

# A Study to Develop and Evaluate the Effectiveness of an Awareness Programme on 'Prevention of Child Abuse' in Terms of Knowledge and Attitude of Parents Regarding Child Abuse in Rural Area of Selected District of Haryana, India

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**Abstract:** Parenting is a demanding task under the most ideal circumstances. The basic goals of parenting are: to promote the physical survival and health of the children, to foster the skills and abilities necessary to be self sustaining adults, to foster behavioural capabilities for maximising cultural values and beliefs. While plenty of advice is available to the parents for child rearing too often this advice is confusing and conflicting. The objectives of the study were to develop an awareness programme on "Prevention of Child Abuse", to assess and evaluate the knowledge and attitude of the parents before and after administration of awareness programme on child abuse. The research approach adopted was evaluative pre experimental and research design selected was pre experimental one group pre test post test design. The variables under study were independent variable i.e. awareness programme on prevention of child abuse and dependent variable i.e. knowledge and attitude scores of the parents regarding child abuse. A Sample of 60 parents were selected by convenient sampling technique. The tools developed were structured interview schedule and attitude rating scale. The awareness program was developed which included a planned teaching programme and an information booklet on "Prevention of Child Abuse" for the parents. Data collection was done within the period from 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 2013 to 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2014 at Village Ningana, District Rohtak of Haryana. The data obtained was tabulated and analyzed in terms of descriptive and inferential statistics. The major findings of the study revealed that the awareness programme was effective in enhancing the knowledge and changing attitude of parents regarding child abuse as evident from significant 't' value calculated from pre test and post test scores. Nurses can play an active role in prevention of child abuse by imparting knowledge and sensitizing parents about child abuse.

**Keywords:** Child abuse, Prevention, Planned teaching program

## 1. Introduction

Children bloom with love and affection. 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.

Child abuse and neglect includes four distinct conditions: neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse. This may occur at homes, in neighbourhood, schools, public places, residential care institutions and work places. Child abuse is found in all societies and is almost a highly guarded secret, wherever it takes place. (WHO, 1997)

Studies carried out in the past two decades have shown that the provision of supportive home visiting, either by community health nurse, social worker or other trained health worker, to families who are at risk of using violence against children can prevent child abuse. Suggested remedial measures includes counselling, educating younger adults for planned parenthood, educating parents, referral to child guidance clinic and legal help. Thus, community health nurse plays an important role in prevention and early identification of child abuse. (Park, J. 2011)

One grandmother says "be strict" and mother says "let the child have his way". The most important single principle is

that everything must be done for the child in a spirit of love, acceptance and understanding. Happy is the parent who knows what to expect of his child at a particular age, that would reduce the disappointment, anxiety and confusion in the parent. (Nancy R Shaw, 1974)

In India, the number of children needing care and protection is huge and increasing. Uncontrolled population, extreme poverty, illiteracy results in provision of very little care to the child during the early formative years. Even services that are freely available are poorly utilized. So public awareness about child abuse has to be raised and attitude of society needs to be changed. Parents, care takers, teachers, children should have knowledge regarding child rights, child abuse prevention, parenting skills, alternative forms of discipline, various governmental facilities like helpline numbers and Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which work for the protection of children. Families and community must be educated, informed and empowered so that they can provide care and protection to their children. (28<sup>th</sup> CMAAO General Assembly & 49<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting report). National Crime Records Bureau in its report of 2011 reported 24201 cases of crimes against children in 2009, mainly including 1488 cases of child murder, 5368 rape cases, 8945 cases of kidnapping and abduction of children, 123 of foeticide, 857 reported cases of exposure and abandonment etc.

Times of India, Haryana, 2012 reported that at Apna Ghar, a shelter home for children, children who had been at the

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facility complained of being sexually abused by Jaswanti, owner of the shelter home, her son-in-law Jai Bhagwan, and other members of staff.

The concept of prevention includes four levels- primordial, primary, secondary and tertiary. In primordial level, prevention of the emergence of risk factors in population groups in which they have not yet appeared is focussed. So the researcher decided firstly to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of parents regarding child abuse and then to develop and conduct an awareness program to sensitize them about child abuse and its prevention.

## 2. Materials and methods

The conceptual framework developed for the study was "Community as a client Model", which is an adaptation of Betty Neuman's "Health Care Model". The research approach adopted for study was evaluative pre experimental. The research design used was pre experimental one group pre test post test design. The sample comprised of 60 parents. Tools developed for data collection were divided into two sections. Section-I Structured Interview Schedule and Section-II Attitude Rating Scale. Nine experts in the field of paediatrics, community health, psychology and social work established the content validity of the tools. The reliability coefficient for structured knowledge interview schedule was calculated by using Kuder Richardson -20 formula and found to be 0.88. For the attitude scale it was calculated by Cronbach alpha and found to be 0.76 for both. Thus the tools were found to be valid and reliable. The tools were administered to fifteen parents for a try out to check the clarity and feasibility of the study.

The awareness program was developed which consisted of a planned teaching programme and an information booklet designed to give awareness on "Prevention of Child Abuse" for the parents. Content validity was established by submitting the program to seven experts in the field of paediatrics, community health, psychology and social work. There was 100% agreement on the content of the awareness program except a few modifications. The study was done within a period from 15<sup>th</sup> Dec 2013 to 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2014 at Village Ningana, District Rohtak, Haryana after obtaining formal administrative approval. 60 Sample subjects were chosen by using convenient sampling. On Day 1, pre test was taken. The investigator administered the structured knowledge interview schedule and attitude scale and thereafter the planned teaching programme was administered and information booklet was provided. On Day 7, post test was administered to all the samples to determine the gain in knowledge, change in attitude to test the effectiveness of the awareness program. The data obtained was tabulated and analyzed in terms of the objectives of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics.

In the present study, the independent variable was Awareness programme on "Prevention of Child Abuse" and dependent variable identifies were knowledge and attitude scores of parents regarding child abuse. The awareness program consisted of Planned Teaching Programme and Information Booklet. The following areas were covered in the planned teaching programme and information booklet:

facts related to child abuse, myths related to child abuse, rights of children, general information about child abuse, factors responsible for child abuse, types and indicators of child abuse, consequences of child abuse, prevention tips, management of child abuse, effective parenting skills, non violent disciplining methods.

## 3. Analysis

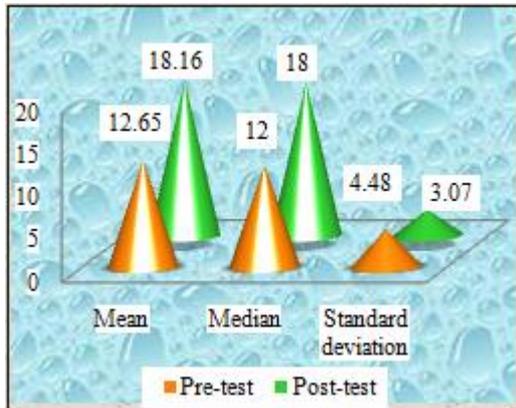
**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage distribution of parents by demographic characteristics i.e. age, sex, religion, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, type of family, exposure to mass media, N=60

S.N.	Demographic Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	<b>Age of parents in years</b>		
	<20	1	1.66
	21-25	9	15
	26-30	28	46.67
	31-35	15	25
	>35	7	11.67
2	<b>Sex of Parent</b>		
	Mother	42	70
	Father	18	30
3	<b>Religion</b>		
	Hindu	57	95
	Islam	3	5
	Christian	0	0
	Any other	0	0
4	<b>Educational qualification</b>		
	Illiterate	11	18.33
	Primary	32	53.33
	Matric	6	10
	Senior Secondary	4	6.67
	Graduate and above	7	11.67
5	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Government Service	2	3.33
	Private Service	3	5
	Business/self employed	2	3.33
	Labourer	11	18.34
	Farmer	12	20
	Unemployed/Home Maker	30	50
6.	<b>Monthly income</b>		
	Less than Rs 5000	41	68.34
	Rs 5001-10000	11	18.33
	Rs 10001-15000	5	8.33
	Above Rs 15000	3	5
7.	<b>Type of family</b>		
	Nuclear	22	36.67
	Joint	38	63.33
	Extended	0	0
9.	<b>Exposure of mass media</b>		
	Yes	39	65
	No	21	35

**Table 1** shows that most of the subjects, 28(46.67%) were in the age group of 26-30 years. Majority of the subjects comprised of mothers 42(70%) and 18(30%) fathers. Majority of the subjects were Hindu by religion 57(95%). Most of the subjects, 32(53.33%) were primary educated. Most of the subjects were homemakers 30(50%). Most of the subjects 41(68.34%) were earning less than 5000. Majority of the subjects 38(63.33%) were of joint family. Most of the subjects 39(65%) were exposed to mass media and 21(35%) were not exposed to mass media regarding child abuse information.

**Table 2:** Mean, Median, Standard deviation and range of scores of pre-test and post-test knowledge scores of parents, N=60

Knowledge Scores	Max. Scores	Range of obtained scores	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Pre- test	26	6-26	12.65	12	4.48
Post- test	26	12-26	18.16	18	3.07

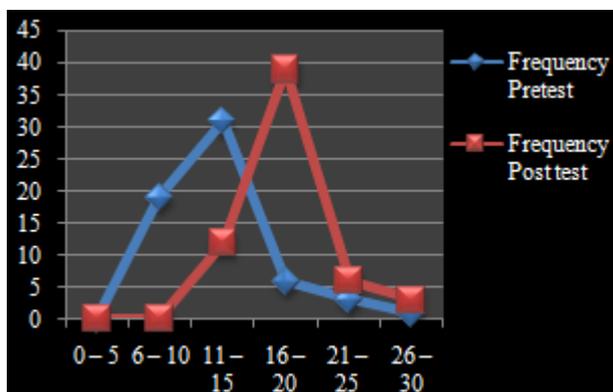


**Figure 1:** Conical column graph showing mean, median and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test knowledge scores of the parents

Data presented in Table 2 and Figure 1 shows that the mean post-test knowledge score (18.16) of parents was higher than mean pre-test knowledge score (12.65). This indicates that there was increase in knowledge of parents regarding child abuse after administration of the awareness programme. The data also shows that the standard deviation of post test (3.07) was less than the pre-test (4.48). Thus it indicates that the group became more homogeneous in terms of knowledge after administration of the awareness programme on prevention of child abuse.

**Table 3:** Frequency distribution of pretest and post test knowledge scores of parents

S.No.	Class interval	Frequency	
		Pretest	Post test
1.	0 – 5	0	0
2.	6 – 10	19	0
3.	11 – 15	31	12
4.	16 – 20	6	39
5.	21 – 25	3	6
6.	26 – 30	1	3



**Figure 2:** Frequency Polygon showing the pre test and post test knowledge scores of the parents

The data in Table 3 and Figure 2 indicate that the Pre test score of the parents were more frequent in the range of 11-15, 31 parents scored within this range in the pre test. Whereas 19 scored within 6-10, 6 scored within 16-20, 3 scored within 21-25 and only 1 scored within the range of 26-30 and no parent scored within the range 0-5. As far as the Post test scores are concerned, majority (39) had scored within the range of 16-20, 12 had scored within 11-15, 6 had scored within the range of 21-25 whereas

**Table 4** Mean, Mean difference, Standard deviation of differences, Standard error of mean difference and 't' value of pre-test and post-test knowledge scores of parents regarding child abuse, N=60

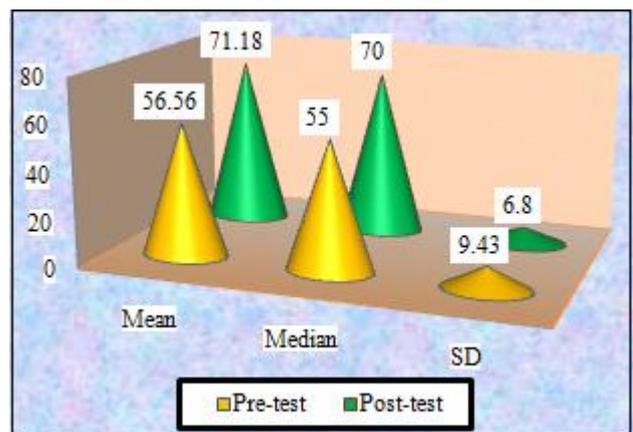
Knowledge Scores	Mean	Mean difference	SD <sub>D</sub>	SE <sub>MD</sub>	't' Value
Pre-test	12.65	5.51	2.75	0.356	15.490
Post-test	18.16				

\*df(59)- 't' Value=2.00 at 0.05 level of Significance

**Table 4** indicates that the mean post-test knowledge score (18.16) of parents was higher than the mean pre-test knowledge score (12.65) with a mean difference of 5.51. The obtained mean difference was found to be statistically significant as evident from 't' value of 15.490 for df (59) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus it was established that the differences obtained in mean pre-test and post-test knowledge scores was a true difference and not by chance. This indicates that the awareness programme was effective in enhancing the knowledge of parents regarding child abuse.

**Table 5:** Mean, Median, Standard deviation and range of scores of pre-test and post-test attitude scores of parents, N=60

Attitude Scores	Max. Scores	Range of obtained scores	Mean	Median	Standard deviation
Pre-test	79	44-79	56.56	55	9.43
Post-test	88	56-88	71.18	70	6.80



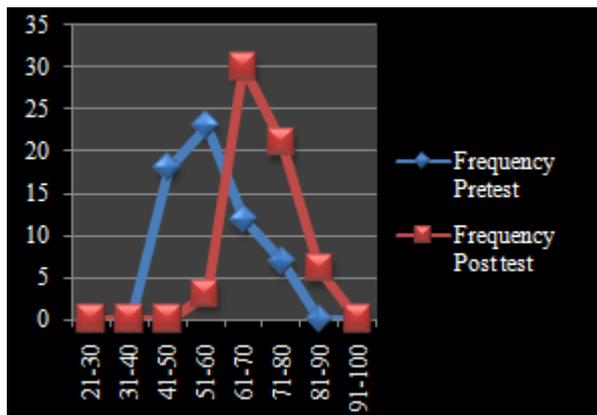
**Figure 3:** Conical column graph showing mean, median and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test attitude scores of parents

Data presented in **Table 5** and **Figure 3** shows that the mean post-test attitude score (71.18) of parents was higher than mean pre-test attitude score (56.56). This indicates that there was a change in attitude of parents regarding child abuse after administration of the awareness programme. The data also shows that the standard deviation of post test (6.80) attitude scores was less than the pre-test (9.43). Thus it

indicates that the group become more homogeneous in terms of attitude after administration of awareness programme on prevention of child abuse.

**Table 6:** Frequency distribution of pretest and post test attitude scores of parents, N=60

S.No.	Class interval	Frequency	
		Pretest	Post test
1.	21-30	0	0
2.	31-40	0	0
3.	41-50	18	0
4.	51-60	23	3
5.	61-70	12	30
6.	71-80	7	21
7.	81-90	0	6
8.	91-100	0	0



**Figure 4:** Frequency Polygon showing the pre test and post test attitude scores of the parents

The data in **Table 6** and **Figure 4** indicate that the Pre test score of the parents were more frequent in the range of 51-60, 23 parents scored within this range in the pre test. Whereas 18 scored within 41-50, 12 scored within 61-70, 7 scored within 71-80 and no parent scored below 40 and above 80. As far as the Post test scores are concerned, majority (30) had scored within the range of 61-70, 21 had scored within 71-80, 6 had scored within the range of 81-90 whereas 3 scored in the range 51-60. There were no subjects scoring below 50 and within 91-100 in the post test.

**Table 7:** Mean, Mean difference, Standard deviation of differences, Standard error of mean difference and 't' value of pre-test and post-test attitude scores of parents regarding child abuse, N=60

Attitude Scores	Mean	Mean difference	SD <sub>D</sub>	SE <sub>MD</sub>	't' Value
Pre-test	56.56	14.61	5.816	0.75	19.465
Post-test	71.18				

\*df(59)- 't' Value=2.00 at 0.05 level of Significance

**Table 7** indicates that the mean post-test attitude score (71.18) of parents was higher than the mean pre-test attitude score (56.56) with a mean difference of 14.61. The obtained mean difference was found to be statistically significant as evident from 't' value of 19.465 for df (59) at 0.05 level. Thus it was established that the differences obtained in mean pre-test and post-test attitude scores was a true difference and not by chance. This indicates that the awareness programme was effective in changing the attitude of parents regarding child abuse.

## 4. Discussion

In a study conducted by **R Sudha(2011)** on awareness of mothers regarding child abuse and neglect it was found that awareness among mothers regarding child abuse and neglect is very low which is similar to the findings of the present study. Further analysis of the present study revealed that the knowledge score was higher among the parents who had higher level of education.

The present study suggests that there is a need to plan and prepare materials for educating the parents on prevention of child abuse. These findings are consistent with the study of **B Svensson and et al (2013)**. The result of the study pinpoints three challenges for preventive measures; parental strategies, organizational efforts and cultural awareness.

The present study reveals that the awareness program was effective in improving the knowledge and attitude of parents which is consistent with the study of **Kaur Shubhdeep (2012)** to evaluate the effectiveness of information booklet for parents of children (3-18 years) with epilepsy regarding home care management of epilepsy in terms of knowledge, attitude and practice. The study findings reveals that the information booklet was effective in enhancing knowledge and developing favourable attitude.

## 5. Conclusion and Future Scope

The study findings revealed that there was an increase in knowledge of parents regarding child abuse after administration of the awareness programme. Thus, the awareness programme was effective in enhancing the knowledge of parents regarding child abuse. There was a change in attitude of parents regarding child abuse after administration of awareness programme.

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. She also can join hand and raise her voice against child abuse and neglect with other organisations like Governmental organisations and NGOs(Non Governmental Organisations). As a community health nurse, a nurse can participate and play a proactive role in sensitizing other health professionals regarding the issue of child abuse. To fight against the global and national issues of child abuse, extensive and intensive researches are required in this field. Mass campaigns on incidence of child abuse cases, prevention and management of child abuse will help the general public to become aware of child abuse and its consequences as it is one of the major problem in the present society. The study can be replicated on larger sample so that the findings can be generalized for a large population. Comparative study can be conducted to assess the effectiveness of the awareness program on "Prevention of child abuse" for parents in rural and urban setting. Comparative study can be conducted to assess the effectiveness of planned teaching program and information booklet on "Prevention of Child Abuse" for parents. Mass

awareness program should be developed for the children as well.

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