Many communicable diseases can even be completely eliminated by vaccination. When a high percentage of the population is immunized, the disease spread reduces as it is not possible to maintain the chain of infection (Jameson and Mortiboy, 2017)

III. METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study: a descriptive study design.

Setting of the Study**:** The study was conducted in Primary Schools in Alhawija district in Kirkuk Governorate – IRAQ.

Sample of the Study

A sample of (250) teachers were selected from (50) Primary Schools in Alhawija district in Kirkuk Governorate – IRAQ.

Study Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

Part one: included demographic data concerning the respondent general characteristics: (gender, age, marital status, educational level, employment period, sessions sharing concerning communicable diseases and residency).

Part two: its concerning primary school teacher's knowledge and comprised of (46) items in regard to general concepts of communicable diseases (6) items, tuberculosis (4) items, poliomyelitis (4) items, typhoid fever (4) items, rubella (4) items, hepatitis B (4) items, whooping cough (4) items, mumps (4) items, lice (4) items, pertussis (4) items, tetanus (4) items, the items were rated according to a 3 Point-Likert scale as (know, uncertain and don't know) and levels of the scale were scored as 3 for correct answer, 2 for uncertain and 1 for incorrect answer, to measuring mean of score.

Data Collection: Data collection was performed through the use of study instrument.

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Statistical Analysis: Appropriate statistical methods were used in order to assess and analyze the results of the study by using SPSS version 24 which included:

IV. RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of the Study Sample According to their Demographical Characteristics

Demographic Data	*Rating And Intervals*	*Frequency*	*Percent*
Age / Years	21-25	22	8.6
	26-30	**48**	18.8
	31-35	33	12.9
	36-40	42	16.5
	41-45	22	8.6
	46-50	37	14.5
	51-55	30	11.8
	56-60	16	6.3
Gender	Male	**195**	76.5
	Female	55	21.6
Levels Of Education	Institute	107	42.0
	College	**139**	54.5
	Higher education	4	1.6
employment categories	1-5	**88**	34.5
	6-10	44	17.3
	11-15	53	20.8
	16-20	18	7.1
	21-25	21	8.2
	26-30	17	6.7
	31-35	4	1.6
	36-40	5	1.6
sessions sharing	Yes	29	11.4
	No	**221**	86.7

Table 1: (Shows that the high percentage of the study sample was (18.8) % were of age group (26-30) years, while (76.5) % was male in gender, (54.5) % have level of education was College, (34.5) % were of employment categories group (1-5) years, and (86.7) % was no sessions sharing.

Table 2: Level of Teacher's Knowledge According to the Main Items of Questionnaire of Teachers' Knowledge Concerning Communicable Diseases

NO	*ITEMS*	*KNOW*		*UNCERTAIN*		*DON'T KNOW*		*TOTAL*
		F	*%*	*F*	*F*	*%*	*F*	
1	GENERAL CONCEPTS ABOUT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES:	695	46.3	496	33.0	309	20.6	1500
2	TUBERCULOSIS	343	34.3	418	41.8	239	23.9	1000
3	POLIOMYELITIS	276	27.6	379	37.9	345	34.5	1000
4	TYPHOID FEVER	279	27.9	380	38.0	341	34.1	1000
5	MEASLES	421	42.1	374	37.4	205	20.5	1000
6	HEPATITIS B	310	31.0	379	37.9	311	31.1	1000
7	WHOOPING COUGH	306	30.6	407	40.7	287	28.7	1000
8	MUMPS	324	32.4	413	41.3	263	26.3	1000
9	LICE	671	67.1	218	21.8	111	11.1	1000
10	DIPHTHERIA	140	14.0	324	32.4	536	53.6	1000
11	TETANUS	169	16.9	341	34.1	490	49.0	1000
	TOTAL	3934	34.2	4129	35.9	3437	29.8	11500

Table.2 shows that (67.1%) of teachers know general information about lice while (53.6%) of them do not know

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information about Diphtheria

Table 3: Level of Teachers' Knowledge Related to Communicable Diseases

Level of knowledge	*F*	*%*
Poor	19	7.5
Moderate	151	59.2
Good	80	31.4
Total	250	98.0

This table shows that the most level of teachers' knowledge related to communicable diseases are moderate.

V. DISCUSSION

The sample of the study consisted of (250) teachers from primary schools in district of Alhawija. The finding of the study Shows that the high percentage of the study sample was (18.8) % were of age group (26-30) years, while the lowest percentage (6.3) % of them represents group whose age was (56-60) years. This result reflects the teachers in primary schools were have young age.

Also shows the majority (76.5) % was male in gender, but only (21.6) % was female in gender. This result indicates that teachers in primary schools was have low proportion of female in staff in all primary schools in district of Alhawija.

The results also show the majority of teachers (54.5) % have level of education was College, while the lowest percentage (1.6) % of them represents group whose have higher education This result indicates that the most teachers in primary schools in district of Alhawija may get enough awareness during their study in the colleges about communicable diseases.

The findings of the study show the high percentage of sample (34.5) % were of employment categories group (1-5) years, while the lowest percentage (1.6) % of them represents group whose (31-35) years This result indicates that the most teachers in primary schools in district of Alhawija may have low experience related to health problems that may effect on children in primary schools.

Thus, teachers must learn technical skills and teaching skills as a definitive precondition for the students to gain confidence and action skills. The teachers 'professional skills are an essential basis for schools which promote health (Barnekow and et al., 2006)

This results also shows the majority of teachers (88.4) % was not sharing in sessions about communicable diseases, but only (11.6) % was sharing, this result indicates that the teachers have defect in subject of health education programs.

The teacher preparation is an investment in both health and education. Legislation, along with adequate resources, will direct the teacher training frameworks, both initial and in-service, using the health-promoting school conceptual framework (Barnekow and et al., 2006)

Finally, the result of findings was disagreeing with a study which mentioned that (78%) of teachers in the sample study were females. Concerning to their ages (39%) of them were (40–49) years old. Concerning educational level, half of the teachers (50%) were Institute graduate. And that (26%) of teachers had (21–and more) years of

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employment in teaching sector. Furthermore, (58 %) had no opportunity to be involved in training courses concerning communicable diseases control.

As in other research, personal factors play a key role in the activities of teacher health education (Jourdan, 2011).

Interview findings with 14 school teachers revealed that offering school health care has a crucial role to play in sustaining and improving the health of the students (Abedi and et al., 2016).

The findings related to teachers' knowledge, teachers should get (11500) scores for true answers while the majority have got only (3934) scores and counted (34.2%) of the total percentages, which counts represent approximately one third of the true answers according to above findings. In addition to that, finally the findings of our study reflects a low level of teachers' knowledge about communicable diseases in general, which considered not enough to prevent spread communicable diseases in primary schools. This result is supported by another study which indicated that teachers' awareness was poor and did not acquire enough awareness towards communicable diseases control in Baghdad city (Faraj and Khalifa, 2014) This results also supported by other study which stated that the most of the school teachers (78%) not having adequate knowledge and (22%) were having moderately adequate knowledge and none had adequate knowledge regarding health care of school children in India (Gowri and Missiriya 2017). The findings showed that 'restricted' health literacy was a major problem among school teachers in the Colombo Education Area, with approximately one-third 32.5 percent (95 percent CI 28.4 percent-36.6 percent) of the population he was studying at 'restricted' health literacy (Denuwara and Gunawardena, 2017).

VI. CONCLUSION

With regard to the discussion and interpretations of the results, the study concluded the following: Lack of teacher's knowledge related to communicable diseases.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended to the implementation of educational health programs regarding to communicable diseases for teachers in primary schools.

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