



CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL GIRLS

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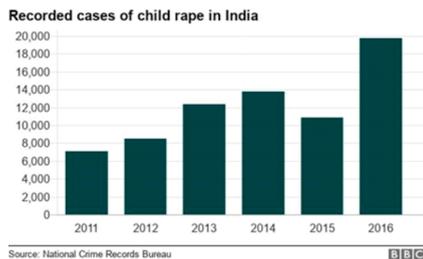
ABSTRACT

Child sexual abuse is a worldwide concern. This study focused on empowering children to keep themselves safe by giving them personal safety education and increasing teacher's awareness and knowledge of protective measures. A pilot study was done on 35 fifth grade girls. Results showed that knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate touches were less and provides evidence that children are not able to identify inappropriate touches. Pre-assessment was done using Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire- Revised among 200 children and Teacher's Knowledge and Beliefs Scale among 30 teachers. Then intervention was done separately in different sessions for children and teachers. Post assessment was done. The post-test results clearly indicated that the children had gained a better understanding of vulnerable areas that can lead to child abuse and also proved that the intervention was effective in increasing the knowledge of the teachers on Child sexual abuse.

KEYWORDS : Child sexual abuse, appropriate and inappropriate touches.

INTRODUCTION

Child sexual abuse is a worldwide concern. It is an insidious, persistent, and serious problem that, depending on the population studied and definition used, affects 2–62% of women and 3–16% of men as victims (Roland, 2002). India is home to 19% of the world's children. A total of 33,098 cases of sexual abuse in children were reported in the nation during the year 2011 when compared to cases in 2010 which increased by 24% (Singh, 2014). A total of 7,112 cases of child rape were reported during 2011 as equated to cases in 2010 depicting a growth by 29.7%. India has the world's largest number of child sexual abuse cases: For every 155th minute a child, less than 16 years is raped, for every 13th hour child under 10, and one in every 10 children sexually abused at any point of time. In India, every second child is being exposed to one or the other form of sexual abuse and every fifth child faces critical forms of it (Singh, 2014).

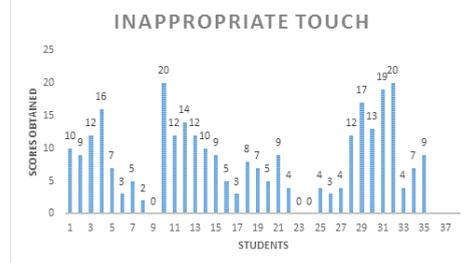


Despite the increase in the number of reported cases of child rape and a comprehensive law, the conviction rate is unchanged since 2012 at 28.2%. (National Crimes Record Bureau, 2017). Because the reported cases of child sexual abuse is only the tip of the iceberg. Many children are reluctant to report sexual abuse because of feelings of guilt and responsibility, fear that they will not be believed, subtle and overt threats from the abuser, and uncertainty about whether the abusive activity is inappropriate. They decide to stay silent about the issue which might lead to various serious complications in the future. Child sexual abuse in India thrives on this very mentality. Parents have no idea how adversely this crime can affect children in their adulthood. (Hall, 2011). Because of the difficulties children experience in revealing sexual abuse to family members, many victims may look outside of the family to find help and support. Teachers are the professionals spending most time with children outside of their families and are likely to notice physical and behavioural changes that may indicate CSA (Briggs & Hawkins, 1997). Teachers also witness the serious social-emotional problems associated with CSA, including low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, aggression, dissociation, and self-harming

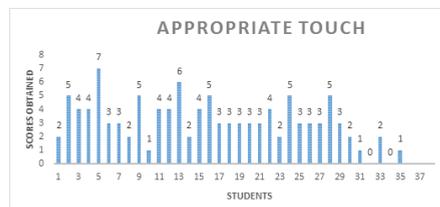
behaviours as well as unusual and inappropriate sexual behaviours and academic underachievement (Jones, Trudinger, & Crawford, 2004). Teachers' reporting of CSA to child protection or law enforcement services is, therefore, an important strategy for interrupting and intervening to limit its adverse short- and long-term consequences. (Webb, 1988). Teachers must interpret information and consider many factors when identifying and responding to CSA and there is evidence to suggest that, factors such as attitudes may be significant positive predictors of recognition and reporting. (Mercedes, 2016).

NEED ASSESSMENT

A pilot study was done as a part of need assessment for the project. The Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire (Tutty, 1990) was administered to 35 girls of fifth grade at a private school. It includes items on knowledge about appropriate and inappropriate touches and skill related items when placed in risky situations. Scores were obtained on two subscales – appropriate and inappropriate touches.



Maximum possible score: 24



Maximum possible score: 9

Results showed that knowledge of appropriate and inappropriate touches were less as the obtained overall mean for appropriate touch was 3.14 and for inappropriate touch was 8.4 with the maximum possible score for the subscales being 9 and 24 respectively. This provides evidence that children are not able to identify inappropriate touches and the need to conduct an awareness program.

PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

AIM:

To increase awareness of child sexual abuse among children and teachers.

OBJECTIVES:

- To increase teachers' knowledge about signs and symptoms of abuse.
- To increase teachers awareness about child protection measures and procedures.
- To teach children personal safety skills.

Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant treatment effect in increasing children's knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse.
2. There will be no significant treatment effect in increasing teacher's knowledge of Child Sexual Abuse.

Method of Investigation

Research Design

Before after without control design

Sample: The sample consisted of students and teachers from a private school. It included 200 fifth grade girls aged 9 – 11 years and 30 teachers handling fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

Sampling technique: Purposive sampling technique was used.

Inclusion criteria: Fifth grade girls of an English medium private School and teachers handling fourth, fifth and sixth grade children.

Tools used:

S.No	Name of the questionnaire	Author and year	Variable measured
1.	Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire – Revised.	Leslie M. Tutty (1990)	Children's knowledge about appropriate and inappropriate touches.
2.	Teachers Knowledge and Beliefs Scale.	Márquez-flores et al.	Teachers' knowledge and beliefs about

Statistical tool:

The statistical tool used in the study is paired sample t test.

Description of the study

- Phase I: Pre-assessment
Administration of Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire– Revised (Tutty, 1990) among children and Teacher's Knowledge and Beliefs Scale (Márquez-flores et al., 2016) among teachers.
- Phase II: Implementation of the intervention
Intervention is done separately in different sessions for children and teachers.
- Phase III: Post assessment using the same scales are done.

Results and discussion

The statistical package for Social Sciences (Version 16.0) and Microsoft Excel 2016 were used to analyse data collected for the present study.

TABLE 1 Paired samples t-test for knowledge on child sexual abuse among students

	Knowledge on child sexual abuse						t
	Pre-test			Post-test			
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	
Students	11.38	5.35	200	22.00	7.80	200	-15.771*

*p < 0.05, significant at the 0.05 level, two-tailed

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare scores on knowledge of child sexual abuse between pre and post intervention conditions for students. There was a significant difference in the scores for pre (M = 11.380, SD = 5.358) and post intervention (M = 22.000, SD = 7.802) conditions; t(199) = -15.771, p < 0.05. These results suggest that the intervention has had an effect on the knowledge component of child sexual abuse among students.

TABLE 2 Paired samples t-test for knowledge on child sexual abuse among teachers

	Knowledge on child sexual abuse						t
	Pre-test			Post-test			
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	
Teachers	9.90	4.37	30	16.60	2.83	30	-7.030*

*p < 0.05, significant at the 0.05 level, two-tailed

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare scores on knowledge of child sexual abuse between pre and post intervention conditions for teachers. There was a significant difference in the scores for pre (M = 9.900, SD = 4.373) and post intervention (M = 16.600, SD = 2.835) conditions; t(29) = -7.030, p < 0.05. These results suggest that the intervention has had an effect on the knowledge component of child sexual abuse among teachers.

Discussion of the findings

200 fifth grade girls were divided into four groups with 50 girls in each. Pre testing was done using Children's Knowledge of Abuse Questionnaire. After a week of pre-test, an intervention on child sexual abuse was done separately for four groups. The intervention included knowledge on the different aspects of Child sexual abuse and teaching of personal safety skills. After a week of intervention, post testing was done using the same questionnaire. Therefore, the post-test results clearly indicates that the students had gained a better understanding of vulnerable areas that can lead to child abuse, good and bad touches, safety measures to be taken and how to respond when they encounter such a situation. The means of the pre-test (11.380) and the post-test (22.00) were compared using paired samples t-test. The results were significant proving that the intervention was effective in increasing the knowledge of the girls on Child sexual abuse. It helped them to break the hesitation and provide them with the correct knowledge about a topic which is swept under the carpet in our society. This also gave insight for the school management to understand the importance of teaching child personal safety skills and the knowledge of sexual abuse:

- Understand the facts of child sexual abuse - incidence rates and effects on individuals and society
- Understand how child sexual abuse happens
- Understand that adults are responsible for the protection of children
- Understand the importance of screening staff/volunteers who work with children and adolescents
- Have resources to react responsibly to incidents of child sexual abuse
- Understand the proactive role adults need to take to protect children and educate their communities about child sexual abuse

30 teachers were given Teachers Knowledge and Beliefs Scale as a pre-test. After a week, an intervention on awareness and child protection measures and procedures. The intervention included a discussion of the myths and facts about child sexual abuse and

- 1) Concepts related to CSA, definition of a paedophile, how

trauma and CSA affects children's minds who have been victims or survivors.

- 2) Theoretical inputs on how Trauma affects the cognitive and behavioural patterns of the child who has been abused.
- 3) Ways of helping a child to cope with such trauma.

After a week, post-test as done using the same questionnaire. The means of the pre-test (9.900) and the post-test (16.600) were compared using paired samples t-test. The results were significant proving that the intervention was effective in increasing the knowledge of the teachers on Child sexual abuse.

Constant vigilance is essential when raising children. Abused children exhibit noticeable signs of distress in the presence of their abuser. Understanding that any child might be suffering means that the parent/teacher will have to rid themselves of any bias they might have for the potential abuser, no matter how close they are.

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