

Original Research Article

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The Knowledge and Practice Gap of Different Nutritional Habits of the Farm Women

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Nutrition knowledge, Knowledge gap, Nutrition, Women, Balance diet

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Farm women are the major player to improve the nutritional status because they are user of the most of the farm product, selection of rich nutritional food is most important. Knowledge of farm women on nutrition is help to select food for nutrition. And the application of the knowledge is play major role for nutrition. Therefore the study was undertaken to determine the gap on knowledge and practice of nutrition. The sample of 100 farm women respondent were interviewed taking fifty from each village Dhalaguri and Dhanghinguri of Cooch Behar-II block under Cooch Behar district in West Bengal. Purposively, multi-stage sampling procedures were followed in the present study. The district Cooch Behar and block Cooch Behar-II was purposively selected due to the availability of active farming women involved in agriculture and allied sectors. Out of the thirteen Gram Panchayats of Cooch Behar-II block, two villages were randomly selected namely Dhalaguri and Dhanghinguri for the study

Introduction

Knowledge is a cognitive pursuit of human being, enhanced knowledge of education and experience always helps in case of developing wisdom for its future application. (Kumari and Srivastava, 2010) reported that woman can play an important role in selection, preparation and serving of food for their family members. The present study farm women knowledge on functions of food always creates an acumen to understand a to utilize the food items which

are functionally sound for the nutritional security. The functions of food delineate the requirement and amount of food foe nutritionally improved and healthy lifestyle. The high level of knowledge on functions of food among the farm women opens a vista regarding a basket of food choices. This knowledge also empowers the farm women nutritionally through identifying the nutritionally enriched food items ad their amount of there of. It can also reflect a vast diversity among the diet. As a result the

knowledge enriched farm women can maintain dietary diversity and nutritional security. That is why the variable 'knowledge on function of food' is significant and +ve associated with the dietary diversity score *vis-a-vis* nutritional security. Upadhyay *et al.*, (2011) reported that nutritional status as well as nutritional knowledge of hill women is unsatisfactory and needs interventions. In other hand in the study are women have sufficient knowledge about balance diet but application of knowledge is least. Payghan *et al.*, (2014) found that nutritional knowledge and practices of urban mothers are high compared to rural mothers, while rural and urban mothers had almost equal positive attitude towards nutrition. Kiran Vani (2007) and Savita Dhoke (2013) revealed that majority (66.67%) of the tribal women respondents were having adoption about health and nutritional practices at extent of medium level followed by high (33.33%) and low (00.00%) adoption level about health and nutritional practices. The knowledge of child nutrition and caring practices can be expected to have significant bearing on their children nutritional status but conflicting results have been reported in this regard where as some studies (Mary, 2013, Daba *et al.*, 2013 and Shettigar *et al.*, 2013) have observed a positive relationship between childhood malnutrition and maternal knowledge and beliefs regarding nutrition. The overall knowledge, attitude and practices regarding utilization of underutilized green leafy vegetables in selected rural women that is 43.12 percent, 46.12 percent and 49 percent respectively. Rao (2010), Masukuand Lan (2014) and Singh *et al.*, (2015). Cent per cent respondents had knowledge about "vegetables should be cut immediately before cooking" and „vegetables should be washed before cooking". 95.83 per cent of the respondents also disagreed with items as "green leafy vegetables harm the human body" which shows that rural women are somewhat aware

about importance of vegetables. Wallace *et al.*, (2014) conducted a study to evaluate the adequacy of iron and vitamin A intakes as well as women's nutritional knowledge out of 67 respondents in Cambodia. He found that about ninety seven percent of women did not meet their daily-recommended intake of iron, while 70.0% did not meet their daily-recommended intake of vitamin A. Results suggest that the cost of foods, access to food as well as the extent of health knowledge is linked to nutritional Practice of women. Ultimately, this study demonstrates the importance of developing comprehensive nutritional interventions including community-based program that simultaneously combines culturally informed 15 health education with initiatives aiming to combat poverty and enhance nutritional knowledge thereby increase access to nutrient rich foods.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in the villages of Dhalaguri and Dhanghinguri of Cooch Behar-II block under Cooch Behar district in West Bengal. Purposively, multi-stage sampling procedures were followed in the present study. The district Cooch Behar and block Cooch Behar-II was purposively selected due to the availability of active farming women involved in agriculture and allied sectors. Out of the thirteen Gram Panchayats of Cooch Behar-II block, two villages were randomly selected namely Dhalaguri and Dhanghinguri for the study. 100 farm women were interviewed taking fifty from each village. The data were collected using interview schedule through face to face interview. The SPSS/PC computer programme was used for data analysis. The important statistical measures that are used to analyse the survey or research data are Frequency, Percentage, Range, Mean, Standard deviation, Coefficient of variation, Coefficient of correlation, Multiple regression.

coefficient of correlation among the nineteen dependent variables with the independent variable dietary diversity score *vis-a-vis* nutritional security. The result shows that the Family Education Status (X2), Land Holding (X5), Extension Contact (X9), Risk Performance (X13), Economic Motivation (X14), Management Orientation (X15), Innovation Proneness (X17), Knowledge on function of food (X19) were found positively significantly and associated with the dietary diversity score *vis-a-vis* nutritional security.

Results and Discussion

The knowledge and practice gap of different nutritional Balanced diet of the farm women

With respect to the knowledge and practices of farm women regarding balanced diet it was evident from Table 1. that, all of the farm women (80%) had the knowledge and practice of including cereals in their diet because of their tradition. About 82 per cent of the farm women have knowledge about Milk and milk products but, 48 per cent were only consuming daily by the farm women as majority of them possessed milch animals. About 84 per cent of the farm women have knowledge on vegetables and fruits but, only 39 per cent were consuming daily. The consumption of

pulses was comparatively less to cereals only 65 per cent of them had knowledge and 62 per cent are practicing in their diet. And 72 per cent of the farm women had knowledge of all food groups and 62 per cent of them were practicing.

Save Nutrients while cooking

Cooking of food products is essential to make them palatable, digestive, tasty, colourful and attractive so that one feels like eating it. But if the food is not cooked in the right way and duration, there may be loss of nutrients. Thus an effort should be made to know how much knowledge the farm women possessed regarding advantages of consuming raw vegetables and tips of conserving nutrients while cooking.

Initial Knowledge and Practices about Points to be kept in Mind while Cooking Food

Majority of the farm women (82%) had good knowledge of washing vegetable before cutting and 75 per cent cutting vegetables just before cooking and 62 per cent and 68 per cent of them are practicing washing and cutting vegetables just before cooking respectively.

Table.1 The knowledge and practice gap of different nutritional Balanced diet of the farm women

S. No.	Food groups	Knowledge	Practice
1.	Cereals	80	100
2.	Pulses	65	62
3.	Vegetables and fruits	84	39
4.	Milk and milk products	82	48
5.	Included all food groups daily	72	62

Table.2 Initial knowledge and practices about points to be kept in mind while cooking food

S. No.	Tips of saving nutrients while cooking	Knowledge	Practice
1.	Wash vegetable before cutting	82	62
2.	Cut vegetable just before cooking	75	68
3.	Use excess/ extra water if it is There in making dough	74	64
4.	Cook food in covered pan	72	65
5.	Use required amount of water for Cooking dal, rice or vegetables	82	74
6.	Avoid use of cooking soda	54	32
7.	Peel vegetables thinly	58	52
8.	Cut vegetables in big pieces	62	58
9.	Use soaked water for cooking	52	43
10.	Cook food on slow fire	58	41

About 58 per cent of the farm women had knowledge on peeling vegetables thinly and 62 per cent had knowledge about cutting vegetables in big pieces. Nearly 72 and 82 percent farm women mentioned that food should be cooked in covered pan and that only required water should be taken for cooking foods respectively. As many as 54 percent farm women said that cooking soda should not be used for cooking food. Only few farm women *i.e.*, 41 per cent were cooking food on slow fire.

In conclusion, the study identified the knowledge and practice gap of different nutritional habits of the farm women. In almost all cases there is knowledge practice gap like balanced diet, saving nutrients while cooking, sprouting, kitchen gardening, household sanitation and waste disposal. the root causes of these gaps include weak economic condition , less agricultural land, education level ,age , extension contact. This gap may be mitigated with the help of some sensitization programme on nutritional and food security, taking some decisions on policy change, identifying the gender dynamics within the society, providing enabling environment to adopt the best practices and

promoting skill development training for different nutritional habits to enrich the nutritional security among the farm women. It may be also recommended that there is a need of a well developed structural platform to discuss the problem and promote the solution among the extension non government and government agencies and the farm women for nutritional security. This structured platform will bear the responsibility of capacity enhancement through accommodating all the services from different sections towards nutritional security of the farm women.

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