

A STUDY ON HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF THEIR COMMON PROBLEMS AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS OF GOVERNMENT JUNIOR COLLEGE IN RURAL FIELD PRACTICE AREA OF S.V.MEDICAL COLLEGE

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Adolescence is widely defined as the time in life when the developing individual attains the skills and attributes necessary to become a productive and reproductive adult. While most of the world's adolescents make it through the period with no major problems, even those adolescents who have no significant personal problems or acute health-care needs have normative stresses and needs for help, support and orientation associated with making the transition from childhood to adulthood.

**Aims & Objectives:** To assess the perceived health problems and help seeking behavior of adolescent girls.

**Material & Methods:** Degree college for girls in the rural field practice area of S.V.Medical College. Students were enrolled randomly in the study.

**Results:** A total of 145 female adolescents in the age group of 16-18 years participated in the study. The commonest problems reported were educational (85.6%) and health related (79.4%).

**Conclusion:** Mother, father, friend, teachers, siblings, doctors were the people from where help was sought by the study subjects in different order of each category.

**Key Words:** Doctor, Education, Health, Problem

## Introduction:

Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood and also changes at biological, psychological and social level. Nearly all cultures recognize a phase in life when society acknowledges these emerging capacities of young people. What varies considerably by culture and context is whether the passage from childhood to adulthood is a direct and short passage, or whether there is a prolonged adolescence marked by a choice of identities and roles. [1] Life of many young people is a painful tug of war filled with mixed messages and conflicting demands from parents, teachers, coaches, employers, friends and oneself. It creates stress and it can create serious depression for young people ill-equipped to cope, communicate and solve problems. Several policy documents in India have also recognized adolescents as an underserved vulnerable group

which needs reproductive health information and services. [2]

The seeking of help and the utilization of support systems by adolescents have a buffering effect on reactions to stress, resulting in better adjustment and less emotional and behavioral problems. [3] Adolescents may prefer to seek help from informal sources since the format of help usually sought is of a casual nature and thus they do not conceive this kind of help as an act of "seeking help". Additionally, adolescents may feel that someone close and familiar is more likely to understand their needs and will continue to value them despite their display of weakness. [4]

**Aim:** To assess the perceived health problems and help seeking behavior of adolescent girls.

### Material & Methods:

A cross-sectional study was carried out in Government Junior college for girls in rural field practice area of S.V.Medical College at chandragiri. Study period: July to November 2012. Study Group: Adolescents of 16-18 years age group. Of the total 190 students, 145 students were selected randomly by using random number table. Study was conducted among randomly selected adolescent girls from Government Junior college for girls, chandragiri, tirupati. Informed consent was taken from all the students.

### Results:

In table 1, among the study subjects, 85.6% had education related problems, followed by health problems and family problems. Fear and concern about future career among adolescents was 46.7%. Among health problems, 27.6% were suffering from aches and tiredness. Among psychological problems, 26.4% were having anxiety. Among social problems, 46.8% were having maladjustment outside family/peer groups.

**TABLE: 1. COMMON ADOLESCENT PROBLEMS AMONG THE STUDY SUBJECTS IN LAST THREE MONTHS**

Problems	Percentage
<b>1. Educational problems</b>	<b>85.6%</b>
- Fear and concern about future career	46.7%
- Lack of concentration	19.4%
-Tension attending classes and exams	24.2%
-Not getting good marks	23.4%
- Parents intervention in career choice	31.8%
- Unable to follow classes	29.3%
<b>2. Health problems</b>	<b>79.4%</b>
-Tiredness/Aches	27.6%
- Irregular menses	22.1%
-Eye problems	15.2%
-Scanty/Heavy menses	6.4%
-White discharge	12.5%
-Skin problems	8.4%
<b>3. Psychological problems</b>	<b>44.3%</b>
-Anxiety	26.4%
- Depression	19.3%
- Excess concern about physical appearance/ IQ	23.2%
- Day dreaming	16.3%
- Suicidal thoughts	10.3%
<b>4. Family problems</b>	<b>54.4%</b>
-Parents spend insufficient time with you	37.4%
- excess argument with parents/siblings	24.8%
- Inadequate money for personal expense	18.4%
-Gender discrimination	13.9%
-Not receiving sufficient attention	10.2%
<b>5. Social problems</b>	<b>39.6%</b>
-Maladjustment outside family/peer groups	46.8%
-Abuse(physical/Verbal/Sexual)	34.4%
-Others	18.8%

**TABLE: 2. HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOR AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS**

Problems	Percentage
<b>1. Educational problems</b>	
Mother	31.6%
Father	26.5%
Friend	24.5%
Teacher	23.2%
Siblings	11.6%
Nil	3.9%
<b>2. Health problems</b>	
Doctor	36.1%
Mother	33.5%
Father	12.3%
Nil	6.5 %
Friends	4.5%
Sibling	3.6%
<b>3. Psychological problems</b>	
Friends	62.3%
Mother	58.4%
Sibling	34.4%
Father	15.7%
Nil	13.3%
Doctor	12.3%
<b>4. Family problems</b>	
Mother	61.9%
Father	21.3%
Friend	39%
Sibling	24.4%
Teacher	14.4%
Nil	12%
<b>5. Social problems</b>	
Mother	51%
Father	35.8%
Friend	25.2%
Siblings	12.6%
Teacher	11.9%
Nil	5.9%

In table 2, majority of adolescents were seeking help from their mother in relation to educational problems, family problems and social problems. For

psychological problems they were seeking help from their friends. For health problems they were seeking help of a doctor.

## Discussion:

Adolescence is marked by rapid physical growth and psychosocial development and most adolescents face difficulties during this transition from childhood to adulthood. Most of the problems are psychosocial/behavioral in nature rather than medical disorders. [2] In this study 79.4% had health related problems which was similar to an urban study (72%). [6] Greater proportion of adolescents reported problems in the present study since, it had a short recall period of three months prior to study.

The prevalence of reported psychological problems among adolescent in the present study was 44.3%. There are limited studies which have assessed psychological problems among adolescents in a community based setting. John BN et al [6] reported 3% and Kumar R et al [2] reported 37.4% as having psychological problems. For Psychological problems adolescents are in need of "information" or "counselling". Therefore, "counselling" must be recognized as a major component of the health service for the adolescents. Friends and peers constitute the major source of help for adolescents in need of information on psychological problems; adolescent health education should be built into the adolescent health program as well as the basic education curriculum.

As the adolescent strives to adjust and find his or her niche and identity in society, he or she moves towards greater dependence on peer relationships and less on familial support. Peers are usually the most -common help-givers approached by the adolescent when they encounter personal problems, if they decide to seek help. Help seeking behavior is a proactive and protective process that has problem-solving strategy, using others as resource, involving social interaction. From the education perspective, help-seeking contributes towards helping learners cope with academic difficulties by keeping them active in learning tasks. Some people do not always want to be helped, especially if being helped means that they would appear incompetent when compared to others, they will often suffer in silence. [7]

## Conclusions:

A total of 145 female adolescents in the age group of 16-18 years participated in the study. The commonest problems reported were educational (85.6%) and health related (79.4%). Mother, father,

friend, teachers, siblings, doctors were the people from where help was sought by the study subjects in different order of each category.

## Recommendations:

There should be an adolescent health education cell for a group of college students to address the issues of adolescent problem. Regular meetings of parents with college authorities should be held to identify the problem among adolescents early. Regular health check-up's of adolescents conducted to identify the health problem for early treatment including follow up.

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