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ANALYSIS OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH KNOWLEDGE, FOOD CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR, AND NUTRITIONAL STATUS OF ADOLESCENTS IN SUBANG, 2025

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Abstract

Adolescents who are healthy are characterized by body weight, height, and body mass index that are appropriate for their age. Inadequate nutrition during this period can cause disturbances and delays in adolescent growth. Poor eating habits and lack of reproductive health knowledge can lead to various negative impacts. This study aims to analyze the relationship between reproductive health knowledge and food consumption behavior and nutritional status among adolescents. The study used a cross-sectional research design. The research sample consisted of 68 female adolescents at SMK Kesehatan Bhakti Kencana Subang, selected using purposive sampling technique. Data were collected using a questionnaire. Data analysis was conducted using univariate and bivariate analysis (Chi-Square test). The results showed that there was a relationship between knowledge and food consumption behavior among female adolescents (p=0.001), and there was also a relationship between knowledge and nutritional status among female adolescents (p=0.000). Reproductive health knowledge can help shape adolescents' attitudes, which can influence their habits in choosing healthy food and snacks. If adolescents have good reproductive health knowledge, they are expected to make better food choices, which will have a positive impact on their nutritional status. These findings emphasize the need for schools to provide or facilitate students with health education or information regarding the importance of reproductive health knowledge and healthy eating behavior to achieve good nutritional status and reproductive health.

Keywords: Reproductive Health Knowledge, Food Consumption Behavior, Nutritional Status

Introduction

Adolescents play a crucial role in national development as they represent the next generation who will determine the sustainability and quality of a nation. Therefore, maintaining adolescent health, including reproductive health, is an essential aspect that requires serious attention [(1)]. Reproductive health during adolescence is closely related to physical growth, nutritional intake, and overall well-being, which can influence future reproductive outcomes and quality of life. Adequate nutrition during adolescence is important to support puberty, fertility, and healthy pregnancy outcomes in the future.

Globally, adolescent health problems are often associated with nutritional issues and lack of reproductive health knowledge. Poor nutritional intake during adolescence can negatively affect physical growth, cognitive development, learning ability, and immune function, as well as increase susceptibility to infections [(4)]. Inadequate nutrition may also lead to long-term health consequences, including reproductive health problems, anemia, and poor pregnancy outcomes later in life. Therefore,

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improving adolescents' knowledge of reproductive health and nutrition is essential to promote healthy behavior and optimal nutritional status.

Indonesia is currently facing a triple burden of malnutrition, including stunting, wasting, and obesity, which is further aggravated by micronutrient deficiencies such as iron deficiency anemia [(2)]. According to the Regulation of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia Number 25 of 2014, adolescents are individuals aged 10–18 years, a period characterized by rapid physical, mental, and psychological development [(5)]. The Indonesian Ministry of Health emphasizes that adolescent health is strongly influenced by healthy eating patterns, balanced nutrition, and regular physical activity. Poor eating habits, lack of nutritional knowledge, and unhealthy food consumption patterns can lead to various health problems, including anemia, obesity, malnutrition, and reproductive health disorders [(3)].

Female adolescents require special attention regarding nutritional status and reproductive health, as they are future mothers who are expected to give birth to a healthy generation [(6)]. Adequate reproductive health knowledge can influence adolescents' attitudes and behaviors, particularly in selecting healthy food and snacks, which ultimately affects their nutritional status [(7)]. However, industrialization and globalization in the food sector have changed adolescents' eating behavior through the widespread availability of fast food, aggressive food marketing, and unhealthy dietary habits. Fast food consumption and irregular eating patterns may lead to obesity or malnutrition and can also affect reproductive health, including menstrual disorders [(8,9)].

Previous studies have shown that knowledge of reproductive health is associated with eating behavior and nutritional status among adolescents. However, research specifically examining the relationship between reproductive health knowledge, food consumption behavior, and nutritional status among female adolescents in vocational health schools is still limited, particularly in Subang, Indonesia. Preliminary observations at SMK Kesehatan Bhakti Kencana Subang indicate that many adolescents still have limited knowledge of reproductive health and tend to believe myths related to food consumption and reproductive health, which may influence their eating behavior and nutritional status.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the relationship between reproductive health knowledge, food consumption behavior, and nutritional status among female adolescents at SMK Kesehatan Bhakti Kencana Subang in 2025.

Method

This study used a quantitative research method with a cross-sectional research design. A questionnaire was used to measure respondents' knowledge of reproductive health using the SKATA instrument developed by the National Population and Family Planning Board (BKKBN) (10). Nutritional status was assessed using the Body Mass Index (BMI) indicator, categorized as BMI <18.5 (underweight), BMI 18.5–24.9 (normal), BMI 25–29.9 (overweight), and BMI ≥30 (obese). Food consumption behavior was measured using the Eating Behaviour Patterns Questionnaire [(7)].

Data were analyzed using univariate and bivariate analysis with the Chi-square test. The population and sample in this study were female adolescents at SMK Kesehatan Bhakti Kencana Subang selected using purposive sampling technique. The total sample consisted of 68 female adolescents.

Results

Table 1 Univariate Analysis Results

Variable	Frequenci	Percentage(%)
Knowladge		
Not Enough	24	35,3
Enough	38	55,9
Good	6	8,8
Eating Behavior		
Negative	27	39,7
Positive	41	60,3
Nutrional Status		
*Underweig*h	25	36,8
Normal	36	52,9
Overweight	7	10,3

Based on Table 1, it shows that out of a total of 68 respondents, more than half had sufficient knowledge at 55.9% (38 people), positive eating behavior at 60.3% (41 people), and normal nutritional status at 52.9% (36 people).

Table 2 Bivariate Analysis Results

Variable	Knowladge						Total		P *Value*
	Not Enough		Enough		Good				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Eating Behavior									
Negative	24	88,9	2	7,4	1	3,7	27	100	0,001
Positive	0	0,00	36	87,8	5	12,2	41	100	
Nutrional Status									
*Underweig*h	22	88	3	12,0	0	0,0	25	100	
Normal	1	2,8	32	88,9	3	8,3	36	100	0,000
Overweight	1	14,2	3	42,9	3	42,9	7	100	

Table 2 shows that based on the Chi-Square statistical test, the relationship between knowledge and eating consumption behavior among adolescent girls obtained a p-value of 0.001, which means p-value < 0.05, indicating that there is a relationship between knowledge and eating consumption behavior among adolescent girls. Furthermore, the relationship between knowledge and nutritional status among adolescent girls obtained a p-value of 0.000, which means p-value < 0.05, indicating that there is a relationship between knowledge and nutritional status among adolescent girls.

Discussion

Knowledge is the most important factor in shaping an individual's behavior. Health information influences behavior as a medium-term outcome of health education. In addition, it contributes to improving public health indicators, particularly health behavior as an outcome of health education.[4]

Adolescent reproductive health problems in Indonesia have received limited attention from various parties. This is because many people assume that reproductive health issues, like other health problems, are solely the responsibility of medical professionals. Meanwhile, understanding of adolescent reproductive health among medical professionals themselves is still limited, as many consider reproductive health issues to be limited only to pregnancy and childbirth, so adolescent reproductive health is not regarded as a significant problem.[11] Adolescent problems arise because they are not adequately prepared with knowledge related to the transition from childhood to adulthood. Therefore, health education is highly needed as an effort to improve understanding, knowledge, attitudes, and positive behaviors among school-age children and adolescents regarding health, especially adolescent reproductive health. In adolescent girls, nutritional status can affect reproductive health because they experience menstrual cycles every month and will eventually enter pregnancy and breastfeeding periods. An individual's nutritional condition reflects what has been consumed over a long period of time and is indicated by their nutritional status.[12]

Nutritional and health behavior are essential factors in maintaining overall well-being. In principle, healthy eating behavior is reflected in the consumption of balanced nutrition through daily food intake. Balanced nutrition can only be achieved by consuming a diverse variety of foods, as greater dietary diversity increases the adequacy of nutrient intake in the body. Adequate nutrient intake is also crucial for human reproduction, as proper nutrition supports sexual maturation and ensures optimal reproductive organ health. Balanced nutrition, therefore, plays a significant role in maintaining reproductive health.

The habit of consuming fast food among adolescents is often perceived as normal and harmless. However, this behavior can lead to both short-term and long-term health consequences, including an increased risk of obesity, which may negatively affect reproductive health.[13]

Adolescents require appropriate guidance, information, and understanding regarding reproductive health, as well as awareness of the importance of planning a healthy and productive future by avoiding harmful behaviors that may negatively impact their development.[14] Common eating habits observed among adolescents include frequent snacking, skipping meals—especially breakfast—irregular eating schedules, frequent consumption of fast food, low intake of vegetables, fruits, and animal-based products, and improper weight control practices among adolescent girls. These behaviors may result in inadequate or excessive nutrient intake, ultimately leading to undernutrition or overnutrition.[15]

According to Notoatmodjo (2012), the adoption of new behavior is influenced by knowledge, awareness, and positive attitudes, which make the behavior more sustainable and long-lasting. Conversely, behavior that is not based on knowledge and awareness tends to be temporary and does not persist.[16] Adolescents generally have a high tendency to consume fast food, which is also supported by technological advancements and easy access to food services. Other factors influencing fast food consumption patterns include knowledge, environment, food prices, and pocket money. Adequate knowledge of reproductive health nutrition among adolescents is essential to prevent various health problems that may arise due to a lack of awareness and understanding of reproductive health.[17] Poor eating habits and limited nutritional knowledge can lead to several negative impacts, such as decreased immunity, increased susceptibility to diseases, reduced physical work capacity, and disruptions in the ovulation cycle.

In line with a study conducted by Fitriani, there is a significant relationship between reproductive health knowledge and nutritional status among adolescent girls, with a significance value

of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that higher reproductive health knowledge among adolescent girls is associated with better nutritional status during their reproductive growth period.[18] Eating habits among adolescents are often irregular, increasing the risk of nutritional problems. Unhealthy dietary patterns commonly found among adolescents include frequent snacking, skipping meals—especially breakfast—irregular eating schedules, frequent consumption of fast food, and low intake of vegetables and fruits. These conditions may result in inadequate nutrient intake that does not meet the principles of balanced nutrition, ultimately leading to nutritional problems such as undernutrition or overnutrition.[19]

Adolescents often neglect their nutritional adequacy and pay little attention to their physical condition and health during puberty. Based on research conducted by Chasanah (2016) entitled *Analysis of Reproductive Health Knowledge and Nutrient Intake with Nutritional Status among Adolescent Girls*, the results showed a relationship between reproductive health knowledge and nutritional status. This finding indicates that adolescents with good reproductive health knowledge tend to have normal nutritional status because they are more prepared and attentive to their health and physical condition during puberty. Therefore, adults such as parents, educational institutions, and the community play an important role in educating adolescents about reproductive health to prevent risks associated with insufficient knowledge, including malnutrition.[12] The higher the level of reproductive health knowledge among adolescent girls, the better their nutritional status during reproductive growth and development.[3]

Conclusion

There is a relationship between reproductive health knowledge and eating consumption behavior as well as nutritional status among adolescents. Schools, through the School Health Unit (UKS), are expected to facilitate students by providing health education and information regarding the importance of reproductive health knowledge and healthy eating behavior to achieve optimal nutritional status and reproductive health. Further research is needed to examine the correlation between nutritional status and other factors, such as physical activity.

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