Nutritional status of adolescent girls irrespective of socio-economic and ethnic background of Jorhat district, Assam

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ABSTRACT

A study was undertaken with an aim of assessing the nutritional status of Assamese adolescent girls from Jorhat district, Assam. A sample of 450 adolescent girls within 10-18 years was drawn proportionately at the ratio of 1:1.5:1.5:1 from tribal, non-tribal rural and urban and tea garden labourer groups. Background information was recorded with a standardized schedule. Assessment of nutritional status was done through standard anthropometric (height and weight), biochemical (haemoglobin estimation) and diet survey (24 h recall) procedures. Results showed that mean heights and weights of the girls ranged between 135.62 cm to 153.17 cm and 27.36 kg to 46.44 kg respectively and were lower than ICMR standards (138.90 cm to 157.5 cm and 33.58 kg to 49.92 kg, respectively). The average haemoglobin level was below the WHO standard (12 g/dl) and ranged between 9.60 g/dl to 10.65 g/dl indicating high prevalence of iron deficiency anaemia among this population. Average cereal consumption found to be “adequate” to excess level of BDR (322.5 g to 398.75 g against 320 g to 350 g of BDR), while intake of pulses and green leafy vegetables were “very low” (<80% BDR). Energy intake ranged from “fair” (>90% of RDA) to excess level of RDA and protein intake ranged between “low” (80-93% of RDA) to “fair” level while iron intake was “very low” (<80% of RDA) for all girls across all ages. Thus, it could be concluded that the nutritional status of adolescent girls was not at par with national standards.

Key words: Adolescent girl, Nutritional status, Anthropometry, 24h recall, BDR, RDA