

Awareness About Nutritional Benefits of Millets Among Young Adults

Abstract- Millets are the group of small seeded grasses that have various benefits. Millets are also known as super nutritious grain which have multiple health and nutritional benefits. Millets have versatility which can be used for various of dishes and it is one of the sustainable choices for agriculture and has great impact on environment. The study participants were young adults between 18-32 years pursuing studies in various disciplines in Ayodhya district. Data regarding the awareness, consumption, opinion, knowledge, choice preferences and about the taste of millets among young adults were collected using a Google questionnaire 100 responses were collected. The majority of respondents heard about millets but regularly did not consume them and also don't know about difference of major, minor and pseudo millets categorically. Some people didn't like the taste of it but knows importance of millets. Moreover, respondents agreed to the point that it increases the employment and economy for the farmer and rural people.

Keywords- Millets, Empowerment, Nutritious, Sustainable grain.

Introduction

Millets are a group of small-seeded grasses grown as cereal crops or grains for human consumption. They are highly nutritious, gluten-free, and environmentally sustainable. Millets have been cultivated for centuries, particularly in semi-arid regions of Asia and Africa, and they are gaining popularity globally due to their health benefits and resilience to climate change. They come in various types, including pearl millet, foxtail millet, finger millet, and sorghum, each with its own unique flavor and nutritional profile. **Millet Year:-** The International Year of Millets, designated by the United Nations for 2023, was all about highlighting the importance of millets for food security, nutrition, and the environment. Millets are packed with nutrients and are environmentally friendly to grow, making them a fantastic choice for sustainable agriculture. This special year aimed to spread awareness about the benefits of millets and promote their consumption worldwide. It was a great way to showcase these nutritious grains and their positive impact on both health and the planet.

These are the most commonly cultivated and consumed millets and include crops like:

- Pearl millet (Bajra)
- Finger millet (Ragi)
- Sorghum (Jowar)
- Foxtail millet (Kangni/Kakum)
- Proso millet (Cheena)

Minor Millets: These are less commonly cultivated and consumed compared to major millets. Th

eyinclude:

- Barnyardmillet(Sanwa)
- Kodomillet(Kodon)
- Littlemillet(Kutki)
- Browntopmillet(Sawa)

PseudoMillets:Thesearenottuemilletsbutareoftenclassifiedassuchduetotheirsimilarnutritionalprofileand culinary uses.Examples include:

- Amaranth(Rajgira)
- Quinoa
- Buckwheat(Kuttu)

Nutritionalbenefitsofmillets-

RichinNutrients:Milletsarepackedwithessentialnutrientssuchasiron,calcium,magnesium,phosphorus,and potassium, whichare crucial forgrowth and development.

1. HighinFiber:Theyareanexcellentsourceofdietaryfiber,promotingdigestivehealthandpreventingconstipation.High fiber content also helps in maintaininga healthy weight.
2. LowGlycemicIndex:MilletsHavealowglycemicindex,whichmeanstheyreleasesugarintothe bloodstreamslowly, helpingto regulatebloodsugar levels andproviding sustainedenergy.
3. Gluten-Free:Milletsarenaturallygluten-free,makingthemsuitableforindividualswithglutenintoleranceor celiacdisease.
4. SourceofProtein:Theycontainagoodamountofplant-basedprotein,essentialformusclegrowthandrepair, as well as overallhealth.
5. AntioxidantProperties:Somemilletvarieties,suchasfingermillet(ragi),arerichinantioxidants likepolyphenols,whichhelp infighting freeradicals andreducing theriskofchronicdiseases.
6. SupportsBone Health:Milletsarerichincalciumandmagnesium,whichareessentialmineralsforbonehealth,particularly important during thegrowth yearsofadolescence.

Incorporatingmilletsintothedietofyoungpeoplecancontributetotheiroverallhealthandwell-being,providinganutritious and sustainablealternativeto refined grains.

Milletsusesinmodernworldamongyoungadultpopulation:-

Inthemodernworld,milletsaregainingpopularityamongyoungadultsduetotheirversatilityandnumeroushealthbenefits.Herearesomecommonusesofmilletsamongtheyoung adult population:

1. DietaryDiversification:Manyyoungadultsareincorporatingmilletsintotheirdietsasawayto diversifytheirfoodchoices and explorealternativegrains beyond rice andwheat.
2. Gluten-Free Options: With the rise in gluten sensitivities and celiac disease diagnoses,

young adults are turning to millets as gluten-free alternatives for staples like bread, pasta, and baked goods.

3. **Health Consciousness:** As young adults become increasingly health-conscious, they are drawn to millets for their nutritional value, including their high fiber, protein, and micronutrient content.
4. **Athletic Performance:** Millets are valued by young athletes and fitness enthusiasts for their slow-releasing carbohydrates, which provides sustained energy levels during workouts and aid in post-exercise recovery.
5. **Environmental Sustainability:** Concerns about environmental sustainability drive some young adults to choose millets, as they require fewer resources like water and fertilizer compared to conventional grains like rice and wheat.
6. **Culinary Innovation:** Young adults are experimenting with millets in the kitchen, incorporating them into recipes for porridge, salads, stir-fries, burgers, and even desserts like cookies and cakes.
7. **Support for Local Farmers:** By purchasing millets, young adults are often supporting local farmers and sustainable agriculture practices, contributing to the growth of small-scale farming communities.

Overall, the versatility, health benefits, and eco-friendly nature of millets make them an attractive option for young adults looking to improve their diets and make sustainable food choices.

Rational of the study:-

The aim of the study was to identify the awareness about the nutritional benefits of millets among young people, including changing dietary patterns, sustainability and investigating awareness levels among young adults regarding the nutritional benefits of millets is essential for promoting healthier dietary choices, fostering sustainability and patterns of millet consumption and attitude among young adults. The purpose for the study and its potential contributions to understanding young adults' awareness and behavior towards millet products and a demographic pivotal in shaping future food trends and dietary habits. With the growing recognition of millets as nutritious, climate-resilient crops, understanding the factors influencing their acceptance and integration into diets is crucial for promoting sustainable food systems and improving public health. By exploring young adults' perceptions of taste, health benefits, cultural influences, and accessibility barriers related to millet consumption, this study seeks to provide insights that can inform targeted interventions and policies to promote millet consumption and support sustainable agriculture practices.

Objectives:-

1. To assess the consumption of millets among young adults.
2. To explore awareness about nutritional benefits of millets among young adults.

Review of literature:-

1. Ms USangeetha, Mrs DMounika et al. (2022) carried out a study titled **“Assessment of millets consumption among young females (18-23 years) in Tirupati.”** Based on the nutritional advantages of millets, this study investigates how important a role they play in households' overall nutritional security. The results of this study showed that although the participants were aware of the health benefits of eating millets, they were not actually ingesting them often.
2. Reddy, Rajesh and Patel, Deval (2023) conducted **“A Study on Consumers' Awareness and Preference towards Millets and Its Products in Vizianagaram District, Andhra Pradesh, India.”** This study looks at word-of-mouth and social media as the primary sources of information about millets and their health advantages. According to the study, millets are more commonly consumed by adults and seniors, and most individuals like to eat them for breakfast and dinner. It was discovered that the millet goods were not easily accessible and that this needed to change. Supermarkets are the most popular places to get value-added millets, whereas Kirana stores are the best option for raw millets.
3. Lakra, Poonam, Gahlawat et al. (2024) conducted a study on **“Awareness and Consumption Patterns among College Students”**. The majority of respondents to this study believed that millets were healthy and knew about their nutritional advantages. The reasons for not consuming millets were found to include lack of understanding about the preparation techniques, being the only one in the home ingesting them, an unpleasant flavor, and a lengthy preparation time.

Methodology:-

1 **Research Design:-** The research design was descriptive in nature. Phase wise plan of work

Phase

I: Framing of objectives, designing of tools and identification of sample. Phase II: Collection of data from the selected sample.

Phase III: Analysis of data and report writing.

2 **Locale of the study:** The study was conducted in a rural area of Ayodhya district of eastern U.P. due to availability, convenience and easy accessibility of the samples.

3 **Sampling procedure:** A total of 100 students from Acharya Narendra Dev University of Agriculture and Technology was included in the study. The sample was chosen using purposive

random sampling method.

4 Variables of the study and their operational definition:

Independent variables-

- A. Age
- B. Education
- C. Gender
- D. Ethnicity

Dependent variables-

- A. Awareness
- B. Consumption of millets

5. **Tools and techniques used:** A self-structured questionnaire schedule (Google form) was used to collect data.

6. **Analysis and interpretation of data:** Frequency and Correlation (Pearson) analysis and interpretation was used to collect data.

Results and Discussion:-

Table- 1 Personal & demographic profile of the respondent:

Variable	Category	F(%)
Age (Years)	18-22	13(13%)
	23-27	52(52%)
	28-32	35(35%)
Sex	Male	44(44%)
	Female	56 (56%)
Educational Qualification	Intermediate	13(13%)
	Graduation	52(52%)
	Masters	26 (26%)
	Research Scholar	(9) (9%)
	Other, Specify	0(0%)
Marital Status	Unmarried	93 (93%)
	Married	7 (7%)
Religion	Hindu	97 (97%)
	Muslim	1(1%)
	Christian	2(2%)
Ethnicity	Rural	43(43%)

	Urban	57(57%)
Are you student	Yes	91 (91%)
	No	9(9%)

Table 1 represents that more than half (52%) of the respondents belongs to 23-27 years followed by 35 percent respondent belongs to 28-32 years and only 13 percent of respondents belongs to 18-22 years in this category, 44 percent of respondents are belongs to male category and followed by 56 percent respondents belongs to female in this category, most of the (52%) respondents are belongs to Graduation followed by most of the (26%) respondents belongs to Masters followed by 13 percent respondents are belongs to Intermediate and 9 percent respondents belongs to Research Scholar in this category, more than half (93%) belongs to unmarried respondents followed by 7 percent respondents belongs to married in this category, represents that more than half (97%) respondents belongs to the Hindu religion followed by more than half (2%) respondents belongs to the Christian religion and 1 percent respondent belongs to Muslim religion in this category, more than half (57%) respondents belongs to the Urban area and more than half (43%) respondents belongs to the rural area in this category, most of the (91%) respondents belongs to be a students and more than half (9%) respondents belongs to be not the students.

Table- 2 Knowledge level about millets and its consumption

Which type of millet is known as the king of millets		
	Pearl Millet	23(23%)
	Finger Millet	10(10%)
	Foxtail Millet	5(5%)
	Sorghum	33(33%)
	Don't Know	29(29%)
Millets are gluten-free grains		
	True	83(83%)
	False	8(8%)
	Don't Know	9(9%)
Which millet is commonly used in making flatbreads in India		
	Pearl Millet	25(25%)
	Finger Millet	18(18%)
	Foxtail Millet	11(11%)
	Sorghum	8(8%)
	Don't Know	38(38%)
Which type of millet is rich in iron & calcium		
	Pearl Millet	18(18%)

	Finger Millet	28(28%)
	Foxtail Millet	14(14%)
	Sorghum	9(9%)
	Don't Know	31(31%)
Name a millet that is often used as a replacement for rice in certain dishes.		
	Pearl Millet	10(10%)
	Finger Millet	22(22%)
	Foxtail Millet	23(23%)
Which of the following major millets are mostly eaten?		
	Finger Millet	30(30%)
	Barnyard Millet	14(14%)
	Little Millet	10(10%)
	Kodo Millet	11(11%)
	Don't Know	35(35%)
Minor millets are less commonly cultivated compared to major millets		
	True	52(52%)
	False	13(13%)
	Don't Know	35(35%)
Which millet is known as "Kutki" in hindi & is commonly used in Ayurvedic medicine		
	Foxtail Millet	8(8%)
	Barnyard Millet	10(10%)
	Proso Millet	16(16%)
	Little Millet	30(30%)
	Don't Know	36(36%)
Which millet is known for its high protein content & is often used as a staple food in parts of Africa		
	Finger Millet	10(10%)
	Kodo Millet	17(17%)
	Pearl Millet	17(17%)
	Proso Millet	9(9%)

	Don't Know	47(47%)
Millets are known for their resilience to drought & their ability to grow in harsh conditions		
	True	60(60%)
	False	13(13%)
	Don't Know	27(27%)
Major millets are widely cultivated & consumed in many countries including India		
	True	61(61%)
	False	14(14%)
	Don't Know	25(25%)
Which millet is known for its high iron and calcium content		
	Finger millet	28(28%)
	Pearl millet	19(19%)
	Foxtail millet	15(15%)
	Proso millet	6(6%)
	Don't know	32(32%)
Which millet is commonly known as "ragi"?		
	Finger millet	42(42%)
	Pearl millet	11(11%)
	Foxtail millet	15(15%)
	Proso millet	5(5%)
	Don't know	27(27%)
Minor millets are less commonly cultivated compared to major millets.		
	True	47(47%)
	False	18(18%)
	Don't Know	35(35%)
Which of the following are major millets?		
	Finger millet (Ragi)	11(11%)
	Pearl millet (Bajra)	11(11%)
	Sorghum (Jowar)	11(11%)
	All of the above	48(48%)
	Don't Know	19(19%)

Which of the following are minor Millets.		
	Barnyard millet &Kodo	11(11%)
	Little millet & Foxtail millets	12(12%)
	Porso millets	5(5%)
	All of the above	40(40%)
	Don't Know	32(32%)
Which of the following are pseudo millets:		
	Amaranth & Buckwheat	31(31%)
	Barnyard millet &Kodo millet	15(15%)
	Sorghum(Jowar)	10(10%)
	All of the above	11(11%)
	Don't Know	33(33%)
Have you ever tasted a millet-based dish?		
	Yes, I have tried millet recipes before.	70(70%)
	No, I haven't had the chance to try millet recipes yet.	30(30%)
Which millet-based dish have you tried, if any?		
	Ragi dosa	22(22%)
	Bajra khichdi	38(38%)
	Foxtail millet upma	7(7%)
	Proso millet pulao	12(12%)
	Little millet pongall	5(5%)
	Haven't tried any millet-based dish	16(16%)
How would you describe your experience with millet-based dishes		
	Delicious I loved the flavors and textures.	39(39%)
	They were okay, but not my favorite.	47(47%)
	I didn't enjoy them at all	14(14%)
Are you open to trying new millet recipes?		
	Yes, I love exploring new flavors!	56(56%)
	Maybe, I'm willing to give it a try.	34(34%)

	No, I prefer sticking to familiar recipes	10(10%)
Which millet recipe would you like to try?		
	Millet pancakes	25(25%)
	Millet salad	13(13%)
	Millet porridge	6(6%)
	Millet stir-fry	14(14%)
	Millet pudding	12(12%)
	I'm not sure, surprise me	30(30%)
Do you have any dietary restrictions or preferences that I should consider when suggesting millet recipes?		
	Gluten-free	31(31%)
	Vegan/ Vegetarian	23(23%)
	Nut-free	12(12%)
	None, I'm open to any suggestions	34(34%)
Have you ever cooked with millet yourself		
	Yes, I enjoy experimenting in the kitchen	54(54%)
	No, I prefer leaving the cooking to the experts	46(46%)

Table 2 represents that most of the (33%) respondents have knowledge that the king of millets, more than half (83%) respondents have knowledge about the gluten free millets, most of the (31%) respondents have knowledge about the iron and calcium rich millets, most of the (36%) respondents don't have knowledge about ayurvedic medicine is called as kutki in hindi, most of the (70%) respondents that millets recipes has been tasted before, most of the (38%) of the respondents that represents that mostly bajara millet khichadi as a millet dish, more than half(47%) respondents that they didn't like the taste of the millets too much, more than half (56%) respondents responds that they like to explore new millet recipes as for health benefits, mostly (48%) respondents has knowledge about the major millet, more than half (32%) respondents have no knowledge about the minor millet, most of the(33%) respondent have no knowledge about the pseudo millets.

Table-3 About the opinion of millets towards increasing economy

Questions	Category	F(%)
Increased production and consumption of millets can contribute to the growth of local economies.	Strongly Disagree	5(5%)
	Disagree	4(4%)
	Neutral	22(22%)

	Agree	51(51%)
	Strongly Agree	18(18%)
Millets have the potential to create employment opportunities in farming and related industries.	Strongly Disagree	4(4%)
	Disagree	4(4%)
	Neutral	30(30%)
	Agree	49(49%)
	Strongly Agree	13(13%)
The demand for millets can lead to increased income for farmers and rural communities.	Strongly Disagree	5(5%)
	Disagree	3(3%)
	Neutral	28(28%)
	Agree	51(51%)
	Strongly Agree	13(13%)
Supporting millet production can help in achieving food security and reducing import dependency	Strongly Disagree	4(4%)
	Disagree	3(3%)
	Neutral	24(24%)
	Agree	51(51%)
	Strongly Agree	18(18%)
The promotion of millets can lead to the development of a sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.	Strongly Disagree	5(5%)
	Disagree	5(5%)
	Neutral	21(21%)
	Agree	49(49%)
	Strongly Agree	20(20%)

Table 3 represents that more than half (51%) of the respondents had agreed that millets contribute to increase the production and consumption of millets as their opinion, more than half (49%) of the respondents had agreed to the farming and related industries contribute to the employment opportunities, mostly (51%) of the respondents agreed to that millets demands are increasing for farmer and rural communities, more than half (51%) of the respondents agreed to that help for food security reducing import dependency as declared Millets as a International Year 2023 for millet and more than half (49%) of the respondents agreed to the development of sustainable and resilient agricultural sector.

Table-4 Distribution of respondent on the basis of the awareness about millets

S.no	Questions	No idea F (%)	Heard about it, but not sure F (%)	Some what familiar F (%)	Quite familiar F (%)	Very familiar F (%)
1.	Do you know what millets are and where they come from?	5(5%)	10(10%)	42(42%)	24(24%)	19(19%)
2.	Have you ever heard of millets before?	5(5%)	19(19%)	21(21%)	28(28%)	27(27%)
3.	Are you aware of the various	15(15%)	23(23%)	32(32%)	15(15%)	10(10%)

	types of millets available					
4.	Do you know that millets are a good source of vegan protein ?	19(19%)	20(20%)	21(21%)	30(30%)	10(10%)
5.	Do you know the nutritional benefits of consuming millets?	12(12%)	13(13%)	34(34%)	24(24%)	17(17%)
6.	Are you aware that millets are rich in fiber and can aid in digestion?	10(10%)	13(13%)	26(26%)	29(29%)	22(22%)
7.	Do you know that millets are a good source of protein and can help in muscle development?	7(7%)	9(9%)	42(42%)	22(22%)	20(20%)
8.	Are you familiar with the fact that millets are gluten-free and can be a great alternative for people with gluten sensitivity or celiac disease?	23(23%)	7(7%)	27(27%)	22(22%)	21(21%)
9.	Have you heard that millets are rich in antioxidants and can help in preventing chronic diseases?	15(15%)	16(16%)	29(29%)	21(21%)	19(19%)
10.	Are you aware that millets are environmentally friendly and require less water and resources to grow compared to other grains?	10(10%)	14(14%)	30(30%)	18(18%)	28(28%)
11.	Are you familiar with the regions where millets are commonly grown?	14(14%)	18(18%)	27(27%)	21(21%)	20(20%)
12.	Do you know which countries are major producers of millets?	21(21%)	8(8%)	41(41%)	18(18%)	12(12%)
13.	Are you aware of the specific states or regions within your country where millets are grown?	6(6%)	13(13%)	25(25%)	33 (33%)	23(23%)
14.	Do you remember that your grand parents have given knowledge about millets in your childhood?	20(20%)	15(15%)	32(32%)	15(15%)	18(18%)
15.	Do you know if the growing conditions in different regions affect the taste and quality of millets?	12(12%)	28(28%)	32(32%)	12(12%)	16(16%)
16.	Are you aware that millets are a good source of complex	15(15%)	16(16%)	34(34%)	20(20%)	15(15%)

	carbohydrates and can provide sustained energy?					
17.	Do you know that millets are rich in essential minerals like iron, magnesium and phosphorus?	13(13%)	9(9%)	45(45%)	17(17%)	16(16%)
18.	Are you familiar with the fact that millets contain a good amount of dietary fibre which can aid in digestion and promote a healthy gut.	20(20%)	25(25%)	12(12%)	25(25%)	18(18%)
19.	Have you heard that millets are a great source of plant-based protein and can be beneficial for vegetarians and vegans?	13(13%)	11(11%)	36(36%)	25(25%)	15(15%)
20.	Are you aware that millets are naturally gluten-free and can be a suitable option for individuals with gluten sensitivity or celiac disease?	14(14%)	19(19%)	28(28%)	21(21%)	18(18%)

Table-4 showed that 42 percent respondents are somewhat familiar to have knowledge about the millets 5 percent of respondents have no idea about the millets , most of the 32 percent respondents are aware about various types of millets, more than half 34 percent respondents are somewhat familiar and aware about the benefits of millets, 27 percent respondents are somewhat familiar that millets are gluten free millets and good option for patients suffering celiac or gluten sensitivity, most of the 29 percent respondents are somewhat familiar to the fact that millets can prevent from chronic disease and contains antioxidant properties, most of the 30 percent respondents are somewhat familiar that millets are environmentally friendly and require less water and resources, 41 percent respondents are somewhat familiar that major producer country of millets, more than half 25 percent respondents are quite familiar with that millets contain a good amount of dietary fibre which can aid in digestion and promote a healthy gut, 36 percent respondents are somewhat familiar with great source of plant-based protein and can be beneficial for vegetarians and vegans and 32 percent respondents are somewhat familiar with the growing conditions in different regions affect the taste and quality of millets.

Relationship between independent variables and awareness towards millets :-

Table-5 Relationship Between Independent Variables And Awareness Towards Millets

S.No.	Independent Variable	Awareness
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1.	Age	-0.034847929
2.	Education	-0.071675488
3.	Gender	0.165648244*
4.	Ethnicity	0.153379921*

***Significant at 0.05 level**

Table- 5 This offers an insight into the relationship between independent variables and awareness about millets. From this table it was evident that the independent variable viz; gender and ethnicity are positively and significantly correlated with awareness of millets where as age and education are negatively and significantly correlated with awareness of millets at a meaning level of 5 percent.

Major Findings

Gender females are more aware about the benefits of millets compare to the males and according to the ethnicity urban people are more aware about the millets compare to rural ones.

Low education level shows that they low awareness and high education level shows that high level of education have more knowledge about millets and as followed by age awareness level about millets also increases as per the age increases.

Conclusion-

Millets are highly nutritious grains with many promoting many health benefits including significant amounts of fiber, protein, vitamins, and minerals like magnesium and iron. Their culinary diversity includes the ability to be used in bread, pancakes, porridges, and traditional cuisines, catering to a wide range of dietary preferences around around the globe. The research on young people' understanding of the nutritional advantages of millets comes to the conclusion that, despite some awareness, there is still a great deal of space for development. The findings emphasize the value of focused educational campaigns and programs to advance knowledge and encourage millets to be consumed. It suggests that future initiatives concentrate on customized learning initiatives, collaboration with academic establishments, and utilizing digital channels for efficient information distribution. Schools and universities can greatly increase the knowledge of young adults regarding the nutritional advantages of millets by including them in curriculum, serving millet-based meals in school cafeterias, and hosting informative workshops with experts. Students can gain a deeper grasp of environmentally friendly agriculture through practical lessons such as agricultural clubs and gardening projects. Healthy eating practices can be encouraged through cooking demos and seminars including millet-based meals. NGOs and local farmers working together, awareness-raising efforts, and encouragement for research projects

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