

A Study On The Nutrition And Health Education Facilities In The Schools Of Tripura

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Abstract: Knowledge about Nutrition and Health Education assumes great importance in India where most of the people are ignorant about the basic principles of nutrition health and hygiene. Health is a very important topic and so is health education. Healthy people constitute a healthy nation. The strength of a nation rests upon the health and nutrition of its people. Malnutrition is not a new health problem in India. Health status survey showed that about 30 percent of the families consume inadequate amount of food to get the necessary nutritional requirements. School is the most ideal place for communication of several communicable diseases; at the same time on the contrary it is the best place for imparting education concerned with nutrition and health. School is also the best platform in our society for planning and implementation of various nutrition and health related schemes. Despite several measures on the part of the government, the nutrition and health status in the schools of our country failed to attain a desirable position. Many school going children do not have clear concept about personal hygiene; at the same time school authorities quiet often pay little hid to these crucial matters. Thus the author got self encouraged to conduct a study on the nutrition and health education facilities in the schools of Tripura.

I. INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is a scientific discipline which essentially deals with food and related issues. Nutrition is closely associated with health. If a person eats right amounts, that person will keep good health provided no other factors intervene. If there is any imbalance in eating pattern i.e. eating too little or too much will result in poor health. It must be emphasized, however, that though good food as one of the crucial factors in ensuring health, it not the only one. The food eaten must not be only nutritious but also it must be complete and clean. If this is not so, the person eating the food would get ill even if the food is nutritious.

If the right food is not consumed in right quantities by a person it results in malnutrition. This malnutrition can result in either inadequate or excessive intake of food. In other words, malnutrition refers to both under nutrition and over nutrition.

Under nutrition means inadequate intake of right food. And over nutrition means excessive intake of right food. But under nutrition and over nutrition both results in ill health. One e.g. of under nutrition is 'Vit A deficiency' when young children do not consume enough Vit. A rich foods; their eyes are affected initially and blindness results ultimately. An e.g. of over nutrition is 'obesity', when a person takes in more energy than he is able to spend in his daily activities, he accumulates fat in the body and his weight increases substantially, the person become obese.

Community health is concerned with the health problems among different groups of population. Such concern with health problems of population group lead inevitably to a broad range of interests i.e. from the cause, prevention and control of diseases, national or otherwise. Thus community health includes both identification of nutritional and health problems and cause and prevention as well as control of diseases.

Community nutrition is the study of assessing food and nutrition situation in terms of identification of nutritional problems, causative factors and possible solutions both for prevention and cure of the problems.

Children constitute the vulnerable section of the society. They are most prone to diseases and infection leading to ill-death. To overcome these problems the government initiated a number of programmes with the sole objective of improving the nutritional and health status. They are Special Nutrition Programme (SNP), Applied Nutrition Programme, Wheat Based Supplementary Nutrition Programme and Balwadi Nutrition Programme. Deriving necessary acquaintance from the above discussion and with an approach to augment awareness among one of the paramount beneficiaries of nutrition and health education facilities i.e., the school pupils, the author geared up to conduct a study on the Nutrition and Health Education Facilities in the schools of Tripura.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To locate the gaps with regard to Nutrition and Health Education in the schools of North Tripura.
- ✓ To bring about some improvement in the Nutrition and Health Education Practices in the schools.
- ✓ To create Nutrition and Health related awareness among students, teachers and guardians.

III. DESIGN OF STUDY

The following steps have been framed as the design of the study:

- ✓ Meeting with the inspector of schools.
- ✓ Collection of necessary information and data like address of the schools, roll strength, available nutrition and health education facilities etc.
- ✓ Seeking written permission from the inspector of schools for visiting the schools.
- ✓ Preparing of questionnaire.
- ✓ Visiting the schools during the school hours.
- ✓ Distribution of questionnaire among the students.
- ✓ Discussion with the teachers and the students by means of personal interview.
- ✓ Collection of questionnaire with the responses.

IV. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

Emergency treatment and care facilities in the schools are in feeble condition

Physical activity and games and sports are of less importance in the school curriculum.

Canteens of the schools are not so well equipped.

Fresh, clean and pure water is unavailable in some of the rural schools.

Infrastructure like class rooms, sanitation facilities, play ground, indoor playing facilities etc. are weaker in some of the rural schools.

Most of the schools don't have any park or similar facilities for the purpose of amusement or entertainment.

Some of the rural schools have been found to be using pond water for the purpose of cooking mid day meal and also for washing the utensils.

The mid day meal program is running successfully throughout the state, though facilities like cooking shed, dining room etc. are not up to the mark.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Knowledge about Nutrition and Health Education assumes great importance in India where most of people are ignorant about the basic principles of nutrition health and hygiene. Health is a very important topic and so is health education. Healthy people constitute a healthy nation. The strength of a nation rests upon the health and nutrition of its people. Malnutrition is not a new health problem India. Health status survey showed that about 30 percent of the families consume inadequate amount of food to get the necessary nutritional requirements. School is the most ideal place for communication of several communicable diseases; at the same time on the contrary it is the best place for imparting education concerned with nutrition and health. School is also the best platform in our society for planning and implementation of various nutrition and health related schemes. Despite several measures on the part of the government, the nutrition and health status in the schools of our country failed to attain a desirable position. Many school going children do not have clear concept about personal hygiene; at the same time school authorities quiet often pay little hid to these crucial matters. Thus the author thrived to conduct a study on the nutrition and health education status in the schools of Tripura. The aim of the author is to locate the gaps with regard to nutrition and health education in the schools of Tripura.

From the study it has been found that despite several measures on the part of the government the theme "*Nutrition and Health Education*" is somehow a neglected part in the schools of North Tripura. On the basis of the findings in the study the recommendations suggested by the author are as follows:

Emphasis must be given toward the development of infrastructure related to games, sports and physical activity. The subject Physical Education should be a compulsory part of the school curriculum. Canteens of the schools need to be restructured. Canteen authorities should be barred from selling junk food items. Emergency care and treatment procedures require improvement. Emphasis to be given on strengthening of Midday Meal infrastructure. Supply of fresh drinking water in the rural schools to be ensured. The authorities including Inspector of Schools, Head Masters, Teachers as well as the guardians should pay special attention in the implementation of Nutrition and Health practices.

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