

## Research Article

### Knowledge and Perception of Child Abuse among the Adolescent Girls in Some Selected Schools in Dhaka City

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#### Abstract

##### Background

About 40 million children under the age of 18 years are estimated to suffer from abuse and neglect around the world. Child abuse in developing countries, including South Asia, is yet to be recognized as a major social and public health problem with an enormous burden on the economy and society. The present study conducted to find out the level of knowledge and perception of child abuse among the adolescent girls in some selected high schools in Dhaka city.

##### Method

This cross sectional descriptive study was conducted among 149 adolescent girl students of class VIII, IX and X of three purposively selected high schools in Dhaka city namely Kakoli High School, Rayer Bazar High School, and YWCA Higher Secondary Girls' School.

##### Results

Mean±SD of age of the respondents was 14.23±0.90 years with a range of 13 to 16 years. Majority of them (61.7%) were in the age group of 13-14 years. When the respondents were asked from where

they got information about child abuse, majority (123), 82% stated that they heard from TV, other common sources were news paper 65 (43%) and parents 36 (24%). In the present study out of 149 respondents said that physical abuse (66.4%) is more prevalent in our country than mental (55.7%) and sexual (29.5%) abuse. In the present study the respondents thought that child was abused by nearest relative, by servant, by teacher, by father, by mother, by brother and sister and by others 47.1%, 27.2%, 20.6%, 18.6%, 17.9%, 9.3% and 24.8% respectively. In the present study opinion of the respondents were sought as to how to prevent child abuse, increase peoples' awareness, enforcement of law, and increase general level of education of the people and parents awareness about child mentality were the prominent opinions. The responses were scored and graded. Mean±SD of scores of knowledge was 11.7±2.5 with a range of 5-17. Only about 13% had high score while 30% scored poor. Mean±SD of scores of perception was 27.9±4.4 with a range of 14-35. Perception score of 'poor' grade was observed in 22% respondents and that of 'good' grade in 32% respondents. Relationship between knowledge score and perception score was examined by correlation analysis and a weak positive correlation was observed with correlation coefficient,  $r=0.186$  ( $p=0.023$ ). The mean±SD of scores of perception among Kakoli High School was 28.78±3.65, among the respondent among Rayer Bazar School was 26.93±5.056) and among the respondents of YWCA was 28.81±2.6. The mean±SD of score of knowledge among Kakoli School was 11.93±2.4, among the respondents of in Rayer Bazar School 11.01±2.34 and among the respondents of YWCA School was 13.52±2.01.

##### Conclusion

From this study it was revealed that the knowledge and perception about child abuse is considerably significant. But in reality to counter the child abuse is not much practiced in our society. Therefore, the importance of child abuse should be focused and generalized with high priority.

**Keywords:** Child abuse; Cross sectional study; Dhaka city; Girls' high school

#### Introduction

Forty-Ninth World Health Assembly organized by World Health Organization (WHO) in 1996 adopted resolution declaring child abuse is a major and growing public health problem across the world [1]. The goals of the report are to raise awareness about the problem of abuse globally, and to make the case that abuse is preventable and that public health has a crucial role to play in addressing its causes and consequences.

The term child is someone who has not reached the age of 18; the age specified by the child protection law of the state in which the child resides. About 40 million children under the age of 18 years are estimated to suffer from abuse and neglect around the world. Child abuse in developing countries, including South Asia, is yet to be recognized as a major social and public health problem with an enormous burden on the economy and society. Therefore, it is imperative not only to recognize child abuse from a clinical perspective but also for society, including professionals, to understand and accept it as a malady as well as to change their attitudes towards it [1].

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When parents are unhappy in their parental role or when a frictional relationship exists between them, some babies become neglected or abused. The second year of life is a more common time for abuse than the first, babies are more troublesome to their parents and this triggers the outlet of anger and other unpleasant emotions endangered in the relationship of the parents, results in poor performance in school [2].

Each year, tens of thousands of children are traumatized by physical, sexual, and emotional abusers or by caregivers who neglect them, making child abuse as common as it is shocking. The scars can be deep and long-lasting, affecting not just abused children but society. But the incidence of parents and other caregivers consciously, even willfully, committing acts that harm the very children they're supposed to be nurturing is a sad fact of human society that cuts across all lines of ethnicity and class. Whether the abuse is rooted in the perpetrator's mental illness, substance abuse, or inability to cope, the psychological result for each abused child is often the same: Deep emotional scars and a feeling of worthlessness [3].

There is no statistics, to show what family member are most responsible for the child abuse, there is some evidence that it is more common among male than female relatives with father and step father the usual offenders. It is important especially for health educators to the behavior disorders and emotional problems that effect children. The emotional maladjustments of children frequently are characterized by anxiety reactions. In the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, child abuse and neglect have been seen as a significant factor in childhood disorders [4].

Almost all counties, including Bangladesh, legislation exists concerning the minimum age for admission to employment, services and other activities intended to restrain the economic exploitation of its children and to alleviate its effects. In Bangladesh, the minimum age for employment is 14 years, and the minimum age for hazardous work is 18 years. Many developing countries children are engaged in some gainful employment. Although most of the cases they are low paid due to reasons of being a child. Not only that they are also maltreated in those job situations. Physical torture, not giving food as torture is very common [5].

This study was planned to identify the perception and knowledge on adolescent girl about the meaning, types, symptoms, factors, source, consequences and opinion about preventive measures of child abuse. The spectrum of child abuse is wide. Child abuse and neglect is defined as "at a minimum, any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or care taker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm [6]".

Bangladesh is a poor developing country, where majority of the population are farmer and less educated, and majority of the families are comprised of 5-7 members. Children are given least priority in their family. Child abuse and neglect is one of them. This has been poorly recognized as a public health problem in the world, particularly in South-East Asia. This study is taken in consideration to the fact that child abuse is a universal practice and should not be continued. Social awareness which is not up to the mark in each sector should be created to curve this inhuman act of daily life. This study is an attempt to explore the knowledge and perception of child abuse that children continuously experience in their daily sphere of life.

## Materials and Methods

The present cross sectional descriptive study was carried out among the adolescent school girls of class VIII, IX and X in selected schools of Dhaka city for a period of three and half months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 to 15<sup>th</sup> July 2008. The target population was adolescent school girls of class VIII, IX and X. Age of respondents of were 13, 14, 15 and 16 years. The study was carried out in 3 (three) purposively selected secondary schools of Dhaka city, namely Kakoli High School, situated in 179, Dhanmondi, Rayer Bazar Secondary Govt. High School, situated in Rayer Bazar, West Dhanmondi and YWCA Secondary Girls High School, situated in Green road, Dhaka. Considering the nature of study and length of time the sample size was limited to 149 students from different classes of three schools. Purposive sampling was followed for sample selection and sample size. Keeping in mind the objectives of study, a draft questionnaire was prepared. It was a semi-structured type of questionnaire. All the variables were considered accordingly. The questionnaire was pre-tested in some schools which were not included in the study. The questionnaire was finalized after necessary modification. A formal written permission from the Headmaster of the schools was taken before proceeding for data collection. Data was collected by direct interviewing the students of three schools. The interview was taken by the researcher herself at the place of study. Before collecting data, the purpose and objectives of the study was explained to the respondents. Assurance was given for maintenance of the confidentiality and secrecy of the information they provided. Data was collected after verbal consent from the students. After collection the data it was checked, verified, edited and to reduce error. Data were analysis by using SPSS software program in addition to description analysis, bivariate, significance test, Chi-square and Co-relation, were done to find out association between different variables.

## Results

The present cross sectional study was conducted among 149 adolescent girl students of class VIII, IX and X of three high schools in Dhaka city namely Kakoli High School, Rayer Bazar High School, and YWCA Higher Secondary Girls' School. Among them 55(37%) belong to Kakoli High School, 73(49%) belong to Rayer Bazar High School and 21(14%) belong to YWCA Higher Secondary Girls' School. According to class-wise distribution 24(16%) were students of class VIII, 103(69%) were students of class IX and 22(15%) were student of class X (Table 1).

Name of the School	Class						Total	
	VIII		IX		X		n	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Kakoli High School	23	41.8	10	18.2	22	40	55	100
Rayer bazar High School	1	1.4	72	98.6	0	0	73	100
YWCA Higher Secondary Girls' School	0	0	21	100	0	0	21	100
Total	24	16.1	103	69.1	22	14.8	149	100

**Table 1:** Distribution of school and class of the respondent.

Mean±SD of age of the respondents was 14.23±0.90 years with a range of 13 to 16 years. Majority of them (61.7%) were in the age group of 13-14 years. In religion majority were Muslim (87%) followed by Hindu (11.4%). Rest of them was Christian (1.3%). In terms

of respondents parent's occupation, majority (48%) of the respondent's father was service holder, 47% businessman, and rest about 5% were Day labourer, unemployed or other occupation group. Majority (86%) of the respondent's mother was housewife, 11% service holder and rest were doing business and other activity. Median family income of the parents of the respondents was 12000 BDT with a range of 1500-1,000,000 BDT. Among 149 respondents 53% had 5-6 family members; about 29.5% had 1-4 family and 17.4% above 7 family members. Majority (42.3%) of the respondent were in first position in the family, 31.5% second position, 16.1% third position and least number (1%) were from sixth position by their birth order. Majority (81%) of the respondents had belonged to single family and rest of 18.8% came from joint family (Table 2).

In education about 11% fathers and 7.4% mothers were illiterate. Most of the mothers (61%) had studied up to secondary level including SSC. Sixteen percent (n=24) had HSC level of education while 15.5% (n=23) were graduate or Masters degree holder. The corresponding levels for fathers were 32% (n=48) up to SSC level, 25% (n=37) in HSC level and 32% (n=48) up to Masters Degree level (Figure 1).

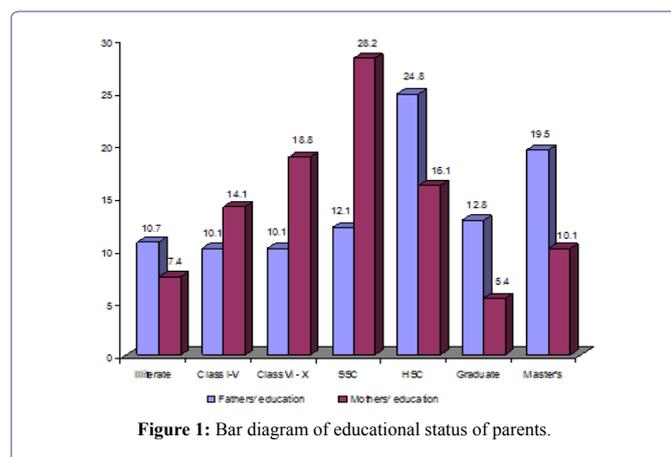


Figure 1: Bar diagram of educational status of parents.

In the present study all the respondents known about child abuse. When the respondents were asked from where they got information about child abuse, majority (123), 82% stated that they heard from TV, other common sources were news paper 65 (43%) and parents 36 (24%) (Table 3).

Regarding type and seriousness of abuse the pinion of the respondents shows that in physical abuse, cigarette burning 91.3% was serious abuse then caning (57%) and (slapping 22%) regarding emotional abuse captivate in room was serious abuse 52% then scolding and compel to study long against desire. Regarding sexual abuse majority state that compel to sexual activity about 86% was serious abuse than compel to view sex picture and forcible de-clothing. Among the respondents 2%, 9%, 4.7% were state that slapping, scolding and forcible de clothing is not any abuse respectively (Table 4).

In the present study out of 149 respondents, 70.5% said that child was abused due to too much mental stress of the parents. When respondents were asked about who were more abused in Bangladesh, most of them stated that girls (86%), and rest of them said didn't know

14%, not a single respondent had opinion about boy abuse. Most of the respondents (47.1%) thought that child was abused by nearest relative. Regarding effect of child abuse, respondents state that majority of the child may effect to psychiatric disease (94.0%), loss of memory due to head injury (92.6%), drug addict (88.6%), break limbs (87.2%) and may conceive child (61.7%) (Table 5). In the present study out of 149 respondents said that physical abuse (66.4%) is more prevalent in our country than mental (55.7%) and sexual (29.5%) abuse (Figure 2).

Variables	Frequency	Percent
<b>Age Group (yr)</b>		
13 -14	92	61.7
15- 16	57	38.3
Mean±SD	14.23±0.90	
<b>Religion</b>		
Islam	130	87.3
Hinduism	17	11.4
Christianity	2	1.3
<b>Fathers' Occupation</b>		
Service	72	48.3
Business	70	47
Day labour	3	2
Unemployed	1	0.7
Others	3	2
<b>Mothers' Occupation</b>		
Housewife	128	85.9
Service	17	11.4
Business	3	2
Others	1	0.7
<b>Family Income (BDT)</b>		
<10000	64	43.2
10000-19999	38	25.7
20000-29999	18	12.2
30000-39999	22	14.9
40000-49999	2	1.3
≥50000	4	2.7
<b>Family size</b>		
4-Jan	44	29.5
6-May	79	53
7+	26	17.4
Mean±SD (Rang)	5.3±1.9(1-18)	
<b>Birth Order Position</b>		
First	63	42.3
Second	47	31.5
Third	24	16.1
Fourth	8	5.4
Fifth	6	4
Sixth	1	0.7
Mean±SD (Median)	1.99±1.130 (2.00)	
<b>Family Type</b>		
Joint family	28	18.8
Single family	121	81.2

Table 2: Sociodemographic characteristics of the respondents.

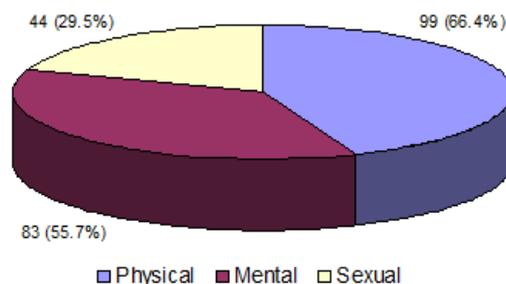
Source	Frequency*	Percent
Radio	14	9.4
TV	123	82.1
Newspaper	65	43.1
Books	25	16.6
Friends	20	13.3
Father and mother	36	23.9
Others	6	4

**Table 3:** Distribution of the respondents regarding sources of information about child abuse

\*Multiple responses

Physical abuse								
Slapping	22	14.8	61	40.9	61	40.9	3	2
Caning	57	38.3	71	47.7	18	12.1	0	0
Cigarette Burning	136	91.3	8	5.4	2	1.3	1	0.7
Emotional abuse								
Captivate in room	79	53	46	30.9	14	9.4	5	3.4
Compel to study long against desire	11	7.4	54	36.2	62	41.6	10	6.7
Scolding	35	23.5	48	32.2	42	28.2	14	9.4
Sexual abuse								
Forcible de clothing	73	49	32	21.5	25	16.8	7	4.7
Compel to sexual activity	128	85.9	3	2	7	4.7	0	0
Compel to view sex picture	122	81.9	7	4.7	3	2	4	2.7

**Table 4:** Distribution of the respondent regarding opinion about type and seriousness of abuse.



**Figure 2:** Distribution of respondents by type of abuse.

“Forbid to go out” and “stopping food” appear to be the type of abuse practised by parents. Out of 149 girls 78% (n=116) and 76.5% (n=114) respectively mentioned as such (Figure 3).

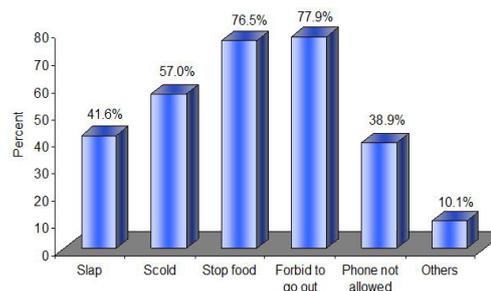
In response to whether respondents themselves had experienced parental abuse, 92 (62%) stated of having had a slap. Experience of scolding was mentioned by about 50% (n=74). When respondent asked whether they became suffer from abuse by parents, they state that about 61.7% respondent received slap from parents. Regarding abuse at school, majority 80% of the respondents stated that caning is a type of abuse in school. When respondents asked whether they became victim at school, they state that about 47.7%, were suffer from

school by stand on the bench 39% had caning, 36% had slap, 33% scold and 21% pull by ear (Table 6).

Variables	Frequency*	Percent
Causes of abuse		
Too much mental stress	105	70.5
Poverty	59	39.6
Lack of education	47	31.5
Mentally imbalanced guardian	30	20.1
Don't know	12	8
Others	3	2
Who is more abused		
Girl	128	86
Don't know	21	14
Abusers		
Father	28	18.6
Mother	27	17.9
Brother and sister	14	9.3
Teacher	31	20.6
Nearest relative	71	47.1
Servant	41	27.2
Others	37	24.8
Effect of child abuse		
Break limbs	130	87.2
Memory loss due to head injury	138	92.6
Psychiatric disease	140	94
Drug addict	132	88.6
Early motherhood	92	61.7
Others	11	7.4

**Table 5:** Distribution of different variables related to child abuse.

\*Multiple responses



**Figure 3:** Bar diagram of type of abuse by parents.

In the present study opinion of the respondents were sought as to how to prevent child abuse, increase peoples' awareness, enforcement of law, and increase general level of education of the people and parents awareness about child mentality were the prominent opinions (Table 7).

Perception and knowledge were measured by asking related questions. The responses were scored and graded. Mean±SD of scores of knowledge was 11.7±2.5 with a range of 5-17. Only about 13% had high score while 30% scored poor. Mean±SD of scores of perception

was 27.9±4.4 with a range of 14-35. Perception score of ‘poor’ grade was observed in 22% respondents and that of ‘good’ grade in 32% respondents (Table 8).

Variables	Frequency*	Percent
<b>Type of abuse at home</b>		
Slap	92	61.7
Scold	74	49.7
Stop food	9	6
Forbid to go out	28	18.8
Phone not allowed	39	26.2
Others	4	2.7
<b>Type of abuse at school</b>		
Slap	96	64.4
Scold	102	68.5
Caning	119	79.9
Pull by ear	90	60.4
Stand on the bench	67	45
Others	10	6.7
<b>Victim of abuse at school</b>		
Slap	54	36.2
Scold	50	33.6
Caning	58	38.9
Pull by the ear	31	20.8
Stand on the bench	71	47.7
Others	2	1.3

**Table 6:** Distribution of the respondents by type and victim of at home and school.  
\*Multiple responses

Opinion	Frequency*	Percent
Increase the awareness of the people	90	60.4
Enforcement of law to prevent child abuse	38	25.5
Increase the education status of the people	28	18.8
Parents should revised about child mentality	26	17.4
Tele-communication through mass media	13	8.7
Govt. Co-operation necessary	16	10.7
People should be sympathetic to the child	14	9.4
Good relationship of parents to their child like friend	4	2.7
Parents should know about all the affairs of the child	4	2.7
To abolish child labour	3	2
Prevent poverty rate	7	4.7
Parents should give enough time to their child	1	0.7

**Table 7:** Distribution of the respondents’ opinion on prevention of child abuse.  
\*Multiple responses

The mean±SD of scores of perception among Kakoli High School was 28.78±3.65, among the respondent among Rayer Bazar School was 26.93±5.056) and among the respondents of YWCA was 28.81±2.6. The mean±SD of score of knowledge among Kakoli School was 11.93±2.4, among the respondents of in Rayer Bazar School 11.01±2.34 and among the respondents of YWCA School was 13.52±2.01 (Table 9).

In this study we analyses the relationship between level of perception and knowledge score with other variable like age group, mother’s

education, father’s education, family income and family members. There is no statistical significant difference in perception score among the respondents by age group, mother’s education, father’s education, family income and family size (Table 10). There is statistical significant difference in knowledge score and father’s education (Table 11). Relationship between knowledge score and perception score was examined by correlation analysis and a weak positive correlation was observed with correlation coefficient,  $r=0.186$  ( $p=0.023$ ) (Figure 4).

Level of knowledge		Frequency	Percent
Grade	Score		
Poor	Upto 10	45	30.2
Average	11-14	85	57
Good	15 or more	19	12.8
<b>Mean±SD=11.7±2.5; Median=12; Mode=11; Range=5-17</b>			
Level of perception		Frequency	Percent
Grade	Score		
Poor	Below 25	33	22.1
Average	25 - 30	68	45.6
Good	Above 30	48	32.2
<b>Mean±SD=27.9±4.4; Median=29; Mode=32; Range=14-35</b>			

**Table 8:** Distribution of respondents by their level of knowledge and perception.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
<b>Knowledge Score</b>				
Kakoli	55	11.93	2.471	0.333
Rayer bazar	73	11.01	2.348	0.275
YWCA	21	13.52	2.015	0.44
Total	149	11.7	2.486	0.204
<b>Perception Score</b>				
Kakoli	55	28.78	3.65	0.492
Rayer bazar	73	26.93	5.056	0.592
YWCA	21	28.81	2.6	0.567
Total	149	27.88	4.368	0.358

**Table 9:** Mean scores of knowledge and perception of the respondents among the three schools.

In order to examine whether level of knowledge and perception among the respondents vary from school to school One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. For knowledge,  $F=9.674$  ( $p=0.001$ ) and for perception,  $F=3.482$  ( $p=0.033$ ). Tukey’s Multiple comparison test shows significant difference in mean score of knowledge between Kakoli high school and YWCA high school ( $p=0.024$ ); and Rayer Bazar high school and YWCA high school ( $p=0.001$ ). Similarly, significant difference in mean score of perception was observed between Kakoli high school and Rayer Bazar high school ( $p=0.045$ ) (Table 12).

## Discussion

Child abuse also called cruelty to children, the willful and unjustifiable infliction of pain and suffering on children. The term can denote the use of inordinate physical violence; unjustifiable verbal abuse; the failure to furnish proper shelter, nourishment, medical treatment, or emotional support; other cases of sexual molestation or rape; and making of child pornography.

Variables	Level of perception								χ <sup>2</sup> , df, P value
	Poor		Average		Good		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
<b>Age Group (years)</b>									
13 - 14	21	22.8	43	46.7	28	30.4	92	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =0.350, df=2, p=0.839
15-16	12	21.1	25	43.9	20	35.1	57	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Mother's Education</b>									
Illiterate	5	45.5	4	36.4	2	18.2	11	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =8.731, df=4, p=0.068
Up to SSC	21	23.1	40	44	30	33	91	100	
HSC and above	7	14.9	24	51.1	16	34	47	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Father's Education</b>									
Illiterate	7	43.8	4	25	5	31.3	16	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =8.731, df=4, p=0.068
Up to SSC	14	29.2	18	37.5	16	33.3	46	100	
HSC and above	12	14.1	46	54.1	27	31.8	84	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Father's Occupation</b>									
Service	14	19.4	38	52.8	20	27.8	72	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =2.907, df=2, p=0.234
Business	17	24.3	27	38.6	26	37.1	70	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>45.8</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Family Income (BDT)</b>									
≤12,000	22	29.3	33	44	20	26.7	75	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =4.989, df=2, p=0.083
>12,000	11	15.1	34	46.6	28	38.4	73	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22.3</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>45.3</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Family Size</b>									
4-Jan	11	25	16	36.4	17	38.6	44	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =2.205, df=2, p=0.332
5 or more	22	21	52	49.5	31	29.5	105	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 10: Distribution of relationship between levels of perception with different variables.

Variables	Level of perception								χ <sup>2</sup> , df, P value
	Poor		Average		Good		Total		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
<b>Age Group (years)</b>									
13 - 14	24	27	52	58.4	13	14.6	89	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =0.428, df=2, p=0.807
15-16	18	32.1	33	58.9	5	8.9	56	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Mother's Education</b>									
Illiterate	3	27.3	8	72.7	0	0	11	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =8.731, df=4, p=0.068
Up to SSC	31	35.6	47	54	9	10.3	87	100	
HSC and above	8	17	30	63.8	9	19.1	47	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Father's Education</b>									
Illiterate	4	26.7	10	66.7	1	6.7	15	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =20.011, df=4, p=0.001
Up to SSC	23	50	21	45.7	2	4.3	46	100	
HSC and above	15	17.9	54	64.3	15	17.9	84	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Family Income (BDT)</b>									
≤12,000	23	31.9	44	61.1	5	6.9	72	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =3.477, df=2, p=0.176
>12,000	18	25	41	56.9	13	18.1	72	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Family Size</b>									
4-Jan	11	25.6	25	58.1	7	16.3	43	100	χ <sup>2</sup> =2004, df=2, p=0.367
≥5	31	30.4	60	58.8	11	10.8	102	100	
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>58.6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 11: Distribution of relationship between score of knowledge with different variables.

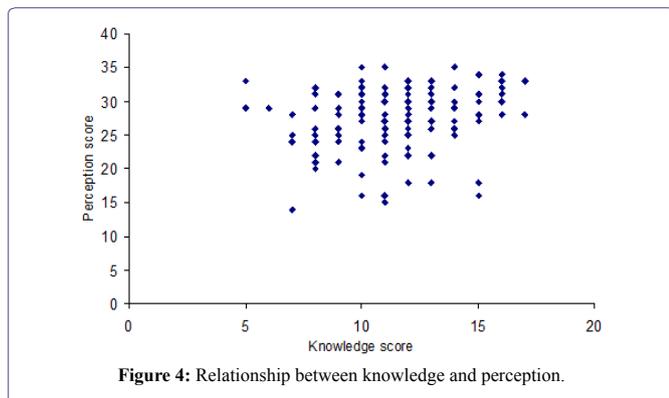


Figure 4: Relationship between knowledge and perception.

	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Knowledge score</b>					
Between Groups	107.073	2	53.537	9.674	0
Within Groups	807.933	146	5.534		
Total	915.007	148			
<b>Perception score</b>					
Between Groups	128.548	2	64.274	3.482	0.033
Within Group	2695.277	146	18.461		
Total	2823.826	148			

Table 12: ANOVA table

Frequently described by the medical profession as the ‘battered child syndrome: Abusive treatment of children is almost universally prescribed by criminal statutes [5].

In the present study total 149 adolescent girls between the ages 13 to 16 years, were interviewed at three purposively selected schools of Dhaka city. In religion majority were Muslims, most (42.3%) of them were 1st child of their parents and majority (53.0%) belonged to 5-6 member size family. This result accords with our national statistics [7]. Among them majority (62%) were 13-14 years old and living with their parents in a single family. It is evident from the findings that the school going children’s father, (48.3%) were service man. Another group stated that 47% of the father’s occupation was business and majority (43.2%) had monthly income <10,000 BDT. Among the mother’s 128 (85.9%) were mainly housewives and other 17(11.4%) was service women. This result does not correspond to our national statistics; maybe they belong to privileged group of our country who resides in the capital city. In developing countries numerous studies across many countries have shown a strong association between poverty and child maltreatment<sup>8</sup>. The abuse against children mostly occurs in the poor income group. Numerous studies across many countries have shown a strong association between poverty and child maltreatment [8,9].

Regarding the source of hearing about child abuse, majority (82%) heard from TV, which accords with national findings [3]. About type and seriousness of abuse shows that slapping was found moderate in (41%), caning was found moderate (48%), cigarette burning was regarded as serious abuse by 91%, captivate in room serious by 53%, compel to study long against desire mild (42%), scolding was regarded as moderate (32%) type of abuse. Child strike such as, caning [4]

physical torture by not giving food, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation, are regarded as serious harms [5,6]. Forcible de-clothing was regarded as serious abuse by 49%, Compel to sexual activity was regarded as serious by majority of the (86%) respondents and Compel to view sex picture was also regarded as serious abuse by majority (82%) of the respondents. Children and adolescent girls are the primary victims of sexual abuse [10].

Regarding causes of child abuse, 70.5% said due to “Too much mental stress”, finding similar with national finding [3]. About 86% opinion reported that girls are more abused. Findings are similar with the study by Anwar et al. [11]. Distribution by more prevalent type of abuse, 66.4% said physical, distribution by abusers, 47.1% said by nearest relative. What is more horrifying is that the abusers of this gruesome act are people whom the children are familiar with i.e. family members, family friends, neighbors, domestic servants, teachers, even those who teach them religion [12]. Effect of child abuse was regarded as 94.0% psychiatric disease. Abused child often suffers from deep emotional scars and a feeling of worthlessness [3].

Regarding abuse by parents, 77.9% forbid to go out. They can learn anger management and child rearing techniques, and try to suppress their violent tendencies through conscious and diligent effort at all times [4]. Respondents about their types of abuses shows, 62% had slap but in their school, majority (80%) had caning. Respondent’s knowledge about abuse was found poor (32%) and average (59%) in 15-16 years age group, and good knowledge was found more in 13-14 year’s age group.

Regarding knowledge about child abuse, average level (67%) was found more in illiterate, and good level (18%) of knowledge was found more in HSC and above group. Similarly, poor level of knowledge was found more (36%) in mother’s educated up to SSC level, average level (73%) was found more in illiterate, and good level (19%) of knowledge was found more in HSC and above group. They are all symptoms of disordered parent- child relationship [2]. Poor level of knowledge was found more (32%) in lower income group (<=Tk.12,000), average level was found more (61%) in lower income group and good knowledge was found more in higher income group (>Tk.12, 000).

Poor knowledge was found more (30%) in 5 or more member family, average knowledge was more (59%) in 5 or more member family and good knowledge was found more (16.3%) in 1-4 member family size. Child abuse was found more in low socioeconomic status and large family size [4,10,13]. Trocme and colleagues [14,15] highlighted poor knowledge and poor income are highly associated with child abuse and maltreatment.

Perception was found poor (23%) and average (47%) in 13-14 years age group, and good (35%) perception was found in 15-16 years respondents. Father’s Perception was found poor (44%) in illiterate father, average (54%) in HSC and above educated father and good level was found (33%) in up to SSC leveled father’s education. Mother’s perception was poor among illiterate (45.5%), average (51%) and good (34%) perception was found in HSC and above educated mothers. Poor level of perception was found more (29%) in lower income group (up to Tk. 12,000), average and good level was found in higher income group (>Tk.12, 000). Good (38.6%) level of perception was found among 1-4 member family, Average (49.5%) level was found among 5 or more member family. Opinion about child abuse

prevention, majority (60%) to increase the awareness of the people, 26% to enforcement of law to prevent child abuse, 19% to increase the education status of the people, 17% said parents should revised about child mentality and only 1% gave opinion about parents should give enough time do their child. Social weariness can protect children from such abuse and its consequences [16]. Reducing the incidence of child abuse is a matter of education and intervention [17]. Traumatized children should be treated with medically or psychologically [18].

## Conclusion

All the respondents were aware about child abuse and got the information from different sources. Study reported that girls were mostly abused by their nearest relatives and too much mental stress of the parents were the major causes of child abuse, which causes psychiatric disease of child in future according to respondents opinion. Regarding knowledge about child abuse among the adolescent girls, good level of knowledge was found in 13-14 yrs girls, in educated parents, small family and high income groups. Corresponding respondent's perception was found good in 15-16 years girls, educated parents more income family and small family size. Further study with large sample size needed to validate the finding of the results.

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