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Knowledge and Attitude of Adolescent Boys Regarding Substance Abuse and Risk Taking Behavior

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Abstract **Original Research Article**

Background: Our study was done on the school going adolescent boys of age ranging from. 13-19 years in the schools of Indore city of central India, which was a cross sectional observational study under school health program. ***Method:*** A total of 703 students participated but the questionnaires of 641 students were complete, which were included in the data analysis. Data was coded and tabulated systematically under appropriate headings and their percentage was calculated to get the results. ***Conclusion:*** Youth are the future of any nation and substance abuse, accidents and other adolescent related problems can pose heavy burden on resources and economy of a country and its growth.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Adolescent & Puberty
Study Designed: Cross Sectional Observational Study.

INTRODUCTION

The term adolescent is derived from Latin word "Adolescere" meaning "to grow, to mature". WHO has defined adolescence as persons between 10-19 years of age [1]. Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood and characterized by spurts of physical, emotional, mental and social development and their efforts in achieving goals related to the expectations of the mainstream culture [2]. Adolescence is a time of experimentation and risk-taking and the initiation of substance use usually begin during this transitional period.

India has the largest number of adolescent population (243 million and more than 50% of the adolescent population living in urban areas). This indicates the importance of specifically addressing the healthcare needs of this considerable demographic, particularly for the developing countries such as India(3).These young people are present in larger number than before and their proportion is also rising relative to other age groups[4]. Modernization, increasing impact of media, decline of parental authority and increase in gender equality in education has given rise to a culture that makes experimenting new things more appealing and acceptable to adolescents without putting much weight or responsibility.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The present study was a school based cross sectional observational study conducted in one private and one government schools of Indore city, Madhya Pradesh.

Study period

The study was carried out over a period of 8 months from June 2017 to January 2018.

Inclusion criteria

- School going adolescent boys of age 13–19 years.

Exclusion criteria

- Boys below 13 years and above 19 years of age.
- Non-school going adolescent boys.
- Adolescent boys not gave consent.

Sample size

641 schools go boys of age 13-19 years.

Sample frame

A self-administered questionnaire was introduced.

Above mentioned study population was chosen because of the following reasons-

- The understanding level of students from class 7 onward allows the administration of a self-administered questionnaire and young students might not understand the questionnaire and giving false results.
- Adolescence is associated with initiation of risk taking behavior.
- The initiation of substance abuse usually begins at the age of 13-14 years which corresponds to class 7 onwards.
- Most of the studies have been carried out on students of class 7 onwards.

Data collection procedure

The study was conducted after obtaining verbal permission from the head of the school and written consent from students and their guardians. Questionnaires were translated in English and Hindi both but according to the preference of the students English version of questionnaire was provided to them. The students were explained the purpose of the study and their confidentiality was assured. Method of filling the questionnaire was explained to the students and the same were filled in the absence of class teachers given a time of about 45 minutes. Inter-personal discussion was not allowed in between the students.

The questionnaire included information about demographic characteristics, sexual and reproductive health, knowledge about pubertal body changes, use of substances, attitude toward premarital sex and risk taking behavior.

A total of 703 students participated but the questionnaires of 641 students were complete, which were included in the data analysis. Data was coded and tabulated systematically under appropriate headings and their percentage was calculated to get the results.

RESULTS

Table-01: Puberty

	13-15 Years		16-19 years	
	No.	%	No.	%
Testicular enlargement	20	4.4	2	1.1
Appearance of pubic hair	29	6.3	7	3.8
Voice change	62	13.5	14	7.7
All the above	231	50.4	146	79.8
Don't know	116	25.3	14	7.7
Total	458	100.0	183	100.0

The above table shows the knowledge of adolescent boys about puberty. Nearly half (50.4%) of boys in 13-15 years and majority (79.8%) boys in 16-19 years were aware of the answer.

Table-02: Do you have any worry or questions about your height, physical appearance, hair growth, voice change

	13-15 Years		16-19 years	
	No.	%	No.	%
No	328	71.6	146	79.8
Yes	130	28.4	37	20.2
Total	458	100.0	183	100.0

The above table shows the concerns of adolescent students regarding their height, physical appearance, hair growth, voice change.

Majority of students in 13-15 years and 16-19 years age group were not concerned (71.6% and 79.8% respectively) about above changes. Only 28.4% and

20.2% boys were concerned in 13-15 and 16-19 years age groups respectively.

Table-03: Precocious Puberty

		13-15 Years		16-19 years	
		No.	%	No.	%
Testicular enlargement before the age of 8.5 year		25	5.5	9	4.9
Appearance of pubic hair before 9th birthday		36	7.9	11	6.0
Both		131	28.6	79	43.2
Don't know		266	58.1	84	45.9
Total		458	100.0	183	100.0

As evident from the above table only 28.6% boys of 13-15 years and 43.2% boys of 16-19 years were aware about precocious puberty while majority in both groups (58.1% and 45.9% respectively) did not know the answer.

Table-04: Delayed Puberty

	13-15 Years		16-19 years	
	No.	%	No.	%
No evidence of testicular enlargement by the age of 15 year	42	9.2	16	8.7
No voice change	28	6.1	7	3.8
Both of above	157	34.3	117	63.9
Don't know	231	50.4	43	25.3
Total	458	100.0	183	100.0

The above table shows knowledge about delayed puberty. Only 34.3% in 13-15 years and majority (63.9%) in 16-19 years age groups were aware, while 50.4% and 25.3% were unaware in both the age groups respectively.

DISCUSSION

Regarding knowledge about precocious puberty in the age group 13-15 years, 25 5.5% boys responded as testicular enlargement before the age of 8.5 years, 7.9% as appearance of pubic hair before 9th birthday, 28.6% as both and 58.1% were unaware of the answers, while in the 16-19 years age group the responses in the same sequence were 4.9%, 6%, 43.2% and 45.9%, showing lack of knowledge in both the age groups [5].

In the age group 13-15 years, 71.6% of boys were not worried about height, physical appearance, hair growth and voice change, while 28.4% boys were worried about these changes. In 16-19 years age group the responses were 79.8% and 20.2% [6].

Related to knowledge about delayed puberty, in 13-15 years age group 9.2% boys responded as no evidence of testicular enlargement by the age of 15 years, 6.1% no voice change, 34.3% both of the above and 50.4% were unaware of the answer. In same order the responses in the age group 16-19 years were 8.7%, 3.8%, 63.9% and 23.5%. Majority (50.4%) of boys in 13-15 years age group were unaware of the answer [7].

CONCLUSION

Youth are the future of any nation and substance abuse, accidents and other adolescent related problems can pose heavy burden on resources and economy of a country and its growth.

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