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KNOWLEDGE ON HEALTHY DIET AMONG THE ADOLESCENTS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS OF KERALA.

¹BASIL JOHN, ²DR.RATNACHHAYA SINGH,

¹RESEARCH SCHOLAR, ² DEAN, GUID, FACULTY OF NURSING SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING SCIENCES ¹,

¹MANSAROVAR GLOBAL UNIVERSITY, BILLKISGANJ, SEHORE, MP ,INDIA

Abstract: Adolescents is crucial period in life span .The growth and development of adolescents influenced by many factors. Health Diet play vital role in growth and development of the adolescents'. Industrialization and cultural changes affected the awareness about Healthy diet. This study aim to assess the knowledge about Healthy diet among adolescents

Methodology: This study conducted by the cross sectional survey design by non-probability convenient sampling. Sample size comprised of 100 both male and female adolescents studying in the selected schools of Kerala. Tool included 8 socio demographic variables and structured 25 item multiple choice questionnaire related to the knowledge about the healthy diet among adolescents.

Results: The result of the survey implies that 38 %(38) have good knowledge 14% (14) have moderate knowledge and 48 %(48).There is no significant association between social demographic variables and knowledge about the healthy diet. This study concluded that there is markedly lack of knowledge about healthy diet among adolescents. It is recommended mass programme to understand the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice.

Key words: Knowledge, Healthy, Adolescents

Introduction

An adolescent is a crucial period in every human life cycle. Nutritional needs of the adolescents very essential and requires special attention. Adolescents period is considered as a formative year in the life span ¹.Major changes occurs in physical, psychological, hormonal ,Emotional, Social and behavioral domains. The physical growth of an adolescents influenced by hormones and balanced diet ².Dietary Habits or pattern of an adolescent determine the physical growth. Now a day, surprisingly nutritional deficiencies or excess problems are markedly rising in adolescents ^{3, 4}. Factors which influence the dietary habits are gender, religion poverty, parents, peer influence, culture and source of information. Obesity, Hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus and alcoholism are the diseases occurs due to nutritional excess .Nutritional Deficiency disease mainly anemia and malnutrition were common among the adolescents ^{5,6}.

The healthy eating behaviors gradually vanishing due to industrialization and modernization .Current Scenario there are noticeable level of nutritional problems were arising day by day vigorously. Awareness about the healthy diet is a healthy way to solve the issues. Many studies were grounded to the nutrition in adolescents⁷. The outcome of those studies indicated that lack of awareness or knowledge about the healthy diet is the foremost reason for many nutritional problems. Interestingly the knowledge attitude and practice reduces the risk of lifestyle diseases.

A Descriptive cross sectional study conducted about knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP) of balanced diets among 485 female adolescents in selected schools Noakhali district, Bangladesh. Results show that knowledge regarding balanced diet, 42.8% had a positive attitude, whereas the practice of consuming a balanced diet was low (only 4.5%). Students studying in government schools had better knowledge and attitudes than non-government school students. Moreover, 41.1% of students were underweight ⁸.From the study it is concluded that adequate knowledge about a balanced diet should be introduced to all levels of public education to improve knowledge, attitude, and specifically the practice .There is a need to assess the knowledge about healthy diet among adolescents. From the above findings the researcher interested to assess the knowledge on healthy diet among male and female adolescents as a primary step towards the awareness.

Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge about healthy diet among adolescents.
2. To find the association between knowledge about healthy diet and socio demographic variables.

Methodology

The methodology includes descriptive cross-sectional survey design is selected as a research design .Non probability convenient sampling is adapted to collect the data from the adolescents The Inclusion criteria were the adolescents' falls in the age between 13 to 16 years, both male and female adolescents', those who are studying in the selected schools and adolescents 'willing to participate. The exclusion criteria were those who are sick and not available at the time of study. Sample size is 100 adolescents studying in selected schools of Kerala. Tool is having two components included socio demographic variable and structured knowledge questionnaire on healthy diet.

A structured questionnaire was prepared about the Healthy diet. The tool constructed in both English and Malayalam languages .Reliability was 0.79 in both languages by split half technique. s Tool standardized by the content validity by experts. Permission obtained from the concerned school authorities. Part 1 included 7 Socio Demographic variables. Blueprint of the Ways to promote healthy diet included 15 items and, Benefit of healthy diet included 5 items. Each correct response scored as '1' and wrong response scored as '0'. Tool administered by the researcher direct face to face interview.

Results

Socio demographic variables show that, 56 %were distributed in the 12-14 years and 44 % were distributed in the 15-17 years. Totally 52% were males and 48% were females .Considering religion 32% were Hindu 31% were in Muslims and 37% were Christian. As residence 51 % were distributed in the Urban, 49% were distributed in the rural Based on the income 31% were distributed > Rs 5000, 23% were distributed Rs5000-10000, 36 % were distributed in < Rs 10000.Type of family implies that 83% were nuclear family and 17% were joint family. As per type of diet 87% were non vegetarian and 13% were pure vegetarians. Most of them 76% were received information about from social media.14% from parents and 105 were from other sources like teacher and health professional.

The level of knowledge regarding healthy diet assessed and presented as follows

Table 1- Mean, SD and Mean percentage regarding various aspects of Knowledge about Healthy Diet

| Various Aspects | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation | mean percentage |
|-------------------------|---------|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Meaning of healthy diet | 5 | 2.8 | 1.3 | 56% |
| Ways of Healthy diet | 15 | 5.8 | 1.7 | 38.67% |
| Benefits Healthy Diet | 5 | 2.9 | 1.12 | 58% |

Table 1 shows that the knowledge components about healthy diet .Knowledge related to meaning mean is 2,8 with the SD of 1.3 mean percentage is 58%.Knowledge related to ways to promote healthy diet mean is 5,8 with the SD of 1,7 mean percentage of 38.67% and Knowledge related to benefits of healthy diet mean is 2.9 with the SD of 1.12 mean percentage is 58%.

Table 2- Mean, SD and Mean percentage of overall knowledge about Healthy Diet.

| Variable | Maximum | Mean | Standard Deviation | mean percentage |
|------------------------------|---------|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Knowledge about healthy diet | 25 | 11.5 | 2.34 | 46% |

Table -2 Show that Over all Knowledge related to healthy diet mean is 11.5 with the SD of 2.34 mean percentage is 46%.

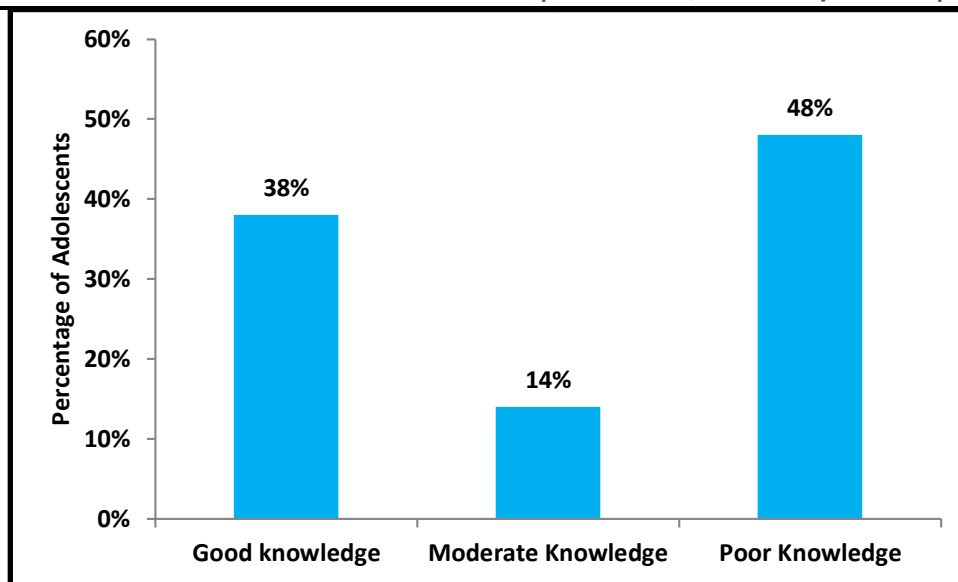


Figure-1 Bar Diagram on level of knowledge about healthy diet among the adolescents

Good level of knowledge (18.75-25) was 38%, Moderate level (12.5-18.75) of knowledge was 14% and Poor level (0-12.5) knowledge was 48%.

Chi Square and Fisher Exact analysis shows that there is no significant association between knowledge about healthy diet and selected socio demographic variables. ($P > 0.05$)

Discussion

The main finding of the study represented that knowledge about healthy diet is 11.5 and mean percentage is 46%. Totally 38% of adolescents have good knowledge about healthy diet, 14% had moderate knowledge and 48% had poor knowledge.

The above findings supported by the study a cross-sectional research conducted to evaluate learners' knowledge of nutrition among 108 learners from 8 different schools in Pinetown, South Africa. The results shows that 56% of the learners were taught nutrition education at primary school 2% were taught in grade 11 and 12. About 92% of the learners were poor knowledge about the nutrition ⁹.

Conclusion

The study concluded that there is lack of knowledge regarding healthy diet among the adolescent. There is no significant difference in the knowledge related to health diet in relation to socio demographic variables. Both male and female adolescents have the same level of knowledge.

Recommendations

Knowledge brings awareness. Awareness help to prevent the problems. Health industry focuses towards creating awareness among the public to prevent nutritional problems. Before conducting massive educational programme this study recommended asses the Knowledge, Attitude and practice among the adolescents.

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