

Original Research Article

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Impact Study on Knowledge of Rural Women about their Nutrition

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ABSTRACT

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The objective of the present study was to find out the knowledge of rural women about homestead technologies in Chittorgarh district. The study was conducted in *Bhadesar* and *Bassi* panchayat samities of Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan state. From each panchayat samiti, two villages where the homestead technologies have been promoted by the KVK since last five years were included in the study. The sample consisted of randomly selected 100 rural women, 25 from each village. Personal interview method was used for data collection. Mean per cent score were used for analysis of data. The knowledge of the respondents about nutrition component revealed that majority of the respondents (66.51%) possessed good knowledge.

Introduction

A rural women hold on three fold responsibilities of home, farm and management of livestock.

In home she devotes endless time in preparing food, washing clothes, procuring fuel from forest, bringing water, storing food grains, cleaning and maintaining house, looking after children and adults, participating in social and religious ceremonies and the list is never ending.

Beside this, she does a lot of work in agriculture and animal husbandry. Adding to

the plight of these, women use age old customary methods for performing all these tasks which make their work more drudgery ridden, tedious and thorny.

Technological innovations and their reach to the rural women can result in enhancing women's welfare and their empowerment. Low cost, reliable homestead technologies related to nutrition, health and sanitation, drudgery reduction, post-harvest technologies etc. can provide a great leap forward for meeting rural women's practical needs for reducing their drudgery, increasing their efficiency and improving family's health condition.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Chittorgarh district of Rajasthan state. The district has 11 panchayat samities out of these, two panchayat samities namely *Bhadesar* and *Bassi* were selected purposively where the homestead technologies have been promoted by the KVK since last five years (2009-2013). Total four villages from two selected panchayat samities were included in the study. Sample for the study consisted of 100 rural women, 25 from each village. Personal interview method was used to collect the data from the respondents. Mean percent score were used for analysis of the data.

Results and Discussion

Background information of the respondents

More than 40 per cent respondents belonged to the age group of 18-30 years and 38 per cent were from 31-45 years of age. Majority of the respondents (60%) were under upper caste category. Regarding education, 29 per cent respondents were illiterate and 24 per cent were educated up to middle level.

Only 15 per cent respondents were graduates. Farming was the main family occupation of 89 per cent respondents. All the respondents were involved in some subsidiary occupations like farm labor, business and service. Majority (63%) belonged to nuclear family. More than 40 per cent respondents had small size family consisting of up to 4 members. Majority of the respondents (62%) were small and marginal farmers. Majority of the respondents (75%) were residing in *pucca* houses.

Knowledge of the respondents about nutrition

Knowledge of the respondents about nutrition. Critical examination of the knowledge score

highlights that the respondents possessed average knowledge about nutrition component (66.51 MPS).

An in depth enquiry into knowledge of the respondents in different components was made to find out specific deficiencies in knowledge so that necessary efforts can be made to increase the knowledge of the rural women about homestead technologies.

Nutrition

With regard to knowledge of the respondents regarding nutrition, Table 1.1 depicts that nearly three fourth of the respondents (74%) knew about concept of balanced diet, 72 per cent respondents knew that intake of imbalanced diet results into improper growth and development and 58 per cent reported that it may cause malnutrition.

Regarding food groups, cent percent respondent knew that cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products and oil and fat should be included in the daily diet.

Similarly, 59 per cent respondents also knew that sugar and jaggery are the important constituents of the balanced diet. However, only 12 per cent women had knowledge that nuts and oil seeds are also important part of the food groups.

With regard to functions of food, all the respondents knew that food provides energy and 94 per cent respondents were aware of the fact that food helps in proper growth and development and prevention from diseases.

With respect to methods of cooking, majority of the respondents (94%) had knowledge about pressure cooking, 77 per cent were aware about boiling method and only 2 per cent respondents had knowledge about roasting.

Table.1 Knowledge of the respondents about nutrition

n=100

S. No.	Aspects	f / %
1.	Concept of balanced diet	74
2.	Consequences of imbalanced diet	
	a) Malnutrition	58
	b) Improper growth and development	72
3.	Food groups	
	a) Cereals	100
	b) Pulses	100
	c) Fruits and vegetables	100
	d) Milk and milk product	100
	e) Oil and fat	100
	f) Sugar & jaggery	59
	g) Nuts & oil seeds	12
4.	Functions of food	
	a) To provide energy	100
	b) Proper growth and development	94
	c) Prevention from diseases	94
5.	Methods of cooking	
	a) Boiling	77
	b) Pressure cooking	94
	c) Roasting	2
6.	Points to be considered while cooking food	
	a) Washing hands before handling food	100
	b) Cutting big pieces of vegetables	100
	c) Washing vegetables before cutting	100
	d) Washing pulses and rice before cooking	100
	e) Cooking food on low flame	50
	f) Keeping food covered	100
	g) Avoiding use of excess water in cooking	100
	h) Avoiding heating of food again and again	36
7.	Methods of improving nutritive value of food stuffs	
	a) By combination of food groups	59
	b) Fermentation	2
	c) Sprouting	69
8.	Nutritional problems prevalent among children	
	a) Protein Energy Malnutrition (PEM)	13
	b) Vit A deficiency	12
	c) Rickets	7
	d) Beri – beri	11
	e) Goiter	11
9.	Nutritional problems prevalent among rural women	
	a) Anemia	72
	b) Under weight	64
	c) Fatigue	81

Regarding knowledge about points to be considered while cooking, 100 per cent respondents knew about washing hands before handling food, cutting vegetables in big pieces, washing vegetables before cutting, washing of pulses and rice before cooking, keeping food covered and avoiding use of excess water in cooking. Similarly half of the respondents (50%) were aware of the fact that food should be cooked on low flame and 36 per cent knew that food should not be heated again and again.

When the respondents were asked about methods of improving nutritive value of food stuffs, majority had knowledge about sprouting (69%) and combination of food groups (59%) while, only 2 per cent respondents had knowledge about fermentation. Knowledge of the women regarding nutritional problems prevalent among children was very poor as only 23 per cent respondents knew about PEM (Protein Energy Malnutrition), 12 per cent knew about vit. A deficiency, 11 per cent had knowledge about beri-beri and goiter diseases and only 7 per cent respondents knew about vit. D deficiency in children due to poor nutrition. The respondents possessed good knowledge about nutrition related problems among rural

women as majority of them knew about fatigue (81%), anemia (72%) and underweight (67%).

Based on the findings it could be concluded that the respondents had average knowledge about nutrition.

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