

THE ROLE OF MALE AND FEMALE PRINCIPALS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN PROVIDING HEALTH SERVICES TO SCHOOLS OF JERASH – JORDAN

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the degree of male and female principals of public schools in providing health services to schools of Jerash. The study sample consisted of (63) male and female principals of Jerash schools– Jordan. To achieve the goal of the study, the researcher presented a questionnaire which was checked of sincerity and persistence. After making an appropriate statistical analysis, the results showed the following: The degree of male and female principals of public schools in providing health services to schools of Jerash was medium as a whole. The results also showed that arithmetic mean of paragraphs related to the role of male and female directors of public schools in providing health services ranged from (2.12 to 4.85), where (29) paragraphs were significantly with high degree of such practice, and (20) paragraphs came moderately, and (10) paragraphs were with a low degree of practice. In light of the findings above, the study recommended a series of recommendations including: providing adequate financial allocations for schools to provide health needs as well as paying much attention to water taps, toilets and washrooms in schools that need to be with a high quality and with sufficient numbers.

Keywords: The degree of exercise, School administrators, Health services, Schools

Introduction

The communities seek to maintain the health of their members since it is important to the community and individuals. The educational institutions have an important role to maintain the health of community members through a collaboration with health institutions to give students good health habits, as well as monitor their risk of health in its infancy, and this can be performed by the role of schools in the health field, which is supposed to ensure the

good health of physical and mental growth in students as they spend the day long and for many years in schools, so the concerned authorities need to take account to provide conditions of health and safety of medical services as well as health education to achieve the healthy mental, physical, psychological and social growth to maintain a healthy school environment, and monitor the growth of students regularly, and follow the methods to prevent diseases, problems and dangers. Besides, they pay attention to the students' personality, morality and the nature of their dealings.

The school is considered the appropriate place to spread and educate the health concepts (Ramstetter, 2010). The students of schools are a large segment who interacts with each other, thus, this may cause some infections that need to be directly treated. Moreover, this may cause infected diseases that may be transmitted to home and society. Hence, the school should shoulder the responsibility of presenting direct and indirect health services to students (Asaad, 2008).

Denman, Moon, Parsons & Stear (2011) define the healthy schools as the schools which constantly try to develop their capacity on how to live and work in a good health. Buijs (2009) defined them as the schools which apply a structural and systematic plan to improve the health and welfare of all students, teachers and administrators. Abdullah (2010) defines them as the schools that focus on developing their programs starting with providing health information and ending with modifying behavior in an effort to develop an appropriate environment physically, psychologically and socially in the framework of joint cooperation with the community. As for Al Shahry (2010), he defines it as the school which constantly seeks to improve and develop their physical and human resources to provide a suitable environment for education and work which make it active in promoting the community health.

The healthy schools have several positive features as stated by Salem (2007). They support families to participate in developing the students' skills and knowledge, the school environment can double the health capacity of its workers, it can promote the participation of students in the curriculum through acquiring skills, guidance and information that support health, enabling the school and the community to cooperate in health initiatives that benefit the community, and enhance the efforts of workers to support the educational process.

Engbers, Poppel, Chin & Mechelen (2005) refer to the healthy targets of schools that are: the prevention of pests and diseases that may infect the school community, promote the physical health of students, implement activities that promote physical and mental health of students, and develop programs to provide health services to society.

Asaad (2008) refers to the fields of school health as follows: the field of health services that includes providing medical care and treatment services to students, detecting infected cases between students to be isolated and transferred to the hospital, providing medicines and tools to aid emergencies. As for the field of the service of school environment, it includes paying attention to the maintenance and cleanliness of the school building and classrooms as well as the maintenance of school furniture to be renewed when needed and fixing water sources and reservoirs periodically, moreover, cleaning the toilet facilities daily, providing adequate and healthy food in the cafeteria, protecting the school environment from pollution. As for the field of health education, it includes health education in school, instill the right concepts and foundations among the students, encouraging them to leave the incorrect habits and practices, increasing the awareness about healthy food and the correct ways to eat, and avoiding diseases caused by improper nutrition.

The school health focuses on the precautionary side that is based on scientific bases and global experiences that keep pace with the latest findings of the developed countries as well as the recommendations issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) in this area. Those interested in school health recognized the importance of strengthening and improving the students' health the school health and improve the health of students through active participation of the education family in this area, and that the school has a large role in activating the health service programs (Melhem, 2003)

Interesting in school health in Jordan has appeared since the early sixties where a team from the Ministry of Health was formed to make detective rounds to schools to test the students, and provide them with primary health care services. The Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Health started to organize special programs about school health that things have evolved to bring out a special department in the Ministry of Health deals with school health through departments of school health across health directorates. In recent years, the concept of school health has evolved from being a medical examination for school students to a broader concept of a comprehensive health care of students making them happier during their years of studying. The school health is an economical and feasible way to raise the level of society by its final results which focus on the health of young students making a perfection in their physical, mental, and emotional capabilities to live peacefully away from health problems during their lives (Abu Laila, 2002, p 23).

Under the patronage of The Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Royal Society for Health Education, the national accreditation program of health schools has been recently appeared in Jordan. This program aims to help schools to become healthy

through supporting their local programs; it also aims to create a healthy environment in all schools of Jordan by being involved in a n educational health program consists of a number of health standards that are applied in schools under the supervision of the concerned ministries. these criteria are the following: leadership and management, safe school environment, healthy school environment, clean school environment, health education, participation of workers and the local community, health services provided for students and staff, educational counseling services and mental health, nutrition, and physical activity (Ministry of Education, 2013).

One of studies that dealt with school health is (Freeman & Meeker, 2001), which indicated that evaluating the health services provided to students in the U.S. state of California was medium. The study of (Howell & Martin, 2003) indicated that most schools in Virginia are with insufficient health programs compared to the recommended policy. As for (Kaplam & Sherrie, 2004), he conducted a study showed that students benefit from regular school health services affirmative from the first school year to the third school year, and his study showed a discrepancy between the levels of access to health services before and after entering the school. This study has indicated that students who adapt fixed methods to take advantage of health services are affected by school, the teacher and the cultural and social environment surrounding them.

Denver Public Schools (2007) conducted a study on the health services provided to students in U.S. schools, state of Colorado. The study recommended expanding a dental health care in students as well as setting up centers for vaccination in schools. Besides, it recommended ensuring that the school environment is clean by following-up the health care for students.

Abdul Latif (2001) conducted a study aimed to promote health in terms of curative, preventive and developmental aspects. It dealt with the effectiveness of school health and its components (school health services, health education, and the school environment). Moreover, the study the children's need to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills as well as to deliver values that will improve their health. The study also focused on the need to cleanliness, and proved that the school health programs should include psychosocial programs. The study concluded that the comprehensive school health lead to an increase in students' attendance, and an increase in the success rate among students in contrary to failed students.

Gosh (2007) conducted a study aimed to state some active ways to practice school health in the Palestinian high school, the results showed the need to activate all school

programs for school health to deliver strategies of health schools to students then to the Palestinian society in general.

It could be argued that previous studies, that addressed the issue of health school, addressed the effectiveness of health situation in schools and evaluated the cadres' knowledge about school health. The researcher did not find any study related to the degree of school principals, the researcher found it is hard to practice such role as she is a principal for one of schools as well.

So, the researcher through this study tried to figure out the degree of school principals of public schools in Jerash, Jordan to provide health services in schools.

Problem of the study

The problem of the study is confined to identify the degree of school principals of public schools in Jerash, Jordan to provide health services in schools. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following question:

- What is the degree of school principals of public schools in Jerash, Jordan to provide health services in schools?

The importance of the study

The importance of this study lies in identifying the degree of school principals of public schools in Jerash, Jordan to provide health services in schools. in order to determine the points of strengths and weaknesses. the researcher hopes that the results of this study are useful for developing health programs in schools of through developing their goals and plans to overcome the obstacles that prevent achieving the needed objectives.

According to the results of this study, the researcher hopes that

- The School Health Department at the Ministry of Education is to improve the performance of supervisory programs of health services provided in schools.
- Schools provided by health services programs in order to raise and maintain the level of health.
- Leadership in the Ministry of Education through introducing the degree of school principals to provide and develop the school health in schools.

Terms of the study

For the purposes of the study, there are following definition of terms:
Health services: the services provided by the school to find a suitable school environment and provide health education, health supplies and all things leading to better health for students.

The degree of practice: It means the practices carried out by the school principal in the field of health services, according to responses of the study samples.

Determinants of the study

The study is limited to government schools related to the Ministry of Education in the province of Jerash - Jordan for the academic year (2012/2013), from the point of view of school principals.

Method and procedures

The Study Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey method.

The study community

The original community of this study consists of all school principals in Jerash Governorate - Jordan for the academic year (2012-2013) with the number of (176) principals.

The study sample

The study sample consisted of (63) principals who were selected randomly.

The Study tool

The researcher has developed a tool based on previous literature about the elements and models of health service programs provided by the ministries of Health and Education for schools as well as the national health accreditation program for schools in Jordan. The questionnaire consisted of (59) paragraphs which aimed to reveal the reality of the school principals' practice to provide health services in schools.

Validity of the study tool

The credibility of the content was adopted to ensure the validity of the study tool by being displayed to arbitrators to take observations.

Stability of the tool

For verification purposes, the researcher followed the method of (Test-Re-Test) on a sample consisted of (20) principals where the method was applied again on the sample after two weeks of the first application, the correlation coefficient (Pearson) was adopted in responses of the sample in both occasions. The overall reliability of coefficient reached (0.92) which is acceptable according to the rules of statistical study.

Study procedures

The researcher has built up the study tool and determine the community of the study after making sure of the tool's sincerity and persistence, the education directorates were addressed to distribute the study tool. After that, the questionnaire was retrieved to conduct a statistical analysis and come up with results.

Statistical treatment

The researcher extracted arithmetic means and standard deviations for each paragraph of the tool and the tool as a whole.

Results and discussion

Results related to the question of the study and discussing it:

What is the degree of school principals in providing health services in Jerash schools?

To answer of this question is, it has been extracted the averages and the standard deviations for the study samples for each paragraph of the study and the tool as a whole. Table (1) shows the averages and standard deviations for the answers of schools principals in Jerash.

num	Paragraph	degree	The averages	standard deviations	level
1	I detect any environmental risk periodically	High	4,85	0.72	1
13	I tell about any environmental risk immediately	High	4,81	0.85	2
18	I take the students' weight, tallness and sight.	High	4,57	0.74	3
16	I provide sufficient number of seats for students	High	4,57	0.73	3
20	I provide guide panels to use labs	High	4,56	0.75	5
19	I keen on practicing sports at school	High	4,56	0.73	5
21	I provide first aid cabinet in school	High	4,56	0.72	5
11	I detect the buildings periodically	High	4,51	0.73	8
22	I provide conditions of general safety in yards	High	4,51	0.81	8
25	I form sports teams at school	High	4,51	0.80	8
24	I provide materials for cleaning the school	High	4,23	0.79	11
8	To get the classroom board ready	High	4,22	0.78	12
7	I provide sufficient lighting to the school	High	4,12	0.84	13
23	I give students vaccines on time	High	4,12	0.85	13
27	I follow up the guide's work	High	4,12	0.87	13
29	I provide sufficient water for the school	High	4,12	0.81	13
28	I activate sports classes	High	4,12	0.87	13
26	I make a periodic medical examination for the students	High	4,11	0.78	18
30	I clean water tanks periodically	High	4,11	0.78	18
33	I provide medical records for students	High	4,09	0.79	20
32	I form a health committee for the school	High	4,08	0.81	21
31	I register cases of chronic diseases	High	4,06	0.85	22

34	I keep the building clean	High	4,02	0.85	23
35	i provide a psychological guide plan	High	3,90	0.69	24
37	I run health awareness activities about physical fitness	High	3,90	0.69	24
5	I reserve the chemical and dangerous materials in a safe place	High	3,88	0.79	26
36	I allocate a specific place for the canteen	High	3,87	0.78	27
38	I get sure of water safety used in the school	High	3,78	0.74	28
17	I provide protected windows for the building	High	3,72	0.68	29
15	I check the integrity of the electrical outlet so that it does not pose a risk to students.	Medium	3,56	0.74	30
39	I provide healthy conditions to the canteen	Medium	3,55	0.85	31
40	I let parents and community members to participate in planning and running health programs in the school	Medium	3,51	0.78	32
42	I keep food in the canteen in a healthy way	Medium	3,42	0.79	33
6	I make sure that the glass of school sounds good and free of defects.	Medium	3,41	0.88	34
41	I provide certificates of health examination for workers in the canteen	Medium	3,40	0.81	35
43	I provide healthy food for students	Medium	3,35	0.83	36
44	I run the plan of health education	Medium	3,33	0.77	37
46	I hold educational lectures on nutrition	Medium	3,32		38
45	I put a plan for health education	Medium	3,22	0.83	39
47	I let workers and students of the school participate in planning and running health programs	Medium	3,22	0.79	39
48	I provide different kinds of food in the canteen	Medium	3,21	0.77	41
2	I get sure the school yard is free from any risk	Medium	3,21	0.77	41
9	I reserve fuel and flammable materials in a safe way	Medium	3,15	0.83	43
49	I determine the subjects of health education according to the students needs	Medium	3,14	0.81	44
51	I do mock evacuation in cooperation with the Civil Defense.	Medium	3,07	0.78	45
52	I provide food bulletins	Medium	3,05	0.85	46
50	I provide health bulletins and means	Medium	3	0.84	47

53	I ask students about their opinion regarding the canteen	Medium	3	0.84	47
54	I activate the health dimension in the school radio	Medium	2,91	0.86	49
12	I make a good space between the first seat and the board	Low	2,24	0.78	50
55	I provide guide panels on how to act during any risk	Low	2,23	0.85	51
4	I provide sufficient ways to protect students from sun rays	Low	2,23	0.75	51
56	I provide sufficient number of water taps	Low	2,22	0.87	53
58	I provide a sufficient number of toilets (bathrooms)	Low	2,17	0.78	54
14	I train students and staff on how to use fire extinguishers.	Low	2,16	0.89	55
3	I make maintenance of fire extinguishers	Low	2,14	0.81	56
57	I provide a sufficient number of washing places	Low	2,14	0.69	56
59	I distribute smoking banning signs into school	Low	2,13	0.81	58
10	I provide a sufficient number of fire extinguishers.	Low	2,12	0.74	59
	The degree of practice as a whole	Medium	3,48	0.78	

Table (1) shows the degree of school principals in providing health services that was moderately practice as a whole with arithmetic average of (3.48), the practice of school principals in providing health services in schools was moderate due to financial and material obstacles as the balance of schools is limited that mostly depend on donations collected from students and allocated to current expenditures in the school such as telephone, stationery and other needs to the library, laboratories, sports, and thus the majority of schools do not give priority to health issues, especially that need to high expenses. Moreover, schools depend on the Ministry of Education which is also suffering from financial problems as its budget is not commensurate with its ambitions, the size of schools, teaching and administrative staff. And thus, the health aspects in schools depend on international projects and initiatives as (my school) initiative and the project of health credit in schools.

The results showed that the arithmetic mean of the paragraphs related to the practice of school principals in providing health services in schools ranged from (2.12 to 4.85), where

(29) paragraphs were with high degree and (20) paragraphs were moderate , and (10) paragraphs were with a low degree of practice.

The highest paragraphs in the term of the arithmetical averages, paragraph "I check any environmental risks periodically and register it" hit (4.85) and with a high degree of practice, followed by the paragraph of "I tell about any environmental risks immediately" hit the arithmetical averages of (4.81) and with a high degree of practice, this may be attributed to that checking the school environment on a daily basis to get sure it is free from any risk and in case of any available risk, they should immediately tell about. Thus, this is one of the most important responsibilities of school principals as they are the direct ones in schools responsible of any risk. Followed by the two paragraphs "Be sure to take measurements of weight, height and vision for all students," and "Be sure to provide an appropriate number of seats for all students" which hit (4.57) this may be due to the fact that the principal is responsible for follow-up files of students to sufficient information about students regarding their weight, height and sight, as well as the principal is responsible of providing a sufficient number of seats for students, which need to be compatible with the number of available classrooms, followed by paragraphs of "providing signboards on the use of laboratories," "Be sure to practice sports activities at school" and "providing a closet for first aid " these paragraphs hit (4.56) and this was attributed to these paragraphs represent essential practices in every school and they are considered one of the easy things that can be provided. The paragraphs that came with the least degree of averages were "Be sure to provide a sufficient number of fire extinguishers" that hit (2.12) and with a low degree of practice and this due to the high costs of buying fire extinguishers, As previously noted the financial capacity of schools is limited, and therefore they can not provide allocations to buy fire extinguishers, but most schools in this area depend on the ministry of education to provide them with extinguishers. Followed by the paragraph of "Be sure to distribute banning smoking panels in all school facilities" this paragraph came with (2.13) with a low degree of practice and this due to that the principal think no one smokes in school whereas the number of smoking students increases. As for the paragraphs of "provide a sufficient number of water taps " and "Be careful to maintain the fire extinguishers ", they came with the average of (2.14) and with a low degree of practice, and the paragraph of "Make sure to train students and staff on how to use fire extinguishers," hit (2.16) with a low degree of practice, the paragraph of "make sure to provide a sufficient number of toilets (bathrooms) "also hit (2.17) with a low degree of practice, the subsequent paragraph of " Be sure to provide a sufficient number of taps " hit (2.22) with a low degree of practice, followed by paragraphs" Be sure to provide

adequate means to protect the students from sun rays” and" make sure to provide boards guidance on how to act in case of disaster " that reached the averages of (2.23) with a low degree of practice, and the subsequent paragraph of " be sure to provide an appropriate distance between the first seat and blackboard "hit (2.24) with a low degree of practice. These paragraphs came with a low degree of practice because these paragraphs need to financial costs (such as providing laundries, water taps, restrooms, and sun umbrellas...) and these needs are usually covered by the ministry of education. Sometimes the number of these needs is not commensurate with the number of students or they require maintenance, and thus, the principal finds problem in providing or increasing their number or making maintenance for them in the light of limited financial resources available in the school. As for the point of making a distance between the first seat and the blackboard, this was attributed to the overcrowding classrooms with students, and therefore, there is no sufficient space in the classrooms between the first seat and the blackboard. This overcrowding is due to the increasing number of students due to the great migrations from neighboring Arab countries as a result of political situations, which led to a significant increase in the number of students in classrooms.

Recommendations:

In light of the findings, this study recommended that:

- Providing adequate financial allocations for schools to provide health requirements.
 - The Ministry of Education needs to provide schools with limited budgets with the necessary equipment for the development of health practices.
 - Paying much attention to laundries, toilets, and washrooms in schools to provided with high quality and in sufficient numbers, and keep making maintenance for them by specialized teams.
- Appointing nursing professionals in schools to take over the follow-up of health issues in collaboration with the school principal to decrease the burden on his shoulders.

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