

THOUGHTS OF COMMON PEOPLE ABOUT ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation has been designed to study the thoughts and ideas of common people residing in Chack Murar and adjoining areas of Jammu district of J&K, India regarding adolescence education and its introduction at school level. The study was conducted by interviewing two hundred persons using a set of questions. The responses were analysed and discussed.

Keywords: *Adolescence, Life Style Education, Samba.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Development of human children depends on several environmental criteria of which educational level of their family members, socio-economic condition, available nutritional support, relevant cultural issues, family structure and its management system deserve mention. All these and many other factors play an important role at different stages of life from infancy to old age. In all the stages, the growing boys and girls experience different types of changes, not only physical and physiological but also mental or psychological. The most vital changes take place at the beginning of the teenage or adolescence period when physiological (to be more precise endocrinological) changes that rule over the human system, bring in new mental thoughts with gradual transformations in the physique. Aristotle identified this phase of adolescent development in a tripartite age continuum, i.e., childhood, youth and old age. But in the present century this stage has been recognized as the most crucial stage in the life-span, i.e., Infancy, Childhood, Adolescence, Adulthood, and Old age.

Though WHO denoted the period of adolescence from 10 - 19 years of age, majority of the development psychologists recorded 13 - 19 years of age as the ideal range. However age is not always the ideal determining factor. Beginning of sexual maturity of puberty initiates the adolescence phase followed by generation of a number of problems and special needs which the adolescents fail to understand and tackle. Adolescence Education has emerged in response to these special critical needs and concerns of the adolescent development which is a complex process of physical cognitive, emotional, social and moral maturation of children to the adult stage. This phase of life gives birth to several implications like development with peer group, distance from parents and other family members and such others. In absence of any adult interventions, the adolescents often get distracted from the ideal path of life and involve themselves into unhealthy sexual practices, drug abuse, violence, criminal activities etc. In this context, the educationists felt the need for transmission of

relevant knowledge in the form of adolescence felt the need for transmission of relevant knowledge in the form of adolescence education at the school stage with a view to make the pupil aware of the scientific background of these physical and psychological changes, its consequences and also about the measures to be taken to tackle the problems.

In a National Seminar on Adolescence Education organized by NCERT in April, 1993, introduction of adolescence education in schools was urged upon. The issue of motivation of school teachers through teacher education programmes or otherwise (special training programmes or workshops) was also considered. In the National Population Education Project of 1998, this issue was recognized as a major thrust area. Owing to inhibitions and apprehensions of a large section of educationists and guardians, the matter was discussed at different levels. The curriculum structure, content volume and teaching methodology were revised before its introduction was finalized in the name of 'Jiban Shaily Siksha' or 'Life Style Education'.

II. OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the present study were :-

- 1) To collect and analyse the thoughts and views of common people (who are guardians of learners at different levels) about adolescence education.
- 2) Need for adolescence education transmission to the school going children and also their opinion about the impact of this concept on social culture.

III. HYPOTHESIS

Keeping in view the objective of the present study following hypotheses were formulated:

- 1)Sexual difference amongst the subjects may not influence their views towards adolescence education.
- 2)Age variation of the subjects may not influence their thoughts and views about adolescence education significantly.

IV. METHOD OF STUDY

The study was conducted in and around Chack Murar, a well developed area of Jammu district. The area covered for the survey was inhabited by people mostly involved in different professions. Their minimum educational level was graduation. Two hundred persons (both male and female) were randomly selected within age group range of 30 - 50 years. Most of the subjects (persons considered for the study) were married. They were interviewed with the help of a set of ten questions prepared in such a manner that the responses may lead to the following points of concern:

1. Knowledge about adolescence.
2. Need of adolescence education.
3. Stage and mode of transfer of adolescence education.
4. Role of parents and teachers in the process.

The responses as well as views of the respondents were analysed, expressed in terms of percentages and presented in table 1. Significant responses satisfying the aforementioned points of concern and also have bearing on the objectives of the present study have been discussed.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table: 1 : Percentage of analysed responses of the subjects leading to the relevant points of concern.

Related issues	Percentage of analysed responses	
Knowledge about adolescence	Clear concept	67.5
	No clear concept	32.5
Transfer of adolescence education amongst young boys and girls is essential	Agree	94..0
	Disagree	6.0
Introduction of adolescence education is essential at	School Level	95.37
	College Level	04.63
At school level the adolescence education is to be introduced from	Class VIII	54.05
	Class IX	45.95
Mode of transfer of the adolescence As a new subject education is desired	As A new subject	24.32
	As a part of life science	43.24
	Through Co- Curricular activities	32.44
Role of teachers and parents	Strongly believe that they have essential duties to help the adolescents	70
	Casual approach towards the problems of adolescents	30

It is evident from table 1 that 94% respondents have clearly expressed their thoughts and views which have direct bearing on their knowledge. In spite of the fact that 32.5% of the respondents do not have any clear concept about adolescence education, 26.5% of them (94% - 67.5% = 26.5%) have agreed to transfer to the adolescence. Those who have disagreed to transfer this knowledge in new form obviously represent the rest

5%. They do neither have any clear concept about adolescence education (32.5%) nor any practical experience of dealing with the adolescents.

VI. ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION

As 94% of the respondents have agreed to transfer adolescence education to young boys and girls, it is necessary to present their views that cropped up from their thoughts and experience. The views in support of adolescence education are:

1. In absence of any knowledge about sex related changes, many misconceptions are generated in them. Wrong interpretation of the situation by the peers coupled with self-ignorance, adversely affect their attitude and behaviour.
2. Basic knowledge of adolescence education may help them to tolerate the situation and adjust in a positive way.
3. Basic knowledge and information about puberty related health may prevent the adolescents from getting involved in pre-marital sexual relationship.
4. It is a safe-guard to sexual exploitation, violence and crime and also for development of respect for opposite sex, urgent educational intervention is strongly desired.
5. Adolescence education may help to develop proper attitude for the opposite sex.
6. The AIDS pandemic has added urgency for introduction of adolescence education in schools. Though there are other modes of HIV transmission, sexual contact and sharing of syringes by drug-addicts are usually regarded as principal avenues of transmission. Considering the serious consequences of HIV infection and drug addiction, the adolescents are to be motivated to adopted behavioural preventive measures against free pre-marital and extra-marital sexual practices and also drug-abuse through the basics of adolescence education.

VII. ARGUMENT AGAINST ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION

6% of the respondents who are not in favour of introduction of adolescence education at school level placed the following arguments in support of their views:

1. Sex and sexuality are extremely private matters which are not to be discussed publicly and that too with young children. Question of transfer of this concept through curriculum at school level does not arise at all for obvious reasons.
2. If adolescence education is introduced at school level, young children may be encouraged to experiment with the newly acquired knowledge which is generally exciting. This will promote spoiling of their youth as well as school and social environment.
3. Its inclusion will increase curricular load.
4. Transfer of the basics of adolescence education to the young children may be more effectively taken up by their parents and other family seniors.

Positive view of 94% respondents to introduce adolescence education at school level is in conformity with the decision taken earlier by the educationists. The study report justifies the decision. 54% of the subjects opined to start teaching adolescence education at class VIII stage which according to majority of psychologists is the starting stage of adolescence (13 years +). It is definitely the right time for obvious reasons. Regarding mode of transfer, 24% of the respondents opted for a new subject on adolescence education, 43% desired to impart the basic concept as parts of life science and the rest 32% through co-curricular activities. In the opinion of the investigators, the first option is not acceptable because this will not only increase subject load but also create additional interest amongst students which may have far reaching consequences. The option is the most acceptable one because basics of adolescence education concept are truly interwoven with a significant number of topics of life science, especially zoology and physiology. Slow and steady stagewise transfer of relevant informations with the related topics of life science may percolate in the delicate mind of teenagers and finally consolidate there in time. The third option, i.e., through co-curricular activities is of much significance as an additional input system which may be organized in and outside class-room situation. In the package developed by NCERT under the National Population Education Project, nine student activity areas have been identified for its introduction. The areas like Question Box, Group Discussion, Value Clarification, Role Play, Case Study, Debate, Painting / Poster Competition, Essay Competition and Quiz Contest are expected to create interest and enthusiasm amongst students.

70% of the respondents have clearly opined that teachers and parents must show positive attitude towards transfer of adolescence education at school level. They need to convince themselves at the very outset about the need for this special concept in the life of adolescents. Until and unless the teachers will be able to get rid of any sort of inhibition or superstition regarding sex and sex related matters (certainly level specific) and become emotionally stable to discuss relevant areas with the students, all their efforts will be futile. Not only the method of presentation of the teachers, but also the way they receive the problems of the students and help them to tackle the situation, will determine effectivity of the system. The teacher needs to act as friend, philosopher and guide of the students. Love should be the basis of all works.

As the parents are likely to spend maximum time with their adolescent sons and / or daughters, their responsibility is more than teachers. The parents and other elderly members of the family are expected to share their knowledge and experience about the physical, physiological and psychological changes an adolescent child usually pass through. The adolescent children of a family in spite of all senses of fear and shyness, truly desire to have emotional support from their family members in regard to tackling the puberty related problems. Any sort of ill treatments if the adolescents receive and experience from their family members or parents, they may divert themselves into unhealthy and unsocial circles which may have undesired consequences.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In spite of the arguments expressed by the respondents in favour or against the introduction of Adolescence Education at school level, its necessity and impact in adolescent life is highly significant. Adults of today who

have experienced this phase and are very much aware of the consequences, should share the responsibilities of counsellors as and when required to pacify the excitement of present day adolescents and help them to face the scientific truth behind the situation and tackle related problems. Teachers, parents or counsellors at large should have the authority to choose the mode of teaching or counselling in consultation with the experts so that the adolescents at the receiving end are convinced about the utility of this healthy essential knowledge. Extensive research is required to explore the dynamic character of adolescents and behavioural changes in the backdrop of variable social surroundings with a view to create scope for proper skill development in them.

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