**Promoting Physical, Sexual and Environmental Hygiene**

**Among Rural BPL Women through Life Skills Training**

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Promoting physical, sexual and environmental hygiene among rural BPL women through life skills training aimed to influence health beliefs and promote health and hygiene practices among rural BPL women. Scientific methods of maintaining health and avoiding illnesses along with methods to practice them were communicated through an intervention making them more environmentally responsible and thereby reducing the economic burden of treatment. Sample consisted of 220 randomly selected women from below poverty line sections, in Eranakulam and Kottayam districts of Kerala. A tool was developed (Inventory for Health and Hygiene Practices) to assess health and hygiene practices. The data were analyzed using percentages and correlations.

The results indicate high awareness and practice of vaccination (92%) and high proportion of families with lifestyle diseases (65.7%). While 68.3% have not heard of dental floss, 79% have low awareness of pH balance and 20% do not know what pasteurization of milk is and there is high consumption of unhealthy food among youth (69.9-70.8%). Analysis of the responses indicates lesser awareness about prevention of STDs through condoms and an immediate need to reduce and or find safer disposal methods for plastic waste. The study indicated that there is no significant correlation between knowledge level and environmental hygiene practices. There is positive correlation between knowledge level and hygienic food preparation, eating and life style habits and personal hygiene.

The participants reported that intervention program which included scientific information of health and hygiene practices, behaviour modification techniques and assertiveness training to increase daily practice of healthy life style was found to be effective in increasing attention to information and practice of hygiene.