

# A Study to Assess the Knowledge on Child Sexual Abuse among 11 To 15 Years Old Students in Selected School at Coimbatore

Jenifer. J.

PhD Scholar, Nursing Department, Maharaj Vinayak Global University, Jaipur, India

**Abstract:** Child sexual abuse, also called child molestation, is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation. Forms of child sexual abuse include engaging in sexual activities with a child (whether by asking or pressuring, or by other means), indecent exposure (of the genitals, female nipples, etc.), child grooming, child sexual exploitation or using a child to produce child pornography. The objective of this study are to assess the knowledge on child sexual abuse among 11 to 15 year students in selected school at Coimbatore and to associate the knowledge level on child sexual abuse with the socio demographic variables. The conceptual frame work of the present study was developed using the concepts from ground general system's theory (Von Ludwing Bertalamffy 1956). A descriptive study was used to find the knowledge level of 11 to 15 year students. The present study was conducted in Ravel Matriculation School, Seerapalayam, and Coimbatore. 50 students (11 to 15 year) were selected for this study. Non-probability convenient sampling was used. Socio Demographic data and knowledge questionnaire on child sexual abuse was used to collect the data. The final format of the structured questionnaire comprises of two parts. Part I consists of items describing the demographic variables of the sample like gender, religion, family income per month, mother and fathers education, mother and fathers occupation, family type, area of residency, mode of transport to school and mode of information on child sexual abuse. Part II consists of 30 items with multiple choices. The minimum mark 0 and maximum 30. The pilot study was conducted on 6 samples. The reliability of the tool was computed by using split half technique. The reliability co-efficient found to be 0.82 and validity coefficient worked out to be 0.97 revealing that the tool is feasible for conducting the main study. The result shows that maximum 48% of 11 to 15-year school students in selected school at Coimbatore were having poor knowledge on child sexual abuse, 30% students were having average knowledge and the remaining 22% were having good knowledge on child sexual abuse. The chi square explains that there is a significant association between socio demographic variables such as mother's education, father's education and the mode of information on child sexual abuse as the chi-square value at 0.05 is higher than the tabulated value. Therefore, the  $H_1$  is accepted.

## 1. Introduction

Child sexual abuse, also called child molestation, is a form of child abuse in which an adult or older adolescent uses a child for sexual stimulation. Forms of child sexual abuse include engaging in sexual activities with a child (whether by asking or pressuring, or by other means), indecent exposure (of the genitals, female nipples, etc.), child grooming, child sexual exploitation or using a child to produce child pornography.<sup>1</sup>

Child sexual abuse can occur in a variety of settings, including home, school, or work (in places where child labor is common).<sup>2</sup> Child sexual abuse (CSA) could be a universal drawback with grave life-long disturbance.<sup>3</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) defines CSA as "the involvement of children in sexual behavior that they don't absolutely comprehend and is unable to allow consent to, or that the child isn't matured physically and mentally, as an alternative that violate the social taboos of society".<sup>4</sup> The word pedophile is commonly applied indiscriminately to anyone who sexually abuses a child, but child sexual offenders are not pedophiles unless they have a strong sexual interest in prepubescent children. Under the law, child sexual abuse is often used as an umbrella term describing criminal and civil offenses in which an adult engages in sexual activity with a minor or exploits a minor for the purpose of sexual gratification.<sup>5</sup> The American Psychological Association states that "children cannot consent to sexual activity with adults", and condemns any such action by an adult: "An adult who engages in sexual activity with a child is performing a criminal and immoral

act which never can be considered normal or socially acceptable behavior."<sup>6</sup> The WHO in 2002 estimated a total of 33,098 cases of sexual abuse in children were reported in the nation during the year 2011 when compared to 26,694 reported in 2010 which increased by 24%.<sup>7</sup> Studies propose that over 7,200 children, including infants, are raped every year and it is believed that several cases go unreported. It is estimated by the government that 40% of India's children are susceptible to threats like being homeless, trafficking, drug abuse, forced labor, and crime. In India, every second child is being exposed to one or the other form of sexual abuse and every fifth child faces critical forms of it.<sup>8</sup> The issue of CSA is still a taboo in India. In India, majority of the people remain numb about this issue. This silence is due to the fear of indignity, denial from the community, social stigma, not being able to trust government bodies, and gap in communication between parents and children about this issue.<sup>9</sup>

### 1.1 Problem statement

"A study to assess the knowledge on child sexual abuse among 11 to 15 years old students in selected school at Coimbatore".

### 1.2 Objectives of the study

- 1) To assess the knowledge on child sexual abuse among 11 to 15 years old students in selected school at coimbatore.
- 2) To associate the knowledge level on child sexual abuse with the socio demographic variables.

1.3 Hypothesis

H<sub>1</sub>- There is a significant association between the knowledge level on child sexual abuse and the socio demographic variables.

1.4 Assumptions

This study helps to understand the knowledge level of the 11 to 15 years old students in selected school at Coimbatore.

1.5 Delimitations

The study will be limited to Only Fifty 11 to 15 years old students in selected school at Coimbatore.

The conceptual frame work of the present study was developed using the concepts from ground general system's theory (Von Ludwing Bertalamffy 1956). A descriptive study was used to find the knowledge level of 11 to 15 year students. The present study was conducted in Ravel Matriculation School, Seerapalayam, and Coimbatore. 50 students (11 to 15 year) were selected for this study. Non-probability convenient sampling was used. The inclusion criteria are the students who are willing to participate, students who are able to write and read English and Tamil and both male and female students are included. Exclusion criteria are those who were not willing to participate and students who are sick. Socio Demographic data and knowledge questionnaire on child sexual abuse was used to collect the data. The final format of the structured questionnaire comprises of two parts. Part I consists of items describing the demographic variables of the sample like gender, religion, family income per month, mother and fathers education, mother and fathers occupation, family type, area of residency, mode of transport to school and mode of information on child sexual abuse. Part II consists of 30 items with multiple choices. The minimum mark 0 and maximum 30. The pilot study was conducted on 6 samples. The reliability of the tool was computed by using split half technique. The reliability co-efficient found to be 0.82 and validity coefficient worked out to be 0.97 revealing that the tool is feasible for conducting the main study. The respondents were assured that the confidentiality of the information provided by them. It took 2 minutes for introduction and rapport building and 15 minutes for filling the questions. Data was collected during the college days. The data collection procedure was done.  $\chi^2$  test was used to determine the significance of relationship between knowledge and demographic variables of school children aged between 11 and 15 years.

2. Results

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of socio demographic variables, n=50

S.No	Socio Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	a Male	18	36
	b Female	32	64
2	Religion		

	a	Hindu	27	54
	b	Christian	10	20
	c	Muslim	8	16
	d	Other religion	5	10
3		Family income per month		
	a	Below Rs.10000/-	12	24
	b	Rs.10000/- to Rs.20000/-	29	58
	c	Above Rs.20000/-	9	18
4		Mothers education		
	a	Illiterate	6	12
	b	Primary school	17	34
	c	High school	9	18
	d	Graduate	12	24
	e	Postgraduate	6	12
5		Fathers education		
	a	Illiterate	12	24
	b	Primary school	8	16
	c	High school	18	36
	d	Graduate	6	12
	e	Postgraduate	6	12
6		Mothers occupation		
	a	House wife	20	40
	b	Government employee	5	10
	c	Coolie	8	16
	d	Employee in private institution	9	18
	e	Own Business	8	16
7		Fathers occupation		
	a	Un employee	7	14
	b	Government employee	15	30
	c	Coolie	8	16
	d	Employee in private institution	13	26
	e	Own Business	7	14
8		Family type		
	a	Nuclear family	30	60
	b	Joint family	20	40
9		Area of residency		
	a	Rural	31	62
	b	Urban	19	38
10		Mode of transport to school		
	a	Own vehicle	16	32
	b	School bus	13	26
	c	By walk	21	42
11		Mode of information on child sexual abuse		
	a	Media	7	14
	b	Friends	15	30
	c	Parents	21	42
	d	Neighbors	7	14

The above table 1 shows that the maximum 32 (64.0%) school students are females and the remaining 18 (36.0%) of them all males. Maximum 27 (54.0%) school students belongs to Hindu, 10 (20.0%) of them Christians, 8 (16.0%) of them were Muslims and 5 (10.0%) of them belongs to other religions. Maximum 29 (58.0%) school students' family income per month was Rs.10000/- to Rs.20000/-, 12 (24.0%) students family income was below Rs.10000/- and the remaining 9 (18.0%) of them having above Rs.20000/-.

Maximum 17 (34.0%) school students' mothers completed primary school only, 12 (24.0%) of their mothers' were graduated, 9 (18.0%) of their mothers' completed high school only, 6 (12.0%) of their mothers' are Illiterate and the 6 (12.0%) of their mothers' are completed postgraduate. Maximum 18 (36.0%) school students' fathers studied high school, 12 (24.0%) students' fathers were Illiterate, 8 (16.0%) students' fathers did primary school, 6 (12.0%)

students' fathers a regraduated, 6 (12.0%) students' fathers are postgraduate. Majority 20 (40.0%) school students' mothers were house wife, 9 (18.0%) students' mothers were employee in private institution, 8 (16.0%) students' mothers were Coolie workers, 8 (16.0%) students' mothers having own Business and the remaining 5 (10.0%) students' mothers are government employees. Majority 15 (30.0%) school students' fathers were government employees, 13 (26.0%) students' fathers were private institution workers, 8 (16.0%) students' fathers were coolie workers, 7 (14.0%) students' fathers were un employed and the remaining 7 (14.0%) students' fathers doing their own Business.

Maximum 30 (60.0%) school students were from nuclear family and the other 20 (40.0%) students from Joint family. Maximum 31 (62.0%) school students were from rural are and the other 19 (38.0%) students from urban area. Maximum 21 (42.0%) school students' mode of transport to school was walk, 16 (32.0%) students by Own vehicle, 13 (26.0%) students by school bus. Maximum 21 (42.0%) school students' mode of information on child sexual abuse was parents, 15 (30.0%) students from friends, 7 (14.0%) students from media and 7 (14.0%) students from Neighbors.

**Table 2:** Area wise and overall min, max, range, mean percentage, S.D., n=50

S.NO.	Knowledge Level	Statement	Min.	Max.	Range	Mean	S.D	Mean %
1	Knowledge on anatomy of reproductive system	6	0	6	0-6	3.02	1.879	50.3
2	Knowledge about Child Sexual Abuse	3	0	3	0-3	1.62	1.048	54.0
3	Knowledge on prevention of Child Sexual Abuse	13	0	13	0-13	6.36	3.921	48.9
4	Knowledge on treatment for victims	8	0	8	0-8	4.00	2.483	50.0
	Overall	30	0	30	0-30	15.00	8.531	50.0

The above table 2 implies that the knowledge score of school students in selected school at Coimbatore on child sexual abuse had obtained highest score in the aspect of "Knowledge about Child Sexual Abuse" with range of 0-3 mean  $1.62 \pm 1.05$  with mean percentage 54.00, " Knowledge on anatomy of reproductive system" with range of 0-6 mean  $3.02 \pm 1.88$  with mean percentage 50.33, "Knowledge on treatment for victims" with range of 0-8 mean  $4.00 \pm 2.48$  with mean percentage 50.00, "Knowledge on prevention of Child Sexual Abuse" with range of 0-13 mean  $6.36 \pm 3.92$  with mean percentage 48.92. The overall mean percentage was 50.

**Table 3:** Frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge level on child sexual abuse

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	24	48%
Average	15	30%
Good	11	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

Maximum 48% of 11 to 15-year school students in selected school at Coimbatore were having poor knowledge on child sexual abuse, 30% students were having average knowledge and the remaining 22% were having good knowledge on child sexual abuse.

**Table 4:** Association of knowledge level of school students in selected school at Coimbatore towards child sexual abuse with selected demographic variable, n=50

Demographic variables	Level		N	df	X2	P-value	P<0.05	
	Below Mean	Above Mean						
1	<b>Gender</b>							
a	Male	8	10	18	1	0.64	3.84	NS
b	Female	18	14	32				
2	<b>Religion</b>							
a	Hindu	13	14	27	3	0.56	7.82	NS
b	Christian	6	4	10				
c	Muslim	4	4	8				
d	Other religion	3	2	5				
3	<b>Family income per month</b>							
a	Below Rs.10000/-	5	7	12	2	0.68	5.99	NS
b	Rs.10000/- to Rs.20000/-	16	13	29				
c	Above Rs.20000/-	5	4	9				
4	<b>Mothers education</b>							
a	Illiterate	4	2	6	4	9.93	9.49	S
b	Primary school	5	12	17				
c	High school	8	1	9				
d	Graduate	5	7	12				
e	Postgraduate	4	2	6				
5	<b>Fathers education</b>							
a	Illiterate	6	6	12	4	9.94	9.49	S
b	Primary school	8		8				
c	High school	6	12	18				
d	Graduate	3	3	6				
e	Postgraduate	3	3	6				
6	<b>Mothers occupation</b>							

	a	House wife	11	9	20	4	2.54	9.49	NS
	b	Government employee	1	4	5				
	c	Coolie	5	3	8				
	d	Employee in private institution	5	4	9				
	e	Own Business	4	4	8				
7	<b>Fathers occupation</b>								
	a	Un employee	3	4	7	4	0.35	9.49	NS
	b	Government employee	8	7	15				
	c	Coolie	4	4	8				
	d	Employee in private institution	7	6	13				
	e	Own Business	4	3	7				
8	<b>Family type</b>								
	a	Nuclear family	16	14	30	1	0.05	3.84	NS
	b	Joint family	10	10	20				
9	<b>Area of residency</b>								
	a	Rural	17	14	31	1	0.26	3.84	NS
	b	Urban	9	10	19				
10	<b>Mode of transport to school</b>								
	a	Own vehicle	7	9	16	2	0.68	5.99	NS
	b	School bus	7	6	13				
	c	By walk	12	9	21				
11	<b>Mode of information on child sexual abuse</b>								
	a	Media	7		7	3	10.32	7.82	S
	b	Friends	5	10	15				
	c	Parents	9	12	21				
	d	Neighbours	5	2	7				

There is a significant association between socio demographic variables such as mother's education, father's education and the mode of information on child sexual abuse as the chi-square value at 0.05 is higher than the tabulated value. Therefore, the  $H_1$  is accepted.

### 3. Discussion

#### Major findings are

Maximum 32 (64.0%) school students are females, 27 (54.0%) school students belongs to Hindu, 29 (58.0%) school students' family income per month was Rs.10000/- to Rs.20000/-, 17 (34.0%) school students' mothers completed primary school only, 18 (36.0%) school students' fathers studied high school, 20 (40.0%) school students' mothers were house wife. 15 (30.0%) school students' fathers were government employees, 30 (60.0%) school students were from nuclear family, 31 (62.0%) school students were from rural area 21 (42.0%) school students' mode of transport to school was by walk, 21 (42.0%) school students' mode of information on child sexual abuse was parents.

Maximum 48% of 11 to 15-year school students in selected school at Coimbatore were having poor knowledge on child sexual abuse, 30% students were having average knowledge and the remaining 22% were having good knowledge on child sexual abuse. The chi square explains that there is a significant association between socio demographic variables such as mother's education, father's education and the mode of information on child sexual abuse as the chi-square value at 0.05 is higher than the tabulated value. Therefore, the  $H_1$  is accepted.

A similar study was conducted by Harun Ozbey et al., (2018) on the topic "Knowledge and awareness of students about child abuse and neglect". This descriptive study was conducted at Karadeniz Technical University, Faculty of

Health Sciences, Department of Nursing between May and June 2018. The data were collected by the researcher using a questionnaire and the "Scale for the Identification of Symptoms and Risks of Child Neglect and Abuse". The significance level was accepted as  $p < 0.05$  on parents' education. This is very similar to our study. It was determined that the mean scores of the students were  $20.16 \pm 1.32$ , the majority of the students were female (84.9%). It also reflects in our study. 42.2% lived in the city and 82.5% had nuclear families. This also same as our study. 29.4% of the students were educated about child neglect and abuse, and 63.0% of these students received the related education in a school-based course. The mean scores of female students regarding child neglect and abuse was higher than male students ( $p < 0.0001$ ) and the knowledge level of those who were educated about this issue was higher than those who did not and the difference between the groups was significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ).<sup>10</sup>

### 4. Conclusion

The study showed that there is a need for awareness program as the number of students with good knowledge level is very low than average and poor knowledge students. All students should have good knowledge on child sexual abuse. This will help them to protect from sexual abuse.

### References

- [1] WHO. World Health organization. [Online].; 2014. Available from: [http://www.who.int/topics/child\\_abuse/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/child_abuse/en/).
- [2] WHO. Guidelines for medicolegal care for victims of sexual violence. World Health organization. 2014 August 9.

- [3] Putnam F. Ten-year research update review: child sexual abuse. *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2003 March; 42(3): 269-78.
- [4] Krug E, Dahlberg L, Mercy J, Zwi A, Lozano R. World report on violence and health. World Health Organization. 2014 August 9.
- [5] Childline organisation. [Online].; 2014. Available from: <http://www.childlineindia.org.in/1098/1098.htm>.
- [6] Behere P, Sathyanarayana RT, Mulmule A. Sexual abuse in women with special reference to children: Barriers, boundaries and beyond. *Indian J Psychiatry*. 2013 October; 55(4): 316-9.
- [7] Study on Child Abuse. Ministry of Women and Child development Government of India. 2014 August 9.
- [8] Child sexual abuse in India. USA.; 2014.
- [9] Martin J, Anderson J, Romans S, Mullen P, O'Shea M. Asking about child sexual abuse: methodological implications of a two stage survey. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. 1993; 17(3): 383-92.
- [10] Roosa M, Reinholtz C, Angelini P. The relation of child sexual abuse and depression in young women. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*. 2015; 27(1): 65-76.
- [11] Ames M, Ashley , Houston , David A. Legal, social, and biological definitions of pedophilia. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. 2016; 19(4): 333-42.
- [12] Harun O, Gokce AO, Ugur G, Ilknur K. Knowledge and awareness of nursing students about child abuse and neglect. *Pulsus*. 2018 July 27; 2(3): 21-5.