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### **Anemia in South Indian adolescent girls: Cross sectional study on prevalence and risk factors**

**Lucy George**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bharathiyar University, India

<sup>2</sup>Mar Athanasios College for Advance Studies, India

**I**ron deficiency anemia in adolescent girls is directly linked to the maternal and population health of a country. The problem is more severe in rural areas as access to resources and right information is lacking. Many times there is insufficient data available from this vulnerable group and adequate support and timely intervention is not possible. A cross-sectional population based study was conducted to identify the risk factors prevalent in rural South India that contribute towards nutritional anemia. Two hundred study participants aged between 15-18 years were randomly selected from government & private aided schools in a Konni Taluk of Pathanamthita in Kerala. A pre-tested structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents to find out their socio-demographic correlates, dietary habits and awareness regarding anemia. Venous blood was collected for Hemoglobin estimation and nutritional anthropometry was done. The prevalence of anemia in the study group was 98%, of which 37% having mild anemia and 61% with moderate anemia. Anemia among the study group was not significantly associated with Body Mass Index ( $p=0.283$ ). Father's occupation ( $p=0.0013$ ), the dietary consumption of fruits ( $p=0.002$ ) and leafy vegetable ( $p=0.0041$ ) significantly associated. This study highlights the prevalence and risk of nutritional deficiencies in the population even from a well-developed and health forward state like Kerala. The findings of the study beg re-evaluation of schemes being run by state and voluntary agencies to tackle this problem and call for a more targeted and effective schemes to address the issue.

#### **Biography**

Lucy George has completed her MPhil from Dr NGP College, Bharathiyar University; Tamil Nadu, India. She has 15 years experience serving in Clinical and Public Health Nutrition in India and abroad. She is currently the Faculty of Bio-science Department in Mar Athanasius College of Advanced Studies, Kerala. She has presented three poster presentation and 2 oral presentations at the international conference in India. Her passion is to see the physiological/psychological up light of adolescence and youth in the universe. She served for DRDRO, Sree Chithra Thirunal Institute of Medical Science, national and international NGO named world vision in pursuit of attaining her goal.

[lucycasa@gmail.com](mailto:lucycasa@gmail.com)

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