# A study of psychosocial problems among junior college students 

Ramakant M Gokhale ${ }^{1}$, Sandhya Gokul Ingole ${ }^{2^{*}}$<br>${ }^{1}$ Professor and HOD, Department of Community Medicine, V.M. Government Medical College, Solapur, Maharashtra, INDIA.<br>${ }^{2}$ Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College, Miraj, INDIA.<br>Email: rmgokhale21@gmail.com


#### Abstract

Background: Psychosocial health is an important aspect of adolescent development. The term "Psychosocial" reflects both the externalizing or behavioural problems such as conduct disorders, educational difficulties, substance abuse, hyperactivity etc. and internalizing or emotional problems like anxiety, depression etc. The emotional problems have been relatively neglected compared to behavioural problems because these are not easy to be detected by the parents or teachers. Aim and Objectives: To study of Psychosocial Problems among junior college students in rural area served by Rural Health Training Centre affiliated to a medical college. Material and Methods: The present cross sectional study was undertaken to determine psychosocial problems among adolescents in junior college students of the rural area, which is rural field practice area of a tertiary health care centre of the same district. Total 360 students were included in the study, 180 boys and 180 girls. The proforma consisted of two parts. Results: It was seen that out of 180 boys $42(23.3 \%)$ had psychosocial problems and out of 180 girls $45(25 \%)$ had psychosocial problems. The domain of Behaviour problems, Emotional problems and Educational problems in boys and girls did not show significant difference. However in the domain of social problems the difference between boys and girls was significant and mean score in girls was higher than boys. On average $43.5 \%$ boys and $43.6 \%$ girls had behavioural problems and the significant difference between boys and girls was not seen with respect to Behavioural problems. $46 \%$ boys and $50 \%$ girls had emotional problems. In boys $76.2 \%$ were under stress and in girls $84.4 \%$ had hot temperedness. There was no significant difference between boys and girls with respect to Emotional problems. It was observed that on average $68 \%$ boys and $65 \%$ girls had educational problems. There was no significant difference between boys and girls with respect to Educational problems. On average $26 \%$ boys and $27 \%$ girls had social problems and there was significant difference ( $\mathrm{p}<0.05$ ) between boys and girls with respect to Social problems. Conclusion: Thus we conclude that the overall prevalence of psychosocial problem in adolescents was found to be $24.8 \%$. The boys and girls independently showed prevalence of $23.3 \%$ and $25 \%$. Among the four domain of 'Psychosocial problem Inventory' scale Behaviour problems, Emotional problems and Educational problems in boys and girls did not show significant difference while social problems score was significantly higher in girls was than boys.


Key Word: Psychosocial Problems, junior college students
*Address for Correspondence:
Dr. Sandhya Gokul Ingole, Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Government Medical College, Miraj, INDIA. Email: sandhya.ingole777@gmail.com
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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of transition between childhood and adulthood. ${ }^{1}$ Adolescence has been defined by World Health Organization as a period of life spanning the age between 10 and 19 years and in terms of a phase of life marked by special attributes. ${ }^{2}$ These attributes include: rapid physical growth and development; physical, social and psychological maturity. "Erikson" in his book "life cycle crisis of psycho-social development" has written: An adolescent is in the stage of "Identity vs. Confusion", before he/she enters the stage of "Intimacy vs. Isolation. ${ }^{3}$ The origin of word adolescence is from a Greek Latin word "adolescere", which means to grow or to grow to

[^0]maturity. ${ }^{4}$ It is variously described as "Neither children nor adults" or as "Growing-up years". ${ }^{5}$ There are about 1.2 billion adolescents in the world, which is equal to one fifth of the world's population and their numbers are increasing. Out of 1.2 billion adolescents in the world, 5 million adolescents are living in developing countries. India's population has reached the 1 billion mark, out of which $21 \%$ are adolescents. ${ }^{6}$ According to the Population Reference Bureau 2013 data sheet; there are 1.8 billion youth (10-24years) in the world and they form $25 \%$ of the world population. In India there are 362 million youth, forming $28 \%$ of the national population. ${ }^{6}$ Over the next decade, the number of adolescents will increase and by the year 2025 they will represent about $27 \%$ of the total population in developing countries. ${ }^{7}$ During this period, changes occur in adolescence in the attitudes, pattern of thinking, ideas, relationships and moral standards and this transition is uneven, which results in an earlier physical maturity and a reproductive capability, than a psychological and a social maturity. ${ }^{8}$ Although adolescence comprises of one decade of a life span, it is a prelude to the ultimate life that the individual will be destined to live. Thus, those who are going through this period of life require special attention from the family, community and the society as a whole. ${ }^{9}$ Psychosocial health is an important aspect of adolescent development. The term "Psychosocial" reflects both the externalizing or behavioural problems such as conduct disorders, educational difficulties, substance abuse, hyperactivity etc. and internalizing or emotional problems like anxiety, depression etc. The emotional problems have been relatively neglected compared to behavioural problems because these are not easy to be detected by the parents or teachers. ${ }^{10}$ Psychosocial problems are an important aspect of overall adolescent health. Proper identification of psychosocial problems is of utmost importance for planning adolescent health programs, thereby emphasizing the areas which need attention. Hence the present study was undertaken in rural area served by Rural Health Training Centre affiliated to a medical college.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present cross sectional study was undertaken to determine psychosocial problems among adolescents in junior college students of the rural area, which is rural field practice area of a tertiary health care centre of the same district. The study was conducted from February 2016 to November 2017. Junior college students in Shirur

Nagar Parished jurisdiction who were willing to participate and age less than 20 years were enrolled in the study. Students who were under treatment for known psychological problems were excluded. Sample size was calculated to be 170 , considering prevalence $(\mathrm{p})$ of psychosocial problems as $41.43 \%{ }^{11}$, confidence level is $95 \%$, taking power of the test $80 \%$ and absolute precision (E) of $15 \%$. Thus Minimum sample size was 170 boys and 170 girls, for present study but we included 180 boys and 180 girls. So the total sample size was 360 . There were four junior colleges in the area. Principals of all colleges were requested for permission to conduct study in their colleges. Two out of four college principals agreed to participate in the study. The purpose of study was explained to the principal and also to the teachers. Total 360 students were included in the study, 180 boys and 180 girls. The number of boys and girls included in the study in XI and XII standards from two colleges were proportionate to number of students (both boys and girls) studying in XI and XII class. Principals/Vice-principals was requested to fix suitable date and time for collecting information from the students of XI and XII standards. The students of junior college selected randomly for study. They were selected randomly from roll call number. Those who were absent they were interviewed by second visit to college. The purpose of study was explained to the study participants. Written Informed consent was taken from students before taking interview.

The proforma consisted of two parts. The first part was used to obtain preliminary information on age, gender, type of family structure, socioeconomic class and other demographic factors. The second part consisted of Structured and pre-tested questionnaire which was used for data collection. 'Psychosocial problem Inventory' (Mumthas and Muhsina, 2012) ${ }^{12}$ comprising of Fifty Five items was used for reference for identifying the extent of Psycho-social problems of adolescents. The questions showing duplication and not found to be suitable were omitted and forty items questionnaire was finalised and used to obtain information about four domains of psychosocial problems i.e. Behavioural, Emotional, Educational and Social. Data was collected, coded and compiled using Microsoft Excel and analysed by using Statistical software EpiInfo Version 7.2. The association of psychosocial problems with socio-demographic variables was assessed using qualitative tests such as chisquare or fisher exact tests and student $t$-test. $P$ values less than 0.05 were considered as statistically significant.

## RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of study subjects according to age and gender

| Age <br> (years) | Boys <br> $\mathrm{n}=180(\%)$ | Girls <br> $\mathrm{n}=180(\%)$ | Total <br> $\mathrm{n}=360(\%)$ | Chi square value | p value |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| $15-<16$ | $09(5)$ | $13(7.2)$ | $22(6.1)$ |  |  |
| $16-<17$ | $74(41.1)$ | $79(43.9)$ | $153(42.5)$ |  |  |
| $17-<18$ | $84(46.7)$ | $71(39.4)$ | $155(43)$ | 2.26 | $0.6873^{*}$ |
| $18-<19$ | $12(6.6)$ | $16(8.8)$ | $28(7.7)$ |  |  |
| $19-<20$ | $01(0.5)$ | $01(0.5)$ | $02(0.5)$ |  |  |
| * Not significant |  |  |  |  |  |

Out of 360 students included in the study, 180 were boys and 180 were girls. In boys $09(5 \%)$ belonged to $15-<16$ years, $74(41.1 \%)$ from age group $16-<17$ years, $84(46.7 \%)$ from age group of $17-<18$ years, $12(6.6 \%)$ from age group $18-<19$ years and $01(0.5 \%)$ were from $19-<20$ years of age group. Similarly, in girls, $13(7.2 \%)$ belonged to $15-<16$ years age group, 79 ( $43.9 \%$ ) from $16-<17$ years, 71 (39.4\%) from $17-<18$ years, 16 ( $8.8 \%$ ) from $18-<19$ years and $01(0.5 \%)$ were from $19-<20$ years of age group. No significant difference ( $p>0.05$ ) was noted between boys and girls with respect to age group, therefore they were comparable to each other.

Table 2: Distribution of students according to severity of psychosocial problems

| Gender | Boys $(\mathrm{n}=180)$ | Girls( $\mathrm{n}=180)$ | Total $(\mathrm{n}=360)$ | P value |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Normal | $138(76.7 \%)$ | $135(75 \%)$ | $\mathrm{n}=273(75.83 \%)$ |  |
| Mild | $41(22.7 \%)$ | $45(25 \%)$ | $\mathrm{n}=86(23.89 \%)$ | 0.7119 |
| Moderate | $01(0.6 \%)$ | $00(00 \%)$ | $\mathrm{n}=1(0.28 \%)$ |  |
| Severe | $00(00 \%)$ | $00(00 \%)$ | $\mathrm{n}=0(0.00 \%)$ |  |

It was seen that out of 180 boys $42(23.3 \%)$ had psychosocial problems and out of 180 girls 45 ( $25 \%$ ) had psychosocial problems. The severe category had no student and the moderate category had only one boy and no girl. The one boy in moderate category was clubbed in mild category for calculation and application of test of significance. Thus the psychosocial problems were compared as, no problems (normal) and with some problems (mild, moderate and severe). There was no significant difference ( $\mathrm{p}>0.05$ ) between boys and girls with respect to psychosocial problems.

Table 3: Comparison in boys and girls with respect to four domains of psychosocial problem

| Psychosocial Domains |  | Psychosocial problems |  | $p$ value |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Boys( $\mathrm{n}=42$ ) | Girls(45) | t test |  |
|  | Mean\% $\pm$ SE | Mean\% $\pm$ SE |  |  |
| Behaviour Problems | $43.5 \pm 7.16$ | $43.5 \pm 8.77$ | 0 | >0.9999 |
| Emotional Problems | $46.89 \pm 5.19$ | $50.57 \pm 7.09$ | -0.4341 | 0.6653 |
| Educational Problems | $68.25 \pm 4.75$ | $65.41 \pm 6.6$ | 0.345 | 0.7309 |
| Social Problems | $26.7 \pm 5.56$ | $27.35 \pm 5.5$ | 2.628 | 0.0101 |

Comparison between boys and girls was done with respect to four domains of psychosocial problems i.e. Behavioural, Emotional, Educational and Social was done. It was seen that the domain of Behaviour problems, Emotional problems and Educational problems in boys and girls did not show significant difference. However in the domain of social problems the difference between boys and girls was significant and mean score in girls was higher than boys.


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|  | Psychological problems | \% of occurrence |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Boys | Girls |
| Behavioural Problems | Violence | 25.5 | 11.1 |
|  | Stealing | 4.3 | 1.8 |
|  | Lying | 65.9 | 81.5 |
|  | Impatient | 68 | 51.8 |
|  | Shyness | 74.5 | 59.2 |
|  | Self- harm behaviour | 8.5 | 5.6 |
|  | Over dependent | 25.5 | 57.4 |
|  | Tendency to violate rules | 57.4 | 20.4 |
|  | Hyperactivity | 46.8 | 44.4 |
|  | Extreme passivity | 42.5 | 42.6 |
|  | Talkative | 46.8 | 43.56 |
|  | Loneliness | 33.3 | 37.8 |
|  | Rapid mood swing(depression) | 50 | 68.8 |
| Emotional Problems | Day dreaming | 38.1 | 24.4 |
|  | Excessive fears and worries | 52.4 | 73.3 |
|  | Anxiety | 59.5 | 80 |
|  | Lack of sleep | 23.8 | 37.8 |
|  | Suicidal feeling | 4.8 | 6.7 |
|  | Apathy | 61.9 | 51.1 |
|  | Hot temperedness | 61.9 | 84.4 |
|  | Feeling of inferiority | 52.4 | 53.3 |
|  | Feeling of insecurity | 40.5 | 20 |
| Educational Problems | Stress | 76.2 | 82.2 |
|  | I am always true/right. | 54.8 | 40 |
|  | Decreased motivation | $45.2$ | 40 |
|  | School absence | 59.5 | 53.3 |
|  | Disinterested in school activities | 66.7 | 66.6 |
|  | Strict rules of college/school | 50 | 31.1 |
|  | Academic underachievement | 78.6 | 68.9 |
|  | Poor memory | 78.6 | 84.4 |
|  | Lack of concentration | 88.1 | 82.2 |
|  | Over expectation of parents | 76.2 | 77.8 |
|  | Fear of failure in exam | 71.4 | 84.4 |
| Social Problems | Not interested in other activities (sports, entertainment and shopping) | 30.9 | 44.4 |
|  | Isolation from family | 30.9 | 22.2 |
|  | Attraction to opposite sex | 50 | 37.8 |
|  | Participation in antisocial activities (physically fight with my family members/ destroy the things on purpose) | 23.8 | 22.2 |
|  | Superstitious belief | 30.9 | 28.9 |
|  | Social withdrawal | 4.8 | 35.6 |
|  | Addiction | 11.9 | 0 |

It was seen that on average $43.5 \%$ boys and $43.6 \%$ girls had behavioural problems. $74.5 \%$ of adolescent boys had problem of shyness and $81.5 \%$ adolescent girls were habituate to lying. Only $4.3 \%$ boys and $1.8 \%$ girls indulged in stealing at home. The significant difference between boys and girls was not seen with respect to Behavioural problems. On average $46 \%$ boys and $50 \%$ girls had emotional problems. In boys $76.2 \%$ were under stress and in girls $84.4 \%$ had hot temperedness. Nearly $4.8 \%$ boys and $6.7 \%$ of girls had suicidal feelings. There was no significant difference between boys and girls with
respect to Emotional problems. It was observed that on average $68 \%$ boys and $65 \%$ girls had educational problems. In boys $88.1 \%$ had lack of concentration and $84.4 \%$ girls had poor memory and fear of failure after exam. $42.2 \%$ boys had decreased motivation. There was no significant difference between boys and girls with respect to Educational problems. On average 26\% boys and $27 \%$ girls had social problems. $50 \%$ boys had over attraction towards opposite sex followed by $30.9 \%$ adolescent boys were not interested in other activities like sports, entertainment and shopping, they felt that they
were isolated from family and had superstitious belief. 44.4\% girls were not interested in other activities, like sports, entertainment and shopping. There was significant difference ( $\mathrm{p}<0.05$ ) between boys and girls with respect to Social problems.

## DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted in adolescent population. The present study was undertaken in rural area served by Rural Health Training Centre affiliated to a medical college. The study population consisted of students of junior colleges and majority of them were late adolescents followed by middle adolescents. WHO classifies adolescent period as early adolescence (1013years), middle adolescence (14-16years) and late adolescence (17-19 years). The study population consisted mainly middle and late adolescents. $51.2 \%$ were in late adolescence while $48.8 \%$ in middle adolescence. In middle adolescents also majority i.e. $41.1 \%$ boys and $43.9 \%$ girls were in age group of $16-<17$ years. In late adolescence majority of boys i.e. $46.7 \%$ and $39.4 \%$ girls were in age group of $17-<18$ years. Anees Ahmad et al. $(2007)^{13}$ in their study found that major proportion of the population belonged to early ( $10-13$ yrs.) and mid adolescents (14-15 yrs.) age group. Proportions of adolescents in middle and late stages were similar to that found in other studies also, the finding were similar to study done by Vaibhav Jain et al. (2014) ${ }^{14}$ in a rural area of District Muzaffarnagar, where majority of the adolescents i.e., $82(39 \%)$ belonged to $17-19$ years of age group (late adolescents) and the least number of 58 (27.6\%) were in the $14-15$ years of age group (mid adolescents). It was seen that out of 180 boys 42(23.3\%) had psychosocial problems and out of 180 girls 45 ( $25 \%$ ) had psychosocial problems. The severe category had no student and the moderate category had only one boy and no girl. The one boy in moderate category was clubbed in mild category for calculation and application of test of significance. Thus the psychosocial problems were compared as, no problems (normal) and with some problems (mild, moderate and severe). There was no significant difference ( $\mathrm{p}>0.05$ ) between boys and girls with respect to psychosocial problems. Comparison between boys and girls was done with respect to four domains of psychosocial problems i.e. Behavioural, Emotional, Educational and Social. The domains of Behaviour problem, Emotional problem and Educational problems in boys and girls did not show significant difference. However in the domain of social problems the difference between boys and girls was significant and mean score in girls was higher than that of boys. Various questions were asked to the study subjects to assess the problems in different domains like Behavioural,

Emotional, Educational and Social domain. The response to each question was recorded and percentage was calculated independently for boys and girls. At the end the mean percentage was calculated separately in each domain both for boys and girls. The responses to various questions to assess Behaviour problems were asked to boys and girls independently. In boys the responses ranged from $4.3 \%$ stealing as a problem to $74.5 \%$ where shyness was a problem. Hyperactivity, talkativeness, tendency to violate the rules, impatient was observed in more than $40 \%$ of boys. Lying was observed in $65.9 \%$ boys. In girls the responses ranged from $1.8 \%$ stealing as a problem to $81.5 \%$ where lying was a problem. Problems like lying, impatient; shyness, over dependent, hyperactivity; extreme passivity and talkativeness were seen in more than $40 \%$ of girls. Surprisingly lying was reported more in girls than boys and shyness was reported more in boys than girls. The overall percentage comparison did not show significant difference.
In present study out of 42 adolescents boys and 45 girls, on an average $43.5 \%$ of adolescents were having behavioural problems. Mumthas, N.S. and Muhsina, M $(2014)^{12}$ in their study concluded that on an average $27 \%$ of adolescents were had behavioural problems. Gayatri Hemant Aradhya (2013) ${ }^{15}$ in their study found that5 girls (1\%) reported interpersonal violence among their hostelmate. Poornima Bhola et al. (2016) ${ }^{16}$ done study on 1336 students and found that $12.6 \%$ adolescence were suffering from hyperactivity/inattention.In boys responses to various questions to assess emotional problems ranged from 4.8\% (suicidal tendency/feeling) to $76.2 \%$ where stress was a problem. Depression, excessive fear and worry, Anxiety, hot temperedness, feeling of inferiority, was observed in more than $50 \%$ of boys. In girls the responses ranged from6.7\% (suicidal feelings) to $84.4 \%$ (hot temperedness). In girls also depression, excessive fear and worry, anxiety, hot temperedness, feeling of inferiority, was observed in more than $50 \%$ subjects. Stress was observed in more than $75 \%$ of boys and girls. The overall percentage comparison did not show significant difference. In present study $50 \%$ boys and $68.8 \%$ girls had depression, $59.5 \%$ boys and $80 \%$ girls had anxiety and $76.2 \%$ boys and $82.2 \%$ girls were in stress. Al-Gelban KS (2006) ${ }^{17}$ in their study found that more than one-third of the participants (38.2\%) had depression, while $48.9 \%$ had anxiety and $35.5 \%$ had stress. Depression, anxiety and stress were strongly, positively and significantly correlated. Gayatri Hemant Aradhya (2013) ${ }^{15}$ in their study revealed that depression was noted in 10 girls ( $2 \%$ ); symptoms of anxiety were noted in 5 girls (1\%). K Sathish Kumaret al. (2017) ${ }^{18}$ in their study found that the prevalence of depression,
anxiety, and stress were $19.5 \%, 24.4 \%$ and $21.1 \%$ respectively. In present study $46.9 \%$ of adolescent boys and $50.7 \%$ of adolescent girls were suffering from emotional problems. Mumthas, N.S. and Muhsina, M $(2014)^{12}$ in their study concluded that, $32 \%$ of adolescents are suffering from emotional problems. In present study depression and anxiety in boys and girls was maximum in late adolescence. Poornima Bhola et al. (2016) ${ }^{16}$ studied on 1336 students and found that $9 \%$ adolescents were at risk for emotional symptoms. In boys responses to various questions to assess educational problems ranged from $45.2 \%$ (decreased motivation) to $88.1 \%$ (lack of concentration). Problems like school absenteeism, disinterested in school/college activities, lack of concentration, over expectations of parents, fear of failure in exam were observed more than $50 \%$ in boys. In girls, problems ranged from 31.1\% (strict rules of college/school) to $84.4 \%$ (poor memory). In girls also, school absenteeism, disinterested in school/college activities, lack of concentration, over expectations of parents, fear of failure in exam were observed more than $50 \%$ subjects. Lack of concentration was major problem in boys and poor memory and fear of failure in exam were major problems in girls. There was no significant difference in boys and girls with respect to educational problems. In present study, on an average $68.3 \%$ of adolescents' boys and $65.1 \%$ girls were having educational problems. Mumthas, N.S. and Muhsina, M (2014) $)^{12}$ in their study concluded that, $34 \%$ of adolescents had educational problems. In our study lack of concentration and poor memory were main educational problems and we had tested these problems with respect to middle and late adolescence and found that these problems were more in late adolescence than mid adolescence both for boys and girls. Vaibhav Jain et al. (2014) ${ }^{14}$ in their study found that mid adolescent boys and late adolescent girls had more educational difficulties as compared to other groups ( 40.0 and $25.4 \%$ respectively). K Sathish Kumaret al. (2017) ${ }^{18}$ in their study found that around four-fifth $(81.6 \%)$ of the respondents had at least one of the studied disorders. Gayatri Hemant Aradhya $(2013)^{15}$ in their study concluded that poor concentration were observed in 10 girls ( $1 \%$ each). In boys responses to various questions to assess social problems ranged from $4.8 \%$ (social withdrawal) to $50 \%$ (over attraction to opposite sex). Problems like not interested in other activities (like sports, entertainment and shopping), superstitious belief were seen in more than $30 \%$ of boys. $23.8 \%$ boys participated in antisocial activities. Addiction was seen in $11.9 \%$ of boys. In girls, social problems range from $22 \%$ (isolation from family) to $44.4 \%$ (not interested in other activities like-sports, entertainment and shopping). Over attraction to opposite sex and social
withdrawal were found more than $30 \%$ in girls. Addiction not observed even in single girl. There was significant difference in boys and girls with respect to social problems which shows social problems more in girls than boys. In present study out of 42 adolescence boys and 45 girls $26.2 \%$ boys and $27.4 \%$ girls adolescents were facing social problems. Mumthas, N.S. and Muhsina, M (2014) ${ }^{12}$ in their study concluded that, $24 \%$ of the adolescents were facing social problems. Poornima Bhola et al. (2016) ${ }^{16}$ in their study found that $13 \%$ adolescents had antisocial behaviour.

## CONCLUSION

Thus we conclude that the overall prevalence of psychosocial problem in adolescents was found to be $24.8 \%$. The boys and girls independently showed prevalence of $23.3 \%$ and $25 \%$. Among the four domain of 'Psychosocial problem Inventory' scale Behaviour problems, Emotional problems and Educational problems in boys and girls did not show significant difference while social problems score was significantly higher in girls was than boys.

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