

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

■ **Ragini Mishra and Sudha Mishra**<sup>1</sup>

Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Home Science, Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, UDAIPUR (RAJASTHAN) INDIA

<sup>1</sup>Anirudh Shukul Balika Mahavidyalaya, Fatehpur, BARABANKI (U.P.) INDIA

Email : raginimishra.2008@gmail.com; sureshanujoshi@gmail.com

### ARTICLE INFO :

**Received** : 10.05.2012  
**Revised** : 01.09.2012  
**Accepted** : 07.10.2012

### KEY WORDS :

Adolescent girls, Fundamental rights, Wages and employment, Domestic violence, Prostitution and eve teasing.

### HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Mishra, Ragini and Mishra, Sudha (2012). A study on awareness of women's rights in rural and urban adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh , *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 3 (2) : 174 - 179.

### 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

cent of Indian girls attend primary school compared to 62 per cent of boys. There are only 940 women for every 1000 men in India (Census 2011). In India due to dowry related violence, one woman is molested every 26 minutes or raped in 54 minutes or kidnapped in every 43 minutes (National Crime Bureau). Therefore, the present study was planned to highlight these issues.

Awareness includes two things one is knowledge (information) and the other is willingness to act (action). From our understanding, we would like to define awareness of adolescent girls by their knowledge and their willingness to perform their duties and responsibilities as members of society. When a girl got good knowledge, thoughts and ideas, when she recognizes her as an independent member of society, having equal rights and responsibilities and when she got her willingness to act then we can accredit this girl, as a responsive or aware member of the society. So, from our viewpoint if adolescent girls have good knowledge about their life and their surroundings and if they have their willingness to act can be called as conscious or aware member of the society. Awareness is the understanding that one exists. Thus, this study was planned to assess the awareness of urban and rural adolescent girls regarding women's rights.

#### Objectives:

- To assess the knowledge regarding women's rights of urban adolescent girls.
- To assess the knowledge regarding women's rights of rural adolescent girls
- To assess the differences in knowledge regarding women's rights of urban and rural adolescent girls.

## METHODS

The study was carried out in rural and urban area of

Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh (India). 120 adolescent girls from the different government girls schools, were randomly selected for the study. Girls studying in XI and XII standards were purposively taken as sample to gather required data for research. A structured questionnaire (close ended questions), was formed to collect the relevant information such as background characteristics of the respondents, knowledge regarding women's rights of urban and rural adolescent girls. Data were analyzed in terms of mean, frequency and percentage.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Table 1 reveals the knowledge regarding fundamental rights. Majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about rights of equality (64.17%), right to freedom (67.50%), right against exploitation (69.17%), right to freedom of religion (62.50%), cultural and educational rights (71.67%), right to constitutional remedies for enforcement of fundamental rights(65.00%). The urban adolescent girls had more knowledge regarding rights of equality (76.67%), right to freedom (80.00%), right against exploitation (76.67%), right to freedom of religion (71.67%), cultural and Educational rights (80.00%), right to constitutional remedies for enforcement of fundamental rights(73.33 %) than the rural adolescent girls for these rights (51.67%, 55.00%, 61.67%, 53.33%, 63.33% and 56.67%, respectively).

Table 2 reveals that knowledge regarding women's political rights. Majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about right age to be elected (75.00 %), right age to vote (87.50 %), 33 per cent reservation of women (82.50%). Most of urban adolescent girls were aware about right age to be elected (91.67%), right age to vote (95.00%), 33 per cent reservation of women (100%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for these rights (58.33%, 80.00%, and 65.00%, respectively). Garg and Srilata (2009) found in a study that knowledge about "the political rights of women the terms of this convention woman are to be

Fundamental rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No	Per cent	No	Per cent	No	Per cent
Right to equality	Know	46	76.67	31	51.67	77	64.17
	Don't know	14	23.33	29	48.33	43	35.83
Right to freedom	Know	48	80.00	33	55.00	81	67.50
	Don't know	12	20.00	27	45.00	39	32.50
Right against exploitation	Know	46	76.67	37	61.67	83	69.17
	Don't know	14	23.33	23	38.33	37	30.83
Right to freedom of religion	Know	43	71.67	32	53.33	75	62.50
	Don't know	17	28.33	28	46.67	45	37.50
Cultural and educational rights	Know	48	80.00	38	63.33	86	71.67
	Don't know	12	20.00	22	36.67	34	28.33
Right to constitutional remedies for enforcement of fundamental rights	Know	44	73.33	34	56.67	78	65.00
	Don't know	16	26.67	26	43.33	42	35.00

Political rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Right age to be elected	Know	55	91.67	35	58.33	90	75.00
	Don't know	5	8.33	25	41.67	30	25.00
Right age to vote	Know	57	95.00	48	80.00	105	87.50
	Don't know	3	5.00	12	20.00	15	12.50
33% reservation of women	Know	60	100	39	65.00	99	82.50
	Don't know	0	0	21	35.00	21	17.50

an equal terms with men without any discrimination in being entitled" the urban adolescent girls had must knowledge (76%) than the rural adolescent girls. The difference was found to be significant (value 7.327) at .05 level of significance knowledge regarding 'Reservation of seats in every Panchayat and in each municipality for women. Both the urban and rural girls had less knowledge. The percentage of urban adolescent girls knowing this was 10 per cent and in rural girls it was 5 per cent. The difference was found to be non-significant (value 0.015) at .05 level of significance.

Table 3 reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about right age of marriage (82.50%), freedom for selection of life partner (74.17%), and freedom for selection of life partner across the religion and culture (69.17%). Most of urban adolescent girls had knowledge about right age of marriage (91.67%), freedom for selection of life partner (81.67%), and freedom for selection of life partner across the religion and culture (80.00%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for these rights (73.33%, 66.67%, and 58.33 %, respectively).

Table 4 reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about demands of money and goods at or before

the time of marriage, is a crime (75.83%), dowry tortures after marriage is a crime (70.83%), and death of bride within 3 months comes under dowry crime (62.50%). Rural adolescent girls had less knowledge of demands of money and goods at or before time of marriage, is a crime (56.67%), dowry tortures after marriage is a crime (53.33%), and death of bride within 3 months comes under dowry crime (50.00%) as compared to the urban adolescent girls for the same (95.00%, 83.33%, and 75.00%, respectively). According to Garg and Srilata (2009) both the girls of urban and rural areas had knowledge about who has rights on the dowry given by parents of girls at the time of marriages, the percentage of urban adolescent girls have knowledge (66%) was little more than the girls have knowledge (53%) in rural area. The difference was found to be non-significant as shown by the value of 3.507. On further enquire, girls were asked about 'If the wife had died within less than 3 months of her marriage who has rights on the article constituting dowry. The majority of urban adolescent girls had knowledge whereas in rural area the percentage of girls knowing about this (45%) was little less than girls in urban area (55%). The difference was found to be non-significant as shown by the

Dowry rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Right age of marriage	Know	55	91.67	44	73.33	99	82.50
	Don't know	5	8.33	16	26.67	21	17.50
Freedom for selection of life partner after legal age	Know	49	81.67	40	66.67	89	74.17
	Don't know	11	18.33	20	33.33	31	25.83
Freedom for selection of life partner across the religion and culture after legal age	Know	48	80.00	35	58.33	83	69.17
	Don't know	12	20.00	25	41.67	37	30.83

Dowry rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Demands of money and goods at or before time of marriage, is a crime	Know	57	95.00	34	56.67	91	75.83
	Don't know	3	5.00	26	43.33	29	24.17
Dowry tortures after marriage is a crime	Know	53	83.33	32	53.33	85	70.83
	Don't know	7	11.67	28	46.67	35	29.17
Death of bride within 3 months comes under dowry crime	Know	45	75.00	30	50.00	75	62.50
	Don't know	15	25.00	30	50.00	45	37.50

value of 2.000 .

As shown in Table 5, majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about Share in property of husband (70.00%), share in property of parents (65.83%), property rights of widows (68.33%). Rural adolescent girls had less knowledge about share in property of husband (60.00%), share in property of parents (56.67%) and property rights of widows (60.00%) as compared to the urban adolescent girls for the same (80.00%, 75.00%, and 76.67%, respectively). Garg and Srilata (2009) enquired in the study that whether the girls were having the knowledge about 'Property rights'. The girls were asked about 'Rights of widow in deceased husband's property brings to an end'. In urban areas majority of the adolescent girls had knowledge about property rights. Whereas in rural areas the percentage of girls knowing (52%) was much less the girls in urban areas (68%). The difference was found to be significant. The value

of 5.333 was found to be significant at .05 level of significance.

Table 6, reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about age of compulsory education (73.33%), right of adult education (69.17%) and right of education at any age (75.00%). Urban adolescent girls had more knowledge regarding age of compulsory education (90.00%), right of adult education (85.00%) and right of education at any age (91.67%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for the same (56.67%, 53.33%, and 58.33%, respectively).

Table 7, reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about right for choices in pregnancy (72.50%), right for medical treatment and facilities during pregnancy (75.00%), right to eat healthy food equal to men (79.17%), right for choices in abortion (67.50%), and infanticide and feticide is crime (83.33%). Urban adolescent girls had more knowledge regarding right for choices in pregnancy (83.33%), right for

Property rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Share in property of husband	Know	48	80.00	36	60.00	84	70.00
	Don't know	12	20.00	24	40.00	36	30.00
Share in property of parents	Know	45	75.00	34	56.67	79	65.83
	Don't know	15	25.00	26	43.33	41	34.14
Property rights of widows	Know	46	76.67	36	60.00	82	68.33
	Don't know	14	23.33	24	40.00	38	31.67

Educational rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Age of compulsory education	Know	54	90.00	34	56.67	88	73.33
	Don't know	6	10.00	26	43.33	32	26.67
Right of adult education	Know	51	85.00	32	53.33	83	69.17
	Don't know	9	15.00	28	46.67	37	30.83
Right of education at any age	Know	55	91.67	35	58.33	90	75.00
	Don't know	5	8.33	25	41.67	30	25.00

Pregnancy and abortion rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Right for choices in pregnancy	Know	50	83.33	37	61.67	87	72.50
	Don't know	10	16.67	23	38.33	33	27.50
Right for medical treatment and facilities during pregnancy	Know	55	91.67	35	58.33	90	75.00
	Don't know	5	8.33	25	41.67	30	25.00
Right to eat healthy food equal to men	Know	56	93.33	39	65.00	95	79.17
	Don't know	4	6.67	21	35.00	25	20.83
Right for choices in abortion	Know	48	80.00	33	55.00	81	67.50
	Don't know	12	20.00	27	45.00	39	32.50
Infanticide and feticide is crime	Know	60	100.00	40	66.67	100	83.33
	Don't know	0	00.00	20	33.33	30	16.67

medical treatment and facilities during pregnancy (91.67%), right to eat healthy food equal to men (93.33%), right for choices in abortion (80.00%) and infanticide and feticide is crime (100.00%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for the same (61.67%, 58.33%, 65.00%, 55.00%, and 66.67%, respectively).

Table 8, reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about right for equal remuneration for equal work (83.33%), right for hazard safety at work place (75.83%), and right for maternity leave during pregnancy (80.83%). Urban adolescent girls had more knowledge regarding right for equal remuneration for equal work (91.67%), right for hazard safety at work place (86.67%), and right for maternity leave during pregnancy (90.00%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for the same (75.00%, 65.00%, and 71.67 %, respectively). Garg and Srilata (2009) also found in their study that Majority of the girls both in urban and rural areas (71% and 58%, respectively) had knowledge regarding 'directive principles that concern women workers'. The difference of knowledge was found to be non-significant.

Table 9, reveals that majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about harassment, maltreatment, brutality or cruelty

and even the threat of assault intimidation on women in home is a crime (77.50%) and legal provisions to protect oneself/others and to complain against domestic violence (73.33%). Urban adolescent girls had more harassment, maltreatment, brutality or cruelty and even the threat of assault intimidation on women in home is a crime (93.33%) and legal provisions to protect oneself/others and to complain against domestic violence (90.00%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for the same (61.67% and 56.67%, respectively).

As shown in Table 10, majority of adolescent girls had knowledge about rights against forced prostitution (70.83%), rights for women involved in prostitution (55.00%) and rights to complain against eve-teasing (71.67%). Urban adolescent girls had rights against forced prostitution (80.00%), rights for women involved in prostitution (60.00%) and rights to complain against eve-teasing (85.00%) as compared to the rural adolescent girls for the same (61.67%, 50.00 and 58.33%, respectively).

### Conclusion:

In light of results of the present study and other research reviews, it can be concluded that difference of knowledge

Employment and wages rights	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Right for equal remuneration for equal work	Know	55	91.67	45	75.00	100	83.33
	Don't know	5	8.33	15	25.00	20	16.67
Right for hazard safety at work place	Know	52	86.67	39	65.00	91	75.83
	Don't know	8	13.33	21	35.00	29	24.17
Right for maternity leave during pregnancy	Know	54	90.00	43		97	80.83
	Don't know	6	10.00	17	28.33	23	19.17

Rights against domestic violence	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Harassment, maltreatment, brutality or cruelty and even the threat of assault intimidation on women in home is a crime	Know	56	93.33	37	61.67	93	77.50
	Don't know	4	6.67	23	38.33		22.50
Legal provisions to protect oneself/others and to complain against domestic violence	Know	54	90.00	34	56.67	88	73.33
	Don't know	6	10.00	26	43.33	31	26.67

Rights against prostitution and eve-teasing	Response	Urban (n=60)		Rural (n=60)		Total (n=120)	
		No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
Rights against forced prostitution	Know	48	80.00	37	61.67	85	70.83
	Don't know	12	20.00	23	38.33	35	29.67
Rights for women involved in prostitution	Know	36	60.00	30	50.00	66	55.00
	Don't know	24	40.00	30	50.00	54	45.00
Rights to complain against eve-teasing	Know	51	85.00	35	58.33	86	71.67
	Don't know	9	15.00	25	41.67	24	28.33

regarding fundamental rights, right for education, health, property, marriage, dowry, pregnancy and abortion, wages and employment, domestic violence, prostitution and eve teasing were found to be significant among rural and urban adolescent girls. There is need to develop women rights education package for school going girls and intervention programmes for non-school going girls especially for rural areas to increase the awareness.

## REFERENCES

---

Census of India, 2011.

Garg and Srilata (2009). Women's rights awareness of urban and rural adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh : A comparative study. *Indian J. Soc. Sci. Res.*, **6** (1) : 113-117

Madan, R. (2000). Education and employment: Agents of women's empowerment Abstract of International Womens Conference on Women's status : Vision and reality held at New Delhi. (27 Feb.- 2 March) p.183.

Rashid, S.F. (2006). Emerging changes in reproductive behaviour among married adolescent girls in an urban slum in Dhaka, Bangladesh, *Reproductive health Matters*, 14 (27).Sex of India Iloveindia:

UNICEF India Statistics. Volunteer Ramblings: Status of Women in India <http://volunteer-thoughts.blogspot.com/2005/09/status-of-women-in-india-over-all.html>

## ■ WEBLIOGRAPHY

<http://www.braceducation.org/adp.php>

[www.iloveindia.com/population-of-india-sexratio.html](http://www.iloveindia.com/population-of-india-sexratio.html)

