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A STUDY TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING MANAGEMENT OF SIBLING RIVALRY AMONG MOTHERS OF UNDER FIVE CHILDREN IN ADHIYAMAN KOTTAI, DHARMAPURI

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Abstract:

Background: Sibling rivalry is a common developmental phenomenon arising from changes in family dynamics following the birth of a sibling. It often manifests as jealousy, insecurity, and competition for parental attention, potentially leading to behavioral issues in children. **Aim:** This study aimed to assess the effectiveness of a self-instructional module on knowledge regarding sibling rivalry among mothers of under-five children in a rural area of Dharmapuri. **Methods:** A pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design was adopted. The study included 50 mothers selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and a self-instructional module was administered as the intervention. Reliability of the tool was established ($r = 0.89$). The posttest was conducted after seven days. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, paired t-test, and chi-square test. **Results:** Results revealed a significant improvement in knowledge scores, with the posttest mean higher than the pretest mean ($t = 6.8, p < 0.05$). Domain-wise analysis indicated higher knowledge in breastfeeding and immunization, while lower scores were noted in cord care and thermal care. Significant associations were found between knowledge and education and parity, whereas age showed no association. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that the self-instructional module was effective in improving maternal knowledge regarding sibling rivalry. Educational interventions can promote better parenting practices and support healthy sibling relationships.

Keywords: Sibling rivalry, self-instructed module, mothers of under five children.

INTRODUCTION

Children need emotional support (love and affection) and satisfaction of physical needs to grow up healthy. Lack of fulfilling these holistic needs can have adverse impacts on the future of a child. The arrival of a sibling, especially one with a 24 year age difference, may greatly affect the elder child, in most cases causing a sense of insecurity, lack of attention, and a sense of being threatened by them. Sibling rivalry is a typical predicament that starts when a second child is born and involves jealousy, anger, competition over parental attention and at times regression or aggression. WHO estimates that there are millions of young children who report sibling-related issues like rivalry and neglect. Research has also shown that the prevalence of sibling rivalry is diverse with reports of 14-88% in India and 23.4- in Delhi. It is also a cause of childhood behavioral problems. Studies indicate that parental treatment, birth order, personality, and family environment are some of the factors that determine sibling relationships. Even one-year-old children are able to see the variations in the attention of parents and at the age of three, children can make comparisons with their siblings. The sibling birth could diminish the parental interaction with the older child, leading to stress and behavioral problems, particularly in the case of a parent with a disability. Sibling rivalry is not a disorder but an ordinary developmental reaction to the changes in the family dynamics, as a child adapts to them. Parenting is a very important factor that can help to control sibling rivalry and this means that parents must be well equipped with the knowledge and skills to help in maintaining positive relations between the siblings.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the pretest level of knowledge regarding sibling rivalry among mothers of under 5 children in selected rural area at Dharmapuri.
2. To assess the effectiveness of self-instructional module regarding sibling rivalry among mothers by comparing pre and posttest knowledge scores.
3. To associate the pretest knowledge score with their selected demographic variables among mothers of under five children.

METHODOLOGY:

The study adopted an evaluative research approach with a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design, conducted among 50 mothers of under-five children in Adhiyamankottai, Dharmapuri, selected through purposive sampling. A structured questionnaire was used to assess knowledge regarding sibling rivalry, along with a self-instructional module as the intervention. Content validity was established by experts, and reliability was confirmed using the test–retest method ($r = 0.89$). Data were collected over four weeks, with pretest assessment followed by administration of the module and a posttest after seven days. A pilot study confirmed feasibility. Data analysis included descriptive and inferential statistics, with paired t-test used to evaluate effectiveness and chi-square test to determine associations between variables.

RESULTS:

Table 1 shows that most mothers were aged 26–30 years, had primary or secondary education, and were predominantly homemakers. The majority were Hindus, belonged to nuclear families, and had lower monthly income. Most mothers received health information from both printed and electronic media, and the common sibling spacing was 2–3 years. Table 2 shows that the mean posttest knowledge score was higher than the pretest score, and the calculated t-value (6.8) was greater than the table value (2.02) at $p < 0.05$, indicating a statistically significant improvement in knowledge after the intervention. Table 3 shows that the highest mean knowledge score was in breastfeeding, followed by immunization and hygiene, while lower scores were observed in cord care and thermal care. Table 4 shows that there was a significant association between knowledge levels and education and parity, whereas no significant association was found with age.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the participants (N = 50)

S. NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Age of mother in years	a) Less than 25 years	12	24
		b) 26 – 30 years	15	30
		c) 31- 35 years	14	28
		d) Above 35 years	9	18
2	Educational status of mother	a) Illiterate	12	24
		b) Primary education	13	26
		c) Secondary education	17	34
		d) Graduate	8	16
3	Occupation of mother	a) Home maker	18	36
		b) Govt employee	7	14
		c) Private employee	15	30
		d) Daily wagers	10	20
4	Religion	a) Hindu	26	52
		b) Muslim	14	28
		c) Christian	10	20
5	Income per month	a) Less than Rs 2000	15	30
		b) Rs 2001 – 4000	9	18
		c) Rs 4001-8000	13	26
		d) Above Rs 8000	13	26
6	Type of family	a) Nuclear family	28	56
		b) Joint family	22	44
7	Gender of 2 children under five years of age	a) Female & Male	17	34
		b) Female & Female	18	36
		c) Male & Male	15	30
8		a) Printed media	16	32

	Health Information regarding child rearing Practice	b) Electronic	14	28
		c) a & b	20	40
9	Space between siblings	a) 1- 2 years	24	48
		b) 2 – 3 years	26	52

Table 2: Overall, Knowledge Levels of Mothers

	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	t-value	Df	P value	Table Value
Pretest	16.48	3.149	2.72	6.8	49	0.05	2.02
Posttest	19.2	2.762					

Table 3: Domain-wise Mean Knowledge Scores

Domain	Max Score	Mean ± SD
Breastfeeding	10	8.5 ± 1.2
Immunization	5	3.9 ± 1.3
Cord care	5	2.6 ± 1.4
Thermal care	5	2.4 ± 1.6
Hygiene	5	3.1 ± 1.0

Table 4: Association of Knowledge Levels with Demographic Variables.

Variable	χ ² value	df	p-value	Interpretation
Age	2.35	2	0.31	NS (Not significant)
Education	14.22	2	0.001*	Significant
Parity	6.85	1	0.009*	Significant

*Significant association at p < 0.05; NS = Not Significant

DISCUSSION:

The study results revealed that the self-instructional module was effective in improving the knowledge of mothers regarding sibling rivalry, as evidenced by a significant increase in posttest scores compared to pretest scores (p < 0.05). Domain-wise analysis showed better knowledge in areas such as breastfeeding and immunization, while comparatively lower scores were observed in cord care and thermal care. Furthermore, a significant association was found between knowledge levels and selected demographic variables such as education and parity, whereas variables like age showed no significant association. Overall, the findings indicate that the intervention significantly enhanced maternal knowledge.

CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that the self-instructional module was effective in significantly improving the knowledge of mothers regarding sibling rivalry. The increase in posttest scores indicates that structured educational interventions can enhance parental understanding and help in better management of sibling rivalry. Therefore, such educational programs can be recommended as an important strategy to promote healthy sibling relationships and improve child-rearing practices.

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