

A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme on Knowledge regarding Prevention of Sexual abuse among Adolescent Girls in Selected Schools at Guwahati

Biteshori Huiem¹, Moirangthem Sumita²

¹Srimanta Sankaradeva University of Health Sciences, Guwahati, Assam, India

Email id: [biteshorih123\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:biteshorih123[at]gmail.com)

²Associate professor, Army institute of Nursing, Guwahati, Assam, India

Abstract: Sexual violence against girls is a global human rights violation of vast proportion with severe health and social consequences. Assertiveness training is a form of behaviour therapy designed to help people stand up for themselves. The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of Assertive Training Programme (ATP) in terms of knowledge gain regarding prevention of sexual abuse. Quantitative approach and Pre-experimental (one-group pre-test and post test) was adopted for the study. Using non-probability purposive sampling technique 80 adolescent girls were selected for the study. The study was conducted at selected schools of Guwahati, Assam. ATP was given to the selected sample. The findings of the revealed that in pre-test majority 66 (82.5%) of participants had inadequate knowledge and 14 (17.5%) of participants had moderate knowledge while in post-test majority of participants 77 (96.2%) had adequate knowledge and (3.8%) had moderate knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse. The association between pre-test level of knowledge with selected demographic variables showed that there was significant association at $p < 0.5$ level between educational status of father and type of family of adolescent girls. The study concluded that assertive training programme was effective in improving the knowledge regarding the prevention of sexual abuse adolescent girls.

Keywords: Effectiveness, assertive training, adolescent girls, sexual abuse and schools

1. Introduction

There's Boldness in Being Assertive; There's Strength and Confidence.

Bryan Cranston

India with 1, 388, 052, 928 (138 crore) people is the second most populous country in the world and more than 50% of India's current population is below the age of 25 years.¹ Moreover, India has the largest adolescent population in the world, 253 million, and every fifth person is between 10 to 19 years.² Adolescents are living in diverse circumstances and have diverse health needs.³ Sexual abuse or violence against adolescent is defined as a situation in which children or adolescents are used for the sexual pleasure of an adult or older adolescents with an intent to gratify their own sexual desires or to intimate or groom the child.⁴ Assertiveness training is a form of behaviour therapy designed to help people stand up for themselves-empower themselves, in more contemporary terms. Assertiveness training promotes the use of "I" statements as a way to help individuals express their feelings and reactions to others. Assertiveness is a tool for expressing confidently and a way of saying 'yes' or 'no' in an appropriate way. Assertive behaviour helps individual feel better about themselves by encouraging them to stand up for their own basic human rights which have equal representation for all individuals.⁵

Today, assertiveness training is used as a part of communication training in settings as diverse as schools, corporate boardrooms, and psychiatric hospitals, for programs as varied as substance abuse treatment, social skills training, vocational programs, and responding to harassment.⁶

Thus, there is a need to assess assertive behaviour response of adolescent girls towards sexual abuse. Sexual abuse has a profound impact on core aspects of emotional, behavioural and physical health and social development throughout life, so, it is essential for girls to be assertive in standing against the abuse.

2. Literature Survey

Assertiveness Training was introduced by Andrew Salter (1961) and popularized by Joseph Wolpe. Wolpe's belief was that a person could not be both assertive and anxious at the same time, and thus being assertive would inhibit anxiety. Assertiveness is a communication skill that can be taught and the skills of assertive communication effectively learned.

The level of assertiveness demonstrated in any human community is a factor of social and cultural practices at the time of inquiry. These factors can evolve with time and may vary from a community to another one. For example, nowadays, in the western world, there are global public discussions about controversial topics such as drug addiction, rape and sexual abuse of women and children, which were not openly discussed in 1940.

Joseph Wolpe initially explored the use of assertiveness as a means of "reciprocal inhibition" of anxiety, in his 1958 book on treating neurosis; and it has since been commonly employed as an intervention in behavior therapy. Assertiveness Training ("AT") was introduced by Andrew Salter (1961) and popularized by Joseph Wolpe. Wolpe's belief was that a person could not be both assertive and

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anxious at the same time, and thus being assertive would inhibit anxiety.⁷

The World Health Organisation and United Nations define adolescents as individuals in the 10-19 years age group. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines sexual violence as: 'Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.'⁸

Sexual abuses are more common in adolescent girls as compared to adolescent boys. One in 9 girls and 1 in 53 boys under the age of 18 year's experience sexual abuse or assault at the hands of an adult. 82% of all victims under 18 are female. Females ages 16-19 are 4 times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape or sexual assault.⁹

Globally, around 120 million girls under the age of 20 worldwide (about 1 in 10) have experienced forced intercourse or other forced sexual acts, and 1 in 3 married adolescent girls aged 15 to 19 (84 million) have been victims of emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by their husband or partners.¹⁰

At least 120 million girls under the age of 20, about 1 in 10 have been forced to engage in sex or perform other sexual acts, although the actual figure is likely much higher. Roughly 90 of adolescent girls who report forced sex say that their first perpetrator was someone they knew, usually a boyfriend or a husband. About 1 in 10 girls under the age of 20 have been forced to engage in sex or perform other sexual acts.¹¹

In India, 42% of girls under the age of 19 years face sexual abuse. According to a Times of India article, data shows that 10% of Indian girls would have faced sexual violence when they are aged 10-14 years and 30% in the 15-19 age group. 77% of the girls in the age group of 15-19 faced sexual violence from their current partner or husband. In 6% of cases, the perpetrator was a relative, while 4% was friend or acquaintance who sexually assaulted them. Cases of stranger rape or sexual violence in India for the age group stood at mere 3%.¹²

Jebakumari R, Santha N J (2019) conducted an experimental study to evaluate the effectiveness of sexual assertiveness training programme on sexual assertiveness among adolescents attending selected schools in Madurai. The results showed that sexual assertiveness training programme was effective in improving school going adolescents sexual awareness (pre-test, post-test comparison $t = 7.157$, $p < 0.001$, post-test comparison $t = 3.286$, $p < 0.001$) sexual assertiveness (pre-test, post-test comparison $t = 13.397$, $p < 0.001$, post-test comparison $t = 6.749$, $p < 0.001$) sexual assertiveness according to situational questions (pre-test comparison $t = 8.839$, $p < 0.001$, post-test comparison $t = 5.38$, $p < 0.001$). there was a significant positive relationship found between sexual awareness and sexual assertiveness ($r = 0.41$).¹³

Objectives

- To assess the pre-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls.
- To assess the post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls.
- To compare the pre-test post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls.
- To determine the association of pre-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls with selected socio-demographic variables.

Hypothesis

All hypothesis are tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H_1 = There is a significant difference in knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls before and after assertive training program.
- H_2 = There is a significant association between pre-test scores on knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls with selected socio-demographic variables.

3. Methodology

The research approach adopted for this study was qualitative approach and the research design adopted was Pre-experimental (one group pre test post test) research design. The study was conducted after getting approval from the institutional ethics committee. Using non-probability purposive sampling technique 80 adolescents girls were selected for the study. The study was conducted in selected schools of Guwahati, Assam. Informed consent was taken before conducting the study.

Tools Used

The tool consists of the following sections:

Section A – Self structured questionnaire on Socio-demographic variables.

It includes 10 items on demographic variables like age, religion, occupation of the parents, educational status of the parents, monthly family income, type of the family, area of living, any history of sexual abuse, sources of information regarding sexual abuse.

Section B – Self-structured knowledge questionnaire regarding prevention sexual abuse based on the assertive training.

It includes 30 items on knowledge questionnaire regarding prevention of sexual abuse based on assertiveness skills. Each items has 4 options. A score of "one" was given for the correct response and a score of "Zero" was given for the incorrect response. The maximum score was 30 and the minimum score was zero.

The scoring were given as:

Level of knowledge Range of the score

Inadequate knowledge 0-12

Moderate knowledge 13-21

Adequate knowledge 22-30

Intervention Module

Assertiveness Training Programme ATP

The content of module was validated by 8 experts. The following steps were adopted in development of the module.

- Preparation of the first draft of the content – the content of the module was prepared after reviewing available journal, research and non-research literature. The learner's capacity to absorb information was considered and that was made simple, clear and comprehensive.
- The final version of the ATP included the concise topic on:
 - Introduction of the topic
 - Definition of sexual abuse,
 - Definition of assertive training,
 - Basis human rights,
 - Response patterns,
 - Assertiveness skills regarding prevention of sexual abuse and
 - POSCO ACT.

Procedure for data collection

The study was conducted after obtaining approval from Institutional Ethical Committee. Formal permission was taken from the principal of the respective schools. After seeking permission, the samples were drawn by using purposive sampling techniques. A brief self-introduction about the study was explained to the participants i.e., 80 adolescent's girls who meets the inclusion criteria. The participants were explained about the purpose and the significance of the study. They were also explained that confidentiality and privacy will be maintained. Before administering the self-structured knowledge questionnaire for the pre-test, the purpose of the study was explained to the entire participants and time was given for 15 minutes to answer the questionnaires. After pre-test on the same day assertive training was given for 45min and on the next days it was again continued for 45 minutes. Each school was given assertive training programme on separate dates as per their convenience and availability.

4. Result and Discussion

Section A: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Profile of the Subject

Majority 33 (41.2%) of the participants were in 14-16 years of age. For religion 38 (47.6%) of the participants belongs to Hindu. Regarding occupation 28 (35%) of participants parents have Government job. In view of educational status 31 (38.8%) of participants mother had secondary level of education and most 36 (45%) of participants father had secondary level of education. Majority 28 (35%) of participants family income is 20000-35000 per month. In terms of types of family 61 (76%) of participants belongs to nuclear family and majority 50 (73.8%) of participants were living in urban areas. Majority 75 (93.8%) of participants have no history of sexual abuse. About 30 (37.5%) of participants have received information about sexual abuse from mass media.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of age of adolescent girls, N=80

Age in years	Frequency	Percentage
a) 11-13 years	17	21.2
b) 14-16 years	33	41.2
c) 17-19 years	30	37.6

Table 2: Frequency and percentage distribution of religion of adolescent girls, N=80

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
a) Hindu	38	47.6
b) Muslim	17	21.2
c) Christian	16	20
d) Others	9	11.2

Table 3: Frequency and percentage distribution of Occupation of the parents of adolescent girls, N=80

Occupation of the parents	Frequency	Percentage
a) Government job	28	35
b) Private job	24	30
c) Business	27	33.8
d) Homemaker	1	1.2

Table 4: Frequency and percentage distribution of educational status of father of adolescent girls, N=80

Educational status of father	Frequency	Percentage
a) No formal education	2	2.5
b) Primary	19	23.8
c) Secondary	36	45
d) Graduate and above	23	28.7

Table 5: Frequency and percentage distribution of educational status of mother of adolescent girls, N=80

Educational status of mother	Frequency	Percentage
a) No formal education	15	18.8
b) Primary	25	31.2
c) Secondary	31	38.8
d) Graduate and above	9	11.2

Table 6: Frequency and percentage distribution of Monthly family income of adolescent girls, N=80

Monthly family income	Frequency	Percentage
a) Rs80000-20000	12	15
b) Rs 20000-35000	28	35
c) Rs 35000-50000	25	31.2
d) Rs 50000 and above	15	18.8

Table 7: Frequency and percentage distribution of type of family of adolescents girls, N=80

Type of family	Frequency	Percentage
a) Nuclear family	61	76.2
b) Joint family	15	18.8
c) Extended family	4	5

Table 8: Frequency and percentage distribution of area of living of adolescents girls, N=80

Area of living	Frequency	Percentage
a) Rural	21	26.2
b) Urban	59	73.8

Table 9: Frequency and percentage distribution of any history of sexual abuse of adolescents girls, N=80

Any history of sexual abuse	Frequency	Percentage
a) Yes	75	93.8
b) No	5	6.2

Table 10: Frequency and percentage distribution of Source of information of adolescents girls, N=80

Source of information	Frequency	Percentage
a) Parents	24	30
b) Family members	10	12.5
c) Peer groups	16	20
d) Mass media	30	37.5

Section B: Frequency and percentage distribution of pre test and post test level of knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among the adolescent girls

Table 11: Frequency and percentage distribution of pre test and post test level of knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among the adolescent girls, N=80

Level of Knowledge	Pre-test		Post-test	
	F	%	f	%
Inadequate knowledge	66	82.5	0	0
Moderate knowledge	14	17.5	3	3.8
Adequate knowledge	0	0	77	96.2

Table 11 depicts the frequency and percentage distribution of pre test and post test level of knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among the adolescent girls. Results revealed that in pre-test majority 66 (82.5%) of participants had inadequate knowledge and 14 (17.5%) of participants had moderate knowledge while in post-test majority of participants 77 (96.2%) had adequate knowledge and (3.8%) had moderate knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse.

Table 12: Descriptive statistics showing minimum score range, Mean, Median, and SD of pre-test and post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls, N=80

Characteristics	Pre-test values	Post-test values
Minimum score	3	19
Maximum score	19	29
Range	16	10
Mean	8.59	25.68
Median	9	26
Mode	10	27
Std. Deviation	3.228	2.464

Section C: Comparison of the pre-test and post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among.

The comparison of pre-test and post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls Findings showed that pre-test mean knowledge score was 8.59 ± 3.228 and post-test mean knowledge score was 25.68 ± 2.464 with mean difference was 17.08. The comparison was tested using paired t test with obtained ($t=32.10$) at $df=79$ was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ level. Findings revealed that assertive training program was effective in improving the knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls

Hence, findings concluded that there was significant difference in knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescents girls before and after assertive training program at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, H_1 hypothesis was accepted and H_0 was rejected.

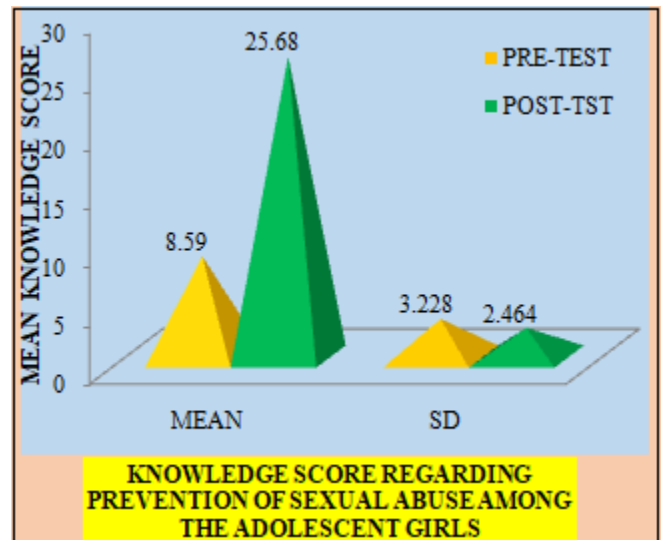


Figure 1: Distribution of mean score and SD of pre-test and post-test knowledge score regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls

Section D: Association between pre-test knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls with their selected demographic variables.

Table 13: Association between pre-test knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescent girls with their selected demographic variables, N=80

S. No	Demographic variables	Pre-test level of knowledge		χ^2 value	df	p value
		Inadequate	Moderate			
1	Age in years			4.133	2	0.127 ^{NS}
	a. 11-13 years	16	1			
	b. 14-16 years	24	9			
2	Religion			4.090	3	0.252 ^{NS}
	a. Hindu	28	10			
	b. Islam	15	2			
	c. Christian	15	1			
3	Occupation of parents			2.444	3	0.485 ^{NS}
	a. Government job	25	3			
	b. Private job	20	4			
	c. Business	20	7			
	d. Homemaker	1	0			

4	Educational status of father					
	a. No formal education	1	0	10.64	3	0.014*
	b. Primary	22	8			
	c. Secondary	32	4			
d. Graduate and above	21	2				
5	Educational status of mother					
	a. No formal education	11	4	1.505	3	0.681 ^{NS}
	b. Primary	21	4			
	c. Secondary	27	4			
d. Graduate and above	7	2				
6	Monthly family income					
	a. Rs 80000-20000	8	4	2.790	3	0.425 ^{NS}
	b. Rs 20000-35000	23	5			
	c. Rs 35000-50000	22	3			
d. Rs 50000 and above	12	2				
7	Type of family					
	a. Nuclear family	49	12	6.308	2	0.043^{NS}
	b. Joint family	15	0			
c. Extended family	2	2				
8	Area of living					
	a. Rural	19	2	1.255	1	0.263 ^{NS}
b. Urban	47	12				
9	Any history of sexual abuse					
	a. Yes	62	13	0.023	1	0.879 ^{NS}
b. No	4	1				
10	Source of information					
	a. Parents	19	5	0.981	3	0.806 ^{NS}
	b. Family members	9	1			
	c. Peer groups	14	2			
d. Mass media	24	6				

*P<0.05 level of significance NS-Non significant

Table 13 depicts the association between pre-test knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among the adolescent girls with their selected demographic variables which was tested using chi-square test. The chi squares value revealed that educational status of father and type of family of adolescent girls was found statistically significant association at p<0.05 level. The other demographic variables such as age, religion, occupation of the parents, educational status of mother, monthly family income, area of living, any history of sexual abuse and source of information were statistically non significant with pre-test knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among the adolescent girls.

Hence, findings concluded that there was significant difference in knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuse among adolescents girls before and after assertive training program at 0.05 level of significance. H1 hypothesis was accepted.

5. Conclusion

The investigator had conducted the study to assess the effectiveness of assertive training program on knowledge regarding prevention of sexual abuses among adolescent girls in selected schools at Guwahati. The above findings of the study indicated that there was significant difference between in the level of knowledge between pre-test and post-test after giving assertiveness training programme. Assertive training programme was found to be effective in preventing sexual abuse. There was significant association between pre-test knowledge educational status of father and type of family of adolescent girls and no significant association between demographic variables such as age,

religion, occupation of the parents, educational status of mother, monthly family income, area of living, any history of sexual abuse and source of information.

6. Future Scope

Based on the findings the future scope are:

- A similar study can be conducted by increasing the sample size.
- A study can be conducted in different settings to strengthen the study findings.
- A comparative study can be conducted between urban and rural schools.
- An experimental study on the effectiveness of assertiveness training on level of assertive behavior among different age groups.

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Author Profile



Biteshori Huiem, M. Sc. Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Lecturer, CPMS College of Nursing, Bonda, Guwahati, Assam, India. M. Sc. Nursing-Army Institute of Nursing, Guwahati, Assam, India. B. Sc. Nursing-College of Nursing, Medical Directorate, Lamphelpat, Imphal, India. Phone no. – 8730936565. Email ID- [biteshorih\[at\]123gmail.com](mailto:biteshorih[at]123gmail.com)



Moirangthem Sumita, M. Sc. Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Associate Professor, Army institute of Nursing, M. Sc. Nursing – Goutham College of Nursing, Meerut. B. Sc. Nursing – Alva’s College of Nursing, Moodbidri. Phone no.-8958428101