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Research Article

Mother's Knowledge and Practices Regarding Management of Common Behavioural Disorders Among Toddlers in Tughlaqabad, New Delhi-A Descriptive Survey

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A B S T R A C T

Introduction: Early childhood is a critical time for physical, emotional, and behavioural development. During this stage, toddlers may exhibit a range of behavioural disorders, such as hyperactivity, enuresis, pica, and temper tantrums, which can significantly affect their growth and development. The role of a mother is vital in identifying and managing the common behavioural problems effectively at home. The knowledge of mothers and their practices greatly influence the child's behavioural outcomes. This study aims to assess the mothers' knowledge and practices regarding the management of common behavioural problems in toddlers at a selected community in New Delhi.

Material And Methods: A quantitative research approach was used. A total of 60 mothers of toddlers (1-3 years) were selected using the convenience sampling method from the Tughlaqabad community of New Delhi. The data were collected using a self-structured knowledge and practice questionnaire. Data were analysed using descriptive analysis.

Results: The present study revealed that mothers had poor knowledge and practices regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers. As for knowledge assessment, the majority of sample subjects, 36 (60%), had moderate knowledge; 18 (30%) had poor knowledge; and 6 (10%) had adequate knowledge related to the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers, while in practice assessment, the majority of sample subjects, 2 (3%) mothers, had good practices, 39 (65%) had moderate practices and 19 (32%) had poor practices related to the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Conclusion: The present study revealed that mothers had poor knowledge and practices regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers and suggests the need to educate mothers for early identification and management of common behavioural disorders.

Keyword: Behavioral Disorder, Toddler, Mother's Knowledge, Mother's Practices

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Introduction

The health and development of young children is the foundation of the future prosperity of any society."

Dr. Jack P. Shonkoff, Harvard University

A child's mental health is crucial, as it enables him/her to live harmoniously in the changing environment. It is the corner stone of national progress. UNICEF emphasises that toddlerhood represents a critical phase in a child's growth and development. Toddlerhood ranges from 1 to 3 years of age and is the phase of marked physical, emotional, cognitive, and social changes. Nearly 80% of a child's brain undergoes significant development by 3 years of age, and hence, learning abilities, emotional regulation, and behaviour also vary during this period. Many behaviours are a normal part of growth and development and generally need no intervention as they subside over time. Some of the behaviours can be classified as behavioural disorders. Common behaviours in toddlers include aggression, temper tantrums, hyperactivity, oppositional defiance, and emotional instability if they are persistent, disruptive, or impact the child's ability to function in daily life.[1,2]

Behavioural problems in children, if not taken care of in the initial stage, can lead to the development of mental disorders. Different types of behavioural problems include hyperactivity, attention deficit, temper tantrums, aggression, disobedience, nail biting, thumb sucking, sleep problems, etc. It requires dedication, open communication, and concrete steps as part of a holistic strategy to support every child's mental well-being, safeguard those at risk, and provide care for children dealing with the most serious difficulties.[3]

Mothers spend maximum time with their toddlers and hence play a vital role in identifying behavioural issues and adopting early interventions. Review of literature has emphasised that in most of the developing countries, like India, there is a lack of education and sound parenting information and understanding about psychology or behaviours, resulting in inappropriate management of behavioural problems.[4]

As per WHO data, in modern lifestyles, urban settings and weakened family support systems have increased parenting difficulties. The quality of maternal care affects the mental and emotional well-being of toddlers. Nuclear families, both parents' employment and a fast-paced environment cause stress and exhaustion in mothers and reduce the quality of time they spend with their toddlers; it leads to less emotional connection between parents and toddlers and unhealthy behavioural development.[5]

Need for the study

Various studies have shown that maternal knowledge regarding the care of children reduces the prevalence of behavioural disorders due to early recognition and prompt interventions. Even when mothers have some knowledge, their actual practices may not align due to various barriers, including economic limitations, cultural beliefs, and misinformation. The present study is aimed at assessing mothers' knowledge and practices regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers in Tughlaqabad, New Delhi, and will help to gather data about mothers' knowledge and practices related to the management of behavioural disorders in toddlers. This survey will help us to identify the need for any community education programme planning in the future.

Material and Methods

Sampling and sampling technique

The data were collected from 60 mothers of toddlers residing in the Tughlaqabad community using a self-developed structured knowledge and practice questionnaire. Samples were selected using the convenience sampling technique. The inclusion criteria for the study were mothers who were present at the time of data collection and having children between the ages of 1 and 3 years.

Description of tools

A self-developed structured questionnaire was developed after extensive review of literature. The tool had 3 sections:
Section 1: This section describes demographic data of mothers of toddlers in terms of age, religion, education, occupation, number of children, and previous knowledge related to behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Section 2: This part consists of 20 questions to assess the mother's knowledge regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers. Mother's knowledge was categorised into 3 categories as per the following scoring criteria(Table 1,2).

Section 3: This part consists of 20 questions to assess the mother's practice regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers. Mother's practices were categorised into 3 categories as per the following scoring criteria:

The tool was validated by 6 nursing experts of paediatric nursing and community health nursing.

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Table 1.Scoring classification of mother's knowledge levels (adequate, moderate, poor)

Mother's knowledge	Score
Adequate knowledge	14-20
Moderate knowledge	8-13
Poor knowledge	1-7

Table 2.Classification of mother's practice levels based on score ranges

S.No	Practice level	Range Score
1.	Good practices	14-20
2.	Moderate practices	8-13
3.	Poor practices	1-7

Ethical consideration

Administrative approval from Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, and MLA of the selected community Tughlakabad was obtained. A participant information sheet and a participant's informed consent form were developed. Informed consent was obtained from the participants prior to the data collection. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants were maintained.

Results

Section I: Frequency and percentage distribution of sample subjects by their demographic variables

The majority of sample subjects, 29 (48.3%), belong to the age group of 25-30 years, followed by 15 (25%) in the range of 31-35 years, 8 (13.3%) in the range of 18-24 years, 6 (10%) in the range of 36-40 years, and 2 (3%) in the age range of 40 and above. The majority of subjects, 34 (57%), were from a Hindu background, followed by 23 (38.3%) Muslims and 3 (5%) Sikhs.

The majority of sample subjects, 27 (45%), were 10th pass, followed by 10 (17%) primary education, 9 (15%) 12th pass, 6 (10%) undergraduate, 6 (10%) with no formal education and 2 (3%) postgraduate. The majority of samples from subject 40 (67%) were housemakers, 17 (28%) had private jobs, 1 (2%) had government jobs and 2 (3%) were self-employed. The majority of sample subjects, 34 (57%), have 2 children; 12 (20%) have 1 child; 10 (17%) have 3 children; and 4 (7%) have more than 4 children. The majority of sample subjects, 32 (53%) of samples, had previous knowledge, and 28 (47%) had no previous knowledge related to behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Section II: Frequency and percentage distribution of mothers based on structured knowledge questionnaire regarding the management of common behavioral disorders in toddlers.

The data presented in the above table show the majority number of subjects, 36 (60%) mothers, had moderate knowledge, followed by 18 (30%) who had poor knowledge and 6 (10%) who had adequate knowledge related to the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Section III: Frequency and percentage distribution of mothers based on structured knowledge

questionnaire regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

The data presented in the above table show the majority number of subjects, 2 (3%) mothers, had good practices regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers, followed by 39 (65%) who had moderate practices and 19 (32%) who had poor practices.

Table 3.Demographic data of mothers of toddlers

S.No	Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age (in years)	18–20	8	13.3%
		25–30	29	48.3%
		31–35	15	25%
		36–40	6	10%
		Above 40	2	3.3%

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2	Religion	Hindu	34	57%
		Muslim	23	38%
		Sikh	3	5%
		Christian	0	0%
		Others	0	0%
3	Education	No formal education	6	10%
		Primary	10	17%
		10th	27	45%
		12th	9	15%
		Undergraduate	6	10%
		Postgraduate	2	3%
4	Occupation	Homemaker	40	67%
		Private job	17	28.3%
		Government job	1	2%
		Self-employed	2	3%
5	Number of Children	1	12	20%
		2	34	57%
		3	10	17%
		More than 3	4	7%
6	Previous Knowledge of Behavioral Disorders in Toddlers	Yes	32	53%
		No	28	47%

Table 4.Mother's knowledge regarding the management of common behavioral disorders in toddlers

S.No	Knowledge level	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Adequate knowledge	14-20	6	10%
2.	Moderate knowledge	8-13	36	60%
3.	Poor knowledge	1-7	18	30%

Table 5.Mother's practice regarding the management of common behavioral disorders in toddlers

S.No	Practice level	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Good practices	14-20	02	3%
2.	Moderate practices	8-13	39	65%
3.	Poor practices	1-7	19	32%

Discussion

The present study assessed the mother's knowledge and practice regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in Tughlaqabad, New Delhi. The present study revealed that there is poor knowledge and practice among the mothers regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

In the present study the data show the majority number of subjects, 36 (60%) mothers, had moderate knowledge, followed by 18 (30%) who had poor knowledge and 6 (10%) who had adequate knowledge related to the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

The findings of the study are in contrast to the results of another study conducted by Ms.

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Sukhwinder Kaur Khehra: The study included 100 mothers of under-five children with behavioural problems. The majority of the respondents, 54 (54%), had average knowledge; 25 (25%) had good knowledge; 18 (18%) had poor knowledge; and lastly, 3 (3%) had excellent knowledge regarding selected behavioural problems among mothers of under-five children.[6]

Jaya John Varghese (2019) conducted a study to assess the knowledge among mothers of under-five children regarding selected behavioural problems in an urban community. Findings show that the total knowledge score of 100 mothers was 45.1%, i.e., the mothers had average knowledge regarding behavioural problems. Common behavioural problems: the mothers scored 54.50%; regarding thumb sucking, they scored only 27%; nail biting (47.33%) and tics (48.33%) – they scored almost equally; pica (49%) and temper tantrums (48.33%) are also almost the same. The findings of the relationship of selected variables show that there is an association between knowledge and age of the mother, type of family and monthly income. And no association was seen between knowledge and age of child, number of children and occupation of the mother. 7

Conclusion

The study was aimed at assessing the mother's knowledge and practice regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers in a selected community, New Delhi. The present study revealed that there was a lack of knowledge and practice among mothers regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Implications

Nursing Practice

- Nursing staff should be equipped to conduct various health education programmes and camps at the community level for increasing the mother's knowledge and practice regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.
- Student nurses can educate about the different types of behavioural disorders in toddlers.
- To create awareness among the mother's knowledge and practice regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

Nursing Education

- Student's interest in nursing research should be emphasised to update their knowledge and practice in the nursing profession.
- Provide adequate exposure to the nurses to identify children with behavioural disorders.
- Nurses should take a more responsible role in the management of children with behavioural disorders.

Nursing Research

- The study provides baseline data for conducting other research studies.
- The study will be motivation for budding researchers to conduct the same study on a larger scale.
- Funding and resources should be allocated to this area of study by both public and private organisations in order to raise public awareness regarding the management of common behavioural disorders.

Nursing Administration

- Administrators can take up initiative in organising workshops and seminars for mothers.
- Enough personnel should be available to allow nurses to take time out of their schedules to educate target groups.
- To carry out instructional activities, the administrative assistance that is required should be supplied.
- Full-time professional counsellors must be provided for in hospitals and community centres.
- The nurse administrators should facilitate a programme in the community to improve the awareness and attitude of mothers regarding the management of common behavioural disorders.

Limitations

It was limited to a community in New Delhi.

Recommendations

- A similar study can be carried out on a larger sample for broader generalisation.
- A cross-sectional study can be carried out in different regions of the nation to gauge women's understanding and perspective on awareness regarding the management of common behavioural disorders.
- A similar study can be conducted among other communities to determine awareness regarding management of common behavioural disorders.
- A similar study can be done by distributing e-pamphlets and posters regarding the management of common behavioural disorders in toddlers.

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