

# Assessment of Knowledge Regarding Child Abuse and its Prevention among Mothers of Selected Rural Community, West Bengal

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**Abstract:** A descriptive study to assess knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention among mothers in selected rural community, West Bengal, with one of objectives to find out the association between knowledge score with selected demographic variables among mothers. For this study non-experimental descriptive research approach and descriptive survey design were adapted. The study was conducted at Bhasa, South 24 PGS from 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017. The data was collected from 100 mothers who had child below 14 years of age by purposive sampling technique with administering semi structured interview schedule on demographic data and structured knowledge interview schedule on child abuse and its prevention. Reliability of the tool was established by Cronbach's alpha method and found 0.78. Overall findings on knowledge score of mothers showed that 4 %, 22%, 44%, 30% mothers had scored excellent, good, average, poor knowledge score respectively. Majority of mothers in the area of physical abuse (43%), psychological abuse (38%), sexual abuse (29%) and neglect (56%) had poor knowledge score. Majority of mothers in the area of definition and description (44%), and prevention (46%) scored average. There were significant association found between knowledge score with age ( $x^2=4.6^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), education ( $x^2=8.9^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), occupation ( $x^2=4.48^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). There were no significant ( $x^2=0.49$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) association between knowledge score with monthly family income. The study conclude that the most of mothers have average knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention but mothers are usually overlook neglect as one of the categories of child-abuse and improvement in societal status of mothers in terms of education, occupation can be a step to prevent child abuse. The findings of the study have implication in the different fields in nursing. This study recommends for assessment of prevalence, awareness programme and qualitative study on child abuse and its prevention.

**Keywords:** child, abuse, and mother

## 1. Background

Children are world's most valuable resources and asset, but their rights throughout the world are largely ignored. Often resulting into tragic outcome. Child abuse is physical, sexual, Psychological mistreatment or neglect of a child by a parent, family members or other caregiver or strangers that resulting actual or potential harm to a child. According to WHO "Child abuse has many forms: Physical, psychological/emotional, sexual, neglect and exploitation, any of this that are potentially or actually harmful to a child's health, survival, dignity and development are called as abuse."<sup>[1]</sup> Globally, over half of all children ages 2-17 years were victims of physical, sexual or emotional violence in the past year.<sup>[2]</sup> one in five women was sexually abused as a child.<sup>[3]</sup> According to Children's Bureau, 2017 child abuse referrals from 3.6 million to 4 million. The no. of children involved subsequently increases to 7.2 million from 6.6 million. This report also indicates an increase in child deaths from abuse and neglect to 1, 670 in 2015, up from 1, 580 in 2014.<sup>[4]</sup> According to National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) 2015, 49 states reported are total of 1, 585 fatalities. Based on these data a nationally estimated 1, 670 children died from abuse or neglect in 2015, which is 5.7% more than 2011. This translates a rate of 2.25 children per 100, 000 children in the general population and an average of nearly 5 children dying every day from abuse.<sup>[1]</sup> Children who experience abuse and neglect are at increased risk for smoking, alcoholism, and drug abuse as adults, as well as engaged in high risk sexual behaviours and studies have found that abused and neglected children to be at least 25% more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy and low academic

achievements.<sup>[5][ 6]</sup> The other consequences of child abuse and neglect are improper brain development, impaired cognitive and socio-emotional skills, lower language development, higher risk for heart, lung and liver diseases, obesity, cancer, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol, anxiety.<sup>[6][7]</sup> Children who experience child abuse and neglect are about 9 times more likely to become involved in criminal activity.<sup>[8]</sup> As the mothers are the primary care giver and primary defence for a child from being abused, if they are aware and knowledgeable regarding child abuse and its prevention they can step forward for prevention of child abuse. For this reason the investigator wanted to assess the knowledge level of mothers regarding child abuse and its prevention.

### Problem statement

Assessment of knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention among mothers of selected rural community, West Bengal.

### Purpose

Through this research study investigator wanted to assess the knowledge level of mothers regarding child abuse and its prevention and on this basis measures can be taken to prevent child abuse.

### Objectives

- To assess the knowledge level of mothers regarding child abuse and its prevention.
- To find out the association between knowledge score regarding child abuse and its prevention with selected demographic variables among mothers.

Volume 7 Issue 4, April 2018

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**Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant association between knowledge score regarding child abuse and its prevention with selected demographic variables among mothers of rural community at 0.05 level of significance.

**Delimitation**

The population of the study delimited to mothers having child below 14 years of age in the selected community.

**2. Review of Literature**

- Literature related to knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention among parents.
- Literature related to association between knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention with selected demographic variables.

**Research Methodology**

**Research approach:** Quantitative, non experimental descriptive research approach was adapted.

**Research design:** Descriptive survey research design was adapted.

**Variables**

- **Dependent variables:** Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse and its prevention
- **Selected Demographic variables:** Age, education, occupation, socioeconomic status, source of knowledge regarding child abuse.

**Settings of study**

**Pilot study:** Setting for pilot study was community of Daulatpur, PO-Poilan Hat, PS- Bishnupur, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

**Final study:** Setting for final study was Bhasa, Plot No-14, South 24 Parganas, West Bengal

**Population:** Population of this study was mothers having child below 14 years of age.

**Sample:** In this study, sample was mothers having child below 14 years of age and who had fulfilled sampling criteria.

**Sample size:** In this study **20 and 100** samples were selected for pilot and final study respectively with maintaining sampling criteria and sampling characteristics.

**Sampling technique:** Samples were selected by purposive sampling technique.

**Sampling Criteria**

**Inclusion Criteria:**

- Mother who had child age below 14 years of age.
- Mother who were available during the study period
- Mother who understood Bengali language.

**Exclusion Criteria:**

- Mother who had understanding & verbal response problem.
- Mother who were unwilling to participate.
- Mother who were mentally ill.

**Table 1: Data Collection Tool and Technique**

Description of Tools	Variables	Technique
<b>TOOL -I</b> <i>Semi-structured interview schedule</i>	<i>Demographic variables-</i> Age Education Occupation Socio economic status source of knowledge regarding child abuse	Interviewing
<b>TOOL -II</b> <i>Structured interview schedule</i> Part I	Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse	Interviewing
Part II	Knowledge of mothers regarding prevention of child abuse	

**Establishing validity and Reliability:**

Content validity of tool was established by 5 experts from the field of Child Health Nursing, Obstetric and Gynaecological Nursing and Mental Health Nursing. The reliability of structured knowledge interview schedule was computed by Cronbach's alpha method by administering the tool on 10 subjects and found 0.78. Thus the tool was found reliable.

**Try out of the tool**

Try out of the tool was done by administrating the tool on 10 samples selected with maintaining the same sampling criteria for final study at kulerdari, village on 20/4/2017 to test clarity, ambiguity of data collection tool and time required for data collection. Most of the questions in the tool were understandable and clear and few were modified according to the understanding level of mothers. The average time taken for interview was 25 minutes.

**Final draft for semi structured interview schedule**

Final draft of interview schedule was prepared by incorporating the changes suggested by the experts. Final data collection tools were tow. Tool-I was semi- structured interview schedule on demographic data consisted of five questions on age, education, occupation, socioeconomic status, source of knowledge regarding child abuse. Tool -II was structured interview schedule which had two parts. Part-I consisted of 30 questions on child abuse and Part- II consisted of 10 questions on prevention of child abuse. Questions were prepared on the following areas of child abuse –definition and description, physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and prevention. A Score value of one (1) was allotted to each correct response and zero (0) for every incorrect response. Total score of structured interview schedule was 40. An answer key was also prepared.

**Pilot study**

Pilot study was conducted on 20 samples selected as per sampling criteria and sampling technique for final study, at

Daulatpur, community form 27/4/17 to 28/4/17. The pilot study assessed that the study is feasible for conducting the final study.

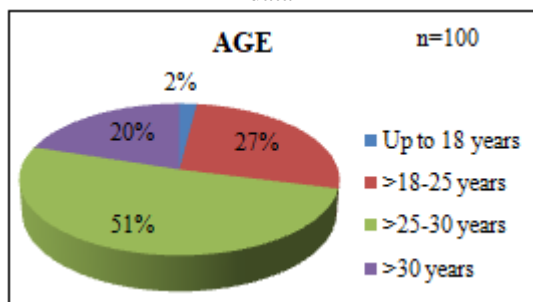
**Ethical consideration:**

Ethical permission was received from ethical committee, Woodlands Multispeciality Hospital Ltd, B.M.O.H, Bhasa, plot no: 14, South 24 Pgs, Panchayet pradhan, Bhasa, plot no: 14, South 24 Pgs informed written consent was received from the participants.

**Final data collection procedure:** Data was collected from 100 samples selected by purposive sampling technique as per sampling criteria from 19<sup>th</sup> May 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017. For data collection self introduction was given and rapport was established then explained the purpose of the study, confidentiality maintained and informed written consent was taken from each subjects. Demographic data was collected first then interview proceed to assess knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention. Data was collected by putting tick marks against chosen option by respondent on the structured interview schedule.

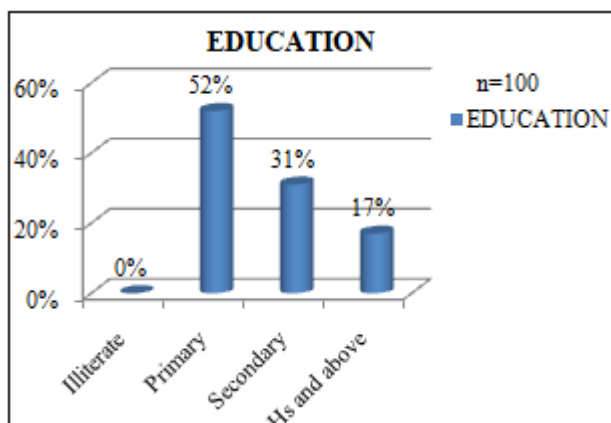
**Data analysis**

**Section-I: Findings related to description of demographic data**



**Figure 1:** Pie diagram represents the percentage distribution of mothers according to age.

Data presented in the Figure-1 showed that maximum mothers (51%) were in the age group of >25-30 years and minimum mothers (2%) were in the age group of ≤18 years of age.



**Figure 2:** Bar diagram represents education wise percentage distribution of mothers

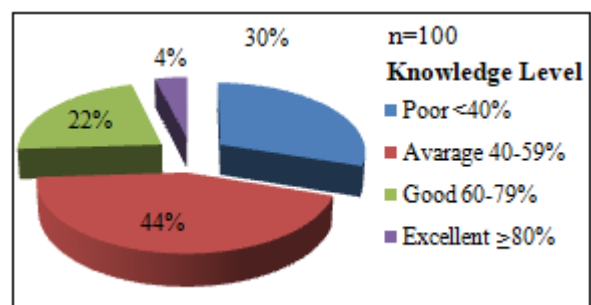
Data presented in Figure-2 showed that most of the mothers (52%) had primary education and no mothers (0%) were illiterate.

**Table 2:** Representing percentage distribution of demographic data of the mothers n=100

Sl. No	Demographic Data	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Occupation</b>			
1	Home maker	73	73%
	Business	9	9%
	Service	13	13%
	labourer	5	5%
<b>Monthly family income</b>			
2	≤ Rs. 5000	30	30%
	>Rs.5000-10, 000	51	51%
	>Rs.10, 000-15, 000	13	13%
	>Rs.15, 000	6	6%
<b>source of knowledge regarding child abuse</b>			
3	TV	72	72%
	TV and News paper	11	11%
	Radio, TV, News and paper	12	12%
	Internet	3	3%
	Health care provider	2	2%

Data presented in Table-2 depicted that maximum mothers were home maker (83%), majority belonged from monthly family income (>Rs.5000-Rs.10, 000) (51%) and majority heard about child abuse from TV (72%).

**Section-I: Findings related to knowledge score of mothers on child abuse and its prevention**



**Figure 3:** Pie diagram depicts the percentage distribution of mothers according to knowledge score on child abuse and its prevention.

Data presented in Fig-3 showed that most of the mothers (44%) had average knowledge and minimum mothers (4%) had excellent knowledge about child abuse and its prevention.

**Table 3:** Percentage distribution of mothers on the basis of knowledge scores in the different areas of child abuse and its prevention

Sl.No.	Areas of child abuse and its prevention	Knowledge level	Percentage of mothers
1	Definition & Description	Poor	34%
		Average	44%
		Good	19%
		Excellent	3%
2	Physical abuse	Poor	43%
		Average	0%
		Good	27%
		Excellent	30%
3	Psychological abuse	Poor	38%

		Average	34%
		Good	20%
		Excellent	8%
4	Sexual abuse	Poor	<b>29%</b>
		Average	22%
		Good	24%
5	Neglect	Excellent	25%
		Poor	<b>56%</b>
		Average	27%
6	Prevention	Good	12%
		Excellent	5%
		Poor	31%
		Average	<b>46%</b>
		Good	20%
		Excellent	3%

The data presented in the Table-3 showed that majority of mothers in the area of physical abuse (43%), psychological abuse (38%), sexual abuse (29%) and neglect (56%) had poor knowledge score and majority of mothers in the area of definition and description (44%), and prevention (46%) scored average. As a whole in all the areas of child abuse and its prevention the majority of mothers had average or more than average knowledge except in the area of neglect where majority (56%) of mothers had scored poor knowledge score.

**Table 4:** Mean, Median and Standard deviation of knowledge scores of mothers regarding child abuse and its prevention  
n=100

Items	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Knowledge score	19.66	19	6.50

The data presented in Table-4 showed that the mean, median, standard deviation of knowledge score of mothers was 19.66, 19 and 6.50 respectively.

**Section-III:** Findings related to association of knowledge score with demographic variables, n=100

**Table 5:** Chi square values calculated between knowledge scores with selected demographic variables among mothers

Sl. No.	Demographic Variables	Knowledge Score		Chi Square Value	Inference
		<Mdn	≥Mdn		
1	<b>Age</b>			4.6	Significant
	<25yrs	15	7		
	≥25yrs	33	45		
2	<b>Education</b>			8.9	Significant
	Upto Class-VII	17	35		
	Class-VIII and above	30	18		
3	<b>Occupation</b>			4.48	Significant
	Home maker	39	34		
	Others	8	19		
4	<b>Monthly income</b>			0.49	Not significant
	≤Rs.5000	16	14		
	>Rs.5000	32	38		

$\chi^2 df(1)=3.841, p<0.05$

Data presented in the Table-5 represents that Chi square between knowledge score with age ( $\chi^2=4.6^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), education ( $\chi^2=8.9^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), occupation ( $\chi^2=4.48^*$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) were found significant indicating that there were significant

association between knowledge score with age and also with education and occupation at 0.05 level of significance. There were no significant ( $\chi^2=0.49, p>0.05$ ) association between knowledge score with monthly family income.

**3. Discussion in relation to other study**

Discussion with similar study as following:

Gurung L B., Bahattarai S.(2015) conducted a descriptive cross sectional study on assessment of knowledge of child abuse among parents of children under 5 years of age residing in Kalanki area, Kathmandu. Participants 50.53% had good knowledge, 48.4% had average knowledge on overall child abuse. However 20% and 10.5% off the parents had poor knowledge on child sexual abuse and general child abuse respectively.<sup>[9]</sup>

Thangavelu S N. (2015) conducted a non experimental study to assess the level of knowledge regarding child abuse among the mother in selected area at Latur. The data was collected from 20 mothers. It is found that 3 mothers (13%) had adequate knowledge and 17 mothers (85%) having moderately knowledge.<sup>[10]</sup>

Study conducted by Devi A M, Yadav R(2014)<sup>[11]</sup> and Babastikos G (2010)<sup>[12]</sup> on assessment of the knowledge of parents regarding child abuse. Findings reported that majority of parents 52% had average knowledge, 38% had poor knowledge, and 10% had excellent knowledge. There was no association between knowledge score where compared to age, sex, occupation, education. In this study knowledge level of mothers was as like this present study but in their study no association found between knowledge score where compared to age, sex, occupation, education.<sup>[11]</sup> But in this present study association was found between knowledge score with age, education, occupation.

**4. Conclusion**

This study conclude that the knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse & its prevention is average and more than average in majority of areas of child abuse and its prevention, but mothers usually overlook 'neglect' as one of the categories of child-abuse. Most of mothers fail to recognize different types of neglect as they are not aware about this type of child abuse. As the mothers age, educational level, occupation are associated with mother's knowledge of child abuse so the improvement of societal status of mothers and education can move a step forward to prevent child abuse in future.

**5. Implication**

This study has implications in the field of nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration through spreading awareness regarding child abuse campaigning for prevention of violence against child in community, clinic, school and various settings. In nursing research this research study can promote research to prevent child maltreatment and also can guide the future researcher to study on this topic.

## 6. Limitation

Study had conducted on mothers having child less than 14 years of age with a small sample size in restricted setting which restricts generalization of findings.

## 7. Recommendation

Following recommendation for future research–

- Study to assess the prevalence of child abuse in community.
- Experimental study can be done on the Effect of awareness programme or planned teaching programme on child abuse and its prevention.
- Similar study can be conducted on a large sample.
- Study can be done in different settings.
- Similar study can be done among different population (eg- parents, women)

## 8. Acknowledgement

Dr. Sandipan for his kind co-operation and support, Prof. Mani as well wisher, Students- Ankita, Surachita, Madhurima, Sudipta, Tania, Suvoshree, Ahana for their support and co-operation.

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## Author Profile



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