

HEIGHT, WEIGHT AND MENARCHIAL AGE AND ITS ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS AMONG SELECTED ADOLESCENT GIRLS OF MARATHWADA REGION

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ABSTRACT

The nutritional status of selected adolescent girls from Marathwada region was assessed in the present study. A study was carried out in urban, rural and tribal places of Marathwada region of Maharashtra State to find out the socio-economic background, health and hygienic condition of selected population and for that different parameters used for the study were survey, assessment of anthropometry, biochemical assessment for haemoglobin content etc. The selected sample comprised of adolescent girls belonging to the age group 13-18 years. A total sample of 500 adolescent girls was selected randomly from urban (200), rural (200) and tribal (100) areas. The urban girls attained menarche mostly at 13 years of age and more percent of rural and tribal girls were attaining menarche at 14 years of age. The tribal girls recorded poor anthropometric measurements compared to urban and rural adolescents. Abdominal pain during menstruation was the most commonly observed problem. The living conditions were more hygienic in urban girls and more unhygienic in case of tribal girls. The haemoglobin values of selected adolescent girls were ranging between 8.72 ± 1.77 to 10.96 ± 0.91 . Mostly urban girls were having haemoglobin 11.0 gm/dl and found to be normal, whereas remaining girls were suffering with some or other degree of anaemia. The present study confirmed the existing relation between growth spurt and age at menarche.

Key words : Menarche, Adolescent, Attainment, Anthropometric measurement, Menstruation

The role of woman in social development has great significance. For healthy and dynamic Indian citizen, it is necessary to improve the overall status of adolescent girls. The most crucial segment of our population from the point of view of quality of our future generation are today's young girls who are just on the threshold of marriage and motherhood (Mane *et al.*, 1999). Adolescent girls are constituting nearly one tenth of the population and form an extremely important segment of our society. These girls need special care in view of their role in shaping the health and well being of the present as well as future generation (Anonymous 2000).

Several studies have shown that the adolescent growth spurt and age of menarche are influenced by the nutritional status during early adolescence. Menarche can be said as an important indicator of physiological development in females. Menarche is the end result of the sequence of events that proceed its onset i.e. attainment of peak height velocity and peak weight velocity. At puberty with the onset of menarche and in the absence of adequate dietary intake adolescent girls become highly

susceptible to anaemia. It is not surprising that more than 3/4th of Indian girls are anaemic (Kulin *et al.*, 1982). According to recent reports nearly 80 per cent of adolescent girls of 10-19 years of age were suffering with iron deficiency anaemia (Mane *et al.*, 1999; Kanani *et al.*, 2000 and Saibaba *et al.*, 2002).

METHODOLOGY

The nutritional status of selected adolescent girls from Marathwada region was assessed in the present study. Different parameters used for the study were survey, assessment of anthropometry, biochemical assessment for haemoglobin content etc.

A survey was carried out to find out the socio-economic background, health and hygienic condition of selected population through out Marathwada region.

A survey was carried out in selected urban, rural and tribal places of Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. The urban population was selected from different parts of Parbhani city, while rural population was selected from villages of Parbhani, Manvat and Jintur Taluka of Parbhani district. The tribal areas covered under the study were villages of Bhokar Taluka of Nanded district.

The selected sample comprised of adolescent girls