

Knowledge on Child Abuse among Mothers

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Abstract: *Child abuse is a global social problem defined broadly as physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse of children by adults who are usually family or community members. Human trafficking involves exploitation of children who are vulnerable due to extreme poverty, child abuse, and other difficult social pressures. We aim to assess the knowledge on child abuse among mothers so that necessary awareness programs could be recommended if found unsatisfactory. The study was conducted to assess the knowledge on child abuse among mothers. A Non experimental Descriptive Research Design was adopted to conduct the study. A total of 50 samples were selected by using non - probability purposive sampling technique. The data was collected from the samples by using structured questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed by using Simple proportions, and Chi - squared test. A p - value of < 0.05 was considered statistically significant. The findings of the study revealed that majority of mothers 24 (48%) had poor knowledge, 18 (36%) had good knowledge and only 8 (16%) had average level of knowledge regarding child abuse. Knowledge on child abuse was found significantly associated with Religion, Occupation and source of knowledge at P<0.05. This study findings show that significant proportion (64 %) of mothers' still lacks good level of knowledge. A nationwide study of such kind using qualitative tools as well as conducting awareness raising activities focusing on child abuse is recommended.*

Keywords: Knowledge, Child Abuse, Mothers

1. Introduction

Child abuse or child maltreatment is any kind of physical, sexual, or psychological maltreatment or neglect of a child or children, especially by a parent or other caregiver. Child abuse may include any act or failure to act by a parent or other caregiver that results in actual or potential harm to a child, and can occur in a child's home, or in the organizations, schools or communities the child interacts with.

Child maltreatment is identified as maltreatment toward a child under age 18 that may include physical, emotional, general neglect, medical or educational neglect, physical punishment or battering, emotional or sexual maltreatment and exploitation or other exploitation that results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. (WHO, 2014). Child abuse is when harm or threat of harm is made to a child by someone acting in the role of caretaker. It is a worldwide problem with no social, ethnic, and racial bounds.

In the year 2018, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported that 109 children were abused sexually in India every single day, and under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 39,827 cases were reported in the same year (India News, 2020). The World Health Organization has estimated that 7.6% of boys and 18% of girls under the age of 18 years had experienced various forms of sexual abuse in their lifetime Kumar 2020). (WHO, 2014). The prevalence is higher among female than male children.

Objectives

- To assess the level of knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse in Sree mookambika Medical college hospital in Kanyakumari District.
- To find out the association between level of knowledge

of mother regarding child abuse and their selected demographic variables such as age, education, religion, occupation, type of family, family monthly income, and source of knowledge

Hypothesis

There will be significant association between the level of knowledge and demographical variables of mothers such as age, education, religion, occupation, type of family, family monthly income, and source of knowledge

2. Material and Methods

A Non experimental descriptive survey design was adapted for this study. The study was conducted during May 2022 among mothers who came to pediatric OPD at Sree mookambika Medical College Hospital at Kulasekharam in Kanyakumari District. The study sample size was 50 mothers. Non - probability purposive Sampling Technique was used for this study. The data were collected from the mothers by using structured questionnaire. It consisted of 30 questions about child abuse. The obtained data were analyzed and tabulated, descriptive statistics as frequencies, and percentage were calculated using computer. Chi - square test also used and P value less than 0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

3. Findings

Description of demographic variables of mothers

The study findings reveal that among age category, 42% mothers belong to 20 – 25 years, 40% mothers belong to 31 - 40 years and 18% mother belong 26 - 30 years. In Education, 22% had primary education, 18% had high school education and 60% were graduates. In religion, 50% belong to Hindu, 46% belong to Christian and 4% belong to Muslim Religion. According to the category of occupation, 38% of the samples were private employees, 20% were Business, 38% were samples were not working 4% belongs

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to Government Job. According to type of family, 72% belong to nuclear family and 28% belong to joint family. According to family monthly income, 42% of sample has Rs 5000 - 10000 and 2% earns above 50000 respectively. Regarding the source of knowledge, 74% of samples acquired knowledge through mass media, 22% through family and friends and 4% through educational Institution.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage distribution of study subject according to their demographic variables (N=50)

Sl. No	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	1. 20 - 25 Years	21	42%
	2. 26 - 30 years	9	18%
	3. 31 - 40 Years	20	40%
2	Education		
	1. Primary School	11	22%
	2. High School	9	18%
	3. College	30	60%
3	Religion		
	1. Hindu	25	50%
	2. Christian	23	46%
	3. Muslim	2	4%
4	Occupation		
	1. Business	10	20%
	2. Government	2	4%
	3. Private	19	38%
	4. Not working	19	38%
5	Type of Family		
	1. Nuclear Family	36	72%
	2. Joint Family	14	28%
6	Family Monthly Income		
	1. Rs.5000 - 10000	21	42%
	2. Rs 10000 - 15000	16	32%
	3. Rs 15000 - 50000	12	24%
	4. Above Rs 50000	1	2%
7	Source of Knowledge		
	1. Mass media	37	74%
	2. Friends and Family	11	22%
	3. Educational Institution	2	4%

Knowledge Level of Sample:

This present study findings show that majority (48%) of the mothers had poor knowledge level, 36% had good knowledge and 16% had average knowledge level about child abuse.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage distribution of samples knowledge on child abuse (N=50)

Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	24	48%
Average	8	16%
Good	18	36%

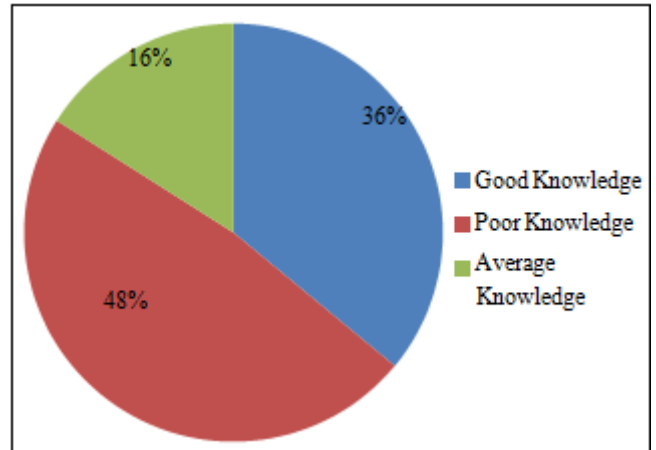


Figure 1: Knowledge level of sample regarding child abuse

Association between the level of knowledge and selected Socio demographic variables of mother

This study findings reveal that the mothers Knowledge on child abuse was found significantly associated with Religion, Occupation and source of knowledge at P<0.05.

Table 2: Association between the level of knowledge and selected Socio demographic variables of mother (N=50)

Socio Demographic Variable	Statistic	df	P - Value
Age			
1. 20 - 25 Years	2.45	4	9.49
2. 26 - 30 years			
3. 31 - 40 Years			
Education			
1. Primary Education	2.56	4	9.49
2. High School Education			
3. College Education			
Religion			
1. Hindu	10.66*	4	9.49
2. Christian			
3. Muslim			
Occupation			
1. Self	23.86*	6	12.59
2. Government			
3. Private			
4. Not working			
Family			
1. Nuclear Family	1.93	2	5.99
2. Joint Family			
Income			
1. Rs.5000 - 10000	11.14	6	12.59
2. Rs 10000 - 15000			
3. Rs 15000 - 50000			
4. Above Rs 50000			
Source of Knowledge			
1. Mass Media	38.86*	4	9.49
2. Friends and Family			
3. Educational Institution			

Significant at p<0.05

5. Conclusion

The present study suggested the lack of knowledge (48%) amongst mothers regarding child abuse. As a parent, it is very important to understand the child and their world. Patience is the key factor here. Sometimes, child abuse can result in psychosomatic and psychological disturbances

leading to a stressful adulthood. More and more reforms are needed to spread awareness. More studies need to be conducted amongst parents and children, which can include child labour, child trafficking, and teen pregnancies etc.

6. Recommendation

- Similar study can be conducted for large sample.
- The same study can be conducted to assess the Knowledge and attitude of teachers and parents regarding child abuse
- A study can be conducted by including more number of variables and at different geographic location.

Conflicts of interest - There are no conflicts of interest.

Source of Funding - Self

7. Ethical Clearance

The ethical clearance was obtained from the Doctoral committee of Sree Mookambika College of Nursing. Oral consent was obtained from the samples before collection of data by explaining the purpose of this study and its importance for each sample. After getting the oral consent, an explanatory letter and the questionnaire were handed over to the samples. The explanatory letter provided a credible and meaningful explanation of the research intention. The researcher remained with the participants, informing them of the strategies employed to protect their anonymity and other safeguards taken to protect their identities prior to publication. They were also assured that their responses would be kept confidential. The ethical principles of guaranteeing the principles of honesty, confidentiality, privacy, avoidance of harm and informed consent underpinned the total research process.

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