



## Comparative study on Health Awareness among the Urban and Rural Secondary School Students

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### ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of school location on the level of awareness of secondary school students about health. The study was conducted in the year 2008 at Purulia district in West Bengal. Two hundred forty nine (249) students were randomly selected from ten secondary schools of urban and rural area. The instrument utilized for this study was questionnaire namely "Health Awareness Measure Scale" (HAMS). Data was analyzed using inferential statistics. Five hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.01 and 0.05 levels of significance. Result showed that secondary school students in urban and rural areas are aware about health, but students in urban areas have more aware about health than their counterparts in rural areas. Result also showed that there were significant differences between urban and rural girls students in respect of their health awareness whereas urban and rural boys do not have significant differences. In conclusion, there were specific area differences between urban and rural girls student's in health awareness.

**Keywords:** Health, Awareness, Location, Secondary school, Students.

### INTRODUCTION

The paramount importance and significance of health is coined in the statement "Sharira Madhyam Kalu Dharma Sadhanam", i.e. a healthy body is the foremost important tool that facilitates performances of duties of life – is propagated by the ancient Indian thought, whereas English maxim "Health is wealth" is known to all. But to acquire that wealth one must be aware about the various dimensions and determinants of health.

Since time immemorial, every civilization has been incessantly striving and interacting with the bio-physical anthropo-socio-cultural parameters to nature its subjects and human resources. The ethnic relations of humans with local environmental world facilitated them with food and health. But industrial revolution brought forth serious environmental problems related to over-crowding, slums and accumulation of filth. This resulted in 'the great sanitary awakening' which led to the enactment of the Public Health Act (1848) in England.

This led to the foundations for the rise of the public health concept and concern for preventive medicine. "Prevention is better than cure" – is an age-old maxim but what method of prevention could be better than developing an integrated scientific awareness about all the dimensions of health among the future citizens of a country like ours.

The prosperity of a nation depends much upon the quality of its youths – their physical, intellectual and moral functions. If the men and women of a country are physically healthy and strong, intellectually creative and morally upright the nation is sure to make a steady headway in all aspects. One of the main functions of education is to help every pupil in developing a healthy body, an alert mind and sound emotional attitudes. A healthy mind lives only in healthy body. Health is the basis of individual and social welfare. Also good health is closely related efficiency in learning.

The present study conducted to reveal whether the level of health awareness between urban and rural secondary school students of Purulia is significant or not.

### OBJECTIVE

The purposes of the study were:

- i. To find out the awareness level of students on health based on school area (both urban and rural).
- ii. To compare the level of health awareness among urban and rural students of secondary school.

### HYPOTHESIS

The following null hypotheses were framed to be tested:

$H_1$ : There is no significant difference between urban and rural secondary school students in respect of their health awareness.

$H_2$ : There is no significant difference between urban boys and urban girls in respect of their health awareness.

$H_3$ : There is no significant difference between rural boys and rural girls in respect of their health awareness.

$H_4$ : There is no significant difference between urban boys and rural boys in respect of their health awareness.

$H_5$ : There is no significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in respect of their health awareness.

### METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the descriptive survey design. Two hundred forty nine (249) students were randomly selected from ten secondary schools in the area. The instrument utilized for this study was questionnaire namely "Health Awareness Measure Scale". Data was analyzed by using inferential statistical technique.

### POPULATION

Students reading in class VIII in the secondary schools recognized by the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, located in Purulia district formed the population of the present study. The population broadly classified on the basis of their sex as boys and girls and locality of the school as urban and rural.

### SAMPLE

The sample consisted of 249 secondary school students (both boys and girls) taken from urban and rural secondary schools of Purulia. The random sampling technique has been used to collect the sample for the present study. For the pur-

pose of this study the researcher randomly selected ten secondary schools, five from urban area and five from rural area of Purulia district. The boys and girls as sampling units were also randomly selected from those ten schools.

**TOOL**

A Health Awareness Measure Scale (HAMS) was developed and used for measuring the health awareness level of the urban and rural secondary school students.

**PROCEDURE**

The health awareness scale was administered on the sam-

ples of 249 students in five urban secondary schools and five rural secondary schools in order to assess their health awareness level. The filled up questionnaire were scored according to the scoring key. The total scores of each dimension for each of the students were tabulated separately for analysis.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

In order to determine the significance of difference between the two groups t-value has been computed which has been shown in the following tables. Table 1 provides a comparative picture of health awareness among the urban and rural students.

**Table 1: Computed t-value in respect of urban students vs. rural students.**

Dimension	Category	Mean	M1~M2	σ	N	Computed value of t	Tabulated value of t		
							df	Level	0.01
Physical standard	U	62.38	2.30	13.74	127	1.32	247	1.97	2.60
	R	60.08		13.84					
Food habit	U	79.90	6.09	12.97	127	3.70*	247	1.97	2.60
	R	73.81		12.99					
Physical activity	U	85.62	3.82	13.24	127	2.36#	247	1.97	2.60
	R	81.80		12.31					
School activity	U	86.05	6.63	14.95	127	3.19*	247	1.97	2.60
	R	79.42		17.64					
Personal cleanliness	U	76.27	1.30	10.06	127	0.92	247	1.97	2.60
	R	74.97		12.20					
Total	U	78.04	4.02	8.38	127	3.79*	247	1.97	2.60
	R	74.02		8.35					

\* means value of t is significant at both levels.

# means value of t is significance at 0.05 levels but not significance at 0.01 level.

The above table shows the t-value of hypothesis 0H1 which states that there is no significant difference between urban and rural secondary school students in respect of their health awareness. The summary of the analysis shows that the t-

value is significant at both level. It indicates that there is a significant difference between urban and rural students in respect of their health awareness. Thus, hypothesis 0H1 has been rejected.

Table 2 provides a comparative picture of health awareness among the urban boys and urban girl's students.

**Table 2: Computed t-value in respect of urban boys (UB) vs. urban girls (UG).**

Dimension	Category	Mean	M1~M2	σ	N	Computed value of t	Tabulated value of t		
							df	Level	0.01
Physical standard	UB	62.44	0.12	13.19	64	0.05	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	62.32		14.27					
Food habit	UB	78.72	2.38	13.98	64	1.04	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	81.10		11.72					
Physical activity	UB	85.94	0.65	13.85	64	0.28	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	85.29		12.58					
School activity	UB	84.90	2.31	14.15	64	0.87	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	87.21		15.64					
Personal cleanliness	UB	75.83	0.89	9.97	64	0.50	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	76.72		10.14					
Total	UB	77.57	0.96	7.82	64	0.65	125	1.98	2.62
	UG	78.53		8.89					

\* means value of t is significant at both levels.

# means value of t is significance at 0.05 levels but not significance at 0.01 level.

The above table shows the t-value of hypothesis 0H2 which states that there is no significant difference between urban boys and urban girls students in respect of their health awareness. The summary of the analysis shows that the t value is

not significant at both levels. It indicates that there has no real sex difference among urban boys and urban girls in respect of their health awareness. Thus, hypothesis 0H2 has been retained.

Table 3 provides a comparative picture of health awareness among the rural boys and rural girl's students.

**Table 3: Computed t-value in respect of rural boys (RB) vs. rural girls (RG).**

Dimension	Category	Mean	M1~M2	σ	N	Computed value of t	Tabulated value of t		
							df	Level	0.01
Physical standard	RB	62.37	4.65	13.97	62	1.88	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	57.72		13.29					
Food habit	RB	75.96	4.37	11.89	62	1.88	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	71.59		13.69					
Physical activity	RB	85.38	6.57	11.29	62	3.08*	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	78.81		12.24					
School activity	RB	81.72	4.68	18.70	62	1.48	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	77.04		16.12					

Personal cleanliness	RB	75.70	1.48	10.65	62	0.67	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	74.22		13.58	60				
Total	RB	76.22	4.49	7.82	62	3.08*	120	1.98	2.62
	RG	71.73		8.28	60				

\* means value of t is significant at both levels.

# means value of t is significance at 0.05 levels but not significance at 0.01 level.

The above table shows the t-value of hypothesis OH3 which states that there is no significant difference between rural boys and rural girls in respect of their health awareness. The

summary of the analysis shows that the t-value is significant at both levels. It indicates that there is a significant difference between rural boys and rural girl's students in respect of their health awareness. Thus, hypothesis OH3 has been rejected.

Table 4 provides a comparative picture of health awareness among the urban boys and rural boys students.

**Table 4: Computed t-value in respect of urban boys (UB) vs. rural boys (RB).**

Dimension	Category	Mean	M1~M2	σ	N	Computed value of t	Tabulated value of t		
							df	Level	
								0.05	0.01
Physical standard	UB	62.44	0.07	13.19	64	0.03	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	62.37		13.97	62				
Food habit	UB	78.72	2.76	13.98	64	1.20	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	75.96		11.89	62				
Physical activity	UB	85.94	0.56	13.85	64	0.25	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	85.38		11.29	62				
School activity	UB	84.90	3.18	14.15	64	1.07	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	81.72		18.70	62				
Personal cleanliness	UB	75.83	0.13	9.97	64	0.07	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	75.70		10.65	62				
Total	UB	77.57	1.35	7.82	64	0.97	124	1.98	2.62
	RB	76.22		7.82	62				

\* means value of t is significant at both levels.

# means value of t is significance at 0.05 levels but not significance at 0.01 level.

The above table shows the t-value of hypothesis OH4 which states that there is no significant difference between urban boys and rural boys in respect of their health awareness The

summary of the analysis shows that the t-value is not significant at both level. It indicates that there is no significant difference between urban boys and rural boys in respect of their health awareness. Thus, hypothesis OH4 has been retained.

Table 5 provides a comparative picture of health awareness among the urban girls and rural girl's students.

**Table 5: Computed t-value in respect of urban girls (UG) vs. rural girls (RG).**

Dimension	Category	Mean	M1~M2	σ	N	Computed value of 't' df	Tabulated value of t		
							Level		
								0.05	0.01
Physical standard	UG	62.32	4.60	14.27	63	1.85	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	57.72		13.29	60				
Food habit	UG	81.10	9.51	11.72	63	4.13*	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	71.59		13.69	60				
Physical activity	UG	85.29	6.48	12.58	63	2.90*	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	78.81		12.24	60				
School activity	UG	87.21	10.17	15.64	63	3.55*	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	77.04		16.12	60				
Personal cleanliness	UG	76.72	2.50	10.14	63	1.15	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	74.22		13.58	60				
Total	UG	78.53	6.80	8.89	63	4.39*	121	1.98	2.62
	RG	71.73		8.28	60				

\* means value of t is significant at both levels.

# means value of t is significance at 0.05 levels but not significance at 0.01 level.

The above table shows the t-value of hypothesis OH5 which states there is no significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in respect of their health awareness. The summary of the analysis shows that the t-value is significant at both levels. It indicates that there is a significant difference between urban girls and rural girls in respect of their health awareness. Thus, hypothesis OH5 has been rejected.

**FINDINGS**

In present study it has been found that-

- The awareness level of urban and rural students about health is not in the same level. In all dimensions the health awareness of the urban students is considerably higher than that of the rural students.
- The health awareness among the urban boys and urban girls is positively very high and they do not differ significantly from one another in respect of their health awareness level in all the dimensions.

cently from one another in respect of their health awareness level in all the dimensions. This is quite normal and natural due to the fact that they are being grown up in the same environment.

- The health awareness among the rural boys and rural girls is positively high and in all the dimensions the health awareness of the rural boys is considerably higher than that of the rural girls. The rural boys differ significantly from the rural girls in respect to their degree or amount of health awareness only in one dimension viz. physical activity. This may be owing to the fact that the rural boys are much more sincere in the physical exercise than the rural girls. This is quite normal and natural.
- The health awareness among the urban boys and rural boys is positively very high and they do not differ significantly from one another in respect of their health awareness level in all the dimensions. In all dimensions the health awareness of the urban boys is considerably higher than that of the rural boys.
- The health awareness among the urban girls and rural girls is positively high and they differ significantly from

one another in respect of their health awareness level in the dimensions food habit, physical activity and school activity. This difference may be happen due to location factor. In all dimensions the health awareness of the urban girls is considerably higher than that of the rural girls. This is quite normal and natural due to the fact that they are being grown up in the different environment.

has thrown some interesting light on the health awareness of secondary school students. In present study it has been found that health awareness among the urban and rural secondary school students is remarkably high and urban students are considerably greater than that of the rural students in respect of their health awareness. That means there was a real difference between urban and rural students due to location gap.

#### CONCLUSION

It is expected that students will aware about their health and try to maintain healthy lifestyle in every respect. The present study

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