



ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING SEXUAL ABUSE AMONG FEMALE ADOLESCENTS IN A SELECTED SCHOOL, BANGALORE

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Sexual abuse is also known as molestation and it is the forcing of undesired sexual behavior by a person to another. Sexual abuse is a serious problem in and around the nation, therefore inadequate knowledge on sexual abuse among adolescent girls will cause increase incidences of sexual abuse. The present study was conducted with the objective to assess knowledge regarding sexual abuse among adolescent girls, to determine the association between knowledge on sexual abuse and selected baseline variables and to prepare and distribute the informational pamphlet on sexual abuse among adolescent girls.

Materials and methods: The research design selected for this study was descriptive design. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select 50 adolescent girls with 12-19 years of age in a selected school, Bangalore. Demographic variables, structured knowledge questionnaire were used to collect the data.

Result: From the study it was found that among the subjects majority of the adolescents there was a significant association between age and knowledge regarding sexual abuse. The older the adolescent girls are they have better knowledge on sexual abuse. The mean score on knowledge regarding sexual abuse was found to be 14.10 and standard deviation is 2.697.

Conclusion: The findings of the study have shown that majority of the subjects 62% had good knowledge, 30% had excellent knowledge and 8% had average knowledge regarding sexual abuse.

KEYWORDS

Knowledge, adolescent girls, sexual abuse

INTRODUCTION

“Adolescence is a new birth, for the higher and more completely human traits are born” - G.STANLEY HALL

Adolescence is the period from the onset of puberty in preteen years until adulthood. It is a period of intense development with profound physical changes as well as transition between childhood and adulthood¹. In Indian society adolescence plays an additional burden on females with biological development. The adolescent girl is often pressurized towards social role conformity, requiring major changes in the psychological sphere. The young lady is often confronted with difficulties and problems related to family, society in their own physical aspects and emotional needs².

Sexual abuse or violence against adolescents is defined as a situation in which children or adolescents are used for the sexual pleasure of an adult or older adolescent which ranges from petting, fondling of genitalia, breasts or anus, sexual exploitation, voyeurism, pornography, exhibitionism, pressuring a child to engage in sexual activities etc. with intent to gratify their own sexual desires or to intimidate or groom the child. Sexual abuse is an especially complicated form of abuse because of its layers of guilt and shame³. Sexual abuse can occur in variety of places including home, school or workplace.⁴

Rape and violence against women are a massive problem in India. India ranks 3rd for the number of rapes reported each year. Nearly one in three rape victims in India is under the age of 18. One in 10 are under 14. Every 20 minutes in India, a woman is raped. The statistics indicate that sexual abuse of children and adolescent girls is alarmingly high⁵. According to 2012 statistics, Bangalore ranks number four in rape cases at 3.8 per cent, with Delhi at the top (17.6 per cent), followed by Mumbai and Bhopal. Karnataka's capital is number four in cases of kidnapping as well as molestation. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, 24,206 rape cases were registered in India in 2011, The incidents of rapes reported increased from 24,206 in 2011 to 24,923 in 2012.⁶

In many cases of sexual abuse female adolescents are found to be the victims and they are afraid to tell about their sexual abuse because of fear of being punished as the molester is mostly known person to the victim. The best way to protect teens from sexual abuse is to make them aware of sexual abuse and its issues.

Statement of the Problem

A study to assess knowledge regarding sexual abuse among female adolescents in a selected school, Bangalore.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess knowledge on sexual abuse among adolescent girls.
- To determine the association between knowledge on sexual abuse and selected baseline variables.
- To develop and distribute informational pamphlet on sexual abuse among adolescent girls

Hypothesis

At 0.05 level of significance

H₁: There is a significant association between the level of knowledge regarding sexual abuse among adolescent girls and their selected baseline variables

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research design was non-experimental simple descriptive research design to assess the knowledge regarding sexual abuse among adolescent girls. The study was conducted in B.M School. 50 female adolescents were selected for the study by probability simple random sampling technique. Data collection was done using self administered knowledge questionnaire, which consisted of 2 parts. These included: Part 1: Baseline variables

Part 2: Structured knowledge questionnaire on knowledge regarding sexual abuse.

The items in the knowledge questionnaire were divided into Concepts and impacts of sexual abuse, methods against sexual abuse and prevention of sexual abuse. Scores assigned were 1 for correct answer and 0 for wrong answer. The maximum possible score was 20 and minimum was zero. The reliability of the knowledge questionnaire was found by Test Re-test method and Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient formula was found to be 0.1, which indicated that the tool was reliable. The data was organized in master sheet and tabulated by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS

Knowledge of female adolescents regarding sexual abuse

n=50

Knowledge	Grading	Frequency
16-20	Excellent	15
11-15	Good	31
6-10	Average	4

Majority of the adolescent girls, that is 62% has good knowledge on sexual abuse ranging from 11-15, 30% has excellent knowledge ranging from 16-20, 8% has average knowledge ranging from 6-10.

Area wise mean, mean percentage and standard deviation of knowledge on sexual abuse**N=50**

S. No.	Area	Range	Mean±SD	Mean %
1.	Concepts & impacts of Sexual abuse	3-9	35.5±3.65	71%
2.	Methods against sexual abuse	1-6	25.83±4.45	51.66%
3.	Prevention of sexual abuse	2-6	36.6±4.08	73.2%

The overall mean and standard deviation of knowledge scores on sexual abuse is 14.10±2.697 and median is 14.00.

Association between knowledge scores on sexual abuse and demographic variables

Association between knowledge scores on sexual abuse and age of adolescent girls were found to be significant at 0.05 level of significant, as obtained chi-square values(0.45). Hence the research hypothesis (H_1) was accepted for the variable and age and rejected for the other demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

The study findings in relation to other similar studies which showed that majority of the adolescent girls had good knowledge regarding sexual abuse.

An exploratory study was conducted on adolescent girls' experiences of sexual harassment and abuse while attending secondary school in Karnataka state, South India. Data from open ended interviews and a participatory workshop in two schools revealed that girls were vulnerable to sexual harassment both within the school grounds and while travelling to and from school, especially on public transport. For some girls, sexual harassment reduced their desire to continue their schooling, for others it increased their fear of being withdrawn to address the abuse and exploitation of girls and women⁷.

IMPLICATIONS

Health care delivery system at present is giving more importance to prevention of sexual abuse rather than rehabilitation of victims. It is the responsibility of each health worker to take care and educate every individual and community on sexual abuse and its prevention and make people more aware about the incidences and consequences of sexual abuse. Health care workers can organize programmes in the school to create awareness about sexual abuse and educate them to deal with the situation. The nurses should have adequate knowledge regarding sexual abuse so that she can identify signs and symptoms of sexual abuse, also she can create among adolescent girls in the clinical set up. The present study is only assessment of knowledge level of adolescent girls regarding sexual abuse. There is a need for extended research in areas of roles and responsibilities of parents, teachers and counselors.

CONCLUSION

Sexual abuse include extreme or unexplained anger, low self-worth, self-destructive behaviour, self-harm, low self-esteem, eating disorders, addictions, anxiety, mood swings, sudden change in school behaviour, arriving at school early or staying late, unexplained or excessive fear, avoidance of relationship, suicide thoughts and attempts⁵. Sexual abuse has a profound impact on core aspects of emotional, behavioural and physical health and social development throughout life. Therefore it is necessary to assess female adolescent's knowledge on sexual abuse and provide necessary interventions

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