



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Nursing

KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE REGARDING CHILD ABUSE AND ITS IMPACT ON LIFE OF CHILDREN AMONG PARENTS OF UNDER-FIVE

KEY WORDS: Child abuse, Impact on life, Under-five

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Child abuse is the physical or psychological harm to a child's health or welfare. Child abuse can leave a scar that may last a life time, where, the child and even society, at large, is affected. Parents and family members have the prime responsibility to ensure that children are accorded an optimum climate for growth and development.

METHOD: A quantitative approach and non-experimental descriptive research design were used for the study. Non-probability convenient sampling technique was used to select 100 parents, having children aged below five years, residing in urban Bangalore. The tool used for data collection was, a structured knowledge questionnaire and structured attitude scale.

RESULTS: The overall assessment of knowledge showed that, majority of parents (56%) had moderately adequate knowledge. The overall assessment of quality of attitude indicated that, majority of parents (92%) had positive attitude. A weak positive correlation was found between Knowledge and Attitude of parents, with the calculated r-value, 0.565, and table value, $t=0.19$, which is statistically significant at $P \leq 0.05$.

CONCLUSION: The study concludes that majority of the parents had moderately adequate knowledge and positive attitude, and a significant relation was found between knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse, and its impact on life of children among parents of under-five.

INTRODUCTION

Today's child is tomorrow's future, stresses the need for protection of children. A child, according to the United Nations means, every human being below the age of 18 years. World Health Organization defines child abuse or maltreatment as, all forms of physical and or emotional ill treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival and development of dignity in context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

India has the largest child population in the world. India's Protection of Children Against Sexual Offences Act of 2012 (POCSO) and Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act have been strengthened recently, with the aim of fighting violation of child rights. Due to awareness about legal recourse, there has also been a corresponding increase in the number of child abuse cases filed, leading to an increase in several convictions. The country renews its commitment and determination to give the highest priority to the basic needs and rights of all children.

Children, especially, the under-five population are vulnerable and voiceless, making them perfect targets for perverted criminals. Wiping out child abuse in India requires a multi-stakeholder support and complex strategy. In an age where the communication gap between parents and children is increasing, it is important that the parents are made aware of child abuse and its impact on life of children, that they listen to their children and educate them so that such incidents are pre-empted.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A study to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children among parents of under-five, in a selected area of urban Bangalore, with a view to develop an information booklet.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse, and its impact on life of children among parents of under-five.
2. To find out the relation between knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse, and its impact on life of children among parents of under-five.
3. To find the association between level of knowledge and

quality of attitude regarding child abuse, and its impact on life of children with the selected socio-demographic variables among parents of under-five.

HYPOTHESES

1. **H₁:** There is significant relation between scores of knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse, and its impact on life of children.
2. **H₂:** There is significant association between the level of knowledge regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children, and selected socio-demographic variables.
3. **H₃:** There is significant association between quality of attitude regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children, and selected socio-demographic variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The conceptual framework selected for the present study is based on the modified Rosenstock Health Belief Model (2002). The research approach was quantitative approach, and research design selected for the study was non-experimental descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted at Cholanayakanahalli, coming under Sumangali Seva Ashrama urban health centre, Hebbal, Bangalore. In this study, convenient sampling technique was used to select sample based on selection criteria and 100 parents having children below five years were selected. Data collection was done using structured knowledge questionnaire and attitude scale. The tool comprised of three sections.

Section A: Socio-demographic data

This section consists of 13 items which includes Age, Gender, Place of residence, Religion, Marital status, Educational status, Occupation of father and mother, Type of family, Monthly family income, Number of living children, Gender of child and Previous knowledge.

Section B: Structured knowledge questionnaire

This section consists of 30 items. All the items were in knowledge domain. Correct answers were given one mark and wrong answers zero. Thus, total 30 marks were allotted under knowledge assessment. The questionnaire was divided into 5 sections namely General information, Physical abuse, Sexual abuse, Emotional abuse, and Impact on life of children.

Section C: Structured attitude scale

The structured attitude scale is a 5-point Likert scale

consisting of 22 statements of which 11 are positive statements and 11 are negative statements. Reverse scoring was done for negative statements. The maximum score for the attitude scale was 110. The scoring of the attitude scale ranges from 1 to 5.

The tool validation was done by 12 nurse experts, specialized in Child Health Nursing. Reliability of the Self-Structured Knowledge Questionnaire was calculated using Split Half Method, and the reliability of the Self-Structured Attitude Scale was calculated using Cronbach alpha.

Formal permission was obtained from the concerned authorities. Sample was selected using convenient sampling technique. The investigator used house to house survey method, to locate the subjects fulfilling the inclusion criteria. After explaining about self and study, due consent was taken from the participants. The tool was administered to the subjects, about 30 to 45 minutes were given for each subject to give their response and the tool was taken back on the same day. Total data collection period was 2 weeks. Data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS

The overall aspect and domain wise Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge of parents, table 1 shows that, regarding general information 49% of subjects exhibited moderately adequate knowledge, and 20% had inadequate knowledge. 51% of subjects exhibited moderately adequate knowledge regarding physical abuse, and 5% adequate knowledge. In terms of sexual abuse, 50% subjects had inadequate knowledge, and 8% had adequate knowledge. 46% of subjects showed inadequate knowledge regarding emotional abuse, and 11% had adequate knowledge. Majority, 54% of subjects had inadequate knowledge about impact of abuse on life of children, and 8% had adequate knowledge. Overall, 56% had moderately adequate knowledge, and only 9% had adequate knowledge.

Table: 1 (n=100)

Sl. No.	Knowledge variable	LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE BASED ON DOMAIN					
		Inadequate [<15]		Moderately Adequate [15-23]		Adequate [>23]	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	General information on child abuse	20	20	49	49	31	31
2.	Physical Abuse	44	44	51	51	5	5
3.	Sexual Abuse	50	50	42	42	8	8
4.	Emotional Abuse	46	46	43	43	11	11
5.	Impact of child abuse on life of children	54	54	38	38	8	8
6.	Overall knowledge	35	35	56	56	9	9

In terms of Frequency and Percentage Distribution of quality of Attitude, table 2 shows that, majority of the subjects 92% had positive attitude, while 8% showed negative attitude towards child abuse and its impact on life of children.

Table: 2 (n=100)

Sl no.	Quality of attitude	Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Negative attitude	22 - 66	8	8%
2.	Positive attitude	67 - 110	92	92%

Regarding correlation between scores of knowledge and attitude, table 3 shows that, there is a weak positive correlation between Knowledge and Attitude, of with, the calculated r-value 0.565 and table value, t=0.19 which is statistically significant at P ≤ 0.05

Table: 3

Sl.no	Variables	Mean	r
1.	Knowledge variable	16.13	0.565
2.	Attitude variable	81.45	S* df =99

S= significant at P ≤ 0.05 **'t' df₍₉₉₎ = 0.19**

Regarding the association, no significant association was found between level of knowledge and quality of attitude with selected socio demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

Overall knowledge scores of parents revealed that majority of the subjects, 56%, had moderately adequate knowledge regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children; only 9%, had adequate knowledge; while remaining 35%, had inadequate knowledge regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children.

Overall attitude scores of parents revealed that, majority of the subjects, 92%, had positive attitude towards child abuse and its impact on life of children; while remaining 8%, showed negative attitude towards child abuse and its impact on life of children.

The inferential analysis using correlation coefficient showed a weak positive correlation between Knowledge and Attitude of the parents with r-value 0.565, which was found to be statistically significant at P ≤ 0.05. Hence the research hypothesis stated, as there is significant relation between knowledge and attitude regarding child abuse and its impact on life of children among parents of under-five, was accepted.

For the level of Knowledge and quality of Attitude, chi square analysis showed that the computed χ^2 values were less than table value, at level of significance P ≤ 0.05, in terms of selected socio demographic variables. Since there was no significant association found, the research hypotheses H₂ and H₃ stated, as there is significant association between level of Knowledge and quality of Attitude with selected socio-demographic variables, was rejected.

IMPLICATIONS

Nursing Practice: -I

- Nurses can play a significant role in identifying and diagnosing child abuse among paediatric clients. As a practicing nurse in the hospital, she can provide adequate information on child abuse to the parents and children under her care.
- As a practicing nurse in the country, nurses can create awareness. Nurses need to be further involved in initiating and preparing strategies to prevent the incidences of child abuse in society.

Nursing Education: -

- Nurse educators should further emphasize on preparing students, to impart information on child abuse to the public, and most importantly, to children who are able to understand.
- With an increase in cases of child abuse, it is imperative to add a curriculum on special training, on how to identify child abuse, create awareness and protect children.

Nursing Administration: -

- Teaching programmes can be conducted in hospitals as it would allow, both, literate as well as illiterate people to enhance their knowledge on child abuse and its impact on

life of children, so that, they take effective measures to protect their children from the dangers of all forms of child abuse.

- School health programmes can be organized to help children gain more knowledge on how to protect themselves from child abuse and reach out for help.

Nursing Research:-

- Research on preventive paediatrics should include areas like child abuse, in order to help protect children from abuse.
- Findings of the present study suggest that, nursing education and administration should encourage nurses to read, discuss and conduct research, to improve knowledge and attitude and bring about public awareness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, an awareness was created about this evil among the parents, so that we can ensure a better place for our children to live.

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