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REVIEW ARTICLE

INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES FOR CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

In recent days the sexual crimes against children are more in numbers irrespective of age and gender. Researchers have proved that the child victims are often unaware of the sexual abuse and they are in a confused state without even knowing what is right or wrong behavior/touch. The crime is increasing more due to the growing number of dual career couples in all classes of people. Hence, they don't find personal time for their kids to educate or create awareness on personal care, self-protection, and sexual crimes. Teachers are the second parents of many children, as per our Indian education system; there is a gap between the children and teachers in sharing the personal *and* social information. Home and School is the primary environment for a child to learn the needed life skills, hence people involved in these two environments should educate them with all necessary information which a child should know. Because, research says that the child who is abused in their childhood is the adults with more traumas in accepting a normal or successful life. Our paper was developed by referring various research studies happened in child sexual abuse. There were studies conducted for identifying the child victims, the authors of the paper were trying to you those methods a intervention tool in educating the children. The current will explain about the various methods and its pros and cons in application.

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INTRODUCTION

India is a country known for its rich culture and heritage throughout the world. It also stands second in the world's population list. Our country has 19% of children around the world, and 42 percent of the Indian population is children. There is a recent research in US shows every one third of girl is sexually abused and one seventh of every boy is victimized. There is a study conducted on 2007 in India, which revealed that two out of every three children were abused physically, as an overall 53.22 percent of Indian children experience sexual abuse. In recent statistics report submitted by Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation have identified crimes against the children in 2012 report. The report says, "The Crimes against children increased 244% comparing the previous year with a total of 33,098 cases of crimes against Children reported in the country during 2011 with 26,694 cases during 2010". Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Delhi reported the highest percentage of sexual abuse. 50% sexual

offenders were known persons and were in positions of trust (Family member, relatives, friend or neighbor) (Loveleen *et al.*, 2007). Studies also pinpointed that Child sexual abuse is "common in homes, schools, and residential care facilities in India". All these evidence says that in our society, children need to be safeguarded against the crimes. We can take create awareness among the child, parent and teacher about what CSA. All government and private school can have a platform to interact with the children, parent *and* teachers and to educate them on the child sexual abuse. Before, let us see various studies on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA).

Previous Studies on Child Sexual Abuse Prevention program

There is insufficient knowledge about recognition of child sexual abuse and its management among health professionals, school teachers and parents. There is no uniform guidelines exist in India pertaining to child sexual abuse prevention and intervention. Fallon, B., Ma, J., Allan, K., Pillhofer, M., Trocme, N. and Jud, A. (2013) reported the caregiver risk factors for child abuse such as poverty, single parenthood, drugs and alcohol abuse, mental health issues, poor social support and intimate partner violence (Fallon *et al.*, 2013).

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Bentovim (1987) reported that boys tend to be abused at a younger age, more severely and for longer periods than girls. Most of them were from lower socioeconomic status. Protection of children was achieved through changes of family attitude and changes in family structure (Bentovim *et al.*, 1987).

Intervention for Child Sexual Abuse

Mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction (MBSR) program for Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse reduced the depressive by 65%. The effect size of MBSR was above 1.0. It has also shown very effective in reducing the Avoidance symptom of PTSD. In 8 weeks MBSR programme, improvement was sustained for 24 weeks (Kimbrough *et al.*, 2010).

Efficacy of School based child sexual abuse prevention program

Ian Barron (2008) reviewed the efficacy of school-based child sexual abuse prevention programmes between 1990 and 2002 which had 22 efficacy studies. The results revealed that there was no evidence to demonstrate that programmes protected children from intra-familial sexual abuse. Zwi (2007) conducted a meta-analysis of 15 RCT's on efficacy of school-based interventions to prevent child sexual abuse in terms of improving knowledge about sexual abuse and self-protective behaviours; increase in disclosure of sexual abuse and/or produces any harm and knowledge retention. The review concluded that significant improvements in knowledge measures and protective behaviours, and several studies reported harms, Retention of knowledge should be measured beyond 3-12 months. Del campo (2006) evaluated the efficacy of school based child sexual abuse prevention program for children aged 8-12 years (n=382). Results showed that it increased awareness about sexual abuse, improved their coping skill with a possible event of sexual abuse and increased the likelihood of revealing such events.

Chasen-Taber (1999) evaluated the CSA prevention program; his critical analysis revealed that the majority of efforts to stop child sexual abuse have focused on punishing abusers and treating victims and their families and rely on educating children to resist and report sexual abuse. Most of the general population do not know where to refer the child and perpetrator and they were less likely to take action against the offenders. Hebert, Lavoie, Piche, and Poitras, (2001) Evaluated the effects of the sexual child abuse prevention program with first and third grade children. A total of 133 children (64 first-graders and 69 third-graders) participated in the study. Children completed a knowledge questionnaire and a video vignette measure designed to evaluate preventive skills towards abusive and potentially abusive situations. A follow-up measure (2 months) was administered to verify whether knowledge and skills were maintained. Results indicated that children who participated in the prevention program showed greater preventive knowledge and skills relative to children not participating. Follow-up data showed that knowledge gains were maintained. In terms of unanticipated side effects, results revealed that almost half of the parents noted positive reactions following children's participation in the program. Majority of

parents did not identify negative reactions in their children following their participation in the workshop. Taal (1992) evaluated a sexual abuse prevention program for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders ranging from 8 to 12 years of age. Six questionnaires concerning feelings of control, choice of protection strategy, perceived feasibility of refusing to cooperate with the intruder, appreciation of touch, school relationships, and social anxiety were used. Subjects were 161 children who participated in the program and a control group of 131 children. Results indicated short term overall effects of the program for the choice of safety strategies. Immediately after participation in the program the youngest and the oldest children felt less in control of an abusive interaction, the youngest pupils thought that refusal was less feasible but they appreciated physical touch more than before. These effects, however, were only of a short duration. In the long run children thought refusing more feasible and younger children showed less social anxiousness. As an unwanted side effect of the program the oldest children developed feelings of discomfort about being touched.

Parents of children who participated in a school-based sexual abuse prevention program were surveyed regarding their children's reactions to the program. No parent reported the program had an overall negative effect on their children. Instead, the program stimulated discussion in the home regarding sexual abuse. More than one-half the parents had not discussed the topic with their child before the program. The study concluded that sexual abuse prevention programs can be implemented effectively in schools without harming the children (3;4)

Community based child sexual abuse prevention program

Barron (2013) assessed the impact of a community-based child sexual abuse prevention program on survivor knowledge/skills, disclosures, and subjective experience. Survivors achieved significant gains in knowledge/skills, made further disclosures and were positive about their program experience (Ian Barron and Keith Topping, 2008).

Innovations in Prevention of child sexual abuse

Teaching school children to resist abuse have shown increase children's knowledge and skills and the likelihood that children will disclose sexual abuse, but have not been shown to reduce the incidence of abuse. Hence a unique approach to prevent child sexual abuse, called community campaign that encouraged sexual offenders to seek treatment. During the campaign, 50 persons voluntarily sought treatment for sexual offending, and eight offenders presented themselves voluntarily to state attorney offices. Recent evidence indicates that many sexual offenders were themselves molested and they lack family support (Paradise, 2001).

Challenges in sustainability of the child sexual abuse prevention programs

Plummer (2001) reviewed 87 child sexual abuse prevention programs. The review concluded that many studies have examined changes in children's knowledge, attitude and skills about preventing sexual abuse.

Most of the studies did not integrate parent education and community awareness in the prevention programs. Sustainability of the CSA program was affected by inadequate and insecure funding, denial from the community, competing agenda and community collaboration.

What is not working?

Pelcovitz (1992) reported that brief and single presentation on school-based child sexual abuse prevention program for 6 to 10 years old children yielded no results. Structured interviews were administered to 22 children, ranging in age from 6 to 10 years old, who did not disclose long-term sexual abuse by an auxiliary school employee, despite having been exposed to a school-based child sexual abuse prevention program.

Methodological Issues in Child Sexual Abuse Research

Green (1993) reviewed more than 100 articles on CSA from 1980 to 1993. The majority of the CSA researches was focused on the demographic characteristics of child sexual abuse, psychological effects of child sexual victimization, the psychopathology encountered in adult survivors of child sexual abuse and approaches to intervention. The review concluded that Methodological difficulties in child sexual abuse research were failure to measure severity of the abuse, failure to use standardized or appropriate instruments, problems with validation and failure to use control groups (Green, 1993). Child Sexual Abuse Treatment Program of Santa Clara County (CSATP), California, has provided therapy to over 4,000 children and their families (about 14,000 individuals). About 90% of the children have been returned to their families; and the recidivism rate in the families who have completed the treatment program remains at less than 1% (Giarretto, 1982).

Conclusion

There are many studies happened and happening in the area of CSA. Very recently many studies happened within and outside all were trying to highlight the crimes against women and child. This is not a healthy sign for a developing country like India. Hence, our government should take necessary steps to solve sexual abuse. Though government brought new law, the "Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012", government needs to ensure an effective system for proper implementation of the act and its relevant laws. We conclude, by considering previous research on CSA, we individuals can work towards offering a good environment for a child to grow for a bright future.

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