

Impact of intervention on knowledge of teachers regarding management of academic skill disorders

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The present research study investigated the impact of an intervention programme designed to enhance the knowledge levels of teachers regarding management of academic skill disorders among elementary school children. The study was carried out in 15 urban private schools of Ludhiana city. From each school, 3rd and 4th class children facing problems in reading, writing and mathematics were randomly selected. The total sample consisted of 300 students. 172 Mathematics and language teachers who were teaching these selected students constituted the sample of teachers. These teachers were given intervention on various aspects of academic skill disorders among children. Pre and post-intervention knowledge scores were assessed to study the impact of given intervention. The results indicated that intervention significantly improved the overall knowledge scores of the teachers from poor to good level. After getting intervention, teachers had better comprehension skills and were able to utilize the gained knowledge for solving day to day problems related to reading, writing and mathematics among students of their respective classes.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Intervention, Knowledge, Comprehension, Academic skill disorders

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Academic skill disorder is an umbrella term used to define various problems faced by children while reading, writing and mathematics. If these problems are not dealt with appropriate intervention at early age, these difficulties become a lifelong challenge as there is no medical treatment for such children. The only and most common treatment for this is individualized special education programmes based on early identification and professional evaluation by experts. To develop need based individualized special education programmes, it is important to enhance basic knowledge level of parents and teachers so that they are able to identify the problem at right stage. There is also growing need to identify these children at an early age and to plan appropriate intervention strategies for these children as they face numerous physical and psychosocial problems in later stage of life. The people with learning problems have poorer health as compared to people without learning difficulties. Apart from health problems children and adolescents with reading and writing difficulties run a higher risk for internalizing

problems including anxiety, depression and phobias in preadolescence age (Prior *et al.*, 1999). McBride and Siegel (1997) of University of Columbia in a study on adolescent suicide reported that 89 per cent of the adolescents who committed suicide had significant deficits in spelling and handwriting. Similarly, Levine *et al.* (1992) in the study on mathematics disability, pointed out that demands of the mathematics curriculum impose increasing strains on a developing and differentiating nervous system and children with mathematics disabilities often experience profound feelings of intellectual inadequacy and sadness. This in turn erode both self-esteem and academic motivation and make their behaviour anxious and withdrawn. The adolescent and teen with learning difficulties who has not received proper academic support and services runs a higher risk than average for becoming involved with tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Teen addictions, aggressive and other anti-social behaviours, and risky pregnancies are therefore linked to learning disabilities. Bale (1981) in cross-sectional study of backward readers