



# “A STUDY ON NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND DIETARY PRACTICES OF HOSTEL GIRLS OF TEERTHANKER MAHAVEER UNIVERSITY, MORADABAD”

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## ABSTRACT

### BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Healthy food habits in girls during adolescence are of utmost importance as practices followed during this age are carried out in the future and influence the food habits and thus the health of their families and community. So, the present study was carried out to assess the food and nutrient intake, anthropometric measurements, nutritional knowledge and dietary practices of hostel girls studying in Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad. A total of 100 girls staying in the hostel of Teerthanker Mahaveer University were selected using random sampling, and the data was collected regarding socio-economic profile, food and nutrient intake, anthropometric subjects, nutrition knowledge and dietary practices using survey schedules by interview method. The results revealed that the intake of mostly nutrients was deficient except for fat and vitamin C, which was 187.4 and 121.4 per cent 50-75% of the RDA. Only 68% of girls were normal according to BMI, and the rest were malnourished, with 18 per cent undernourished and 14 per cent over nourished. The reason for this was faulty food habits which were judged by their attitude and dietary practices. The majority of the population 55 per cent of girls had high knowledge level, 41 per cent had a medium level, and only 4% had low nutrition knowledge. The result of nutrition knowledge depicts that nutrition knowledge was not poor, but the population followed the wrong practices for food consumption. So, it is recommended to carry out campaigns in order to motivate the girls to follow good dietary practices.

## OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the general profile of hostel girls.
- To assess the nutrient intake and per-cent adequacy of hostel girls.
- To assess the anthropometric measurements of hostel girls.
- To study the dietary practices of hostel girls.
- To assess the nutritional knowledge of hostel girls.

## METHODS:

The present study was conducted in the girls hostel of Teerthanker Mahaveer University of Moradabad district which is situated in the Uttar Pradesh state. The data was collected from April 2012 to June 2012.

A total of 100 girls were selected from girls' hostel of Teerthanker Mahaveer University by random sampling method. A survey schedule was prepared to collect the information about the respondents. The survey schedule was pre-tested on a non-sample population having similar socio-economic background. Necessary modifications were made after pilot testing of the schedule. The schedule thus developed comprised of following parts:

**General Information:** Depends on age, type of family, family size, number of siblings, total family income, education and occupation of the parent and per capita income.

**Knowledge Level:** A set of 25 multiple choice questions related to basic principles of nutrition and health were prepared for testing the knowledge of the subjects. The set of questions were shown to the experts for judging the appropriateness of questions for hostel girls. Modifications as suggested by experts were made. The questions were then used for pretesting on 10 non-sample college going girls, therefore the schedule was finalized.

**Anthropometric Survey Schedule:** The anthropometric measurements in the study included body weight and height of the subjects.

**Dietary Survey Schedule:** Dietary survey was conducted by a combination of 24-hour recall method and food frequency questionnaire. All the 10 food groups i.e., cereals, pulses, green leafy vegetables, roots and tubers, other vegetables, fruits, milk & milk products, fats and oils, meat, fish, eggs, sugar & jaggery were listed in this section.

**Dietary Practices:** This will collect information regarding dietary practices, like meals taken, consumption of junk foods, like and dislikes etc.

## RESULTS:

Majority of the girls (60%) were of the age 20-25 years whereas 30% girls were lying in the age less than 20 years and only 10% girls were of the age above 25 years. In the present study, it was found that majority of the girls (91%) were single and only 9% were married. Nuclear type family pattern was more common. About 76 per cent of the total families were of nuclear type whereas 22 and 2 per cent were of joint and extended types, respectively. Similar were the findings of **Srivastava (1991)** and **Goel (1996)**.

The results regarding **knowledge** of the girls are presented in the given table 1.1, which reveals maximum girls (55%) were having high (66-100%) knowledge level, 41% were having medium (33-66%) knowledge level and only 4% girls had low (0-33%) knowledge level. The results clearly indicate that the girls were having good knowledge about the basic principles of nutrition and health.

**Table 1.1 : Distribution of subjects according to their knowledge**

S.No.	Grade	Per cent
1.	0-33%	4
2.	33-66%	41
3.	66-100%	55

**Anthropometric measurements-** In the given table 1.2 when whole of the population was categorized in different levels of nutritional status according to BMI, it was found that 68% girls were normal, 18% girls were underweight, and 14% girls were obese at different levels.

**Table 1.2: Distribution of subjects according to their Body Mass Index**

S.No.	BMI	Nutritional Status	Per cent Population
1.	>18.5	Under weight	18
2.	18.5-24.5	Normal healthy range	68
3.	25-30	Obesity (Grade I)	10
4.	30-40	Overweight (Grade II)	04
5.	>40	Severe Obesity (Grade III)	00

The results regarding **dietary practices** of the subjects reveals that majority of the subjects (35%) were consuming their meals thrice a day, 30% were consuming meal once in a day, 20% were consuming meal in every 6 hours and only 15% were consuming meal twice in a day.

The results clearly indicate that the girls were having good knowledge about the basic principles of nutrition and health. However, it was not seen in the dietary practices and nutrient intake of the subjects. So, there might be problem with the attitude or practices of the girls which could have been wrong leading to intake of diet deficient in many nutrients.