Chapter 20

A College Reaching Out to Society: A Practical Model for Knowledge Dissemination

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ABSTRACT

The article is based on the study of nutritional status of girl students attending an Urban College in Kolkata, India. Their nutritional status was evaluated through their food chart, weight and height measurement, their family socio-economic condition and female nutritional condition under disproportionate male female ratio present in the family. The data collection was made through direct interaction and also through questionnaire containing information sheet to learn the regular diet chart of the respondents, number of members in the family and family income. The arrangement for occasional and need based involvement of medical practitioner was made to investigate significant cases of special nature. The overall aim of the research was to set up a cue to the family socio-economic condition and its correlation with women nutritional position. The data collection method was innovative because it was conducted following parallel interaction method through students to students interaction in the class room situation. The data collectors included the girl students from Human Rights Cell, and the respondents included the willing girl students from the basic streams. The method of information gathering was evolved through direct interaction and also through questionnaire. The research aimed at imbibing nutritional awareness along with the nutritional analysis of the students (both the investigators and the investigated) through interaction and through discussion awareness. The awareness part aimed to inform the young women about their nutritional position and the need for their better nutritional condition as the future mothers. The uniqueness of the program includes data collection and information dissemination through peer group interaction. The overall outcome was to reach out to the women students with low cost nutritional chart and awareness against junk food with fitness diet chart prescribed by the medical practitioner. As a Best Practice Measure, the proposed research cum nutritional awareness program aimed to adopt
corrective and remedial measure for students’ general health. To find out the causes and consequences of sudden illness (attack of pain, fits and other ailments) as an outcome of nutritional deficiency detected among them through nutrition study and general health trend as observed from daily incidence. The overall aim of the nutritional study was to aware the students regarding their rights to stay healthy and receive proper attention of their nutritional condition as a matter of their rights. The overall aim of the study is to help the young women to stay healthy as a matter of their rights...

INTRODUCTION

The case study presented in this article is based on ethnographic/Anthropometric studies done on two consecutive years’ survey in a College, under the University of Calcutta, India. The author of the article through students to students interaction tried to gather information (both formally and informally) on the nutritional status of the College going girls’ students of Kolkata and its peripheries. Based on analytical data collected by the college students (as surveyor) from the willing respondent students (surveyed), the present article made an effort to report the nutritional status of the group of girl students (as respondents) and through their food chart, weight and height measurement and through stage-wise involvement of the environmentalist, psychoanalyst, medical practitioners, the author herself tried to evaluate their nutritional status and also through regular interaction tried to aware them on the need for better nutrition for better living as the citizens of the country and as the future mother of the healthy citizens of the country.

The Stage-wise data collection through questionnaire and also through informal interaction was done by the students of Human Rights cell engaged in the research pursuit, as a part of their academic effort. However, the orientation of the respondent students from both sides (surveyor and the surveyed) were the responsibility of the research team under the supervision of the author, the-then Principal of the College. The evaluations of the questionnaires were done by the author in collaboration with the team of faculties involved in the project. However, in case of practical health questions, the medical practitioner was called upon and involved for preliminary medical checkup and medical advice, (example: detection in the causes of high obesity or disproportional height and weight measurement, their counseling and preparing their diet chart were done by him). In case of sudden stomach pain (which was one of the very common ailments among the girl students) medicine prescribed by the associated Medical practitioner at the preliminary stage but considering the severity of the problem, the students were shifted to the nearby Hospital for medical investigation at the advice of the Medical practitioner. The cases which were shifted to outpatient clinic of the Hospital were ultimately handed over to the families after preliminary health checkup. However the College authority always remained in touch of the families for impact study. The important information gathered through medical interaction was investigated time to time by the College authority.

The author, as the Principal of the College had been facing the problem of sudden illness of the students almost on regular basis. On enquiry, it was detected that, they had been coming to the College without taking food. Those who had been commuting from far corner of South 24 Parganas, were expected to come out of the house at 7 a.m. in the morning. They therefore stayed empty stomach for longer hour. Due to the irregularity in food intake, nutritional deficiency became a persistent problem to them. Besides this the general nutritional trend among the girl students of low income families became so prominent among them that most of them suffer from the other common ailments among them and they became