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**Improving the Knowledge and Practices of Teachers to Impart Sexual
Health Education to Children with Autism: An Intervention Study**

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Abstract

Children with autism need to understand their bodies, and cope with puberty. Apart from parents- their primary caregivers, they rely on teachers for education regarding sexual health. Teachers can effectively impart sexual health education if they possess adequate knowledge. This study was carried out on 50 teachers of children with autism to assess their knowledge and practices, and improve the same through an intervention program. The method was a pre-test post-test method with an intervention program. For assessment, two self-structured questionnaires on knowledge and practices containing 24 and 18 items respectively were used. Results revealed that teachers lacked in their knowledge and practices in imparting sexual health education to children with autism. Only a few teachers had attempted to teach few basic concepts regarding sexual health education. Even though they were convinced of the need for such education, they reported a number of barriers and dilemmas that prevented them from doing so. However, the post-test data revealed that teachers had significantly improved in their knowledge and practices. They had not only gained sufficient knowledge but they also knew to put their knowledge into practice within their classrooms, this can be attributed to the effectiveness of the intervention program.

Key Words: Autism, Intervention, Knowledge, Practice, Sexual health education, Teacher