

## AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM TO INVESTIGATE GIRLS FOOD HABITS AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS

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### ABSTRACT

*The objective of this educational program is to assess the eating habits and nutritional status of girls, with a particular emphasis on correcting any possible deficiencies and encouraging good eating habits. The program tries to identify areas of improvement and create treatments that are specifically targeted by conducting a full study of dietary patterns, nutritional intake, and anthropometric measures via the use of a comprehensive analysis. By empowering girls with information about optimal nutrition and providing them with practical skills for choosing better food choices, the program seeks to improve the girls' overall well-being and lower the risk of nutrition-related health issues such as obesity and diabetes.*

**Keywords:** Educational, Investigate Girls, Food Habits, Nutritional

### INTRODUCTION

The people of Kota have been toiling away for many years, and they are now beginning to see the results of their arduous efforts. The city of Kota has perfected the skill of giving its numerous students with first-rate educational possibilities. These students have made the city their home and have achieved academic success due to their success. In terms of the things that they have done, girls have been just as amazing as boys they have been. In order to give excellent coaching for competitive examinations like as the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) and other medical entrance examinations, teachers in Kota have adequately prepared themselves.

Because of the increasing commercialization of coaching, Kota is a place in which going into the teaching profession is comparable to discovering a treasure trove. On a yearly basis, students from as far away as Mizoram, Meghalaya, Tripura, Assam, and West Bengal make their way to this metropolitan area in an attempt to achieve success on the most prestigious tests. This phenomenon has been going on for about two years. Students from all across India have evolved a broad variety of tastes as a result of their varied cultural origins and family histories, and there is an increasing need for dining halls that provide practically every cuisine. This is to meet the vast range of preferences that students have established. There are currently a great number of restaurants in Kota that offer cuisines that the locals have never heard of, and fast food franchises are competing to satisfy the voracious appetites of the students who live in the city. A peaceful small hamlet that wasn't even on the map of India has made news and is now nearly the dream of every one of the students who are serious about their studies.

Paying guest facilities and restaurants have made significant adjustments in response to shifting tastes and emerging trends in the realm of food and drink. As a result of the introduction of foods from different regions of the globe, there has been a variation that is not only subtle but also evident in the manner in which food is cooked and presented. There is a proliferation of restaurants all around the city, and each one of them serves a distinct variety of mouthwatering food or beverages. Recently introduced specialties and creative recipes are gradually gaining popularity in the city,



and it is possible that there have been modifications made to the presentation or the components as well. However, despite the fact that these benefits have come, they do so with a certain degree of mixed emotions. It is not true that all of the food that is being provided to the students is nutritious and worthy of consumption. Old oil, which has almost little nutritional value and may be highly hazardous, is occasionally included among the shabby things that are offered by those selling on the street. The food that is offered in the paid tourist sections as well as the cuisine that is served in the mess areas are both revolting and not worth eating on a regular basis. Not only is the dinner of poor quality, but the preparation is also deficient in terms of idealistic standards. In spite of this, the vast bulk of what is being provided seems to be satisfactory. Providing the kids with the highest possible level of boarding, accommodations, and food is something that Kota has done for them.

For the purpose of doing research on students and analyzing the characteristics that they possess, Kota would be a good site because to the huge number of students that are enrolled in the lac studies. As a result of the fact that the story centers on food, it is essential to keep the focus on food, the many types of food, and the impact that food has on the health of humans. When it comes to kids, who are at a formative age when trying new foods is the norm, it will be quite important to observe the dietary regulations that the city has in conjunction with them. In the beginning, some rough estimates may be provided based on the results of an interview that was performed at random with restaurateurs, business owners, and proprietors of mess establishments.

## **MESS AND RESTAURANTS**

Additionally, in addition to the expenditures associated with lodging, the nearly one lakh students who come in Kota each year are concerned about the availability of food. The vast majority of people like eating at the mess halls and the facilities that are reserved for paying guests; yet, there are a few individuals who are dissatisfied and continue to check out other restaurants. Due to the fact that they have been visiting there for about a month, it should not come as a surprise that the quality that they were expecting for is not there; in addition, they find the food to be uninteresting. As a means of immediately compensating for this, fast food restaurants and other dining establishments provide cuisine that is, of course, considerably superior than the meal that is served at home. An article that was published in a recent issue of Rajasthan Patrika<sup>1</sup> indicates that over the course of the last two years, the little neighborhood of New Rajiv Gandhi Nagar has seen the development of sixty-five new fast food restaurants. Because it contains a lot of oil and spices, this meal should not be consumed on a regular basis because it is harmful. Even while going out to eat is a lot of fun for children, it may turn out to be a significant financial strain for their families. Due to the fact that the majority of these students are dependent on little allowances from their parents, it is possible that they will not be able to afford to eat at fast food restaurants on a daily basis. Since they have been eating there for some time, the only option available is to continue cleaning up after them whenever they are there. Even at its worst, the quality of the ration is subpar because of the uncertain and substandard standards that it adheres to. One last thing to consider is that there is always the possibility that it is tainted. Due to the fact that they are required to rely on the food that is given by these facilities, the majority of students who live in hostels are faced with a significant risk of having gastrointestinal ailments.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Whether it be trains, buses, or taxis, the transportation industry has been seeing yet another significant change in recent years. Recent railway legislation has resulted in the addition of Kota



to the itineraries of a number of significant trains, and it has also been reported that a large number of new trains will soon be introduced, all of which will be charting their paths via Kota. This is also true for buses that travel between cities. In order to make it easier for students to travel to and from Kota, private operators have begun operating air-conditioned buses that go to and from Kota. These buses link major cities and towns in India. The remarkable transformations that have taken place are altogether attributable to the high-quality education that is being provided in this city. Twenty years ago, a city that was so quiet that it only had auto rickshaws operating on the roadways could today brag of big taxi operators such as "Ola" and "Taxi for sure" operating their services and generating a significant amount of money out of this town. In a word, the situation has improved in terms of the connection between roads and rails. This is a positive development. An area of Rajasthan that was long ignored on the map has recently emerged as a popular destination.

## **HOTELS**

Over the course of a few of decades ago, hotels in Kota were quite uncommon. Over the course of a distance of kilometers, there were just a handful of entries, and even less than that were submitted each month. The hotel sector in Kota flourished at the same time as coaching institutions were flourishing. Hotels and guest homes sprang up overnight in locations such as Dadabari, Talwandi, and Mahaveer Nagar, which are located on the outskirts of Kota and had been sparsely populated for years. These areas were created in order to accommodate the ever-increasing number of parents who relocated to Kota with their children. A hotel sector that was not even worth a few crores roughly twenty years ago has evolved into a company that is worth 150 crores annually, according to current estimates (which were cited in an article that was published recently in The Times of India). The parents may now visit the town and stay at these hotels while they are waiting for their children to be accepted into one of these colleges. This practice has become very handy for the parents. Consequently, a sector that was not present at all to begin with made tremendous strides forward in terms of development.

## **RETAIL STORES AND OUTLETS**

This significant inflow of more than one lakh students each year has, quite naturally, led to the establishment of retail outlets that cater to the day-to-day requirements of students. These stores sell items such as fruits, milk, wafers, cold beverages, mobile telephone recharges, common munchies, and other miscellaneous items. It is practically impossible to escape noticing the existence and significance of these stores in some crowded areas of Kota since there is such a large number of them in such areas. As a consequence of this progressive inflow of students throughout the years, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that a great number of young people who were previously without jobs have been able to get work that is suited for them. Retail businesses like this could be found in almost every corner and cranny of Kota, offering a wide variety of products, ranging from writing implements like pens, pencils, and notebooks to delicacies like wafers, chocolates, and milk. This retail sector, which caters to practically all of the requirements of students, has seen exponential growth over the course of the last ten years and is now a lucrative enterprise. The sort of audience that they are attracting and the amount of business that they are creating are sufficient signs of their expanding status, despite the fact that there is no specific number that can authenticate how much this retail sector genuinely is worth. As a result of the fact that they offer bread goods, milk products, patties, and samosas, these retail businesses also function as confectioners. The majority of products that are considered to be of regular significance are sold at these establishments. These products include soaps, shampoos, fragrances, mouthwash, toothpaste, shaving creams, and almost anything else that may be classified as toiletries. The fact that these retail establishments offer note books,



registers, pens, pencils, erasers, and practically all of the stationery supplies that students need on a daily basis is not the only thing that they sell. As a matter of fact, due to the manner in which these establishments have expanded in number, there is not a single residential neighborhood that is devoid of them. It is possible that every single lane and every single corner might brag of three to four retail outlets that attract roughly the same number of students into their establishments.

## **NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF ADOLESCENTS**

In addition to being more affected by their friends than by any kind of sound advice, the majority of these teenagers have an odd nutritional state. They are more influenced by external variables, such as their appearance and the views of their friends, when it comes to choice of food. To a lesser extent, they are concerned about the nutritional worth of the food that they eat. In the minds of these young women, their appearance has a great deal of significance, and as a result, they are compelled to disrupt their eating habits. They make changes to their diet according to their own whims and are under the impression that doing so would somehow improve their appearance. When they reach this age, their metabolic demands continue to increase on a daily basis, which causes their calorific requirements to rise as well. If they do not consume regular meals that are rich in nutrients, they make up for the lack of proper nutrition by eating dead junk such as burgers, pizzas, chocolates, and wafers, which contain an excessive amount of fats that are harmful to their physical health. Chocolates have been regarded as a significant health deterrent in a recent research that was cited in one of the most recent editions of TIME magazine. The study found that around 20 grams of chocolate are ingested on average by teenage females all over the globe. The majority of these young women's eating patterns are more likely to be the outcome of psychological causes than they are of physiological ones. The females are compelled to tailor their diets in order to appear attractive because of the pressures that they face from society.

There are a few other aspects that play a role in determining the nutritional health of a female. Including the fact that she is required to attend her lessons at unusual hours, which prevents her from eating a healthy meal at the time when she needs it the most. Some young women are brought up with the custom of eating breakfast at an early hour in the morning; however, if they are living at a hostel, they will have to deal with the fact that they will not be able to receive breakfast at such an early hour. Due to the fact that eating breakfast early in the morning provides a girl with the energy to maintain her attentiveness and agility throughout the day, this may have a significant influence on her life. As a result of the fact that the whole process of metabolism is reliant on time, even a little shift in the time at which the meal is served may have a negative influence on the life of it. It has been shown that the majority of these young ladies are either eating too little or occasionally consuming too much. It is quite uncommon to come across a situation that is fair. It is possible that the girls may have a variety of issues as a result of this unreasonable and unscheduled eating routine. They may even develop intestinal imbalances, which are difficult to correct if they continue over an extended period of time. As a result of the fact that they are unable to consume the food that they have been used to consuming for years, several young women are need to make significant adjustments to their lifestyles. In other cases, individuals can get addicted to consuming food that is excessively hot since it seems to be more satiating. However, this may result in irreversible damage to their digestive systems.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1. To study the perceptions of diet, attitude towards food, eating habits, family meals and food preferences to gain an insight into the eating behavior and practices

2. To study relationship between dietary pattern and family background of girls residing in hostels for coaching

## **MACRONUTRIENTS**

Due to the fact that these teenagers are at a stage of life in which their eating habits are the most unpredictable, it is reasonable to draw the conclusion that the food that they consume is completely out of balance and badly timed. This is in direct consequence of the fact that their parents do not intervene in a timely manner. It is not only the lack of punctuality in the intake of meals that is missing; it is also the lack of balance that may be discovered in the relative percentage of nutrients that they ingest. Nearly all of the essential elements are either substantially absent or completely absent, while some additional nutrients that are scarcely necessary beyond a certain level are present in enormous amounts. The signs and symptoms of the illnesses that people experience as a consequence of this lack of proportion are quite obvious to everyone who observes them. In terms of the macronutrients, such as carbs, lipids, and proteins, it has been shown that these teenagers have an insufficient percentage of these macronutrients, which causes them to have negative repercussions. "Dietary errors related to choice of food and hence macronutrients can spoil health adversely," Sukhneet Suri and Anita Malhotra, two famous nutritionists and writers, said in their best-selling book "Food Science, Nutrition and Safety," which was published by Pearson. This is a perfect example of how nutritional errors can have a negative impact on health. Given this, having an understanding of macronutrients is very necessary in order to maintain one's health and forestall the onset of illnesses. One of the most important points that the writers sought to make was that making the appropriate decisions with regard to these essential nutrients is the basis for an individual's health throughout the course of their lifetime. In a single day, the majority of the food that we eat is composed of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. To a significant degree, the structure or framework of our body is determined by the percentage of macronutrients that we consume regularly. To put it another way, the quantity of macronutrients that are present in our food has a significant impact on whether or not our bodies are lean, bulky, or beautifully muscular. Carbohydrates should ideally make up forty-five percent of our overall energy intake in a day. If there is a severe lack of this nutrient, a teenager may experience feelings of exhaustion. Carbohydrates serve as a source of fuel for the body. The majority of the activities that we engage in during the day, such as walking, reading, and running, are all powered by carbs. Certainly, fats are present in a significant quantity in the oils that we take on a daily basis, and they constitute the most delectable portion of the food that we consume in a single day. It is recommended that they be eaten in moderation. In a perfect world, fats would account for 35 percent of the total calories that we consume. Also, the optimal proportion of our overall calorie intake that should be comprised of proteins is twenty percent. Proteins are created by our body from amino acids, and this process assists us in performing the most important processes of our body.

## **Health Problems with Adolescents Arising Out of Lack of Proper Nutrition**

Living on one's own without the presence of one's parents provides unrestricted independence, but it also comes with a price. Keeping their health in excellent condition is a struggle for these young ladies, who are forced to go through a difficult situation. Unsanitary meals, tainted spices, old flour, and fruits and vegetables that have gone bad make it harder for the females to maintain their fitness level. By the time they have spent two years in Kota, they have either acquired a chronic illness or developed an infection that poses a risk to their lives. Both of these conditions threaten to put their livelihood in jeopardy. The vast majority of the meals that they take at



paying guest facilities, messes, and roadside sellers are completely filthy and lacking of critical vitamins. This progressively exposes them to the possibility of obtaining either an illness or a deficit of some key nutrient, which may have long-term consequences.

### **Missing Breakfasts:**

It is a well-known truth that a significant number of young women have a tendency to develop the habit of missing breakfast because they do not find it to be to their liking and it is tasteless. This, in turn, causes them to be deprived of the carbohydrates that are necessary for their bodies to continue to work hard. Consequently, this causes individuals to become sluggish, which finally manifests itself in their academic performance. The same is true for meals that are not on a predetermined schedule and are irregular. Individuals who are hungry for extended periods of time are more likely to experience acidity, which may lead to the development of peptic ulcers if the condition is not addressed.

### **ANOREXIA NERVOSA**

Due to the fact that they are adolescents, they are somewhat more worried about their appearance. Being presentable and acceptable is considered to be the standard, which is what drives the girls to go on crash diets in order to maintain their attractiveness and slimness. One of the primary reasons why females place such a high value on being slender and gorgeous is because of the powerful influence of their peers. Their weight may decrease as a result of this, but more importantly, it causes them to become malnourished, which progressively has a negative impact on the quality of life they are now experiencing. There is a correlation between anorexia and symptoms such as dizziness and convulsions. If they do not get the appropriate nutrients, it may be very difficult for them to concentrate on their academics, which can have a negative impact on their mental health. Skipping meals can be also detrimental to their mental health. "Roughly one-third of young girls between the ages of 13 and 19 in urban India are languishing under self-inflicted starvation, which is causing some severe mental and physical traumas," was a statement that was cited pretty accurately in one of the most recent editions of "The Hindu." It is fine for these females to look nice while still being skinny so long as it does not interfere with their daily routine. However, the minute it begins to negatively impact their health, the situation becomes irreversible on their part. Weakness, with all of its worst consequences, might be the result of this. Therefore, the concept of being anorexic is detrimental to the health of females, which in turn renders them unable of performing the responsibilities that are required of them.

### **ANAEMIA**

Folic acid and iron are two essential minerals that are essential to the maintenance of red blood cells (RBCs) in the bloodstream. If a significant number of teenage girls who live in hostels do not have access to high-quality food that is rich in nutrients, then they will begin to lack certain essential minerals. Folic acid is claimed to be abundant in green leafy vegetables, some pulses, tomatoes, oranges, and the livers of certain animals. Folic acid may also be found in certain tomatoes. It is general known that living alone without parents comes with its own set of drawbacks. One of these drawbacks is that young girls do not have the opportunity to consume fruits and vegetables that are fresh, which leads to their slow development of anemia. In a recent edition of Outlook, it was stated in a manner that was fairly compelling that "Anaemia as a disorder affects as many as 85 percent of the girls under the age of 20 in major cities and towns of India." The majority of their meals are either prepared using harmful hydrogenated oil, the veggies that are used are often stale and have practically lost their nutritious value, and there is



either very little or no access to fruits.

It is also possible that their parents are not there to encourage kids to consume fresh fruits. A prolonged period of anemia may lead to the development of chronic anemia. This is a problem for adolescent females since they do not have access to high-quality meals. Even the mess halls where they eat do not provide them with fresh green leafy vegetables, which are essential at this age because they contain significant vitamins. Due to the fact that they do not consume these veggies, they are deprived of the essential roughage that allows them to maintain clean bowel movements and gives them a sense of agility and freshness. This may have a negative influence on their health. Furthermore, since they depend so heavily on junk food and roadside food, such as pizzas and burgers, teenage girls do not have the opportunity to consume a balanced diet. This causes them to be deficient in vitamin C, which lowers their immune and makes them more susceptible to contracting diseases. The same is true for vitamins that are essential to the development of the human body as a whole, such as vitamin B, which is not included in their typical meals since the food that they consume on a daily basis is not meeting the required standards. It is possible that it may not manifest itself as a symptom right away; but, in the long term, it may cause the girl to develop a condition that might be problematic, such as hair loss and skin rashes, both of which are connected to a deficiency in vitamin B.

## **DIABETES**

Diabetes, which is a metabolic illness, may be a significant cause of concern for young women, particularly those who are adolescents. One of the most prevalent medical conditions of our day is diabetes in children and adolescents, which is caused by the human body's inability to produce insulin in the appropriate amounts. Insulin is responsible for converting glucose into energy, and if there is an imbalance in the proportion of insulin to bodyweight, it might gradually make the body more prone to developing diabetes condition. As stated in a publication that is published on a global scale, the "American Diabetes Association" has said that they have discovered around 2,15,000 instances of diabetics who are younger than 20 years old in the United States of America. It has been discovered that they are suffering from type 1 diabetes, which is a condition that is prevalent among teenagers. Even malnutrition is thought to be a contributing factor in the development of diabetes. There are a number of variables that contribute to the development of diabetes in young women who reside in hostels. One of these reasons is the fact that they are exposed to a diet that is significantly out of balance. regulating one's food seems to be of the utmost significance in terms of regulating one's blood sugar levels. There is evidence that even changes in one's mental state may be a cause of diabetes. Obesity that is the consequence of overeating has the potential to lead to diabetes in the long term, as researchers have shown that obese females are more or less likely to be diabetic.

## **EYE AILMENTS**

Due to the fact that the eyes are the most sensitive to any irritation that may be generated, young females between the ages of 16 and 25 are equally susceptible to a variety of eye care conditions. It is possible that one of the most significant factors that causes the eyes to suffer from discomfort is the continuous use of mobile devices for talking and texting, as well as the prolonged use of computer displays for extended periods of time from young people. In addition, a lack of vitamin A is thought to be one of the primary factors that contribute to the discomfort experienced by the eyes. In fact, a deficiency in vitamin A is directly responsible for the development of poor vision. It is possible that as a result of the fact that the majority of these girls do not have access to regular milk and milk products, they may develop myopia or short-sightedness, or they may cause an existing issue to become even more severe. Similarly, the



same may be said about veggies. However, the majority of young women do not have the opportunity to eat vegetables such as cauliflower, which is an abundant source of vitamin A. Recently, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Optometric Association came out with a viewpoint that blames young girls for their excessive use of cosmetics. It has been shown that some cosmetics, such as mascara and eye shadows, may induce dryness and allergy in the eyes. When applied to the eyes, even eye liners, talcum powders, and facial creams have the potential to cause significant discomfort.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this educational program has a great deal of potential to improve the eating habits of girls and to meet the nutritional requirements that they have. We are able to enable girls to make educated decisions that are beneficial to their growth, development, and long-term health if we raise knowledge about nutrition and provide individualized treatments. We are able to establish a supportive atmosphere that is favorable to better eating habits among girls via collaborative efforts that include educators, healthcare experts, and community stakeholders. This will result in an improvement in the girls' quality of life and will promote a brighter future. In addition, this curriculum emphasizes the need of taking a holistic approach in order to address the myriad of variables that influence the eating habits and nutritional health of young women. Interventions should not just concentrate on dietary consumption; they should also take into account socio-economic issues, cultural influences, and environmental determinants that have an impact on the food choices and eating habits of individuals or groups. The development of solutions that are more effective and durable in promoting optimum nutrition and health among girls is possible if we take a holistic approach to addressing the myriad of issues involved. The implementation of this instructional program is a significant step toward ensuring the nutritional well-being of young women, therefore setting the groundwork for their continued health and empowerment throughout their lives. A future in which all girls have access to the resources and support they need to flourish physically, intellectually, and emotionally can be achieved via continued research, cooperation, and activism. We can continue to improve and build upon these efforts, eventually working toward a future in which all girls have access to these resources and support.

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