RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY ON KNOWLEDGE REGARDING NORMAL GROWTH AMONG MOTHERS OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Today's children are tomorrow's citizen. A healthy child is a priceless asset of the country. The normal growth of a child is dependent on the knowledge of their parents, especially of their mothers. Growth is nothing but the physical maturation of the child. During childhood, growth is a complex process. Unless better understood, parents feel anxious and can't deal with it. **Methodology**: A descriptive- cross sectional study was undertaken to assess the knowledge of mothers of school children, Nellore. The sample size was 200 mothers of school children and the Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used for selection of the subjects. Semi structured questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge of mothers. **Results:** The results regarding knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth revealed that with regard to knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth 25 (12.5%) have poor knowledge,106 (53%) have average knowledge, 69 (34.5%) have adequate knowledge. With regard to socio-demographic variables, 89 (44.5%) were between 27-30 years, 70 (35%) studied higher secondary education, 101 (50.5%) had more than two children, 90 (45%) were private employees, 80 (40%) earn Rs.6500-9000, 134 (67%) were residing in rural area, 149 (74.5%) are non-vegetarians, 96 (49%) got information from relatives. **Conclusion:** The mothers of school going children have inadequate knowledge regarding normal growth.

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INTRODUCTION

Growth begins when a baby is conceived, and continues throughout life. It is a complex process, influenced by a variety of factors that are only beginning to be understood. Parents have to keep track of their children's growth in many ways. Parents often notice how quickly new clothes are outgrown, and also observe their child's size in relation to that of their classmates and playmates. If a child is not growing as expected or is lagging far behind classmates in size, most parents become concerned and seek the advice of their paediatrician. The first thing a concerned parent is likely to learn is that there is a wide range of "normal" for both height and weight, and the smallest child in the class may or may not have a medical problem relating to size. Not all short children have abnormal growth. There are about 2 million children in the United States who are shorter than 98% of children their age. Most of these boys and girls are normal in every way, but some have problems that can have long-lasting effects on their health and growth if they are not diagnosed and treated.

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Short stature is not the only cause for concern: A tall boy who stops growing needs an evaluation long before he stands out as the shortest child in his class. A child who "shoots up" to stand inches taller than his classmates usually is perfectly normal, but also may have a problem affecting growth. There is a wide range of normal for height and weight, and the parents have to know what is abnormal. This study is aimed at assessing the normal patterns of growth in children.

Statement of the Problem

A Study on Knowledge Regarding Normal Growth Among School Children at Nellore district

Objectives

- To Assess the knowledge regarding normal growth among mothers of school going children.
- To Associate the level of knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth with their socio demographic variables.

Assumptions

Mothers have some knowledge regarding normal growth.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in selected village at Nellore District. A sample size of 200 school going children mothers of (6-12 yrs) were selected by Non-Probability convenience sampling technique. Semi structured questionnaire was used to assess the knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth.

Criteria for sample selection

Inclusion criteria

- Mothers who are willing to participate.
- Mothers of children with 6 to 12 years of age group.
- Mothers who know Telugu or English.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Mothers who are not willing to participate in the study.
2. Mothers who don't know Telugu or English.

Description of the Tool

Structured Questionnaire to assess the knowledge of mothers regarding Normal growth. It consists of 44 items.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was done for a period of 4 weeks after obtaining the written permission from the mothers, Structured questionnaire was administered to assess the knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth. It took 30 min to collect the data from each mother and the information book let was given to the mothers.

Plan for Data Analysis

Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics.

Descriptive statistics

- frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables
- Mean & standard deviation

Inferential statistics

- chi-square test to find association with knowledge of mothers.

RESULTS

Table 1 Shows with regarding knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth revealed that with regard to knowledge of mothers regarding to normal growth 25 (12.5%) had poor knowledge, 106 (53%) had average knowledge, and 69 (34.5%) had adequate knowledge. Table 2, Shows that with regard to the level of knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth, mean and standard deviation of poor level of knowledge are 16.2 and 8.1 respectively , for average level of knowledge 22.4 and 11.2 and for adequate level of knowledge they are 26 and 13.
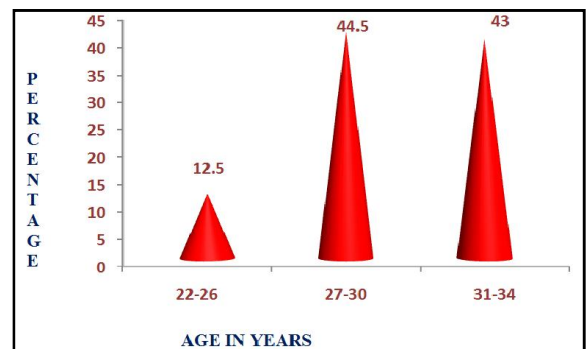

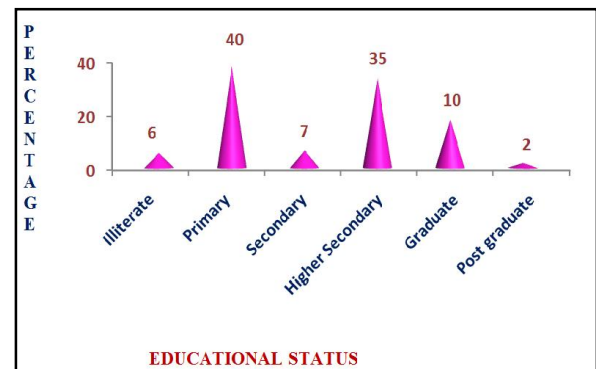Fig.1. Percentage distribution of mothers based on the age

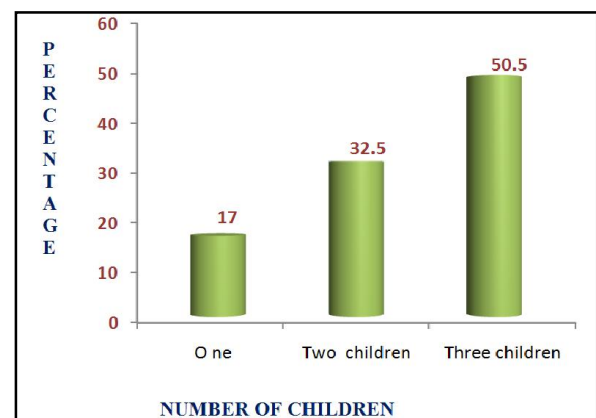Fig. 2. Percentage distribution of mothers based on the Educational status

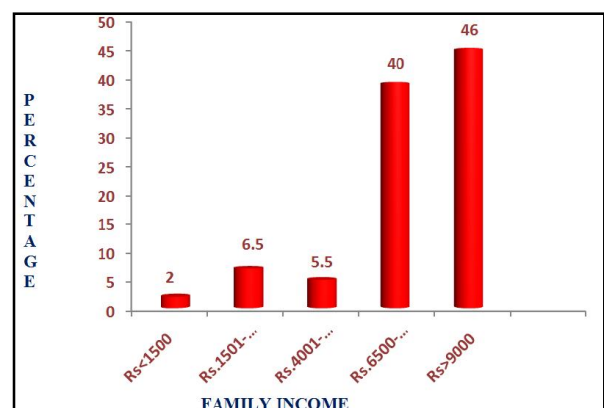Fig.3Percentage distribution of mothers based on number of children

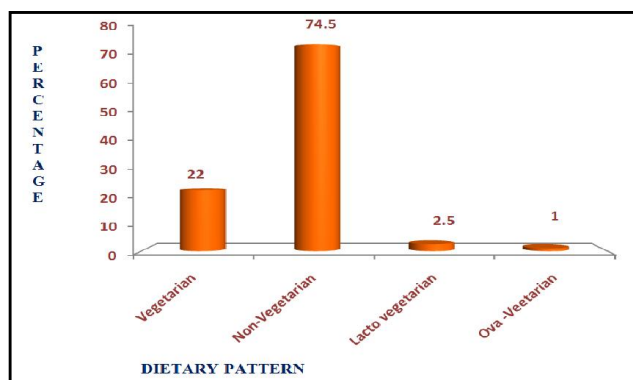Fig. 4. Percentage distribution of mothers based on family income

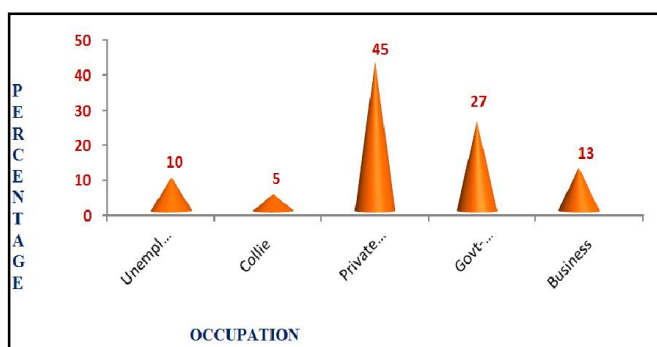**Fig. 5. Percentage distribution of mothers based on Dietary Pattern**

Fig. 6. Percentage distribution of mothers based on Occupation
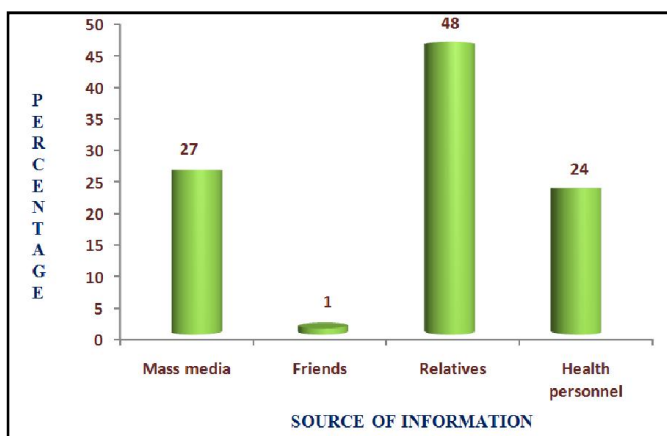

Fig. 7. Percentage distribution of mothers based on Source of information

DISCUSSION

The findings are discussed based on the demographic characteristics, objectives of the study.

Description about demographic data

Among 200 samples, In relation to age of mothers 89(44.5%) were between 27-30 years. In relation to education 70(35%) studied higher secondary education. In relation to Number of the children 101(50.5%) had more than two. In relation to occupation 90(45%) were private employee. In relation to Family income 80(40%) were earn salary of Rs.6500-9000.In relation to residence 134(67%) live rural children. In relation

to Dietary pattern 149(74.5%) were non-Vegetarians. In relation to Source of information 96(49%) got information from relatives.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of mothers regarding normal growth (N=200)

S.No	Level of knowledge	(f)	(%)
1.	Poor Knowledge	25	12.5
2.	Average knowledge	106	53
3.	Adequate Knowledge	69	34.5
	Total	200	100

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth

S.No	Level of knowledge	Mean	Standard deviation
1.	Poor Knowledge	16.2	8.1
2.	Average knowledge	22.4	11.2
3.	Adequate Knowledge	26	13

Table 3. Associate the level of knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth with their sociodemographic variables (N=200)

S.No	Variable							Stats
1.	No.of children	9	4.5	38	19	13	6.5	C=205
	a)First child	7	3.5	14	7	12	6	T=102
	b)Second child	9	4.5	12	6	44	22	df=4
	c)Third child							S***
								P=.001
2.	Dietary Pattern	5	2.5	24	12	15	7.5	C=205
	a)Vegetarian	18	9	79	39.5	52	26	T=102
	b)Non-Vegetarian	1	0.5	3	1.5	1	0.5	df=6
	c)Lacto-Vegetarian	1	0.5	-	-	1	0.5	S***
	d)Ova -Vegetarian							P=.001
3.	Family Income	1	0.5	2	1	1	0.5	C=0.16
	a)Rs.1500	3	1.5	6	3	4	2	T=15.5
	b)Rs.1501-4000	2	1	4	2	5	2.5	df=8
	c)Rs.4001-6500	9	4.5	46	23	25	12.5	NS
	d)Rs.6500-9000	10	5	48	24	34	17	
	e)Rs.>9000							

Findings related to knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth

Table 1 shows with regard to knowledge of mothers regarding to normal growth 25(12.5%) had poor knowledge, 106 (53%) had average knowledge, and 69 (34.5%) had adequate knowledge. Mahima shaka (2013) conducted a study to assess the relationship between maternal nutritional knowledge in childcare practices and growth of children living in impoverished rural communities. This was an analytical cross-sectional study which covered a random sample of 991 children of aged 6-12 years. Multivariate analysis showed that, after adjusting for potential confounders, there was a significant positive association between the childcare knowledge index and mean HAZ ($\beta=0.10$, p=0.005) but was not associated with mean WHZ.

The strength of association increased among women of high socioeconomic status ($\beta=0.15$, p=0.014) but there was no significant association among women of low socioeconomic status. Increase in maternal childcare knowledge may contribute significantly to child's nutritional status in Ghana if there is concurrent improvement in socioeconomic circumstances of women living in deprived rural communities.

Association of level of knowledge of mothers regarding normal growth with their socio demographic variables

Table 3 shows there is a significant association between level of knowledge regarding normal growth with occupation, dietary pattern and number of children. And there is no association with age of the mother, education, Family income and source of information. Kaur Supreet (2008) conducted a study to examine the effectiveness of dietary treatment in children with overweight on the basis of thorough analysis of their state of nutrition, method of nutrition and eating habits and the impact of other environmental factors. The sample size was 236 aged 3-15 yrs. The study indicated significant correlation between the children's overweight and mother's level of education and father's overweight. Overweight in children is connected with familial and environmental factors, including incorrect eating habits.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the mothers of school going children have poor knowledge regarding normal growth. There is a need for creating an awareness among regarding normal growth.

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