



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
Impact Factor: 5.2
IJAR 2017; 3(3): 904-906
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 19-01-2017
Accepted: 20-02-2017

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An exploratory study to assess the effect of breakfast skipping on college performance among Bsc nursing students in MM College of nursing, Mullana, Ambala

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Abstract

Skipping breakfast has become the norm in modern day India because of changes in family lifestyle. When this happens largely among students, it can result in their suboptimal growth and development – a factor important to the future human resource development of the country. The aim of the study was to explore the skipping of breakfast among nursing students and its effects on various parameters such as college performance and its nutritional status. Descriptive Exploratory design was used in this study. Researcher included the undergraduate students. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling and a total of 72 undergraduate students were included.

The results of the study were analyzed in SPSS version 21 using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency as well as chi square test was used to assess the association between skipping breakfast and non-skipping breakfast and various parameters. 70.8% of the total subjects were skipping breakfast while 29.2% of the subjects didn't skip their breakfast.

There is a significant association between skipping breakfast with grade obtained at $p=0.05$. Most common reason for skipping breakfast among breakfast skipper and non-skipping was the lack of time. There is a significant association between skipping breakfast with grade obtained at $p=0.05$.

Conclusion: Breakfast skipping significantly affects a number of parameters like academic performance, attendance, concentration; nutritional status etc. skipping breakfast affects both nutritional status and academic performance. There is a significant association between skipping breakfast with grade obtained as well as educational status at $p=0.05$.

Keywords: Breakfast skipping, college performance, nursing student

1. Introduction

Breakfast is considered the most important meal of the day, providing the essential nutrients for the day's activities for children, adolescents and adults [1]. Skipping breakfast has become the norm in modern day India because of changes in family lifestyle. When this happens largely among students, it can result in their suboptimal growth and development – a factor important to the future human resource development of the country [1]. Breakfast is regarded by many as “the most important meal of the day”, because an adequate food intake at the beginning of the day helps to ensure that nutrient needs by the body for the remainder of the day are likely to be met. The problem student face when attempting morning college work on an empty stomach appears to be at least partly due to low blood glucose [3], regular pattern of having breakfast on most days of the week has been associated with improving and enhancing general nutritional health and is linked to long-term health status [1]. Breakfast has been suggested to positively affect learning in students in terms of behavior, cognitive, and college performance. To maintain this higher metabolic rate, a continuous supply of energy derived from glucose is needed; hence breakfast consumption may be vital in providing adequate energy for the morning. Students who habitually consume breakfast are more likely to have favorable nutrient intakes including higher intake of dietary fiber, total carbohydrate and lower total fat and cholesterol [2]. Very less published work is available on the prevalence of breakfast skipping in college going students in India. A study was conducted by Arshad N *et al* (2014) on sample of 240 respondents to find out the breakfast habits on the academic performance.

It was found that there is high association between breakfast habits and education performance. Students consuming less food feel lazy and inactive during study and can't focus on the study. A vast majority of the respondents i.e.47% don't take breakfast often while most of the students missed one time meal often that become the cause of brain damage and makes the student cognitive level low. That becomes the cause of obtained low grades in education [4]. in another study conducted by Rachael M. Schroll, (2006) assessed the effects of Breakfast on Memory Retention of Students at the College Level. Subjects were tested on two different days, once after consumption of breakfast foods, and once without consumption of breakfast. Using one word list, three face recognition tests, and one object test, the students were tested to determine whether breakfast aided in their cognitive functioning.

2. Methodology: The aim of the study was to explore the skipping of breakfast among nursing students and its effects on various parameters such as college performance and its nutritional status. Descriptive Exploratory design was used in this study. Researcher included the undergraduate

students of MM College of nursing, Mullana who were present during the data collection period. Tools used in the study were demographic characteristics and checklist for perception regarding the importance of breakfast. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling technique and a total of 72 undergraduate students were included in the study. The subjects were asked to fill the demographic Performa and the checklist related to perception of breakfast. For assessment of nutritional status the researchers calculated the BMI of the subjects and for academic performance and attendance the grades obtained in the last exam was evaluated. The data collected was coded using statistical analysis tool. Chi-square used for the statistical testing.

3. Results: The results of the study were analyzed in SPSS version 21 using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency as well as chi square test was used to assess the association between skipping breakfast and non skippers breakfast with various parameters. 70.8% of the total subjects were skipping breakfast while 29.2% of the subjects didn't skip their breakfast.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics among Breakfast Skipper and Breakfast Non Skippers, N=72

Parameters		Breakfast Skipper N=51	Breakfast Non Skipper N=21	Chi-Square	P-value
1. Age (In Yrs)	1.1 18-22	42	15	2.94	0.3
	1.2 23-27	09	05		
	1.3 28-32	00	01		
2. Gender	2.1 Male	09	02	0.75	0.4
	2.2 Female	42	19		
3. Educational Status	3.1 Bsc. (N) 2 nd year	41	10	7.73	0.007*
	3.2 P.B Bsc. (N) 2 nd year	10	11		
4. Marital Status	4.1 Unmarried	51	20	2.46	0.29
	4.2 Widow/Widower	00	01		
5. Type of Family	5.1 Nuclear	34	16	0.63	0.5
	5.2 Joint	17	05		
6. Number of Hours Studying At Home	6.1 1hr	06	03	1.765	0.7
	6.2 2hrs	18	09		
	6.3 3hrs	16	04		
	6.4 4hrs	10	05		

The above table 1 depicts results of chi-square test applied on various demographic parameters like age, gender, educational status, and marital status, type of family, attendance and number of hours of study. There is

significant association of skipping breakfast with the education group (p <0.004). Most of the student in Bsc nursing were non breakfast skippers in comparison to post basic Bsc nursing students.

Table 2: Comparison for Grade, Reasons for Skipping Meal and Time, BMI Obtained By Breakfast Skippers and Breakfast Non Skippers N=72

Parameters		Breakfast Skippers N=51	Breakfast Non-Skippers N=21	Chi-square	P value
1. grades	1.1 A (85-100%)	0	0	0.078	.005*
	1.2 B (75-84%)	4	01		
	1.3 C (51 -<75%)	45	20		
	1.4 D (≤50%)	2	0		
2. bmi	2.1 Underweight	21	5	-2.317	0.3
	2.2 Normal	23	11		
	2.3 Overweight	07	5		
3. reasons for skipping meal and time,	3.1 non skipper	0	18	72.000	0.001*
	3.2 lack of time	29	0		
	3.3 laziness	3	0		
	3.4 fullness	15	0		
	3.5 tasteless food	4	0		
	3.6 other	3	0		

This table 2 depicts that comparison of Grade obtained by breakfast skippers and breakfast non skippers. More number of breakfast non skippers score Grade C (95.2%) in comparison with breakfast skippers (82%). There is a

significant association between skipping breakfast with grade obtained at $p=0.05$. Most common reason for skipping breakfast among breakfast skipper and non skipper was the lack of time.

Table 3: Perception of Nursing students regarding the importance of breakfast among breakfast skippers and breakfast non skippers N=72

Parameters		Breakfast skippers N=51	Breakfast non-skippers n=21	Chi-square	P value
1. Does you feel skipping of breakfast affect your Health Consciousness	Yes	41	21	4.78	0.02*
	No	10	0		
2. Do You Feel Any Difference In the Efficiency To Work / Concentrate If You Don't Consume Breakfast?	Yes	42	21	4.23	0.04*
	No	09	00		
3. Is It Important To Have breakfast Regularly?	Yes	49	20	0.26	0.8
	No	02	01		
4. Does Breakfast Influence Body Functioning, Physical/Mental?	Yes	47	19	0.55	08
	No	04	02		
5. Do You Feel Weak Or Tired While Attending Class Without Having Breakfast?	Yes	40	20	3.02	0.8
	No	11	01		
6. Do you feel any difficulty in memorizing things if you don't consume breakfast	Yes	20	14	4.49	0.03*
	No	31	07		
7. Does Skipping Breakfast Affect college Attendance?	Yes	13	09	2.11	0.14
	No	38	12		
8. Does Skipping Breakfast Affect Concentration on class ?	Yes	38	18	1.08	0.29
	No	13	03		
9. Does Skipping Breakfast Affect Physical Activity?	Yes	39	17	0.17	0.6
	No	12	09		
10. Do You Aspire To Have Breakfast Daily?	Yes	45	19	0.07	0.7
	No	06	02		
11. Do you feel annoyed all the times if you don't consume breakfast	Yes	17	14	0.74	0.09*
	No	34	07		
12. Does skipping breakfast affect our relationship with your classmates	Yes	08	05	0.06	0.4
	No	43	16		

The above table 3 depicts the association between the breakfast skipping and non-skipping in relation to the level of perception regarding breakfast. There is highly statistical significant was seen in parameters 1- Do you feel skipping of breakfast affect your health, parameter 2- Do you feel any difference in the efficiency to work if u skip breakfast, parameters 6 – Do you feel any difficulty in memorizing thing if you don't consumed breakfast, Parameter 11- Do you feel annoyed all the times if you don't consumed breakfast

4. Discussion

In our study there is no any significant difference seen in nutritional status, academic performance between breakfast skippers and non skippers. In a study conducted by Garg M *et al*, A significant difference was also seen in a no. of parameters like memory ($p<0.001$), concentration ($p<0.001$), grades obtained ($p<0.001$), attendance ($p<0.001$) etc between breakfast skippers and breakfast non-skippers. The study indicates that skipping breakfast affects both the nutritional status as well as the school performance of the students [2]. In our study significant difference was seen among breakfast skipping and grades obtained as well as educational status of the students. In similar study conducted by Arshad N *et al*, (2014) It is found that there is highly association between breakfast habits and education performance the students who consumed less food feel laziness and inactive during study they can't focus on the study [4]. in this study researcher found significant difference in various perceptions regarding importance of breakfast among breakfast skippers and non-skippers.

5. Conclusion

As per the findings of the study the prevalence of breakfast skipping among the undergraduate nursing students was 70.8%. Breakfast skipping significantly affects a number of parameters like academic performance, attendance, concentration; nutritional status etc. skipping breakfast affects both nutritional status and academic performance. There is a significant association between skipping breakfast with grade obtained as well as educational status at $p=0.05$. Most common reason for skipping breakfast among breakfast skipper and non-skipper was the lack of time. There were some limitations in the study. Equal number of boys and girls could have been considered for better comparison. There is a need as part of the parents as well as health care providers to make the students aware regarding the significance of breakfast and motivate towards healthy life style.

6. Reference

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