

Health Awareness of Rural Adolescent Girls: An Intervention Study

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ABSTRACT Adolescent girls of age 13 to 19 years constitute nearly 66 million of population in India. The lives of these girls are characterized by limited education, lack of knowledge pertaining to social as well as health aspects and also limited influence on decisions affecting their lives. Thus, awareness is one major factor for development of this group of population because of the fact that these adolescent girls would be the future housewives. A study was undertaken to see the awareness of adolescent girls regarding health aspects through an intervention study. The study adopted a pretest – post test design with an intervention for a specific period. A total of 112 adolescent girls in the age group of 14 to 18 years were selected randomly from government schools of five villages in two blocks of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh. The tools for assessment consisted of socio-economic status scale and a general awareness scale. The sample group was pretested on their level of general awareness which focused specifically on health aspects. An intervention package was developed on the aspects of health including general health, reproductive and child health, environmental health and nutritional aspects. The intervention was given for nine months to the girls through lectures, discussions and demonstrations. Post testing was done on the girls after the period of intervention. Results showed that the knowledge of girls regarding health aspects improved significantly after intervention. There was a considerable increase in the awareness levels of girls with regard to knowledge of health problems, environmental health, nutritional awareness and reproductive and child health. Thus informative and educable intervention seem to have a positive effect on awareness levels which would eventually encourage expansion of knowledge and positive health habits.