

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF**

**UGC MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT**

**AWARENESS OF SEX AND SEXUALITY AMONG  
ADOLESCENT BOYS IN THRISSUR DISTRICT: AN  
INTERVENTION STUDY**

**(2237-MRP/15-16/KLCA019/UGC-SWRO)**

**BY**

**LIMS THOMAS**

**ASSISTANT PROFESSOR**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

**ST.THOMAS' COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRISSUR**

## **Introduction**

Awareness on sex and sexuality is significant in adolescent period. The level of sexuality awareness is varied from age to age. Awareness on sexuality will be understood from early childhood, when the personality of a child starts to develop. Adolescents should aware about their own sexuality as before they reach physically matured. Adolescents should aware about their own body and body changes. Adolescence is the period in development between the onset of puberty and adulthood. It usually begins between 11 and 13 years of age with the appearance of secondary sex characteristics and spans the teenage years, terminating at 18 to 20 years of age with the completion of the development of the adult form. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines adolescents as the age group 10–19.

Today, 1.2 billion adolescents stand at the crossroads between childhood and the adult world. Around 243 million of them live in India. Investing in the world's 1.2 billion adolescents aged 10-19 now can break entrenched cycles of poverty and inequity, said UNICEF today in its 2011 State of the World's Children report entitled 'Adolescence: An Age of Opportunity'. India is home to more than 243 million adolescents, who account for a quarter of the country's population. Physical and psychological changes or development is significant during adolescent period. Puberty is the age of growth spurt. Physical changes can be both internal and external. Physical changes such as; Hormone development, growth in body parts, gain height and weight, hair growth, voice change etc. are take place during this period. During the puberty growth spurt, four important physical changes occur which transform the child's body into that of an adult: changes in body size, changes in body proportion, the development of the primary sex characteristics, and the development of the secondary sex characteristics. The primary sex changes include the development of sex organs. In males, the gonads or testes are developed. And secondary sex changes include the changes in physical features. On this context, it's highly important that the adolescents must be able to properly understand the biological and psychological changes. Many of them are not able to understand and cope

up with these changes. UNICEF India (2013) reported that, 61% of adolescents are confused about their physical changes during adolescence period in south Asian countries. The awareness regarding own sexuality will help adolescents to lead a comfortable life. Sexuality awareness also helps them to differentiate the positive and negative aspects of their own sexuality. It will help them to avoid unwanted anxieties towards physical and psychological changes. Sexuality of an adolescent is influenced by their parents, peer groups and siblings etc. Adolescents should understand about their own sexuality as before they reaching puberty or as before they get matured. Most of the problems of adolescent generated due to lack of awareness on sexuality.

### **Research Methodology**

A before-after experimental design with control was adopted for the present study. The particular design was selected because the study involved a pre assessment of the dependent variables in two matched groups, an intervention for one of the randomly selected groups and a post assessment of the same variables in both the groups. The dependent variables under study were, the respondent's knowledge regarding sex and sexuality, their attitude towards sex and sexuality, their myths and Misconceptions on Sexuality and Self-esteem. The universe of the study included all the adolescent boys studying in 8th or 9th standards or above in the Government run high schools or grant in aid schools in Thrissur District. Multi-Stage Random Sampling was adopted as the sampling procedure in this study.

The list of all Higher Secondary Schools in Thrissur Corporation was collected from the District Education Office, Thrissur and from the source list of 28 Higher Secondary Schools runs by governments and 63 grant in aid schools. From the above list, the researcher randomly selected ten schools for the study purpose. While selecting the schools, the researcher gives preferences to incorporate different regions such as vocational schools, schools situated in beaches etc. From each schools, the researcher minimum 50 respondents for intervention. From the study group, using simple random sampling, a group of 50 from the same class was selected which formed the experimental

group (intervention group). The same number of students based on the criteria has taken as the control group too. The tools were Knowledge inventory on Sexuality, Attitude towards the Sexuality and Self Esteem Scale by Rosenberg. The pre assessment was done initially before every session. Intervention has given to every school on different dates. The entire components comprises of three sessions of one and half hours each. The resource persons were social workers, counselors and teachers etc. Interventions were provided to 510 adolescent boys. After the intervention session, post assessments were conducted with the same tool. One of the major limitation of the study is the intervention sessions have previously scheduled in the months of February and March 2018 as per the instructions received from the office of educational office. But the co –operation which received by the researcher from the school authorities were not that supportive. The researcher has covered seven schools by March 2018. But the other schools which were communicated to conduct the interventions did not allow the researcher to conduct the interventions and requested the researcher to extend to the next academic year. In the initial months of the next academic year, Kerala has witnessed it's one of the major disaster in the last 100 years. The floods devastated majority of the schools in Kerala which compel the researcher to extend the interventions in the schools. Majority of the schools were busy with exam scheduling, syllabus completion, remedial coaching, terminal exams etc. The researcher was able to conduct the next three intervention session only in the months of Jan/Feb of 2019. The response may vary based on the time gap which can be one of the limitations of the study.

## **Results and Discussion**

Impact of pedagogical interventions in sex and sexuality on the knowledge, attitude, and self-esteem of the adolescent boys in both the groups were analyzed using the knowledge inventory and attitude scale constructed for the purpose. Rosenberg self-esteem scale was used to assess the self-esteem. Mean percentage scores of each respondent for all the scales were computed and were used for testing the impact of pedagogical interventions on Knowledge, attitude, body image perception and self-esteem.

Statistically significant improvement was noticed in the knowledge levels of the respondents in the experimental group after the intervention, hence the hypothesis, “The experimental (intervention) group will have significantly better knowledge regarding sex and sexuality than the control (comparison) group after intervention” was accepted to be true. Regarding the attitude of the adolescent boy towards sexuality the following hypotheses were tested and accepted to be true. Interventions in sex and sexuality will inculcate positive attitude towards sex and sexuality among the experimental group and it also leads to an attitudinal change towards sex education as well as sexual expression and experiences

It was found that there is significant improvement in the self-esteem of the respondents in the experimental group after the intervention. Hence the hypothesis “Self-esteem improves significantly with pedagogical interventions in sex and sexuality” is accepted to be true. Correlation between knowledge of the respondents and their attitude towards sex and sexuality was also found to be significant at 0.01 levels and the correlation was positive. It indicates that there exist a positive and significant correlation between knowledge and attitude. Correlation between knowledge on sex and sexuality of the respondents and self-esteem is found to be significant at 0.01 levels and positive. This indicates that there exist a positive significant correlation between knowledge on sex and sexuality and self-esteem of the adolescent boys. A significant and positive correlation was worked out between self-esteem and body image perception. Hence the hypothesis that an adolescent with a healthy body image perception will have better self-esteem was accepted to be true. As the correlation between attitude towards sex and sexuality and self-esteem (0.622) was found to be significant and positive. This indicated that there is a significant correlation between attitude towards sex and sexuality and self-esteem.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of the present study very clearly indicate that teaching interventions in sex and sexuality has a significantly positive impact on the knowledge and attitude towards

sex and sexuality. Moreover, the interventions have enabled the boys in improving their self-esteem. The researcher believes that study will add more clarity and strength to the need for introducing teaching interventions in sex and sexuality to the adolescent population in the state and the findings of the study will consider as the beacon light for conducting more studies in the proposed subject among the adolescents. The findings would also urge the need of incorporating sexuality education in the state.