Attitude and Knowledge of Adolescent Girls about Prevention of HIV/AIDS

A study to assess the knowledge and attitude of adolescent girls regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS and its relation with selected factors, in a selected college of south Delhi.

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Worldwide greater number of adolescents are infected with HIV. More than half of new infections in 1998 occurred in those 15-24 years of age. Adolescents aged between 10-19 years accounted for more than one-fifth of the world’s population. More than a billion are young and four out of five young people live in developing countries. In India, this age group forms 21.4% of the total population.

According to WHO estimates, India today reportedly has the largest number of HIV positive individuals among the countries of the WHO south and southeast Asia region. Along with Thailand, India accounts for an estimated 95% of the reported cases of AIDS in the region (WHO-1992) there are an estimated 3 million HIV positive cases in India.

Adolescents are difficult to engage in the care needed for the diagnosis and treatment of the HIV disease. Adolescents believe they are invincible and tend to deny they are at risk. This belief may cause them to engage in high-risk behavior, delay HIV testing, or delay or refuse treatment when they have tested positive for HIV. Thus, prevention is the key weapon in reducing the incidence of adolescent HIV/AIDS (Woods, 1998).

Background data

A sample of 100 adolescent girls (17-19 years) were selected from a selected college of south Delhi. Demographic data (collected in relation to age, income, literacy of parents, religion, parents’ occupation, type of family and sources of information. A multiple choice questionnaire of 26 questions related to magnitude of problem of AIDS, epidemiological, mode of transmission, incubation period, clinical manifestation, diagnosis, treatment, control and prevention of HIV/AIDS). The attitude scale develop for the present study consisted of five point likert scale type including 25 statement that covered two broad area: attitude towards role of self prevention of HIV/AIDS and role of others in prevention of HIV/AIDS.

Objectives:

- To assess the knowledge of the adolescent girls regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS
- To identify the attitude of the adolescent girls regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS
- To find out a co-efficient of correlation between the knowledge and attitude of the adolescent girls regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS
- To find out the relationship between the knowledge and selected factors such as: age, income, literacy of parents, religion, parent’s occupation, type of family and source of information
- To find out the relationship between the attitude and selected factors such as: age, income, literacy of parents, religion, parents’ occupation, type of family and source of information

The first objective is to assess the knowledge of the adolescent girls regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS. Mean value is 13.18 with standard deviation of 3.53 shows that the adolescent girls had inadequate knowledge regarding prevention of HIV/AIDS.

43% had inadequate knowledge, 50% had average knowledge and only 7% had adequate knowledge regarding the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

This reveals that adolescent girls had inadequate knowledge regarding magnitude of problem of AIDS, mode of transmission, incubation period, treatment, control and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

The second objective of the study is to assess the attitude of the adolescent girls towards the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Assessing the attitude is an important aspect, which makes the individual differ from each other. Attitude is concern with belief, idea, thinking of person and affect on behavior of individual.

The author was studying for her Master of Nursing at RAK College of Nursing, New Delhi when she wrote the article.
According to finding of this study, adolescent girls had less favorable attitude towards the HIV/AIDS.

Mean value is 96.64 and standard deviation was 9.33 that shows the level of attitude 56% of adolescent girls had less favorable attitude and 44% had favorable attitude and no one of them had unfavorable attitude towards HIV/AIDS.

The third objective of this study is to find out the relationship between, the knowledge and attitude of the adolescent girls regarding the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

The knowledge means scores 13.18 with standard deviation of 3.53. The attitude mean score was 96.64 with standard deviation of 9.33 and "r" value was "r"=0.0007 so this indicates that there is no corelation between the knowledge and attitude of the adolescent girls towards the HIV/AIDS.

It is evident that there is no significant relationship between knowledge and attitude of adolescent girls at 0.03 level of significance for df (98).

The fourth objective of this study was to find out the relationship between the knowledge and selected factors such as age, parents' education, religion, income, parents occupation, type of family and source of information.

The finding of the study reveals that there is no significant relationship between the knowledge of the adolescent girls with the selected factors.

That shows knowledge and selected factors are not influencing each other and there is no associated relationship between knowledge and selected factors.

In this study, the fifth objective was to find out the relationship between the attitude of the adolescent girls with the selected factors such as: age, income, literacy of parents, religion, income, parents' occupation, type of family and source of information.

The finding of the study shows that there is no significant relationship between the attitude of the adolescent girls with the selected factors. That reveals the attitude and selected factors are not influence each other and there is no associated relationship between attitude and selected factors.

Conclusion

The study shows the knowledge deficit of the adolescent girls regarding the prevention of HIV/AIDS and less favorable attitude towards HIV/AIDS. The study revealed there is no significant relationship between the knowledge and attitude of the adolescent girls. Also, the study has shown there is no relationship between the knowledge and attitude of the adolescent girls with the selected factors which revealed the factors such as: age, parents' education, religion, income, parents' occupation, type of family and source of information not influencing the knowledge and attitudes of the adolescent girls.

There is need for including the educational programmes to the curriculum of colleges/school for adolescent girls to increase the knowledge and develop most favorable attitude towards the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

The findings justify the need for programmes that apprise parents and peers to guide adolescents' lifestyle and sexual health needs while at the same time equipping them to make informed.

Recommendation

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- A similar study can be replicated on a large scale, thereby findings can be generalized for a larger population.
- A comparative study can be carried out to ascertain the knowledge and attitude between:
  - Boys and girls of age group of 17-19 years
  - Rural and urban area
  - Boys and girls of age group of 10-19 years
  - Nursing and non-nursing graduates and undergraduate students
- Experimental study can be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of PTP or informational booklet on prevention of HIV/AIDS.
- A comparative study can be done in different Colleges of country (State-wise) in girls group.
- A comparative study can be done between adolescents of the higher income and lower income.
- A comparative study can be done on the adolescent girls with the illiterate and literate parents.
- Longitudinal study can be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of informational booklet on prevention of HIV/AIDS at certain interval of time.

References:

- Agha, S. "An evaluation of


