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A study on awareness of government nutritional programmes among adolescent girls of Mahabubnagar district (Telangana state)

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Abstract
Adolescence, transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an adolescent as any person between ages 10 and 19. Government Nutritional programmes were started mainly for the welfare of the people i.e., mainly for the health of the health of the adolescent girls. The adolescent girls were the future builders of the nation. Hence, an attempt was made to study the awareness of government nutritional programmes among adolescent girls of Mahabubnagar district Telangana. In this study, samples comprising of 60 adolescent girls including 30 adolescent girls from rural area and 30 adolescent girls from urban area who were studying in government and private schools were randomly selected. The questionnaire was developed for assessing the awareness and utilization regarding government nutritional programmes of rural and urban adolescent girls. Results revealed that majority of rural and urban adolescent girls had awareness regarding government nutritional programmes. All the respondents (100%) in the rural area were utilising mid day meal programme because they were studying in government school. There was significant association (3.35**) between rural and urban areas regarding the utilization of government nutritional programmes. The adolescent girls need more number of awareness programmes and campaigns to improve the awareness of government programmes and making them to utilize to get benefitted.

Keywords: Adolescent girls, awareness, nutritional programmes, utilisation

Introduction
Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. Good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is a cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity
A nutrition programme that is center based should be designed in such a way that improves the nutritional status of children and contributes to their optimal growth and development.

Nutrition programme for adolescent girls (NPAG)
Nutrition programme for adolescent girls to address the problem of under-nutrition among adolescent girls and pregnant women and lactating mothers, the Planning Commission, in the year 2002-03, launched the Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), on a Pilot Project basis in 51 districts in the country. Under this scheme, 6 kg. of food-grains were given to under nourished adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers. Eligibility was determined on the basis of their weight. The Pilot Project was continued in the year 2003-04 also. It, however, could not be continued in the year 2004-05. The Government approved the implementation of NPAG, through the Department of Women and Child Development, in 51 backward districts identified by the Planning Commission in the year 2005-06 to provide 6 kg of free food-grains to undernourished adolescent girls only (pregnant women & lactating mothers are not covered as these are targeted under ICDS). The scheme is being continued for the Annual Plan 2006-07 on pilot project basis.

Kishori Shakti Yojana
Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) seeks to empower adolescent girls, so as to enable them to take charge of their lives. It is viewed as a holistic initiative for the development of adolescent girls. The programme through its interventions aims at bringing about a difference in the lives of the adolescent girls. It seeks to provide them with an opportunity to realize their full potential.

This scheme is a redesign of the already existing Adolescent Girls (AG) Scheme being implemented as a component under the centrally sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. The new scheme dramatically extends the coverage of the earlier scheme with significant content enrichment, strengthens the training component, particularly in skill development, aspects aimed at empowerment and enhanced self-perception. It also fosters convergence with other sectoral programmes, addressing the interrelated needs of adolescent girls and women.

Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has launched Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), a health programme for adolescents, in the age group of 10-19 years, which would target their nutrition, reproductive health and substance abuse, among other issues.

The Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram was launched on 7th January, 2014. The key principle of this programme is adolescent participation and leadership, Equity and inclusion, Gender Equity and strategic partnerships with other sectors and stakeholders. The programme envisions enabling all adolescents in India to realize their full potential by making informed and responsible decisions related to their health and well being and by accessing the services and support they need to do so.

To guide the implementation of this programme, MOHFW (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare) in collaboration with UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) has developed a National Adolescent Health Strategy. It realigns the existing clinic-based curative approach to focus on a more holistic model based on a continuum of care for adolescent health and developmental needs.

The Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (National Adolescent Health Programme), will comprehensively address the health needs of the 243 million adolescents. It introduces community-based interventions through peer educators, and is underpinned by collaborations with other ministries and state governments.

Mid day meal scheme

The Midday Meal Scheme is a school meal programme of the Government of India designed to better the nutritional standing of school-age children nationwide. The programme supplies free lunches on working days for children in primary and upper primary classes in government, government aided, local body, Education Guarantee Scheme, and alternate innovative education centres, Madarsa and Maqtabs supported under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, and National Child Labour Project schools run by the ministry of labour. Serving 120,000,000 children in over 1,265,000 schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centres, it is the largest of its kind in the world.

The objectives of mid-day meal as issued by the government

- Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I-V in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centres.
- Encouraging children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.
- Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought affected areas during summer vacation.

Objectives

- To study the profile characteristics of rural and urban adolescent girls.
- To analyse the awareness of nutritional programmes among rural and urban adolescent girls.
- To study the utilization of nutritional programmes among rural and urban adolescent girls.
- To study the difference between the awareness and utilization of nutritional programmes among rural and urban adolescent girls.

Materials and Methods

Based upon the nature of the research problem and objectives of the present study, Ex-post-facto design is a quasi-experimental study examining how an independent variable, present prior to the study in the participants, affects a dependent variable. The state of Telangana and district Mahabubnagar was purposively selected for the study. In this study, samples comprising of 60 adolescent girls including 30 adolescent girls from rural area and 30 adolescent girls from urban area who were studying in government and private schools were randomly selected. Interview schedule was designed by the investigator for the study which includes general profile of the young adults. The questionnaire was developed for assessing the awareness and utilization of government nutritional programmes by rural and urban adolescent girls. The questionnaire consists of 5 statements and all statements are of positive manner. A total awareness and utilisation score was obtained by adding the responses, scoring one for each Yes response and No response. Yes response was given a score of one and for No response a score of zero. Frequencies, percentages, means and t-test were used to analyze the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: General profile of the respondents (rural and urban adolescent girls)

S.No	Variable	Rural (n=30)		Urban (n=30)		Total=60 (n=60)	
		n	%	N	%	N	%
1	**Age**						
	11-14 Years	24	80	22	73	46	77
	14-17 Years	6	20	8	27	14	23
2	**Level of Education**						
	VIII class	0	0	7	23	7	12
	IX class	30	100	19	63	49	82
	X class	0	0	4	13	4	6
3	**Father's Occupation**						
	Agriculture	28	93	9	30	37	61
	Business	0	0	3	10	3	5
	Government Job	0	0	13	43	13	22
	Driver	2	7	2	**7**	4	7
	Others	0	0	3	10	3	5
4	**Mother's Occupation**						
	Agriculture	29	97	2	7	31	52
	Business	0	0	2	7	2	3
	Government Job	0	0	5	17	5	8
	Tailor	1	3	20	67	21	35
	Others	0	0	1	3	1	2

From the above table, it was seen that majority of the respondents both in rural and urban population in the present study fall under 11-14 years (80% & 77% respectively. The educational level of the respondents, who were classified into

three categories, eighth class, ninth class and tenth class. In rural majority (100%) of the respondents are from ninth class followed by eighth class (0%) and tenth class (0%). In urban majority (63%) of the respondents are from ninth class followed by eighth class (23%), tenth class (13%). By considering the total respondents, majority (82%) are from ninth class followed by (12%) from eighth class and (6%) from tenth class. The above table revealed that majority of the respondents are from ninth class.

Regarding Parental occupation both fathers and mother occupation was studied. In rural area majority (93%) of the respondent's father's occupation is agriculture followed by driver (7%), business (0%), government job (0%) and other jobs (0%). In urban majority (43%) of the respondent's father's occupation is government job followed by agriculture(30%), business (10%), other jobs (10%) and driver (7%).taking into consideration the above total population majority (61%) of the respondent's father's occupation is doing agriculture work followed by government job (22%), driver (7%), business (5%), and other jobs (5%)The above table depicts that majority of the respondent's father do agriculture, the reason may be illiteracy so they do not have continuous employment opportunities.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their awareness of ongoing nutritional programmes

S.No	Awareness of nutritional programmes	Rural (n=30)		Urban (n=30)	
		F	%	F	%
1	NPAG	11	37	16	53
2	KSY	8	27	12	40
3	RKSK	6	20	8	27
4	Mid day meal	30	100	23	77
Total		30	100.0	30	100.0

It is observed from the above table 2 that in rural majority (100%) of the respondents were aware about the mid day meal programme followed by (37%) NPAG, (27%) KSY and (20%) RKSK. Likewise in urban majority (77%) of the respondents are aware about the mid day meal programme followed by (53%) NPAG, (40%) KSY and (27%) RKSK.

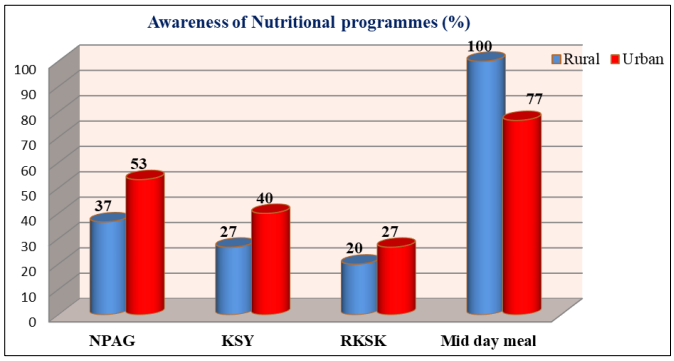

Fig 1: Distribution of respondents according to their awareness of ongoing nutritional programmes

Table 3 Distribution of respondents according to their utilization of ongoing nutritional programmes

S. No	Utilisation of nutritional programmes	Rural (n=30)		Urban (n=30)	
		F	%	F	%
1	NPAG	10	33	13	43
2	KSY	8	27	9	30
3	RKSK	6	20	8	27
4	Mid day meal	30	100	0	0
Total		30	100.0	30	100.0

It is observed from the above table 3 that in rural majority (100%) of the respondents were utilizing the mid day meal programme followed by (33%) NPAG, (27%) KSY and (20%) RKSK. Like wise in urban (43%) of the respondents were utilizing NPAG, (30%) KSY, (27%) RKSK followed by (0%) of the respondents were utilizing the mid day meal programme.

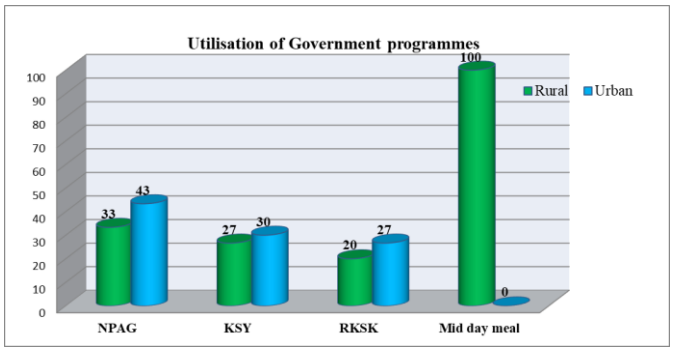

Fig 2: Distribution of respondents according to their utilization of ongoing nutritional programmes

Difference between the rural and urban adolescent girls awareness on nutritional programmes

In order to study the difference between the rural and urban adolescent awareness on nutritional programmes, t - values were computed and values were presented in table 4. t- test was used to compare the means of two sets of data.

A t-test's statistical significance indicates whether or not the difference between two groups' averages most likely reflects a "real" difference in the population from which the groups were sampled.

A statistically significant t-test result is one in which a difference between two groups is unlikely to have occurred because the sample happened to be atypical. Statistical significance is determined by the size of the difference between the group averages, the sample size, and the standard deviations of the groups. For practical purposes statistical significance suggests that the two larger populations from which we sample are "actually" different.

The difference between the rural and urban adolescent awareness on nutritional programmes were tested by relevant null and empirical hypothesis.

Null hypothesis: There will be no significant difference between the rural and urban adolescent awareness on nutritional programmes.

Empirical hypothesis: There will be significant difference between the rural and urban adolescent awareness on nutritional programmes.

Table 4: Awareness of Nutritional Programmes

Awareness	Mean values	t - stat value
Rural Adolescent girls awareness	5.84	0.56 NS
Urban Adolescent girls awareness	5.97	

NS = Not Significant

Difference between the rural and urban adolescent girls utilization of nutritional programmes

In order to study the difference between the rural and urban adolescent utilization of nutritional programmes, t - values were computed and values were presented in table 5. t- test was used to compare the means of two sets of data.

The difference between the rural and urban adolescent utilization of nutritional programmes were tested by relevant null and empirical hypothesis.

Null hypothesis: There will be no significant difference between the rural and urban adolescent utilization of nutritional programmes.

Empirical hypothesis: There will be significant difference between the rural and urban adolescent utilization of nutritional programmes.

Table 5: Utilization of Nutritional Programmes

Utilization	Mean values	t-stat value
Rural Adolescent girls utilisation	5.76	3.35**
Urban Adolescent girls utilisation	5	

* = Significant at 1% level

- There was no significant difference between rural and urban adolescents awareness on nutritional programmes.
- There was significant difference between the rural and urban adolescents in utilisation of nutritional programmes.

Conclusion

Adolescent girls are backbone of healthy and progressive family and thus future builders of positive health of community. Improving their awareness on government nutrition programmes therefore presents a key opportunity to improve health and growth. Findings of this study showed that majority of the respondents (77%) belonged to the age group of 11-14 years and (23%) of the respondents belonged to 14-17 years. In rural majority (100%) of the respondents were aware about the mid day meal programme followed by (37%) NPAG, (27%) KSY and (20%) RKSK. Likewise in urban majority (77%) of the respondents are aware about the mid day meal programme followed by (53%) NPAG, (40%) KSY and (27%) RKSK. In rural majority (100%) of the respondents were utilizing the mid day meal programme followed by (33%) NPAG, (27%) KSY and (20%) RKSK. Like wise in urban (43%) of the respondents were utilizing NPAG, (30%) KSY, (27%) RKSK followed by (0%) of the respondents were utilizing the mid day meal programme. There was a significant association (3.35**) between rural and urban areas regarding the utilization of government nutritional programmes. The adolescent girls need more number of awareness programmes and campaigns to improve the awareness of government programmes to improve their health by utilizing the welfares of the government to lead a healthy life.

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