

## A cross sectional study on quantitative and qualitative food pattern of women of an urban slum of Varanasi

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■ **ABSTRACT :** The value of nutritional assessment is greatly enhanced when it is supplemented by an assessment of what people eat qualitatively and quantitatively. Special demands are made for increase amount of body building and protective nutrients during this period. Instead of this, women have received little investigative attention except during pregnancy and lactation. The objective of the study was to know the quantitative food intake by 24 hour recall methods in the study area and to find out consumption pattern for the qualitative value of food stuffs in women. This study was carried out in urban slum area of Varanasi. The approaches adopted for the study was cross-sectional one. For this study, 310 women belonging to reproductive age groups (15 to 49 years) in four Mohall's of Varanasi city by adopting multistage random sampling procedure. The tools in the study were pre-designed and pre-tested schedule comprising of family and individual schedule. In quantitative food intake, as much as 58.61 per cent and 45.81 per cent women had calorie and protein consumption, 80 per cent of RDA, respectively. Average intake of thiamine, riboflavin, niacin, pyridoxine, and cynocobalamine was 87.17 per cent, 87.37 per cent, 96.83 per cent, 79.70 per cent and 64.79 per cent, respectively. The average consumption of cereals was  $305.30 \pm 118.5$ g/day. This was 72.57 per cent of the estimated RDA. Consumption of pulses and green leafy vegetables were observed to be 75.18 per cent and 79.50 per cent, respectively of the estimated mean RDA. In majority (83.55%) of subjects, frequently of meals was fixed time for their meals and only 16.45 per cent subjects were irregular in their meals.

■ **KEY WORDS :** Reproductive age, Quantitative dietary intake, Consumption pattern, Qualitative value and Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA)

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People eat qualitatively and quantitatively and find out the inadequacies in the existing dietary consumption and habits. Dietary profiles enable malnutrition by deficiency arising from dietary intakes, food gaps and malnutrition. In reality nutritional survey is the mirror of nutrition and diet is one of the main determinates of the nutritional status. So, the value of nutritional assessment is greatly enhanced when it is supplemented by an assessment of food consumption and calculated on scale of qualitative value. Turning to the adult part of the woman's life cycle, it is apparent that pregnancy and child birth are special events in a woman's life, a time of hope, anticipation and joy. Unfortunately, very often it turns out to be a time of fear,

suffering and even death. Nutritional status of women integrate related to their, dietary intake which is determined by availability of food in terms of quality and quantity and then ability to digest, absorb and utilize food. Food availability is influenced by food pattern, cultural traditions, family structure, birth intervals, meal patterns, political environments and food allocation. At the same time, digestion and absorption can be impeded by infection or metabolic disorders. In general, reproductive age groups women are the worst sufferers of the ravages of various forms of malnutrition (*viz.*, protein energy malnutrition, iron, calcium and other specific nutrient deficiencies) because of their increased nutritional needs and low social power. The Objective of the study was to know