



A study on awareness of women's rights in rural and urban adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh. The aim of research study was to assess the knowledge of adolescent girls in urban and rural areas, regarding women's rights. Purposively 120 adolescent girls 60 from urban areas and 60 from rural area were selected. A survey, was conducted using a self- structured questionnaire with close ended questions, to collect the data regarding fundamental rights, right for education, health, property, marriage, dowry, pregnancy and abortion, wages and employment, domestic violence, prostitution and eve teasing. Data were analyzed in terms of mean, frequency and percentage on different aspects. Findings revealed that majority of urban adolescent girls had knowledge about women's rights. Differences of knowledge were found among rural and urban adolescent girls regarding fundamental rights, women political right, right for education, health, property, marriage, dowry, pregnancy and abortion, wages and employment, domestic violence, prostitution and eve teasing.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent period is the most important formative time that shapes the future course of girl and boy's life. Adolescence is not only a phase of transition and turning point of one's life but also a period of commitment, determination and dedication to fulfill the dreams. Adolescents form a major portion of country's population. This segment constitutes almost one-sixth of India's population which alone is larger in population size than many countries of the world.

Adolescent girls are mirror the situation of adult women and are characterized by inequality and subordination in the family and society. Adolescent girls are vulnerable in terms of various social, legal and health issues. Development of a country depends upon them at large. But lack of adequate knowledge about their rights (Madan, 2000), problems related to sexual issues and rights and limited opportunities for development and mental illumination make them

impressionable. About 34.54 per cent of females had no education (Census, 2011). Girls' education level has still not improved much. In addition, adolescent girls particularly between age group (14-19 years) are more prone to gender discrimination, lack of education, high school dropouts poor health, early marriage, early pregnancy, abortions, infanticides and feticide, prostitution, eve teasing, dowry, no control and share in property, unequal wages, domestic violence etc. and have little unawareness of their rights (UNICEF, 1998).

Women represent a disadvantaged section of the society. The inequalities in the social, political and economic spheres are manifested in the adverse sex ratio, poor educational and nutritional status, inequality in wages, and prevalence of violence against women, including trafficking. Let us consider the following statistics: In India, 42 girls per thousand die before the age of five compared to 29 boys, 40 per cent of India's women are literate compared to 67 per cent of males, 43 per