

Interventional programme on HIV/AIDS awareness for adolescent girls of Agra district: a study of effectiveness

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ABSTRACT : HIV/AIDS still remains a threat to development of people of all age and Nationalities. It is pandemic, now at the beginning of its third decade, is one of the most devastating diseases, currently. It deprives families, communities and entire nations of people at their most productive ages. Globally, 34.0 million (31.4 million – 35.9 million) people were living with HIV at the end of 2011. HIV continues to profoundly affect women and girls across all regions. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, the region most severely affected by HIV, women represent 58 per cent of the people living with HIV and bear the greatest burden of care (UNAIDS, 2012). India was the second largest population infected with HIV/AIDS and over 29.23 per cent of all reported AIDS cases were women (NACO, 2005). The figures in India as well as all over the world show that HIV/AIDS victims amongst girls will increase faster than the boys. The vulnerability of HIV infection in adolescent girls increases due to the biological factors and due to the limited information on growing up and sexuality issues. At such age girls are not so much aware about contracting HIV/AIDS and its after effects, which creates the problem. This makes adolescence a crucial period in her life time. This calls for not only health education and health promotion in general, but also for HIV prevention and AIDS education specifically for which intervention programme should be organized. In this context, the author made a scientific attempt to intervene adolescent girls to protect themselves from AIDS and to find out the level of awareness and changes in the level of awareness about HIV/AIDS which occurred as a result of intervention programme. This study was conducted among two hundred adolescent girls of Agra district. It is concluded from the study that the respondent's awareness regarding basic facts about HIV/AIDS, causes of HIV infection, prevention against HIV infection and government programme and policy against HIV/AIDS was high before the intervention programme. While regarding to the sexually transmitted infections, symptoms of HIV/AIDS, progression stages of HIV/AIDS and medical tests and treatment for HIV/AIDS, the awareness level in most cases was low. Overall level of awareness regarding HIV/AIDS of most of the respondents was at medium level. Intervention programme was highly effective in creating awareness regarding different aspects of HIV/AIDS. Significant differences were observed (0.1 level of probability) in awareness level of adolescent girls regarding different aspects of HIV/AIDS before and after the intervention programme.

KEY WORDS : Adolescent girls, HIV/AIDS, Intervention programme, Awareness

View Point Article : Rani, Dolly and Arora, Manju (2015). Interventional programme on HIV/AIDS awareness for adolescent girls of Agra district: a study of effectiveness. *Internat. J. Home Sci. Extn. & Comm. Manage.*, 2 (1): 33-38.

Article History : Received : 18.10.2014; Revised : 28.11.2014; Accepted : 13.12.2014