

A study to assess the challenges faced by adolescent girls and opinion about their parents residing at urban areas

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ABSTRACT

Adolescents (10-19 years) constitute about 22% (232 million) of India's population with girls constituting almost half (111 million) of this group. For every individual "Adolescence" is a challenging time as it is a period accompanied by many significant biological, economic, social, moral and psychological events which later on set the platform for adult life (Cameron and Karabanow, 2003). A cross sectional research design was done in urban area of Alwarthiru Nagar. 100 adolescents girls and their parents are included in this study. Purposive random sampling techniques by lottery method was used in selecting the samples. Demographic variables was collected by interview method followed by self-structured questionnaires. The challenges faced by adolescent girls were percentage of safety issues (48%), menstrual hygiene and reproductive health (84%), discomfort during menstruation (90%), gender discrimination (42%), mobility and freedom of opinion restricted (53%), curiosities regarding sex and sexuality (78%), gender role perception (30%), conflict of emotions (89%), usage of ICT (74%), challenges related to social network (50%), addiction of watching TV (72%), regarding interpersonal relationship (74%), peer pressure (69%), peer relationship (28%), easily get irritated or anger (59%), accepting the bodily changes (30%), lack of motivation and guidance (22%), Parents forces to choose carrier according to their wish (63%), mobile phone addiction (65%). The challenges faced by adolescents girls and about their parents opinion were sharing every problems (50%), Recreation (83%), Adolescent girls are tough to handle (71%), job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children (85%) Regarding sex education and sexual abuse (25%), Regarding choosing their carrier (85%). In the conclusion, discomfort during menstruation and conflict of emotions and menstrual hygiene and reproductive health issue is the most pertinent challenges faced by girls Recreation and Adolescent girls are tough to handle and job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children is the most pertinent opinion about parents of adolescents girls.

Key Words : Adolescent girls, Parents, Challenges, opinion, Safety issues, Gender role perception, Menstrual hygiene and Reproductive health, Emotional Conflicts

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents (10-19 years) constitute about 22% (232 million) of India's population with girls constituting almost half (111 million) of this group. For every individual "Adolescence" is a challenging time as it is a period accompanied by many significant biological, economic, social, moral and psychological events which later on set the platform for adult life. These changes pose numerous developmental challenges like increasing need for

independence, evolving sexuality, transitioning through education and employment, consolidating advanced cognitive abilities, and negotiating changing relationships with family, peers and broader social connections to the adolescents, definitely at a varying pace (Cameron and Karabanow, 2003).

In a developing country like India with its own specific familial and socio cultural features, the problems and challenges faced by the adolescent population are unique. In addition to the common challenges of

adolescents, the adolescent girls face some specific issues. The girl child is still discriminated against from the moment of birth, through her childhood, adolescence and into her womanhood. She is conditioned to believe that she is inferior and subordinate to men. Sons are idolized and celebrated (Kuruvilla, 2012).

WHO believes that the inter relationship between the gender, poverty, education, and health demonstrates the need for all nations to address gender equality as a central part of their efforts to achieve the millennium development goals. In a report identifying the challenges faced in achieving its strategic vision for women and girls.³

Gradually, due of technological development and modernization, the role of social institutions changed. Today's children are under pressure to excel in academics and extracurricular activities. Changing roles of women at home, breakdown of the joint family system, single child concept and technological advancement are influencing the life of children also. The role of parents cannot easily be explained. The society and social institutions expect too much from them. A parent may be good in fulfilling the physical needs for their child. However, understanding the children and helping them might have been considered as an additional responsibility (Akshatha and Mohan, 2017).

Adolescence is a phase of rapid growth and development during which physical, physiological and behavioural changes occur. They constitute more than 1.2 billion worldwide, and about 21% of Indian population. Morbidity and mortality occurring in this age group is mostly due to preventable causes. Young and growing children have poor knowledge and lack of awareness about physical and psychological changes that occurs during adolescence and the ill health affecting them. Existing Adolescent health programs focus on rendering services like immunization, health education for sexual and reproductive health, nutritional education and supplementation, anemia control measures and counseling. Adolescent health programs are fragmentary at present and there is no comprehensive program addressing all the needs of adolescents (Sivagurunathan, 2015).

Objectives:

- To assess the demographic variables among adolescents girls their parents.
- To assess the challenges faced by adolescents girls among adolescents living in Alwarthiru Nagar.

- To assess the parents opinion about challenges faced by adolescent girls among parents of adolescent living in Alwarthiru Nagar.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 100 adolescent girls and their parents of adolescent girls. Samples are selected purposive random sampling techniques by using lottery method.

The cross sectional research study was conducted during a one-week period. Data collection was conducted in Alwarthiru Nagar, after getting permission from the counselor of the Alwarthiru Nagar. Demographic variable consist of age, religion, type of family birth of order, education, age at menarche, type of school, and parent variable consists of age, qualification, occupation, marital status, income. Self-structured interviewed questionnaires were used to collect data on challenges faced by adolescent girls and opinion about their parents.

The study investigators explained to the adolescent girls and parents opinion about the study's objectives, and requirement of consent to participate in the study. The investigators then provided instructions for filling the questionnaire, and then guided the adolescent girls and their parents.

Understanding of each question was checked by asking the adolescent girls and their parents to repeat the meaning. During the filling of questionnaires, the investigators helped the adolescent girls and their parents throughout and helped simplifying the meaning of each question, clarifying doubts and checking for completeness of filling up the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 100 samples regarding age out of 100 samples 33(33%) samples were comes under age in years 12-14 years, 29(29%) were comes under age in years 15-16 years, 38 (38%) samples were comes under age in years 17-19 years. Regarding religion out of 100 samples 66(66%) samples were Hindu religion, 14(14%) samples were Christian 20(20%) samples were under Muslim religion. Regarding type of family, out of 100 samples, 71 (71%) samples were lived in nuclear family, 29(29%) samples were lived in joint family. Regarding educational qualification out of 100 samples 46(46%) samples were studied middle school, 52(52%) samples were studied higher school, 02 (2%) samples were not completed her studies. Regarding age at menarche out of 100 samples

40(40%) samples were 10-12 yrs, 56 (56%) samples were 13-14 yrs, 4(4%) samples were above 15 and above. Regarding birth of order, out of 100 samples 47(47%) samples were first child, 49(49%) samples were second child, 4(4%) samples were third child. Regarding type of school out of 100 samples 55(55%) samples were co-ed school, 45(45%) samples were non co-ed school. Regarding parent variables out of 100 samples 22(22%) samples were age group of 25-35 years, 69(69%) samples were age group of 36—45 year, 9(9%) samples were age group of 45-58 years, Regarding education qualification out of 100 samples, were 10(10%) illiterate 53(53%) samples were primary schools, 30(30%) samples were SSLC, 71 (71%) samples were under pre university. Regarding occupation out of 100 samples 47(47%) samples were daily wage workers, 26(26%) samples were household workers, 15(15%) samples were business worker, 12(12%) samples were professional workers Regarding marital status, out of 100 samples 76(76%) samples were married women, 18(18%) samples were separated mothers, 3(3%) samples were widow mothers. 4(4%) samples were divorced mothers. Regarding family income out of 100 samples 42(42%) samples were 25,000 to 50,000, 54(54%) samples were 50,000 to 1,00,000, 4(4%) samples were above 1,00,000.

The challenges faced by adolescent girls were percentage of safety issues (48%), menstrual hygiene

and reproductive health (84%), discomfort during menstruation (90%), gender discrimination (42%), mobility and freedom of opinion restricted (53%), curiosities regarding sex and sexuality (78%), gender role perception (30%), conflict of emotions (89%), usage of ICT (74%), challenges related to social network (50%), addiction of watching TV (72%). And regarding interpersonal relationship (74%), peer pressure (69%), peer relationship (28%), easily get irritated or anger (59%), accepting the bodily changes (30%), lack of motivation and guidance (22%), Parents forces to choose carrier according to their wish (63%), mobile phone addiction (65%). The challenges faced by adolescents girls and about their parents opinion were sharing every problems (50%), Recreation (83%), Adolescent girls are tough to handle (71%), job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children (85%), Regarding sex education and sexual abuse (25%), Regarding choosing their carrier (85%).

The challenges faced by adolescents girls and about their parents opinion were sharing every problems (50%), Recreation (83%), Adolescent girls are tough to handle (71%), job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children (85%) Regarding sex education and sexual abuse (25%), Regarding choosing their career (85%).

Table 1 shows the challenges faced by adolescents girls were percentage of safety issues (48%), menstrual

Table 1: Frequency and distribution of challenges faced by adolescents girls among adolescents living in a Alwarthiru Nagar

Sr. No.	Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Safety issues	48	48%
2.	Menstrual hygiene and Reproductive health	84	84%
3.	Discomfort during menstruation	90	90%
4.	Gender discrimination	42	42%
5.	Mobility and freedom of opinion is restricted	53	53%
6.	Curiosities regarding sex and sexuality	78	78%
7.	Gender role perception	30	30%
8.	Conflict of emotions	89	89%
9.	Usage of ICT	74	74%
10.	Challenges related to social network sites	50	50%
11.	Addicted to watching TV	72	72%
12.	Regarding interpersonal relationship	74	74%
13.	Peer pressure	69	69%
14.	Easily get irritated or anger	59	59%
15.	Accepting bodily changes	30	30%
16.	Parents forces to choose carrier according to their wish	36	36%
17.	Lack of motivation and guidance	22	22%
18.	Mobile phone addiction	65	65%

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of the parents opinion among adolescents girls

Sr. No.	Parents Opinions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Sharing every problems	50	50%
2.	Recreation	83	83%
3.	According to academic performance	66	66%
4.	Adolescent girls are tough to handle	71	71%
5.	Spending time to take care of children	85	85%
6.	Treating both child equally	93	93%
7.	Regarding sex education and sexual abuse	25	25%
8.	Regarding choosing their career	85	85%

hygiene and reproductive health (84%), discomfort during menstruation (90%), gender discrimination (42%), mobility and freedom of opinion is restricted (53%), curiosities regarding sex and sexuality (78%), gender role perception (30%), conflict of emotions (89%), usage of ICT (74%), challenges related to social network (50%), addiction of watching TV (72%), regarding interpersonal relationship (74%), peer pressure (69%), peer relationship (28%), easily get irritated or anger (59%), accepting the bodily changes (30%), lack of motivation and guidance (22%), Parents forces to choose carrier according to their wish (63%), mobile phone addiction (65%).

Table 2 shows that the challenges faced by adolescents girls and about their parents opinion were sharing every problems (50%), Recreation (83%), Adolescent girls are tough to handle (71%), job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children (85%) Regarding sex education and sexual abuse (25%), Regarding choosing their career (85%).

Discussion:

The present study was to assess the relation between the challenges faced by adolescent girls and their parents. The result indicates approximately the challenges faced by adolescent girls were percentage of safety issues (48%), menstrual hygiene and reproductive health (84%), discomfort during menstruation (90%), gender discrimination (42%), mobility and freedom of opinion restricted (53%), curiosities regarding sex and sexuality (78%), gender role perception (30%), conflict of emotions (89%), usage of ICT (74%), challenges related to social network (50%), addiction of watching TV (72%), regarding interpersonal relationship (74%), peer pressure (69%), peer relationship (28%), easily get irritated or anger (59%), accepting the bodily changes (30%), lack of motivation and guidance (22%), Parents forces to choose carrier according to their wish (63%),

mobile phone addiction (65%). Challenges faced by adolescents girls and about their parents opinion were sharing every problems (50%), Recreation (83%), Adolescent girls are tough to handle (71%), job going parents are unable to spend more time to care their children (85%) Regarding sex education and sexual abuse (25%), Regarding choosing their career (85%).

The study which is similar to findings reported by study conducted by safety issue is the major challenge for majority of (76.8%) adolescent girls. Menstrual hygiene and reproductive health is the second important challenge among adolescent girls (74.4%). The fourth significant challenge is gender discrimination (74%). The rapid development of computer, internet, mobiles and other communication technologies yields numerous opportunities and benefits for adolescent girls. On the other side, it has created numerous chances for new forms of crimes like morphing, pornography and traps in the social networking sites. In the present investigation 67.6% of the sample expressed usage of ICT as posing a challenge to them. Interpersonal relationship is another persistent area of challenge for 65% of girls in the total sample. Peers play a greater role in adolescent girls' life and at times it becomes difficult for girls to resist the peer influences. The results of the present analysis show that 62.8% of girls have challenges related to peer pressure. 58% of girls responded that they are utterly confused as how to choose an appropriate career and they lack proper role models. They are worried that the interest of their parents regarding choice of their career is different from what they have in mind (Kuruvilla, 2015).

This condition must change Parents and teachers must realize the need for sex education and open discussions in matters related to sexuality with adolescents. Training to handle adolescence education classes effectively must be given to the teachers and

other concerned team. Proper clarification of the doubts of youngsters is more important than the simple transaction of adolescence education classes. Youngsters often have a reluctance to ask their doubts out of shyness and fear of peer ridicule. The stigma and secrecy surrounding sexuality in the Indian society add up to this reluctance. Based on the experiences from the present study, the investigators strongly recommend the use of 'Curiosity Box' in such sessions wherein the adolescents feel very free and open in raising their doubts and apprehensions.

Most of the girls are scared of being cheated in the social networking sites. Some of them admitted that they are addicted to watching TV and few of them agreed that their parents often scold for their lengthy watching of TV, sitting with laptop or chatting over phone. The study reveals that adolescent girls are not aware of using technologies properly and adopting online safety strategies. Haneefa and Sumitha (2011) points out from their study that a good number of students convey issues related to security and privacy and fear of misusing their personal information as the major problem while using social networking sites. A number of studies also have highlighted the negative outcomes such as overuse of the mobile phone and related financial problems (Billieux *et al.*, 2008; Funston *et al.*, 1999) and addiction to the mobile phone in young adults and adolescents (Bianchi and Phillips, 2005; Funston *et al.*, 2004). The present study reveals the need for mobile literacy to adolescents as how to use it judiciously and awareness regarding cybercrimes and cyber laws to prevent the trapping.

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