
KNOWLEDGE OF DISASTER AMONG UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE TEACHERS

Article Particulars

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Abstract

The present study is primarily focused on knowledge of disaster among university and college teachers. The investigators used normative survey method for the study. The sample consists of 240 university and college teachers who participated in the orientation and refresher courses organized by UGC-Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC), Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu. Convenient sampling technique has been used for the selection of sample. The investigators developed a tool themselves to measure level of knowledge of disaster among university and college teachers. The data were analyzed using 't' test. The findings of the study revealed that university and college teachers have average level of disaster knowledge and they do not differ in knowledge of disaster with respect to nature of institution, gender and faculty.

Keywords: disaster, HRDC, institution, gender, faculty, training programmes

Introduction

Knowledge of disaster among the public is very essential to predict, to prevent or reduce risk, to mitigate, to manage and to recover from disaster effectively. As the environmental awareness among us is not uniform, our knowledge level on disaster is also a matter of doubt. Presently there are steps taken as an eleventh hour, need to assess the disaster knowledge of public and to organize training programmes too. For effective disaster management, knowledge about various types of disasters and the factors influencing them is very indispensable.

Every university or college must take serious effort and strive continually to achieve high environmental awareness and behaviour change. Though environmental education is inclusive in the curriculum it is not given major importance and serious attention which is the actual need of the hour. Achieving disaster knowledge among present and future generations is a milestone and, university or college teachers play a key role in effective dissemination of any kind of knowledge and that is the case in

disaster knowledge too. For excelling in this, teachers need to have sound knowledge about disaster and the preventive measures. In connection to this, assessing knowledge of disaster among university and college teachers is the primary focus of this study. It is noted that mostly the investigators had focused on the assessment of knowledge of disaster of school teachers alone and failed to include university and college teachers. Hence there is a need of focus shift from school teachers to university and college teachers.

Significance of the Study

This study will provide a deeper understanding on teachers' disaster knowledge especially with prime focus on the higher education teachers. This study is also planned to assess the disaster knowledge among university and college teachers. It will also provide us with the hints towards various roles of teachers and other members closely associated with education. While only few studies had so far focused on the higher education teachers, this study will be crucial step in context of assessing disaster knowledge among university and college teachers. Hence this study will be an added knowledge to the existing body of knowledge and also be a foundation for future research in this area.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers who are aware of disasters and their management can improve the practices successfully. They can easily make students to follow disaster management as they are the inspirers to the students. But, in reality the investigator observed that disaster knowledge is still lacking among many university and college teachers. The study made by Ganpatrao (2014) revealed that there is gross deficiency in knowledge and practices of teachers regarding disaster management. Vijaya (2014) found that though the higher education teachers' academic achievement in the orientation was high they attained a lower score in the disaster management awareness test. Only school teacher are gaining more and more attention while taking up studies related to disaster management, awareness and knowledge. Very less or negligible number of studies had been conducted so far on the college or university teachers. Hence, a study had been conducted on the "Knowledge of Disaster among University and College teachers".

Operational Definition

Disaster: Disaster is defined as a crisis situation causing wide spread damage which far exceeds our ability to recover.

Knowledge: Understanding of or information about a subject which a person gets by experience or study, and which is either in a person's mind or known by people generally (Source: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/knowledge>)

The present study focuses on knowledge of disaster.

University and College Teachers: University and College teachers, often referred to as *professors* or *faculty*, specialize in a variety of subjects and fields. They often spend more time teaching classes and working with students. They may spend some time conducting research.

Objectives of the Study

The present study has the following objectives: 1. To find out the level of knowledge of disaster among university and college teachers. 2. To find out the significant difference, if any, between university teachers and college teachers in their disaster knowledge. To find out the significant difference, if any, in disaster knowledge of male and female university and college teachers. 3. To find out the significant difference in disaster knowledge of arts and science university and college teachers.

Delimitation of the study

The delimitation of the present study is, the investigator selected only 240 teachers from universities and colleges of various states in India who participated in the Orientation and Refresher Courses organized by UGC-Human Resource Development Centre (HRDC), Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu.

Materials and Methods

The investigators used normative survey method to study the level of knowledge of disaster among University and College teachers.

Tool

The investigators developed and validated a tool to measure the disaster knowledge of University and College Teachers. Since there was no tool available to measure the disaster knowledge of university and college teachers, the investigators have developed a tool to measure the same. A tool namely Disaster Knowledge Assessment Tool (DKAT) was developed by the investigators in order to measure disaster knowledge among university and college teachers. The tool contains 40 questions. Each of the items in DKAT is responded on a three point scale. Response alternatives for all of the items include "true", "false", or "don't know"; however, credit was assigned only for items marked correctly true or false. The 'Don't Know response choice (counted as an incorrect answer) was included to reduce guessing. The reliability of the disaster knowledge assessment tool was found to be 0.774 and the content validity was worked out.

Sample

A total of 240 university and college teachers was taken up for the present study. Convenient sampling technique was used for the selection of sample. Two hundred and forty respondents participated in the Orientation and Refresher courses

conducted by UGC-HRDC, Bharathiar University were taken up for the study and accordingly 240 questionnaires were distributed among the teachers.

Data Collection

For the data collection, the investigators visited personally the UGC-HRDC, Bharathiar University and collected the data from the respondents. The investigators sought permission from the Director of UGC-HRDC, Bharathiar University and approached the participants. The data were collected from the participants with the help of the tool. The tool was distributed to the participants and the investigators assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used for research purpose only. The gathered responses were scored.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential analysis. t-test was employed for the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Analysis of Data

Table -1 Knowledge of Disaster among university and college teachers

N	Mean
240	22.16

The above table -1 indicates that mean score of university and college teachers' knowledge of disaster is greater than the mid value (20) and is found that the mean score is just slightly above the mid value which reveals that university and college teachers have average level of knowledge of disaster.

H₀1: - There is no significant difference in the mean score of university teachers and college teachers with respect to knowledge of disaster.

Table-2 Difference between University Teacher and College Teachers with Respect to knowledge of disaster

Institution	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P-Value
University	47	21.66	5.26	0.63	0.53
College	193	22.17	4.84		

It is inferred from the above table -2 that the calculated t-value for knowledge of disaster (0.63) is less than the table value (1.97) at 5% significant level. Hence it is failed to reject the formulated H₀1 and it concluded that enough evidence is not available to prove the null is false at 5 % significant level

H₀ 2: - There is no significant difference in the mean score of male and female teachers with respect to knowledge of disaster.

Table-3 Difference between Male and Female Teachers with Respect to Knowledge of Disaster

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P-Value
Male	121	22.05	4.85	0.05	0.96
Female	119	22.08	5.01		

It is inferred from the above table -3 that the calculated t-value for knowledge of disaster (0.05) is less than the table value (1.97) at 5% significant level. Hence it is failed to reject the formulated H_0 2 and it concluded that enough evidence is not available to prove the null is false at 5 % significant level.

H₀ 3: - There is no significant difference in the mean score of teachers of arts faculty and teachers of science faculty with respect to knowledge of disaster.

Table-4 Difference between Teachers of Arts Faculty and Teachers of Science Faculty with Respect to Knowledge of Disaster

Faculty	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P-Value
Arts	102	22.41	5.12	0.93	0.351
Science	138	21.81	4.78		

It is inferred from the above table-4 that the calculated t-value for knowledge of disaster (0.93) is less than the table value (1.97) at 5% significant level. Hence it is failed to reject the formulated H_0 3 and it concluded that enough evidence is not available to prove the null is false at 5 % significant level.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the investigators evaluated the knowledge of disaster among teachers of universities and colleges. The calculated mean value of disaster knowledge was near to mid-value (22.16, $M=20$) and was not satisfactory in university and college teachers. The research findings of Ganpatrao (2014) is supporting the findings of the present study and also revealed that teachers' knowledge of disaster and self-expressed practices were not at satisfactory level. The results of the study conducted by Jyoti (2015) also revealed that the teachers do not meet the satisfactory level of awareness about the disaster management. Even though there is a rising awareness of its indispensable importance in recent years, relevant educational programmes are still lagging behind. Though disaster management education is inclusive in the higher education curriculum, it is not given major importance and serious attention which is the actual need of the hour. Readiness to help the affected people at the time of disasters, humanity towards affected people, planning, preparedness, precautions, rescue methods – both the male and female teachers should be given in-service training in all these categories. The investigators insisted on training programmes for teachers on disaster knowledge based on their study outcomes.

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