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Impact of intervention programmes on the life skills of adolescent girls in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which enables individuals and groups to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life, therefore efforts are to be made to empower these adolescent girls through education and training in different areas. The present study has been undertaken with the objective to empower adolescent girls by imparting life skills. A total of five villages were selected from three blocks. A sample of 155 school going adolescent girls between the age range of 14 to 18 years was selected from three blocks i.e. Baijnath, Panchrukhi and Bhawarna of district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. Data were collected from the respondents on various scales in three phases namely pre test, post test I and Post test II. In between each phase, interventions were given to the respondents through training, lectures by subject matter specialists, field visits and through activities organized for a specific trait. Intervention programmes were organized mainly in groups. Significant differences were observed after intervention in decision making, interpersonal relationship and knowledge on legal issues.

Key words: Intervention, life skills, adolescents and enhancement.

Introduction

Adolescents account for one fifth of the world's population and have been on an increasing trend. In India they account for 22.8 per cent of the total population. This implies that about 230 million Indians are adolescents in the age group of 10-19 years. Adolescence is a phase of life characterized be rapid physical growth and development, physical and social and psychological changes and maturity, sexual maturity, experimentation, development of adult mental processes and a transition from the earlier childhood, socio- economic dependence towards relative independence.

Women empowerment is the process in which women individually and collectively become active, knowledge and goal oriented. Women tend to be involved in the care of children and management of the household as well as income generation. Rural women and girls are the most vulnerable among all the groups of population that require intervention for quality life. They work for long hours in tasks that are beyond their capacities often with no training and awareness of recent trends in farming as well as household activities. They face discrimination in the family and as a result in adolescence the girls bear the burden of looking after young siblings, working and doing household chores. This erodes their capacity for normal growth and development and prevents them from developing educational and other qualification essential for self development, capacity building and empowerment.

Empowerment would become more relevant if women are educated, better informed and can take rational decisions. The present study focused on empowerment through life skill education. Rural adolescent girls are unable to utilize their potential in an appropriate way due to lack of guidance and motivation. Through this study effort has been made to help the women to improve the decision making ability to take everything in the right sense and also improve their contribution to the society.

Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Life skills are innumerable and the nature and definition of life skills are likely to differ across cultures and settings. However, analysis of the life skills suggests that there is a core set of skills that are at the heart of skills – based initiatives for the promotion of the health and well being of rural adolescent girls. The main objective of the study is to empower rural adolescent girls through imparting life skill education (LSE) namely decision making, communication skills, Interpersonal relationships, problem solving, critical thinking etc.

Methodology

A total of five villages were selected randomly from three blocks i.e. Baijnath, Panchrukhi and Bhawarna of district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. From these villages a sample of 155 rural school going girls between the age range of 14 years to 18 years was selected. The psychological tools were administered on the respondents to measure some traits like decision making pattern, communication skills, interpersonal relationships, social skills, general awareness, awareness regarding legal aspects, self esteem and mental health. Data were collected from the respondents with help of various scales in three phases namely pre test, post test I and post test II. In between the phases, intervention was given to the respondents through trainings, lectures by the subject matter specialists and through activities organized for a specific trait. Intervention programmes were organized mainly in groups.

Result and Discussion

It is revealed from table 1 that communication skills of adolescent girls within the home were found to at medium level and none of the respondents exhibited high level of communication skills within home. Whereas in the neighbourhood majority (81.3%) of adolescent girls exhibited medium level of communication skills, only 12.3 per cent were reported to have low level of communication skills in their neighbourhood. Half of the respondents (52.9 %) had low level of communication skills with the authority and the remaining (47.1%) demonstrated medium level of communication skills with the authority. The results of present study were in consonance with findings of Twenge and Crocker (2002) who reported that in communication skills majority of adolescent girls fell in the low category (62%) followed by medium level. Only 14% were in high category.

Majority (61.6%) of the adolescent girls were at medium level of social skills and the remaining (38.4%) were at had high level of social skills (Table 2). Table 3 shows that majority (98.7%) of the

Table 1. Communication skills

N=155

Skills	Category	f	%
Within the home	Low	6.0	3.8
	Medium	149.0	96.2
	High	-	-
In the neighbourhood	Low	19.0	12.3
	Medium	126.0	81.3
	High	10.0	6.4
With authority	Low	82.0	52.9
	Medium	73.0	47.1
	High	-	-

Table 2. Social skills among respondents N=155

Category	f	%
Low	-	-
Medium	95.0	61.6
High	60.0	38.4
Total	155.0	100

Table 3. Self-Esteem of respondents N=155

Category	f	%
Low	-	-
Medium	153.0	98.7
High	2.0	1.3
Total	155.0	100

adolescent girl's self esteem was at medium level and none of the girls were found to be falling in low self-esteem category. Similar study conducted by Kaplan, Howard (2001) on cognition in self esteem revealed that majority (75%) of boys found to have high self-esteem.

It is revealed from the table 4 that the interpersonal relationships of the adolescent girls with their parents was found to be at medium level among majority (62.6 %) of the respondents followed by high level (35.5%). More than half of the adolescent girls (58.1%) reported to be at medium level of interpersonal relationship with their siblings. The remaining (41.9%) were at high level of interpersonal relationship with their sibling. Regarding the interpersonal relationship of adolescent girls with their friends all (100%) were at high level of interpersonal relationship. With the neighbourers the interpersonal relationship of adolescent girls (64.6%) was medium. High level of interpersonal relationship was reported by 30.9 per cent of adolescent girls. Within groups

Table 4. Inter personal relationships of adolescent girls

N=155

Inter personal relationships	Category	f	%
With parents	Low	3.0	1.9
	Medium	97.0	62.5
	High	55.0	35.4
With siblings	Low	-	-
	Medium	90.0	58.0
	High	65.0	41.9
With friends	Low	-	-
	Medium	-	-
	High	155.0	100
With neighbors	Low	7.0	4.5
	Medium	100.0	64.5
	High	48.0	30.9
Within groups	Low	2.0	1.2
	Medium	81.0	52.2
	High	68.0	43.8

Table 5. Comparison of mean scores of pre and post tests on various aspects

Area	Mean and SD's			t-values		
	Pre test	Post test I	Post test II	Pre & post I	Pre & Post II	Pos t I & Post II
Decision making	Mean= 26.09 SD=4.41	Mean=28.59 SD=3.46	Mean=30.27 SD=2.143	1.999*	1.398	2.67*
Interpersonal relationships	Mean= 35.2 SD=4.22	Mean= 37.52 SD=3.26	Mean= 40.45 SD=6.26	8.39**	7.819**	5.392**
Communication skills	Mean= 17.97 SD=2.93	Mean= 17.87 SD=2.66	Mean= 17.57 SD=2.13	0.133	0.123	1.201
Self esteem	Mean= 17.72 SD=4.56	Mean=17.78 SD=4.53	Mean= 22.35 SD=1.52	0.256	0.296	1.029
Legal issues	Mean= 15.34 SD=2.28	Mean= 15.34 SD=2.30	Mean= 10.56 SD=1.52	0.23	0.5	3.253**
Mental health	Mean= 60.54 SD=1.34	Mean= 62.0 SD=1.53	Mean= 65.23 SD=2.98	3.35**	6.123**	6.354**

*represents significant value at 5% level of significance
** represents significant value at 1% level of significance

54.8 per cent of adolescent girls demonstrated medium level of interpersonal relationships and had high level (43.8%) of interpersonal relationships within group. Present study finds support finds support from findings of the study conducted by Geeta and Devi (2005) who revealed that interpersonal relationship of majority of the adolescent girls with their parents was found to be high.

It is clear from the table 5 that in decision making skill significant differences (t value at 5% and 1%) was observed between mean scores of pre and post test I and post test I and II. Positive impact of intervention has been seen in interpersonal relationships, mental health and legal awareness. Similar study conducted by Khadi (2003) revealed that all the adolescent girls fell in medium category on these skills. The mean scores on legal awareness was of medium level among girls.

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