

A Case Study on the Relationships between the Dietary Patterns and the Nutritional Status of School Children of the Farming Community in “Galkadapathana” Village in Sri Lanka

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Nutritional status is an important indicator for measuring the quality of life of children. *Galkadapathana* is a rural agricultural village in the Nuwara Eliya district. Villagers confront difficulties related to their nutritional status due to low-income levels, education levels, and infrastructure facilities. This study was undertaken to identify the relationships between the nutritional status of school children of *Galakadapathana* village and their dietary patterns. A community-based cross-sectional study was carried out using a deductive approach. A total of 85 households with 137 school children in the age group of 6-18 years were randomly selected. Data was collected using structured surveys and conducting face-to-face interviews. The nutritional status of children was assessed through anthropometric measurements. Among 137 school children, there were 71 boys and 66 girls. Stunting was seen in 16.9% of boys and 4.2% were severely stunted based on height- for- age, according to the WHO standard. Furthermore, 12.1% are stunted, while 7.6% were severely stunted in girls. Based on the WHO standard for BMI-for-age, 7.6% of girls and 7.0% of boys were severely underweight. The prevalence of overweight was 3.6% and obesity was 2.2% of the population. Obesity was predominantly seen among girls (4.5%), and not observed among boys. The amount of starchy food intake showed a significant impact on the prevalence of wasting ($P<0.05$), but not the dietary diversity.

Keywords: Dietary diversity, Malnutrition, Nutritional status, Stunting, Underweight

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