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KNOWLEDGE REGARDING WEEKLY IRON AND FOLIC ACID SUPPLEMENTATION AMONG NURSING STUDENTS

G. Bharatha Selvi*[1], A. Muthulakshmi[1], S. Florence Grace Angel[1]

[1*]Department of Community Health Nursing, Velammal college of Nursing, Madurai, Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT

Background: Anaemia is a major public health problem especially in adolescent age group because of its intergenerational impact. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, India launched the weekly iron and folic acid supplementation programme for adolescent girls and boys. **Aims and objective:** of the study was carried out to assess the knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation among nursing students. **Methods:** A descriptive study was conducted in selected private nursing college in Madurai. Fifty (50) first year Diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery (DGNM) student were selected and Self-structure knowledge questionnaire was used to collect the data. The study was carried out for a period of one week, the data, were organized, tabulated and analysed based on the objectives of the study. **Results:** A total of 50 students, 5 had adequate knowledge (10.41%), 40 had moderate knowledge (78.16) and 5 had adequate knowledge (10.41). **Conclusions:** The results of the present study indicate that only 5nursing students had adequate knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation.

KEYWORDS

Weekly Iron and folic acid supplementation (WIFS), Adolescent, Anaemia and Diploma in General Nursing and Midwifery (DGNM).

Author for Correspondence:

G. Bharatha Selvi,
Department of Community Health Nursing,
Velammal college of Nursing,
Madurai, Tamilnadu, India.

Email: kubendiranbharathi@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents in developing countries are exposed to nutritional challenges, and adolescent girls are more vulnerable to anaemia than boys. Studies showed that adolescent anaemia was the greatest nutritional problem encountered in developing countries. Iron deficiency anaemia is highly prevalent in less developed countries, but also remains a noticeable problem in developed countries, where other forms of malnutrition have already been virtually eliminated. Iron deficiency is not the only cause of

anaemia; however, anaemia is prevalent where; iron deficiency is usually the most common cause. Anaemia is a major preventable public health problem. Globally, anaemia affects 1.62 billion, which corresponds to 24.8% of the population.

Government of India launched the universalisation of WIFS programme all over the country in 2012 targeting 108 million adolescent girls and boys both. School going Adolescent Girls and Boys (6th to 12th classes) and Adolescent Girls who are not in school are the target groups. The adolescent girls and boys in the schools are reached by teachers and out of school adolescents by the Anganwadi workers. Iron and folic acid tablets are given on a fixed day in a week for the 52 weeks in a year to be consumed under direct supervision. Weekly Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation Program In 2013, government of India under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Weekly Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation (WIFS) Program under RMNCH+A approach to deal with the challenge of high prevalence and incidence of anaemia amongst adolescent boys and girls.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-3, more than 55 percent of both adolescent boys and girls are anaemic. Adolescent girls in particular are more vulnerable to anaemia due to duel effect of rapid growth of the body and loss of blood during menstruation. In India, the highest prevalence of anaemia is reported between the ages 12-13 years, which also coincides with the average age of menarche. During adolescence, iron deficiency anaemia can result in impaired physical, mental, cognitive development, reduced work performance and lower concentration on daily tasks.

The strategies for intervention are administration of supervised weekly IFA tablet containing 100mg of elemental iron and 500mcg of Folic acid usinga fixed dayapproach i.e. on Monday, screening of target groups for moderate / severe anaemia and referring them to an appropriate health facility, biannual de-worming with Albendazole (400mg) tablet, and health education for improving dietary intake and prevention of intestinal worm. Keeping all these words in mind an attempt has been made by this study to know the current status of WIFS programme with following objectives-to assess the knowledge of WIFS programme among the nursing students.

Statement of the problem

A study to assess the knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation among nursing students in selected college in Madurai.

Objectives

Assess the knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation among nursing students.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A descriptive research design was used to conduct the study. The study sample comprised of 50i year DGNM students in Velammal School of Nursing by convenient sampling techniques. The researcher used the following instrument for collecting the data.

Tool

The tool comprised of two parts.

SECTION A: Demographic Variables

SECTION B: Self-structured Questionnaires to assess the knowledge of weekly iron and folic acid supplements among DGNM fist year students.

For ensuring the content validity the instruments were given to different experts from field of nursing. Modification was made according to their opinion and suggestion of the experts and the reliability of the tool were determined.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis for demographic variables and level of knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation among I year DGNM students was performed and results were reported as numbers with frequency and percentage.

Section A: Frequency and percentage Distribution of demographic variables

Table No.1 Potrays the distribution of sample characteristics according to demographic variables and displays the frequency and percentage obtained. It indicated the majority of students (54.1%)26 were in the age of 18 years. With regard to gender the Majority 41(85.4%). With regard to place of residency the majority 26(54.1%) was in the rural area. Most of them 43(89.5%) Fathers studied school

education. Most of them 37(77%) Mothers studied school education. Most of them 24(50%) Father occupation is Agriculture. Most of them 32(66.6%) mother occupation is House wife.

Section B: Knowledge level of I Year DGNM Students regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation

Table No.2 depicts that A total of 50 students, 5 had adequate knowledge (10.41%), 40 had moderate knowledge (78.16) and 5 had inadequate knowledge (10.41) regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation.

Table No.1: Distribution of samples according to demographic characteristics (N=50)

S.No	Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age			
1	18 years	26	54.1%
2	19 years	17	35.4%
3	Above 20	15	31.2%
Gender			
4	Male	7	14.5%
5	Female	41	85.4%
Place of residency			
6	Rural	26	54.1%
7	Urban	22	45.8%
Father Education			
8	School education	43	89.5%
9	Post graduate	3	6.25%
10	Under graduate	2	41.6%
Mother Education			
11	School education	37	77.0%
12	Post graduate	8	16.6%
13	Under graduate	3	6.25%
Father Occupation			
14	Agriculture	24	50%
15	Business	9	18.7%
16	Private	15	31.25%
Mother Occupation			
17	Housewife	32	66.6%
18	Working women	16	33.3%

Table No.2: Distribution of sample according to knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplement among nursing student

S.No	Level of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1	Adequate	5	10.41%
2	Moderately Adequate	40	78.16%
3	Inadequate	5	10.41%

CONCLUSION

Findings revealed that majority of the students had moderate knowledge regarding weekly iron and folic acid supplementation among adolescents WIFS and health education is recommended for growth promotion among adolescent girls and boys especially who are underweight. Intervention program like health education, awareness program should be undertaken in order to gain the knowledge regarding Weekly Iron and Folic acid supplement.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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