Knowledge and Attitudes of Preschool Teachers Regarding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder


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Abstract

Background:
The symptoms of attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may manifest before the child begins elementary school.

Objectives:
To survey preschool teachers’ knowledge and attitudes regarding ADHD.

Methods:
In this cross-sectional study, 360 preschool teachers were selected via a randomised cluster sampling method from among the teachers working in Tabriz, Iran, during 2013. A self-administered questionnaire concerning the symptoms of ADHD, the method of diagnosis, and their attitudes regarding ADHD was completed by the participants.

Results:
The response rate was 96.1%. The teachers’ age was 39.45 ± 7.66 years. Educational courses (43.6%) constituted their main source of knowledge regarding ADHD. The teachers’ knowledge was more accurate regarding the symptoms of ADHD (81.8% correct answers), followed by the treatment (77.82% correct answers). Their knowledge concerning the consequences of having ADHD and the aetiology of the condition was relatively low (61.4% and 69.82%, respectively). The teachers’ knowledge was not correlated with their age or years of experience (P = 0.812). The teachers also reported that their typical reaction to inattention on the part of children with ADHD was to inform the parents (59%), while their typical reaction to hyperactivity was to point out the issue to the student (45.4%). More knowledge regarding the aetiology of ADHD and more overall knowledge about ADHD were correlated with a healthier attitude on the part of the teachers toward children with ADHD.

Conclusions:
This study is the first to evaluate the knowledge of Iranian preschool teachers regarding ADHD. Preschool teachers’ knowledge about the consequences of having ADHD as well as the aetiology of the disorder needs improvement. Our results indicated that increased knowledge would correlate with a healthier attitude on the part of preschool teachers.