

Sexual and Procreation Health Related Awareness in Rural Tribal Adolescent Girls: A Study

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I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescent age is an important stage in the life. It is a link between childhood and youth. Adolescent people's personality development plays vital role as it is the age where various bio-chemical changes happen in the body as well as they are considered as the responsible factor of society and family. Adolescent age people's population is recorded at 1.2 Million out of total population of the world. Behind every five people 1 person is adolescent. Asia continent encompasses half of the world's population. The numbers of adolescent age people is more in India as compared to China where the density of population is more than India.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In Maharashtra, total 25% marriages are completed before 18 years. Women's population is rapidly decreasing as compared to the men. No major changes have been observed in the health of women during this decade. Various problems have been identified in the tribal areas such as child marriages, pregnancy, increase in the complications during procreation, increasing rate of child-mother deaths etc. It severely affect on the nurturing of child due to immaturity in the women. (NFHS-4, 2015-16). There is five percent high risk of mother's death who are below 16 years as compared to the mothers who belongs to 20-24 years whereas it is observed at three percent among the women whose age is less than 18 years (Hung, 2014).

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Following objectives have been decided to study the awareness of rural tribal adolescent girls regarding sexual and procreation health.

1. To study the awareness regarding the posing danger caused by pre-marital sexual relations.
2. To investigate the knowledge regarding sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS.

IV. HYPOTHESES

1. Rural tribal adolescent girls lack in the knowledge regarding sexual and procreation health.
2. Very few girls are aware about the sexually transmitted disease like AIDS.

ASSUMPTION:

Sexual and procreation health related awareness programs organized by the government as well as Women and Children Development Department are beneficial for rural tribal girls.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Observation method has been used for the present research.

A. SELECTION OF AREA:

Chichgad, Istari, Chichewada, Kakodi, Futana, Kawrabandh, Dhamditola, Mulala, Murmadi, Piparkhari etc. villages of Deori block of Gondia district have been selected for the present research.

B. SAMPLING:

Random sampling method has been used for the present research. Total 200 girls of 15-18 age group, 20 girls each from every Anganwadi Centres, have been selected for the research.

DATA COLLECTION METHOD:

Primary data has been collected with the help of questionnaire duly filled by rural areas' tribal adolescent girls during May 2015 to November 2016. The questionnaire has been prepared to collect various

data such as their family background, social and economic status as well as their awareness level regarding procreation and sexual health.

Data has been collected with the help of officers of Women and Child Development Department of Deori block of Gondia district. Every village has Anganwadis as per the population of village. A supervisor is assigned for circle and an Anganwadi Sevika and an assistant are also assigned for the work. Questionnaire has been filled with the help of these people by registered adolescent girls.

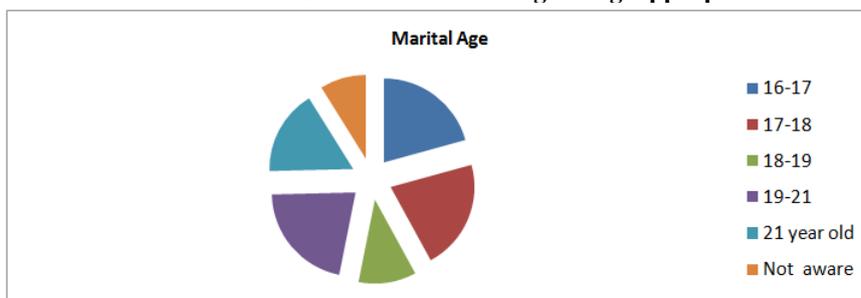
SECONDARY DATA SOURCES:

Various published literature and internet have been used to collect secondary data. As per the collected data, 38.5% girls belong to 15-16 years category, 30.3% girls to 16-17 years while 31.2% girls belong to 17-18 years category. Average age of tribal adolescent girls is 16.5 while percentile is 33.33%.

Total 27.67% girls are in 9th standard of middle school, 31.17% girls in 10th standard. As far as the higher secondary schools level education is concerned, 24.00% girls are enrolled in 11th standard, 12.83% girls in 12th standard whereas 4.33% girls are enrolled in other professional education i.e. tailoring and nursing. Total 60.66% girls belonged to Gond tribe, 23.20% to Halbi and 10.14% girls belonged to Pradhan tribe.

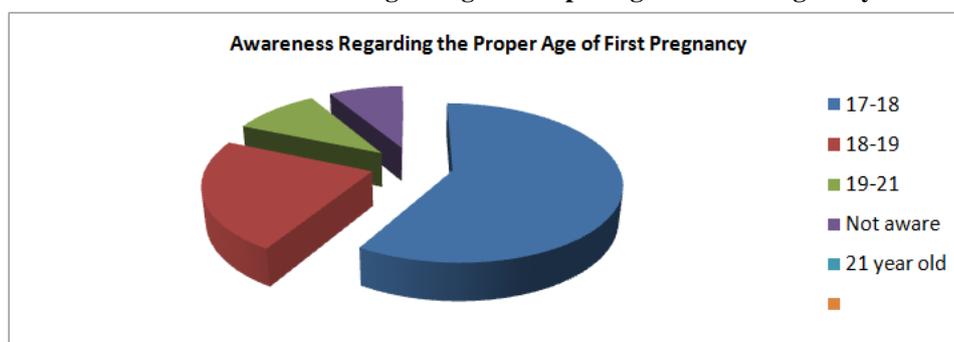
Average monthly income of these families is between Rs. 5000 to 10000/-. Out of which total 31.60% girls' monthly family income is less than 5000/-. Total 39.26% parents worked in agriculture, 1.83% in service, 6.33% in small scale industries and 58.58% worked as labour. Total 37.33% joint families are observed whereas 62.67% families are separate.

CHART-1: Tribal Adolescent Girls' Awareness Regarding Appropriate Marital Age.



These girls belong to the remote tribal and backward areas who are from very poor financial background and their presence in school is very low. Above chart meticulously deals with the proper marital age of the adolescent age girls. It indicates that these girls are not very much aware about the proper age of marriage. Girls are considered as a burden prominently due to parent's indifferent nature towards girls, gender discrimination, poverty, addiction and familial conflicts. Parents always think that they must complete their responsibility of marriage of the girls as soon as possible. They don't give prominence to girls' education. Girls spend their maximum time in daily household chores, wages. It culminates into to the unwillingness of girls in education and poor educational status. They remain absent in the school and their comprehension level is too low. They become ready prominently due to their family's conditions. But, the girls who are taking higher secondary education are mostly aware about the appropriate age of the marriage.

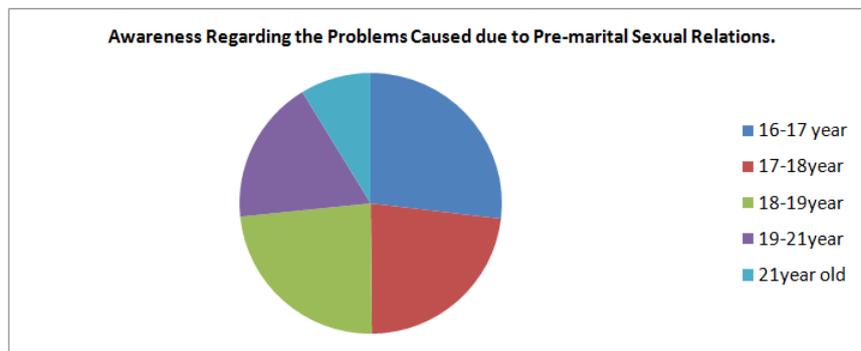
CHART-2: Awareness Regarding the Proper Age of First Pregnancy:



Following diagram shows the opinions regarding the appropriate age of women's first pregnancy.

As per above diagram, it is observed that more than 50% girls are not aware about the appropriate age of the pregnancy. Pre-marital sexual relations are considered as immoral, characterless and unsocial. Gender discrimination is prevalent in these acts also. But, Gond tribe never considers it as an immoral act. Nowadays, tribal people are coming into the mainstream of the society due to socialization. Adolescent girls are becoming victims for it prominently due to the lack of knowledge, television, mobile, boldness in the movies, separate families, disobedience of older people, unwillingness, lack of etiquettes and manners, familial disputes, unfulfilled desires, and laziness. It culminates into the pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and danger of maiden mother. They have very meager amount of information regarding it. They are not aware about their health and ongoing problems in their life. Many times boys consider it as time pass and never takes the responsibility of such acts. It culminates into the familial and social humiliation, regret, negative thoughts of suicide in their minds. As well as, it may lead towards the misunderstanding in further marital family life.

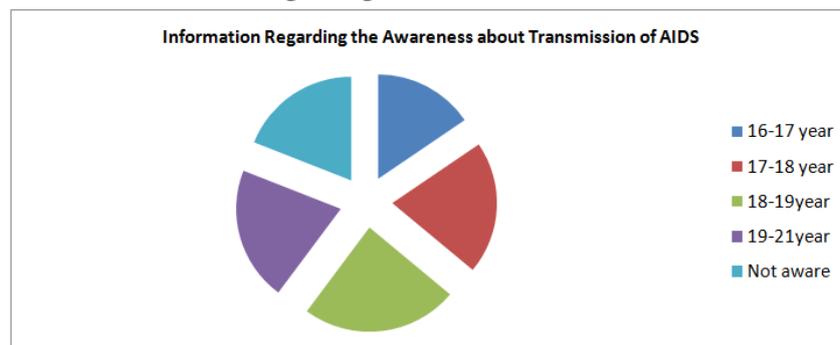
CHART-3: Awareness Regarding the Problems Caused due to Pre-marital Sexual Relations.



Tribal Adolescent girls' views were taken regarding the awareness about the problems caused by pre-marital sexual relation. Total 34.18% girls considers that pre-marital sexual relations are immoral and unsocial while 29.18% girls considers that it may lead towards the pregnancy and 40.00% girls opine that boy can't take the responsibility of pregnancy though he is responsible for it. Total 29.90% girls considers that it may lead towards the maiden mother's problem while 22.75% girls opined that it cause humiliation and regret to the concerned girls. Total 15.00% girls consider that it can be culminated into AIDS whereas 13.68% girls approved that negative thoughts like suicide can be hovered on the minds of the girls due to mental stress.

Information has been accumulated from schools, Anganwadi centres's Adolescent Empowerment Scheme regarding the awareness and knowledge about HIV/AIDS. These girls have little knowledge that AIDS is sexually transmitted disease, it is a breath-taking disease, it has no medicine, and protection is the only way to save from it.

CHART-4: Information Regarding the Awareness about Transmission of AIDS



As per data collected regarding the knowledge about the transmitted disease like AIDS, total 15.44% opined that AIDS prominently caused due to the used blade of HIV affected person, 20.66% girls said that it caused due to the insecure sexual relations, 24.05% girls stated that it caused by the donated blood of HIV affected person while 20.85% girls opined that it spread due to the infected needle of the patients. According to 19% girls, it transmitted to the child of HIV infected mother. It clearly indicates that these girls have very meager amount of knowledge regarding AIDS.

VI. CONCLUSION

While studying the rural tribal adolescent girls' awareness who belong to 15-18 years of Deori block of Gondia district regarding the sexual and procreation health, it is observed that maximum girls were from poor financial background. Parents are indifferent towards the girls which directly affect the health and future of the girls.

Various problems have been identified regarding the comprehension of the girls prominently due to the unwillingness towards the education. It is the main reason behind the lack of knowledge regarding sexual and procreation related health. Therefore, they have to face various severe physical problems in future. They went for the agricultural activities whenever this type of information is provided in the Anganwadi as well as in health centers.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adolescent girls as well as parents need counseling in tribal region. Government and Social Organizations should take the initiatives regarding the present issues.
- Education and health department should implement various programs to spread awareness among the people regarding it and it should be effective.
- Adolescent girls' sexual and procreation health are very sensitive factors which have been incessantly neglected. Its impacts are very harmful and dangerous and it is proven in various researches. Various efforts should be taken in right direction to safeguard and keep the future generation healthy. It is not only the responsibility of the government but also attempts should be made at all level.
- Government's Women and Child Development Department should effectively implement the schemes like Adolescent Girls' Upliftment Scheme, empowerment schemes and health department's schemes related to the adolescent girls' health materials. Social Development programs should consist various activities like life-skills, health, moral value education and related social activities etc. These programs will be successful if there is mutual cooperation and collaboration.

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