

Mothers' Knowledge and Attitude on Early Identification of Substance Abuse in Children

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2025.120800325>

Received: 01 Sep 2025; Accepted: 07 Sep 2025; Published: 11 October 2025

ABSTRACT

Substance abuse is a common phenomenon worldwide and has become one of the most significant social issues, adversely affecting human society. Substance abuse refers to a maladaptive pattern of drug use that leads to negative consequences and encompasses a range of cognitive, behavioural, and psychological symptoms. The present study aims to assess mothers' knowledge and attitudes regarding the early identification of substance abuse in children. The objectives of the study were: to assess mothers' level of knowledge, to assess their attitudes, and to determine the association between demographic variables and mothers' knowledge and attitudes on the early identification of substance abuse in children. The conceptual framework was based on the Health Belief Model. The tools used included a socio-demographic proforma, self-structured knowledge questionnaires, and an attitude rating scale. A pilot study was conducted, followed by data collection among 100 mothers selected from rural areas of Kozhikode. Data collection began with the administration of the socio-demographic proforma, followed by self-structured questionnaires and the attitude rating scale. The data were tabulated and analysed. The findings showed that a majority of mothers had excellent awareness (61%), 21% had good awareness, 10% had moderate awareness, and 8% had low awareness. The majority exhibited a positive attitude towards early identification of substance abuse among children (81%), 17% had a moderate attitude, and 2% had a negative attitude. There was a significant association between education level and knowledge, as well as a significant association between family relationships and mothers' attitudes toward the early identification of substance abuse in children.

Keywords –Knowledge, attitude, Substance abuse, early identification, mothers

INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse has become a widespread issue globally, posing significant social challenges and harm to societies. It represents a maladaptive pattern of drug use that leads to serious consequences, including a spectrum of cognitive, behavioural, and psychological symptoms. Among Indian adolescents, commonly abused substances include tobacco and alcohol, but there are also reports of the use of illicit drugs such as cannabis, opium, and even intravenous drugs like heroin. Recent trends indicate that children are increasingly engaging in the injection of multiple drugs, frequently sharing needles, which puts them at greater risk for HIV, AIDS, and Hepatitis B and C infections. Substance abuse poses a growing public health challenge in India, affecting people across diverse age groups. According to a 2019 national survey by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 14.6% of Indians aged 10–75 consume alcohol, with about 5.7 crore individuals identified as problematic or dependent users. Cannabis is used by 2.8% of the population, while opioids—such as heroin, opium, and synthetic variants—are consumed by about 2.1%, with around 77 lakh people in need of treatment. Given these concerns, the current study seeks to evaluate mothers' knowledge and attitudes regarding the early detection of substance abuse in children.^{1,2,3,4,5}

Problem statement

A study to assess the mother's knowledge and attitude on early identification of substance abuse in children in rural areas of Kozhikode.

Objectives

- To assess the mother's knowledge on early identification of substance abuse in children.
- To assess the attitude of mothers towards early identification of substance abuse in children.
- To find the association between the level of knowledge of mothers on early identification of substance abuse in children and selected demographic variables.
- To find the association between the attitude of mother's towards early identification of substance abuse in children and selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis

H1- there is a significant relationship between mother's knowledge regarding early identification of substance abuse in children and selected demographic variables

H2- there is a significant relationship between attitude of mother's regarding early identification of substance abuse in children and selected demographic variables

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study was based on the health belief model.

METHODOLOGY

Research approach-Quantitative research approach

Research design-A: Non-experimental research design (descriptive design).

Population-The Population selected for the present study was Mothers of children in rural areas in Kozhikode

Sample Size:100

Sampling technique: Non-probability convenience sampling technique

Settings of the study: Mothers of children in Rural areas in Manassry area, Mukkam

Variables: Knowledge and attitude of mothers on early identification of substance abuse in children

Demographic variables: Age, education, religion, type of family, occupation, monthly income, number of children, age of children, gender of children, family history of substance abuse, and relationship between family members.

TOOL

Section A- Demographic proforma

It consists of 11 questions to collect Age, religion, education, occupation, type of family, number of children, age of children, gender of children, monthly income, family history of substance abuse, and relationship between family members

Section B – Self-Structured Questionnaire

It consists of 15 questions to assess the knowledge of mothers regarding the early identification of substance abuse in children

Section C – Likert Scale

It consists of 15 items to assess the attitude of mothers regarding the early identification of substance abuse in children

Data collection

Data collection was started after obtaining ethics committee clearance and permission from ethical authorities at KMCT Hospital. The subjects were selected by non-probability convenience sampling

Ethical considerations

The research proposal was presented in front of the research committee of KMCT College of Nursing and approval was obtained. Ethical clearance for the study was obtained. Informed consent was obtained from the subjects.

RESULTS

Section 1

Demographic variables of selected mothers: according to age, among the 100 sample, 29% were in the age group of 21- 30 years, 28% were in the age group of 31-40 years 36% were in the age group of 41-50, and 7% were in the age group of 51 and above. According to religion, out of 100 sample, 42% were Hindu, 46% were Islam, and 12% were Christian. according to educational status, among the 100 sample, 2% were Primary school, 2% were middle school, 12% were high school, 36% were pre-degree, 38% were graduates, and 10% were post-graduates and above. According to the occupation, among the 100 sample, 61% were unemployed, 20% were in the private sector, 13% were in the government sector, and 6% were self-employed. according to the type of family, among the 100 sample 73% were nuclear families and 27% were joint families. according to the number of children, among the 100 sample, 16% had 1, 57% had 2, 26% had 3, and 1% had 4 and above. according to the occupation, among the 100 sample 15% had < 5 years, 17% had 6-10 years, 25% had 11- 15 years and 43% had 16-19 years. according to the gender of children, among the 100 sample, 60% were male and 40% were female. According to the monthly income, among the 100 sample, 74% were APL and 26% were BPL. According to the family history of substance abuse, among the 100 sample, 76% had no family history and 24% had a family history. according to the relationship between family members, among the 100 sample, 97% had satisfactory relationships and 3% had unsatisfactory relationships.

Table 1: Frequency (percentage) distribution of sociodemographic characteristics of the sample

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
AGE		
21-30	29	29
31-40	28	28
41-50	36	36
Above 51	7	7

RELIGION		
	42	42
Hindu	46	46
Islam	12	12
Christian	0	0
Others		
EDUCATION		
Primary school	2	2
Middle school	2	2
High school	12	12
Pre degree	36	36
Graduate	38	38
Post graduate and above	10	10
OCCUPATION		
Unemployed	61	61
Government sector	20	20
Private sector	13	13
Self employed	6	6
TYPE OF FAMILY		
Nuclear	73	73

Joint	27	27
Extended	0	0
Number of children		
1	16	16
2	57	57
3	26	26
4 or above	1	1
Age of children		
Less than 5	15	15
6-10	17	17
11-15	25	25
16-20	43	43
Gender of children		
Male	60	60
Female	40	40
Monthly income		
APL	74	74
BPL	26	26
Family history of substance abuse		
Yes	76	76

No	24	24
Relationship between family members	97	97
Satisfactory	3	3
Unsatisfactory		

Section 2:

The study shows that 61% had excellent awareness, 21% had good awareness, 10% had moderate awareness and 8% had low awareness.

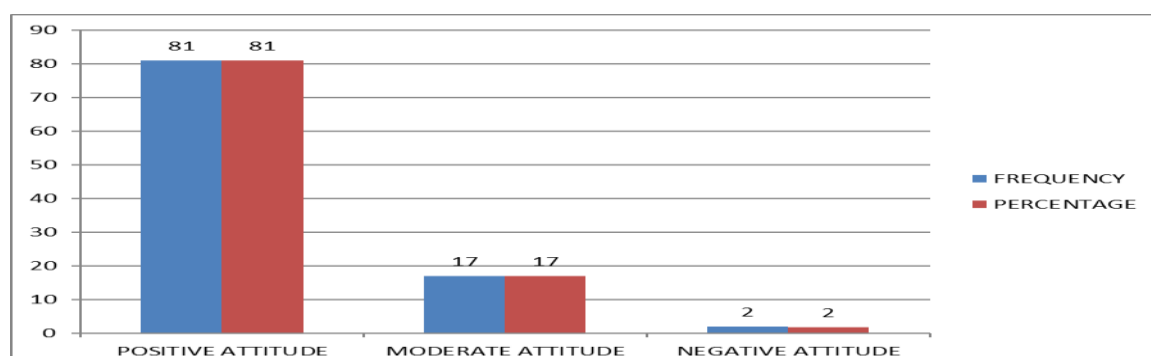
Table 2:Frequency distribution of knowledge level of mothers on early identification of substance abuse

Level of knowledge	Frequency(f)
Excellent awareness	61
Good awareness	21
Moderate awareness	10
Low awareness	8

Section 3:

The study shows that 81% had a positive attitude, 17% had a moderate attitude, and 2% had a negative attitude regarding early identification of substance abuse in children.

Fig.1. The figure shows the distribution of frequency and percentage of the sample according to attitude.



Section 4:

There was a significant association between the knowledge score of the sample and education, a significant association between the attitude of the sample and the relationship between family members, and there was no association with other demographic variables.

DISCUSSION

A similar study was conducted in 2023 to assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among college students. The research methodology used in the study was a descriptive research design, and the sampling technique used was convenience sampling. The sample size was 135 students. The data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Major findings of the study among demographic variables were, 77.04% had average knowledge regarding substance abuse and 21.48% had poor knowledge while 1.48% had good knowledge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A similar study can be replicated as a large sample and in other settings.
2. A similar study can be conducted by using quasi quasi-experimental design
3. The follow-up study can be done to assess the effectiveness of a structured teaching program in mothers of children to identify substance abuse early.

CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the knowledge and attitudes of mothers regarding the early identification of substance abuse in children. Utilizing a descriptive research design and a non-probability convenience sampling technique. The sample size was 100. Data were collected using a self-administered demographic proforma, a structured knowledge questionnaire, and an attitude rating scale. The findings revealed that 61% of mothers exhibited excellent knowledge, while 21% had good knowledge, 10% moderate knowledge, and 8% low knowledge regarding early identification of substance abuse. In terms of attitude, 81% demonstrated a positive attitude, 17% a moderate attitude, and only 2% a negative towards early identification of substance abuse.

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