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## Original Article

### Study To Assess Perception And Need Assessment Of Sex Education Among School Going Adolescents

Rupali<sup>1</sup>, Arashpreet Kaur Chhina<sup>2</sup>, Sanjay Gupta<sup>3</sup>, Seema Grover<sup>4</sup>, Shivani<sup>5</sup>, Sahil Chhabra<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Senior Resident, <sup>2</sup>Junior Resident, <sup>3</sup>Professor and Head, Department of SPM, <sup>4</sup>Professor and Head Department Of Obs and Gynae, <sup>5</sup>Senior Resident, Department of Microbiology, <sup>6</sup>Senior Resident, Department of Pathology, GGS Medical College and Hospital Faridkot, Punjab, India.

#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** It is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood, a period of dramatic growth and development. As a child evolves into an adult, a complex myriad of physiological as well as psychological alterations take place. It is the most critical period of development, second only to early childhood. **Aims & Objectives-** To assess pattern and perception of sex education among adolescents. **Materials and Methods-** Community based cross sectional study design was adopted. assessment in school going adolescents in the age group of 16 to 19 years of Faridkot. **Results-** Total of 250 students were taken in the study which includes 143 girls and 107 boys. Only 7(04.90%) of girls responded that their parents had attempted to educate them about sex, whereas 127(88.81%) answered the question in the negative. The ratio of boys who had been given any form of sex education by their parents was 5(04.68%), with 97(90.65%) saying they had not received such education. The respondents who had received some sex education from parents were asked how they had found it. 3(50.00%) of the girls said they found it educative, whereas 1(16.67%) found it embarrassing. Among the boys, 2(33.33%) found the talks educative, and 1(16.67%) found it embarrassing and 1(16.67%) already knew. Among girls, 59(41.26%) said the sex education should be given in school, 38(26.57%) said college, and rest said nothing. Among the boys, 45.79% wanted sex education in college, 35.51% in schools, and rest in neither of them.

**Keywords-** Adolescent, Sex Education

**Corresponding Author:** Dr. Arashpreet Kaur Chhina, Junior Resident (Community Medicine), Guru Gobind Singh Medical College, Faridkot

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## INTRODUCTION

The term adolescence meaning "to emerge or achieve identity" is a relatively new concept, especially in developmental thinking. The origin of the term was from the Latin word "adolescere" meaning "to grow, to mature" indicate the defining features of adolescence.<sup>1</sup> Although many adolescents navigate the sometimes turbulent course from childhood to adulthood to become productive and healthy adults, there is growing concern that far too many others may not achieve their full potential, as adolescence is also a period fraught with many threats to the health and well being of adolescents in which many suffer substantial impairment and disability.<sup>2</sup> The sex education given at the right age can prevent various STDs including the modern day pandemic of AIDS; however, this need is still not appropriate by various agencies involved. It is necessary that students who are to be given this education should be involved at every stage of decision making. Present study aims to identify the needs and perception of students about the sex education and

also addresses the crucial issues, Sex education being advocated and promoted by many Western oriented educationists seems only a euphemism for teaching safe sex. It is assumed that students cannot be prevented from free sex, so teach them safe sex, use of contraceptive.<sup>3</sup> The lives of millions of adolescent's worldwide are at risk because they do not have the Information, skills, health services and support they need to go through sexual development during adolescence and postpone sex until they are physically and socially mature and able to make well-informed, responsible decisions. Adolescents are susceptible to unhealthy and risk taking behaviors like unsafe sex, substance abuse and violence.<sup>4</sup> The present study was conducted to identify the need of imparting sex and reproductive health education in school going adolescents.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Community based cross sectional study design was adopted. The study population consisted of school going adolescents of 16 to 19

years in Faridkot studying in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> classes. This age group was chosen as the students get exposed to reproductive and sexual changes in their bodies and face problems related to these changes. The study was conducted in government and private senior secondary schools of Faridkot (Punjab). All the students aged 16-19 years, studying in 11<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> standard who were willing to participate in the study. Respondents whose parents also gave informed consent for participation were included in the study. Students not belonging to specified age group and students who themselves or whose parents were not willing to participate in the study were excluded from the study. To obtain the consent, a consent form was given to the students to take consent from their parents. After obtaining consents from both sides (Parents and Students), the students were allowed to participate in the study. A self designed self-reported pretested questionnaire was used to assess the need assessment among adolescents in schools. The self designed Performa consisting of questions significantly associated with sex education and STDs knowledge. Most of the questions were structured with 3-5 options. Students were asked to tick only one option unless specified otherwise. Open-ended questions were given wherever description of answer is required

which helped them in understanding the answer better while enabling students to explain their problem. Multistage Random Sampling was adopted to get the study subjects. Out of 10 senior secondary schools in Faridkot, 5 schools were randomly selected. In each school there were 2 sections of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. One section of each class i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> was selected by random method from each school. Ultimately we got total of 250 students in 10 sections from 5 schools. The study was conducted after obtaining written permission from the Principals of the selected schools. The weekly schedule of the students was taken and adjusted accordingly to make them available for the study, without disturbing much of their teaching schedule. The students were explained the purpose of the study. They were assured of utmost confidentiality. A total of 143 girls and 107 boys were administered questionnaire. The method of filling the questionnaire was explained to the students. No interpersonal discussions were allowed in between and all the queries raised by students were clarified. The completed questionnaires were collected. Data was compiled in excel sheet and analyzed with appropriate statistical methods and valid conclusions were drawn.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Distribution Of Respondents According To Age And Sex**

Age Group (in years)	Male		Female		Total	
	No. of males	%age	No. of females	%age	No. of respondents	%age
16-17	23	09.20	34	13.60	57	22.80
17-18	32	12.80	41	16.40	73	29.20
18-19	36	14.40	39	15.60	75	30.00
19	16	06.40	29	11.60	45	18.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>42.80</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>57.20</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 2: Respondents Whose Parents Have Tried To Educate Them About Sex**

Response	Male		Female		Total	
	No. of males	%age	No. of females	%age	No. of respondents	%age
Yes	5	04.68	7	04.90	12	04.80
No	97	90.65	127	88.81	224	89.60
NA/DK	5	04.67	9	06.29	14	05.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.00</b>

- **NA/DK stands for No Answer/ Don't know.**

The above table shows that the respondents were divided into four groups for study purposes. A large segment were in age group of 18-19 years 75(30.00%), followed by 17-18 years 73(29.20%), 16-17 years 57(22.80%) and 19 years 45(18.00%). A total of 250 students were taken in the study which includes 143(57.20%) girls and 107(42.80%) boys. Chi square test reveals that there is a statistically significance between age and sex distribution of the

participants in the stu Above table shows number of respondents whose parents had ever tried to educate them about sex. Among girls, only 12(04.80%) responded that their parents had attempted to educate them about sex. The ratio of boys who had been given any form of sex education by their parents was even lower 5(04.68%).

**Table 3: Responses To Parental Efforts At Sex Education**

Response	Male		Female		Total	
	No. of males	%age	No. of females	%age	No. of respondents	%age
Educative	2	33.33	3	50.00	5	41.66
Boring/Useless	2	33.33	1	16.67	3	25.00
Embarrassing	1	16.67	1	16.67	2	16.67
Already Knew	0	16.67	2	16.66	2	16.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Above table shows the response to parental efforts at sex education. Among girls 3(50.00%) said they found it educative.

Among the boys, 2(33.33%) found the talks boring and same percentage of boys found it educative.

**Table 4: Respondents Views On Place For Sex Education**

Response	Male		Female		Total	
	No. of males	%age	No. of females	%age	No. of respondents	%age
School	38	35.51	59	41.26	97	38.80
College	49	45.79	38	26.57	87	34.80
Neither	13	12.16	17	11.89	30	12.00
NA/DK	7	06.54	29	20.28	36	14.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* NA/DK stands for No Answer/ Don't know.

Above table shows the response to where sex education should be given. Among 143 girls, 59(41.26%) said school, 38(26.57%) said college and rest said nothing. Among the boys, 49(45.79%) in college, 38(35.51%) wanted sex education in schools and rest in neither of them. Chi square test reveals that the observed

difference among males and females regarding where sex education should be given was found to be statistically significant.

## DISCUSSION

In this study 250 adolescents, aged between 16-19 years were included, 107(42.80%) male students and 143(57.20%) female students, with a ratio of 0.74:1. Similar results were found in a study conducted by Abraham L et al, in 2005 on AIDS Awareness Campaigns, Sex Education Programmes and Pornography: The Shaping of Sexuality Awareness among College Students and included adolescents from class 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> aged between 16-20 years (Table 1).<sup>5</sup> The present study shows the responses to where sex education should be given. Among girls, 59(41.26%) said it should be given in school, 38(26.57%) said college and rest said nothing. Among the boys, 49(45.79%) mentioned college, 38(35.51%) wanted sex education in schools and rest in neither of them and the results were statistically significant ( $X^2 = 56.784$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Similar results were seen in a study conducted by Gladys M et al, in 2000 on Educating Teenagers About Sex in the United States and found that Parental communication about sex education topics with their teenagers is associated with delayed sexual initiation and increased birth control method and condom use among sexually experienced teenagers. Although the impact of formal sex education on teenagers' behavior is harder to assess and depends on its content, studies show it can be effective at reducing risk behaviors. These data show that the majority of male and female teenagers 15–19 years are receiving formal sex education on “how to say no to sex,” methods of birth control, STDs, and how to prevent HIV/AIDS.<sup>6</sup> Sabherwal VB et al, conducted a study on Sexual Behavioral patterns relating to HIV/AIDS and STDs among College Students of Delhi and felt that sex education should be initiated at school (83.5%) or college (15.0%). Only 1.5% felt no sex education should be given in any educational institution. In the medical undergraduates of Delhi, 84.1% opined that there was a requirement for sex education in school or college.<sup>7</sup> Bhalwar R et al, in 2003 conducted a study on Community Based Study of AIDS Awareness and Attitudes among School and College-going Teenagers from rural background and found that 87% of females and 91% males (High School) favored HIV/AIDS education in schools and college's. This figure rose to 98% in females and 97% in males at Intermediate level.<sup>8</sup>

## CONCLUSION

So it can be concluded that adolescent's reproductive and sexual health is very important for their future life, it also gives the good impact of a nation. There are only limited studies on adolescent reproductive and sexual health in India. There is a need to do further research on adolescent reproductive and sexual health and review of the past research is also essential to develop conceptual model for the investigation. This helps to develop clear understanding of the present study, which can be formulated with appropriate research methodology according to the objectives of study.

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