

A COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG INTER UNIVERSITY WOMEN PLAYERS OF ANDHRA PRADESHIN NUTRITIONAL AWARENESS FOR HEALTH, FITNESS AND PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The foremost aim of physical education has been to inculcate a healthy mind in a healthy body. The aim of this study was to find out the nutritional awareness among interuniversity women players in Andhra Pradesh. To achieve the purpose of the study, the investigator developed an awareness questionnaire consisting of 25 statements and administered among 50 women interuniversity players of different disciplines. The administered questionnaire has the four dimensions for assessing the nutritional awareness. Each statement was responded by the respondents for a 5 point scale, strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree. The score for each of the dimensions were discussed as positive (those who strongly agreed and agreed) and negative (those who strongly disagreed and disagreed). The results presented on four different dimensions on nutritional awareness of women interuniversity players proved that the players have adequate awareness on nutrition and helpful for general health, however they do not believe that nutrition would tone up muscles and specific food would help to improve specific fitness. Further the women players were not aware that proper nutrition could improve performance of them as revealed by their responses. It was concluded that the importance of nutritional awareness among women players must be emphasized and popularized so that they could follow suitable nutritional habits for their all round development.

Key Words: Nutrition, Awareness, Women Players

I. INTRODUCTION

Nutritional deficiency is almost impossible to avoid in these modern times. With our busy lifestyle, the ever-tempting convenience of fast food, it is now very difficult to enjoy excellent daily nutrition. The foremost aim of physical education has been to inculcate a healthy mind in a healthy body. Our body is indeed an instrument satisfying all our needs. Its maintenance and upkeep has always been a serious concern of formal education. It finds expression as health education and organisation of games and sports. Players always tend to improve their performance through vigorous physical activities and training and do not give more attention for their nutritional food habits. Women players were found to be more conservative than men players in taking nutritional food.

Formulated theoretical background made by Melissa C. Mullinix (2003) stated that female soccer players reported an energy intake of 34 kcal/kg body weight (total 2015 kcal/day). The contribution of protein, fat and carbohydrate to total energy intake were 15%, 30% and 55%, respectively. Dietary intakes of vitamins D and E were less than two-thirds of the recommendations and intake of all minerals was greater than two-thirds of the recommendations. The self-reported health status suggests that this was a healthy group of female athletes. Responses to the nutrition attitude questions suggest that these athletes may benefit from appropriate education regarding the role of nutrients in health and performance. From a review of energy intake of male and female athletes in different sports, Burke *et*

al (2001) concluded that the energy intake of female athletes, expressed relative to body mass, is about 70% of that of their male counterparts. This can be explained by the lower intensity, frequency and duration of the training programmes of most female athletes. Many studies, however, report that some athletes seem to be in negative energy balance, and such observations seem to apply more often to female athletes than to their male counterparts: these observations and the potential explanations have been reviewed in detail by Loucks (2004). It does seem that some female athletes are in precarious energy balance, and maintain a low body mass and low body fat content by prolonged energy restriction, including some periods of negative energy balance. This is not unique to female athletes, in many societies women are under greater pressure to maintain a low body fat content. At a time when the prevalence of obesity is increasing rapidly, some parts of the population are moving in the opposite direction. In a comprehensive review of match activities, patterns of play and energy demands of both training and match play, Bangsbo *et al* (2006) were able to present little information on the female player. There also seem to be rather few data on the energy intakes of female players and most of those are based on short term measurements (typically three days) using household measures to estimate portion sizes that were then recorded in a food diary. The food intake, especially nutritional food intake depends on an individual awareness and attitude. And in these circumstances, this research is devoted to find out the nutritional awareness among interuniversity women players in Andhra Pradesh.

II. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the purpose of the study, the investigator developed an awareness questionnaire consisting of 25 statements and administered among 50 women interuniversity players of different disciplines. The administered questionnaire has the following four dimensions

Table I: Dimensions of Nutritional Awareness and Statements Numbered

Dimension	Total No of Statements	Statements Numbered
Awareness on Nutrition	6	8, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25
Nutrition for General Health	4	3, 5, 10, 16
Nutrition for Fitness	7	1, 4, 6, 9, 17, 21, 24
Nutrition for Performance	8	2, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19

Each statement was responded by the respondents for a 5 point scale, strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree. The score for each of the dimensions were discussed as positive (those who strongly agreed and agreed) and negative (those who strongly disagreed and disagreed).

III. RESULTS

Table 2: Analysis of Responses on Awareness on Nutrition Dimensions

STT.NO	DESCRIPTION	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE	
		No	%	No	%
8	One must take at least three liters of water a day.	46	92	0	0
18	Players must not take fatty food	33	66	10	20
20	In order to reduce fat one should take balanced diet	46	92	4	8
22	Drinking milk daily helps build strong bones.	28	56	7	14
23	Vegetarians are healthier than non vegetarians.	36	72	11	22
25	Nutritional Food intake must be increased with increase in physical activity.	10	20	24	48

The results presented in Table II proved that the inter university level women players have fairly good nutritional awareness more than 66% to 92% for statements 8, 18, 20, 22, and 23. There was negative tendency for the statement “Nutritional Foot intake must be increased with increase in physical activity” as most of the women feel that increased intake corresponding to physical activity would make them fatter.

Table 3: Analysis of Responses on Nutrition for General Health Dimensions

STT.NO	DESCRIPTION	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE	
		No	%	No	%
3	Proper balanced diet would maintain health	46	92	4	8
5	Nutritional foods helps to decrease diseases	41	82	9	18
10	Food in consultation with dietician would be helpful to maintain health	29	58	21	42
16	Asana would not help in maintaining good health.	46	92	4	8

The results presented in Table III proved that the inter university level women players have positive tendency that Nutrition and nutritional habits are for general health and the obtained percentages ranged from 58% to 92%..

Table 4: Analysis of Responses on Nutrition for Fitness

STT.NO	DESCRIPTION	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE	
		No	%	No	%
1	A Player must be aware of the benefits of nutritional habits	50	100	0	0
4	Nutrition contributes for toning up muscles	5	10	40	80
6	Heredity plays a role in health of an individual.	36	72	9	18
9	Specific nutritional foods help specific fitness	4	8	34	68
17	Health status should be measured for every player.	43	86	4	8

21	Every player must have nutritional awareness to improve physical fitness	34	68	16	32
24	BMI calculation for every player is needed for nutritional supplementation	32	64	11	22

Though all the players (100%) positively responded for “A player must be aware of the benefits of nutritional habits, most of them, that is 80% and 68% were not in agreement with the statement that “nutrition contributes for toning up muscles” and “Specific nutritional foods help specific fitness” respectively.

Table 5: Analysis of Responses on Nutrition for Performance

STT.NO	DESCRIPTION	POSITIVE		NEGATIVE	
		No	%	No	%
2	Nutrition contributes for more energy	26	52	24	48
7	Anemic is due to lack of nutrition	19	38	15	30
11	Nutrition is directly related to physical fitness	17	34	30	60
12	Specific nutrition would improve performance	34	68	12	24
13	Nutrition is directly related to improved metabolism	50	100	0	0
14	Lack of nutrition would affect performance	9	18	38	76
15	Iron supplementation improves strength	41	82	9	18
19	Protein supplementation improves muscular strength	13	26	30	60

Though all the players (100%) positively responded for “Nutrition is directly related to improved metabolism”, most of them, do not believe that nutrition can contribute for the improved performance as 60% responded negatively for “Nutrition is directly related to physical fitness”, 76% responded negatively for “Lack of nutrition would affect performance” and 60% negatively responded for “Protein supplementation improves muscular strength”.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The results presented on four different dimensions on nutritional awareness of women interuniversity players proved that the players have adequate awareness on nutrition and helpful for general health, however they do not believe that nutrition would tone up muscles and specific food would help to improve specific fitness. Further the women players were not aware that proper nutrition could improve performance of them as revealed by their responses. The findings of this study are in agreement with the findings of Loucks (2004) that some athletes seem to be in negative energy balance, and such observations seem to apply more often to female athletes than to their male counterparts. It was concluded that the importance of nutritional awareness among women players must be emphasized and popularized so that they could follow suitable nutritional habits for their all round development.

V. REFERENCES

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