

# A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of Structured Teaching Programme (STP) on Knowledge Regarding Sexual Abuse and Its Prevention Among Adolescents in Selected Higher Secondary Schools of Rohtas, Bihar.

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**Abstract**—Background: Sexual abuse among adolescents is a significant public health concern with serious physical, psychological, emotional, and social consequences. Lack of awareness regarding sexual abuse and preventive measures increases adolescents' vulnerability. Educational interventions may improve awareness and protective behaviors. Objectives: To assess the effectiveness of a Structured Teaching Programme (STP) on knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention among adolescents and to determine the association between knowledge and selected demographic variables. Methods: A quantitative pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test design was adopted among 100 adolescents studying in selected higher secondary schools of Rohtas, Bihar. A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used. Data were collected using a structured knowledge questionnaire consisting of 30 multiple-choice questions. The STP was administered after the pre-test, and post-test assessment was conducted subsequently. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results: Pre-test findings revealed that 38% of adolescents had poor knowledge, 47% had average knowledge, and only 15% had good knowledge. Following the STP, 80% demonstrated good knowledge. The mean pre-test score was  $14.5 \pm 3.6$ , which increased to  $25.2 \pm 2.9$  in the post-test. The calculated t-value (19.85) was statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), indicating the effectiveness of the intervention. Significant associations were found between knowledge scores and age, class, parents' education, and previous exposure to information regarding sexual abuse. Conclusion: The

Structured Teaching Programme was highly effective in improving adolescents' knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention. School-based educational interventions should be integrated into adolescent health promotion programmes.

**Index Terms**—Adolescents, Sexual Abuse, Prevention, Structured Teaching Programme, Knowledge.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by rapid physical, psychological, emotional, and social changes. During this period, adolescents become increasingly vulnerable to various forms of exploitation, including sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is recognized globally as a major public health and human rights issue affecting children and adolescents. It includes unwanted sexual touching, sexual harassment, rape, verbal abuse, online exploitation, and grooming.<sup>(1,2)</sup>

The consequences of sexual abuse extend beyond immediate physical harm and include depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, low self-esteem, social isolation, academic decline, and risk-taking behaviors.<sup>(2,3)</sup>

In India, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 provides legal protection for children below 18 years.<sup>(4)</sup> Despite legislative safeguards, awareness regarding sexual

abuse, reporting mechanisms, and preventive strategies remains inadequate among adolescents, particularly in rural settings.<sup>(5,6)</sup>

Educational interventions have been shown to improve awareness and empower adolescents to identify, prevent, and report abuse.<sup>(7,8)</sup> Therefore, the present study was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of a Structured Teaching Programme on knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention among adolescents in selected higher secondary schools of Rohtas, Bihar.

#### Background of the Study

Sexual abuse is a serious public health and social problem affecting children and adolescents worldwide. Adolescence is a critical developmental period marked by physical, emotional, psychological, and social changes, making adolescents more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Sexual abuse includes unwanted sexual touching, sexual harassment, exposure to pornography, online exploitation, and forced sexual activities.<sup>(1,2)</sup> Such experiences can have long-lasting consequences, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, poor academic performance, and social withdrawal.<sup>(2,3)</sup>

Despite legal protections such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, many cases remain unreported due to fear, shame, stigma, and lack of awareness.<sup>(4)</sup> Studies have shown that adolescents often possess inadequate knowledge regarding sexual abuse, its warning signs, and preventive measures. Educational interventions, particularly Structured Teaching Programmes (STPs), have been found effective in improving awareness and self-protective behaviors. Therefore, increasing adolescents' knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention is essential for ensuring their safety and well-being.<sup>(8)</sup>

#### Need for the Study

Sexual abuse continues to be one of the most underreported forms of violence against adolescents. Many adolescents lack adequate knowledge regarding safe and unsafe touch, consent, abuse prevention, and reporting mechanisms. This lack of awareness increases their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and delays timely reporting of abuse.<sup>(6)</sup> Cultural taboos and limited communication about sexual health further contribute to inadequate awareness among adolescents, especially in rural areas.<sup>(9)</sup>

Educational programmes are recognized as effective methods for improving knowledge and empowering adolescents to protect themselves from abuse. Research studies have demonstrated that Structured Teaching Programmes significantly enhance awareness regarding sexual abuse and preventive measures.<sup>(10)</sup> However, limited studies have been conducted in Rohtas district of Bihar to assess adolescents' knowledge and the effectiveness of educational interventions on this topic. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of a Structured Teaching Programme on knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention among adolescents, thereby promoting awareness, safety, and early reporting of abuse.<sup>(11)</sup>

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Research Design:** A quantitative research approach with a pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test design was used. **Setting and Participants:** The study was conducted in selected higher secondary schools of Rohtas district, Bihar. The study population consisted of adolescents aged 13–18 years studying in these schools. A total of 100 adolescents were selected through non-probability convenience sampling. **Data Collection Tool:** A self-structured questionnaire was developed consisting of: Section A: Demographic information.

Section B: Thirty multiple-choice questions assessing knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention. Each correct response carried one mark, yielding a maximum score of 30. **Validity and Reliability:** The tool was validated by five nursing experts. Reliability was established using the split-half method, yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.82. **Data Collection Procedure:** After obtaining institutional permission and informed consent, pre-test knowledge assessment was conducted. Subsequently, the Structured Teaching Programme was administered. Post-test evaluation was performed after the intervention. **Statistical Analysis:** Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (paired t-test and Chi-square test). A significance level of  $p < 0.05$  was adopted.

### III. RESULTS

**Demographic Characteristics:** Among 100 adolescents, 50% belonged to the age group of 16–18 years, 60% were female, 60% resided in rural areas, and 62% belonged to nuclear families. Additionally, 78% had no previous exposure to information regarding sexual abuse.

#### Pre-Test Knowledge

Before intervention:

- Poor knowledge: 38%
- Average knowledge: 47%
- Good knowledge: 15%

These findings indicated inadequate baseline awareness regarding sexual abuse and its prevention.

#### Post-Test Knowledge

After the Structured Teaching Programme:

- Poor knowledge: 5%
- Average knowledge: 15%
- Good knowledge: 80%

A substantial improvement in knowledge levels was observed following the intervention.

#### Effectiveness of STP

| Test      | Mean Score | SD  |
|-----------|------------|-----|
| Pre-test  | 14.5       | 3.6 |
| Post-test | 25.2       | 2.9 |

The mean difference was 10.7. The paired t-test value was 19.85 ( $p < 0.001$ ), demonstrating a statistically significant improvement in knowledge after the Structured Teaching Programme.

#### Association with Demographic Variables

Significant associations were found between knowledge scores and:

- Age ( $p = 0.045$ )
- Class ( $p = 0.021$ )
- Parents' education ( $p = 0.014$ )
- Previous exposure to information ( $p = 0.017$ )

No significant association was found with gender, family type, residence, or parents' occupation.

### V. DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrated that adolescents possessed inadequate baseline knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention. Nearly half of the participants had only average knowledge and more than one-third exhibited poor knowledge during the

pre-test assessment. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting limited awareness among adolescents regarding consent, abuse recognition, and reporting mechanisms.

Following the Structured Teaching Programme, knowledge levels improved significantly. The increase in mean knowledge scores and the statistically significant t-value indicate the effectiveness of the educational intervention. The findings support previous research that highlighted the positive impact of school-based educational programmes on sexual abuse awareness.

The significant association between knowledge scores and variables such as age, educational class, parental education, and prior exposure suggests that educational and environmental factors influence awareness levels among adolescents. Older students and those with educated parents tended to have better baseline knowledge.

The study emphasizes the importance of integrating structured sexual abuse prevention education into school curricula to empower adolescents with knowledge and self-protective skills.

### VI. CONCLUSION

The Structured Teaching Programme was effective in significantly improving adolescents' knowledge regarding sexual abuse and its prevention. Educational interventions can play a vital role in reducing vulnerability, promoting awareness, and encouraging protective behaviors among adolescents. Regular school-based awareness programmes should be implemented to strengthen adolescent safety and well-being.

#### Recommendations

1. Implement regular school-based awareness programmes on sexual abuse prevention.
2. Integrate personal safety and abuse prevention modules into school curricula.
3. Conduct similar studies with larger samples and control groups.
4. Evaluate long-term retention of knowledge after educational interventions.
5. Include attitude and practice assessments in future research.

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