

ABSTRACT

Adolescence is a transitional stage from puberty to adulthood, during which individuals often face challenges in managing emotions, making informed decisions, and exercising sound judgment[1]. This vulnerability increases their risk of being victims of sexual abuse - a form of maltreatment involving unwanted sexual behaviour imposed by one person on another. Educating adolescents about sexual abuse, self-protection, and self-defence is crucial to empower them and reduce their risk. The study aimed to assess the knowledge of sexual abuse, self-protection, and self-defence among teenage girls at the Institute of Nursing, Brainware University, Barasat. It also sought to examine the association between knowledge levels and selected demographic variables. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. A total of 100 teenage girls were selected through a convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured and validated online questionnaire via Google Forms, consisting of demographic variables and 55 knowledge-based items on sexual abuse, self-protection, and self-defence. The findings revealed that 32% of participants had poor knowledge, 57% had average knowledge, and only 11% demonstrated good knowledge on the subject. Statistical analysis showed no significant association between knowledge levels and demographic variables such as age, religion, type of family, educational qualification, or domicile. The study indicates that the majority of teenage girls possess inadequate knowledge regarding sexual abuse, self-protection, and self-defence. This highlights the urgent need for implementing comprehensive sex education and training in self-defence techniques to enhance awareness and safety among adolescent girls.