



Research Article

EXTENT OF THE VICTIMIZATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG ADOLESCENTS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

In the absence of co-operation and adjustment, family members can feel repressed and suppressed that can lead to discontentment. Having unrealistic expectations of others is often the root cause of disappointment. In such cases, there is no affection towards each other and they are not willing to sacrifice their happiness for the sake of the family. So domestic violence is common in this society. Children are often described as the 'forgotten victims' of domestic abuse. Evidence suggests that witnessing violence can have serious negative impacts on the development of children. The present study attempts to find the extent of victimization of domestic violence among adolescents at higher secondary level in Kerala. Normative survey method is adopted. Stratified random sampling technique was used. The study throws light on the facts that majority of adolescents victimizing low level of domestic violence and small percentage of adolescents victimizing very high level of domestic violence. The study also reveals that majority of adolescent higher secondary students are high victims of emotional & physical violence and very low victims of stalking.

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INTRODUCTION

Family is looked upon as a place of love and affection and is considered as a basic unit and bedrock of the society. It has a basic role of maintaining a continuity of the society and to bring up the children in par with the social and cultural ethos of society. In some cases strained environment and domestic violence creates a lot of problems to the family circle and a negative impact on the development of the children. Domestic Violence (sometimes referred to as domestic abuse or spousal abuse) occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically or psychologically dominate another. Domestic violence is “a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, verbal, and psychological attacks as well as economic coercion that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners” (Ganley,1995)

Domestic violence occurs in all cultures; people of all races, ethnicities, religions, sexes, educational level and classes can be perpetrators of domestic violence. Domestic violence is perpetrated by both men and women, occurring in both same-sex and opposite-sex relationships. The reactions of children who witness violence by one parent against another may include emotional, social, cognitive, physical and behavioural maladjustment problems (Jaffe, Wolfe & Wilson, 1990). In recent years, increased attention has been focused on children

who may be affected by violence in the home, either as victims or as witnesses to domestic violence. Research shows that even when children are not direct targets of violence in the home, they can be harmed by witnessing its occurrence, (Schechter and Edelson, 1999). If care takers and teachers provide these students with sympathetic care, there can be full and wholesome development of the personality which in turn will help them to maintain positive moods and maintain better interpersonal relations. They should be equipped with environmental faculties that will enable them to develop their potentialities, to achieve positive mood states, social intelligence and study involvement. There should be an affectionate and peaceful environment in the schools and educational institution so that the child may develop properly and develop positive regards in all aspects.

It helps the teacher as well as parents to plan activities and experience for children and to take proper care of children by developing understanding of them and thus fulfilling their needs. In the present study domestic violence is considered as the nature and frequency of parental violence experienced by the adolescent students at Higher Secondary Level. The nature of such violence includes emotional violence, physical violence and stalking.

Emotional Violence refers to blaming the victim for all problems in the relationship, undermining the victim’s self-esteem, name calling etc. Physical violence includes: pushing, shoving, hitting, slapping, choking, pulling hair, punching, kicking, grabbing, using a weapon, beating, throwing her down, twisting arms, tripping and biting. Stalking” means an

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intentional course of conduct directed at a specific person which seriously alarms, annoys, intimidates or harasses; which serves no legitimate purpose; and which would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial mental distress, calling, following, harassing, spying on, leaving messages, unwanted e-mails and phone calls.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescents at higher secondary level. (with respect to total Domestic Violence)
2. To identify the extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescents at higher secondary level with respect to various dimensions. (Emotional violence, physical violence and stalking).

Hypotheses of the Study

1. The extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescent students at higher secondary level with respect to total wise is not evenly distributed.
2. The extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescents at higher secondary level with respect to various dimensions is not evenly distributed. (emotional violence, physical violence and stalking)

METHODOLOGY

Normative survey method is adopted for the study. The present study has been envisaged on a sample of three thousand and six higher secondary adolescent students from 18 higher secondary schools of Ernakulum, Kottayam, Thrissur and Idukki districts. Stratified random sampling technique was used for selecting sample from the population.

Tool Used For Collection of Data: Domestic Violence Scale (Developed and Standardized by the investigator).

Statistical Techniques Used For the Study

Chi-Square test & Percentage were used for analyzing the data.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

To identify the extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescents at higher secondary level with respect to total wise.

Extent of victimization of domestic violence of adolescent students at higher secondary level were found out by classifying

Table 1 Chi-square table for the significance of difference of the range of scores of adolescent students at Higher Secondary level with respect to the level of victimization of domestic violence for total wise.

Sl.No	Level	N	Percentage	Chi-square
1	Very Low	892	29.60	1020.10**
2	Low	972	32.30	
3	Moderate	738	24.60	
4	High	366	12.20	
5	Very High	38	1.30	
	Total	3006	100	

** Significant at 0.01 level

them in to five groups namely very low, low, moderate, high and very high based on their scores in the domestic violence scale.

The frequency of different categories of responses of adolescent students for each item in the domestic violence scale was computed and chi-square test was applied.

The details of chi-square and frequencies and percentages of adolescents at Higher Secondary level with respect to the level of victimization of domestic violence for the total sample is given in Table 1

The table 5.2 shows that the result of chi-square analysis, the tabled value of chi-square for (5-1) = 4 df is 13.83 at 1% level of significance and 9.49 at 5% level of significance. The calculated value of chi-square is 1020.10 is much higher than the table value at both the level of significance. So there is a significant difference in the distribution of scores of victimization of domestic violence of adolescent students at higher secondary level for the whole sample. The table shows that out of the 3006 adolescent Higher Secondary students 1.30 percent are victims of very high domestic violence, 12.20 per cent are victims of high domestic violence, 24.60 percent have moderate, 32.30 are low and 29.60 per cent are victims of very low domestic violence.

To identify the extent of the victimization of Domestic Violence among adolescents at higher secondary level with respect to various dimensions. (emotional violence, physical violence and stalking)

In order to find out the level of dimension wise domestic violence scores of adolescent students at higher secondary level, the frequency of different categories of responses of adolescent students for each item in the domestic violence scale was computed and chi-square test was applied.

The details of chi-square and frequencies and percentages of adolescents at Higher Secondary level with respect to the level of dimension wise domestic violence scores for the total sample is given in Table 2

Table 2

Dimensions		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Total	Chi-square
Emotional	N	644	548	625	886	303	3006	291.50**
	P	21.40	18.20	20.80	29.50	10.10	100	
Physical	N	856	637	572	859	82	3006	670.50**
	P	28.50	21.20	19.00	28.60	2.70	100	
Stalking	N	1560	778	371	219	78	3006	2368.00**
	P	51.90	25.90	12.30	7.30	2.60	100	

** Significant at 0.01 level

The Table 5.4 shows that the result of chi-square analysis of various dimensions of victimization of domestic violence for the total sample, the tabled value of chi-square for (5-1) = 4 df is 13.83 at 1% level of significance and 9.49 at 5% level of significance.

Emotional Violence: The calculated value of chi-square is 291.50 is much higher than the table value at both the level of significance. So there is a significant difference between the

observed frequencies of the scores of emotional violence of adolescent students at higher secondary level for the whole sample. The table reveals that among adolescent Higher Secondary students 10.10% are victims of very high emotional violence, 29.50% have high emotional violence, 20.80% have moderate, 18.20% have low emotional violence and 21.40% have very low emotional violence.

Physical Violence: The calculated value of chi-square is 670.50 is much higher than the table value at both the level of significance. So there is a significant difference between the observed frequencies of the scores of physical violence of adolescent students at higher secondary level for the whole sample. The table reveals that among adolescent Higher Secondary students 2.70% are victims of very high physical violence, 28.60% have high physical violence, 19.00% have moderate, 21.20% have low physical violence and 28.50 per cent have very low physical violence.

Stalking: The calculated value of chi-square is 2368.00 is much higher than the table value at both the level of significance. So there is a significant difference between the observed frequencies of the scores of stalking of adolescent students at higher secondary level for the whole sample. The table reveals that among adolescent Higher Secondary students 2.60% are victims of very high stalking, 7.30% have high stalking, 12.30% have moderate, 25.90% have low stalking and 51.90% have very low Stalking.

Major Findings of the Study

1. In total wise analysis the results indicate that the difference between the frequencies of the five categories of students response is statistically significant.
2. Majority of adolescents victimizing low level of domestic violence and very few adolescents victimizing very high level of domestic violence.
3. In the dimension wise analysis results indicate a statistically significant difference between the frequencies of the five categories of students response.
4. Majority of adolescent higher secondary students are high victims of emotional & physical violence and very low victims of stalking.

Educational Implications

- The best way to counteract the effects of witnessing abuse is early intervention. Intervention programs for older primary school children who are at a stage in their cognitive development to confront the issues of

violence in their own families and built into existing personal safety programs is cardinal for them.

- Children between the ages of 8 and 12 are at a stage when intervention could be successful before the impact of violent role modelling has become entrenched in their behavioral and social learning processes.
- Counselling in the school by professionals or school counsellors is beneficial for the children who witness domestic violence.
- Experiment with various types of counselling, play therapy, peer support groups, anger management classes and safety programs is helpful for them kids to protect themselves from dangerous situations.

Suggestions For Further Research

- A study of this kind can be conducted among the students at primary and secondary level.
- The study can be extended to other areas like child abuse, child maltreatment and child involvement in violence.
- The present study was confined to four districts of Kerala. It can be extended to other districts of Kerala to arrive at more reliable and precise result.
- Case studies can be conducted in relation with domestic violence and behavioral problems of children. It is necessary to develop a counseling package for victims of domestic violence.

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