

Assess the Knowledge Regarding Child Abuse among Mothers of Children under 12 Years of Age

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Abstract: Child abuse is one of the most significant social problems affecting children. Violence by a husband toward a pregnant wife may be a type of prenatal child abuse, on a conscious or subconscious level. The abuse may kill or handicap the child. Post natal child abuse or neglect is one of the most serious problem confronting the physician and nurse who care for children. Child abuse can also occur in day care centers, school and child care agencies. Abused children may have had an earlier diagnosis of failure to thrive. (Barbara A Redding 2009)

Child abuse is the physical, sexual, emotional maltreatment or neglect of children. In the US the centre for disease control and prevention (CDC) define child maltreatment as any act and series of act of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that result in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to a child.

Child abuse is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. Parents who physically abuse their spouse are more likely than others to physically abuse their children. However it is impossible to whether marital stress is cause of child abuse are caused by tendencies in their abuser.

Materials and Methods: A non-experimental descriptive design was used to assess the knowledge regarding child abuse among mothers of children under 12 years of age. The study conducted on 80 samples. Data was collected using semi structured interview schedule.

Results: Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse was divided into three categories for easy understanding. The result of the study revealed that 1(1.25%) of mother had adequate knowledge level regarding child abuse, 3(3.75%) of them had moderate knowledge and 76(95%) of them had inadequate knowledge. The overall knowledge rated with the maximum possible score of 120. It was ranged between 27-100 with mean of 38.08 and SD percentage of 12.31%, the mean score percentage of overall knowledge was 32.2%. there is no significant relationship between knowledge of mothers on child abuse with age, religion, education, type of family, income, number of children, and mothers injured their children but there was significant relationship with occupation, previous knowledge and witness of child abuse.

Conclusion: The conclusion drawn from the findings of the study. 95% subjects had inadequate knowledge regarding child abuse. Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse was significant with occupation, previous knowledge and witness of child abuse.

Keywords: child abuse, mothers of children under 12 years of age

I. INTRODUCTION

Child abuse is the physical, sexual, emotional maltreatment or neglect of children. In the US the centre for disease control and prevention (CDC) define child maltreatment as any act and series of act of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that result in harm, potential for harm or threat of harm to a child.

Four elements involved in defining child abuse are -

1) Intentionally of the act 2) the impact of the act on the child 3) value judgment about the fact 4) the cultural and societal standards upon which the act is evaluated.

Child abuse is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. Parents who physically abuse their spouse are more likely than others to physically abuse their children. However it is impossible to whether marital stress is cause of child abuse

are caused by tendencies in their abuser. Physically abused children are likely to experience bone fracture, high risk for developing cancer, 59% likely to be arrested as juvenile, 28% likely to be arrested a adult and 30% more prone to commit violent crime, minor cut or bruises, burns, lacerations, haemorrhage and even death, shaken baby syndrome, impaired brain development, poor physical growth.(Flaherty 2006)

II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

To assess the knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse.

To determine the association between knowledge score and sociodemographic variable such as age, religion, education, type of family, occupation, and monthly income, number of children in family, previous experience, witness and mothers abuse their own children.

To prepare health education module on child abuse and its prevention.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A non-experimental descriptive design was used to assess the knowledge regarding child abuse among mothers of children under 12 years of age. The study conducted on 80 samples. Data was collected using semi structured interview. The tool consisted two sections –

SECTION A

It deals with sociodemographic variables of mothers. It consists of 11 items related to age, religion, type of family, education, occupation, number of children, place of residence, previous knowledge, witness and mothers injured their children.

SECTION B

Knowledge regarding child abuse. The knowledge aspects consist of 38 items regarding the knowledge of child abuse. It includes definition, types, methods, clinical manifestations, management and prevention of child abuse.

The content validity of the tool was obtained from seven different experts in the field of child health nursing, community health nursing, psychologists. The split half method was used to obtain the reliability of the tool. The coefficient correlation of the knowledge was found to be $r=0.99$ and showed high degree of reliability of the tool to conduct the study.

Final study was conducted on 80 samples. The sample for the study comprised of the sample of 80 mothers having children under 12 years of age, who met the designated criteria were selected through convenient sampling method. Objectives of study was discussed and obtained consent for participation in study. Base line data was assessed by semi structured interview. The finding of sociodemographic data and mothers knowledge were analysed in the form of frequency, percentage, mean, mean score percentage and standard deviation. The analysed data were presented in the tables, bar diagrams and pie diagrams. The association between the knowledge of the mothers regarding child abuse with sociodemographic variable was found by using the chi-square test.

Statistical Methods

The data collected from the participants was planned to be analysed on the basis of the objectives of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was organized data in a master data sheet. Data analysis is the systematic organization of research data and the testing of research hypothesis using that data. The plan of data analysis was as follows:

Section 1: Descriptions of sociodemographic variables

Section 2: Assessment of knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse

Section 3: Association between knowledge score and sociodemographic variables

IV. RESULTS

SECTION 1

DESCRIPTION OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF MOTHERS

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by age
N = 80

Sr.	Category	Respondents	
		Number	Percentage(%)
1	AGE		
1	<25years	10	12.5
2	26-30years	25	31.25
3	31-35years	23	28.75
4	>35years	22	27.5
2	RELIGION		
1	Hindu	78	97.5
2	Muslim	2	2.5
3	Christian	0	0
3	EDUCATION		
1	Illiterate	8	10
2	Primary	31	38.75
3	High school	32	40
4	Higher secondary	8	10
5	Graduate	1	1.25
4	TYPE OF FAMILY		
1	Nuclear family	62	77.5
2	Joint family	18	22.5
5	OCCUPATION		
1	Housewife	19	23.75
2	Daily wages	33	41.25
3	Private employee	9	11.25
4	Self-employee	17	21.25
5	Govt. employee	2	2.25
6	FAMILY INCOME		
1	<2000/-	10	12.5
2	2001-3000/-	28	35
3	3001-4000/-	19	23.75
4	>4000/-	23	28.75
7	NUMBER OF CHILDERN		
1	One	13	16.25
2	Two	56	70
3	Three	9	11.25
4	Above three	2	2.5
8	PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE		
1	Yes	32	40
2	No	48	60
9	WITNESS OF CHILD ABUSE		
1	Yes	20	25
2	No	60	75

10	TYPE OF ABUSE WITNESSED BY MOTHER		
1	Physical abuse	9	45
2	Emotional abuse	6	30
3	Sexual abuse	3	15
4	Neglect	2	10
11	CAUSED INJURY TO THEIR CHILD		
1	Yes	27	33.75
2	No	53	66.25
12	REASON FOR INJURED PHYSICALLY TO YOUR CHILD		
1	Refuse to go to school	8	29.6
2	Refuse to take food	14	51.9
3	Refuse to obey	5	18.5
4	Specify any other	0	0
Total		80	100

SECTION II

ASSESSMENT OF KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD ABUSE AMONG MOTHERS HAVING CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE

Table 2 knowledge level of respondents regarding child abuse

N = 80

S. No.	Knowledge Level	Respondents knowledge	
		Number	Percentage(%)
1	Inadequate(<60%)	76	95
2	Moderate(60-90%)	3	3.75
3	Adequate(>90%)	1	1.25

Table 2 shows that among 80 mothers only 1(1.25%) had adequate knowledge, 3(3.75%) mothers had moderate knowledge but 76(95%) had inadequate knowledge regarding child abuse.

Table.3 knowledge score on child abuse among mothers

Sr.	Aspects	Max score	Range	Respondents		
				Mean	Mean score%	SD
1	Overall knowledge	120	27-100	38.08	32.2	12.31

Table 3 shows the mean of overall knowledge score of respondents on child abuse is 38.08 and mean score percentage is 32.2 with standard deviation of 12.31.

Table 4 Aspect wise mean knowledge score on child abuse among mothers.

Sr.	Aspect	Max score	Range score	Respondent's knowledge		
				Mean	Mean%	SD
1	Meaning	9	1-8	3.14	34.88	1.22
2	Physical abuse	34	7-33	10.79	31.73	3.66
3	Emotional abuse	24	5-20	7.6	31.25	2.85
4	Sexual abuse	23	5-22	7.58	32.95	4.84
5	Neglect	30	6-23	9.54	31.8	3.42
Combined		120	27-100	38.08	32.2	12.31

Table 4 shows that knowledge on meaning and types reveals the mean, SD, range and mean score percentage of knowledge regarding child abuse. The knowledge were assessed in different aspects of child abuse such as meaning of child abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse sexual abuse and neglect. The mean score percentage knowledge regarding meaning of child abuse was 34.88, mean of 3.14 and standard deviation of 1.22 as variation in their knowledge. Knowledge on physical abuse was the mean of 10.79; mean score percentage of the knowledge was 31.73 and standard deviation of 3.66 as variation in their knowledge. Similarly knowledge on emotional abuse was the mean of 7.5 and mean score percentage of the knowledge was 31.25 and standard of 2.85 as variation in their knowledge. Sexual abuse was the mean of 7.58 and mean score percentage of the knowledge was 32.95 and standard deviation of 4.84 as variation in their knowledge. Knowledge on neglect was the mean of 9.54, and mean score percentage of the knowledge was 31.8 and standard deviation of 3.42 as variation in their knowledge.

SECTION -III

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE ON CHILD ABUSE AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF MOTHERS

**Table 5 Association between knowledge on child abuse and socio demographic variables
N=80**

SL. No	Variable	Category	Knowledge level						X ² test
			Inadequate		moderate		adequate		
			No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	Age	<30years	33	43.5	1	33.3	1	100	1.39
		>30years	43	56.5	2	66.7	0	0	
2	Religion	Hindu	74	97.3	3	100	1	100	0.34
		Others	2	2.75	0	0	0	0	
3	Education	Illiterate	8	10.5	0	0	0	0	0.19
		Literate	68	89.5	3	100	1	100	
4	Type of family	Nuclear family	59	77.6	2	66.7	1	100	1.44
		Join family	17	22.4	1	33.3	0	0	
5	Occupation	Employed	60	67.1	1	33.3	0	0	6.18*
		Unemployed	16	32.9	2	66.7	1	100	
6	Income	<3000/-	38	50	0	0	0	0	3.19
		>3000/-	38	50	3	100	1	100	
7	Number of children	<2	65	85.5	3	100	1	100	1.45
		>2	11	14.5	0	0	0	0	
8	Previous knowledge	Yes	28	36.8	3	100	1	100	6.3*
		No	48	63.2	0	0	0	0	
9	Witness	Yes	17	22.4	3	100	1	100	9.44*
		No	59	77.6	0	0	0	0	
	Type of abuse Witnessed	Physical	7	41.2	2	33.3	0	0	0.47
		Others	10	58.2	1	66.7	0	0	
10	Physical injury by mother	Yes	27	35.5	0	0	0	0	1.11
		No	49	64.5	3	100	1	100	
11	Reason for injury by mother	Refuse to go to school	8	29.6	0	0	0	0	0
		Others	19	70.4	0	0	0	0	

*Significant at 5% level (0.05, 2df) =5.99

The association between knowledge levels of mothers having children under 12 years of age with sociodemographic variable. The chi-square value shows that there was significant association between knowledge level and demographic variable such as occupation, previous knowledge and witness of child abuse but not significant with age, religion, education, type of family, income, number of children and mothers injured their children.

V. DISCUSSION

1) SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES OF MOTHER

- Out of 80 mothers 25(31.25%) were in the age group of 26- 30 years, 23(28.45%) were between 31 and 35 years. Above 35 years mothers were 22(22.7%) and below 25 years mothers were only 10(12.5%).
- Majority of mothers 78(98.5%) were Hindus and only 2(2.5%) were Muslims. There were no Christians.
- Among 80 mothers 8(10%) were illiterate, 31(38.75%) were finished primary education, 32(40%) were finished high school education, 8(10%) were completed higher secondary education and only 1(1.5%) was graduated.
- Most of the mothers 62(77.5%) were from nuclear family and only 18(22.5%) belongs to joint family.
- Out of 80 mothers 19(23.75%) were house wife, 33(41.25%) were daily wage employers, 9(7.5%) were private employers, 17(21.25%) were self employers and only 2(2.5%) were govt. employers.
- Maximum 28(35%) were earning Rs 2000/-3000/- as their family income and 10(12.5%) were having below Rs 2000/- as family income, 19(23.75%) were having family income between Rs 3000/ - 4000/ and 23(28.75%) were earning above Rs 4000/ as family income.
- Among 80 mothers 56(70%), 13(16.25%), 9(11.25%) and 2 (2.5%) were having two, one, three and above three children respectively.
- Only 32(40%) mothers had previous knowledge regarding child abuse and 48(60%) were not aware about this condition.
- Most of the mothers 60(75%) were not witnessed child abuse, but only 20(25%) were witnessed different types of child abuse.
- Out of 80 mothers the child abuse were witnessed by only 20(25%). Among these 20 mothers 9(45%) were witnessed physical abuse, 6(30%) were witnessed emotional abuse, 3(15%) were witnessed sexual abuse but child neglect was witnessed by only 2(10%).
- Majority of mothers 53(66.25%) were not caused physical injury to their child, but only 27(33.75%) were caused physical injury to their children for various reasons. Among these 27 others 8(29.6%) were injured their children for refusing to go to school, 14(51.41%) were injured for refusing to take food and 5 (18.5%) were injured for refusing to obey in home.

II) ANALYSIS OF THE KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF MOTHERS HAVING CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE REGARDING CHILD ABUSE

Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse was divided into three categories for easy understanding. The result of the study revealed that 1(1.25%) of mother had adequate knowledge level regarding child abuse, 3(3.75%) of them had moderate knowledge and 76(95%) of them had inadequate knowledge. The overall knowledge rated with the maximum possible score of 120. It was ranged between 27-100 with mean of 38.08 and SD percentage of 12.31%, the mean score percentage of overall knowledge was 32.2%.

III) ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL

The present study revealed that there is no significant relationship between knowledge of mothers on child abuse with age, religion, education, type of family, income, number of children, and mothers injured their children but there was significant relationship with occupation, previous knowledge and witness of child abuse.

VI. CONCLUSION

The conclusion drawn from the findings of the study. 95% subjects had inadequate knowledge regarding child abuse. Knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse was significant with occupation, previous knowledge and witness of child abuse.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the study has implications in different branches of nursing profession, ie nursing service, nursing education, nursing administration and nursing research.

Nursing practice

Nursing and other health team members have responsibility to provide health information to the public. Community health nurses are the appropriate persons for helping mothers to increase their knowledge regarding child abuse and its prevention. They can educate the mothers regarding child abuse and help them to identify the victims of child abuse. So the mothers can take safety steps to protect their children from child abuse. Community health workers can conduct health education session to improve the knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse.

Community health workers can teach mothers individually regarding child abuse and its prevention in order to create awareness among mothers.

Nursing education

Child abuse is one of the major problems facing by children. Both boys and girls are equally vulnerable. So the nursing students must be able to recognize the importance of knowledge of mothers on child abuse. They must provide proper information to mothers having children under 12 years of age regarding child abuse. Mass and individual education programmes may be organized on child abuse in the community. The health personals can provide information booklet on child abuse to the mothers. It should be in understandable language with suitable picture and appropriate explanations to make them aware regarding child abuse and its prevention. Nursing students can conduct educational programmes, role play, workshops and campaign regarding child abuse and its prevention in the community to educate community health workers.

Health administration

Health personals are playing vital role in improving nursing practice. Nursing personal should be prepared to take leadership role in educating the nurses. The nurse administrator should encourage the health personal in conducting and participating in various educational programmes which would contribute better health promoting behavior. Conducting such programmes require efficient team work, money, material and time. The programme will strengthen and up-to-date the knowledge of mothers regarding child abuse. The nurse administrator can act as care giver; advocate, educator, counselor etc are able to identify the knowledge deficit of mothers and can organize programmes to achieve expected goals. The study reveals that the mothers require better education and training on prevention of child abuse. Health personals can provide health education to mothers to achieve specified goals.

Nursing research

Nursing research is a strong foundation for an evidenced based nursing practice. By reviewing the literature regarding child abuse reveals that in India fewer studies are conducted on child abuse. So it emphasize great need for conducting research in awareness on child abuse and effectiveness of teaching programme on child abuse and its prevention. Nurse researcher will come forward to develop and validate new strategies and tool and create awareness on child abuse.

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