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Dietary patterns as predictive factor for overweight/obesity among adolescents in Mashhad, Iran

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Statement of Problem: A growing volume of literature points that the food intake pattern being more predictive of health outcomes than the single nutrient approach. The World Health Organization suggests that dietary allowances for populations should be based on the totality of their diets rather than on the traditional focus on nutrients. Diet in childhood and adolescents have a potential lifelong effect on risks for obesity.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to determine the main dietary patterns among the adolescents and investigate its relationship with overweight and obesity among them.

Methodology: This cross sectional study was conducted among 1189 urban secondary school children who studied in 10 schools (overall from 501 schools), in Mashhad. It explored, food intake using a 121 item food frequency questionnaire (FFQ). The Principal Component Factor analysis (PCA) was applied to define dietary patterns. Overweight and obesity was defined using WHO cut-off points.

Findings: The patterns were labelled subjectively based on the nature of the food groups with labelled as Healthy Pattern (HP) that characterized by higher intake of fish and other sea foods, fruits, and fruit juice, green, white and yellow vegetables, whole grains, dried and processed fruits, and Unhealthy pattern (UP) that was heavily loaded on food items were high energy dense and rich in oil and sugar such as sweets, sugars and confectionary, tea, and coffee, egg, cooked, and fried potato, and moderately loaded on snacks, nuts, Iranian broth, and pickles. This study showed that 11.7% of adolescents were obese and 17.3% were overweight. The HP was significantly associated with BMI (Body Mass Index). Similarly, UP was significantly associated with BMI.

Conclusions: Childhood obesity is one of the biggest health issues in Mashhad. Dietary patterns are good predictive and useful when a researcher wants to examine the relationship between overall patterns of diet and health outcomes, such as obesity.

Biography

Khosro Shafaghi completed his Master's Degree of Sciences in the field of Public Health in Nutrition from Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS), in 1989. He started work as a Lecturer of Nutrition in Kashan University of Medical Sciences in 1990, and then continued the position in Mashhad University of Medical Sciences among 1997-1999. He also has been a Lecturer in Gonabad University of Medical Sciences from year 2000, a position which he holds up to present time. In 2007, his passion for community research inspired him to pursue a PhD Degree in the field of Community Nutrition, under the supervision of Professor Doctor Zalilah Mohd Shariff in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Putra Malaysia. His current research interest is on overweight/obesity and dietary patterns in children and adolescents.

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