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Trends of Nutrition and Health Education of rural mothers on personal hygiene practices of their preschool children of Jabalpur district

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to determine the efficacy of Nutrition and Health Education on the personal hygiene level of subjects. A total of 500 rural children were selected, 250 of them were considered as experimental group while 250 were as control group. Nutrition and Health Education was given only to the mothers of subjects of experimental group. The result showed a significant increase in personal hygiene level of experimental group when compared to that of the control group. It shows that effect of Nutrition and Health Education was positive on personal hygiene practices of subjects.

Introduction:

Nutrition and Health Education is a tool to enhance the awareness of individuals and thereby bring about a change in their behaviour for the protection and promotion of their health and well being. This education has the long term goal of capacity building of women as they can look after their own health and nutritional needs as well as that of their children and families.

The components of Nutrition and Health Education comprise basic health and nutrition messages related to children, infant feeding practices, utilization of health services and environmental sanitation. Education is imparted through sessions, home visits and demonstrations.¹

In ancient time the village life was blessed with boons like fresh vegetables and fruits, plenty of fresh milk and milk products and pollution free environment but now in changed rural scenario, there are more family members, poor hygiene and sanitation and paucity of water.

The poor personal hygiene practices lead to poor health and infectious diseases. If it continues it will surely lead to malnutrition. Along with these unhygienic practices as practiced by people residing in rural areas leads towards development of a wrong life style as they grow up.

So, the present study was conducted with the objective to study the effect of Nutrition and Health Education on personal hygiene practices of preschool children of rural area.

Material and Methods:

The study was conducted in rural area of Gorakhpur district. 500 rural mothers of preschool aged children were selected as sample. 50% (250) of them were selected randomly as control group and remaining 50% (250) were considered as experimental group.

Nutrition and Health Education regarding personal hygiene was given to the experimental group through lectures, posters and individual contacts while no such education was given to the control group.

The personal hygiene practices of children and knowledge level of their mothers regarding it was recorded before and after implementation of the education. Collected data was tabulated and analyzed statistically.

Results and Discussion :

Table-I : Distribution of subjects according to daily teeth cleaning practices

S.No	Clean teeth daily	Experimental Group				Control Group				Total			
		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Yes	75	30	215	86	92	36.8	95	38	167	33.4	310	62
2	No	175	70	35	14	158	63.2	155	62	333	66.6	190	38
Total		250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

Table I shows increase in percentage of subjects who clean teeth daily from 30% in pre exposure stage to 86% in post exposure stage in experimental group while in control group there was no great improvement in daily teeth cleaning practice. So, it indicates that health education was effective.

Table-II Distribution of subjects according to Daily bath practices

S.No	Bath daily	Experimental Group				Control Group				Total			
		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Yes	107	42.8	186	74.4	24	9.6	24	9.6	131	26.2	210	42
2	No	143	57.2	64	25.6	226	90.4	226	90.4	369	73.8	290	58
Total		250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

Table III-Distribution of subjects according to practices of washing hands meal.

S.No	Clean teeth daily	Experimental Group				Control Group				Total			
		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Yes	125	50	191	76.4	121	48.4	120	48	246	49.2	311	62.2
2	No	125	50	59	23.0	129	51.6	130	52	254	50.8	189	37.8
Total		250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100	250	100

The table II depicts the percentage of daily bathing practices of subjects. The increased percentage of daily bathing practices of subjects from 42.8% to 74.4% in pre exposure stage and post exposure stage respectively shows that health education was effective. However the results of control group, remained same as in pre exposure stage.

Table III shows the percentage of subjects who wash their hands before meals percentage of subjects of experimental group and control group at the pre exposure level responding "Yes" was 50% and 48.4% respectively and after implementation of health education percentage of subjects of experimental group was increased up to 76.4% while in the percentage of the subjects, of control group there was a little decrease (48%).

The above three tables, showed an increase in percentage of subjects of experimental group because of implementation of health education while in control group subjects no major increase or decrease in percentage was observed.

Study on hygiene and sanitation practices also noticed that the personal hygiene practices in general improved significantly due to the health education.²

Table IV depicts the percentage of subjects falling in different categories. When the impact of health education on hygiene practices was analyzed statistically (paired t test) by allotting scores to each practice, higher scores to correct practice and lower scores to incorrect ones. The result showed that the practices in general improved significantly in the experimental group due to education. Some improvements were seen in control group too.

In a study of 155 preschool children (24-60 months) from families of low socio economic status and attending crèches in villages around Chandigarh India were studied. Children received informal nutrition and health education relating to personal hygiene daily from crèche supervisor for 12 months. Appropriate teaching materials (song, rhymes, and role play) were developed specifically for this purpose. Checklist were used to evaluate the impact of nutrition and health education, children's knowledge of personal hygiene increased significantly in the lowest

Summary and Conclusion:

The present study was conducted to determine the efficacy of Nutrition and Health Education on the personal hygiene level of subjects. A total of 500 rural children were selected. 250 of them were considered as experimental group while 250 were as control group. Nutrition and Health Education was given only to the mothers of subjects of experimental group. The result showed a significant increase in personal hygiene level of experimental group when compared to that of the control group. It shows that effect of Nutrition and Health Education was positive on personal hygiene practices of subjects.

Thus, Nutrition and Health Education could be a tool to combat the causes of malnutrition in rural area. So, along with different health programmes, Nutrition and Health programmes should also be increased specially in rural areas.

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