PREFACE

“Reproductive health education should flow as river flows, if we try to stop students learning about reproductive health issues, it will not stop so better to give a direction to the flow from the starting point itself.”

Respondent (a teacher)

Adolescence is a period of growth and development from the onset of puberty to transition into adulthood. During this period adolescents attain reproductive and sexual maturity. It is universally agreed that all adolescents need accurate and adequate information about reproductive and sexual health. In the absence of adequate and accurate information adolescents are at risk of being worry-informed about sexual and reproductive matters, which is likely to lead them to make decisions that could have negative effects on their lives. As regards to the adolescents’ awareness about their reproductive health issues, it is urged that education is the major viable media for this purpose. There is a need to impart reproductive health education to adolescents. It is realized that it should be imparted by the important stakeholders i.e., parents and teachers. Thus, the present study aimed to explore the opinion of all the three major stakeholders including adolescents, parents and teachers. The present study examined the adolescents’ reproductive health issues, including the knowledge, perception and context within which they arise and also explored the opinion of parents, teachers, and adolescents on imparting reproductive health education. It also attempted to study the existing policies and programs with respect to reproductive health education for adolescents.

The study has been divided into 8 chapters. Chapter - 1 introduces to the concept of reproductive health education, reproductive health status of adolescents in India, theoretical perspectives, scientific background, rationale of the study, relevance to social work practice. In Chapter - 2 the researcher reviewed the articles, books, empirical studies related to reproductive health education for adolescents. Chapter - 3 deals with the research methodology which include: the objectives of the study, operational definitions, the sample undertaken, and methods employed in selecting the sample, the tools and techniques used, methods of data collection, and the methods used in the analysis of the data. Chapter - 4 presents a brief analysis of the national
policies and programmes on reproductive health education for adolescents. Chapter - 5 presents the demographic profile of the adolescents, profile of the respondents, i.e., adolescent students, parents and teachers. Chapter - 6 deals with the knowledge and perception of adolescent students on reproductive health issues which include: process of growing up, pregnancy, abortion, contraceptives, sexual behaviour, sexual abuse/ harassment, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse. An attempt has been made in Chapter - 7 to examine the opinion of parents, teachers, and adolescents towards imparting reproductive health education. Chapter - 8 summarises findings, discussion and recommendations including the social work intervention model.

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