
Context

- 50% of currently married women in Karnataka were married before 18 years
- Gender and social norms limit girls' mobility, aspirations and participation in decision making
- Girls experience early sexual contact because of marriage or due to being initiated into sex work as part of the *devadasi* system
- Nutrition, healthcare and education services at the state, community and family levels does not cater to the specific needs of the girls
- High poverty levels take girls out of school and push them into marriage and/or the unskilled work force

Objectives

- To understand the needs and aspirations of the adolescent girls in the age group of 9 to 19 years
- To facilitate the creative expression of their needs and aspirations by the girls

Methods

- Three days residential workshop with 63 adolescent girls with sessions on self-exploration, sharing of dreams and aspirations and creative expression
- Recording of answers to questions on their daily routine, people they like and dislike, and their dreams and role models

What is something you are proud about or an event that you felt happy?

- **Helping others**
- **Household chores among school drop outs**
- **Helping mother**
- **One's own skills**

Who is someone you like?

- **Mother,**
- **Friend/Classmate**

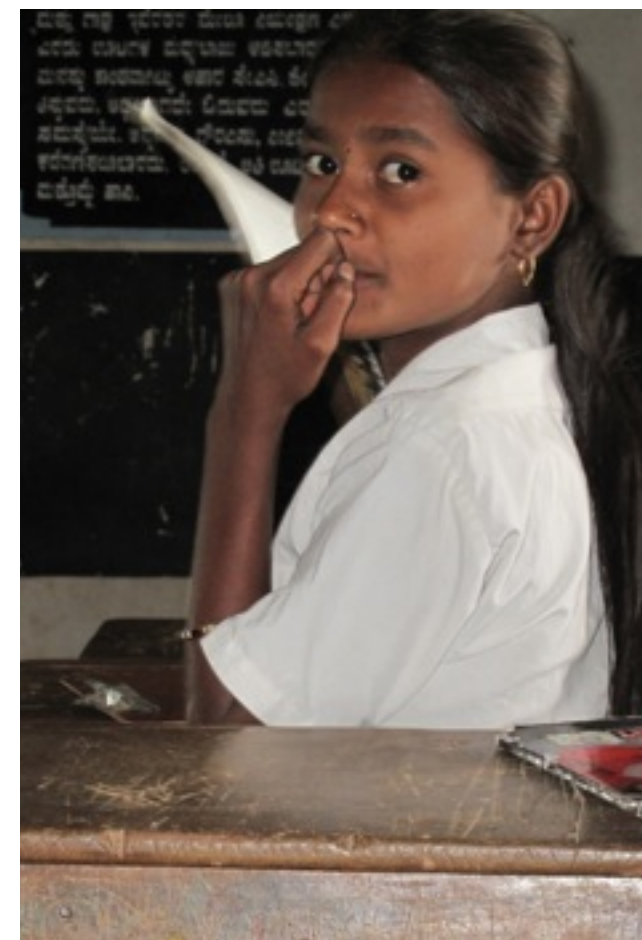
Who is someone you dislike?

- **Female friends/male classmates for girls in the age group of 9-13 years**
- **Paternal uncle and grandmother for girls in the age group of 14-16 years**
- **Cousin sister and brother-in-law for girls in the age group of 17-18 years**



Know me: A self exploratory exercise to understand vulnerabilities of adolescent girls - A northern Karnataka experience

Mallika B, Mohan H L, Soni S, Raghavendra T.





What is your dream for the future?

- To become a teacher, doctor and police officer



Social needs identified by the girls

- Prevent child marriage
- Prevent child labour
- Prevent dedication of adolescent girls as devadasis
- Keep adolescent girls in school

Who is your role model?

- Teachers were named as the role model across age groups
- Those girls who did not have role models were not in school



“Our’s is a poor family and it is difficult for me to continue studying for very long. If I study up to 12th standard, I can go for teacher’s training and become a teacher.”

- Adolescent Girl

Findings

- Intervention on behalf of adolescent girls needs to occur at a variety of levels
- It is important to facilitate a peer support system among adolescent girls
- Girls seek affection, appreciation and acceptance from their family and society at large
- When a girl drops out of school, her social sphere is restricted in addition to having less knowledge about resources in the society

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“I want to become a police officer to arrest my father. He does not come home often and every time he comes, he gets drunk, shouts and beats us. Because of him, I had to drop out of school.”

- Adolescent Girl