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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG ADOLESCENT BOYS IN M.P.P.H SCHOOLS, DENDULURU.

Mental Health Nursing

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive study aimed to assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru, Andhra Pradesh. **Background:** Adolescence is a vulnerable developmental phase characterized by rapid physical, emotional, and social changes, increasing the risk of substance abuse due to curiosity, peer pressure, and lack of awareness. Substance abuse during this stage can have serious health, academic, and social consequences. Early education and preventive interventions are essential to reduce initiation and promote healthy behavior. **Objectives:** To assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys. To determine the association between knowledge levels and selected demographic variables. **Methodology:** A non-experimental, descriptive research design was adopted. A total of 60 adolescent boys aged 13–19 years were selected using a non-probability convenience sampling technique from M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru. Data were collected using a structured knowledge questionnaire covering types of substances, causes, effects, and prevention of substance abuse. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Chi-square test to determine associations. **Results:** The study revealed that 45% of participants had inadequate knowledge, 40% had moderately adequate knowledge, and only 15% had adequate knowledge regarding substance abuse. No statistically significant association was found between knowledge levels and demographic variables such as age, education, type of family, income, religion, family history of substance use, or source of information ($p > 0.05$). **Conclusion:** The findings indicate a general lack of awareness among adolescent boys, regardless of demographic background. This underscores the need for school-based educational interventions and community awareness programs to strengthen knowledge and reduce the risk of substance abuse. Integrating such programs into the school curriculum can empower adolescents to make informed and healthy lifestyle choices.

KEYWORDS

Substance abuse, adolescent boys, knowledge assessment, preventive education, school-based intervention, Denduluru

INTRODUCTION

Substance abuse is a critical global health issue, especially among adolescents, who face significant emotional, psychological, and social changes during this developmental phase. Factors such as increasing availability of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, along with peer pressure and curiosity, contribute to adolescents' heightened vulnerability to substance use. Early experimentation can lead to addiction, mental health problems, academic decline, and involvement in criminal behavior, underscoring the urgent need for effective preventive interventions.

The World Health Organization (WHO) highlights a rising trend of substance abuse among school-aged adolescents worldwide, with serious long-term impacts on their health and social functioning. In India, research shows an alarming prevalence of substance use among adolescent boys, often exacerbated by peer influence within school environments. Despite existing awareness initiatives, gaps persist in adolescents' understanding of the risks associated with substance abuse and the importance of prevention.

Schools play a pivotal role as platforms for health education and intervention. Assessing the knowledge levels of adolescent boys regarding substance abuse can help tailor prevention programs to empower them with the information and skills necessary to resist peer pressure and make healthy choices. This study focuses on adolescent boys at M.P.P.H School, Denduluru, aiming to evaluate their knowledge about substance abuse and inform effective school- and community-based preventive strategies.

Need for the Study

- **Global Perspective:** WHO reports that about 13% of adolescents worldwide engage in drug use, leading to long-term health and behavioral consequences.
- **U.S. Data:** A 2021 NIDA survey found that 46% of adolescent boys experimented with illicit substances before 18, with peer influence as a major factor.
- **Indian Context:** According to ICMR (2020), 37% of school-going adolescent boys in India reported substance exposure, mainly due to peer pressure and lack of awareness.
- **Regional Data:** NIMHANS (2021) study in Andhra Pradesh showed 42.5% of adolescent boys tried substances, with 29.3% using regularly; factors include poor parental supervision and easy access.
- **Local Concern:** APSCHE (2022) survey in rural Andhra Pradesh, including Denduluru, found 55% of boys aware of substance abuse but holding misconceptions about its risks, highlighting a need for focused awareness efforts.

Problem Statement: "A descriptive study to assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru."

Objectives

- To assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru.
- To find out the association between the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse and selected demographic variables of adolescent boys.

Research Hypothesis

H1 – There is a significant association between the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse and selected demographic variables among adolescent boys.

Research Methodology:

Research Approach: A quantitative research approach was used to assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys.
Research Design: A non-experimental, descriptive research design was adopted for this study.
Research Setting: The study was conducted in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru. The rationale for selecting this setting included the availability of an adequate sample, familiarity with the environment, cooperation from the institution, and feasibility of conducting the study.
Variables of the Study:
Research Variable: Level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys.
Population: The population of the study includes adolescent boys studying in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru.

Sample and Sample Size: The sample consists of adolescent boys studying in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru, with a total sample size of 60 students.

Sampling Technique: A non-probability convenience sampling technique was employed to select participants.

Sampling Criteria:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Adolescent boys aged 13-19 years enrolled in M.P.P.H Schools, Denduluru.
- Willing and available to participate during the data collection period.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Adolescent boys with major health issues or cognitive impairments affecting their ability to respond.
- Those unavailable during the data collection period.

Development and Description of the Tool:

The tool consists of two sections:

Section A: Demographic Variables: Age, Education level, Type of family, Family income, Religion, History of substance use in family, Sources of information regarding substance abuse

Section B: Knowledge Assessment Tool: A structured knowledge questionnaire was used to assess knowledge regarding substance abuse. The questionnaire covered:

1. Definition and types of substance abuse
2. Common substances abused (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, drugs)
3. Causes and risk factors of substance abuse
4. Effects of substance abuse on health, family, and society
5. Preventive measures and awareness programs

Each question was multiple-choice with a single correct response.

Table -1: Scoring And Interpretation: Each Correct Answer Was Given 1 Mark, And Incorrect Answers Were Given 0 Marks.

Level of knowledge	Score	Percentage
In adequate knowledge	0-10	0-33.3%
Moderately adequate knowledge	11-20	36.6-66.6%
Adequate knowledge	20-30	70-100%

Plan for Data Analysis:

Descriptive Statistics:

- Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to analyze the knowledge scores.

Inferential Statistics:

- Chi-square test was applied to determine the association between knowledge levels and selected demographic variables.

Table-2: Frequency And Percentage Distribution Of Data According To Demographic Variable: n=60

Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (years)		
a. 13 – 14 years	16	26.7%
b. 15 – 16 years	42	70%
c. 17 years and above	02	3.3%
Education level		
a.8th standard	12	20%
b.9th standard	24	40%
c. 10th standard	24	40%
Type of family		
a.Nuclear family	40	70%
b.Joint family	15	21.67%
c.Extended family	2	3.33%
d.Others	3	5%
Family income		
a.10,000 / month	53	88.4%
b.10,001-15,000 / month	4	6.6%
c.15,001-20,000 / month	1	1.6%
d.20,000 above	2	3.4%
Religion		
a.Hindu	30	50%
b.Muslim	20	33.3%
c.Christian	10	16.7%
History of substance use in family		
a.Yes	15	25%
b. No	45	75%
Source of information regarding substance abuse		
a.Media	27	45%
b. Peer group	18	30%
c. Family members	15	25%

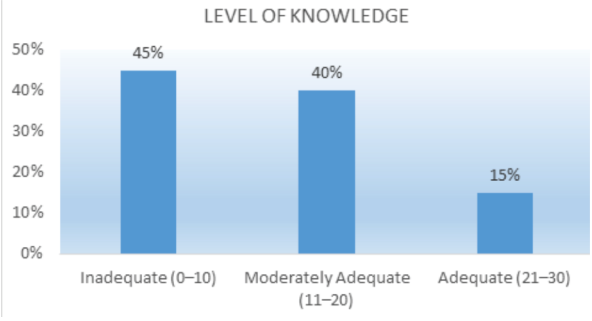

Figure-1: Frequency And Percentage Distribution Of Level Of Knowledge Regarding Substance Abuse Among Adolescent Boys. n=60

Association Between The Level Of Knowledge Among Adolescent Girls With Their Selected Demographic Variables.

The findings indicate that there was no statistically significant association between the level of knowledge on substance abuse and any of the demographic variables assessed. Variables such as age($p = 0.14$), education level($p = 0.81$), type of family($p = 0.79$), family income($p = 0.58$), religion($p = 0.53$), history of substance use in the family($p = 0.75$), and source of information($p = 0.664$) all yielded p-values greater than 0.05, suggesting that these demographic factors did not have a significant impact on participants' knowledge levels.

DISCUSSION

The first objective was to assess the level of knowledge regarding substance abuse among adolescent boys. The majority, 27(45%), had inadequate knowledge, 24(40%) had moderately adequate knowledge, and only 9(15%) had adequate knowledge regarding substance abuse.

The second objective was to examine the association between the level of knowledge and selected demographic variables. Variables such as age, religion, education level, type of family, family income, history of substance use in the family, and source of information on substance abuse were analyzed. However, none of these demographic variables were found to have a statistically significant association with the level of knowledge at the 5% significance level ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis that there is a significant association between the level of knowledge and selected demographic variables was rejected.

CONCLUSION

The study found that most adolescent boys had either inadequate or moderately adequate knowledge regarding substance abuse, with only a small portion demonstrating adequate awareness. There were no significant associations found between knowledge levels and demographic variables, indicating a general lack of awareness across all groups. These findings highlight the urgent need for comprehensive, school-based education programs to improve knowledge about substance abuse among adolescents.

Implications

Nursing Practice:

- Nurses should actively engage in educating adolescents about substance abuse and its risks.
- Regular in-service training should be provided on adolescent health and preventive strategies.

Nursing Education:

- Nursing curricula should include content related to adolescent substance use and its prevention.
- Students should be encouraged to attend seminars and workshops addressing early intervention.

Nursing Administration:

- Support and implement school-based programs aimed at preventing substance use among adolescents.
- Develop policies and allocate resources to promote health education and early awareness.

Nursing Research:

- This study provides a foundation for developing evidence-based strategies to reduce substance use in adolescents.

- Further large-scale and intervention-based studies are recommended to enhance preventive efforts.

Recommendations

- Conduct similar studies in diverse settings and larger populations to validate findings.
- Implement structured, age-appropriate school programs focused on awareness and prevention.
- Encourage collaboration with families, peers, and educators to strengthen education and support systems.

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