

Learning Disability Awareness among Primary School Teachers in Nepal

Kavita Thapa*

Abstract

Learning impairment is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects an individual's ability to read, process and express information effectively. Children with learning disability struggle with reading, writing, organization and attention. Teachers' awareness about learning disability is crucial for creating effective learning environment. The objective of this study is to assess the knowledge of learning disability among primary school teachers in private and public schools. In total, 100 participants were selected for the study from Butwal, Nepal. The tool used was Questionnaire on Teachers' Competence in Identifying Pupils with Learning Disability (QTCIPLD). The data was subjected to a t-test analysis, revealing a lack of sufficient understanding of learning disabilities among primary school teachers.

Keywords: Learning disability, teachers, primary, private, public, school, Nepal

Learning disability is a neurological disorder where an individual has difficulty in reading, writing, coordination etc. It is most common in early childhood. There would be issues in their academic performance but they can perform well in extracurricular activities. Teachers, parents or school authorities due to lack of awareness often labelled these children as slow, failure or incapable. Some of the children were beaten, punished or abused for not doing well in the academics. Several studies have pointed out that repeated failures result in low self-esteem among children and also many children stop going to school.

In the lives of the students, teachers play an increasingly important and influential role. They impart knowledge, teach skills and train students to help them achieve academic success. The teachers have the capacity to provoke curiosity and enthusiasm for learning by using effective and efficient methods of teaching.

Teacher's awareness of learning disability is a cornerstone of effective education. It empowers educators to implement inclusive practices, provide targeted support and ultimately help students with learning disability thrive academically and socially. This will ensure a more equal and stimulating educational experience for all the students.

Learning disability is a relatively new and understudied topic in Nepal. Therefore, the present study is carried out to assess the knowledge about learning disability among primary teachers working in Butwal, Nepal.

Sivrikaya et al. (2023) investigated the specific learning disability content knowledge competencies of teachers in different branches in Turkey. The study involved 133 teachers, and it revealed that the teachers possessed a moderate level of knowledge about learning disabilities.

Alharbi Hatim Yousef (2022) examined the level of awareness and knowledge regarding dyslexia among primary school teachers in the Qassim region of Saudi Arabia. A total of 172 teachers were involved in the research. The results demonstrated that primary school teachers exhibited a lack of awareness.

Dhindsa et al. (2022) investigated the understanding

of learning disabilities in children among primary school teachers in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India. The study involved 70 teachers, and the findings indicated that these educators had a restricted knowledge of learning disabilities.

Khawa et al. (2022) analyzed the knowledge regarding learning disabilities in children among primary school teachers in Rajasthan, India. The research involved 70 teachers. The results revealed that the primary school teachers demonstrated a restricted level of knowledge concerning learning disabilities in children.

Mutlu et al. (2022) assessed teacher's awareness about dyscalculia in Turkey. The study involved 489 teachers, and the findings indicated that the majority of teachers lack sufficient understanding of dyscalculia.

Rani et al. (2021) explored the awareness levels of primary school teachers regarding learning disabilities in government schools in Telangana, India. The study involved a sample of 60 teachers. The results showed that 55% of the teachers had a moderate level of adequate knowledge, 38% had inadequate knowledge, and only 10% had adequate knowledge about learning disabilities.

Kunwar et al. (2021) examined teacher's awareness about mathematics learning disability in Nepal. The study involved 300 teachers in total, and it uncovered that these educators lacked sufficient knowledge about mathematics learning disabilities.

Ranjeetha Golde Vincent & Shobha G (2021) conducted a study to examine the understanding of learning disabilities in children among government and private school teachers in Bengaluru, India. The findings revealed that 40 teachers from both types of schools demonstrated a moderate level of knowledge regarding learning disabilities.

Jolly et al. (2021) examined the understanding of learning disabilities among primary school educators in Kerala, India. The research involved a sample of 100 teachers, with 50 from private schools and 50 from government schools. The findings revealed that there was no notable disparity in the level of knowledge among the teachers.

Rudrappa Hunasikatti (2021) examined the level of

awareness and knowledge of dyslexia among primary school teachers in Tshwane District, South Africa. A sample of 30 teachers was purposefully selected for the study. The results showed that the primary school teachers demonstrated a basic level of awareness and knowledge about dyslexia.

Rajesh R et al. (2020) examined the awareness of learning disabilities in children among primary school teachers in Kolar, India. A sample of 30 primary school teachers was chosen for the research. The outcomes demonstrated that 60% of teachers had inadequate knowledge, 36.7% had moderately adequate knowledge, and only 3.3% had sufficient knowledge.

T. Malliga (2020) conducted a study on the level of awareness of learning disabilities among primary school teachers in Erode, India. The research sample included 106 primary school teachers, and the findings revealed that these teachers exhibited a lower level of awareness regarding learning disabilities.

John-AdubasimJeoma & UGWU Chinelo J (2019) conducted a study on the awareness of dyslexia among primary school teachers in River State, Nigeria. The research involved 200 teachers, revealing a lack of sufficient knowledge on dyslexia among the participants.

Nsreen A. Alahmadi & Mogeda El Sayed El Keshkey (2019) conducted an analysis on the knowledge of specific learning disabilities among primary school teachers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study included 902 primary school teachers, and the findings revealed that the teachers lacked sufficient knowledge about learning disabilities.

Sasmitha Ghimire (2017) assessed the level of understanding among primary school teachers concerning learning disabilities in school children in Dharan, Nepal. A sample size of 150 participants was selected for the research. The results indicated that the teachers exhibited insufficient knowledge about learning disabilities.

Shukla et al. (2015) conducted a study to evaluate the level of understanding of learning disabilities among primary school teachers in Haridwar, India. 68 teachers from primary schools were chosen to participate in the research. The findings revealed a lack of knowledge and awareness regarding learning disabilities among the primary school teachers.

Shari M & Vranda Mysore Narasimha (2015) assessed the ability of primary school teachers to identify children with learning disabilities in Bangalore, India. The research involved 200 primary school teachers, and the findings indicated a deficiency in the teachers' knowledge regarding learning disabilities.

Sawhney & Bansal (2014) conducted a study on the level of awareness regarding learning disabilities among elementary school teachers in Chandigarh, India. The research sample included 50 primary school teachers. The findings indicated that the

teachers possessed limited understanding of learning disabilities.

Kakabararee et al. (2012) examined the awareness and ability of primary school teachers to identify students with learning disabilities in the province of Kermanshah, Iran. A total of 291 teachers took part in the study. The research revealed that the teachers' awareness of the nature and causes of learning disabilities was sufficient and satisfactory, but their ability to identify and recognize students with learning disabilities was at a low and inadequate level.

Objective

To assess the knowledge of learning disability among private and public school teachers.

Hypothesis:

There will be no significant difference in knowledge of learning disability among the private and public school teachers.

Method

Design

The current study utilized a causal-comparative research design.

Sample: The total number of participants were 100 teachers. 50 samples were drawn from private schools and 50 were drawn from public schools.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria

- Participants aged 25-50 years.
- Open to all genders
- Agree to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria

- Presence of any mental or physical illness.
- Refuse to take part in the study.

Tools

Questionnaire on Teachers Competence in Identifying Pupils with Learning Disabilities (QTCIPLD) was created by MfonEyo and EmeNkanga, comprises 18 items using a 4-point Likert scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The reliability coefficient is 0.83.

Procedure

Official authorization was acquired from the institution's leader. Each participant provided a signed consent form. The study's purpose was clearly communicated to them. Participants were guaranteed that their answers would be kept confidential.

Statistical Analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS software. A T-test was utilized to compare the level of knowledge regarding learning disabilities between teachers in private and public schools.

Results

Table 1 shows the knowledge about learning disability among primary teachers of public and private schools.

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean	t-value
Public school teachers	50	24.52	2.60	0.37	0.06*
Private school teachers	50	24.56	3.49	0.49	

Significance at $p < 0.05$

The findings indicated that there is no notable disparity in understanding of learning disabilities between primary school teachers in private and public schools. The T ratio did not show significance at the 0.05 level.

Discussion

The current research assessed the understanding of learning disabilities among primary school teachers in public and private schools. The study's results indicate that there is no notable distinction between the two groups. The findings align with prior research that has similarly identified a lack of understanding about learning disabilities among elementary school educators.

Sashmita Ghimire's (2017) research revealed that there is a lack of sufficient knowledge among school teachers when it comes to learning disabilities.

In his research, Alharbi Hatim Yousef (2022) uncovered that elementary school educators exhibited a lack of awareness.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate a lack of sufficient understanding regarding learning disabilities among primary school teachers in both private and public educational institutions. Therefore, it is important to conduct workshops at regular intervals in order to enhance their knowledge regarding learning disability. Further training programs should be held for teachers to identify learning disability among children and learn ways to deal with them in the classroom.

Reference

Ali, C., Fysal, N., Thasneem, A. A., & Aswathy, P. S. (2019). Assessment of knowledge level on learning disability among primary school teachers. *International Journal of Contemporary Pediatrics*, 6(2), 431–435. <https://doi.org/10.18203/2349-3291.ijcp20190545>

Arifa, S., & Siraj, S. S. (2019). A descriptive study to assess the knowledge and attitude of primary school teachers regarding learning disabilities among children in selected schools of district Pulwama Kashmir. *IP Journal of Paediatrics and Nursing Science*, 2(1), 19–32. <https://www.innovativepublication.com/journal->

[article-details/IJPNS/article/8719/volume/248/issue/678](https://doi.org/10.18203/2349-3291.ijcp20190545)

Dhindsa, H., Borana, H., Yadav, J., Gharu, K., Khawa, S. P., & Kumar, A. (2021). Knowledge regarding learning disabilities in children among primary school teachers. *International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health*, 9(1), 235. <https://doi.org/10.18203/2394-6040.ijcmph20215003>

Eyo, M. & Nkanga, E. (2020). Teachers' competence in identifying pupils with learning disabilities: A study in Nigerian primary schools. *Issues in Educational Research*, 30(3), 883–896. <http://www.iier.org.au/iier30/eyo.pdf>

Ghimire, S. (2017). Knowledge of primary school teacher regarding learning disabilities in school children. *Journal of Nobel Medical College*, 6(1), 29–35. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jonmc.v6i1.18084>

Hunasikatti, R. (2021). A descriptive study to assess the knowledge and attitude of school teachers regarding Learning Disabilities among children in selected schools at Bagalkot. *South Asian Research Journal of Medical Sciences*, 3(3), 33–38. <https://doi.org/10.36346/sarjms.2021.v03i03.002>

John-Adubasim, I. C., & Joy, U.C. (2019). Knowledge of dyslexia amongst primary schools teachers in Rivers State. *National Journal of Advanced Research*, 5(2), 10–15. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333853430_Knowledge_of_dyslexia_amongst_primary_schools_teachers_in_Rivers_State

Jolly, R., & Chacko, C. M. (2021). Knowledge Regarding Learning Disability among Primary School Teachers. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 9(2), 1153–1168. <https://doi.org/10.25215/0902.122>

Kakabarae, K., Arjmandnia, A. A., & Afrooz, G. A. (2012). The Study of Awareness and Capability of Primary School Teachers in Identifying Students with Learning Disability in the Province of Kermanshah. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 2615–2619. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.534>

Kasi, N. (2003). Teachers awareness and attitude towards learning disabilities. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 26(1), 28–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0975156420030106>

Khanal, A., Rai, M., & Mandal, P.K. (2021). Knowledge on learning disabilities among primary school teachers of selected schools in Municipality of Morang. *Journal of Psychiatrist's Association of Nepal*, 10(2), 3–7. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jpan.v10i2.48989>

Kunwar, R., Shrestha, B. K., & Sharma, L. (2021). Are Teachers Aware of Mathematics Learning Disabilities? Reflections from Basic Level Schoolteachers of Nepal. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 10(1), 367–380. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.10.1.367>

Madhamani, A., & Joseph, A. (2021). Assessment of Knowledge and Awareness of Public School Teachers Towards Learning Disabilities in Children -

- An Institutional Based Cross-Sectional Study in Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu. *Journal of family medicine and primary care*, 10(7), 2524–2528. https://doi.org/10.4103/jfmpe.jfmpe_1869_20
- Makgato, M. M., Leseyane-Kgari, M., Cekiso, M., Mandende, I. P., & Masha, R. (2022). Evaluating the awareness and knowledge of dyslexia among primary school teachers in Tshwane District, South Africa. *African journal of disability*, 11, 807. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ajod.v11i0.807>
- Malliga, T. (2020). Awareness of Learning Disabilities among Primary School Teachers. *TNTEU International Journal of Educational Research*, 1(1), 34–41.
- Mutlu, Y., Çalışkan, E. F., & Yasul, A. F. (2022). We asked teachers: Do you know what dyscalculia is? *International Online Journal of Primary Education (IOJPE)*, 11(2), 361-378. <https://doi.org/10.55020/iojpe.1067560>
- Rajesh, R., Thomas, A., James, A., Sebastian, J., Chacko, J., Ashok, N., Sandhya, S., Srinidhi, S., Reeta, R., Jamuna, J., & Thabitha, T. (2020). Assessment of knowledge regarding learning disabilities in children among primary school teachers. *Journal of Clinical and Biomedical Sciences*, 10(2), 48–51. <https://doi.org/10.58739/jcbs/v10i2.5>
- Rakshit, S., & Mete, J. (2022). Awareness of Dyslexia among Primary School Teachers and Dyslexia affected students in Primary Level in Bankura District in West Bengal. *Quest Journals- Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Science*, 10(8), 123–127.
- Rani, N. S., & Reddy, R. G. (2021). A study on awareness levels of primary school teachers on learning disabilities in government schools of Telangana. *The Pharma Innovation Journal*, 10(3), 170–173. <https://www.thepharmajournal.com/archives/2021/vol10issue3/PartC/10-1-101-183.pdf>
- Shari, M., & Vranda, M. N. (2015). Knowledge of Primary School Teachers in Identifying Children with Learning Disabilities. *Disability, CBR and Inclusive Development*, 26(3), 68-76. <https://doi.org/10.5463/dcid.v26i3.443>
- Shukla, P., & Agrawal, G. (2015). Awareness of Learning Disabilities among Teachers of Primary Schools. *Online Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(1), 33–38.
- Sivrikaya, T., Karabulut, H. A., & Uçar, A. H. (2023). An investigation of specific learning disability content knowledge competencies of teachers in different branches. *Theory and Practice in Child Development*, 3(1), 17–36. <https://doi.org/10.46303/tpicd.2023.2>
- Vincent, R. G. (2020). Attitude of teachers on learning disabilities in children. *International Journal of Peace, Education and Development*, 8(1), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.30954/2454-9525.01.2020.3>
- Yadav, A., & Kaur, N. (2015). Awareness about Learning Disability among the Primary School Teachers in Chandigarh. *Learning Community-An International Journal of Educational and Social Development*, 6(2and3), 201-230. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2231-458x.2015.00021.4>
- Yousef, A.H. (2022). Primary school teacher's awareness and knowledge of dyslexia in Qassim Region-Saudi Arabia. *Current Pediatric Research*, 26(1), 1220–1230. <https://doi.org/10.35841/0971-9032.26.1.1220-1230>.