

Knowledge and Attitude of Teachers about Communicable Diseases in some of Primary Schools in Erbil

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الخلاصة :

الأمراض المعدية أو السارية والناجمة من حدوث الالتهاب تتصف بعلامات أو أعراض طبية ناتجة من حدوث التهاب وتؤدي إلى نمو وتغيير باثولوجي للعامل المسبب في الشخص المصاب أو المضيف وقد يكون المرض المعدى بدون أية أعراض أو علامات. لا يمكن للبرنامج الصحي المدرسي أن يتم تنفيذه بدون أن يكون للكادر الصحي والمعلمون والعوائل تعاون في تنفيذه والاشتراك فيه. تهدف الدراسة إلى التعرف حول مدى المعرفة والمواقف للمعلمين تجاه الأمراض المعدية وقد تم إجراء دراسة وصفية وشملت العينة 106 من المعلمين في بعض المدارس الابتدائية في مدينة أربيل وأجريت الدراسة للفترة من 20-2 ولغاية 20-4/2011 وتم أعداد استمارة استبائية لهذا الغرض والتي كانت متكونة من جزئين رئيسيين وتتعلق بمعرفة المعلمين ومواقفهم تجاه الأمراض المعدية. وأشارت نتائج الدراسة بأن أغلبية المعلمين كانت معلوماتهم ومواقفهم حول الأمراض المعدية ضعيفة ومتدهورة ولخصت الدراسة بأن أغلبية المعلمين في كردستان يحتاجون إلى برامج للتعليم المستمر حول الأمراض المعدية وكيفية الوقاية منها.

Abstract:

Infectious diseases, or communicable diseases comprise clinically evident illness , characteristic medical signs and/or symptoms of disease resulting from the infection, presence and growth of pathogenic biological agents in an individual host organism. In certain cases, infectious diseases may be asymptomatic. School health programs could not be fully implemented without having staff, teachers, and parent's cooperation and involvement. The study aimed to identify the knowledge and attitude of teacher science regarding communicable disease. A descriptive study was carried out; one hundred and six of teachers were involved in some of the primary schools in Erbil city. The study began in Feb. 20, 2011, through Apr 20, 2011. Questionnaire was designed for data collection which was consisted of two main parts: socio demographic characteristics and knowledge and attitudes about communicable disease. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the teachers responses regarding knowledge about communicable disease were very poor and deteriorating, The study concluded that the majority of the teacher's needs continuing education programs about common communicable disease in Kurdistan and ways of prevention them.

Introduction

A communicable disease is an illness caused by a specific infectious agent or its toxic products⁽¹⁾. It arises through transmission of that agent or its products from an infected person or animal to a susceptible host either direct or indirectly through an intermediate plant or animal host, vector or the inanimate environment⁽²⁾. Infectious disease can be a major cause of illness among children and can affect a child's schooling by causing absenteeism. They may in turn, affect other children and staff, and can prevent parents' careers ability to work, especially where both parents' careers work⁽³⁾. School health programs could not be fully implemented without having staff and parents' cooperation and involvement. Parents, community leaders and teachers often can and do serve as role models for students. Students serve as a linkage with school and family while parents can and should cooperate with schools to help their children.⁽⁴⁾ Communicable diseases spread quickly among students in the classroom, there must be gathered printable and advise for germ prevention in school⁽⁵⁾. Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in public concern about communicable diseases in the schools all over the world. School administrations must find ways to strike a balance between protecting the general school population from exposure to dangerous communicable diseases and ensuring the infected student's right to privacy and to public education⁽⁶⁾. The study aimed to identify the knowledge and attitude of teacher science regarding communicable disease.

Methods:

A descriptive study was carried out; one hundred and six of teachers were involved in some of the primary schools in Erbil city. The study began in Feb. 20, 2011, through Apr 20, 2011. Questionnaire was designed for data collection which consisted of two main parts: socio-demographic characteristics and knowledge and attitudes about communicable disease, and its submitted to 10 of experts in nursing field for validity. The Data was analyzed using the statistical packages for the social science SPSS version 11.5

Results:

Table (1) Distribution of Socio-demographic Characteristic of the samples according to their age, sex, address, economic status, years of employment

Characteristic	Valid	Frequency	Percent
Age	25-29	38	35.8
	30-34	17	16.0
	35-40	14	13.2
	41-63	37	34.9
	Total	106	100.0
sex	Male	16	15.1
	female	90	84.9
	Total	106	100.0
Address	urban	91	85.8
	rural	15	14.2
	Total	106	100.0
Economic status of family	sufficient	6	5.7
	somehow sufficient	96	90.6
	Insufficient	4	3.8
	Total	106	100.0
Years of employment	1-5	32	30.2
	6-10	23	21.7
	11-15	13	12.3
	16- more	38	35.8
	Total	106	100.0
Religion	Muslim	106	100.0
	Christian	0	0
	Others	0	0
	Total	106	100.0

This table shows that most of teachers their age between (25-29) and 41 and above. Most of them from urban 85.8% and 90.6% of them experience somehow sufficient. 35.8% have more than seventeen year's employment services. All of them are Muslim.

Table (2) Distribution of teachers according to their knowledge about communicable disease

Qs		Valid	Frequency	Percent
1.	Do you hear about communicable disease?	Yes	70	66.0
		No	36	34.0
		Total	106	100.0
2.	What are the examples of disease that are communicable?	Measles	23	21.7
		Smallpox	4	3.8
		Chicken pox	25	23.6
		Cholera	10	9.4
		Whooping Cough	10	9.4
		Tuberculosis	20	18.9
		Mumps	5	4.7
		hepatitis	7	6.6
		HIV	15	14.2
		Flu	24	22.6
		Malaria	1	0.9
		Cancer	7	6.6
		Diabetic	6	5.7
		Asthma	1	0.9
		Hypertension	1	0.9
Psychological disorder	1	0.9		
Thalassemia	4	3.8		

This table reveals that (66%)of the teachers hear about communicable diseases which are focusing on chickenpox, flu, measles, tuberculosis and HIV as an example and some of the examples were not related to communicable disease.

Table (3) Distribution of the teachers according to their knowledge about modes of transmission of communicable disease.

Q		Valid	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Do you know modes of transmission for communicable disease	Yes	73	68.9
		No	33	30.1
		Total	106	100.0
2.	Mention what these modes of transmission of communicable disease.	Household items	30	28.3
		Sneezing	8	7.5
		Cough	5	4.7
		Blood	5	4.7
		Kiss	4	3.8
		Respiration	14	13.2
		Cash	1	0.9
		From mother	1	0.9
		Air	20	18.9
		Sexual	5	4.7
		Animal	1	0.9
		Water	5	4.7
		Dentist tool	1	0.9
		Foods	10	9.4
Heredity	2	1.9		
Virus	3	2.8		

This table shows that (30.1%) of teachers has no information about mode of communicable disease while (68.9%) were know about it, and the majority of them (28.3%) mentioned that the modes of transmission of communicable disease were by household items and the lowest mode were by dentist tool, which represents (0.9%) .

Table (4) Distribution of teachers according to their knowledge about the relation between environment and communicable disease.

Q		Valid	Frequency	Percentage
1	Is there any relationship between environment and communicable disease?	Yes	67	63.21
		No	39	36.79
		Total	106	100.0
2.	What are the examples of environmental factors that causing communicable disease	Respiration	24	22.6
		shaking hand	5	4.7
		Crowding index	22	20.8
		Factory	5	4.7
		Population	5	4.7
		Transition	6	5.7

This table reveals that (63.21%) are knows the relationships between communicable disease and environmental factors , and (22.6%) of them believed that the respiration is one of environmental factors that causing communicable disease.

Table (5) Distribution of samples according to their knowledge about risks for transmission.

Q		Valid	Frequency	Percentage	
1	Do you know risks for transmission communicable disease?	Yes	46	43.39	
		No	60	56.61	
		Total	106	100.0	
2	Mention what are these risks	Disease	15	14.2	
		Death	18	17.0	
		Epidemic	11	10.4	
		Measles	2	1.8	

The table shows that (43.39%) had mentioned the risks for transmission of communicable disease, and were considering death as the major factor risks for communicable disease, but majority of them (56.61) not knew risks for transmission of communicable disease.

Table (6) Distribution of samples according to program's of controlling communicable disease in schools.

Q	Items	Valid	Frequency	Percentage
1	Do you know such subjects are necessary to be included in primary schedule curriculum?	Yes	84	79.2
		No	22	20.8
		Total	106	100.0
2	Do you satisfy with school health program?	Yes	40	37.7
		No	66	62.3
		Total	106	100.0
3	Have you desire to enter training workshop for teacher science about health promotion?	Yes	85	80.2
		No	21	19.8
		Total	106	100.0
4	Do you mention health risks in your subject in the class room?	Yes	79	74.5
		No	27	25.5
		Total	106	100.0
5	Have you any information about your duties as a teacher science to do some prevention action during class teaching?	Yes	87	82.1
		No	19	17.9
		Total	106	100.0

This table shows that the majority of teachers were answers are highly percentage to all program of controlling communicable disease. While (62.3%) were not satisfied with school health program for controlling communicable disease.

Table (7)) Distribution of samples according to their activity to prevention communicable disease.

Q		Valid	Frequency	Percentage
1	Have you doing any activity about prevention of C.D.as your duty in your class?	Yes	87	82.1
		No	19	17.9
		Total	106	100.0
2	Mention these activities to controlling communicable disease	Personal hygiene	40	37.7
		Control sellers rover	13	12.3
		Hand Washing	24	22.6
		Isolation	16	15.1
		Treatment of disease	12	11.3
		Sexual cautions	1	0.9
		Passenger caution	2	1.9
		Prevention	5	4.7
		Household items control	6	5.7
		Counseling session	4	3.8
		Protection from disease	12	11.3

This table reveals that (82.1%) of the teachers doing activity about prevention of communicable disease, the highest were focusing on personal hygiene which represents (37.7%) while the fewer programs were on sexual education which represents (0.9%).

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the teachers were mixed between youth and old age and they have more than (16) years of employment ,from urban places, their responses regarding it were very poor and deteriorating. While (66%) of them they said that they heard about communicable diseases, there are some of them their answers were not related to communicable disease , some believed that hypertension,malaria,cancer,asthma,and psychological disorder is considering as communicable disease(table 1,and 2) . School teachers are considered the major source of information for their students and would appear to be suitable as health educators ⁽⁷⁾.Teacher's education is considered a major factor in the effective implementation of comprehensive school health.

(Table 3) shows us that (68.9%) of them knows the mode of transmission of communicable disease, and (28.3%) believed that the household items such as towels ,linen ,beds, and tooth brush are the main significant factors that causing the communicable disease and in the less degree are the other factors like air, sneezing, food, water respiration ,and sexual intercourse. The majority of the teachers mixed between the direct and indirect transmission of the disease because they didn't know what are the different ⁽⁸⁾. and some of the teacher responses were considering heredity as one factors that transmission of disease which means there are deficit of information regarding communicable disease.

Table (4) reveals that the majority of them believed that the environment were the main factors which causes communicable disease at the same time their answer about it were not valid , (22.6%)of them were believed that respiration is considering one of the most important environmental factors, and few of them considering shaking hands also as environmental factors. At the same time (20.8%) of them were considering crowding index is the main indicator for environmental factors. School and health professionals should continue to advocate school- wide policies and programs that support both students and teachers if the goal of an integrated healthy school environment is to be realized ⁽⁹⁾. School health services concentrated with the early detection of physical, intellectual and emotional abnormalities in school children and their subsequent treatment and surveillance, it has now been changed to a system of selective examination based on recommendations by teachers ⁽¹⁰⁾.

(Table 5) shows that the slightly majority of the teacher knows the risks of communicable disease, (17%) of them believed it cause death, and (14%) of them said it causes certain disease, and some of the answer were related to consider it as epidemic without really known what epidemic is it. This result is not in accordance with a study conducted in Nigeria found that the majority of teachers were unable to know the consequences of affecting by communicable disease ⁽¹¹⁾.

Regarding to the program of the school (79.2%) they are believed in the importance of putting program and subjects in primary school to control communicable disease ,they were not satisfy with the program submitted by schools ,likes to entre especial workshop for their development of their knowledge(Table 6). Development efforts by teachers, including training and ongoing reinforcement to increase their sense of preparedness, have significant effects in the classroom ⁽¹²⁾. In Nigeria most teachers felt that health education was important and should be an integral part of the curriculum ⁽¹³⁾.

Table (7) shows the activity that teachers try to do it in their classes, the major of it were about personal hygiene, instruction to prevent buying from seller rover, use hand washing techniques and procedure for isolation in communicable disease, and there are less focusing on sexual transmission disease. School teacher's perceptions of health, their attitudes and practices and their knowledge of common health problems could be essential factors in optimizing their roles as health educators in society. Many adult behavior patterns and attitudes develop in early childhood .In addition there is growing acceptance of the need for health education at primary school age ⁽¹⁴⁾.

Conclusion

1. Teacher's knowledge about communicable disease were poor and deteriorating in responses.
2. The majority of the teacher's needs continuing education programs about common communicable disease in Kurdistan and ways of prevention them.

Recommendation

1. Encourage educational program for both teachers and students, that focusing on :
 - a. factors that causes infectious disease and accurate scientific facts
 - b.. understanding of the environment that affects the spread of the disease
 - c.. understanding of the cultural practices influencing health
 - d.. common communicable diseases and ways of preventions
2. Teachers should understand that everyone is responsible for prevention of the spread of an infectious disease such as oneself, parents, schools, community members, etc
3. Teachers should express various personal habits and actions that help promote health as well as understand the importance of accessing reliable health information
4. Educational health packages could be developed with collaboration between ministry of education ,ministry of higher education , and health professionals who are fully aware of health problems

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