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KEYWORDS: Eating behaviour, prevalence, general courses, professional courses

A STUDY TO ASSESS PREVALENCE OF EATING BEHAVIOUR AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS OF GENERAL AND PROFESSIONAL COURSES OF SELECTED COLLEGES OF AMBALA, HARYANA



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Bhawna Sharma

Department of Mental Health Nursing, Maharishi Markandeshwar University Mullana, Ambala, Haryana, India.

Anjula Kumari*

Department of Mental Health Nursing, Maharishi Markandeshwar University Mullana, Ambala, Haryana, India. *Corresponding Author
anjulimahajan4777@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT:

Eating behaviour is a complex interplay of psychological, social and genetic factors that influence meal timing, quantity of food intake, food preferences and food selection

MATERIAL AND METHODS: The research approach adopted for this study was quantitative research approach (non-experimental) and the design used was descriptive research design. The convenient sampling technique was used to select 522 female students of general and professional courses comprises of 261 each. The tool used for data collection was personal variables, eating behavior scale was used to assess prevalence of eating behaviour among female students. Bio physiological measurement and Paper pencil technique was used for data collection and data obtained were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS: The mean eating behavior score among general courses was 42 and 46.2 among professional courses. The computed t value (1.96) (p value= 0.04) shows significant difference between eating behavior among female students of general population.

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescents eating behaviour is a function of individual and environmental influences. Individual influences are psychological as well as biological, whereas, environmental influences include social environments such as family and friends and peers networks and other factors such as school meals and fast food outlets. In addition another important factors in social system or macro system which includes mass media, marketing and advertising social and cultural norms of the society¹.

Eating behaviour is a complex interplay of psychological, social and genetic factors that influence meal timing, quantity of food intake, food preferences and food selection. They are very anxious about their weight and keep it as possible by strictly controlling and limiting what they eat. Many female with anorexic will excessively exercise to lose weight. To control things by strictly regulating food and weight.¹ Female with eating behaviour often feel that their self-esteem is tied to how thin they are. It is increasingly common, especially among young women in industrialized countries where cultural expectations encourage women to be thin. Female with anorexic have an extreme fear of gaining weight, which causes them to try to maintain a weight far less than normal. They will do almost anything to avoid gaining weight including starving Calibri (Body) themselves or exercise too much. Female with eating behaviour have a distorted body image – they think that they are fat (even when they are extremely thin) and won't maintain a proper weight.²

According to researcher eating behaviour is a complex interplay of psychological, social, and genetic factors that influence meal timing, quantity of food intake, and food preferences and Female students in general courses refers to students who are undergoing through 3 years degree programme in general field.

The current estimate of the 2 months prevalence of eating behaviour in European people over 19 years is approximately 0.2-0.7% with one population study estimating the mean incidence in the UK at 4in 100,000 in people aged 15-19 years. This eating disorder mainly affects women, 1 in 250 in the UK as opposed to 1 in 2000 men, and in some western countries is reported to be as high as 5.7% Specific risk factors seem to include high parental expectations, certain personality traits including a morbid perfectionism and psychiatric conditions including obsessive compulsive disorders and various affective disorders.³

Following are some factors which are responsible the eating behaviour:

1. Emotional issue – Not eating is a way to cope with painful or distressing emotions (anger, sadness, frustration)
2. Weight comment – 'You look much better now,' 'How is your weight been?'
3. Image-Skinny female, picture or food
4. Eating with others-In some case, eating with other people made feel like a pig. No matter what was i on the plate it always seemed like 10 times as what everyone else had to eat.
5. Exercise promotion- How often it is heard that diet and exercise go hand –in – hand ?For some folks exercise sets the wheel of eating in motion. In this case its usually called a 'diet'⁷

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research approach adopted for this study was quantitative research approach and the design used was descriptive research design. The study was conducted at Maharishi Markandeshwar College of Nursing Mullana, Ambala and Sanatan Dharam College Ambala. The convenient sampling technique was used to select 522 students of general and professional courses comprises of 261 each. Three general courses were selected, Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Science.

Three professional colleges were selected, Maharishi Markandeshwar College of Nursing, Maharishi Markandeshwar College of Physiotherapy and Maharishi Markandeshwar College of Pharmacy from University.

The colleges were selected continently and stratified random technique sampling was used for sample selection. The criterion for the selection of the sample subject was.

Minimum score- 25 Maximum score- 100

The data presented in table 4.3 shows that mean eating behaviour of female students of general courses (42) was less than mean eating behaviour (46.2) of female students in professional courses. The data further shows that the median of general courses(40) was less than median eating behaviour (45) of female students of professional courses. The standard deviation of female students of general courses is 0.59 with range of 25-74 whereas the standard deviation of female students of professional courses is 11.1 with range of 27-90, which shows that there was more variance present in students of professional courses in terms of eating behaviour as compare to the students of general courses.

TABLE- 4.4 Mean, Standard deviation, Mean difference and standard error and t-value of eating behaviour among female students of General and Professional courses.

N=522					
FEMALE STUDENTS	Mean ± S.D	MD	Standard Error	df	t- value
Professional courses (n=261)	46.2±11.1	4.2	0.24	518	17.5*
General courses (n=261)	42± 0.59				

df(520) t= 1.96 *Significant

The data presented in table 4.4 indicates that mean eating behaviour of general courses (42) and professional courses mean (46.2) were having the mean difference of 4.2. The computed t-value= 17.5 shows significant difference between the eating behaviour among female students of general and professional courses, which was found to be statistically significant i.e. t=1.96.

Among general courses the computed chi-square value between the selected variables, religion (30.9), type of family (11.2), father education status (21.2), mother occupation (19.03) and BMI (49.6) were found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Among professional courses the computed chi-square values of selected personal variable religion (15.52), mother education (21.1) and mother occupation (18.2) showing association of eating behaviour among female students of professional courses was statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance.

DISCUSSION

The present study findings were consistent with the findings of **N. Baber et.al (2002)** who conducted a cross sectional survey study to determine the proportion of eating behaviour among medical and nursing students. A total of 180 female students were interviewed. To assess the eating behaviour EAT 26 (eating attitude test) is used. The total proportion of eating behaviour among female student was 21.7%. Conclusion of this study was proportion of female nursing students is much higher as compared to female medical students.

A descriptive study was resealed personality heterogeneity in female adolescent in patient with eating disorder. Million adolescent clinical involuntary personality data form adolescent girl with disturbed eating who were psychiatrically hospitalized were analyzed. And result group were compared in eating and co morbid psychopathology. Three subgroup by elevated eating and mood psychopathology as well as impulsivity, aggression and substance uses and high function group and relatively high self esteem.

In our study the result was found that the female students of professional courses were having more eating behaviour as compared to female students of general courses. Female students of professional courses were having high self esteem as compared to general courses.

CONCLUSION:

Thus it was found that the female students of professional courses were having more eating behaviour as compared to female students of general courses. Based on the finding of the study

recommended that study can be conducted to assess the prevalence of eating behaviour among adolescents, comparative study can be to assess the eating behaviour among medical and nursing students and to assess the impact of mass media on eating behaviour in female students.

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