CHAPTER-III

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM & OBJECTIVES

Child Sexual Abuse: The Concept

Sexual abuse of a child is defined as, "the involvement of a child in a sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to or that violate the laws or social taboos of society". Most common negative effects of sexual abuse manifest in emotional and behavioral problems, posttraumatic stress symptoms, depression, suicidal ideation and self-harm behaviors, anxiety, substance abuse, aggression, self-esteem issues, academic problems, and sexualized behaviors. Child sexual abuse (CSA) is one of the most stressful life events, and is associated with many adverse consequences, including physical and mental health problems, substance abuse and criminality.

Statement of the Problem

The subject of the present thesis is "Child Sexual Abuse; A Comparative Study of Schools in Urban and Rural Areas in Tamil Nadu". This research attempts to study the various forms of child sexual abuse among the children and its causes and consequences.

Significance of the Study

World over women and children are always considered as precious. Many welfare programmes focus on child development programmes, child rights. Laws are provided to protect them, but still violence against children, like child sexual abuses occur in many societies. Almost 19 percent of the world's children live in India. More than one third of the country's population i.e., around 440 million is below 18 years (Skarbek., et. al.,
2009). Each day, the safety and well being of the children across India are threatened by child abuse and neglect. The child abuses are mainly done by their close relatives, neighbors and strangers. These are hidden due to shame, fear and unawareness about their abuses. With this background this research has been done among the school children in Tamil Nadu.

**Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study are given below:

1. To study the various forms of child sexual abuse prevalent in urban and rural areas in Tamil Nadu.

2. To study the magnitude of the various forms of child sexual abuse.

3. To explore the causes and consequences of child sexual abuse.

4. To find the perceptions of police and the Criminal Justice System, by the child sexual abuse.

**The Research Variables**

Based on the review and considering the Indian Context, the variables of the study are as follows:

**Dependent Variables**

Child Sexual Abuse
Independent Variables

1. Child Specific Variables
   - Socio Economic Status
   - Rural-Urban background
   - Age
   - Sex
   - Education

2. Personality Related Variables
   - Anger
   - Aggression
   - Anxiety
   - Behavior Problems
   - Somatization
   - Depression
   - Attitude Towards School
   - Concern for Personal Safety
   - Future Aspirations
   - Hopelessness
   - Sense of Safety
   - Low Self Esteem

3. Police Related Variables
   - Problems in investigation
   - Problems in enquiry
   - Problems in procedure
   - Problems in assistance.
4. Judicial Related Variables
   - Victim Perception of Judiciary

5. Medical related variables
   - Problems in medical assistance

6. Family related variables
   - Parental Attachment
   - Presence of Domestic Violence
   - Family Bonding

7. Social Variables
   - Stigmatization

8. Economic Set of Variables
   - Compensation

9. Consequences of abuse
   - Social Problems
   - Academic Performance
   - Hostility