



Nutritional Empowerment Of Rural Women Using Iec Materials

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Abstract: A study was conducted in three villages of Thoppampatti block of Dindigul district to assess the knowledge of 120 rural women (35-55 years) on selected nutrition aspects, after imparting education with using of different Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials. Interview method was used to collecting data from selected samples. Interview Schedule and Nutrition Knowledge Scale were used as a tool. In Nutrition Knowledge Scale, Test – Retest Method was followed and also to know the diet history of the women, 24 hr recall method was used. Intake of various nutrients of the subjects also calculated and compared with the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA). Nutrition Education improved their mean nutrition knowledge scores significantly ($P < 0.05$) from 0.42 to 1.9. Significant increase in knowledge of nutritional deficiency and nutrient rich food sources was found among all the women. Use of multimedia has a great impact on increasing the knowledge level women.

Nutrition Education, Empowerment, Rural Women

I. INTRODUCTION

Enhancing women's capacity to make wise decisions in life, or women's empowerment, has inherent worth. Therefore, it is crucial to make measures to elevate women's status over the world. The empowerment of women also has an instrumental value; it is one way that society can enhance other significant welfare outcomes, such as child nutrition, especially during the first 1000 days of life. In line with this claim, the UN's Scaling-Up Nutrition project highlights how crucial it is for women and girls to have leadership roles in their countries' scale-up initiatives. Furthermore, nutrition-sensitive initiatives that work to elevate women's status have the potential to be a significant tool for enhancing the nutritional outcomes for children.

Emphasis should be laid on continuing breast feeding, supplementary feeding of infants, identification of malnourished children requiring special care and proper methods of cooking storage and the creating interest and awareness regarding importance of good nutrition among people. Women in the age group of 35-55 years are to be properly educated to foster the nutritional status of family members. Since women are involved in cooking, they should know the nutritional importance of cooking also. Education alone can bring the changes in the behavior. Nutrition education has to be imparted to women to make them aware of the right cooking practices, nutritional deficiency diseases and nutrient rich food sources. This outcome of the study would help the gross root level personnel working at health, rural development department, anganwadi and noon meal center to impart education on nutrition to rural women.

Concept of the Reviewers:

The association between quantitative indicators of women's empowerment and child nutrition was examined in three peer-reviewed papers that were published in 2015 and 2016. These reviews made a substantial contribution to the field's understanding. The relationship between women's autonomy, one particular aspect of empowerment, and the nutritional status of children was first examined and analyzed by Carlson et al. Cunningham et al. concentrated on the relationship between South Asian child feeding results and women's empowerment. A more thorough explanation of the impact of women's empowerment on a range of maternal and child health outcomes, such as nutritional status in low- and middle-income nations, was given by Pratley. The reviews came to the conclusion that there was a general correlation between child nutrition and women's empowerment, but they also highlighted the challenges in interpreting the findings due to the diversity of empowerment indicators and classifications. Since the publication of these evaluations, a lot has been written about the importance of women's empowerment.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Selection of the Samples:

One Hundred and Twenty rural women with the age group of 35-55 years were selected by purposive random sampling method. From each village 40 women were randomly selected. The sample constituted 120 women from three different villages.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

For convenience in data recording and analysis the variables chosen for this study were categorized and the data were edited, coded and tabulated accordingly. Mean, percentage, and test of significance were used.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Nutrition Knowledge Scores:

Three methods like lecture, use of flip chart with lecture and multimedia presentation were used for imparting nutrition education. The knowledge scores of the respondents before imparting education was zero. Compared with three methods, the mean scores of women on knowledge of nutritional deficiency diseases had increased with the use of multimedia presentation. After education, women understood the concept of malnutrition and scurvy clearly than other deficiency syndrome.

Table 1
Knowledge Level of the Respondents after Imparting Nutrition Education

Nutrient rich food sources	Respondents (N=120)		
	Mean knowledge Scores		
	Total Mean Score=2		
	Lecture Method	Use of Flip Chart	Use of Multimedia
Milk	0.58	1.6	1.7
Whole Wheat & Hand Pounded Rice	0.53	0.96	1.1
Sprouted Legumes & Pulses	0.50	0.80	1.6
Ragi	0.48	0.96	1.1
Amla	0.45	0.92	1.8
Guava, Orange & Lemon	0.45	1.20	1.5
Dry Fish	0.43	0.68	1.3

Rice Porridge	0.42	0.89	1.39
Greens	0.42	0.90	1.2
Jaggery, Liver & Egg	0.32	0.87	1.2
Papaya	0.32	0.92	1.2

The effect of use of multimedia on the knowledge of respondents on nutrient rich food sources revealed that the knowledge level of respondents had risen considerably with the use of multimedia. The knowledge level of women on nutrient rich food sources has improved considerably with the use of multimedia than other two methods.

Table 2
Comparison on Three Methods of Imparting Nutrition Education

Aspects	Respondents (N=120)		
	Mean Knowledge Scores Total Mean Score=2		
	Lecture Method	Use of Flip Chart	Use of Multimedia
Balanced Diet	0.85	1.2	1.9
Healthy Foods	0.81	1.2	1.8
Nutrient Content of Food Items	0.75	1.3	1.7
Cooking Practices	0.75	1.3	1.8
Nutritional Diseases	0.68	1.2	1.7

Table 2 shows the knowledge level of respondents after using three different methods. Compared with three methods the mean scores of women on different nutrition related aspects had increased with the use of multimedia. Thus the analysis reveals that the knowledge level of women on different nutrition related aspects has improved considerably with the use of multimedia than other two method.

Table 3
Knowledge Scores on Selected Nutrition Aspects

Knowledge Scores	Before Nutrition Education	After Nutrition Education		
		Lecture Method	Use of Flip Chart	Use of Multimedia
Below 14 (Low)	54 (45)	15 (12.5)	8 (6.7)	–
14-44 (Medium)	66 (55)	105 (87.5)	86 (71.6)	50 (41.7)
44-58 (High)	–	–	26 (21.7)	70 (58.3)
Total	120	120	120	120
	Range=0-28	Range=4-42	Range=12-56	Range=22-58
	Mean =12.85	Mean =23.98	Mean =35.56	Mean =50.53

(Figures in parentheses show percentage.)

As shown in Table 3, before giving nutrition education, the knowledge scores of the respondents ranged between 0-28 with an average of 12.85. After using three methods, their knowledge scores have been increased. Nearly 60 per cent of the respondents got the highest scores between 44-58.

CONCLUSION

One third of the respondents were illiterate, consumption of two meals a day was observed in many families. Rice, sambar, kulambu and rasam are normally found in their meals. All food items are not covered generally. Correct method of cooking was done only in 31.7 per cent of families. Energy giving foods are dominant in the menu of majority of the families. None of them had the knowledge on nutritional deficiency, nutrient rich food sources before imparting education. Use of multimedia has a great impact on increasing the knowledge level of women on selected nutrition aspects.

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