

**A PRE-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STRUCTURED TEACHING PROGRAMME REGARDING LEARNING DISABILITIES OF STUDENTS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS OF AMRITSAR, PUNJAB.**

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**ABSTRACT:**

*Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. They are in a continuous process of growth and development. Any alteration in its course leads on to developmental disorders. Of the developmental disorders learning disability plays a significant role as a silent handicap among children. It is estimated that 4-5% of students in school have learning disability. Learning Disability is "A disorder that affect people's ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. Such difficulties extend to school work and can impede learning to read, write or do math". As there are no specific test to identify children with learning disability, health professionals have to rely mainly on teacher's report for its diagnosis. School teachers possess very limited knowledge on learning disability among children and have negative feeling towards children with learning disability. Of the developmental disorders learning disability plays a significant role as a silent handicap among children. Evaluation of fund of knowledge about SLD among kindergarten and primary school teachers is essential to avoid misdiagnosis of SLD and to plan for specific teacher education to enable early identification of SLD among children. The main aim of this study was to enhance the knowledge regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers. Data was collected and analysed using mean, percentage, SD, T-test, Anova and presented in the form of tables and diagrams. The study revealed that major portion (35%) of primary school teachers belonged to the age group 30-35 and of these 93% were females. Majority of them (75%) possessed B.Ed. degree. Nearly half of them (48.33%) had less than 5 years of teaching experience. 91.67% studied child psychology in their curriculum but very few (8%) had opportunity to attend in service educations on problems of learning. No teachers had opportunity to teach such children. Chi square revealed a significant association ( $P < 0.05$ ) between knowledge and educational qualification. Significant association was identified between attitude and age of the subjects also. The study revealed that none of the teachers had excellent knowledge on learning disability. A Self Instructional Module was developed and distributed among the teachers to improve their knowledge on this aspect.*

**Interpretation and Conclusion** *The study revealed that the level of knowledge regarding learning disability was low among school teachers but in general the study concluded that need for providing knowledge on learning disability is an important strategy to utilize teachers as effective contributors towards child mental health services.*

**Key Words:** Learning disabilities, mental health services, primary school teachers.

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## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the modern society mastery of basic academic skills - reading, writing and arithmetic is a necessary pre-requisite for success in both school and employment settings and in society at large. However, a large percentage of children suffer from learning disabilities, which is a childhood disorder characterised by difficulty with certain skills such as reading or writing and they are prevalent in individuals with normal intelligence. According to **American Psychiatric Association (1994)** it is identified that there are 4 types of learning disorders: Reading disorder, Mathematics disorder, Disorder of written expression and Learning disorder, not otherwise specified (NOS). Estimates of the prevalence of learning disorders range from 2% to 10% depending on the nature of ascertainment.

The Hindu philosophy places teacher on a pedestal - even above God and just after the parents. Children spend most part of their hours in school with teachers who play an important role in moulding their future. A teacher is responsible for the integrated all round development of a child. Like a gardener, he provides all suitable conditions for their best growth.

**Mahatma Gandhi** said "Education means an all-round drawing out of the best in child and men – body, mind and spirit". Only an efficient and an understanding teacher can identify the capacities, strength, and weakness innate in each student.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the pre-test knowledge score regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers.
2. To assess the post- test knowledge score regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers.
3. To compare the pre & post test knowledge score regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers.
4. To determine the relationship of pre & post test knowledge scores regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers with selected variables.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

The conceptual framework of this study was based on General System theory of **Ludwig Von Bertalanffy**<sup>26</sup> which serves as a model for viewing man as interacting with the environment. One of the first theorists to develop systems theory was Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (1968) who synthesised the following abstract laws in the systems theory development. These laws are:-

1. Systems are organised complexities in which behaviour is determined by interaction among various components.
2. No system repeats its interaction, but continuous interaction among variables produces uniquely dynamic situations infinitely.
3. People are living, open systems, exhibiting self-differentiation providing energy and having a stored information system to steer the process.

## METHODS AND MATERIAL:

The research approach for this study was experimental. This approach involves manipulation but lacks at least one of the other two properties of true experiment i.e. randomisation or control. The present study lacks control. Attempt has been made to assess the effectiveness of structured teaching programme on Learning Disabilities among the teachers.

### Research setting

The study was conducted at Sri Guru Harkrishan Public Schools within Amritsar city. These schools are run by Chief Khalsa Diwan Charitable Society. This is a Sikh religious society established in 1902 and is running so many educational institutes, dispensaries, hospitals, orphanage and old-age homes. This society is running about 50 schools throughout the Punjab but the investigator conducted study in selected 7 schools within Amritsar city only. All faculty members of these schools are well qualified and experienced (graduates and postgraduates in education). The reason for selecting

these schools was investigator convenience and expected cooperation from authorities in getting permission for conducting the study.

#### Population

The population of the study was teachers. Target population of the study consisted of teachers from Sri Guru Harkrishan Public Schools run by Chief Khalsa Diwan Education Society.

#### Sample and Sampling Technique

The investigator selected a sample of 400 primary school teachers by using convenient sampling technique from selected 7 Sri Guru Harkrishan Senior Secondary Public Schools within Amritsar city.

#### Research Tool

The study was to assess the effectiveness of structured teaching programme on Learning Disabilities among primary school teachers in selected schools named Sri Guru Harkrishan Public Schools. Self-structured multiple choice questionnaire was prepared to assess the knowledge regarding Learning Disabilities among the teachers. The review of literature, expert's opinion and the investigator's own experience provided the basis for construction of the tool.

The tool consisted of the following two parts:

##### Part I: Demographic data

This part consisted of items for obtaining personal information about subjects such as Age (in years), Education, Marital Status, years of experience, existence of child psychology in their curriculum and whether or not they have attended in-service education on Problems of Learning.

Total Sample N=400

#### Criterion measurement

Criterion measurement for assessment of knowledge is as following:

##### Level of Knowledge

Good = (>76%) 23-30 marks

Average = (53-75%) 16-22 marks

Below Average = ( $\leq 52\%$ )  $\leq 15$  marks

**Procedure of data collection:** A formal written permission was obtained from the Director, Educational Committee of Chief Khalsa Diwan and Principal of selected schools after discussing the purpose and objectives of the study with them. Also the teachers were explained about the purpose of the study and confidentiality was assured to them. Verbal consent was taken from all the subjects for the participation of the study.

## RESULTS

### Section - 1

TABLE - 1

Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic data of teachers

N=400

Demographic data	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
20-30	110	27.50
31-40	196	49.00
41-50	72	18.00
51 & above	22	5.50
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	349	87.25
Male	51	12.75

Demographic data	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Education</b>		
Diploma	20	5.00
Graduation	169	42.25
Post-Graduation	211	52.75
Ph.D	-	-
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	193	48.25
Unmarried	207	51.75
<b>Experience(in years)</b>		
1-5	191	47.75
6-10	109	27.25
11-15	69	17.25
16 & above	31	7.75
<b>Did you have child psychology in your curriculum?</b>		
Yes	156	39.00
No	244	61.00
<b>Have you attended in service education on Problems of learning?</b>		
Yes	49	12.25
No	351	87.75

**OBJECTIVE 3:** To compare the pre & post test knowledge scores regarding learning disabilities of students among primary school teachers.

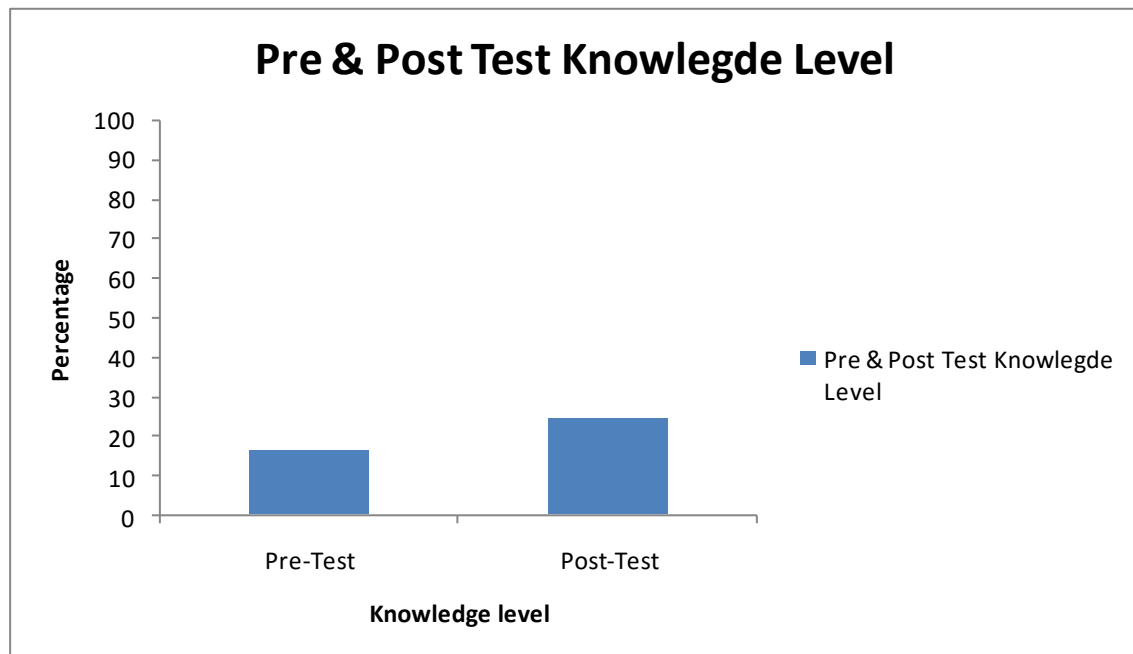
**Table - 4**

	N	Mean	SD	df	't'
<b>Pre test</b>	400	16.46	4.47	399	37.38
<b>Post test</b>	400	24.45	3.88		35.66

Table 4 and Figure 1 delineate that pre-test mean knowledge score of teachers was 16.46 and post-test mean knowledge score was 24.45. The difference between pre and post test mean knowledge score was statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$  level.

Hence, research hypothesis was accepted and thus, it was adjudged that structured teaching had definite impact in improving the knowledge among the teachers.

Figure 1.



## DISCUSSION

### The knowledge of teachers regarding learning disabilities among children:

In the present study, the researcher analysed that in pre-test none of the 400 samples had good knowledge while 62.5% of them had average knowledge and 37.5 % had below average knowledge. These findings are consistent with findings of **Erfani (1997)** that proved primary school teachers have good knowledge at 60%.

Mean percentage score for average score was 20.06% with SD of 1.88 and for below average knowledge was 11.60% with SD 3.03, but in post-test 75.5% had good knowledge with mean percentage score 26.21% and SD 2.08, while 22% had average knowledge with mean percentage 19.87% and SD 1.71 but. On the other side below average knowledge was 2.5% with mean percentage score 11.7% and 2.45 SD. The findings of the study are supported by the study of (**Sara**) wherein 20% of teachers were found having average knowledge, 65% were having good knowledge level.

## CONCLUSION

The study was a Pre-experimental design to assess the knowledge of School teachers regarding learning disability among children in selected schools at Amritsar. It was conducted in seven selected schools during the period 20-11-'14 to 20-12-'14. Analysis was done and the following conclusions were drawn.

- Majority of the primary school teachers had inadequate knowledge on learning disability.
- Educational qualification of teachers and their knowledge regarding learning disability were found to be non-significantly associated. Other socio demographic variables had significant association with knowledge of teachers on learning disability by Anova and T-Test.

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