Effectiveness of Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training Program (ACETP) on knowledge of schoolteachers regarding mental health assessment and on, enhancement of mental health and coping abilities of adolescents in selected schools of Kerala.

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Abstract

Background of the study: Adolescence is a time of rapid biological, psychological, cognitive, emotional and social change. It is often considered to be a bridge between childhood and adulthood. It is a time where several significant changes occur in a relatively short period of time. Young people’s relationships with school staff, parents and other adults may change during adolescence, and some of these changes may be challenging for young people. But these relationships are still fundamental to positive development. Developing resilience skills can help students respond directly to the challenges of school as well as manage their emotional responses to day to day events. Mentally healthy and resilient students are more able to manage the transitions that occur across these areas.

Objective: The aim of the study was to assess the mental health and coping abilities of adolescents and to find out the effectiveness of Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training Program in increasing the mental health and coping abilities of adolescents in selected schools of Ernakulum District with school teachers as trainers.
**Methodology:** Quasi experimental research design with two group pre-test post-test control group with time series design (repeated measure) was used in this study. The study was conducted among 190 adolescents who were selected by multistage random sampling from six schools of Ernakulam District. There were 96 adolescents in the experimental group and 94 in the control group. The school teachers teaching these adolescents were selected by purposive sampling method. The teachers were given a one-day training program and these teachers implemented the Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training Program under the supervision of investigator. The knowledge of the teachers was assessed by a prepared and validated tool. The adolescent mental health and coping abilities were measured by using standardized scales such as Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, Child & Youth Resilience Measure, The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Adolescent Coping Orientation for Problem experiences (A-COPE). All the variables were measured three times, once before the Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training program and twice after administering the ACETP.

**Results:** Most of the demographic variables of teachers and adolescents were homogenously distributed in control and experimental group. But only few of the demographic characteristics of parents of adolescents and the background variables of adolescents were homogenously distributed.

The study results showed that 50% of the teachers in both the control and experimental group had poor to average knowledge scores in the pre-test. In the post-
The percentage of teachers scored average score increased to 90% in the control group whereas 60% of the teachers had average and 40% had good knowledge in the experimental group. The ACETP was found to be effective in improving the knowledge of school teachers regarding adolescent mental health assessment. A significant difference in the mean knowledge scores of control and experimental group of teachers (F=17.296, p<0.001) was found and the mean knowledge scores of teachers also differ statistically between different time periods of measurements (F= 20.152 (p<0.001).

A significant association was found between the knowledge of school teachers regarding adolescent mental health assessment and the variable of having an adolescent child (p< 0.05) for the teacher.

The mental health of adolescents in the experimental group improved with a mean score of 113.30 ±9.70 to 124.96±8.79 at 10 weeks and 121.49±7.88 at the end of the ACETP. The results of RM-ANOVA (F= 31.739, p<0.00) showed that the ACETP was effective in improving the mental health of adolescents. A statistically significant difference was found in the coping abilities of adolescents in the experimental group compared to that of control group at post-test 1 (t = -3.842; p ≤ .000). But the comparison of coping abilities of adolescents, between group and group into period interaction showed that the ACTEP was not effective in increasing the coping abilities of adolescents in the experimental group with that of control group [F (1,189) =7.346, P >0.01].
In the present study, no relationship was found between mental health and coping abilities of adolescents as the Pearson product moment correlation calculated between the scores was \( r=0.005, n=190, p=0.05 \). In the present study a significant association was found between the mental health, gender of adolescents and the education of the father \( (p <0.05) \).

**Conclusion:** The results of the study illustrates that the Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training Programme delivered through school teachers was effective in improving the mental health and coping abilities of adolescents. This evidence needs to be strengthened by incorporating the programmes of mental health promotion as part of day today school curriculum and activities.

**Key Words:** Adolescent Coping Enhancement Training program, Knowledge, Mental Health, Coping Abilities.