

## A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge of Mothers with School Age Children Regarding Prevention of Child Abuse

Ms. Kalpana Thakur<sup>1</sup>, Ms. Priya sharma<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assisstant Professor, Akal College of Nursing, Eternal University, Baru Sahib

<sup>2</sup> Nursing Tutor, Akal College of Nursing, Eternal University Baru Sahib

---

**Abstract:** Child abuse is the major global problem and all communities are facing this in various forms and can be seen harming community in many ways. It may remain hidden as in many cases the victims of child abuse cannot reveal the event due to various reasons such as threat, isolation, inability to share experience due to fear and past experience. This can lead to serious health problems physically and mentally which are difficult to compensate in future and leaves an unresolved impact on the victim and the society too. If mother's knowledge is improved regarding child abuse, she would be able to detect the signs of child abuse and can prevent the occurrence of child abuse by educating the child about the scenario and would be helpful for the society too. To prevent the growing stage of this issue, this topic was chosen to assess the knowledge of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse. So, quantitative approach was used for the study and we selected mothers of children in age group of 6-12 years. The sample size comprised of 60 subjects. Purposive non-probability sampling technique was used for selection of mothers from selected rural areas of District Sirmour in the month of March, 2018. Data was collected by using self-structured interview schedule and the reliability of the tool was found to be 0.74 by using cronbach's alpha. Study findings revealed that the mean knowledge scores of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse was  $13.5 \pm 4.8$  where more than half i.e. 31 (51.6%) participants had low level of knowledge, 18(30%) had moderate level of knowledge and only 11(18.3%) had high level of knowledge. Hence, it can be said that the mothers had inadequate knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse. So, this study highlighted that the level of knowledge is low among mothers which depicts that there is need to improve the knowledge of mothers regarding prevention of child abuse in rural areas.

**Keywords:** Child abuse, knowledge, mothers of school age children.

---

Date of Submission: 06-07-2019

Date of acceptance: 20-07-2019

---

### I. Introduction

Child abuse is the major global problem and all communities are facing this in various forms. According to WHO- "Child abuse or mistreatment constitutes all kinds of physical and /or emotional ill-treatment, statutory offense, neglect or negligent treatment or different exploitation, leading to actual or potential damage to the child's health, survival, development or dignity within the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power". This phenomenon can be investigated from verbal, physical, emotional and sexual aspects. In many cases the victims of child abuse cannot reveal the event due to various reasons. The event can remain as a secret and consequently leads to serious health and mental problems that are difficult to compensate in future.

According to a survey conducted by United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) in India from 2015-2013 reported that 10% girls in India had experienced sexual violence at the age of 10-14 years followed by 30% during the age of 15-19 years of age. Under the POCSO (Protection of children against Sexual Offences) Act, the total number of child abuse cases registered has raised from 8,904 in the year 2014 to 14,913 in the year 2015. Time of childhood is a unique experience for every child which moulds overall personality in later life. Child is affected by the surrounding environment and closed relationships he/she shares with parents, relatives, teachers and caregivers. Children who experiences abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences during their childhood period are at increased risk for developing physical and psychological problems in later life. Parents, children, teachers and caregivers should have adequate knowledge about child abuse to reduce the incidence of child abuse and promote growth and development of child. Mother plays important role in the prevention of child abuse as they are the primary care provider of care to child and have strong bonding with the child.

**Problem definition**

A descriptive study to assess the knowledge of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse in a selected community of District Sirmour (HP).

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To assess the knowledge of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse.
2. To find out the association of knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse among mothers with selected socio-demographic variable.

**II. Methodology**

A quantitative research approach was used in the present study. Descriptive research design was considered to be appropriate to assess knowledge of mothers regarding prevention of child abuse. A sample of 60 mothers was selected to assess the knowledge. Mothers of children between age group of 6-12 years who were residing in selected rural community of district Sirmour were the target of the study. Study was conducted in the selected rural community of district Sirmour, (H.P). Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used for selection of samples. The tool consists of self-structured interview schedule which has two sections. Section A comprises socio-demographic profile and consisted of 7 questions related to demographic data of study subjects, that is, age, religion, education, occupation, no. of children, previous knowledge and source of information. Section B consists of self-structured interview schedule to assess mothers’ knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse. It includes 30 questions covering all aspects of child abuse, its predisposing factors, and perpetrators of child abuse, impact of child abuse on children’s overall health, early identification and prevention. Possible range of score was 0-30 and a maximum score indicated high level of knowledge. The mean and standard deviation was calculated. The S.D value was added and subtracted from mean score to obtain the following categories for the interpretation of knowledge score. Hence scores were interpreted as:-

- (>Mean+S.D) = High level of knowledge
- (Mean-S.D to Mean+S.D)=Moderate knowledge
- (<Mean-S.D)=Low level of knowledge

**III. Results**

*Section 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of socio- demographic variables of the mothers of children in age group of 6-12 years*

**Table 1:** Frequency and percentage distribution of socio demographic variables

Variables	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>N=60</b>		
<b>Age(in year)</b>		
less than 20 years	00	0%
21-25 years	14	23.3%
26-30 years	22	36.6%
More than 30 years	24	40%
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	57	95%
Muslim	00	0%
Sikh	02	3.33%
Others	01	1.66%
<b>Education</b>		
No formal education	03	5%
Primary education	25	41.6%
Secondary education	24	40%
Graduate	08	13.3%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Unemployed	21	35%
Self employed	33	55%
Private job	04	6.6%
Government job	02	3.3%
<b>No. of children</b>		
One	05	8.33%
Two	35	58.3%
Three	14	23.3%
More than three	06	10%
<b>Previous knowledge</b>		
Yes	56	93.3%
No	04	6.6%
<b>Source of information</b>		
Awareness programme	04	6.6%
T.V.	46	76.6%

Radio	02	3.3
Newspaper	04	6.6%

*Section-2: Findings related to knowledge of mothers' regarding prevention of child abuse*

**Table 2:-**Frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge score obtained by mothers.

**N=60**

Categories of knowledge score	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
High level of knowledge (Score more than 18)	11	18.3
Moderate level of knowledge (Score between 14-18)	18	30
Low level of knowledge (Score less than 13)	31	51.6

**Mean±SD : 13.5±4.8**  
**Possible Range of Scores 0-30**

Data in table 2 indicates that the majority i.e. 31 (51.6%) of mothers had low level of knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse followed by 18 (30%) had moderate level of knowledge, however a lower proportion 11 (18.3%) had high level of knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse.

*Section 3: Findings related to relation between knowledge score of mothers and selected variable.*

**Table: 3** Relationship between knowledge score of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse and educational status

Category	Knowledge Scores		Chi square ( $\chi^2$ )
	Below Mean	Above Mean	
<b>Educational Status</b>			
No formal education	2	1	3.48
Primary education	11	13	
Secondary education	15	10	NS
Graduate & above	2	6	

$\chi^2 (3) = 7.82$ , \*Significant at 0.05 level ; NS Non significant

Data presented in table 3 revealed that table values of chi square for mothers' educational status is more than the calculated value of chi square which indicated that there is no significant relationship between knowledge score and selected demographic variable, i.e. educational status of mothers at 0.05 level of significance.

#### IV. Discussion

Children are dependent on adults for safety and on-going nurturing which puts them at risk of maltreatment in many forms. Mothers play a vital role in taking care of children to provide love and support constantly throughout their life. As a primary care provider they can easily identify the symptoms of child abuse and be helpful in prevention of child abuse.

Analysis of data regarding 1<sup>st</sup> objective of the study i.e. to assess the knowledge of mothers regarding prevention of child abuse indicated that the mean knowledge scores of mothers with school age children regarding prevention of child abuse was  $13.5 \pm 4.8$  where more than half i.e. 31 (51.6%) participants had low level of knowledge, 18(30%) had moderate level of knowledge and only 11(18.3%) had high level of knowledge. Hence, it can be said that the mothers had inadequate knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse. The findings are supported by Jagraj Singh and Baljinder Kaur (2015) that 58% parents had average level of knowledge regarding child abuse. The study findings are in contrary to the findings of study done by Thangavelu SN which concluded that majority of the mothers i.e 85% had moderate level of knowledge followed by 15% inadequate knowledge and 0% (none of the mothers) had adequate knowledge regarding child abuse. The study findings are also contrary to another study done by Jyotsna Jacob where most of the mothers (60%) had good level of knowledge.

Analysis of 2<sup>nd</sup> objective of the study i.e. to find out the association of knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse among mothers with selected socio-demographic variable indicated that 25(41.6%) mothers were had primary education followed by 24(40%) had secondary education, 3(5%) had no formal education and only 8(13.3%) had professional education. Present study revealed that there was no significant association of the knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse among mothers with school age children with selected socio-demographic variable i.e. educational status. Similar finding was reported by Fredrick M. Mlekwa, et.al. in their

study on child abuse among mothers of school going children. They concluded that there was a non-significant relationship between knowledge levels among mothers with their educational levels.

### **V. Conclusion**

The findings concluded that significant percentage of respondents had inadequate knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse as the mean knowledge score was  $13.5 \pm 4.8$ . Present study clearly stated that 51.6% had low level of knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse and only few i.e. 18.3% had high level of knowledge. Study findings also stated that there was no significant association of mothers' knowledge regarding prevention of child abuse with their educational status. The results of this study may help in identifying the proper and suitable methods for planning health education programs for community people that will improve their knowledge and attitude regarding this alarming issue.

### **VI. Future scope**

Practice plays major role in prevention of child abuse so it is important to assess the knowledge of parents regarding child abuse and its prevention along with practice and attitude towards same to bridge the gap between two. Nursing students need to be trained to impart health education to the community people regarding child abuse, its early identification, predisposing factors, perpetrators of the problem, impact of child abuse on children's behavior and overall health. Further studies can be conducted to put more emphasis on educational programme regarding child abuse in community. A similar study can be conducted on a wider sample to help validate and generalize the findings to the population unlike the present study which was conducted on a small sample in rural setting.

### **References**

- [1]. Lippincott. Manual of Nursing, Published by Wolters Kluwer (India) Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 9<sup>th</sup> edn, Page No. 1430.
- [2]. WHO | Preventing child maltreatment: a guide to taking action and generating evidence [Internet]. Who.int. 2018 [cited 15 December 2018]. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment>
- [3]. Ray A. 42% of Indian girls are sexually abused before 19: Unicef. The Times of India. 2014. Sep 18, [Last cited on 2018 December]. Available from: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/42-of-Indian-girls-are-sexually-abused-before-19-Unicef/articleshow/42306348.cms?>
- [4]. Sudha, R. 2011. Awareness of the mother regarding child abuse and neglect. *The Nursing Journal of India* May 2011; 102(5): 100-102.
- [5]. Thangavelu S. Assess the Level of Knowledge Regarding Child Abuse among the Mothers in Selected Areas at Latur. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Behaviour* [Internet]. 2016 [cited 14 December 2018];04(01). Available from: <https://www.omicsonline.org/open-access/assess-the-level-of-knowledge-regarding-child-abuse-among-themothers-in-selected-areas-at-latur-2375-4494-1000271.php?aid=67358>
- [6]. Singh J, Kaur B. (2015). A comparative study to assess the knowledge regarding child abuse among parents residing in selected rural and urban areas of Jalandar, Punjab. *International Journal of Development Research*. [Internet]. 2015 [cited 14 December 2018]; 05(11) Page No.. 6001-6006. Available from: <https://www.journalijdr.com/comparative-study-assess-knowledge-regarding-child-abuse-among-parents-residing-selected-rural-and>.
- [7]. Jyotsna Jacob. A Study To Assess The Knowledge Regarding Child Abuse Among Mothers In Selected Residential Areas Of Delhi-NCR. *IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science (IOSR-JNHS)* 2018; 7 (6 )2018 Page No. 29-31. Available from: <http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jnhs/papers/vol7-issue6/Version-6/C0706062931.pdf>.
- [8]. Pappachan B, Jipsa Philip. Knowledge of mothers regarding prevention of child abuse. *Innovational Journal of Nursing and Healthcare*; 54(5) Page No. 546-50 available at: <http://www.ijnursing.com>
- [9]. Fredrick M. Mlekwa , Tumaini Nyamhanga , Phillipo L. Chalya and David Urassa. Knowledge, attitudes and practices of parents on child sexual abuse and its prevention in Shinyanga district, Tanzania. *Tanzania Journal of Health Research* [Internet]. 2016 [cited 14 December 2018]; 18(04). Available from: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/thrb/article/viewFile/126216/138252>.

Ms. Kalpana Thakur. "A Descriptive Study to Assess the Knowledge of Mothers with School Age Children Regarding Prevention of Child Abuse." *IOSR Journal of Dental and Medical Sciences (IOSR-JDMS)*, vol. 18, no. 7, 2019, pp 72-75.