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## A study on health and nutritional status of the pregnant women

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**Abstract**

The condition of health of a person that is influenced by the intake and utilization of nutrients is called nutritional status. Maternal health is the healthiness of women during being pregnant, childbirth, and post-partum period. Adequate nutrition during pregnancy is crucial and it has long term health benefits. Maternal nutrition is influenced by various factors i.e. economic, social, environment etc. The present study was to investigate nutritional well-being of pregnant women. A total of 40 pregnant women were selected in Hyderabad. Majority of the respondents (72%) were belongs to the 20-25 age groups. The data was collected through secondary data (hospital records), personal interviews with the help of the schedules and analysed using standard statistical tools. The results revealed that half of the respondents (52%) were had knowledge on maternal nutrition. Complications were seen in the respondents; about 17% of the respondents had Anemia followed by Hypothyroidism (15%) and Gestational Diabetes (12%). This study also showed that education and Maternal nutritional knowledge were positively correlated at 0.01% levels of significance.

**Keywords:** Maternal nutrition, nutritional well-being, nutritional status and health of pregnant women, complications during pregnancy

**Introduction**

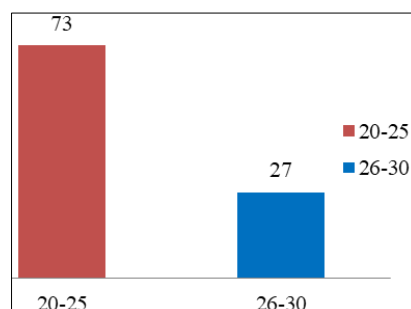
According to WHO Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. A woman's health is essential to the good health of her baby. Women who eat well and exercise regularly along with regular prenatal care are less likely to have complications during pregnancy. They're also more likely to successfully give birth to a healthy baby.

Eating a nutritious diet during pregnancy is linked to good foetal brain development, a healthy birth weight, and it reduces the risk of many birth defects.

A balanced diet will also reduce the risks of anemia, as well as other unpleasant pregnancy symptoms such as fatigue and morning sickness. Good nutrition is thought to help balance mood swings and it may improve labor and delivery as well.

**Materials and Methods**

The present study was conducted in Hyderabad, by using ex-post facto research design. A total of 40 pregnant women were selected by purposive sampling method. The data from the respondents was collected through secondary data (hospital records), personal interviews with the help of the structured schedules and analyzed using standard statistical tools.

**Results and Discussion**

**Fig 1:** Age of the respondents (%) n=60

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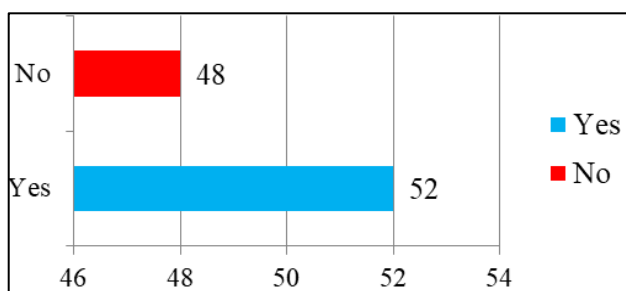
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Fig1 clearly indicated that majority (73%) of the pregnant women belonged to 20-25 years age group followed by the 26-30 (27%). The above table depicts that young age women were higher compared to the other age group. This might be Due to the reason that they got married in early age.

**Table 1:** Education of the respondents n=40

Education of the respondents	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Illiterates	9	20
Primary level	8	23
Upper primary	14	35
Intermediate	4	10
Degree	5	12

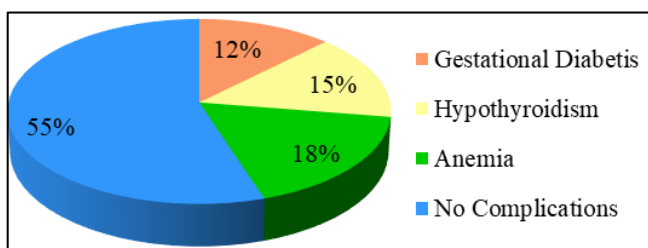
It was observed from the table 1, 35% of the pregnant women were educated up to upper primary followed by Primary education (23%), intermediate (10%) and Degree (12%). It is also observed from the table that 20% of the pregnant women were illiterates.



**Fig 2:** Knowledge on Maternal Nutrition n=40

It was observed from the above figure, more than half (52%) of the women had Knowledge on Maternal Nutrition while 48% pregnant women had no Knowledge on Maternal Nutrition. Maternal nutrition provides nutrients and oxygen for her baby and is a critical factor for fetal health and its survival. Failure in supplying the adequate amount of nutrients to meet fetal demand can lead to fetal malnutrition. This study also highlighted that 60% of the respondents had no knowledge about colostrum. Colostrum is the first milk that comes after the child birth and is loaded with immune, growth and tissue repair factors.

Joshi (2012) [3]. in his study “Colostrum Feeding: Knowledge, Attitude and Practice in Pregnant Women in a Teaching Hospital in Nepal” found that women (26%) who lacked knowledge about colostrum, majority being uneducated and who came from the rural areas. Those women who knew about it, received the information about colostrum via various media (30%), followed by family and friends (16%) and antenatal advice (12%) which contributes the reason of improved practice of colostrum feeding in urban area. It was further pointed that efforts are necessary to improve the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of colostrum feeding.



**Fig 3:** Complications during Pregnancy n=40

Complications during pregnancy are conditions that are associated during pregnancy and ranges from minor discomfort to serious diseases. From the above table, it can be noted that 18% of the pregnant respondents under study were anemic. Anemia is the most common hematological abnormality in pregnant women. The main cause of anemia in pregnancy and puerperium is the deficiency of iron. Iron requirements increase during pregnancy, and a failure to maintain sufficient levels of iron may result in adverse maternal-fetal consequences. Vinogradova, *et al.* 2014) [4]. Stephen *et al.* (2018) [1]. Found in his study “Anaemia in Pregnancy: Prevalence, Risk Factors, and Adverse Perinatal Outcomes in Northern Tanzania” that the prevalence of anaemia was 18.0% and 2% had severe anaemia. The clinic of recruitment and low education level of the women were the factors that were independently associated with anaemia during pregnancy. Anaemia in pregnancy was a mild public health problem.

As much as 15% of the pregnant respondents in the study had hypothyroidism as their complications. Maternal thyroid function changes during pregnancy and inadequate adaptation to these changes results in thyroid dysfunction. Saraldevi *et al.*, 2016 [5]. showed in their study that a high prevalence of thyroid disorder (11.6%) especially hypothyroidism in pregnant women, with the prevalence of subclinical hypothyroidism being 6.4% and overt hypothyroidism being 2.8%.

Gestational diabetes is a complication during pregnancy. It has health implications for mother and child. Gestational diabetes refers to the conditions in which the increase of blood glucose level is diagnosed for the first time during pregnancy.

Gestational diabetes occurs almost in 4% of pregnancies. As much as 12% of the pregnant respondents suffered from gestational diabetes. And in this study more than half of the respondents (55%) were healthy; they did not have any complications during pregnancy.

**Table 2:** Correlation

		Education	Knowledge
Education	Pearson Correlation	1	.545(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	40	40

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Null Hypothesis:** There will be no significant difference between education and maternal nutrition knowledge.

**Alternate hypothesis:** There will be significant difference between education and maternal nutrition knowledge.

The above table clearly indicates that there is positive correlation between mother’s education and maternal nutritional knowledge. If the pregnant mother is educated she will have more knowledge regarding healthy diet, pregnancy complication and hence can take care of the growing fetus in the womb.

**Conclusion**

Based on the above finding it can be noted half pregnant women in the study had no Knowledge on Maternal Nutrition. Maternal nutrition is important as it provides nutrients and oxygen for her baby and is a critical factor for fetal health and its survival. Failure in supplying the adequate amount of nutrients to meet fetal demand can lead

to fetal malnutrition.

Further, that there is positive correlation between mother's education and maternal nutritional knowledge. Nutrition intervention such as nutrition education in different villages, health centers, and health posts and women organizations should be given for the community particularly for the pregnant mothers concerning nutrition during pregnancy to increase the nutritional knowledge of mothers.

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