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**Original article**

**Relationship between childhood obesity and eating habits in school going children (6 – 11 years) of Central India.**

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**Abstract**

**Context:** Childhood obesity along with its co-morbidities is expanding rapidly in India due to its evolving economy and urbanization. One of the major causes of childhood obesity is unhealthy eating habits which is an effect of changing life style of the families. Identification of the causative factors is important to limit the expansion of childhood obesity.

**Methods and Materials:** Obesity and overweight was measured using BMI and cut off points given by IOTF. Pre-validated questionnaire was used to acquire information about eating habits and background characteristics. SPSS software and MS Excel was used for statistical analysis.Data was analysed based on percentages and proportions and relationship between variables and overweight and obesity were established using Chi – square test and multivariate logistic regression analysis.

**Results:** Overall prevalence of overweight and obesity was 13.5% and 13%, respectively. Eating habits like consumption of junk foods(AOR=2.649, 95% CI=1.737-4.040, p=0.0001), picky/ poor eaters(AOR=2.063, 95% CI=1.382-3.079, p=0.0001), snacking without permission of parents(AOR=2.767, 95% CI=1.205-6.352, p=0.016), easy availability of cookies at home(AOR=1.619, 95% CI=1.025-2.557, p=0.039) were significantly related to overweight and obesity. Prevalence of obesity was found significantly higher in higher income group and nuclear families.

**Conclusions:** Prevalence of obesity is increasing in Indian children, focussing on the probable role of change in dietary pattern with the increase in income levels. Effective measures needs to be taken by parents, schools and Government to control and reduce the expansion of childhood obesity in the country.

**Keywords:** BMI, Childhood, Eating Habits, Immunity, Nuclear Family, Obesity, Overweight, Prevalence, School-going children, Socio – economic Status.