A study of primary school teachers' knowledge of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder


Abstract

INTRODUCTION:
The high prevalence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), with at least one pupil per classroom, poses a challenge for all the professionals in contact with them, especially for teachers.

AIM:
To examine how much primary school teachers know about ADHD in three areas (general information, symptoms and diagnosis, and treatment).

SUBJECTS AND METHODS:
125 primary school teachers from different communities answered the Knowledge of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Scale (KADDS).

RESULTS:
The teachers answered fewer than half the items correctly, the symptoms and diagnosis subscale being the one where they were seen to be most knowledgeable. Teachers who had had children with ADHD in class displayed greater knowledge in the areas of general information and treatment, but less on the symptoms and diagnosis subscale. 32.8% of the teachers reported feeling somewhat or totally unable to teach children with ADHD in an effective way and recommend special education as a better educational style. Teachers with specific training in ADHD obtained better scores than those who had not received such instruction.

CONCLUSION:
Teachers with training in ADHD are more knowledgeable and more confident about their abilities when it comes to teaching children with ADHD.