

ATTITUDE OF INDIAN MOTHERS TOWARDS CHILD RIGHTS

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Abstract

Children form a very important population in any society. The future health status and behaviour of a person are laid down during childhood. To ensure survival and healthy development into adulthood, proper care during childhood should address all the basic needs for children. Child care is mostly the responsibility of mothers. There are very few population based data on attitude of mothers on child rights in South India. The attitude of the mothers towards child rights is very important as they are the basic unit in rearing children. This study was therefore carried out among mothers at selected paediatric Outpatient department of South India. The aim of the study was to assess attitude of mothers towards child rights of selected dimensions. An exploratory research design was adopted to accomplish the purpose of this study. The simple random sampling technique was used to select 40 mothers. The data was collected for a period of 10 days. Each day four subjects were interviewed. Modified Children's Rights Attitude Scale developed by Rogers and Wrightsman (1978) semi structured four point Likert scale on Child Rights was used as main screening instrument. It contained 25 items. The results revealed that the mean attitude score of the subjects was (69.30) with mean percentage of (69.3%). Majority of the subjects (92.5%) had moderately favourable attitude towards child rights. A significant association was found only between attitude score and residential status of the mothers ($X^2= 7.544, P< 0.05$).

Keywords: Attitude, child rights, mothers

Introduction

For all individuals physical, emotional, cultural, spiritual and social wellbeing is vital strands of life that are closely interwoven and deeply interdependent. As understanding of these relations, it is also applicable to the growing children¹. Children are vulnerable group and they are exposed to a wide range of child rights violations. Violation often occurs in children through inadequate knowledge of parent & caregivers and improper living conditions. Enjoyment of the child rights is vital to all aspects of a child's life and crucial to the realization of many other fundamental child rights². With more than a third of its population below the age of 18, India has the largest child population in the world. This backgrounder explores the levels of health, nutrition, education and social security of children, and government policy and action on child rights. Out of every 100 children, 19 continue to be out of school, 40% of children are malnourished. Of every 100 children who enrol, 70 drop out by the time they reach the secondary level. India is home to the highest number of child labourers in the world³. With this ground realities of children in India the investigator aimed to study the attitude of the mothers towards selected child rights such as Right to standard of living, right to expression, right to freedom, right to protection, and right to education.

Materials and methods

An exploratory research design was adopted to understand the attitude of mothers of child rights in selected dimensions such as standard of living, right to expression, right to freedom, right to protection and right to education. The study was carried out in at selected paediatric Outpatient department of South India. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 40 mothers, who met the criteria. After reviewing the literature and identifying topics related to the child rights, modified semi structured Rogers and Wrightsman (1978) four point Likert scale on child rights was used to collect the data. The content validity of the tool was sought from experts in the field of paediatric, paediatric nursing and psychologist and suggestions given by the experts were incorporated according to the study nature and local setting. The reliability of the tool was established, the reliability core was = 0.82.

The tool was divided into two parts:

Part I Baseline data

Baseline data consisting of age, marital status, religion, educational status, occupation and residential status.

Part II Modified semi structured attitude scale on child rights

A four point Likert scale was used to assess the attitude of the mothers towards child rights. It consisted 25 items covering various dimensions such as right for standard living, expression, education, protection and free punishment. The tool contained 16 positive statements and nine negative statements of attitude questionnaire. Maximum score was 100 and minimum score was 25. The attitude scoring was given as, for favourable attitude ($\geq 75\%$), moderately favourable (36 -75%) and for unfavourable attitude ($\leq 35\%$). The data collected was processed, edited, coded and analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results

Table1. Baseline data of Mothers
N=40

Variables	Group	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age in years	21-25	08	20.0
	26-30	22	55.0
	31-35	08	20.0
	35 and above	02	05.0
Marital status	Married	37	92.5
	Widower	03	7.5
Religion	Hind u	33	82.5
	Muslim	07	17.5
E ducational status	Illiterate	10	25.0
	Primary	06	15
	High school	10	25
	Higher secondary	07	17.5
	Under graduate	06	15.0
	Post graduate	10	25.0
Occupation	Coolie	33	82.5
	Housewife	05	10
	Business	03	7.5
Socio economic status	Below poverty line (< 17000 rupees/yr)	35	90
	Above poverty line (>17000 rupees/yr)	05	10
Residential status	Urban Slum	32	80.0
	Urban	06	15.0
	Rural	02	05.0

Table no.1 shows the baseline data of the mothers. More than half (55.0%) of the mothers belong to the age group of 26-30 years. Most of the mothers (92.5%) were married. Majority of them were belonging to Hindu religion (82.5%). Majority of them were illiterate (25%) and studied up to high school (25%). Maximum number of the mothers (90%) belonged to below poverty line (< 17000 rupees/yr). Most of them were residing in Urban slums (80%) when compared to Urban (15%) and rural (05.0%).

Table 2. Range, Mean, Mean Percentage and Standard Deviation of attitude of mothers regarding Child rights
N=40

Sample	Attitude Score				
	Max. Score	Range	Mean	Mean %	SD
Mothers	100	61-76	69.30	69.3%	3.236

Table no.2 shows that the mean attitude score of the mothers was 69.30 with a mean percentage of (69.3%) which shows a majority of the mothers had moderately favourable attitude regarding child rights.

Table 3 Dimension wise attitude score of mothers regarding Child rights
N=40

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Mean %
Standard of Living	14.58	1.31	72.90
Right to expression	8.8	1.44	7.33
Right to freedom	15.98	1.216	66.58
Right to protection	16	1.746	66.67
Right to education	1.68	1.82	68.40

Table no.3 shows the dimension wise Mean, SD and Mean percentage attitude score of mothers regarding child rights. Majority of the subjects had favourable attitude with regards to provide standard of living (72.9%) and right to education (68.40%).

Table 4. Attitude levels of mothers regarding Child rights
N=40

Attitude Level	Mothers	
	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Favourable	03	7.5%
Moderately Favourable	37	92.5%
Unfavourable	--	--

Table no.4 shows that majority of the mothers (92.5%) had moderately favourable attitude towards child right. i.e. maximum number of mothers had total scores between 36 - 75% and 7.5% of the mothers had favourable attitude towards child rights.

Association with selected baseline data of mothers with their attitude scores regarding child rights showed that there is statistically significant association between residential status and the attitude scores of the mothers ($X^2 = 7.544$, $P < 0.05$) which indicates that the residential status influences the attitude of mothers regarding child rights.

Discussion

In general, mother's attitude towards child rights plays a vital role in rearing children. The samples contained more number of young mothers between the age group of 26- 30years (55.0%). Most of them were illiterate (25%). Majority of the mothers (90%) were below poverty line with an annual income of rupees 17,000/- and 80% of them were from urban slums who were accompanying the children to the paediatric Outpatient department. Most of the mothers (92.5%) had moderately favourable attitude towards child rights with a total scores between 36 – 75%. Dimension wise results showed that majority of the mothers had moderately favourable attitude about Standard of living and right for education. The study results are consistent with a study conducted by Sudha (2012) to explore the attitude of the

mothers towards the rights of the children at Chengalpattu district, Tamil Nadu found that moderately favourable attitude was seen in standard of living and a favourable attitude towards right for education among mothers and also indicated that the residential status and mothers educational status influenced the attitude of mothers regarding child rights⁴. A study conducted by Justin et al (2011) on attitude of parents towards child rights indicated that the parents had favourable attitude towards right for education and right for expression with irrespective of their socio demographic background⁵. Similarly Kishore et al (2010) assessed attitude of mothers regarding child rights and the study revealed that the mothers had positive attitude towards basic right of children⁶. Similar study findings have been reported by the study conducted by Joby et al (2010) on parent's attitude towards child rights. The study revealed overall results was moderately favourable attitude towards all the dimensions of child rights but more favourable attitude was shown in the areas of right for education, right for protection and standard of living with no significant association with the socio demographic data⁷.

Conclusion

Present study concludes that the mothers with moderately favourable attitude towards child rights need to focus much more clearly on defining child rights based on the better future and insight of the children. It is notable that all above mentioned studies were conducted in India and in all the studies, it is clear that mothers have inadequate knowledge regarding child rights which in-turn led to moderately or unfavourable attitude. Hence, it is high time for all the citizens of the country to join hands to build up a healthy society through rising awareness on child rights to the public. Nurse administrators need to take initiative in organizing educational programmes in the community to emphasis on child rights to prevent child right violations in the society.

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