

EFFECT OF PSYCHO-EDUCATION ON CREATING AWARENESS OF CHILD ABUSE

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Abstract

Child abuse can lead to long-lasting, even life-long, consequences and is a severe problem on a person, family and community level. Parenting is the most vital goal of child abuse prevention. In the present study, the investigators attempted to find out the effectiveness of Psycho-Education for the parents of early adolescents on awareness of child abuse. Experimental method was adopted and single group pretest posttest design selected for the present study. The sample consisted of 47 parents of early adolescent Students studying in selected school at Kanyakumari district. The investigator prepared a psycho-education module for the study and gave treatment for selected parents of early adolescents. For collection of data, conducted pretest and post test for early adolescents. The questions were constructed and validated by the investigator and guide. The investigator used mean, standard deviation, t-test for analyze the data. The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.

Introduction

Child abuse is doing something or failing to do something that results in harm to a child or puts a child at risk of harm. Child abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional. Neglect, or not providing for a child's needs, is also a form of abuse. However, in India, as in many other countries, there has been no understanding of the extent, magnitude and trends of the problem. The growing complexities of life and the dramatic changes brought about by socio economic transitions in India have played a major role in increasing the vulnerability of children to various and newer forms of abuse. (Carson, Foster & Tripathi, 2013).

Child abuse is not a stand-alone family problem, and is associated with multiple risk factors (Duggan et al., 2004). Individuals with child abuse histories face a heightened risk of adverse health conditions across the lifespan which may result for some in premature mortality from disease (Brown et al., 2009). There is strong evidence that girls who are sexually abused in childhood face an elevated risk of sexual assault in adolescence and young adulthood (Lalor & McElvany, 2010). Preventing child abuse and neglect can also prevent other forms of violence. Each of the various forms of violence are interrelated and share many risk and protective factors, 18 consequences, 19, 20 and effective approaches to prevention (Finkelhor, Ormrod & Turner, 2009). Strategies that support the development of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between parents or caregivers and their children could be key in preventing the early development of violent behavior in children (Caldera et al., 2007). Emerging evidence suggests that by stemming the early development of violent behav-

ior, such relationships can also reduce many types of violence occurring in adolescence and early adulthood, such as youth violence, intimate partner and dating violence, sexual violence, and self-directed violence (Mikton & Butchart, 2009).

Need and Significance of the Study

The aim of the study is to spread awareness on child abuse prevention among children and to sensitize, stakeholders in particular and civil society in general on the need and importance of child protection against abuse, exploitation, discrimination as also protection in times of calamities. Several key concepts need to be considered in attempting to understand prevention pathways that lead from abuse to the various consequences and the context in which those consequences manifest.

Positive and negative influences found among individual child characteristics, within the family environment, and in the child's broader social context all interact to predict outcomes related to child abuse. Child abuse occurs in the society then the parent's community awareness on their child to prevent from this issue. Abused children often are exposed to multiple stressors in addition to experiences of abuse, and prevention consequences may manifest at different points in a child's development. Therefore, the most rigorous research on this topic attempts to account for the many factors that may be confounded with awareness on prevention of child abuse.

While child abuse exists almost all over the world, it is much greater in some countries. India is definitely one of them. Children are in vulnerable situations such as poverty, disability, homelessness etc. and they find

themselves doubly disadvantaged, by their gender and the physical, geographic, economic, political, and social situations that they find themselves in. It is, therefore, imperative to take a child perspective into account while examining the situation of children. Abuse of children is widely prevalent in Tamil Nadu. To increase the application of prevention strategies against child abuse, more outcome studies are urgently needed. These studies should include attempts to find out the outcomes of the existing strategies. They should provide practical guidance on how to plan, select, design and implement prevention strategies in a way that they will generate evidence as to how effective they are. Realizing these factual learnings, the researchers have focused on child issues and carried out this research on the title “Effect of Psycho- education on Creating Awareness of Child Abuse”.

Review of Related Studies

Salloum et al. (2020) conducted a study on parents' knowledge, attitudes, and experiences in child sexual abuse prevention in El Salvador. The purpose of this study was to examine knowledge, attitudes and experiences of CSA prevention and characteristics related to greater knowledge and openness to engaging in child abuse prevention among Salvadoran parents. Most parents were knowledgeable about CSA, viewed CSA prevention as their responsibility, and had talked with their children about CSA, although 65.7% incorrectly believed that children are more likely to be abused by strangers. Parents with lower income were less knowledgeable and willing to participate in CSA prevention. CSA programming needs to involve parents and specifically target low-income parents.

Gubbels, Vander Put and Assink (2019) conducted a study on the effectiveness of parent training programs for child maltreatment and their components: A meta-analysis. This is the first meta-analytic review investigating what components and techniques of parent training programs for preventing or reducing child maltreatment are associated with program effectiveness. The results indicated that improving parental personal skills, improving problem solving skills, and stimulating children's prosocial behavior should not be the main focus of parental training programs for preventing and reducing child maltreatment. This also holds for practicing new skills by rehearsal and giving direct feedback in program sessions. Further clinical implications and directions for future research are discussed.

AlRammah et al., (2019) studied the parent child com-

munication and preventive practices for child sexual abuse among the general population: A community-based study. This study was conducted to investigate parent child communication and preventive practices centred on child sexual abuse among a cohort of Saudi population. The study showed that parent child communication practices in KSA seem to be reasonably good. Further parentsupervision of children with respect to sexual abuse needs attention. Parents are advised to communicate with their children and to provide them with information and material on the prevention of sexual abuse. Batham, Koreti and Gaur (2019) conducted a study on “Are parents and children aware of child sexual prevention education?”. Current study aimed to find out awareness, orientation, execution of parents for child sexual abuse (CSA) prevention education and study the awareness of CSA prevention education among children attending pre-primary and primary school. Majority of parents and kid are unaware of various fact of child sexual abuse. Parents education level has direct correlation, highly qualified mother father has positive attitude toward child sexual abuse prevention education. Lack of knowledge found in lower socioeconomic class.

Navaei, Akbari-Kamrani, Esmaelzadeh-Saeieh, Faridand Tehranizadeh (2018) examined the effect of group counseling on parents' self- efficacy, knowledge, attitude, and communication practice in preventing sexual abuse of children aged 2-6 years: A randomized controlled clinical trial. The present study aimed to examine the effectiveness of group counseling on parents' self-efficacy, knowledge, attitude, and communication practice in preventing sexual abuse of children aged 2-6 years. A randomized controlled clinical trial was carried out on 62 parents in Karaj (Iran) during the period of March-November 2016. This study revealed that counseling is an effective tool in increasing the self- efficacy of parents on child sexual abuse. The awareness of child sexual abuse and its prevention should be raised in the society through effective training programs.

Asadollahi, Jabraeili, Jafarabadi and Hallaj (2016) examined the Parents' attitude toward child abuse conducted in the health centers of Tabriz. This study was conducted to investigate the parents' attitudes toward child abuse in the health centers of Tabriz. In this cross-sectional study 384 parents with children 2 to 12 years old, filled a questionnaire about parents' attitude toward child abuse in the 13 health centers of Tabriz. The results showed that the parents' attitudes toward child abuse were negative, but because of the relation-

ship between parents' attitudes with some of their demographic characteristics, parents should be supported economically and socially to prevention of child abuse. Walsh and Brandon (2012) conducted a study on their children's first educators: Parents' views about child sexual abuse prevention education. In this descriptive focus group study, investigated parents' views about child sexual abuse prevention education at home and in schools. Focus groups were conducted with a sample of 30 Australian adults who identified as the parent or caregiver of a child/children aged 0–5 years. The findings may be useful in assisting school authorities and providers of child sexual abuse prevention programs to better understand parents' contributions to child sexual abuse prevention education, and their perspectives in relation to provision of school-based prevention programs.

Objectives of the Study

1. To develop a module for Psycho- Education for the parents of early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.
2. To find out the effectiveness of Psycho-Education for the parents of early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.
3. To identify the awareness of child abuse among parents.
4. To identify the awareness of child abuse among early adolescents.
5. To find out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the parents of early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.

Hypotheses Formulated

1. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.
2. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component physical abuse
3. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component emotional abuse
4. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component neglect
5. There is no significant difference between the

pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component sexual abuse

Design of the Study Method

Research design refers to the scheduling of the times at which treatment is administered to subjects and at which observations are made of the performance of the subjects. It is rather an important component of the research process of establishing cause and effect relationships. By combining careful research design with appropriate measurement, analysis and reasoning, the validity of the conclusions drawn from the research efforts can be strengthened (Vockell, 1983). The present study the researchers employed Single- Group Pretest-Posttest Design. In such a design, a single test group area is selected and the dependent variable i.e. awareness of child abuse is measured before and after the administration of the treatment i.e. Psycho-education for the parents. The duration for the treatment is ten days.

Population and Sample

A population is any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common and that are of interest to the researchers (Best & Kahn, 2012). The population must be clearly defined before the sample is taken. For the present study the parents of early adolescents in Tamil Nadu as population.

A sample is a small proportion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample, one can make certain inferences about the characteristics of the population from which it was drawn (Best & Kahn, 2012).

The sample for the present study was comprised of the parents of seventh standard students studying at C.S.I. Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Kulasekhar, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu. After getting permission from the Principal of the school the investigator was allowed to collect data after administering the treatment.

Tools used for the Study

The investigator had used a tool to collect the data for the present investigation. The tool that the investigator used for the study was Child Abuse Awareness Test for Early Adolescents.

This tool was constructed and validated by the investigator and the guide. The Investigator standardized the tool with item analysis, validity and reliability.

Analysis of Data
Hypothesis: 1

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.

Table 1
Significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse

Component	Test	N	Mean	SD	Calculated t Value	P value	Remarks
Child Abuse	Pre test	47	16.94	3.11	32.02	0.000	S
	Post test	47	30.55	2.38			

S-Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is stated that the mean value of pre-test is 16.94 and post-test is 30.55 and the corresponding standard deviation for pre-test and post-test is 3.11 and 2.38 respectively. The calculated p value is less than the table value at 0.01 significant level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it can be stated that there exists significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.

Hypothesis: 2

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component physical abuse

Table 2
Significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component physical abuse

Component	Test	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Pvalue	Remarks
Physical Abuse	Pretest	47	4.11	1.03	13.71	0.000	S
	Posttest	47	6.11	0.73			

S-Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is stated that the mean value of pre-test is 4.11 and post-test is 6.11 and the corresponding standard deviation for pre-test and post-test is 1.03 and 0.73 respectively. The calculated p value is less than the table value at 0.01 significant level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it can be stated that there exists significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component physical abuse.

Hypothesis: 3

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component emotional abuse

Table 3

Significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component emotional abuse

Component	Test	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Pvalue	Remarks
Emotional Abuse	Pretest	47	4.38	1.19	20.08	0.000	S
	Posttest	47	7.98	0.90			

S-Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is stated that the mean value of pre-test is 4.38 and post-test is 7.98 and the corresponding standard deviation for pre-test and post-test is 1.19 and 0.90 respectively. The calculated p value is less than the table value at 0.01 significant level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it can be stated that there exists significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component emotional abuse.

Hypothesis: 4

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component neglect

Table 4

Significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component neglect

Component	Test	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Pvalue	Remarks
Neglect	Pretest	47	4.70	1.18	20.84	0.000	S
	Posttest	47	8.32	1.04			

S-Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is stated that the mean value of pre-test is 4.70 and post-test is 8.32 and the corresponding standard deviation for pre-test and post-test is 1.18 and 1.04 respectively. The calculated p value is less than the table value at 0.01 significant level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it can be stated that there exists significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component neglect.

Hypothesis: 5

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho- education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component sexual abuse

Table 5

Significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component sexual abuse

Component	Test	N	Mean	SD	t Value	Pvalue	Remarks
Sexual Abuse	Pretest	47	3.70	0.98	22.89	0.000	S
	Posttest	47	8.15	0.81			

S-Significant at 1% level

From the above table it is stated that the mean value of pre-test is 3.70 and post-test is 8.15 and the corresponding standard deviation for pre-test and post-test is 0.98 and 0.81 respectively. The calculated p value is less than the table value at 0.01 significant level. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, it can be stated that there exists significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component sexual abuse.

Major Findings

- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse.
- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component physical abuse.
- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component emotional abuse.
- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component neglect.
- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of psycho-education for the early adolescents on awareness of child abuse based on the component sexual abuse.

Interpretations

Research has shown the huge impact that positive parenting practices can have on a child's social, emotional, and intellectual development, particularly during the early years (National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016). This includes a child's improved sense of safety, the ability to focus attention, and behavioral health. Parent education programs are planned to help parents understand their children's individual needs and development, as well as their own roles and responsibilities, by offering tools and strategies aimed at maximize positive outcomes for children and families.

This is not an age where people shy away from mentioning anything sexual around their children. Children are quite able to grasp complex topics like sexuality and abuse. But we must be cautious while explaining our child about sexual identity. We should explain how certain regions of her body are private, elaborate on how

these places are delicate and must be protected from interruption. Children have to be trained to say no to strangers who offer treats or rides and should not be taught to obey or respect any adult they come across if that adult is infringing on their bodily space; instead, they to be instructed to shout or fight back.

Child abuse prevention begins at home with educating our children early on about child abuse using suitable language and not instilling fear in children. Apart from that, much of our practices only slow down children from coming to parents if abuse does occur. For example, the corporal punishments that commonly use leave children not capable to trust parents. The pain and fear caused by spanking children leaves them emotionally weak and vulnerable, developing in them a feeling of low self-worth, low self-esteem, making them feel they somehow have to tolerate shame, abuse and pain. Vulnerable children who are emotionally neglected are often easy prey to perpetrators.

Studies of physically abused children and their families indicate that a significant number of psychological problems are associated with child physical abuse. Abused children compared with non-abused children may have more difficulty with academic performance, self-control, self-image and social relationships. The physically abused children in the study experienced far greater problems at home, at school, amongst peers and in the community.

Parent education programs have shown significant benefits for parents, caregivers, children, and families, such as the following (Wilder Research, 2016). More positive parenting style as a result of greater parental or caregiver understanding of child development and effective communication styles *f* Enhanced social connections as parents exchange ideas, provide and obtain support, and share resources *f* Improved child behavior, as children whose parents participate in these programs show greater prosocial behaviors and less negative externalizing behaviors *f* Better quality parent-child interactions as a result of parents learning how to engage with their children *f* Enhanced parental mental health and well-being, as improved skills and parenting knowledge help to reduce caregiver depression, anxiety, anger, guilt, and stress *f* Reduced risk of corporal punishment and child abuse as parents learn alternatives to physical punishment and a new way of thinking about appropriate family roles and expectations of children *f* Parental self-confidence and empowerment as caregiving skills progress and parents grow more competent and comfortable in their roles.

Recommendations

- In early childhood, parents should teach their children the name of the genitals, just as they teach their child names of other body parts. This teaches that the genitals, while private, are not so private that you can't talk about them.
- Parents should teach young children about the privacy of body parts, and that no one has the right to touch their bodies if they don't want that to happen. Children should also learn to respect the right to privacy of other people.
- Teach children early and often that there are no secrets between children and their parents, and that they should feel comfortable talking with their parent about anything - good or bad, fun or sad, easy or difficult.
- Be aware of adults who offer children special gifts or toys, or adults who want to take your child on a "special outing" or to special events.
- As children age, create an environment at home in which sexual topics should be discussed comfortably. Use news items and publicized reports of child sexual abuse to start discussions of safety, and reiterate that children should always tell a parent about anyone who is taking advantage of them sexually.
- Parents should inform the child and let him or her know that he or she is not responsible for the abuse. Educational institution should also conduct different awareness programme through videos regarding the child abuse awareness programme and also create awareness of the various acts of preventing child abuse.
- Awareness programme on child abuse should be conducted with the help of NGO's and government authorities. This could simply be done either by direct or indirect training. The direct methods would include one to one training, counseling, or group based training for children. Indirect methods would engage the use of media, pamphlets, role plays, drama and talk shows.
- The Government should take initiation to review on the necessities available in connection to child care services and should assess the extent to which services meet the aims and objectives of national child care policies. The child safety and child care policies should be telecast through mass media by means of advertisements, awareness programme and available apps in relation to prevent abuses.
- Each educational institution should appoint a counselor and they should provide counseling connected to various abuses.

Conclusion

Child abuse is a dark reality that routinely inflicts people's daily lives but in a majority of cases it goes unnoticed and unreported on account of the innocence of the victim, stigma attached to the act, callousness and insensitivity of the investigating and the law enforcement agencies, etc. Parents, teachers and others in the community have a vital role to protect children from various forms of exploitation and abuse. Children are the country's greatest human resource and a measure of the country's social progress lies in the wellbeing of its children: that they are healthy, educated, safe, and happy and have access to life opportunities. It is our duty that Child abuse should be combated as early as possible. We should raise voice against that and build a safe and healthy society for our future citizen.

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