

ABSTRACT

Involvement of Mothers for Promoting Eye Health among School Children

HARINDAR JEET GOYAL

ONE of God's greatest gifts to man is the ability to perceive the universe in all its contrasts. Of the five senses man possesses vision is the most important as most of the information from the outside world is collected by the sense of sight.

An evaluative study was conducted with one group (pre-test and post-test) design to determine eye health needs of Middle School girl students of a selected school in Delhi with a view to involving mothers and children for promotion of eye health by the author in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of Master of Philosophy in Nursing at the Rajkumari Amrit Kaur College of Nursing, University of Delhi.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the eye health status of selected middle school girl students.
2. To identify commonly occurring eye problems among these children.
3. To assess the level of knowledge of mothers and children in relation to: (i) Structure and function of eyes; (ii) care of eyes including eye hygiene, eye safety and nutrition for eye health; (iii) common eye problems, their causes, mode of transmission, signs and symptoms and management, and (iv) to assess the level of effectiveness of teaching programme for children having eye problems and their mothers with a view to promoting eye health of children

as measured by : (a) gain in knowledge scores; and (b) compliance rate in relation to care prescribed.

Methodology

The research approach adopted for this study was evaluative in nature. Sample I consisted of a total population of 420 children of class VI, VII, and VIII. Sample II comprised 30 randomly selected children with eye problems and their mothers. The instruments used for generating necessary data were: Eye Assessment Tool to find out the eye health status, structured Interview schedule to assess mothers' and children's eye health knowledge and compliance check list for follow-up of the selected instructions.

Major Findings

1. More than one-third of the school children (35.23%) had a variety of preventable eye conditions and some needed corrective measures.
2. Children and mothers had deficiencies in their knowledge of management of eye problems.
3. Planned teaching programme could bring about a significant change in knowledge among mothers and children in each of the sub-area of knowledge test.
4. Compliance to the prescribed instructions was also observed among children for a period of 3 weeks.

Implications

The findings of the study have some implications for those associ-

ated with the health care system and the educational system.

For General Education

The study reveals the extent of eye health illiteracy amongst school children. Knowledge and practices of eye hygiene and nutritional aspects which can be easily taught within the available resources are inadequate. The school can strengthen health education activities in its overall programme to help children gain adequate eye health knowledge, develop positive attitude towards eye health and to inculcate healthy practices.

For Nursing Education

Short-term speciality courses in Ophthalmic Nursing should be undertaken by Nurses to gain increased knowledge and clinical expertise. This is an important area which requires a lot of research by Nurses to bring about changes in health care delivery at various levels in schools, the community and the hospitals.

School Health Services

It was observed that though the School was covered under the School Health Scheme of Delhi Administration, no Medical/Nursing team had visited the School during the past five years. A system must be developed for effective functioning of School Health Services, for guidance and support to the student community and through them to the families. The findings of the study strongly suggest the role of mothers in developing self-reliance for promotive and preventive care.

Mrs. Harinder Jeet Goyal is Basic Programme Coordinator, R.A.K. College of Nursing, New Delhi.