

## Teachers' Beliefs about Epilepsy in Children at AL- Basrah Elementary Schools

Nuha Saeed Kadhim, MSc\* Zainab Salman Dawood Salman, MSc\*\* Doaa Mohammed Bachi, MSc\*\*\*

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Understanding epilepsy influences Beliefs about children with epilepsy. Due to unfavorable cognition, school-aged children with epilepsy have significant social difficulties.

**Objective:** To measure elementary school teachers' beliefs about epileptic in children. In addition, we aimed to clarify the relationship between elementary school teachers' views on epilepsy in children and sociodemographic characteristics such as age, gender, and family history.

**Methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted between February 2020 and July 2020 among 130 primary school teachers in Basrah's central business district to determine how elementary school instructors felt about children who have epilepsy. The choice of the teachers at the schools was made using probability (a straightforward random sample).

**Results:** A probability (simple random sample) was carried out in order to pick the school's teachers. The approximate gender breakdown of the (130) participants is as follows: (n=111; 85.4%) women and (n=19; 14.6%) men. Less than half of the participants in the (40–49) age range (n=42; 32.3%) are female. The majority of participants (n=107; 82.3%) have moderate beliefs, according to the data.

**Conclusion:** In light of the study's findings, the researcher comes to the conclusion that the majority of participants have moderate attitudes.

**Keywords:** Epilepsy, Children, Teacher's, Beliefs

### INTRODUCTION

The most prevalent chronic neurological illness in children is epilepsy, which affects 5 to 10 kids out of every 1000<sup>1</sup>. It is a propensity for repeated unexplained seizures. A seizure is a periodic impairment of awareness, emotion, or movement brought on by excessive, improper electrical discharges that are coordinated in the cerebral cortex. Numerous factors, including genetic, structural, functional, anomalies in metabolism, and other stressors, can contribute to this illness<sup>2</sup>. All ages are affected by epilepsy; however, children are more frequently affected. Five to ten cases of epilepsy are reported for every 1000 people in underdeveloped nations. There are 2.8 to 19.5 cases per 1000 persons worldwide. Currently, 50 million people worldwide suffer from epilepsy, with 80 percent of them residing in poor nations<sup>3-5</sup>. Epilepsy is one of the conditions that most significantly impacts a child's behavior and quality of life when compared to other chronic illnesses. This is mainly due to the lack of knowledge about the disease, which leads to misunderstandings. Social stereotypes negatively impact the daily lives of families and children with epilepsy, superstitions, and illogical beliefs<sup>6,7</sup>. A person experiencing a seizure may lose control of their body and revert to a primal state, which can lead to social rejection<sup>8</sup>. Epilepsy can sometimes be more distressing for those who

have it because of social prejudice than the condition itself. Due to their dread of an unplanned and public lack of self-control, some epileptic youngsters may be excluded from their classrooms<sup>9,10</sup>. In the past, epilepsy was thought to be a sacred disease caused by a divine invasion of the body. A healthy person could only be stunned, thrown to the ground, convulsed, and then quickly awakened by God. Many people in developing nations think epilepsy is contagious and spreads during convulsions through the passage of urine, saliva, gas, and feces, is frequently misinterpreted<sup>3</sup>. The ideas around the etiology, prognosis, and management of epilepsy have undergone significant change over the centuries. Significant efforts have been made over the twenty-five years, especially during the last decade, to combat centuries-old stigma and misunderstanding that have led to prejudice towards epilepsy sufferers<sup>11</sup>. It is important to understand the processes, prejudices and attitudes of stigma surrounding epilepsy. Biomedical information about epilepsy now replaces magical explanations in wealthy countries, but inaccurate information remains in developing countries because of stigma, shame and false beliefs. These assumptions, which are rooted in epilepsy, blur the connections between the community and epilepsy and can harm children with a sense of social identity of disability<sup>12,13</sup>. As a result, there is a negative perception of epilepsy that

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\* Assistant Lecturer, Pediatric Nursing  
Department of CHN, College of Nursing  
University of Basrah, Basrah, Iraq.

\*\* Assistant lecturer, Adult Nursing  
Department of Fundamental Nursing, College of Nursing  
University of Basrah, Basrah, Iraq.

\*\*\* Assistant lecturer/Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing  
Department of CHN, College of Nursing  
University of Basrah, Basrah, Iraq.  
E-mail: doaa.bachi@uobasrah.edu.iq