
CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study intended to explore the extent to which an Intervention Programme that can help the Girl Child to learn the basic skills to differentiate between safe and unsafe Touch and provide knowledge to children so that they can provide a healthy environment where the Girl Children can develop a Vigilant Optimistic Outlook about Strangers.

This chapter presents the summary of the investigation, the key findings, conclusions based on the interpretation of the data generated by the research and implications of this investigation. It further, lists the limitations of the study and scope of future research.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives are as follows:

- To find out the Efficacy of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy in reducing Stress, Anxiety and Loneliness among the Sexually Abused Girl Children
- To find out the Efficacy of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy in enhancing Assertiveness among Sexually Abused Girl Children

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses would be tested during the research.

- H₁: There will be a significant difference in Physiological Stress, Cognitive Stress, Emotional Stress, and Behavioural Stress among Sexually Abused Girl children during Before, After and Follow-up through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.
- H₂: There will be a significant difference in the level of Assertiveness among Sexually Abused Girl Children during Before, After and Follow-up through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.
- H₃: There will be a significant difference in the Loneliness among Sexually Abused Girl Children during Before, After and Follow-up through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

- H₄: There will be a significant difference in the State Anxiety and Trait Anxiety among Sexually Abused Girl Children during Before, After and Follow-up through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

AREA

The area selected to conduct the study were 4 schools were selected for the study Corporation High School, Ramalingam Colony, Corporation Girls Higher Secondary School, Ranganathapuram and Corporation Girls Higher Secondary School, R. S. Puram, Coimbatore. The reasons for selecting this area are as follows:

- Availability of the required number of sample
- Approval and facilities provided by the authorities to carry out the research
- Willingness and cooperation of the students to be part of the study

SAMPLE

Five hundred school girl students studying in class VI to VIII (age group ranging from 10 years to 13 years) from three schools were screened and 108 School Girl Children who were sexually abused along with their Parents and Teachers were included in the study. Since the sample belonged to School population therefore consent has to be met prior to the intervention. Purposive sampling method was used for the sample selection.

Inclusion Criteria

The following criteria were strictly taken into account while selecting the School Girl Children.

- The Girl Children with Child Abuse should be in the age range of 10 years to 13 years.
- The Girl Children with Child Abuse should be attending schools.
- The children who have not attended any sort of intervention will be included in the study.
- The participants with very high, high and moderate Stress, Anxiety were taken for the study

Exclusion criteria:

The following exclusion criteria will be followed

- Age above 14 are not included in the sample
- Participants with low Stress, Anxiety were not included for the study
- Persons with psychological problems were not included in the study

Research Design

Three groups Before, After and Follow-up Research Design through Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was used to conduct the research.

The primary data was obtained from the sample through Standardized Questionnaires and Schedules. The data collection for the present study was conducted in **four** Stages.

Stage I: Various Schools of Coimbatore was covered for screening the School Girl Children who were abused with the following tools

Stage II: After the selection of the School Girl Children who had undergone child abuse, the following measures namely Case Study Schedule, Stress Questionnaire, Assertiveness, Loneliness and Anxiety were used before administering the Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to the School Girl Children.

Stage III: After imparting the Questionnaires to the School Girl Children, the above measures were used after administering the Cognitive Behaviour Therapy.

Stage IV: After a period of one month of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to the children who were sexually abused, the above measures were used as a follow-up assessment

The data collected from school girl children during the before, after and follow-up periods was analyzed using Mean, S.D., and Repeated Measures ANOVA and Sidak Post-hoc Analysis to find out the significant differences in the dependent variables.

The Major Findings of the Study

The results of the study showed that Training Children especially the girls to understand whether it was wrong or right for an uncle or grandfather, teacher's touch should be differentiated or not becomes essential in overcoming the problem of being

sexually abused. Whereas sexually abused girl children undergo a great amount of stress and that was assessed in terms of physiological, cognitive, emotional and behavioural stress. The results indicates that the training programmes certainly has reduced the physiological stress which otherwise could have caused greater physiological damages to the organs of the body has been reduced successfully to avoid psychosomatic problems in the future. The cognitive effect of abuse is one of the great stressors that a child could bear leading to attention problems and learning disorders to severe organic brain syndromes. The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy had successfully helped the girl children to shed away such stressful thoughts and also helped the children to look for a progressive future so as to be relaxed and be aware about what is happening to them from the people those around them. Emotional stress includes moodiness, impaired concentration, decline in performance at school, difficulty coping with daily life, suicidal thoughts, self harm, self destructive behaviour etc, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Relaxation Training had helped to drastically decrease the emotional stress. The girl children with behavioural stress who had the problem of sleeping difficulties, absenteeism, exhaustion, excessive behaviour, unhealthy eating habits, accidents, suicidal talk or behaviour, hostility etc. underwent the training as well as teachers or parents attention were found to have their behavioural stress reduced to a great extent.

Assertiveness is being able to stand up for one's own or other people's rights in a calm and positive way, without being either aggressive or passively accepting 'wrong'. The girl children who were vulnerable to being abused had very low assertiveness and hence were not able to express while being exploited. The intervention programme which also included sessions on assertiveness had helped the girl children considerably increase after the training programme as well as after the Follow-up period.

Loneliness is an unpleasant emotional response to isolation moreover it is more complex since it includes anxious feelings about a lack of connection with other people. Loneliness can also be felt when surrounded by people also indicating that it includes factors such as social, mental, emotional or even physical factors. Loneliness is a significant problem that can predispose young children to immediate and long term negative consequences. However, only recently have research and intervention in educational settings focused on young children who are lonely.

State anxiety is as an unpleasant emotional arousal in face of threatening demands or dangers. A cognitive appraisal of threat is a prerequisite for the experience of this emotion. A person with trait anxiety will tend to have pounding heart, sweating, headache, stomach upset or dizziness, frequent urination or diarrhoea, shortness of breath, muscle tension, tremors, and twitches, fatigue or insomnia. State anxiety of the girl children got reduced drastically due to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Relaxation Training. Further, the Trait anxiety refers to the stable tendency to attend to, experience, and report negative emotions such as fears, worries, and anxiety across many situations. Trait anxiety also manifests by repeated concerns about and reporting of body symptoms. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy and Relaxation Training have effectively reduced Trait Anxiety among School Girl Children.

The cognitive behaviour therapy had a significant impact on the children in bringing the desired results. The parents were asked to interact with the child, and the ways to protect the child from the perpetrators to understand the signs of sexual abuse in the children. Further they have had a significant change in the negative perceptions towards the child and to accept the child as they are and accordingly to nurture them and bring positivity in them to face the world with a fresh outlook.

Further the teachers who actually spend more time with the children than the parents were the one who either neglected the children, or they lacked the skill to handle such cases or was not aware of as to how to bring it to the notice of parents and higher officials in the school as well as they were ill equipped to render help to the girl children. The cognitive behaviour therapy for the children helped the participants to learn the skills required to listen and to maintain a positive attitude. The teachers also benefitted to avoid certain activities that could damage the girl children including blaming and belittling the child in the class room and moreover they were trained to report professionally and keep the secret to themselves and not letting it to fellow colleagues and strangers. All the more the teachers were asked not to neglect any child irrespective of being abuse or not and spend ample time in taking care and interacting with the children.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn from the present study after analyzing the results through appropriate statistics:

- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was found to be effective in helping the Sexually Abused Girl Children to differentiate between safe and unsafe Touch through Skills, avoiding perpetrators and reporting activities
- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was effective in reducing the Stress factors such as Physiological Stress, Emotional Stress, Cognitive Stress and Behavioural Stress among Sexually Abused Girl Children.
- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was effective in enhancing the Assertiveness among Sexually Abused Girl Children
- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was effective in reducing the Loneliness among Sexually Abused Girl Children
- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was effective in reducing the State Anxiety and Trait Anxiety among Sexually Abused Girl Children

Implications

- The Government of India should create a data bank of the sexually abused so as to understand the gravity of problem being faced by the girl children
- The Government of India should make a policy level decision to accept the reality of the prevalence of school girl children being sexually abused
- The findings of the present research will enable policy makers in the School Education to bring out such intervention Programmes as mandatory to help children who were sexually abused to overcome their problem
- The School Education Department should bring out a chapter in the social studies curriculum for the children to get a better exposure of the safe and unsafe touch
- The Teacher Education Department should bring out a module in the teacher education curriculum in understanding, dealing reporting and counselling the sexually abused children

- These results can be shared with the Social Media to help parents to understand the children's plight and how ignorant parents are in dealing child sex abuse
- Parental education in understanding, accepting and dealing with such situation should be conducted at least once in six months by the PTA in Schools
- All schools should have a counsellor for screening the children regularly for child sex abuse and accordingly report to the parents and teachers
- General public awareness should be created for people to understand their own feelings towards children as many of the perpetrators were found to be first time offenders and got carried away by the situation to sexually abuse a child on temptation
- Peer support groups should be created for the children to share such information's to either to the parents or teachers
- Non Governmental Organizations should bring out street plays and distribute handouts to create awareness among the children, parents and teachers
- Awareness among teachers will have long lasting effect since they will continue to provide such positive attitude to upcoming generations and help them overcome their problem
- Parents will get to have their children overcome the problem of Child Abuse as well as prevent such things happening and thus paving the way for them to pass on the information about the positive effects of intervention programme to other worried parents thus youths with enhanced mental health can be achieved for the betterment of the Nation
- Earlier disclosure of abuse, which could prevent further abuse from occurring and allow the child to be treated for the abused
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy will create Increased self protective knowledge and skills, and increased use of these self protective skills as well as increased positive feelings about self and decreased negative feelings about self

Limitations of the Study

- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy was conducted for a short period for a specific group, whereas if the intervention was extended for many other schools other affected students will benefit from the training

- The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy did not include a control group, which could have helped to find accurate efficacy of the intervention Programme
- Only one Follow-up was conducted after one month of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, whereas the second and third follow-up could have helped to understand the effect of the training over a longer period
- A certain number of other factors may moderate the relationships among Stress, Anxiety and Loneliness, which are not considered in the present study and which opens the door for future research
- The experimental design of the present study limited the inclusion of more number of participants in the study

Future challenges

- Teachers should get in depth training on identifying and reporting suspected abuse, while a child safety committee serves as a resource for teachers
- Making parents accept the fact that their children are being exploited and helping them to overcome this emotional issue and accepting the child and in turn helping the child to tide over the experience
- For younger children, it is important to introduce them early to the concept of safe touch, unsafe touch. This allows them to have the words and the confidence to talk to children, if they experience an unsafe touch.
- It is a challenge to make the children learn to distinguish between people who could be a probable abuser, and not teaching to be suspicious about people

Suggestions for further Research

- The study highlights the need for counselling centres for Children in all the schools so as to have a complete data of the sexually abused children especially school wise
- To have a longitudinal study of the children who had undergone sexual abuse will help understand the adaptability into adulthood and there after

- The Government should at least conduct periodical surveys to understand the changing nature of abuse over a period of time with the inclusion of women and men as well
- The study also should include a peer assisted counselling to help the children overcome the problem
- Future studies should include waitlisted group to understand the accurate impact of the training

Strengths of the study

- This is one of the very few experimental studies done on child abuse among school children. The findings of the study has made a significant contribution to the society
- Numbers of children have gained awareness from this research and this study would an eye opener for future generations