

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DIETARY HABIT OF RURAL AND URBAN CHILDREN

Dissertation for the Degree of Master of Science

Foods and Nutrition

By

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Abstract:

Background: Diet and nutrition of children influence their current health status and scholastic performance and also have long term consequences reaching well into their adulthood. Further, diet preferences and practices acquired during childhood usually persist for life. Data on nutritional intake of school children is required by public health policy makers to be able to formulate nutritional intervention and also for nutritionists and general practitioners to be able to advise parents and care givers regarding the inadequacies in the diet. This study out in rural and urban area. To study the dietary patterns and preferences of school children in the age group 11 to 13 years.

Method: Qualitative diet survey was carried out by oral questionnaire method. The data collected was on the food habits, frequency of various types of food eaten and the preferences/dislike to various food items. A database was created in MS Excel and JAMOV used analyze data. Appropriate inferential and descriptive statistics were calculated.

Result: rural area 82 % of the children were vegetarian's diet and only around 8 % were Non vegetarians and in urban area 88 % vegetarians and 2% Non-vegetarian. Rural area 68 % of children consumed milk daily and in urban area 78% of children consumed milk daily. Only 16 % children consumed fruits daily in rural area and in urban area 32% children consumed fruits daily. Snacks, fast food and processed food were the most preferred food by the children. And in rural area 12% children in underweight, 80 % children in normal and 8% children in overweight. And in urban area 42% children in underweight ,48%children in normal and 10% children in overweight.

Conclusion: Food habits acquired during childhood persist into adulthood and form the basis of either good health or ill health, as the case may be, in the coming years. Hence there is a need to educate parents, especially in the middle and higher socioeconomic groups regarding correct dietary habits for the children to ensure that they can live healthy and productive lives as adults.

Keywords Food habits, Children's Nutrition and Health