



“A STUDY ON HEALTH PROBLEMS OF HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN IN SPSR NELLORE DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH”

SUBJECT: POPULATION STUDIES

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ABSTRACT: Investment in education is an investment in health. Addressing health and education together underpins all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). National Health Policy (NHP) 2017 also envisages attainment of the highest possible level of health and wellbeing for all ages, through preventive and promote health care. The policy lays greater emphasis on investment in school health by incorporating health education as part of the curriculum, promoting hygiene and healthy practices within the school premises.

KEY WORDS: The profile of school age children, Importance of Health Care by Parents & Teachers, Common diseases, Economical and Social Problems, Addict of bad habits, Deficiency of Vitamin-A, Vitamin-C, Vitamin-D & Vitamin-B12, Importance of Health Education like Yoga & Exercise.

INTRODUCTION: *Seth Berkley* said that Healthy children are more likely to attend school and are better able to learn. Healthy workers are more productive. More productive economies mean greater stability in developing countries and improved security in the west. And Erik Erikson said that healthy children will not fear life if their elders have integrity enough not to fear death. The **World Health Organization (WHO)** emphasizes the importance of addressing various preventable health issues in school-aged children, including those in high school, such as injuries, violence, and mental health concerns. They also highlight the need for quality health services tailored to this age group, emphasizing the role of schools in providing effective health interventions. The health of children depends on their thoughts, feelings, desires, hopes, and positive thinking. The health of children also depends on their physical and mental development.

The school is only second to the home in its influence on the child's personality development. The teacher, next to the parents has the greatest responsibility and opportunity to maintain good health. The schools substitute the home situations and often meet personal health needs that are neglected in the home.

A child's personality develops continuously during the school years. He still has a chance to learn how to love and to be loved. The school can play a major role in the preservation and promotion of good health of the children. It must provide a physical mental health, physical health and good environment in which a child may have good enjoyment belongingness. Following measures can be very helpful in securing good health of the students.

- ❖ Physical Exercise
- ❖ Meditation and Yoga
- ❖ Healthy home and School environment
- ❖ Health care by Parents and Teachers
- ❖ Awareness on common health diseases like Dental, Eye, De-warming and Anemia.
- ❖ Menstruation period in teenage girls
- ❖ Emotional and Social problems
- ❖ Economical background of the family
- ❖ Residing at SC, ST, BC and Muslim minority colonies
- ❖ Addict of Smoking, Drinking in adolescent age
- ❖ Deficiency of Vitamin-A, Vitamin-C, Vitamin-D, Vitamin-B12, Iron, Iodine

Due to the many reasons mentioned in the above, as the health problems of high school children increase in the current situation, there is a risk of them withdrawing from school, developing bad habits and bad friendships, and dropping out of school altogether. Therefore, first of all, awareness seminars should be organized for parents about how to maintain good health of their children. Minimum facilities required in the school such as drinking water facility, hygienic washroom facility for girls, availability of necessary pads during period times, awareness on bad habits (cigarettes, drinking, drugs, ganja and gutka), awareness on sex education, awareness should be created about physical exercise and yoga. Training classes should be conducted to the teachers working in schools on student health and all children should be enrolled in schools for the particular catchment areas and ensure to complete their courses.

There are many ST, SC, BC and KGBV welfare hostels are functioning in Nellore district. Many poor students are studying in these Social Welfare Hostels. Economically backward families admit their children in such welfare hostels run by the State Government. There is a need of a healthy atmosphere at those hostels. For example, they need to be provided with good food, good drinking water, good toilets, good surroundings, and good protection. Classes should be conducted so that students are also aware of health. Good health creates the conditions for good studies.

Over the past decades, numerous studies on the health of high school students have shown that the health of students depends on their family circumstances, parental education, parental occupation, family income, and local conditions.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

Several studies highlight the difficulties that indigenous women experience in accessing reproductive health problems of High School Children.

Ram Sagar Reddy Moola (2019), in *health problems among government primary school children in rural area of Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh*. The health problems and their influencing factors in government primary school children and intervene by referring the students to appropriate health facilities.

Swapnil Jain (2024) in *Common Health Problem of School Going Children in a City of Central India*. Despite the well-known importance of nutritional health several cultural, social, political, economic and educational factors contribute to malnutrition among children. School going children constitute one-fifth of the total population and are the future of the nation.

Altaf Naseem (2021) in *Comprehensive study of health problems in school children of Hyderabad, India*. In India due to poverty and prevailing socio-cultural milieu a substantial number of school children suffer from various diseases which can be prevented if diagnosed and treated early. A child spends most of the time in school and it is considered an ideal place for learning and growing up of a child.

Banka Srinivas (2024) in Mental Health Status of the Secondary School Students in SPSR Nellore District. Mental health is a level of psychological well-being, or an absence of mental illness. It is the "psychological state of someone who is functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioural adjustment". From the perspective of positive psychology or holism, mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life, and create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience.

3. METHODOLOGY:

AIM: The objective of the article is to examine the reproductive rights and access to health care among High School children both boys and girls in all management schools like Government, Local bodies, Municipalities, Aided and Un-Aided in both Urban and Rural areas.

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ To find out whether there is any significant difference between boys and girls with regard to their health status
- ❖ To study whether there is any significant difference between rural and urban areas on their mental health status
- ❖ To find out the major health problems of VIII, IX and X class children
- ❖ To find out the major health problems of SC, ST, BC & Minority children who are living in small colonies
- ❖ To study whether there is any significant difference between different management of schools' regard to their health status
- ❖ To find out health problems of addicted children with Smoking, Drinking in adolescent age
- ❖ There will be any association between their parents' occupations and income in the health status
- ❖ There will be any association between their parents' educations in the health status
- ❖ There will be any association between physical exercise & Yoga in the health status

4. CASE PRESENTATIONS (Findings & Analysis)

Particulars of School Wise Enrolment, Long Absentees and Dropped Out Children

Sl · N o	School Name	Enrolment - Class Wise						Lon g Abs ente es	Drop ped out childr en	Total (LA+ DO)
		6t h	7t h	8t h	9t h	10t h	Tot al			
1	GOVT HS PALLIPADU	28	27	30	21	50	190	23	11	34
2	ZPHS GANGAPATNAM	52	38	43	35	37	263	36	16	52
3	ZPP GIRLS HS INDUKURPET	29	26	47	30	25	157	21	9	30
4	ZPP HS ADEMMASATRAM	22	26	25	19	25	117	16	10	26
5	ZPP HS KOMARIKA	31	18	26	26	25	175	24	12	36
6	ZPP HS KOTHUR OF I PETA	53	63	69	51	81	391	38	17	55
7	ZPP HS MUDIVARTHIPALEM	24	14	16	27	52	147	22	9	31

Source: District Information System for Education (DISE) by NIEPA, New Delhi Survey

Every student who joins school is expected to complete their education. But this is not always the case. There are various reasons for this. Some students miss school due to poverty, some due to bad habits, some due to their parents' lack of understanding about education, and some due to health reasons. The main thing is that the table above shows the enrollment in 7 Government and Zilla Parishad high schools from DISE, a survey conducted every year by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) organization, New Delhi, there are various reasons for this, such as students not attending school properly, students who drop out middle of the academic year, and students who are not familiar with the school at all.

Our governments are taking many steps for this. This is also the responsibility of all of us, yet 15% to 20% of students are unable to complete their school education. If we look deeper into this, they are unable to complete their higher education due to different health reasons.

% of Children are suffering from the following diseases

Sl. No	Type of Health Problem	Total (OS C + LA)	Dental	Visionary (Eye)	De-worming	Anemia	Menstruation	Deficiency of Vitamins	Suffering from long diseases	Addict of bad habits	Social & Psychological Problems	Total	%
1	GOVT HS PALLIPADU	34	0	4	0	1	0	3	2	2	6	18	53
2	ZPHS GANGAPATNAM	52	1	4	2	2	1	5	3	3	7	28	54
3	ZPP GIRLS HS INDUKURPET	30	2	0	0	1	0	2	1	3	4	13	43
4	ZPP HS ADEMMASATRAM	26	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	2	3	12	46
5	ZPP HS KOMARIKA	36	2	3	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	21	58
6	ZPP HS KOTHUR OF I PETA	55	4	4	5	2	3	6	3	4	3	34	62
7	ZPP HS MUDIVARTHIPALEM	31	0	0	2	2	0	3	2	3	4	16	52
	Total	264	10	17	13	9	6	24	14	20	29	142	
	% of children under Health Problems		3.8	6.4	4.9	3.4	2.3	9.1	5.3	7.6	11.0	53.8	

Source: Office of the Project Office, Samagrasiksha, SPSR Nellore District. (Child Info)

According to a survey conducted by the office of the Project Officer, Samagra Shiksha, SPSR Nellore district, when examining the above table, it was found that many students fail to continue their high school education and drop out middle of the academic year and are unable to complete their higher education. As part of this, if we look at the table above, we can see that many people are unable to continue higher education due to different health problems. Among them, social & psychological problems, vitamin deficiencies, bad addict of habits, eye problems, chronic diseases, de-worming, dental problems, and lack of proper facilities in the schools for girls are the main reasons for dropping out of higher education. And the following health problems are identified from the children in the schools.

1. **Physical Health Issues:** Common physical health problems identified included:
 - Nutritional deficiencies (anemia, obesity)
 - Vision issues (myopia and astigmatism)
 - Dental problems (cavities and gum disease)
2. **Mental Health Concerns:** The study revealed a significant prevalence of:
 - Anxiety and stress related to academic pressure
 - Depression linked to social issues and family dynamics
3. **Lifestyle Factors:** The research highlighted lifestyle choices that contribute to health problems, such as:
 - Sedentary behaviour and lack of physical activity
 - Unhealthy dietary habits, including high consumption of junk food
 - Insufficient sleep and poor time management

Discussion

The findings underscore the multifaceted health challenges faced by high school children in SPSR Nellore District. Physical health issues, compounded by mental health concerns, indicate a need for integrated health education and support services in schools. Addressing lifestyle factors through community programs can promote healthier habits among adolescents.

Recommendations

1. Conduct of Awareness Campaigns for parents in the rural and urban areas.
2. Conduct of Trainings to the Teachers who are working in High Schools.
3. Conduct of Regular health check-ups in the High Schools.
4. Strengthening of Mid-Day meal programme with high protein and vitamins.
5. Provide healthy atmosphere in the school i.e., drinking water, hygiene washrooms for girls, maintain of Pads bank, First Aid Kit.
6. Health Education Programs: Implementing comprehensive health education in schools to raise awareness about nutrition, physical activity & Yoga.
7. Counselling Services: Providing access to health resources and counselling for students facing Physical and Psychological challenges.
8. Community Engagement: Involving parents and local leaders and communities in health promotion initiatives to foster a supportive environment for adolescents.

Conclusion

This study highlights the urgent need to address health problems among high school children in SPSR Nellore District. By implementing targeted interventions and promoting healthy lifestyles, stakeholders can significantly improve the health and academic outcomes of these students. Future research should explore the long-term effects of these interventions on adolescent health.

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