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Impact of Nutrition Training on Knowledge of Rural Women

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ABSTRACT
A study was conducted to examine the impact of training related to nutrition education imparted by KrishiVigyan Kendra (KVK), Jehanabad to rural women in terms of knowledge component of behavior in five adopted villages of KVK, Jehanabad in Bihar state. The training was imparted to women for seven days on different components of nutritional practices such as balanced diet, infant feeding & weaning, deficiency diseases, conservation of nutrients during cooking, food preservation, food hygiene and food fads & fallacies. The findings indicated that there were considerable variations in mean knowledge scores of respondents with respect to different nutritional areas. The findings of the study revealed that the nutrition training had a definite positive impact in increasing level of knowledge about nutritional practices as the respondents had very low knowledge in all five areas of nutrition at pre training phase. But after the training, there was considerable gain in knowledge level of women.
Key words *: Training, Nutrition, Knowledge, Nutritional components, Rural women.*

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INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition is still a widespread health problem in India. As the present scenario indicates that millions of children are still victims of protein- energy malfunction and lack of certain micro- nutrients. Besides children, women are also the neglected segment of the society. So, there is a need to give a serious attention on the efforts to raise the health & nutritional status of entire family. Poverty, low purchasing power, lack of nutrition knowledge, wrong cooking practices followed and prevalence of social taboos are important factors contributing to the malnutrition. Even the available foods are not utilized properly due to the wrong cooking practices followed by women. Researchers have indicated that mother's level of nutritional knowledge contributes significantly in improving the health & nutritional status of entire family. This provides a condition to plan and impart such training in nutrition for women to bring desirable changes in their level of knowledge. This paper examines the impact of training related to nutrition education imparted by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Jehanabad to rural women in terms of knowledge component of behaviour.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in five adopted villages of KVK, Jehanabad in Bihar state. The training was imparted to women for seven days on different components of nutritional practices such as balanced diet, infant feeding & weaning, deficiency diseases, conservation of nutrients during cooking, food preservation, food hygiene and food fads & fallacies. . Training was given using appropriate teaching methods and aids and by following 'Before and after' experimental design. Random sample of 20 women in each training group from each adopted village was taken. The sample thus consisted of 100 women in experimental group and 25 respondents served as control group. The findings indicated that there were considerable variations in mean knowledge scores of respondents with respect to different nutritional areas. The data showed that the respondents had very low knowledge in all five areas of nutrition at pre training phase. But after the training, there was considerable gain in knowledge level of women. The findings of the study revealed that the nutrition training had a definite positive impact in increasing level of knowledge about nutritional practices. This led to conclude that, there is a strong need to educate and

to impart training to rural women about different components of nutrition and nutritional practices in order to improve health and nutritional status especially of the vulnerable groups of the society.
A random sample of 25 married women in the age group of 18-45 years having atleast one child and initial readiness to participate in the nutrition training programme of specified duration formed the sample of the study for each training group. The sample thus consisted of 100 women in experimental groups and 25 respondents served as control group.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:
The effects of training in terms of knowledge gained in different components of nutritional practices of women was measured with the help of well standardized test at two points of time i.e pre-training and immediately after the training. Age of the respondents ranged between 30 to 40 years and the average age was 34 years. About 93 percent of women were illiterate and the family income was below Rs. 1000/- month. The nutritional practices drawn from five areas served as base of investigation. The area wise pre-training knowledge scores of women are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Pre training knowledge score of respondents in different areas of nutritional practices

Sl. No.	Nutritional Components	Percentage knowledge scores N= 125		
		Range	Mean	Rank
1	Balanced diet	0-40	17.20	IV
2	Infant feeding & weaning	20-80	34.40	I
3	Deficiency diseases	0-45	7.96	V
4	Conservation of nutrients during cooking process	25-50	31.38	II
5	Food fads and fallacies	0-100	28.00	III

It appers from the table that these were considerable variations in mean knowledge scores of respondents with respect to different nutritional areas. The mean knowledge scores of respondents in different nutritional areas varied from 7.96 (deficiency disease) to 34.40 (Infant feeding). The data showed that the respondents had very low (much below 50 percent) knowledge in all five areas of nutrition. The mean knowledge scores of women in different areas of nutritional practices in descending order were of infant feeding, conservation of nutrients, food fads and fallacies, balanced diet and deficiency diseases.
A perusal of the data presented in the table1 indicates that the women had relatively higher level of knowledge about infant feeding and conservation of nutrients during cooking as compared to other nutritional components. However the level of knowledge even in these areas was low

Gain in knowledge about nutritional practices:
Gain in knowledge is one of the importat indicators to measure the effectiveness of any training programme. Immediately after training, the level of knowledge of the respondents was measured with the help of same knowledge test which was administered before imparting training to them. The gain in knowledge was computed by substrating the pre-training knowledge scores from knowledge scores obtained immediately after training. The knowledge gained by women in different nutritional components is presented in table 2

Table 2: Knowledge gained by respondents in different components of nutritional practices

Sl. No.	Nutritional Components	Percentage gain in knowledge N=100		
		Range	Mean	Rank
1	Balanced diet	0-50	27.10	V
2	Infant feeding and weaning	0-80	40.60	III
3	Deficiency diseases	10-70	42.22	II
4	Conservation of nutrient during cooking process	15.5-62.5	40.50	IV
5	Food fads & fallacies	0-100	45.0	I

The data reported in table 2 indicates that the mean score on gain in knowledge was highest in food fads and fallacies (45.00) and lowest in balanced diet (27.10). The knowledge gained by the women in different components of nutrition in descending order was of local fads and fallacies deficiency disease, infant feeding, conservation of nutrients during cooking process and balanced diet. Gain in knowledge of any subject is influenced by the individual's interest in the subject matter and perception of the utility of the practices as well as simplicity and complexity of the subject matter.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study led to conclude that the nutrition training had a definite effect on knowledge level of rural women asnutrition education brought a significant gain in knowledge and improvement in practices. It was observed thatas a result of training the gain in knowledge was maximum in the area of food fads and fallacies and minimum in the area of balanced diet.It was found that inadequate knowledge about cooking practices was possessed by most of the respondents and wrong cooking practices were followed by majority of the women. As women play a crucial role in the selection, preparation and serving of food therefore, educating them will help in increasing their awareness which will go a long way in improving the overall nutritional status of the community.

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