

Breakfast Eating Pattern Associated with Nutritional Status of Urban Primary Schoolchildren in Iran and India

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Abstract : The aim of this study was to examine the effect of breakfast eating pattern (between frequencies of breakfast consumers and non-consumers) on nutritional status (weight for age, height for age and weight for height). A total 4570 primary school children aged 6-9 years old constituted the sample. From these, 2234 Iranian school children (1218 girls and 1016 boys) and 2336 Indian school children (1096 girls and 1240 boys) were included in a cross sectional study. Breakfast frequency consumption was recorded through an interview with mothers of children. Height and weight of children were taken and body mass index were calculated. The World Health Organization's (WHO) AnthroPlus software used to assess the nutritional status of the children. Weight for age z-scores were slightly associated with frequency of consuming breakfast in both India ($\chi^2 = 60.083$, $p=0.000$) and Iran ($\chi^2 = 18.267$, $p=0.032$). A significant association was seen between frequency of child's breakfast intake and the height z-scores in both India ($\chi^2 = 31.334$, $p=0.000$) and Iran ($\chi^2 = 19.443$, $p=0.022$). Most of children with normal height had breakfast daily in both countries. A significant association was seen with children's BMI z-scores of Indian children ($\chi^2 = 31.247$, $p=0.000$) but it was not significant in Iran ($\chi^2 = 10.791$, $p=0.095$). The present study confirms the observations of other studies that showed more frequency in having breakfast is associated with better nutritional status.

Keywords : breakfast, schoolchildren, nutritional status, global food security

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