

**IMPACT OF FEMALE ADOLESCENTS SCHOOL- BASED EDUCATION PROGRAM IN
REINFORCING THEIR ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE**

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Abstract:

Adolescence is a time of turbulence with biological, psychological, and social changes as they grow from childhood to adulthood. Rapid changes often outpace their social and emotional maturity. Despite the importance of this period, not much is known about the knowledge, attitudes, reproductive health-related behavior and health and social support needs of adolescents. Hence, the present study aimed to assess “The Implementation and the Efficacy of Kishore, Programme – A Case Study conducted in Dharwad, City female adolescents studied in Govt Kannada medium Schools of Dharwad city in Karnataka who have under gone Kishori Awareness Program training an initiative of Sarva Shikshan Abhiyan from 2005 to 2013, and also including non-participant to measure the effectiveness of programme in reinforcing their attitude and practice.

Keywords: Kishori Awareness Program, Adolescent Girls, School Based Educational Program, Attitude and Practice.

Introduction:

Every third person in the India is young, while every fifth person an adolescent. India has the largest population of adolescents in the world. Being home to 243 million individuals aged 10-19 years, the country's adolescents constituted 20 per cent of the world's 1.2 billion adolescents (UNICEF 2012). According to the decadal & yearly data from 1991 to 2011 the adolescent population has increased from 177.7 million in 1991, 21.9 per cent in 2001, 20.9 per cent in 2011. Karnataka's adolescent population constitutes about 18.9 percent of the entire adolescent population in India (Census 2011). This significant population is therefore attracting the attention of the policy-makers and the academicians alike, as this population can become a valuable asset of the country if groomed well and their energy is channelized productively.

Adolescence is a phrase used to describe the second decade of life of an individual, which is characterized by changes-physical, emotional, intellectual, social-role, relationship and expectations towards society (USAID, 2012). It may pose new challenges to health and development of the incumbent adolescents owing to their relative vulnerability to and pressure from peers and society to experiment. They may knowingly or otherwise adopt risk behavior under these circumstances. As a dynamic productive force, it is important for adolescents that the transition from childhood to adulthood is smooth and effortless so that they can make an enormous contribution to society through proper support of informed interaction. Therefore a need for effective and immediate programs has been discerned. Life Skills Education is one such initiative which can play a vital role in creating awareness and providing guidance to adolescents, as it empowers them with improved decision making skills, abilities that promote mental wellbeing and competencies to face the realities of life, builds self-esteem and confidence, ability to take responsibility for self and the society around.

Adolescent girls being the creators of future healthy generations, their empowerment becomes an essentiality than an option. The societal expectation towards girls has also changed and efforts are on to improve their potentialities through implementation of schemes for their empowerment. India has one of the fastest growing youth populations in the world. Taking cognizance of the morbidities and associated problems faced by adolescents in general and girls in particular, the government of India has initiated certain schemes and programs for their capacity building and empowerment. Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) is one such scheme, initiated under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), under the aegis of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, in 2005. In Karnataka on an experimental basis Kishori Awareness Program was implemented and training to 9-14 years school going adolescent girls was provided through awareness camps (*Jagruthi shibhira*) Dharwad district was one of the districts which implemented it through the Public Instruction Department with the help of the Sarvashikshan Abhiyan Programme. The training manual with the objectives of creating awareness on child rights, child trafficking, child abuse, importance of education, health and hygiene, gender equality, personality development, skill development, HIV/AIDS and Life Skill Education. Keeping these facts in mind, the Kishori Awareness Program was evolved to impart appropriate knowledge to young adolescent girls in schools so that

they can be empowered to take care of themselves. Realizing the utility and significance of this program, the researcher has attempted to relook in to this program and evaluate efficacy of the component taught during the training and its practice Health and Nutrition, Menstrual Hygiene Management and Superstitious Beliefs practice in their life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The researcher has made an elaborate survey of the studies evaluating Adolescent Education Programs in Indian literature published during the last one decade and more, to get some insights on methodological outcomes and to comprehend the utility and impact of each of the components on adolescents, based on the findings of the previous studies if any.

ARTICLES PERTAINING TO HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Report of the District level Household Survey on Reproductive and Child Health (2006) drafted by Ladu Singh, Mari Bhat ;Ram and Paswan ;Thomas, 1991; Shepherd and Dennison, 1996; Spear, 1996; Ramrao's (2013), describes the status of Indian adolescent, their Changes in physio-psychology, monetary backwardness, and uncontrolled population made the adolescent girls vulnerable to malnutrition. Majority of girls was found to be anemic with other illness. So it was suggested that Indians had comparable genetic potential to grow, but sub-optimal environmental factors like diet, morbidity burden, socioeconomic status etc., had taken a toll and resulted in poor growth. Nutritional problems of adolescents-whether under nutrition or nutrition-related chronic diseases-are mainly the result of dietary inadequacies, because of a number of factors that can be grouped under physiological, socioeconomic, and psychosocial factors. So it was concluded that the need an hour to help them by eliminating the negative environmental factors for the upliftment of their nutritional status so as to raise healthy mothers of new millennium.

SUPERSTIOUS BELIEFS

Dhillon (2014) was keen in examining the level of superstitions among the girls in the age group of 14 to 16 years. Besides, he was also looking forward to examine the difference in the level of superstition among girls grouped on the basis of type of school, income, & education of their parents. For this study he used a Purposive sample of schools & subjects. The sample consisted of 86 Convent & 122 Government school girls, totalling 208 girls from both the schools. Data were

collected through the superstition scale by Dixit & Dubey (1988). The study found that nearly two third of the girls were not superstitious, 1/6th girls had moderate belief towards superstitions, government schools students were more superstitious than convent going girls because convent schools. It clearly indicated that education played a significant role in developing analytical, critical & logical thinking among individuals..

Yet another study carried out in Iran by Kashiha (2015) covering a sample of two hundred & fifty female students, ranging from 15 to 19 years, to identify the relationship between superstition & locus of control & find out whether people with more superstitious beliefs were more in an external locus of control or internal, using Rutter questionnaire consisting of 29 items & questionnaire with 16 items, found a significant relationship between external source of control & having superstitious beliefs among the adolescent students.

MENSTRUATION AND ITS HYGIENIC MANAGEMENT

A community based descriptive cross-sectional study conducted by Kumar and Kundan (2011) focusing on the knowledge and psycho-social behavior of school going adolescents during menstrual days revealed that a strong bondage with the traditional beliefs, taboos and misconceptions during menstruation among these girls had led to much serious health and behavioral problems. Majority of the adolescents had affirmed that, they experienced cultural and societal restrictions during menstruation. There searchers therefore recommended that school management should take up weekly/monthly sessions on the menstrual issues by inviting health experts at times, to address the important issues faced by students and by involving their parents also. It was suggested that the teachers too had to address some issues in the class and also inform the students about good and reliable sources which they should access for accurate and correct information and intervention was found to be effective among adolescent girls in developing and enhancing their life skills.

The above review proves that life skill development programs, which target adolescents early in life, can prevent aggression, improve social skills, boost educational achievement and improve social skills. For, a healthy transformation from childhood to adulthood could be achieved by inculcating life skills in one's life to cope with several problems such as increasing pre-marital sexual activity, subjection to gender discrimination, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, unsafe motherhood and

sexual abuse. Hence this evaluation study of the ‘Kishori Awareness Program’ which had incorporated all these features of sexuality and reproductive health education , besides life-skills based education, is undertaken to assess its efficacy and to suggest continuation, if found efficacious, with renewed impetus.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has conscientiously followed all the requisite steps of social work research viz., Problem Formulation/Statement of Problem to detailing the Chapter Scheme while bearing in mind the scientific validity of the study. It is titled as “The Implementation and the Efficacy of Kishore Programme – A Case Study of Dharwad City”. In this backdrop of the theoretical foundation, the Kishori Awareness Program- supposedly a vital tool to enlighten adolescent girls about their reproductive and sexual health-under Sarvashikshan Abhiyan. Program was initiated very enthusiastically in Dharwad district on an experimental basis in the state of Karnataka, besides the other districts. This program was implemented under the joint auspices of the Sarva Shikshana Abhiyaan, the District Institute for Educational Training, Dharwad (DIET), the Department of Public Instructions, Government of Karnataka, and the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of Karnataka. The first phase training was held between November and December 2011 by covering 25,375 girls under the jurisdiction of Hubli-Dharwad Corporation. Initially the program was launched as a residential program by covering 2100 female adolescents between 9 and 14 years of age from the Government Kannada Medium Primary and High Schools studying in 6th, 7th and 8th standards. The broad objectives of the Scheme are to enhance the awareness level of adolescent girls towards nutrition health, menstrual hygiene, HIV AIDS, Life skills, and to enable the beneficiaries to take initiatives to become productive members of the society. For this purpose ‘Kishori Awareness Program manual’ was designed by mobilizing and utilizing expertise from volunteers working in local NGOs working with adolescents, Teachers and other members of the DIET. The researcher in present study has attempted to evaluate the efficacy of Kishori Awareness Program in respect to Dharwad city.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Adolescent girls form a significant section of India’s population. Their healthy development is of concern in the present day’s society as their roles are fast changing and they are expected to be active both in the private and public arenas. Basically

therefore, they need to be comfortable with themselves and be aware of their potentialities. This self realization will not dawn on them without their being exposed to the obstacles inherent in themselves and around them in the external environment, and trained to relieve these threats successfully. Realizing this need the Kishori Awareness Program was evolved and implemented. . It is with this in background, the present study was conceived and planned so that the researcher could evaluate the impact of the erstwhile Kishori Awareness (residential) Program and acquire some insights to suggest to the administrators of this program as well as the state either to continue it by reviving it or remodel it or even discontinue it if found obsolete.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This being a study, first of its kind, the researcher intended to evaluate the program by eliciting views, opinions of the Beneficiary and Non-beneficiary Adolescent Girl Students. The following objectives were therefore set for this study:

1. To examine the socio-demographic profile of the respondents of this study;
2. To examine the impact of this program on the behavior of the beneficiaries by comparing the same with the behavior of the non-trainees
3. To make appropriate suggestions to the stakeholders to determine the future course of action with regard to this program.

PLACE OF THE STUDY; Researcher preferred to undertake this study in Dharwad, especially in Dharwad city cluster.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY; The scope of this study is limited to the evaluation of the Kishori Awareness Program with regard to its implementation and efficacy.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Adolescents are unable to utilize their potential in an appropriate way and are engaged in non-productive activities due to lack of proper guidance and motivation. By adopting high risk behavior, adversely affecting society to a large extent Life Skill. Education plays a vital role in creating awareness and providing guidance and direction to adolescents through Schools. It empowers them with improved decision making skills, abilities that promote mental wellbeing and competencies to face the realities of life, build their self-esteem and self-confidence; develop the ability to take responsibility for self, relationships and society around. Therefore a need for effective

and immediate programs have been discerned which would be beneficial to young adolescents in specific and the society at large.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Since the present study had aimed to assess its effectiveness of Kishori Awareness Programme on enhancing awareness level among beneficiaries, the researcher has opted for an evaluation research design.

UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY

The Adolescent Girl Student Beneficiaries from all the Government Kannada Medium Schools of Dharwad city cluster where KAP was implemented were considered to be the universe of the study, besides the Administrators of the program, Teacher Resource Persons trained to be trainers, and the untrained female adolescent students studying with the beneficiary girls at the time of this study and volunteered to participate in this study were taken into consideration for population of the study.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Here the researcher had to adopt Purposive Sampling method who fitted in to the inclusion-exclusion criteria and volunteered to be a part of this study. Ultimately the sample selected was as follows:

	TRAINED	UNTRAINED
Universe (Total Population)	10 to12 % of the total 2100 Beneficiaries	Matching number of voluntary Participants
Sample (Proposed to be selected)	240	240
Sample (Actually available)	170	170

Inclusion Criteria

- Only female Adolescents students from Government Kannada Medium Schools who fell in the age group of 10 to 19 years were included;

- Adolescent girls who were the beneficiaries of Kishori Awareness Program and their class mates who had no opportunity to be the recipients of the benefits of this program were included.
- Only those female adolescents who were the residents of Dharwad city were included.

Exclusion Criteria

- Adolescent Girl Students of the Government English Medium schools were Excluded
- Girl students from other classes other than those who were studying with the beneficiaries were excluded.

RESEARCH TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED

Primary data was obtained through administering self structured questionnaires (prepared with the support of Kishori Awareness Program manual) for three different categories of respondents, and Researcher has reviewed about 100 studies from different data bases, such as Infibnet –Shodganga-Shodsindu, Research Gate, Google Scholar, Google e-books, Pub Med, JSTOR, Biomedical Research, International Journal of Indian Psychology, Sage Journals, Science Direct , Pro-Quest, J-Gate, PsycINFO, Semantic Scholar, Springer Link ,Times of India, various reports of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt of India, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, UNODC, UNFPA, UNESCO and WHO; reports of the National and International NGOs, Annual and Census Reports of the Government of India and the State of Karnataka.

PRE-TESTING OF THE TOOLS

The questionnaire for the adolescent girl students was pre-tested with a total of 20 each female-trained and untrained adolescent respondents and suitably modified.

DATA COLLECTION

Student respondents filled the questionnaires in the presence of the researcher and whenever they had any difficulty, they consulted her to clarify their doubts. The data from the beneficiary and non-beneficiary children were collected by distributing questionnaires to them in their respective classes, after obtaining permission from the Head Masters/Head Mistresses of the schools. The researcher attempted to discern the efficacy of KAP, by assessing their knowledge and behavioral practices in the areas

covered under this program by administering a self structured scale prepared with the support of Kishori Awareness Training Manual.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data were cleaned, coded, computed and analyzed by working out frequency tables and percentages, and using simple statistical measurements/tests. Further the data collected from the trained and the untrained adolescent girl students were compared to assess the efficacy of the program and inferences were drawn.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- The purpose of the study was informed to the respondents and their informed consent to participate in the study was obtained.
- Confidentiality was an important issue that was given serious consideration.

LIMITATIONS

- Inordinate delay caused in obtaining accurate data about the planning, inception and implementation of the program.
- Absence of accurate information about the beneficiaries.
- Delayed permission from and shorter duration permitted by the school authorities for data collection.

Analysis

The major findings of the primary data obtained from the field from four different groups Trained and untrained adolescent girls by administering three separate sets of questionnaires could be summarized as follows:

Assessment of Knowledge and behavioral Practice of the Respondents in the 13 Components of KAP

Assessment was carried out for 340 respondents (170 trained and 170 untrained) who participated in this study belonging to the middle adolescence period, studying in Government Kannada Medium Schools, majority were from urban area

and studying in 10th standard. Parents of the respondents were found to belong to lower socio-economic backgrounds like lower literacy, occupation and economic status, etc. There were 13 different components covered in the KAP manual (see table 1). The cumulative scores of the respondents on knowledge and awareness were consolidated and the respondents were classified in three levels viz., low, average, and high levels.

Table 1: Overall Awareness Level among Trained and Untrained Respondents on 3 components

Sl No	Components	Trained				Untrained			
		Low	AVRG	High	Total	Low	AVRG	High	Total
1	Health and Nutrition	10 (5.88)	64 (37.65)	96 (56.47)	170 (100)	12 (7.1)	63 (37.1)	95 (55.9)	170 (100)
2	Superstitious Belief	11 (6.47)	159 (93.52)	-	170 (100)	86 (50.58)	84 (49.42)	-	170 (100)
3	Menstrual Hygiene management	-	2 (1.2)	168 (98.8)	170 (100)	17 (10)	142 (83.5)	11 (6.5)	170 (100)
Overall Knowledge		-	74 (43.5)	96 (56.5)	170 (100)	124 (72.9)	46 (27.1)	-	170 (100)

The efficacy of KAP was attempted to be examined by comparing the overall awareness and knowledge of the respondents, both trained and untrained, on 3 components which showed a majority of the trained respondents had high level of awareness and knowledge on the three components while the untrained showed poor knowledge as a majority of them exhibited low and average knowledge.

The comparison of the cumulative scores of knowledge on components of the KAP showed that the trained respondents had better knowledge than the untrained respondents. This could be attributed to their exposure to the KAP training. This is because, on certain components which are openly discussed in the day to day life and which do not happen to be taboo subjects, the awareness of both the groups appears almost the same, though the trained respondents have an edge over the untrained. But the subjects who are not discussed openly either in families, at home or in schools; the untrained respondents seem to be more ignorant. Based on these findings it can be

conclusively stated that the training has had positive impact on the adolescent girls. Moreover, a large percentage of the children still remember the inputs provided to them through this training as accurately as mentioned in the training manual even after a time gap of more than a year.

Table 2: Overall practice Level of Health and Nutrition, Superstitious Belief and Menstrual Hygiene management among Trained and Untrained Respondents

Sl No	Components	Trained				Untrained			
		Low	AVRG	High	Total	Low	AVRG	High	Total
1	Health and Nutrition	22 (12.9)	147 (86.5)	1 (0.6)	170 (100)	28 (16.9)	73 (42.9)	69 (49.6)	170 (100)
2	Superstitious Belief	9 (5.29)	25 (14.71)	136 (80.00)	170 (100)	51 (30.00)	64 (37.64)	55 (32.35)	170 (100)
3	Menstrual Hygiene management	22 (12.9)	109 (145)	39 (22.9)	170 (100)	5 (2.9)	145 (85.3)	20 (11.8)	170 (100)
Overall Knowledge					170 (100)			-	170 (100)

Both the trained and untrained respondents who confessed to taking shelter under the superstitious beliefs. In fact the KAP's intention of bringing a change in respondents' irrational belief to rational beliefs through awareness seems to have made little impact. Nonetheless, the Menstrual Hygiene and management practice when compared, the trained girls attribute to their inability to practice because of inadequate physical conditions/facilities both at schools and at home and socio-economic conditions of their families. The overall practice pertaining to personal hygiene, nutrition and related behavior shows that while among the untrained respondents more number exhibit satisfactory practice, among the trained a majority exhibit somewhat satisfactory practice. This confirms that despite no training exposure, the untrained respondents have adopted satisfactory habits about personal health and nutrition..

The researcher prefers to conclude that KAP is an effective program barring some drawbacks. There is a need to continue it with new vigor eliminating or

plugging the gaps successfully. It will go a long way in developing the holistic personality of the adolescent girls by cautioning them about the areas where they need to be more careful and alert. A few hours of training may not be adequate for changing the psyche and behavior of them. A repeated and effective interaction with them seems to be essential to imbibe the desired change among the adolescent as the trained respondents being dependents their individual choices irrespective of their knowledge, may have been constrained by various factors such as social, cultural, and economic conditions of their families

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- The effectiveness of life skill education for female adolescents in rural, hilly and tribal region to integrate the education of life skills into specific social and cultural contexts.
- An interventional studies could be thought of on changing Nutrition Health issues, Menstrual Hygiene Management, Superstitious belief etc., so that the quality of life of adolescents can be improved by enabling them to make informed decisions.
- An examination of the impact of the socioeconomic determinants on the intervention could be a new area for social scientists, to comprehend the ineffectiveness of the intervention.

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