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FOOD HABITS OF DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS OF ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN SAMASTIPUR DISTRICT, BIHAR

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Nutritional status of adolescents of developing countries like India is poorer as compared to developed countries. There are various factors which affect adolescent's health and nutritional status directly or indirectly such as inadequate nutrition, lack of awareness about health and nutrition, early marriage, high migration rate etc.

In Bihar, adolescent girls are suffering from serious health problem due to socio economic conditions, nutrition and gender discrimination. According to National Nutrition Monitoring Bureau (2003), in the rural area more than 40-50 per cent girls have been reported to be undernourished and iron deficiency anaemia is about 70 per cent (jaysree 2017).

Analysis of food habits helps in understanding the trend and in knowing the demand and supply gaps of food in the state. It also throws light on the nutritional aspects and helps in promoting certain required foods among the citizens.

Food Habits of Adolescent Girls

Study was carried out on 15-19 years age group of adolescent girls. Total number of adolescent girls was 100 and they were classified into three different groups' i.e. upper class (78), middle class (14) and lower class (8). Data in (Table 1) implied that out of total 100 respondents, 64 per cent of the respondents were non-vegetarian in each income class. Remaining respondents were vegetarian and ova-vegetarian 27 and 9 per cent respectively. Regarding frequency of skipping meal, it was found that majority of respondents were missing breakfast (53%) than lunch (37%) and dinner (10%). It showed that 52.56, 37.18 and 10.26 per cent adolescents belonged to lower class family who were missing breakfast, lunch and dinner respectively, while 50, 35.71 and 14.29 per cent of middle class adolescents were

missing breakfast, lunch and dinner respectively. Whereas 62.5 and 37.5 per cent respondents of upper class group missed breakfast and lunch respectively. Majority (53%) of respondents preferred fast food daily in each income class. Only nine per cent adolescents ate fast food on rarely basis. Overall 26 per cent adolescents were eating fast food on alternate days whereas 12 per cent selected subjects preferred fast food outside home once in a week.

The results of current investigation are supported by Kumari (2012) who presented her study in adolescent girls from different income groups in Patna, Bihar, where fast food consumption and breakfast skipping was assessed. The study implicated that almost every adolescent girls consumed fast foods. However, the selection of food items was strongly dependent on different income groups. Although, skipping breakfast and snacks was also more in adolescent girls.

Table 1: Food habits of selected adolescent girls

S.No.	Particulars	Socio economic groups						Overall N= 100	
		Lower class n=78		Middle class n= 14		Upper class n= 8		F	%
		F	%	F	%	F	%		
Food habits									
1	Vegetarian	21	26.92	4	28.57	2	25.00	27	27.00
2	Non-vegetarian	51	65.39	9	64.29	4	50.00	64	64.00
3	Ova-vegetarian	6	7.69	1	7.14	2	25.00	9	9.00
TOTAL		78	100.00	14	100.00	8	100.00	100	100.00
Meal skip									
1	Breakfast	41	52.56	7	50.00	5	62.5	53	53.00
2	Lunch	29	37.18	5	35.71	3	37.5	37	37.00
3	Dinner	8	10.26	2	14.29	-	-	10	10.00
TOTAL		78	100.00	14	100.00	8	100.00	100	100.00
Desire to eat fast food									
1	Rarely	6	7.69	2	14.29	1	12.5	9	9.00
2	Daily	45	57.69	5	35.71	3	37.5	53	53.00
3	On alternate days	20	25.64	4	28.57	2	25	26	26.00
4	Once a week	7	8.98	3	21.43	2	25	12	12.00
TOTAL		78	100.00	14	100.00	8	100.00	100	100.00

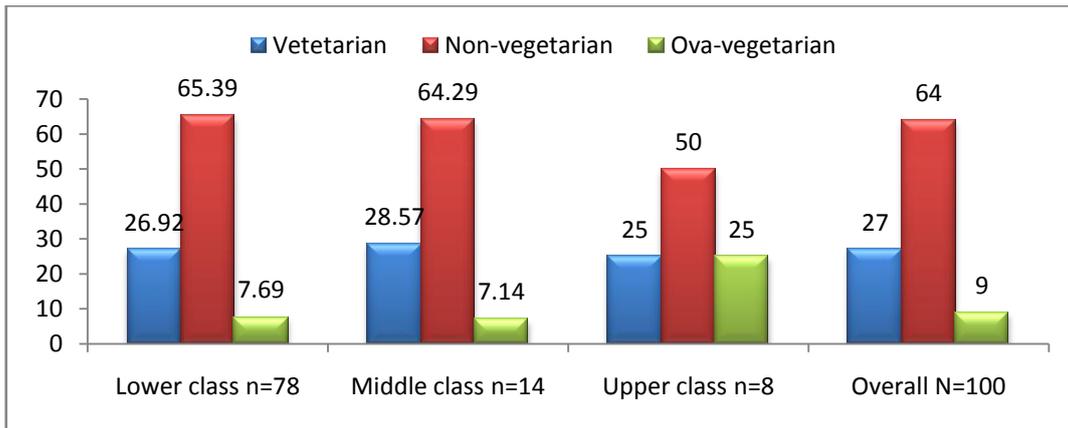


Fig 1: Percentage distribution of the respondents by their food habits

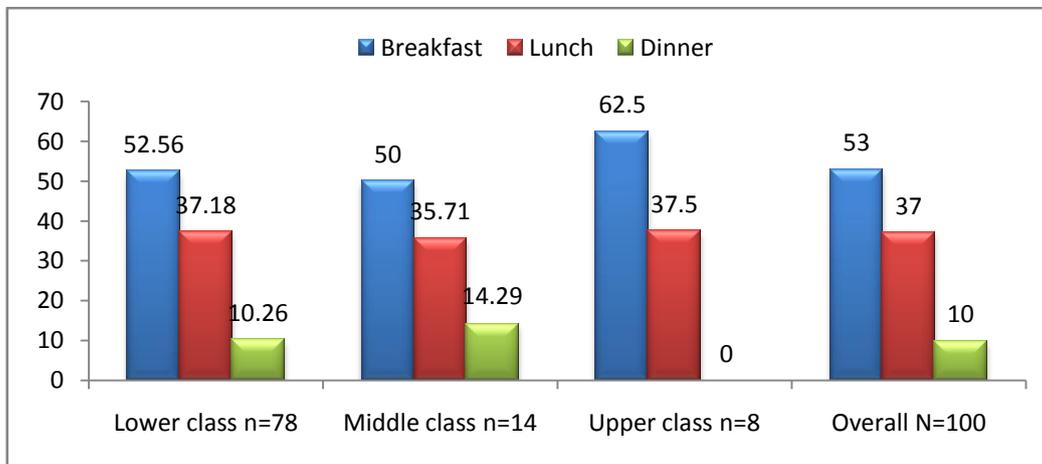


Fig 2: Percentage distribution of skipping meal by the respondents

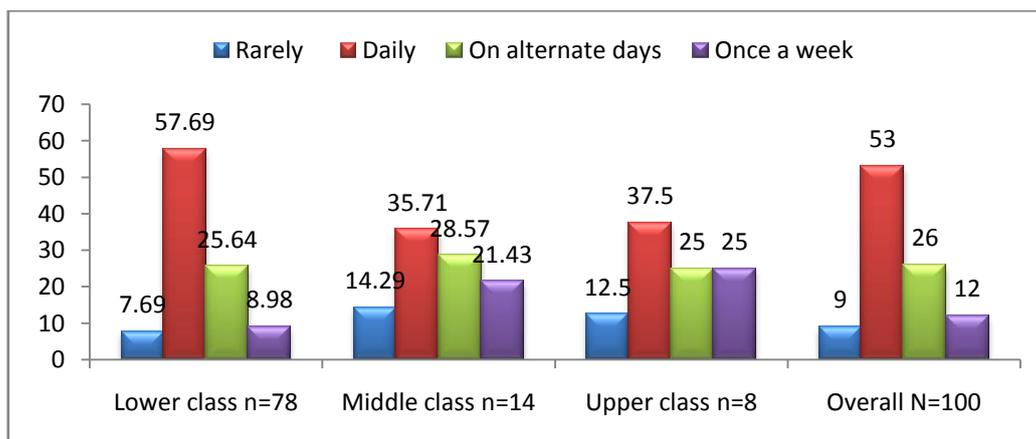


Fig 3: Percentage distribution of consumption of fast food by the respondents

Conclusion

It was observed that almost every adolescent girl in each economic group preferred consuming fast foods as compared to any other food groups. Skipping breakfast and snacks was also more in those selected girls. Most of the girls of every income class preferred tea and carbonated beverage on daily or alternative basis. Average daily intake of food stuffs and nutrients by respondents was very less in comparison as per the required recommended values. It was also showed that micro nutrients especially iron, folic acid, vitamin c and calcium were minimally included by each income group respondents in their daily diet. Among all food groups, milk and milk products, pulses, green leafy vegetables and fruits were less consumed by respondents of every socio-economic group. It was observed that the poor nutritional status of adolescent girls was found low in each income group irrespective of their class.

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