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ONLINE TRAINING ON FUNCTIONAL SIGN LANGUAGE TO TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT

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***Abstract:** The Hearing Impaired students who receive their education in General Education with their normal peers has rapidly increased. This research intended to provide Online Training on Functional Sign Language to General Education Teachers. Quasi experimental design was adopted and 30 General Education teachers of Hearing Impaired were trained using Functional Sign language Package the results revealed that there is significant improvement in Functional Sign Language among General Education Teachers due to online Training.*

***Keywords:** Functional Sign Language, Hearing Impaired, General education Teacher.*

I. Introduction

The Hearing Impaired students who receive their education in General Education with their normal peers has rapidly increased. Although there is an increase in placement of Hearing Impaired students in the general education General Education in many countries (Standley, 2007; Stinson, Antia, 1999), numerous studies have shown that those students experience difficulties participating and interacting with general education teachers and hearing peers (Levy-Shiff & Hoffman, 1985; Stinson & Liu, 1999).

The participation and interaction of Students with Hearing Impairment been limited the General Education due to many possible factors, including communication barriers, teachers' attitudes and knowledge about inclusion and disabilities, hearing students' awareness about deafness, (Antia, 1985; Antia, Kreimeyer, & Eldredge, 1994; Garrison, Long, & Stinson, 1994; Saur, Popp-Stone, & Hurley-Lawrence, 1987). It is

important that train the General Education Teachers on Functional Sign Language in Inclusive Education, Hence this research study intended to provide online training on Functional Sign Language to General Education Teachers of students with Hearing Impairment

1.1. Site

The site selected for the present study was Inclusive Schools of Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu, India. The schools selected for the study are:

1.2.Sample

The present study adopted purposive sampling technique to select the sample. The sample comprised of 30 General Education Teachers of Students with Hearing Impairment in Inclusive Education from VI to X Grade.

II. Design for the Study

Quasi-experimental design was adopted in the Research study. It is pre-test post-test single group design.

2.1.Tools

The investigator developed her own tools for Assessing Development of Functional Sign Language among the General Education Teachers of Students with Hearing Impairment in Inclusive Education.

III. Functional Sign Language Rating Scale

The Functional Sign Language Rating Scale was developed. A total of 100 words were selected from 12 domains of Indian Sign Language Dictionary published by Ramakrishna mission Vidhyalaya University and the investigator framed 25 sentences using those words. The sentence consists of various types of sentences including Declarative, Imperative, Interrogative, and Exclamatory Sentences used in or day today life. The tool has been translated into Tamil Language also.

Three point rating was given for signing each sentence. Fully Correct- 2, Partially Correct -1, Fully Wrong -0 score was given. Total score is 50.

5.6 Preparation of Adapted Functional Sign Language Training Package

From Indian Sign Language Dictionary 12 Domains were selected.

Functional Communicative 100 words were listed under the 12 domains. 60 Functional communication sentences used in day today life have been framed using those 100 words.

For each domain of words practicing sentences were listed. The Functional Sign Words and sentences were translated in Tamil Language.

IV. Implementing Functional Sign Language Online Training

Intervention was given to General Education Teachers of Inclusive Education. The intervention training was given through online mode. The participants were introduced with the Functional Sign for 100 words under 12 domains. The training involves introducing the Functional Sign for the words to the participants and make them to practice and remember the sign for each word. And then using the Functional Sign in sentences for communicating was taught by connecting the words with using in example sentences. The participants were given with Hands on training during the online training programme. Each session comprised of teaching as well as practicing.

One-month intensive training was given to each group of General Education Teachers. Each online training was taken for one hour per day. A manual adapted using the Indian Sign Language Dictionary with practice sentences was given to the participants for reference.

V. Results

Comparison of mean scores of General Education Teachers of Students with Hearing Impairment before and after Introduction of Functional Sign Language Online Training

Variable	Test	N	Mean	SD	't' value
Functional Sign Language Development of Peers	Pre	30	14.02	4.50	4.01**
	Post	30	16.32	4.06	

**Significant at 0.01 level

From the above Table, it is evident that the 't' value for the Functional Sign Language Development of General Education Teachers before and after introduction of Functional Sign Language Online Training is 4.1 which is significant at 0.01 level. It indicates that there is significant difference between pretest and posttest of Functional Sign Language Development of General Education Teachers. Hence, the hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between pretest and posttest of Functional Sign Language Development of General Education Teachers of Hearing Impaired Students is rejected. It is concluded that Online Training on Functional Sign language was effective in enhancing Functional Sign language Development among General Education Teachers of Students with Hearing Impairment.

VI. Conclusion

The result revealed that introducing online training on functional sign language to general education teachers was effective. Using Functional Sign Language in heterogeneous classrooms with Hearing Impaired Students meets learning needs, clarifies concepts, and engages students in action that decreases stress while building language and thinking connections.

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