

Awareness regarding family life education concepts among institutionalized adolescent girls

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to assess the Knowledge content regarding Family Life Education concepts among 27 Institutionalized adolescent girls, residing in two destitute homes in Jammu city i.e. SOS Home and Balika Niketan. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample and data was collect using interview schedule. The result revealed that majority of respondents were having knowledge about nutritious food which they view as healthy and one should always prefer balanced diet. A high proportion of respondents were having awareness regarding menstruation and fertility period. The inmates of SOS Home viewed that the length of fertility period is between 15-45 years and gain information regarding menstruation cycle from their friends and sisters, and in Balika Niketan they viewed that the length of fertility period lies between 15-49 years and gain information regarding menstruation cycle from their friends and caretaker. A high proportion of the respondents revealed that population of india is increasing and it has effect on the size of the family. The results further revealed that majority of the respondents in both the institutions viewed that marriage is compulsory for every individual and right age of marriage is between 21-25 years. In both the institutions, most of the respondents were having knowledge regarding breast feeding and should be continued for 1-2 years. According to them colostrum is good for the health of new born. Majority of the respondents were having knowledge about HIV/AIDS as compared to inmates of Balika Niketan. Majority of the respondents were having less knowledge content regarding immunization of pregnant women and children in both institutions. A two day intervention programme was planned and organized for the sample adolescent girls based on the findings i.e. one day in SOS Home, and one day in Balika Niketan, Amphalla. The intervention programme yielded positive responses as respondents gained valuable information from the researcher which helped them in clarifying their queries regarding AIDS and immunization practices. Overall, it can be concluded that respondents in SOS home were having better knowledge regarding various concepts of Family Life Education the reason could be better schooling of the inmates of SOS home.

Keywords: Family Life Education Institutionalized, Adolescents, Intervention.

Introduction

Adolescents are the backbone and future of the society. The term adolescent means “to emerge” or “to achieve identity”. Adolescence is defined as a phase of life characterized by rapid growth and development i.e. physical, social and psychological changes, maturity, experimentation, development of adult mental process and a move from the earlier childhood, socio-economic dependence towards relative independence. Adolescence is a crucial phase in the life of a female, at this stage; she stands at the threshold of adulthood. The current generation of adolescent will be the largest generation in history to make the transition from childhood to adults, but their health needs, and particularly their reproductive health needs to be ignored and neglected. Adolescents find themselves sandwiched between a glamorous western influence, which arouses their curiosities and instincts, and a stern conservation at home, which strictly forbid discussion on sex. This dichotomy aggravates the confusion among adolescents. Changes in social values may lead to increased premarital sexual activity, pregnancy and possibly child rearing among unmarried girls, apart from the increasing influence of various health problems. They need authentic knowledge that helps them to understand the process of growing up in particular reference in reproductive health need, so that they are well equipped to cope with the problem which they might confront during the transition phase. Rao (2001) studied that

educational system provides adolescents with the opportunity to acquire in the area of intellectual, emotional and social development. The Life cycle approach for holistic child development remains unaddressed if adolescent girls are excluded from the developmental programs. Adolescent need special attention and there is need to impart Family Life Education in this sensitive period. The term ‘Family Life Education’ is study of self-awareness understanding of others about sexuality, marriage and parenthood. Family Life Education is also been defined as “Education for Human Development” which seeks to ensure that each individual approaching adulthood is equipped with the skills and personal reserve to cope with the challenges of everyday life in society within acceptable societal structures and to adapt to change with experience and equilibrium (Sarada, 1999).

Institutionalized adolescents are affected by various forms and degree of deprivation not only by their previous experiences, but also by the simple fact of being away from their homes. Children placed in an institution by reason of necessity are children of misfortune. They have lost their parents due to death, divorce of separation or their parents either could not or would not care of them. So their basic needs for individual care, attention, love, warmth and security are not met in the institutional set up. Girls living in such institutions may be thinking themselves deprived as compared to those girls who are living in secure and affectionate home and whose needs of

acceptance, belongingness, identification and approval are adequately being fulfilled. Thus institutionalized adolescent girls lack in various aspects of Family Life Education. Therefore, there is a need to impart the concept of Family Life Education to these girls. The objectives of Family Life Education is to enrich and improve the quality of individual and family life and thus helping these girls to be equipped with the skills and personal reserve to cope with the challenges of everyday life in society within.

Objectives of the study

- To study the knowledge content regarding Family Life Education concepts among institutionalized adolescent girls.
- To plan an intervention programme for sample adolescent girls on the basis of research findings.

Hypothesis

The sample group will not be fully equipped with regard to concepts related to Family Life Education.

Methodology

The sample comprised of 27 institutionalized adolescents girls in the age group of 11-18 years, selected purposively from two institutions of Jammu working for the welfare of deprived children. The institutions selected were SOS Home and Balika Niketan. For the data collection two interview schedules were used for gathering background information and contents of Family Life Education. Data was analyzed by using various statistical tools.

Interview Schedule I: An interview schedule was formulated to collect background information regarding the institutionalized children, their families, duration of institutionalization and relationship with the peer group. It contains open ended questions mostly with only a few binary questions.

Interview schedule II: A self-devised interview schedule was used to study the knowledge content of adolescent girls regarding various aspects of Family Life Education: Nutritious food, Menstruation Cycle, Marriage, Family Planning, Immunization practice.

Intervention: A plan for intervention was drawn on the basis of the findings. A need based intervention programme was planned for the sample adolescent girls who were having less awareness regarding some of the concept of Family Life Education (HIV/ AIDS, immunization of pregnant women and children). Communication Aids were used in the intervention programme.

Results

1. Background Information of Respondents

The results revealed that majority of the respondents (52%) were in the age group of 14-18 years, rest of the respondents (48%) were in the age group of 11-14 years and 49% of the respondents had qualified primary school, most of the respondents (89%) were from nuclear families and 11% of them came from joint families. Majority of the respondents (59%) were having 3-6 members in the family, (30%) of them were third born and most of the respondents (63%) were

having friends outside the institution and 37% didn't have friend outside; on the other hand, all the respondents have friends inside the institutions and 78% have friends of opposite sex.

2. Information related to the knowledge content of respondents regarding family life education

2.1 Knowledge Regarding Nutritious Food

In SOS Home, majority of the respondents i.e. (65%) were of the view that nutritious food means balanced diet, only 47% of the respondents know that diet of pregnant women should be balanced and nutritious for good health of child. Most of the respondents (76%) viewed that by cleanliness we maintain health and majority of the respondents (94%) believed that education contributes for making good health.

Whereas in Balika Niketan, half of the respondents had knowledge that diet should be planned for proper growth and development, most of the respondents (90%) believed that nutritious food should be specific and more than half of the respondents (60%) stated that a healthy diet should be given during menstruation cycle, less than half of the respondents (40%) believed that it should be balanced and nutritious, half of the respondents (50%) said that by taking balanced and nutritious diet we maintain health and all the respondents believed that education contributes for making good health.

2.2 Knowledge regarding menstruation cycle and fertility

In SOS Home, majority of the respondents (47%) gain information regarding menstruation cycle from friends and only 41% of the respondent's form sisters, 53% observed changes after menstruation cycle and out of these 78% observed pimples and 22% change in voice. Majority of the respondents (88%) avoided work during menstruation cycle and kind of work they avoid is running (53%) and worshipping (47%). All the respondents used both types of napkins i.e. readymade and homemade. Most of the respondents (71%) the length of fertility period is between 15-45 years and only 29% believed that it is between 15-49 years of age. All the respondents were having knowledge that hygiene is necessary for both males and females as it is requirement for better health. Almost all the respondents (88%) were having knowledge that husband and wife should decide about the pregnancy.

Whereas in Balika Niketan, Majority of the respondents (70%) gain information regarding menstruation cycle from caretakers in the institution, only 30% of the respondents from friends. Most of the respondents (60%) observed changes after menstruation cycle and out of these an equal number observed weakness and change in voice. All the respondents avoid work during menstruation, out of these 50% avoid playing, 30% running and 20% avoid worshipping. All the respondents used both the napkins readymade and handmade. Most of the respondents (60%) have awareness regarding the length of fertility period i.e. between 15-49 years. Majority of the respondents (80%) have awareness that husband and wife should decide about the pregnancy.

2.3 Knowledge Regarding HIV/AIDS

In SOS Home, majority of the respondents i.e. (70%) were having knowledge regarding the meaning of HIV/ AIDS. Few of them didn't have knowledge. Most of the respondents (65%)

have the awareness of meaning of AIDS, only 18% of the respondents HIV is a disease, 29% of the respondents believed that AIDS spread through infected syringes, 18% infected blood, 6% believes that it spreads through sexual contact. 41% of them believed that it spread by all the above. More than half of the respondents (58%) are of the view that there is a treatment for AIDS disease. Majority of the respondents (88%) believe that HIV infected person can infect the disease to another and are of the belief that infected husband/ wife shouldn't think of child birth. Only, 38% of the respondents were of the view that drug addicted person should have information about his/ her disease.

Whereas in Balika Niketan, majority of the respondents (90%) were not aware of HIV/AIDS. All the respondents were not aware about the sources through which AIDS spread and means of prevention. Most of the respondents (70%) believed that there is treatment for AIDS. Majority of the respondents (80%) believed that HIV infected person infect the disease to another. Most of the respondents (70%) view that infected husband/ wife, should think of child birth, more than half of the respondents (60%) believed that drug addicted person gets AIDS, most of them (70%) were of the view that AIDS patient should have information about his/her disease. More than half of the respondents (60%) said that AIDS patient should donate blood. Majority of the respondents (80%) were known that information of AIDS should be imparted to the child by parent/ teacher. The inmates of Balika Niketan were not having full knowledge about HIV/AIDS in some aspects they have partial and in some; they have no information at all.

2.4 Knowledge of respondents regarding population

Majority of the respondents in both the institutions were having knowledge regarding various aspects of population. The respondents in the both institutions believed that population of India have increased. All the respondents in SOS Home believed that from the religious point of view presence of son in family have a positive effect on the size of the family and in Balika Niketan, majority of the respondents (90%) are in favour that the presence of son in family has a positive effect. All the respondents in both the institutions believed that increasing population have more effect on country's population.

2.5 Knowledge content of respondents regarding family planning

In SOS Home, all the respondents were having knowledge regarding the right meaning of family planning as it is to give birth by choice. All the respondents were having knowledge regarding contraceptive i.e. it is meant for both male and female. More than half of the respondents (53%) viewed that contraceptive is a means that propagate small families. All the respondents believed that family planning should be planned by husband and wife and also that family planning should be adopted by both rich as well as poor people.

Whereas in Balika Niketan, majority of the respondents (80%) reveals that family planning is a means to give birth by choice and not by luck. Almost all the respondents (70%) were having knowledge that contraceptives are meant for both male and female. Most of the respondents (80%) were having knowledge that contraceptives are the means of birth control, and majority of the respondents (70%) believed that family planning should be planned by husband and wife and all respondents viewed

that family planning should be adopted by both people rich and poor.

2.6 Knowledge Regarding Marriage

Majority of the respondents were having full knowledge regarding various aspects related to marriage in SOS Home. More than half of the respondents (53%) viewed that right age of marriage is 21-25 years, less than half of the respondents (47%) believed that right age of marriage is 18-21 years.

2.7 Respondents knowledge regarding breast feeding

In SOS Home, all the respondents were having knowledge regarding breast milk is essential for the proper growth and development of the child. Majority of the respondents (65%) were in favour that colostrum is necessary for new born, only 35% of the respondents were in favour that colostrum is good for health of new born. More than half of the respondents (60%) believed that duration of breast feeding should be 0-6 months, whereas less than half of the respondents (40%) viewed that duration of breast feeding should be 0-12 months. All the respondents were having knowledge that weaning food should start at 4-6 months. Majority of the respondents (76%) were having knowledge that nutritious and balanced diet is necessary for pregnant women.

Where as in Balika Niketan, an equal number of respondents observed first milk is nutritious and good for health of new born. Majority of the respondents (80%) are of the view that duration of breast feeding should be 0-12 months, only 20% of the respondents were believed that it should be (12-24). Most of the respondents (60%) were having knowledge that nutritious and balanced diet is necessary for pregnant women.

2.8 Knowledge regarding immunization

All the respondents in both institutions were not aware about immunization of pregnant women. More than half of the respondents (53%) were not aware of immunization of children; few of them (41%) were having knowledge regarding immunization of children i.e. for polio drops and only 6% for tetanus.

Whereas in Balika Niketan, all the respondents were not aware about immunization of pregnant women as well as immunization of children, only 10% of them having awareness regarding polio drops i.e. the immunization for children.

Intervention

The results further revealed that the knowledge of adolescent girls in Balika Niketan was less regarding AIDS and immunization practices and in SOS Home regarding immunization. Thus, a two days intervention programme was planned and organized i.e. one day in SOS Home and one day in Balika Niketan for the sample adolescent girls based on the findings. This programme was based only on those concepts of Family Life Education for which the adolescent girls had less knowledge content. The intervention programme yielded positive responses. All the respondents on whom this programme was implemented were satisfied. They reported that the information they received from the researcher was quite valuable as this helped them in clarifying their queries regarding different concepts in Family Life Education like AIDS and immunization practices.

Discussion and Conclusion

- The present research work revealed that adolescent girls in both the institutions have adequate knowledge regarding nutritious food, breast feeding and colostrum but inadequate knowledge regarding immunization.
- The inmates of SOS Home have knowledge of AIDS and that could be because of better schooling. Also the results are consistent with the study conducted by Family Planning Association of India (1995), that focused on a need for accurate knowledge about STD/HIV/AIDS and modes of HIV transmission to male and female urban youth.
- The results revealed that inmates of both the institutions have adequate knowledge about menstruation and other related issues. But in the study of Sadiq, Salih 2013 knowledge regarding menstruation was poor in the majority of the girls, and mothers were their major source of information, certain practices were restricted during menstruation such as bathing and physical activity and absenteeism from school was considerable.
- The inmates of both the institutions have adequate knowledge regarding population. Pattanaik 2000. Revealed that all the girls were aware of the small family norm, but few could correctly define it. Though most girls preferred a two-child family, almost all of them had a preference for at least one son.
- Most of the respondents demonstrates problems relating to the normal physical and psychological changes during this period. Similar finding were observed in a study conducted by Reena 2015. Her study revealed that adolescent girls emerge to be in need for counseling and support for coping with the bodily as well as psychological changes of adolescence. Another study showed lack of awareness and correct information about psychological changes of adolescence Jain RB 2013.
- The adolescent girls of both the institutions have adequate knowledge regarding nutritious food, Family planning, population, marriage and inadequate knowledge about HIV/AIDS and immunization. The results are in concurrence with the study by Sai baba 2002 which revealed that use of educational aids through intervention have a positive effect on the nutritional knowledge of girls which may ultimately improve their nutritional status. In a study by Gupta 2001 found that awareness of at least one method of immunization was present in majority of girls and most of them were aware of polio, BCG TT, Measles and DPT. In Kolkata only 13.5 senior school students had clear knowledge regarding AIDS – its general aspects, transmission and prevention Chatterjee 2001.
- The results further revealed that the awareness level of adolescent girls in Balika Niketan was less regarding AIDS and immunization practices and in SOS Home regarding immunization. Thus a two days intervention programme was planned and organized one day in SOS Home and one day in Balika Niketan for the sample adolescent girls based on the findings. This programme was based only on those concepts of Family Life Education for which the adolescent girls had less knowledge content. The intervention programme yielded positive responses. All the respondents on whom this programme was implemented were satisfied. They

reported that the information they received from the researcher was quite valuable as this helped them in clarifying their queries regarding different concepts in Family Life Education like AIDS and immunization practices. Bhende 1995. Conducted a study and found that women and girls of low socio-economic status were greatly vulnerable to HIV and the required a need based intervention. The intervention must focus on improving self-confidence and communication skills while simultaneously providing basic Family Life Education and sex education.

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