



Research Article

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EFFECT OF SEX EDUCATION WITH HEALTH AWARENESS ON ADOLESCENT FEMALE STUDENTS OF RURAL HIGH SCHOOL IN PUNE: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Adolescence is an important phase of life. Physical growth and development is rapid in this period but mentally they are immature. Especially females grow faster. They are curious about sexuality (96.7%) but never express their feelings openly. They may be misled by indecent magazines & media. It affects on their physical and mental health. This workshop was planned to counsel adolescent females about sexuality, protection and information about unexpected problems in a scientific way. Today's lifestyle is sedentary. Adolescents are not doing exercise regularly (99.17%). Hence workshop was conducted along with information about proper diet, regular exercise & regimen to maintain health.

Keywords: Adolescent female, Sex education, Ayurvedic directives of health

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is an important state in human life. It is a short span between childhood and adulthood in which adolescent's physical growth is rapid but psychologically they are immature. Adolescents are curious about sexuality; but generally, they never express these feelings openly. There is no trustworthy person around them due to nuclear families or outgoing parents. Hence their questions remained unanswered. Due to vast exposure to media adolescents enter in the unreal world and influenced by it. Media provides information in an erroneous manner which may lead to wrong decisions or criminal behavior. Hence it is duty of elder persons to instill correct concepts of sex & sexuality in children at proper time so that they do not get misled by indecent magazines and irresponsible media. If adolescents receive sex education at right time, their understanding will be rectified which lead to a satisfactory & healthy life.

Sexual abuse over females is increasing day by day¹. Hence each female should be aware about her safety. It is duty of parents and school to convey information to females. Scientific information given in the sex-ed is a path leading to the reality. By this view study was planned to educate Adolescent Females with sex-ed and to know their views on it in open session.

Today's AF (Adolescent Female) is figure conscious and neglects her health. Thus, to educate AF about healthy diet and to convey importance of regular exercise is a need of healthy generation. According to Ayurved, Ahara² i.e. Diet is the best medicine which maintains health & avoids illness. Hence study was planned including Ayurvedic view of diet & exercise.

Aim & objectives

- To study the effect of 'sex education along with health awareness with Ayurvedic directives' on Adolescent Females (AF).
- To educate AF about human reproductive system.

- To prepare AF to accept changes during puberty as a normal part of development.
- To advise importance of diet & exercise according to Ayurved.
- To guide AF about safety & develop their confidence by providing forum for discussion.

MATERIAL & METHODS

1. AF students of high school.
2. Verbal lecture
3. Video clippings
4. Questionnaire

Methodology

It was decided to take workshop of sex education along with health directives of Ayurveda for a group of adolescent females. Hence discussions were carried out with the high school authorities and permission was sought for conduction of workshop.

Questionnaires were designed by researcher own with the help of experts in sex education and counseling, for pre-workshop and post-workshop session. It is helpful to assess knowledge of AF before workshop & its modification after workshop.

Verbal lecture on sex education with Ayurvedic directives of health was prepared. Video clippings were selected accordingly for explanation of reproductive system (Anatomy and Physiology of reproductive organs).

A free talk was carried out in question – answer form i.e. Open session was to dispel myths in their mind.

Inclusion criterion

- AF were selected from 8th and 9th std class of the high school with prior permission of school authorities.
- AF were selected irrespective of cast, religion and status of physical development.

(Total 130 no. of AF between the age of 13yrs to 15 years were admitted in the school & 121 AF were attended the workshop, so n=121)

Exclusion criterion

AF who were not willing to participate in the workshop.

Steps in the Workshop

1. Introductory session
2. Filling of Pre- workshop questionnaire
3. The workshop – verbal lecture with video clippings.
4. Question- answer session = OPEN SESSION.
5. Filling of Post – workshop questionnaire.
6. feedback

AF were explained about the workshop in introductory session and pre-workshop questionnaire was fulfilled.

Comprehensive type of sex-ed³ was covered in the workshop which includes many topics from primary knowledge of reproductive system, growth and development, sexually transmitted diseases, various types of relationships, contraception and abstinence till marriage.

Brief information about diet and importance of exercise as per Ayurved medical science² was given to AF as follows –

- Unique concepts like Dosh⁴, (humor, basic elements of body) Dhatu⁵ (tissues, basic elements of body) & Agni⁶ (power of digestion).
- Doshas are three- Vata, Pitta, and Kapha.
- Pathological increase or decrease in Doshas leads to formation of diseases.
- Dhatus are seven- Rasa (plasma), Rakta (blood), Mamsa (muscles), Meda (fats), Asthi (bones), Majja (bone marrow) & Shukra (spermatic fluid)- health and strength of individual depends upon dominant Dhatus.
- Agni (has 13 types) is power of digestion. Kindled or activated Agni is essential for proper digestion & assimilation of food.
- Agni is associated with Pitta Dosh⁴ & Pitta is associated with Raktadhatu. Due to loss of blood during menstruation Pitta & thus Agni get affected.
- Thus, during menses Agni is unable to function optimally. Hence Ayurved has advised to take Laghu i.e. easily digesting food in this period.
- Ayurved has advised that food and exercise should change according to physical and environmental conditions to improve strength. Hence rules of diet⁷ & exercise⁸ were discussed in the workshop.

At the end of the workshop post-workshop questionnaire was fulfilled.

Open session was carried out as a free discussion to dissolve myths in the minds of AF. Feedback was taken after open session.

Both questionnaires were studied and analyzed.

Table 1: Percentage of status of AF about sex-education and related issues

Sex-education and related issues	Percentage
Know about sex-ed	3.3
Do not Know correct names of body parts	82.6
Have healthy discussion with parents	15.7
Restless & irritated during menstruation	57.7
Not doing regular exercise	99.17
Do not changes diet during menses	76.11
Do not know about STDs	59.
Chosen friendship as a long-term relation	76.87

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was seen that very few AF knew about sex-ed (3.3% only). Others were curious about it (71.9%). It highlights the need of sex-ed in Adolescents.

82.6 % AF do not know about correct names, structure and function of specific organs of female. It is essential for understanding the function of reproduction. This scientific information improves self-esteem of AF. Some AF got the information from their parents. It suggests the free and healthy atmosphere in the family. But they were few (15.7%).

14.87% AF have got menarche at the age of 11 to 12 years. Out of which 57.70% AF feel restlessness and annoyance during menstruation. It is the sign of bearing something unwanted. It highlights the need of information about physiological changes. Females in adolescence should accept body changes at ease. The information given during sex-ed about human reproduction ultimately improves their self-esteem as they accepted menstruation as a natural phase of life.

AF not doing regular exercise were 99.17%. It may result in unhealthy generation future.

AF who do not change their diet & exercise pattern during menses are 76.11%.

Though media is bombarding information of AIDS and contraception, surprisingly 59.5 % students do not know anything about it! Hence it again highlights the need of sex-ed.

Open session

AF felt awkward to talk freely about the topics included in the sex-ed. Hence, they were asked whether they would be able to talk to their siblings or friends. 100% were agreed to discuss about sex-ed with them. It showed their acceptance as a female and their wish to overcome miserable feelings of these topics.

Almost all AF expressed feelings of embarrassment on boys’ ‘staring look’ towards them. Some AF were disturbed by it but some believed that it is an initial stage of the love, which is very dangerous. After this session, maximum AF preferred to neglect it and some preferred to inform parents.

Importance of target in life was also discussed. Thus 83.4% agreed to complete the education. But only 15.7 % preferred to stand on their own feet and become financially independent. This workshop has elaborated types of interpersonal relationships with pros and cons. But surprisingly maximum AF (76.87 %) have chosen friendship as a preferred long term relationship rather than marriage (13.22 %). The choice of friendship was may be by the influence of the age.

Open session showed that AF were feeling confident to maintain good interpersonal relationship with persons around them unbiased by gender if myths in their mind are dispelled satisfactorily.

This session of Sex-ed helps students to identify positive aspect about them and of other gender too.

Adolescents asked various questions about Ayurvedic health directives and accept Ayurvedic view of health to improve their strength.

CONCLUSION

As age of menarche is decreasing today; Sex education should include in the schools as a part of educational activity. Current sex-education given in schools should carry out open session after informative lecture to dispel myths in the mind of AF. Sex-education should be given along with information of healthy diet & importance of regular exercise which will return with healthy generation. Free sharing with family members is important to make positive changes in personality to boost their confidence. Parents should give quality time to AF to guide them. Teenagers

need psychological support from the family to face various emotional disturbances. When parents would have made aware of adolescence, they give their kind support to child so that they can face all physical, psychological and emotional challenges confidently. Feedbacks showed that this workshop improved self-esteem of AF. Timely guidance and counseling by trustworthy persons is essential for development of a well-being personality of AF.

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