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A Study to Assess the Knowledge Regarding Sexual Abuse Among Adolescents Girls in Sir Issac Newton School at Nagapattinam

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Abstract:

Introduction: According to the World Health Organization, adolescence is the period that leads to adulthood and childhood that includes people aged between 10 and 19. To the same extent, the Oxford dictionary defines adolescence as the developmental stage that starts at puberty till adulthood. **Methodology:** The study implemented a descriptive research design based on a quantitative research approach. The research was carried out in one school (selected) of Nagapattinam. There were 100 students who were chosen by use of non-probability sampling technique. Data collection tool was divided into two parts: Part I was composed of demographic data, and Part II was composed of a structured questionnaire which is based on knowledge assessment. **Results:** It was found that 11 percent of the students possessed poor knowledge on sexual abuse, 65 percent possessed moderate knowledge and 24 percent possessed sufficient knowledge. In general, there were 100 respondents to consider in the knowledge analysis. **Conclusion:** The research established that the majority of students had the moderate level of knowledge regarding sexual abuse. Even though some of the participants were conversant with simple concepts, they experienced lapses in knowledge about preventive measures, warning sign identification and proper reporting practices.

Keywords: Awareness, public, prevention, sexual assault

INTRODUCTION

Latin adolescence meaning growing up is a period of human growth, a transition period between puberty and legal adulthood (age of majority). Adolescence according to stages of human development according to Erik Erikson is a human being between the ages of 13–19-year-olds. Many people say that the girls are the most valuable resources and assets of the world, yet their rights on the global scale are more or less disregarded, and it often leads to tragic consequences. This is due to the susceptibility of girls. Girls rely on parents since their infancy to adolescence to feel secure and to continue being nurtured and this exposes them to maltreatment in most aspects. The age of adolescence is the important period to motivate and empower the girls during the decisive years. However, when the adolescent girls are moved out of their homes, families, and schools, by conflicts, or crises, they are at a greater risk of being exploited, sexually and gender-based violence, and early pregnancy. They tend to interrupt their studies and most of

them are compelled to marry at a young age. However, with the right competencies and tools, teenage girls will be able to change themselves, their households, their localities and their cultures. Sexual abuse also known as molestation is the compelling of unwanted sexual behaviour on a person by another one. In case the force is instant, of brief duration or infrequent, then it is referred to as sexual assault.

The rapist is known as a sexual abuser or a molester. In a case where the victim is below the age of consent, it is termed as child sexual abuse. A study was done by a 2009 research study in Clinical Psychology Review in which 65 studies on sexual abuse were reviewed found that prevalence was 19.7% among females and 7.9% among males across 22 countries. The largest prevalence of sexual abuse geographically was identified in Africa (34.4%), mainly due to the high prevalence rate of sexual abuse in South Africa; Europe was the lowest prevalence

rate (9.2%); the prevalence rate of America and Asia fell between 10.1% and 23.9% respectively with the help of available data. The majority of the sexual abuse perpetrators are known to the victim, 30% of sexual abuse perpetrators are family members, usually brothers, fathers, uncles or cousins, around 60% are other people acquainted with the victim, which may include friends of the family, babysitters, or neighbours and strangers are the offenders in about 10% of sexual abuse cases.

India is rated as the highest number of children in the world (375 million) that encompasses 40 percent of the population with 69 percent of the girls in India being victims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The capital of the country New Delhi has a rate of abuse which is above 83. Over 70 percent of the cases are not reported or even shared among family members. A prevalence study carried out worldwide by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. revealed that 19.7% of all women in the entire world were sexually abused before the age of 18.

Yoga, guided meditation, and techniques like progressive muscle relaxation are some of the stress management methods that enhance capacity to cope with stress, emotional stability, and well-being (Woodyard, 2011; Corliss, 2014). The methods aid in restoring physiological balance and preclude stress-related disorders (Robinson, 2023). On the whole, relaxation techniques and autogenic training should be considered crucial in the prevention of academic stress and bipolarity among students to enhance mental health.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used was a quantitative, evaluative approach with descriptive research design. Random sampling was used and 100 female students with the inclusion criteria and available at the time of data collection were selected. A self-administered questionnaire was used as the means of data collection. The content validity was achieved using the review of the experts and the required amendments. Before the collection of data, institutional permission and an informed consent were required so that it lasted around 30 minutes on each participant. The analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to determine the level of knowledge about sexual abuse among adolescent girls.

RESULT

Table: 1 Distribution of level of knowledge on sexual abuse among the students in terms of frequency and percentage were as follows:11% had inadequate knowledge.65% had moderate knowledge.24% had adequate knowledge. Total: 100%. Table: 2 The table show description of Demographic

Variables Amidst Adolescents girls who took part in the study. In terms of age: 22.0% of the students were between 13 14 years, 28.0% between 14-15 years, 0 between 16-17 years, and 50.0 between 18-20 years. In relation to sex: 100 percent of students were female. About religion: 82.0% were Hindus, 10.0% Christian and 8.0% Muslim. Concerning the year of study: 21.0% were 9 th standard students, 24.0% were 10 th standard students, 22.0% were 11 th standard students, and 33.0% were 12 th standard students. In terms of support system: 12.0 was government, 86.0 was private and 2.0 was others.

Table 3 indicates how the level of knowledge on the topic of ovarian sexual abuse among teenagers correlates with the chosen demographic factors. The Chi-square test reveals that majority of the demographic variables had no significant associations though significant associations were observed with the demographic variables like gender and religion.

Table:1 Frequency and percentage-wise distribution of the level of knowledge regarding sexual abuse among adolescent girls.

Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage%
Inadequate knowledge	11	11%
Moderate knowledge	65	65%
Adequate knowledge	24	24%
Total	100	100%

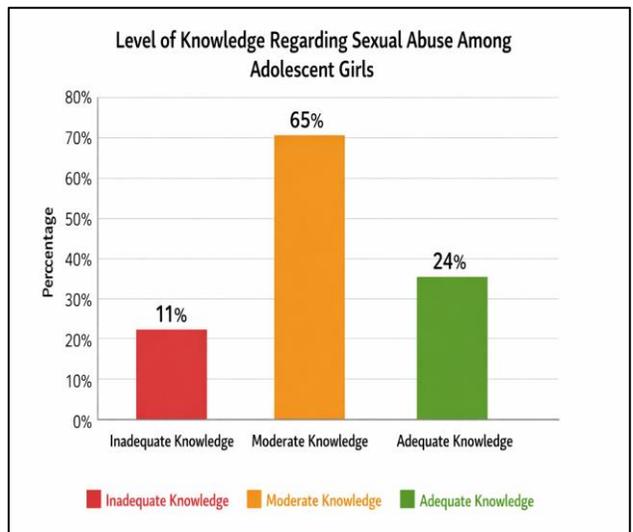


Table:2 Description of Demographic Variables Among Adolescents girls.

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Age (in years)	13–14	22	22.0%
	14–15	28	28.0%
	16–17	0	0%
	18–20	50	50.0%
Gender	Male	0	0%
	Female	100	100%
Religion	Hindu	82	82.0%
	Muslim	8	8.0%
	Christian	10	10.0%
	Others	0	0%
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	65	65.0%
	Joint Family	27	27.0%
	Blended Family	3	3.0%
	Single Parent	5	5.0%
Class of Study	9th Standard	21	21.0%
	10th Standard	24	24.0%
	11th Standard	22	22.0%
	12th Standard	33	33.0%
Support System	Government	12	12.0%
	Private	86	86.0%
	Others	2	2.0%
Living With	Parents	88	88.0%
	Mothers Only	11	11.0%
	Fathers Only	0	0%
	Relatives	1	1.0%
Mode of Travel to School	Walking	6	6.0%
	Bus	86	86.0%
	Bicycle	3	3.0%
	Auto	5	5.0%
Distance of School from Home	2 km	16	16.0%
	4 km	29	29.0%
	6 km	11	11.0%
	More than 6 km	44	44.0%
Place of Residence	Rural	53	53.0%
	Urban	47	47.0%

Table:3 Association between the level of knowledge regarding sexual abuse among adolescent girls and their selected demographic variables.

Demographic Variables	χ^2 Value (Df) & P value	Inference
Age (Years)	$\chi^2 = 5.975$, Df = 4, P = 0.201	NS
Gender	$\chi^2 = 9.232$, Df = 4, P = 0.056	S
Religion	$\chi^2 = 10.608$, Df = 4, P = 0.031	S
Type of Family	$\chi^2 = 6.634$, Df = 6, P = 0.356	NS
Class of Study	$\chi^2 = 11.380$, Df = 6, P = 0.077	NS
Support System	$\chi^2 = 2.342$, Df = 4, P = 0.673	NS
Living With	$\chi^2 = 0.542$, Df = 4, P = 0.819	NS
Mode of Travel to School	$\chi^2 = 3.929$, Df = 6, P = 0.686	NS
Distance of School from Home	$\chi^2 = 7.630$, Df = 6, P = 0.267	NS
Place of Residence	$\chi^2 = 2.857$, Df = 4, P = 0.582	NS

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study is to determine the extent of knowledge on the subject of sexual abuse among school students in Nagapattinam. The literature review offered a foundation and information on the topic of sexual abuse. The knowledge about sexual abuse was evaluated through the descriptive research design. The total of 100 samples. The analysis and presentation of the data was given in the form of tables and diagrams. The discussion is founded on the objectives identified in the study.

The findings indicate that among the 100 students interviewed, the majority of the students (50%) were in the age group of 18–20 years. All the participants (100%) were female. With regard to religion, the majority (82%) were Hindus. Most of the students (33%) were studying in the 12th standard. The majority (86%) belonged to a private support system. Regarding the type of family, most of them (65%) belonged to nuclear families. The majority of the students (88%) were living with their parents. Most of the students (86%) travelled to school by bus. With regard to distance from school, the majority (44%) travelled more than 6 km from home.

The findings indicate frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge on sexual abuse among school students. A moderate level of knowledge of sexual abuse was found in the majority of the students (65%) and (24) percentage of students had adequate knowledge of sexual abuse and (11) percentage of students had inadequate knowledge on sexual abuse respectively.

CONCLUSION

This research determined that students were moderately aware of sexual abuse. It is known that the amount of knowledge in relation to sexual abuse was moderate. Another recommendation that was made by the study is that the students should be provided with counselling. A counsellor should be present in schools to assist the affected students of child sexual abuse.

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