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A Study To Assess The Knowledge Regarding Teenage Pregnancy Among Selected Girls At Selected School In Coimbatore

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Abstract

Aim and Objective: To assess the knowledge regarding teenage pregnancy among adolescent girls in selected school, Coimbatore. **Materials and Methods:** A descriptive study was adopted to assess the knowledge among adolescent (13-17 years) school students (40 Samples) studying in 9th standard in school at Ashokapuram Village, Coimbatore who filled the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Convenient purposive sampling technique used to select the samples. Tool was prepared and validity of the tool was obtained from Subject experts. Descriptive and inferential statistics was administered to assess the knowledge among adolescent (13-17 years) school students. **Results:** The study finding revealed that among 40 samples, majority of the adolescent 36 (90%) are in the age group 16-17, 4 (10%) are in the age group of 13-15 years. **Conclusion:** The study results revealed that most of the adolescent girls possess a basic understanding of teenage pregnancy, there remain sufficient significant gaps in knowledge regarding its causes, consequences and method of prevention.

Index Terms: Teenage, Pregnancy, adolescent.

I INTRODUCTION

Teenage pregnancy remains a significant public health concern globally, particularly in developing countries. It is defined as pregnancy occurring in girl aged 13 to 19 years and is often associated with various health, social and economic challenges. (1)

Adolescents are often ill- prepared – physically, emotionally and socially- for parenthood, which can lead to complications for both the mother and child, including high risks of maternal mortality, low birth weight and school dropout. (2)

Lack of accurate knowledge, limited access to reproductive health services, peer pressure, early sexual initiation and inadequate parental or school guidance are major contributing factors to teenage pregnancy. In many cases, societal taboos and cultural norms hinder open discussions about sex education, further compounding the issue. (3)

Understanding the knowledge and perceptions of school students regarding teenage pregnancy is crucial in developing effective health education strategies. This study aims to assess the level of awareness and misconceptions among school students, identify the gaps in knowledge and provide recommendations for comprehensive adolescent reproductive health programs. (4)

Teenage pregnancy is a global issue that disproportionately affects low and middle income countries. According to the World Health Organization(WHO), approximately 12 million girls aged 15-19 years and at least 777,000 girls under 15 years give birth each year in developing countries(WHO 2023).Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19 years globally.(5)

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the adolescent birth remains one of the highest in the world,at 99 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19(UNFPA , 2022).In India , the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5,2019-21) reported that 6.8%of women aged 15-19 had already begun childbearing.(6)

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) conducted in 2019-21,the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Tamil Nadu increased from 5% in 2015-16 to 6.3% in 2020-21.This upward trend is further corroborated by a study published in the Tamil Nadu Journal Of Public Health and Medical Research, which reported that teenage pregnancy rate in Tamil Nadu rose from 1.1% in 2019-20 to 1.5% in 2023-24.

District –level data reveal significant disparities within Tamil Nadu. Nagapattinam district reported the highest teenage pregnancy rate at 3.3%, followed by Theni at 2.4% and Perambalur at 2.3%. In contrast, districts such as Kanchipuram, Virudhunagar, Nagercoil and Chennai reported lower rates, ranging from 0.4% to 0.7%. (7)

Statement of the problem

A study to assess the knowledge regarding teenage pregnancy among girl students in a selected school in Coimbatore.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the knowledge level of teenage pregnancy among school students.
- To identify the source of information about teenage pregnancy

Assumption of the study:

- Teenage girls are having knowledge on teenage pregnancy.
- Teenage girls are able to answer the question regarding teenage pregnancy.

II MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive study was adopted in order to assess the knowledge regarding teenage pregnancy among girl students in a selected school in Asokapuram High school, Coimbatore. The study conducted over a period of one week, i.e. from January 20th 2025 to January 27th 2025. The independent variable of this study was selected school girls. The dependent variable was knowledge regarding teenage pregnancy among selected school girls. The study was conducted at Asokapuram Government High school, Coimbatore. The study sample includes adolescents school students in the age group of 13-19 years studying in Asokapuram Government Higher Secondary school, Coimbatore. The sample size consisted of 40 girls (Who fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria) selected by non-probability purposive sampling technique- lottery method. The study included girls available during the time of data collection and samples included only girls in the age group of 13-19 years. The study excluded the adolescents who were not willing to participate in the study and who were sick at the time of data collection.

The tool consisted of two parts i.e., Demographic data and structured questionnaire tool. The data collection tool consists of two sections. Section A consists of demographic variables and Section B consists of a semi-structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge level which consist of 20 yes or no question regarding teenage pregnancy among teenagers. A total score is 20 and the score is graded as score: <50% -Inadequate knowledge, score :51-74% = Adequate knowledge and score :>75% -Adequate knowledge

Permission to use the tools was sought from the experts through email. In the majority of occasions, the original English versions of the scales and questionnaires were utilized.

Ethical consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Review Board and formal approval was obtained from the Head Master of Ashokapuram Government High School, Coimbatore to conduct the study in the school and also from the class teachers of the respective class. The researcher has followed fundamental ethical principles like the right to freedom from harm and discomfort, respect for human dignity. The researcher gave full freedom to the participant to decide voluntarily whether to participate in the study or to withdraw from the study and the right to ask questions at any time during the course of the study. One visit was made to meet the students and distribute the consent and assent forms, later on two visits were made for data collection, hence minimum of three visits were made in each class. Class hours were not disturbed for the students as the study conducted after the chief hours. The investigator has maintained the study participants' privacy throughout study. The investigator has administered the same questionnaire for all the adolescents school students.

The data from the proforma were entered in Microsoft excel 2016 and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0. Descriptive statistical was used to describe the demographic variables and the knowledge of teenage pregnancy.

III RESULTS

Socio-demographic Characteristics

A total of 40 adolescent school students from Ashokapuram Government High School were participated. The mean age of the students was 14.9 (± 1.4) years. It is observed that, most of the students 36 (90%) were in the age group of 15-19 years and only 4 (10%) in the age group of 13-15 years. Majority of the participants were Hindu (75%), followed by Christians (15%) and Muslim (10%). Most of the students (75%) live in a nuclear family followed by joint (25%). Majority of the student birth order are second born (44%), followed by first born (33%) then third born (20%) and 3% of students were single born. More than half (60%) the students had at least one sibling, 34% have two siblings and 6% of students had no sibling and more than two respectively. The majority of the students belonged to the upper class (56%) and lower-middle-class (44%). More than half of the students (70%) were from schools located in the rural area. About 65% of the students attended menarche in the age of 10-13 years and the 35% of the students attended in the age of 14-15. Most of the student's fathers occupied with others work (40%), 33% were salaried employees 20% fathers were government staff and 7% are businessmen. Regarding mothers' occupation, majority of the mothers were house wife (60%), 17% do other work, 13% were salaried employee and only 10% are government staff. Among the students, the family income is above 20000 is 40%, 30% were between 10000- 15000, 17% of the student's family with below 10000 income and 13% of the family with 15000-20000 income.

Table 1: Distribution of knowledge levels regarding Teenage pregnancy among adolescent's girls

A semi-structured questionnaire with multiple choice questions to assess the knowledge of teenage pregnancy which consists of age for teens, attended sex education, media influences, family and social pressures, mental health, complications of teenage pregnancy, etc.

Each correct answer was awarded a score of “1” mark and each wrong answer was given the score of “0”. The maximum score of the knowledge assessment semi-structures questionnaire was 20.

The resulting score was interpreted as follows

Table 1: Distribution of Knowledge levels regarding Teenage pregnancy among adolescent's girls.

N=40

S. No	Level of knowledge	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Inadequate Knowledge	< 50%	0	-
2	Moderate Knowledge	51-74%	16	40%
3	Adequate Knowledge	>75%	24	60%

IV DISCUSSION

The study was under taken to “assess the knowledge of adolescent girls towards teenage pregnancy at selected Ashokapuram High School, Coimbatore”. The discussion of the present study is based on the findings obtained from descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of collected data. It is presented in view of the objectives of the study. The First Objective of the study was, to assess the level of knowledge among adolescent girls towards teenage pregnancy. Present study shows that out of 40 adolescent girls 16 (40%) had average knowledge and 24 (60%) had excellent knowledge. The findings were supported by a qualitative study conducted by Rachel lebesse, (2015) conducted a study on knowledge, attitude and perception of students on teenage pregnancy rural based university students in South Africa. Explorative and descriptive design was used. The population included all tertiary students from one selected institution, on-probability convenience sample was used to sample 110 participants (58 females and 52 males) for focus group discussion. Purposive sampling was used to select 17 female students, ten (10) pregnant and seven that delivered a baby whilst at university for in-depth interview. Data was analysed qualitatively through open coding. Four sub-themes emerge, that is knowledge about pregnancy, participant's views about pregnancy, factors influencing pregnancy and participant's experiences of pregnancy whilst studying, emanating from the themes were used to purpose recommendations on the best strategies that could reduce pregnancy rate in teenagers. (8)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ A similar study could be conducted on large sample.
- ❖ A comparative study can be conducted between urban and rural school students.
- ❖ Structure teaching program can be conducted for primary level students.
- ❖ A similar study can be conducted on large sample for better generalization.

- ❖ The study can be replicated in different community settings. Manuals, information booklet and self-instructional module can be prepared and distributed in community to create awareness

V CONCLUSION

Evidence from this investigation revealed that, majority of adolescent girls had in adequate and moderate knowledge. This study suggests that necessity of creating awareness and providing motivation, to prevent teenage pregnancy. Thus, if we could provide correct knowledge and motivation to younger adolescent girls on a population basis, a positive change could be achieved among adolescent girls to bring out healthy community. Health education should be incorporated in the curriculum which should be given through teaching, inter personal communication, television, health camps. Mobiles are very common among adolescents. Broad casting of health message would be effective through mobiles. Reproductive health problems should be discussed among adolescents and identify and solve their reproductive health problems through counselling with the help of specialist on time to time.

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X CONTRIBUTORS

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