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Level of Knowledge about Autism Disorder among Special Education Teachers who Teach Individuals with Autism in the City of Amman

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the level of knowledge about Autism Disorder among (70) special education teachers who was purposefully selected from teachers of students with autism in the city of Amman in light of their gender (male, female), educational level (less than a Bachelor, Bachelor and above), and teaching experiences (less than 3 years, 3-5 years, above 5 years). To pursue the purpose of the study, a questionnaire was developed to measure the knowledge among the teachers. The questionnaire included a total of 30 items distributed equally among three sections: (1) general characteristics (10 items), diagnostic criteria (10 items), and educational considerations (10 items). A fourth section was also included to gather demographic information about the teachers participating in the study. Results of the study revealed that special education teachers acquired a medium level of knowledge about autism as presented in each section of the questionnaire and in the questionnaire in all as well. In addition, results of (t) test at ($\alpha = 0.05$) indicated no statistically significant differences were found in level of knowledge about autism among the teachers according to their gender or their educational level. Whereas, the results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe post hoc test showed statistically significant differences at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in level of knowledge about autism among the teachers toward teachers with higher teaching experiences (above 5 years) in comparison to teachers of teaching experiences (less than 3 years) as well as (3-5 years); while results indicated no statistically significant differences were found between teachers of (less than 3 years) of teaching experiences and teachers of (3-5 years) of teaching experiences at ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Keywords: Autism Disorder, Level of Knowledge, Special Education Teachers, Teacher Preparation.

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