



## Knowledge and Consumption of Beverages among Adolescent Girls: An Empirical Study

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*The present empirical study was conducted on 200 adolescent girls of five prominent colleges belonging to Patna town. The purpose was to find out the knowledge and consumption of beverages among adolescent girls. Equal number (40) of respondents were selected from each college using incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique. The respondents were interviewed using an interview schedule to test the hypotheses whether knowledge about the beverages would significantly influence the consumption of beverages among adolescent girl respondents; choice of beverages would significantly be influenced by probable hazardous effect of beverages to health; various other factors would be found effective in the choice of beverages irrespective of their positive and negative effect. The results were analyzed using percentage, which confirmed the formulated hypotheses. It was concluded that- adolescent respondents were found fully acquainted with various types of beverages available in Patna; consumption of beverages is largely affected by their hazardous effect to health; besides enjoyment convenience significantly influenced the choice of beverages irrespective of other factors.*

**Key words:** Beverages, adolescent period.

**Introduction :** Adolescence is the transition period between childhood and adulthood; a window of opportunity for the improvement of nutritional status and correcting poor nutritional practices because any nutritional deficiency experienced during this critical period of life can have an effect on the future health of individuals and their off springs.

Poor nutritional practice is very common during adolescent period. Adolescent girls are often conscious of their figure and they avoid many foods labelling them as fattening. Dull complexion, pimples and other marks are often associated with certain foods and their consumption. Weight control is another important factor with adolescent girls and they eliminate essential nutrients in this effort. Withdrawal attitude, regarding the intake of food is the common problem of adolescent girls.

A balanced diet (required nutrients in correct quantity with water) is very important during this period. Beverage can be a good supplement because it is both food and fluid. A beverage is a drink used for the purpose of relieving thirst and introducing fluid to the

body, nourishing the body, and stimulating or soothing the individual.

The youth of today are very fond of beverages. It has been found that adolescent girls are not choosing the right beverages though consumption of beverages among them is good. Wrong choice of beverages, unawareness regarding advantages and limitation of beverages, harmful drinking practices – are factors which not only affect the intake of beverages but also their subsequent results. Beverages which help meeting the requirement of fluid in the body and overcoming nutritional deficiency of balanced diet to some extent also plays a supportive role in withdrawal attitude towards food (due to any reason) to a great extent, yet, they are not doing much for adolescent girls. Indigenous drinks are completely missing from their diet. Probably they have their own reasons. Present study will be an effort to find out the existing scenario of beverages among adolescent girls of Patna, because there is a need for inculcating a beverage friendly culture among youth. Including right kind of beverages in their daily life will be of some help in correcting poor nutritional practices, thereby improving the nutritional

status of adolescent girls.

**Objectives:**

1. To examine whether the respondents have knowledge about the beverages.
2. To find out the knowledge on consumption of beverages in relation to health hazards.
3. To search out other factors responsible for popularity of beverages.

**Hypotheses:**

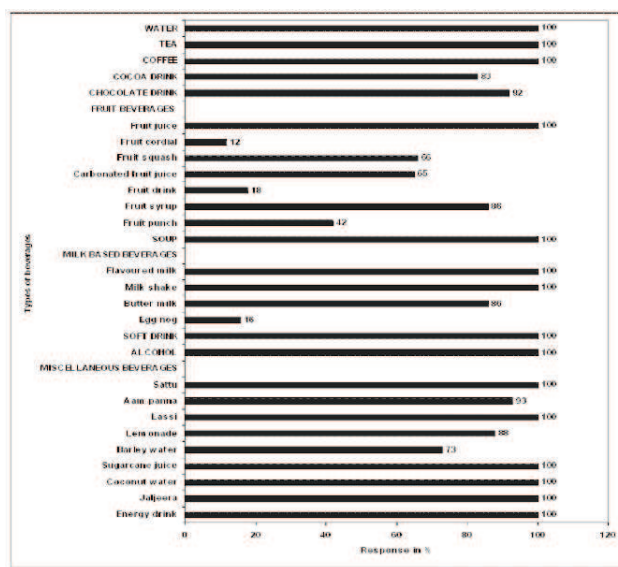
1. It is likely that adolescent girls would have knowledge of various beverages.
2. It is likely that choice of beverages would be significantly influenced by the probable effect of health hazards due to intake of beverages.
3. It is likely that various other factors would be found effective in the choice of beverages irrespective of health awareness.

**Methodology:**

- (a) Sample: The study was conducted on 200 adolescent girl-respondents, equal in number, selected from among the five prominent colleges of Patna town. In other respects too they were matched as far as practicable. Incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique was used to select the adolescent girl-respondents.
- (b) Tool used :
  - (i) A personal data sheet was used to get the necessary information about the respondents.
  - (ii) An interview schedule was used to seek the necessary information in order to test the formulated hypotheses.
- (c) Procedure: The interview schedule along with personal data sheet was implemented on the selected respondents and data were obtained.
- (d) Statistical technique used: The obtained data were analyzed using percentage.

**Results and Discussion:**

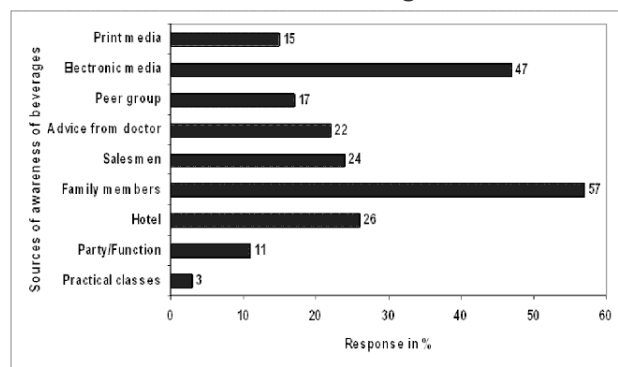
**Awareness level regarding beverages**



**Fig: - 1 Awareness level of adolescent girls regarding various beverages (N= 200)**

Acquaintance/awareness is the first step towards consumption. There are a number of beverages available at different places in Patna, such as - home, colleges, shops, hotels, road side stalls, and mobile carts. Coming across these easily available beverages made the respondent girls acquainted with them.

**Sources of awareness of beverages**



**Fig:-2 Various sources of awareness about beverages among adolescent girls (N = 200)**

There were a number of sources which were responsible for making adolescent girls aware about various beverages. Home as a place and family members as resource persons were most powerful sources for making adolescent girls aware of various beverages. Home made indigenous beverages (aam panna, sattu, butter milk) and various nutritious juices and soups were not only consumed by them, but they had also learnt how to prepare them. They had tried out some new recipes of different beverages.

Today's youth is totally smitten by electronic media (T.V, Cinema). Computer with internet facility makes the task one step easier. Though, print media is equally powerful but today's youth does not want to spend time in reading. However, endorsement by celebrities (soft drinks, cold drinks, soup) through both the media, have an impact on the girls.

Respondents were introduced to some beverages after doctor's advice too. Many a times the salesmen at shops (and even at home) persuade them to try new beverages. Hotel's menu card and the curiosity to try something new, were another sources of awareness. Same was the case with parties. Girls who had Home Science as their subject, found practical classes very informative.

### Consumption of beverages

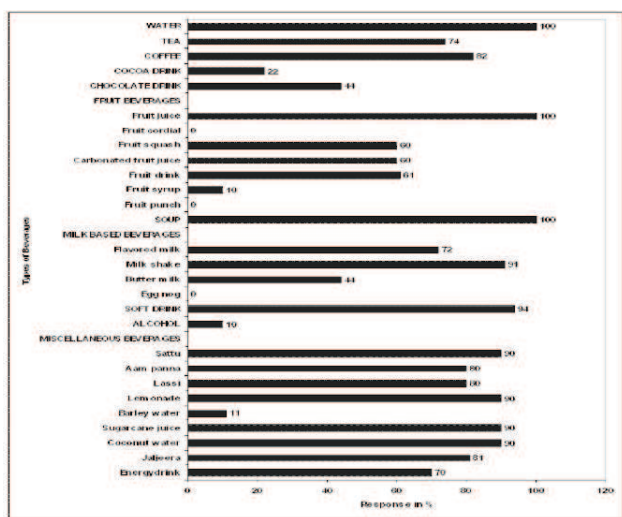


Fig:-3 Consumption of various beverages among adolescent girls (N=200)

Barring a few, the consumption of beverages among adolescent girls was good. Low consumption of few beverages was solely because of non-familiarity with them.

### Consumption pattern of beverages

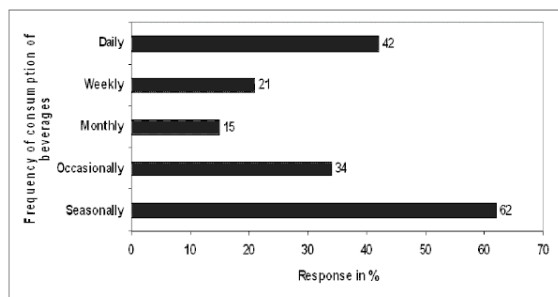


Fig: - 4 Consumption pattern of beverages among adolescent girls N=200)

Beverages which do not have much nutritional value (soft drinks), which are unhealthy and hazardous for health, if consumed weekly / monthly/ occasionally, are not very harmful. On the other hand, consumption of nutritional beverages should be on a daily basis. Findings revealed that most of the nutritional beverages (fruit juice, lassi, lemonade, soup, butter milk, sugar cane juice) which were high on consumption were seasonal which was very unfortunate. Reasons being that they were available in particular seasons only (sugar cane juice, aam panna, coconut water). Lassi, cold drinks are enjoyable when they are chilled and that is why summer is best for them, whereas hot coffee, soups are consumed more in winter season. The required quantity of water was not consumed by many respondents.

### Knowledge of effects of beverages

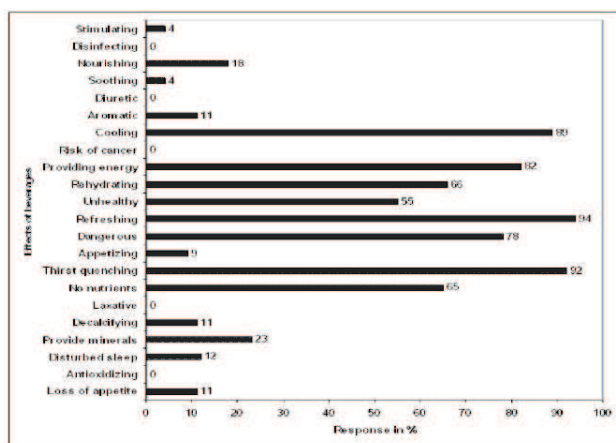
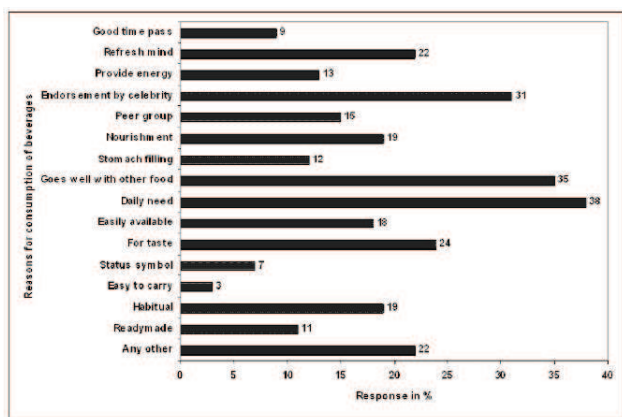


Fig: - 5 Knowledge of adolescent girls regarding various effects of beverages (N=200)

Beverages have many advantages and disadvantages which accordingly increase or decrease its consumption. Respondents were aware of the refreshing, cooling, fulfilling roles of beverages. In addition to these, Home Science students were also aware of nutritional and appetizing value of beverages. Surprisingly, awareness regarding the disadvantages was minimal. It can be concluded that neither the minimal knowledge of advantages nor the negligible knowledge about disadvantages of beverages affected its consumption among adolescent girls.

### Reasons for consumption of beverages



adolescent girls (N=200)

There were many reasons for consumption of beverages among adolescent girls. These can be put under the following groups. The first one was “for the sake of enjoyment”. Many beverages were consumed purely to enjoy or for time pass that is, when they were with friends, in a party or at a hotel. There were respondents who were very particular when it came to selection of beverages. Their selection was on the basis of “nutritional as well as hygienic aspect” of the beverage. “Matter of convenience” was the third main reason for consumption. Convenience and consumption go together smoothly, whether the reference is to its availability, carriage, preparation time, price, quantity, package or habit.

### Reasons for non-consumption of beverages

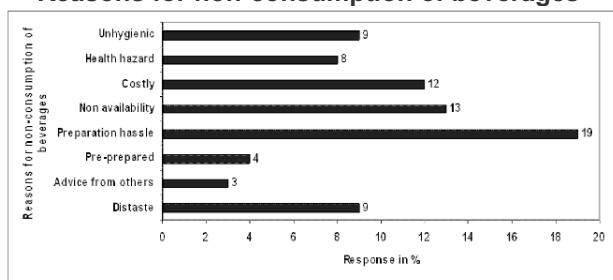


Fig: - 7 Reasons for non-consumption of beverages among adolescent girls (N=200)

Beverages are available either ready made or prepared on demand at both the places: inside or outside home. Beverages that were sold outside at different places such as: sugar cane juice, coconut water, lassi, sattu, aam panna, fresh fruit juice - had few takers as they were sold very unhygienically. Also they were sold at small juice centers, mobile carts, obviously girls could not stand and drink either alone or in a group. Whatever be the reason, all the nutritional beverages were withheld thereby depriving the adolescent girls of its intake.

According to the respondents, many beverages could not be prepared at home because it was time consuming, some could not be prepared every day, and not just for one person (but could be in case prepared outside home, on demand). Respondents did not know how to prepare many beverages.

### Conclusion:

Most of the adolescent girls under study were well acquainted with, and had required knowledge about the various kinds of beverages available in Patna, the sources behind their knowledge were family members, doctors, salesmen. Besides these human resources there were other sources like electronic media, print media, shops, hotels, parties, etc which played a significant role in acquainting the respondents about various kinds of beverages.

Consumption of beverages is largely influenced by the probable adverse effect of these beverages when taken by the respondents. It is a hard fact that adolescent girl respondents, who have proper knowledge of beverages, avoid taking those which are hazardous to health.

Besides these, there are factors like enjoyment and convenience behind care free intake of non-nutritious beverages irrespective of their probable hazardous effect on health.

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