

A Descriptive Survey to Assess the Knowledge and Attitude of Parents regarding Child Abuse in Rural Area of Selected District of Haryana, India

Manju

Staff Nurse, Pt. BD Sharma University of Health Sciences, Rohtak, India

Abstract: *Children are an important and valuable part of God's Kingdom. The world changes with children. With every child that comes into the world, new hopes and dreams of the human race are born. This study was conducted with an objective to assess the knowledge and attitude of the parents regarding child abuse and to seek the relationship between the knowledge and attitude of the parents regarding child abuse in rural area of selected district of Haryana. A Sample of 80 parents were selected by convenient sampling technique. The research design selected was descriptive survey. To obtain necessary data for the study, the tools developed were structured interview schedule and attitude rating scale. Data was collected at government school of Village Nindana, District Rohtak of Haryana. The major findings of the study revealed that majority of the parents were in poor knowledge score level (51.25%), had favourable attitude (48.75%) toward child abuse. There was significant positive relationship between knowledge and attitude scores of parents regarding child abuse. The findings have implications for nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration, nursing research and public education.*

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Child Abuse

1. Introduction

Children of today are the citizens of tomorrow, so it is our duty to provide safe and secure environment to our children. Childhood is the most crucial period in a person's life because maximum growth and development happens at this stage. Safe and secure environment free of physical, sexual and emotional trauma gives the child a feeling of wellbeing, which enhances his/her growth and development. Many children are living with great difficulty in society and undergo various traumas in their lives, which disrupts their normal process of growth and development.

More than one third of India's population is below the age of 18 years, making it the country with highest number of child population in the world, around 440 million, eleven million of them are street children. Seventeen million children work in India which is highest in the world. Girl's enrolment in schools at primary level is (47.79%). Children's vulnerabilities and exposure to violations of their legal rights remain widespread and multiple in nature. The manifestation of these violations are various ranging from child labour, child trafficking, child sexual abuse, child marriage, child pornography to commercial sexual exploitation.

As a nursing professional, it is the responsibility of a nurse to address these problems and to work on them. Nurse is in a position to make unique contribution to this problem as she interacts with children and their parents in a variety of settings like hospital and community, school, child welfare centres, child guidance centres.

Independent India has taken large strides in addressing issues like child education, health and development. However, child protection has remained largely unaddressed. There is now realization that if issues of child abuse and neglect like female foeticide and infanticide, girl

child discrimination, child marriage, trafficking of children and so on are not addressed, it will affect the overall progress of the country. (Deepa Jain Singh, Secretary Ministry of Women and Child Development Government of India, 2007)

National child abuse and neglect data system (NCANDS, 2007) indicates that in 2007 neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and psychologic maltreatment constituted 60%, 20%, 10% and 7% respectively of confirmed cases. The rate of maltreatment declined with advancing age of the children.

In 2007, the Indian Government published the results of one of the world's largest and most sophisticated studies on child abuse, carried out in conjunction with Unicef and Save the Children. This detailed research on over 12,000 children produced some conclusions: across different kinds of abuse, it is the young children, in the 5-12 year age group, who are the most at risk of abuse and exploitation. Twenty one point nine percent child respondents faced severe forms of sexual abuse and 50.76% other forms of sexual abuse. Fifty percent abusers are persons known to the child or in a position of trust and responsibility. Most children did not report the matter to anyone. And overall, more boys than girls face various forms of sexual abuse ranging from inappropriate touch, exposure to pornography or violent sexual assault. The abuser could be from the peer group or an older student. According to NCPDR (National Commission for protection of Child Rights) report, 2011, Child abuse in India, increased to 763 in 2009-10 from 35 in 2007-08.

2. Materials and Methods

The survey approach was thought to be the most suitable method and the design was descriptive survey design. Variables identified in the present study were the attribute variable, Background factors of parents like age, sex, religion, educational qualification, occupation, monthly

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income, type of family, exposure to mass media, dependent variable identifies were Knowledge, attitude scores of parents regarding child abuse. The study was conducted in Government school, Village Nindana, District Rohtak, Haryana. In the present study, the population comprised of the parents of the children between the age group of 0-18 years residing in rural area of Rohtak, Haryana. Parents who were willing to participate in the study, living in rural area of Rohtak district, able to understand/read hindi, available during the research study period. Try out was done on 15 subjects; Reliability of the tool was checked on 15 subjects. Total subjects selected were 80 for the final study.

The sampling technique used was non probability convenient type. The teachers of the selected setting were requested to call the parents of children who were available at home and those who could come to schools easily and investigator took the sample as per the convenience. The following tools were developed in order to obtain data: A Structured Interview Schedule comprising of two parts. Part I, Background Data to collect background information of the parents and Part II, Structured Knowledge Interview Schedule to assess the knowledge of the parents regarding child abuse. An attitude rating scale to assess the attitude of the parents regarding child abuse. The interviewer read the statements and options and asked the respondents to select a suitable option, then put a tick mark in the column provided. Content validity of the tool was established by submitting them to nine experts in the field of paediatrics, community health, psychology and social work who rated them on basis of criteria checklist. Pretesting of all the tools was done to ensure the clarity of items, their feasibility and practicability. Item analysis of the items was done and no modification was done in the tool. The most commonly used test of internal consistency was Cronbach's alpha.

It was conducted from 7th to 20th October, 2013 at Village Nindana, District Rohtak, Haryana after obtaining formal administrative approval. Parents were provided with general information on the purpose of the study. They were assured of confidentiality. The investigator herself administered the structured interview schedule and attitude scale. Average time of 35-40 minutes was taken to respond to all of the tools.

3. Analysis

The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of parents by demographic characteristics, N=80

S.N.	Demographic Characteristics	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age of parents in years		
	<20	2	2.5
	21-25	15	18.75
	26-30	26	32.5
	31-35	17	21.25
	>35	20	25
2.	Sex of Parent		
	Mother	55	68.75
	Father	25	31.25
3.	Religion		
	Hindu	78	97.5

	Islam	2	2.5
	Christian	0	0
	Any other	0	0
4.	Educational qualification		
	Illiterate	22	27.5
	Primary	42	52.5
	Matric	1	1.25
	Senior Secondary	3	3.75
	Graduate and above	12	15
5.	Occupation		
	Government Service	11	13.75
	Private Service	8	10
	Business/self employed	5	6.75
	Labourer	23	28.75
	Farmer	5	6.25
	Unemployed/Home Maker	28	35
6.	Monthly income		
	Less than Rs 5000	57	71.25
	Rs 5001-10000	17	21.25
	Rs 10001-15000	1	1.25
	Above Rs 15000	5	6.25
7.	Type of family		
	Nuclear	29	36.25
	Joint	50	62.5
	Extended	1	1.25
8.	Exposure of mass media		
	Yes	37	46.25
	No	43	53.75

Data presented in **table 1** shows that majority of the parents 26(32.5%) were in the age group of 26-30 years. Most of the subjects comprised of mothers, 55(68.75%). Majority of the subjects were Hindu by religion 78(97.5 %). 22(27.5%) were illiterate, 42(52.5%) were primary educated. Most of the subjects were homemakers 28(35%), 23(28.75%) were labourers, 11(13.75%) were in government service. Majority of the subjects 57(71.25%) were earning less than 5000. Most of the subjects 50(62.5%) were of joint family. 37(46.25%) were exposed to mass media and 43(53.75%) were not exposed to mass media regarding child abuse information.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of parents in terms of knowledge scores regarding child abuse, N=80

Knowledge score	Range of knowledge scores	Frequency	Percentage
Good	22-29	8	10
Fair	14-21	31	38.75
Poor	6-13	41	51.25

Data presented in **Table 2** indicates that majority (51.25%) of the parents were in poor knowledge level (6-13), 38.75% in fair knowledge level (14-21) and 10 % were in good knowledge level (22-29). This shows the existence of knowledge deficit among parents regarding child abuse.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of parents in terms of attitude scores regarding child abuse, N=80

Attitude scores	Range of attitude scores	Frequency	Percentage
Unfavourable	76-91	11	13.75
Undecided	60-75	30	37.5
Favourable	44-59	39	48.75

Data presented in **Table 3** indicates that Most (48.75%) of the parents had favourable attitude (44-59) regarding child

abuse, 37.5% had undecided attitude (60-75) and 13.75% had unfavourable attitude (76-91) towards child abuse. This shows the existence of favourable attitude among parents in regard to child abuse.

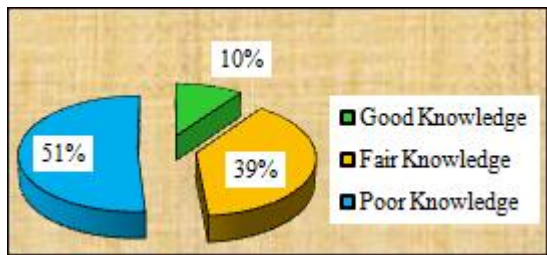


Figure 1: Pie diagram showing percentage distribution of parents in terms of knowledge scores regarding child abuse

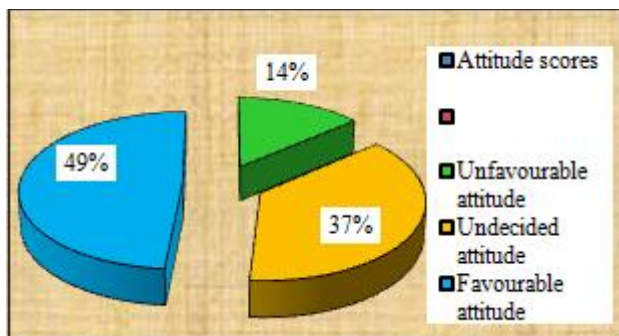


Figure 2: Pie diagram showing percentage distribution of parents in terms of attitude scores regarding child abuse

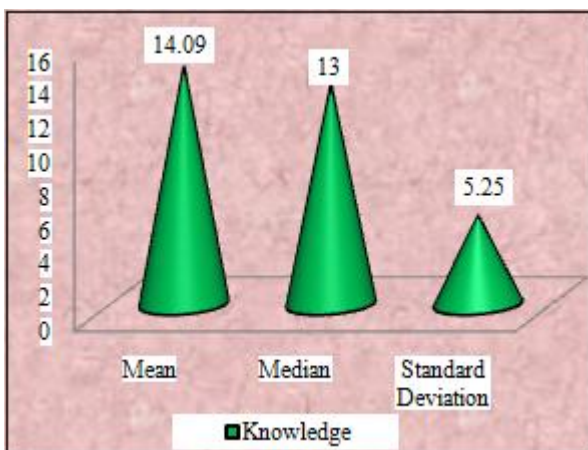


Figure 3: Conical column graph showing mean, median and standard deviation of knowledge scores of parents

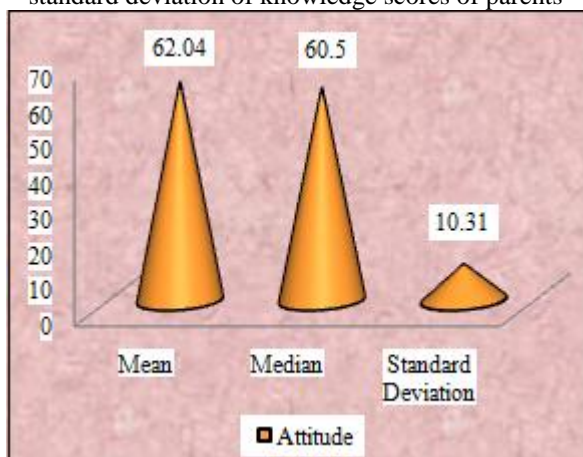


Figure 4: Conical column graph showing mean, median and standard deviation of attitude scores of parents

In order to determine the relationship between the knowledge and attitude of parents regarding child abuse, Pearson Product of Correlation (r) was calculated.

Table 4: Coefficient of correlation between knowledge scores and attitude score of parents regarding child abuse, n=80

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	"r" value
Knowledge	14.09	5.25	r = 0.598*
Attitude	62.04	10.31	

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance
df(78) = 0.217 @ 0.05 level of significance

Table 4 shows that the mean knowledge score of parents was 14.09 with standard deviation of 5.25 and mean attitude score was 62.04 with standard deviation of 10.31. Pearson r value was found to be 0.598 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance, which indicates that there was statistically significant positive correlation between knowledge and attitude scores. The findings reveal that lack of knowledge in parents regarding child abuse lead them to have favourable attitude towards child abuse.

4. Discussion

The present study findings showed that the parents had knowledge deficit and favourable attitude regarding child abuse. These finding are consistent with the findings of the study conducted by **Chen J.Q et al (2007)** which revealed that many parents lacked basic knowledge about characteristics of perpetrators, the sexual abuse of boys, and nonphysical consequences of CSA(child sexual abuse) and did not have more supportive attitudes to CSA prevention. The present study findings were consistent with study conducted by **Das Hima, (2010)** to assess the knowledge and attitude of parents of children aged 4-15 years, regarding child abuse and neglect and seek its association with selected factors. The study findings showed that the parents of children aged 4-15 years, had knowledge deficit and had less favourable attitude towards child abuse and neglect.

Further analysis of the present study revealed that the knowledge score was higher among the parents who had higher level of education. Study by **Calvert, J.F. (1998)** et al also showed that parents who had low education had significant knowledge deficit regarding child abuse.

5. Conclusion and Future Scope

The study has implications for nursing practice, nursing education, nursing administration, nursing research and public education. Nurses can organize counselling session for the parents to prepare them for responsible parenthood and healthy child rearing practices to prevent child abuse. As a school health nurse, a nurse can play an active role in prevention of child abuse by imparting knowledge to students about safety issues. Both in undergraduate and post graduate level, the nursing students should be trained to identify the form of child abuse and neglect in all settings such as Hospital, Community, and School etc. and to take immediate remedial actions. To fight against the global and national issues of child abuse, extensive and intensive

researches are required in this field. Survey research studies can be done to identify the incidence, prevalence and consequences of child abuse.

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Author Profile

Ms. Manju RN RM, MSN (Obstetrical Nursing)