

Parental Knowledge On The Relationship Between Nutrition And Health Of Adolescent Girls (13-19 Years)

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Abstract

Adolescence is the exciting yet stressful time when your child transitions into adulthood. A research was conducted to study the nutritional awareness among parents. Sample size was 20. Data collected from 20 parents having adolescents, those between 13 and 19 years, were interviewed. Some were interviewed twice or thrice. It consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions. The samples comprised of adolescents' parents living in Keonjhar district of Odisha at the time of research. Non-random convenience sampling method was used. Parents play the major role in taking care for their children. Though they are providing nutritious food to their adolescents, but due to not adequate knowledge some parents are lagging behind in providing right food to their adolescents, for which their children are suffering from some nutritional problems. For overcoming this problem, the parents should be properly educated so that their children would live a healthy life in the long run.

Key words: Adolescent, nutrition, health, consumption habit.

Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period, often defined as beginning with puberty and ending around age 19 years, characterized by rapid physical and cognitive development. It is a vulnerable period for onset of disordered eating behaviors, including emotional eating, bulimia, anorexia, and binge eating. The adolescent period is an inherently stressful time of life marked by gradual acquisition of self-identity, cognitive and emotional maturity, and the skills necessary for independent living and for less dependence on the familial unit. Importantly, stress-specific effects on the brain and body confer increased risk for mental and cardiometabolic dysfunction and food-related coping mechanisms. For example, elevated cortisol increases blood glucose levels, mobilizes fatty acids and amino acids, favors visceral or abdominal adiposity, and promotes reward-based eating behavior and consumption of highly palatable, energy-dense foods. Not only have metabolic and behavioral effects of stress been well documented in adults, but stress-motivated eating has been documented in adolescents as well, suggesting that these behaviors may begin relatively early in life and persist to adulthood.

Influence of food-related parenting on adolescents' eating behavior

The parent is the most significant source of influence on eating behavior in youth, even in adolescents who seek increased independence and develop their own eating habits during independent eating occasions, usually in social settings with peers. Although the influence of parents on the eating behavior of children encompasses prenatal, antenatal, and early childhood periods, these topics are beyond the scope of this review and are reviewed in detail elsewhere. Parents create environments that can promote development of healthy eating habits in youth, and parents who set expectations, model healthy behaviors, and make healthy foods available typically buffer against obesogenic eating behaviors in their offspring.

Although children may be more receptive to direct parental influence (e.g., verbal encouragement) on decisions about eating behavior, adolescents seeking more independence during eating occasions may be more receptive to indirect parental influence, such as the parent making healthy foods available. In addition, home environments fostering parent and adolescent involvement in food preparation are linked to better adolescent diet quality and a higher frequency of family meals. Researchers examining adolescent involvement in food preparation found better diet quality in those who

actively participated in food preparation for the family vs those who did not regularly participate. Therefore, adolescents who prepare food for the family and participate in the family meal may be at lower risk for developing unhealthy, potentially obesogenic, eating behaviors.

Review of Literature

British Medical Association (2003) Irving, L. M., & Neumark-Sztainer, D. (2002). Demand for an investigation on nutritional knowledge especially among adolescents has heightened recently due to concerns about the quality of food consumed which has reached unprecedented proportions.

In a survey by Sakamaki, R, Toyama, K., Amamoto, R., Lio, C.H., & Shinfuku, N. (2005). It was discovered that adolescents had an average nutritional knowledge.

World Health Organization, (2008) has emphasized that nutrition is vital for healthy growth and development and has an important role to play in enhancing quality of life particularly in the prevention and management of many chronic conditions. In essence, good nutrition especially during adolescence is a must and should be accorded the highest priority as it relates to an important aspect of healthy lifestyle Kigaru, D. M. D, Loechl, C. Moleah, T, Macharia- Mutie C. W. & Ndungu, Z. W. (2015). It could be construed that healthy lifestyle is expected to suffer if nutritional knowledge is inapposite. Consistent with these claims, the high prevalence of overweight and obesity among adolescents' could be attributed to poor and inadequate nutrition knowledge leading to poor dietary practices which results in chronic health problems.

Objective of the study

1. To study the socio-economic characteristics of parents having adolescent girls.
2. To find out the nutritional awareness among parents.
3. To find out the consumption habit of nutritious foods.
4. To assess the relationship between nutrition and health among parents for their adolescent girls.
5. Suggestions for parents to provide nutritious foods to their adolescent girls.

Methodology

The study was designed to investigate the socio-economic status of the sample, their nutritional awareness, consumption habit, and relationship between nutrition and health. The present study was conducted taking 20 tribal parents having adolescent girls of Keonjhar district of Odisha. The information was collected by investigator's own observation, and what is currently happening and is not complicated by either the past behaviour or future intentions or attitudes of the respondents. The observational method can further provide confirmation and accuracy to the data obtained from the interview.

The investigator follows a rigid procedure and seeks answers to a set of pre-conceived questions through personal interview. This method of collecting data is usually carried out in a structured way where output depends upon the ability of interviewer to a large extent. Structured interview is applied to data collection which helped the researcher to obtain reliable information of their aim and objective of topic.

Results and discussions

Objective-1: Socio-economic status of the parents under study

The socio-economic status of the parents was taken under study.

Table –4.1.1: Socio-economic characteristics of parents (N=20)

Sl.no.	Socio-economic variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age (in years)		
	13-16	12	60.00
	17-19	08	40.00
	Total	20	100.00
2.	Education		
	M . School	03	15.00
	H . School	07	35.00
	College & above	10	50.00
	Total	20	100.00
3.	Caste		
	General	05	25.00
	OBC	05	25.00
	ST/SC	10	50.00

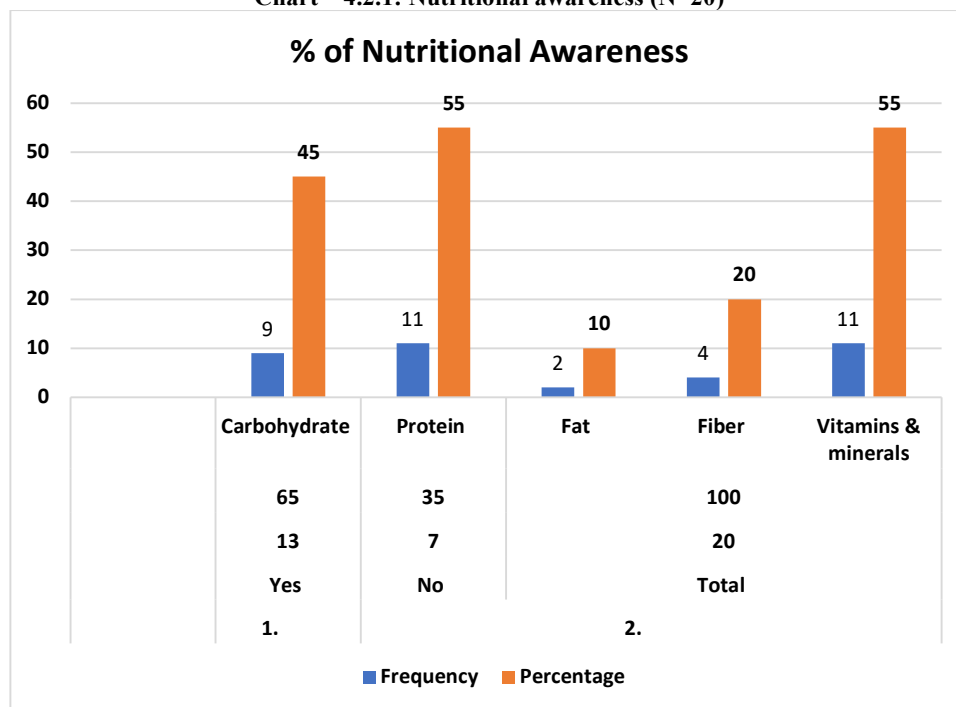
	Total		
4.	Family size		
	Up to 5	12	60.00
	6 & above	08	40.00
	Total	20	100.00
5.	Family type		
	Single	09	45.00
	Joint	04	20.00
	Extended	07	35.00
	Total	20	100.00
6.	Size of earning members		
	One	12	60.00
	Two	04	20.00
	Three & above	04	20.00
	Total	20	100.00
7.	Annual family income		
	5,000 – 50,000	07	35.00
	50,001 - 1,00,000	07	35.00
	1,00,001 – 2,00,000	05	25.00
	2,00,001 – 3,00,000	01	5.00
	Total	20	100.00

The above table – 1.1 reveals that, out of the total respondents are taken, 60 % parents have the children which are in the early adolescent stage followed by 40 % parents have the children in the late adolescent stage. 50 % adolescents have attained college education followed by 35 % attained high school, 15 % attained middle school, and they know the importance of nutritious food and also demand about it from their parents. Maximum respondents belong to schedule caste and schedule tribe followed by OBC and general of 25 % each. 60 % respondents have the members of up to five in their family and mainly they are living in single family type, which is a demand of today. In every family there is at least one earning member and maximum respondents are earning with in Rs. 2,00,000/- annually, which is quite sufficient to provide locally produced nutritious food during adolescent stage.

Objective - 2: Nutritional Awareness

Nutrition is very much required at this stage as; it is neither the childhood stage nor the adulthood stage. The nutritional awareness of the parents was taken and also awareness on the types of nutrients was investigated.

Chart – 4.2.1: Nutritional awareness (N=20)

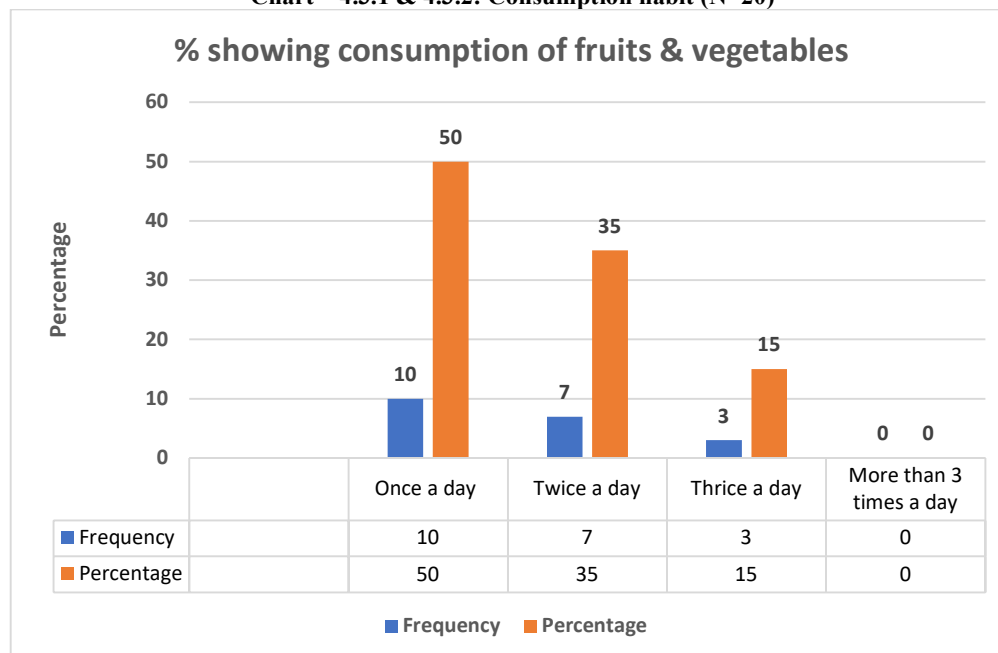


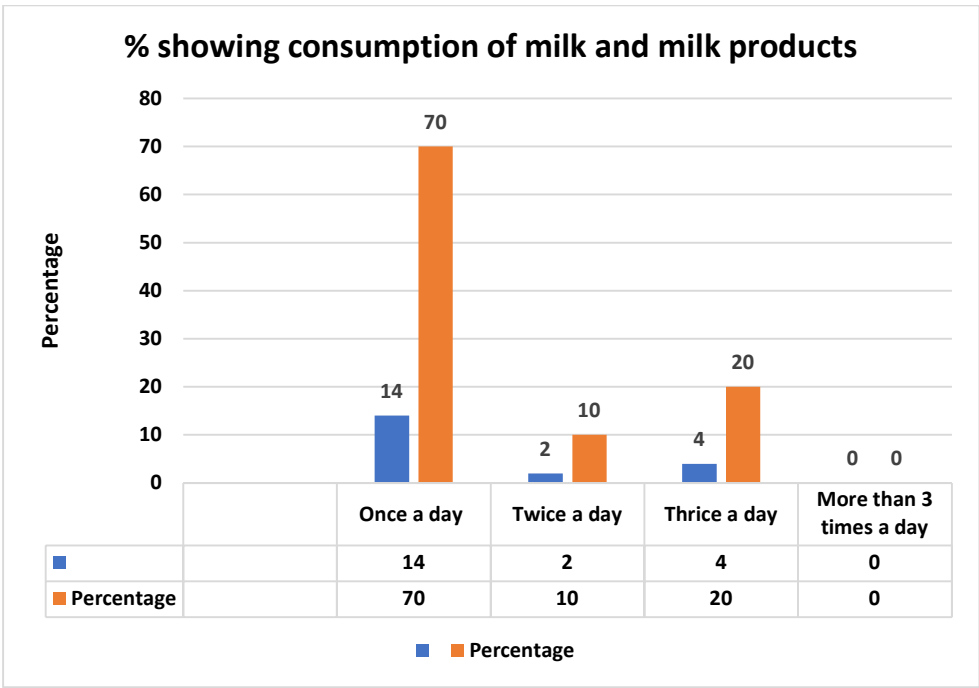
The above chart – 4.2.1 shows, 65 % parents have the nutritional awareness which they got to know from their children, followed by 35 % parents who don't have nutritional knowledge. Those who have nutritional knowledge, they are giving different foods to their adolescents like rice, artichoke, apple, grapes, banana, orange, milk, curd, paneer, mutton & chicken, eggplant, cabbage, tomato, almond, green leafy vegetables and so on. From these food items their adolescents are getting nutrients like carbohydrate, protein, fat, fiber, vitamins and minerals in regular basis.

Objective - 3: Consumption Habit

Essential nutrients, consumption of required vitamins and minerals which are available from fruits and vegetables and also consumption pattern of milk and milk products was investigated.

Chart – 4.3.1 & 4.3.2: Consumption habit (N=20)



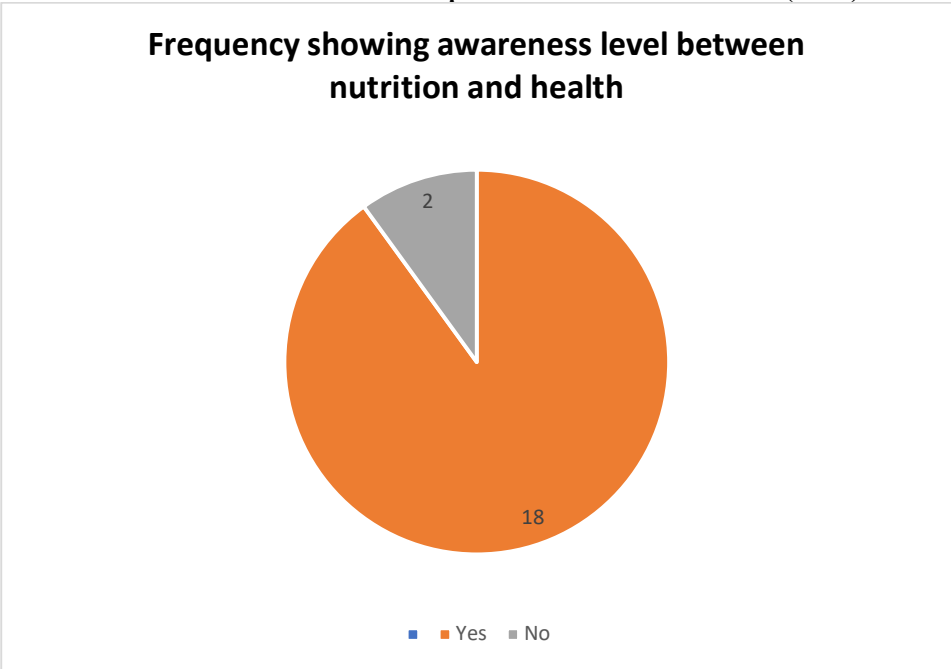


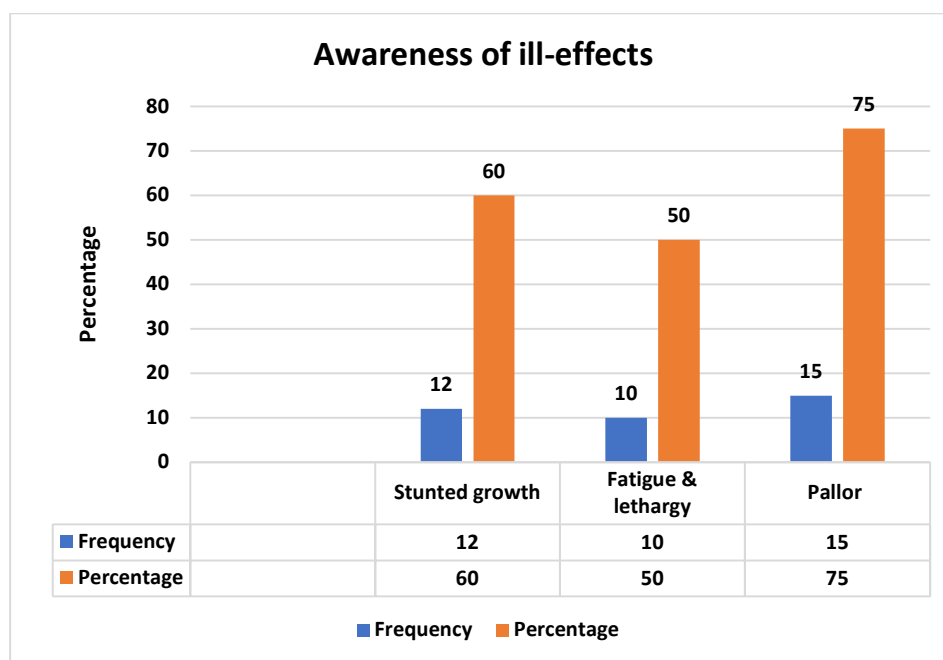
The above chart indicates, around 50 % out of total respondents are consuming fruits and vegetables once in a day from which they are getting vitamins and minerals followed by 35 % getting twice a day and 15 % thrice a day. Regarding consumption of milk and milk products, around 70 % consume milk and milk products at least once daily. Only 20 % are consuming three times a day. Apart from milk and milk products, they are consuming other fleshy foods from which they are getting protein.

Objective - 4: Nutritional Ill-effects

Health depends upon proper nutrients consumption. So, the relationship between nutrition and health was also considered. Also find out its ill-effects.

Table – 4.4.1 & 4.4.2: Relationship between nutrition and health (N=20)





The above chart – 4.4.1 & 4.4.2 shows, 90 % respondents have the knowledge of nutritional ill-effects. The nutritional ill-effects like stunted growth were seen among 60 % of respondents, 50 % shows lethargy and fatigue and rest 75% shows pallor. Due to low income of their parents, as in most of the families there is only single member is earning and the family members is up to 5 in which the adolescents are not getting enough fruits, vegetables, milk & milk products even twice or thrice a day.

Conclusion

The study was conducted basically to determine parent's nutritional awareness and consumption habit of nutritious foods. The relationship between nutrition and health among parents for their adolescent girls was also taken into consideration as parents are the major provider of nutritious foods. From the study, it was revealed that, parents are trying their level best to provide nutritious foods to their adolescents, but due to less income, more family members, less knowledge about nutritious foods they won't be able to do. From the study it was observed that, adolescents are not consuming enough fruits, vegetables, milk and milk products on daily basis due to which they are looking pallor, feeling of fatigue and lethargy and also shows stunted growth. For this, the parents should be educated regarding locally produced nutritious foods through which these nutritional ill-effects can be corrected and it won't create problems among the adolescents in the long run.

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