KNOWLEDGE REGARDING FOOD AND NUTRITION AMONG FARM WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Good nutrition is an important factor in the promotion and maintenance of good health throughout the life. A balanced diet must include variety of foods in our daily diet. Number of factors affect on the selection of foods such as social, economical, geographical, environmental and knowledge regarding food and nutrition. All these factors interact in a complex manner to shape dietary consumption patterns and affect the morbidity and clinical status of women. Knowledge regarding food & nutrition is an important factor which independently can impact deeply on the choice, habits and nutritional status of an individual. It is important to know that how much awareness is there in the community, particularly in women because they select of food for entire family. Keeping this in mind, present study was under taken to assess the knowledge of farm women about food & nutrition. In this study, 100 trained farm women were selected randomly from Mandvi and Umarpada talukas of KVK operational area of Surat district, Gujarat. Data were collected by using personal interview method and to get inference the simple statistical tools were applied. Study revealed that majority of women (73per cent) had medium level of knowledge about nutrition. Result of this study indicates that women must be given a basic knowledge regarding food and their nutritional value to overcome the nutrition related problems among community.

Key words : *nutrition, balance diet, food and nutrition, knowledge, awareness*

INTRODUCTION

Farm Women constitute major percentage of the agricultural labor force in the rural sector, producing much of the country's food. In rural India, the percentage of women who depend on agriculture for their livelihood is as high as 84%. Women make up about 33% of cultivators and about 47% percent of agricultural laborers (Singh. *et al.* 2009). These statistics do not account for work in livestock, fisheries and various other ancillary forms of food production in the country. Despite the fact that women are predominantly the food producers for the nation, majority of them are anemic, malnourished and have health problems due to insufficient nutrient intake.

Healthy Women are the prerequisite for creating a Healthy Nation. Nutrition is a basic human need and a prerequisite to a healthy life. A proper diet is essential from the very early stages of life for proper growth, development and to remain active. *Food consumption mainly depends on production and distribution, determines health and nutrition of the population. An important part of the nutrition gap is the information gap. Lack of knowledge is one of the major causes for poor nutrition among the people. Under*

nutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, obesity and diet-related chronic diseases exist side by side in many countries. Whether food supplies are scarce or abundant, it is essential that people know how best to make use of their resources to ensure nutritional wellbeing. To be adequately nourished, individuals need to have access to sufficient and good quality food and they need an understanding of what constitutes a good diet for health, as well as the skills and motivation to make good food choices. Nutrition education is a major source of information about nutrition. It helps to promote access to a variety of nutritious food, increase knowledge of the nutritional value of foods and develop personal skills and motivation to adopt healthy eating practices. (Anonymous 2019)

The importance of proper nutrition as one of the enhancing the nutrition attitudes, knowledge and important aspects of lifestyle were emphasized in the practices of women has high importance, because recent years and the trend toward healthier diets have this subsequently will lead to more food-conscious increased (Margetts et. al. & Stampfer et. al) Awareness about food and nutrition among the women are very essential for maintaining the food and nutrition security of the family. Each member of the every family

should be aware about food and nutrition security. Hence an attempt is being made to study the level of knowledge about food and nutrition among farm women.

OBEJCTIVE

To know the knowledge regarding food and nutrition among farm women

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Surat District of Gujarat state. Two talukas Mandvi and Umarpada were randomly selected. Five villages from each talukas of KVK operational area were selected purposively. 100 farm women were selected randomly among the trained group of KVK, Surat. The important components of nutrition were identified while developing structured interview schedule. To collect the data from the respondents, a personal interview method was used for analysis and to get inference the simple statistical tools was applied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socio-economic characteristics of the farm women

Age

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based on age

(n= 100)

Sr. No.	Age	Frequency	Percent
1	Young age (Below 30 years)	29	29.00
2	Middle age (30-50 years)	64	64.00
3	Old age (above 50 years)	07	07.00

It is evident from table 1 that majority (64 per cent) of the respondents belonged to the middle age (30-50 years) group followed by young age group (below 30 years) and only seven per cent of the respondents were old group. (above 50 years). This finding is in line with Patel *et. at* (2016) Arti and Verma (2019) and Dave (2019)

Education

With regards to the education of the respondents, the

Table 2: Distribution of respondents based on education

(n=100)

Sr. No.	Levels of education	Frequency	Percent
1	Primary education	32	32.00
2	Secondary education	38	38.00
3	Higher secondary education	19	19.00
4	Graduation and above	11	11.00

Findings revealed that 38.00 per cent had secondary education followed by 32 percent of the respondents with primary level of education. Only 11.00 per cent had a graduation and above level of education. This finding is in line with Devi and Sindhuja(2015) and Dave (2019).

Occupation

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on occupation

(n=100)

Sr. No.	Occupation	Frequency	Percent
1	Agriculture + AH	56	56.00
2	Agriculture + Labour	32	32.00
3	Homemakers	08	08.00
4	Government job/ business etc.	04	04.00

Data in table 3 found that majority (56 %) of the respondents were belonged to Agriculture + AH occupation followed by Agriculture + Labour (32 %) and only 4 per cent had government job and business. This finding supported to the findings of Patel *et. at* (2016) Arti and Verma (2019) and Dave (2019)

Annual income

Table 4: Distribution of respondents based on annual income (₹) (n=100)

Sr. No.	Annual Income(₹)	Frequency	Percent
1	Up to 25,000/-	12	12.00
2	25,000/- to 50,000/-	57	57.00
3	50,000/- to 1,00000/-	24	24.00
4	Above 1,00,000/-	07	07.00

From table 4 data show that 57 per cent respondents earn ₹ 25,000/- to 50,000/- annually followed by 24 per cent earn ₹ 50,000/- to 1,00000/- only 7 per cent earned above ₹ 1,00,000/-.

Type of family

Table 5: Distribution of respondents based on family type

(n=100)

Sr. No.	Type of Family	Frequency	Percent
1	Joint	61	61.00
2	Nuclear	39	39.00

Majority (61 per cent) of the respondents belonged to the joint family followed by 39 per cent who belonged to nuclear family. This finding is in conformity with the finding of Patel *et. at* (2016) Arti and Verma (2019) and Dave (2019).

Source of information

Table 6: Source of information of the respondents regarding level of nutrition (n= 100)

Sr. No.	Source of information	Frequency	Percen
Personal cosmopolite			
1	Family members	04	04.00
2	Neighbors	07	07.00
3	Friends/relatives	14	14.00
4	SHG members	26	26.00
5	Line department officer	15	15.00
6	KVK-Scientists	31	31.00
Mass contact			
7	News paper	06	06.00
8	Television	30	30.00
9	Magazine	05	05.00
10	WhatsApp	38	38.00

*Multiple responses

In source of information, majority of the farm women falls in KVK scientist (31 per cent) group of personal cosmopolite, While in case of mass contact majority of the farm women got information from WhatsApp (i. e. 38 per cent) and followed other groups. This finding is in conformity with the finding of Arti and Verma (2019).

Social participation

Table 7: Social participation of the respondents

(n=100)

Sr. No.	Social participation	Frequency	Percent
1	One organization	34	34.00
2	More than one organization	60	60.00
3	Not participation	06	

Social Participation of respondents depicted more than one organization (60 per cent) followed by one organization (34 per cent) and some of the respondents (6 per cent) not involved in any organization. This finding is in conformity with those reported by Arti and Verma (2019).

Level of knowledge about foods and nutrition

Data in table 8 reveled that majority of the respondents (73 per cent) had medium level of knowledge regarding food and nutrition followed by high and low level of knowledge i.e. 18 per cent and 9 per cent respectively. This findings is similar with the findings of Devi and Sindhuja(2015), Patel *et. at* (2016) Arti and Verma (2019) and Dave (2019).

Table 8: Level of knowledge of the respondents regarding nutrition (n=100)

Sr. No.	Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percent
1	Low level	09	09.00
2	Medium level	73	73.00
3	High level	18	18.00

Mean - 7.85   SD – 3.44

The relationship between dependents and independent variables

Table 9 : The relationship between dependents and independent variables

Sr. No.		Variables	correlation 'r'value
X_1		Age	0.260**
X_2		Education	0.465**
X_3		Occupation	0.222*
X_4		Income	0.163
X_5		Family Type	0.201*
X_6		Source of Information	0.376**
X_7		Social Participation	0.274**

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)
NS Non-significant

The analysis of data showed in the table 9 that the relationship between dependents and independent variables were significant correlation with the knowledge about foods and nutrition. The data indicated that age, education, source of information and social participation were positive and highly significant correlated with the level of knowledge about food and nutrition. Occupation and family type showed

significant relation with knowledge level of farm women. Income showed non-significant relation with knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The selected characteristics such as age, education, source of information and social participation show positive and highly significant relationship with knowledge level of nutrition. Whereas, remaining characteristics such as occupation and family type showed positive significant relation. However, income did not show any significant relationship with knowledge level of nutrition.

It can be concluded from the present study that the majority of the tribal women were aged between 30 to 50 years. More than half of the women were primary and secondary education. Most of the respondents (88 %) were engaged in agriculture work, animal husbandry and labour. Majority of the family income ranged from ₹ 25000 to 50000 per annual. Majority of them belonged to joint families. Maximum of the tribal women (73 per cent) had medium level of knowledge about selected nutritional practices. On the basis of findings it can be concluded that KVK had reached at some extent because of the respondents were tribal. They need in-depth foods and nutrition education and intervention programmes for their holistic development. KVKs and line department should organize more training programme on foods and nutrition for tribal community.

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