

Assessment of Knowledge level about Nutrition Education among School Going Children in Bareilly City

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to assess the nutritional knowledge of the school going children participating in the nutritional awareness programme in Bareilly city, to educate the children about healthy eating habits are important are not only for physical health but also for the development of mental health. Evidences indicates that dietary habits acquired in childhood persist through to adulthood and the family have important roles to play in acquisition of nutrition related knowledge and practices. The purpose of the study was to severe knowledge and practices the purpose of the study was to severe knowledge attitudes and eating practices of nutritious and junk food among school going children and to assess any improvement in the attitudes and eating behaviours of the children with increasing level of knowledge. The questionnaire survey was conducted in eight schools of Bareilly city. A questionnaire consisting of fifteen questions to assess the knowledge of children. The survey found that although there was an increased preference for fast foods among school going children alike, the taste and visual appeal being the major reasons. It is clear from the results that majority of the subjects were assessed to have either poor or fair levels of awareness about the important of nutrition. Hence, during nutrition education, emphasis was given to the dietary guidelines during adolescence as diet influences the future nutritional status.

Keywords:- Nutrition Education, Dietary guidelines, nutritional status

Introduction

Food and eating are intimately connected with eating disorders. Poor dietary practices are major contribution to the development of chronic non- communicable diseases. Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood with accelerated physical, mental and emotional development (shrilakshmi, 2002). During this period, the final growth spurt occurs. There are many body changes occurs due to the influences of hormones and with profound growth there is increased demands for energy, proteins, minerals and vitamins (Renjini, 2014). The family play a vital role in the acquisition of nutrition knowledge and nutrition related practices. Evidences indicates that dietary habits acquired in childhood persist through

to adulthood. School is one of the main social contexts in which lifestyles are developed. There has been an evolution in food habits with the replacements of healthy nutritious food with things that are tasty, convenient in vogue junk food. These foods are rich in salt, sugar and fat or calories but low nutrient content, the changing lifestyles and the easy availability of junk food near schools or even within school canteens have led children to prefer and become addicted to junk foods. The purpose of this study was to know the impact of nutrition education programme conducted for school going children.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the dietary habit of school going children
2. To study about the opinion of respondents about different aspects of fast foods.
3. To assess the knowledge level of the respondents at pre and post intervention of nutrition education.

Materials and Methods

This survey was conducted in government and private schools in Bareilly city. Total 400 school going children were selected randomly. A total 400 students were selected from the eight schools of Bareilly city between the age group of 10 -15 years. A pre-structured questionnaire containing a set of fifteen questions was prepared and distributed in the children's native language. This questionnaire aimed to assess the knowledge and attitude about the consumption of nutrition as well as junk foods. The set of knowledge test schedule which was used at pre-exposure stage was again used to find out the impact of nutrition education on the knowledge level and daily practices related to nutrition and eating behaviour of school going children. The respondents responded to statements by selecting 'Yes' or 'No' response. A post test taken and comparison between scores obtained in pre and post-test by the respondents decided the impact of nutritional awareness created through communication material among the target groups.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Distribution of respondents on the basis of dietary habit

Dietary Habit	N = Frequency	Percentage (%)
Vegetarian	204	51
Eggitarian	46	11.5
Non-vegetarian	150	37.5

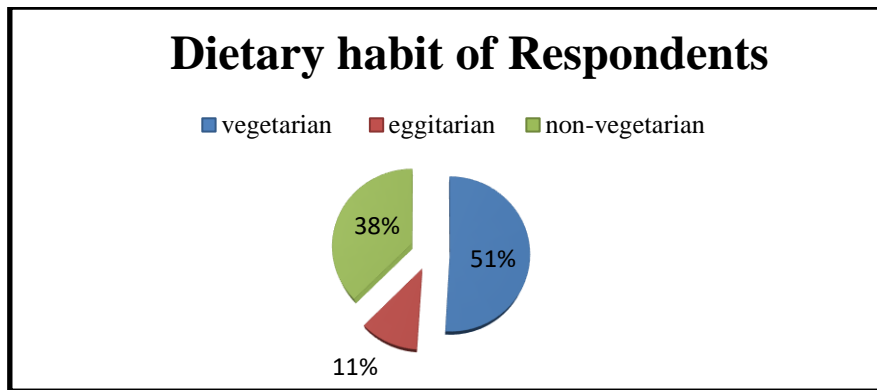


Figure 1 Distribution of respondents on the basis of dietary habit

Table 1 and figure 1 showed the distribution of the dietary habits of school going children. It was evident that most of the respondents (51%) were in vegetarian category in which they consume milk and vegetarian diet in their regular meal pattern and they do not include egg and meat product in their dietary pattern. 37.5 percent respondents had non-vegetarian dietary habit, those students are consume meat and poultry products in their diet and they also include milk of vegetarian diet in their meal plan. It was observed that 11.5 percent of total children had followed vegetarian diet they consume egg and vegetarian food both in their diet they were do not include meat products in their diet.

Table 2 Distribution of opinion of respondents about different aspects of fast foods and street foods

Sr.no	Statement	Yes		No	
		N	%	N	%
1	Do you know what is fast foods and street foods?	385	96.3	15	3.8
2	Do you enjoy eating fast foods and street foods?	341	85.3	59	14.8
3	Has the fast foods and street foods become a basic need for you.	35	8.8	365	91.3
4	Do you think fast foods and street foods are unhealthy?	326	81.5	74	18.5
5	Do you think it is more damaging than beneficial to the society?	284	71.0	116	29.0
6	Consumption of fast foods and street foods with your friends and family is a form of entertainment for you.	309	77.3	91	22.8
7	Do you think Hi-tech life is more responsible for habit of consuming fast food in school going children?	263	65.8	137	34.3
8	Advertisements mould your mind in such a way that you are forced to consume certain type of fast foods and street foods.	257	64.3	143	35.8
9	Urbanization has a greater influence on changing food habits of urban children.	265	66.3	135	33.8
10	Would you like to prefer branded fast foods	321	80.3	79	19.8

Table 2 shows the survey conducted on the statement that whether the respondents prefer fast food for their enjoyment. It was showed that majority of the respondents (96.3%) had know the concept of fast foods and street foods whereas 3.8 percent children had no idea about fast foods and street foods. 85.3 percent children agreed that they enjoy eating fast foods and street foods, school going children were satisfied their hunger by the consumption of fast foods and street foods whereas, 14.8 percent respondents agreed that fast foods and street foods become a basic need for them but they used to ate fast foods and street foods for the sake of enjoyment and fun, while 91.3 percent children disagreed by this statement. Regarding the opinion of respondents on the statement that fast foods and street food items are unhealthy, it was found that majority of respondents (81.5%) agreed while 18.5 percent respondents disagreed to this. Opinion of the respondents on the statement that fast foods and street foods more damaging than beneficial to the society, it is found that most of the children (71.0%) agreed by this statement and rest (29.0%) respondents disagreed by this opinion. Regarding the opinion of respondents on the statement that whether consumption of fast food with friends and family in a form of entertainment to them, it was found that majority of the children (77.3%) from the selected sample agreed to this and 22.8 percent respondents disagreed by this statement. Most of the students (65.8%) think that Hi-tech life is more responsible for the habit of consuming fast foods and street foods whereas 34.3 percent children don't think that Hi-tech life is responsible for the choice of fast foods. In response to the statement on whether advertisements moulds the mind of people to consume certain types of fast foods, it was found that majority of respondents (64.3%) had similar view point while 35.8 percent respondents disagreed by this opinion. The statement that whether urbanization has a greater influence on changing food habits of urban students, it was found that most of the respondents (66.39%) agreed to it and rest 33.8 percent children disagreed by this statement. 80.3 percent school going children always purchase branded fast foods whereas 19.8 percent children do not prefer branded fast foods. This result is supported the research given by **Vaida (2013)** inferred that the response to the statement on whether advertisements moulds their mind of people to consume certain type of fast foods, it was found in the study that most of the respondents has differed in their opinion, while some had a similar view point.

Table 3 Assessment of knowledge level of the respondents at pre and post intervention of nutrition education.

Awareness level	Knowledge percentage			
	Pre-exposure (n=400)		Post-exposure (n=400)	
	N	%	N	%
Fair (< 7)	241	60.25	32	8.0
Good (8-11)	106	26.5	295	73.75
Excellent (>11)	53	13.25	73	18.25
$\chi^2 = 252.25$		*Significant		
P = <0.00001*		(At 5% probability level)		

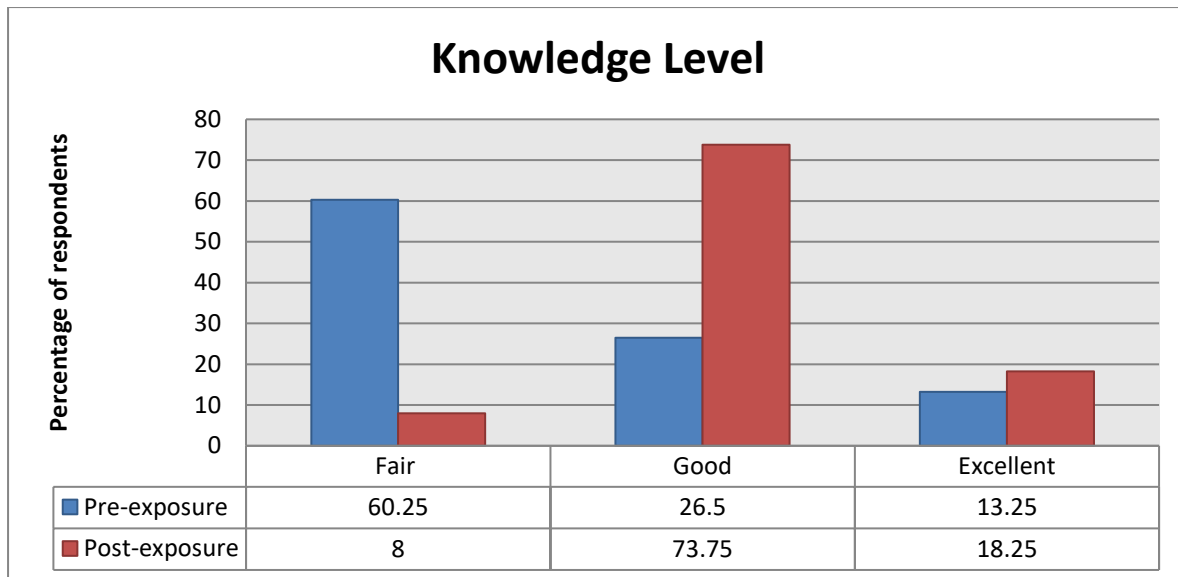


Table 3 shows the level of knowledge of the respondents regarding the various aspects about eating patterns, food habits and balanced diet. The statistical interpretation of the data revealed that there was a significant association ($P < 0.00001$) between the data regarding scores obtained by the respondents in the pre intervention and scores obtained in the post intervention. This result revealed that there is a positive improvement in knowledge level of selected respondents by giving the nutrition intervention through prepared material of nutrition education. It is a effective method used for the improvement the knowledge level of school going children.

Nutrition education in school premises may be beneficial in the educating school going children on the possible long term health effects by excessive consumption of fast food and high calorie intake. The different types of media campaigns and other communication strategies are used in different countries to educate the population about healthy eating habits. Those programmes and promotions can give a significant impact on awareness, attitudes, knowledge and intention to change but yes behavioural changes are not usually influenced. A healthy lifestyle and good eating practices among children should be presented through televisions, newspapers and effective method of education in school campaigns. Children should be encouraged to consume foods which have a high nutrient quality like grains pulses, fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products.

Overall student’s knowledge has been significantly improved after an educational intervention. So, replication of such a programme among adolescents population which introduce healthy dietary concepts to improve nutritional knowledge, attitudes and dietary patterns is recommended.

Conclusion

Good eating practices, healthy attitudes and a good knowledge basis to nutrition and health need to be established in childhood and adolescence. Pre-adolescents need to be educated in nutrition and healthy eating so they will be able to select produce and consume a healthy diet now and in the future to help slow down the increasing level of many diseases. Nutrition

education is a key element to promoting lifelong healthy eating and exercise behaviours should start from the early stages of life.

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