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Comparative study of health awareness among secondary school students in relation to their gender and locale

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Abstract

A healthy body works as a platform where other important qualities can spring. It is the health education that helps to keep one away from ailments. The health of individual is the concern of the community. The health awareness of child is very important from the point of his all round development. Mahatma Gandhi advocates that physical exercise is an important daily activity equivalent to taking of one's meal by each individual. The 21st century may be treated as an age of rapid change in life styles of people. Science and Technology has developed very quickly to a great extent. Consequently human beings in general and adolescence in particular are greatly influenced by science and technology. Health education is essential for achieving healthy mind in a sound body. It assists in making the physical body strong and stout. It develops an integrated and well organized personality. It imparts knowledge and information necessary for improving the overall condition of an individual so that life becomes meaningful, enjoyable and successful. Health education has an impact on the total development of individual. Adolescent boys and girls face severe emotional disturbances. They suffer from profound stresses and excessive strains. It is said that adolescences is a period of storm and stress. During adolescence there is vigorous growth in body and mind. Adolescent boys and girls require education and training for maintaining sound reproductive health.

Keywords: Health awareness, gender, locale

Introduction

Human beings are born to lead a happy life. In bringing up the children, the school plays a unique role in everyone's life. A feeling of total well-being plays a critical part in attaining any lasting success or happiness in life. To achieve this state of well being, one must attain a life of fitness, which enables one to perform the best at all times. The present generation is living with a lot of distractions. They do not know how to lead a healthy life. In the present scenario the students are facing number of problems in home and school. They are facing unemployment adjustment and number of problems due to these problems students are becoming victim of fear, anxiety and despair and frustrations problem of adjustment etc. Good health contributes a lot in all round development of the personality. Health is a multidimensional concept because it is shaped by biological, social, economic and cultural factors. Health is not merely the absence of disease but is influenced and shaped by the access to basic needs like food, security, safe water supply, housing, and sanitation and health services. Within this broader definition of health, individual health is intrinsically interrelated with social factors. Therefore while individual health is important it is necessary to delineate its linkages with the physical, social and economic environment in which people live. Health of the children is an important concern for all societies since it contributes for all societies in their overall development. Health, nutrition and education are important for the overall development of the child and these three inputs need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. While the relationship between health and education is seen more in terms of the role that the latter plays in creating health awareness and health status improvements. Studies have shown that poor health and nutritional status of the children is the barrier to the attendance and educational attainment and therefore plays a crucial role in the enrolment, retention, and completion of school education. The concern related to health, nutrition and other inputs that contribute to the overall development of the child, therefore

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need to be part of curriculum on “Health and Physical Education” at the primary, secondary and higher secondary schools.

Objectives

The study conducted by the investigator is based on the following objectives:

1. To compare the health awareness of boys and girls of secondary schools.
2. To compare the health awareness of urban and rural secondary school students.

Hypotheses

Ho₁ There exist no significant difference between health awareness of boys and girls of secondary schools.

Ho₂ There exist no significant differences between health awareness of urban and rural secondary school students.

Research Method

In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study the descriptive survey method of research has been used to obtain information about the current status of phenomena.

The Sample

The sample of study comprised of 200 secondary school students of Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. It includes rural and urban secondary schools. The schools were selected purposively as per the suitability of the investigator. It may be mentioned here that out of 200 secondary school students 100 students belong to urban areas and other 100 belong to rural areas.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Area	Boys	Girls	Total
Urban	50	50	100
Rural	50	50	100
Total	100	100	200

Table 2: Detailed Structure of the Sample

S. No.	Name of the School	Area		Gender		Total
		Urban School	Rural School	Boys	Girls	
1	Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School Solan	01			50	50
2	Govt. Boys Sr. Sec. School Solan	01		50		50
3	Govt. Boys Sr. Sec. Kunihar		01	38	43	81
4	Govt. Girls Sen. Sec. School Kunihar		01	12	7	19

Instrumentation

In the present study the instrument used to collect the data was self-developed questionnaire on the health awareness consisting of 30 items. The tools consist of both positive and negative statements.

Techniques of Analysis and Interpretation

In view of the objectives and hypotheses investigator has used both descriptive as well as inferential statistics. The mean and standard deviation were calculated in case of descriptive statistics and ‘t’ test was calculated in case of inferential statistics.

Gender wise Score Distribution on Health Awareness of Secondary School Students

Table 3

Category	N	Mean	S.D.
Boys	100	143.45	8.61
Girls	100	140.85	11.89

A close scrutiny of table no.3 reveals that mean value of boys of secondary schools on health awareness is found to

be 143.45 which is high than the mean value of girls of secondary schools which is found to be 140.85. Further the standard deviation value of boys and girls of secondary schools are found to be 8.61 and 11.89 respectively. However, for the better understanding of such phenomenon the mean scores on health awareness of boys and girls have been presented in figure no.1

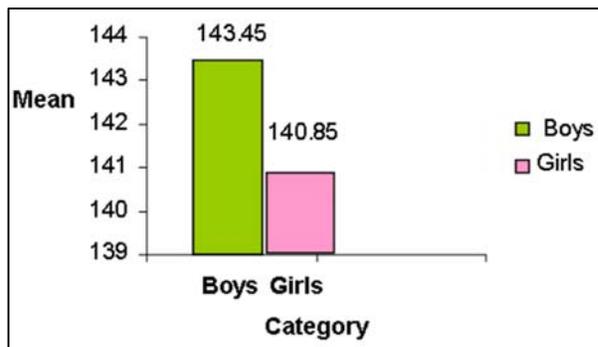


Fig 1: Locale wise Score Distribution on the Health Awareness of Secondary School Students

Table 4

Category	N	Mean	S.D.
Rural	100	144.86	9.31
Urban	100	139.44	10.85

A close scrutiny of table no.4 reveals that the mean value of rural and urban secondary school students on health awareness is found to be 144.86 and 139.44 respectively. Further, the standard deviation value of the rural and urban

secondary school students is found to be 9.31 and 10.85 respectively. However, for a better understanding of such a phenomena the mean scores on attitude towards health awareness have presented in figure no.2

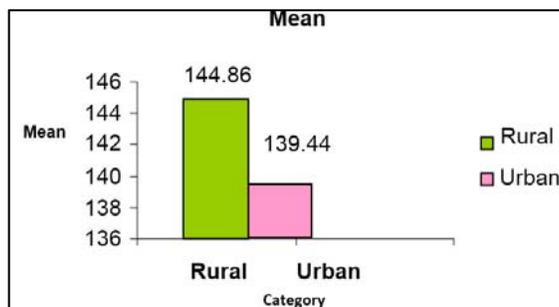


Fig 2: Study of significance of mean difference on Health Awareness of secondary school boys and girls

Table 5

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	SE _D	df	't'	Remark
Boys	100	143.45	8.61	1.46	198	1.78	Not-Significant
Girls	100	140.85	11.89				

The analysis of table no.5 reveals the mean scores of 143.45 and 140.85 in case of boys and girls of secondary schools respectively. Further, when scores were subjected to the testing of their significance of difference of difference, the 't' value calculated was found to be 1.78 which is less than the table value of 't' that is 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance and 2.60 at 0.01 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 198. Therefore the calculated 't' value is found to be not significant.

Therefore, the hypothesis that there exist no significant difference between health awareness of boys and girls of secondary schools is accepted and it can be concluded that boys and girls of secondary schools do not differ significantly on their attitude towards health awareness.

Study of significance of mean difference on health awareness of urban and rural secondary school students

Table 6

Area	N	Mean	S.D	SE _D	df	't'	Remark
Urban	100	139.44	10.85	1.42	198	3.81	Significant
Rural	100	144.86	9.31				

The analysis of table no.6 reveals the mean scores of 139.44 and 144.86 in case of urban and rural secondary school students respectively. Further, when such scores were subjected to the testing of their significance of difference, the 't' value calculated was found to be 3.81 which is more than the table value of 't' that is 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance and 2.60 at 0.01 level of significance with degrees of freedom of 198. Therefore, calculated 't' value is found to be significant

- The study can be extended over more number of samples including various levels of education.
- A study can be conducted to see the relationship between health awareness status and mental health.
- A comparative study may be conducted including different areas of Himachal Pradesh such as tribal and non-tribal.
- This study may be extended to a large sample taking some more variables.

Therefore, the hypothesis that there exists no significant difference between health awareness of urban and rural secondary school students is rejected and it can be concluded that urban and rural secondary school students differ significantly on their attitude towards health awareness.

Findings of the Study

After careful analysis of the obtained data and interpretation of the result with regard to the objectives and hypotheses of the study, the investigator reached at the following findings;

- Urban and rural secondary school students differ significantly on their attitude towards health awareness.
- Boys and girls of secondary schools do not differ significantly on their attitude towards health awareness.

Suggestions for Further Research

On the basis of experience of the present investigation the following suggestions may be offered to conduct further research;

- Similar study may be conducted on senior secondary and college level students.

Conclusion

Maintaining a healthy body is three part-equations. It comprises of three separate elements. These are exercise, nutrition and rest. It is a bit of balancing act. All these elements are necessary to maintain the health. Most of the Health problems can be attributed to either poor nutrition or poor life style habits. If some innovative strategies are introduced in school health education, it is possible to protect the youth from various diseases. Hence let the fruits of health education be realized at earliest.

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