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Risk factors of overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence in south Asian countries: A systematic review of the evidence

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The study was carried out to assess and synthesize the published evidence on risk factors of overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence in South Asia. A systematically conducted narrative review was performed of all primary studies published between January 1990 and June 2013 from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Maldives through the following databases: PubMed, PubMed central, EMBASE, MEDLINE, BioMed central, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and electronic libraries of the authors' institutions. Data extraction and quality appraisal of included studies was performed and findings were synthesized in a narrative manner as meta-analysis was inappropriate. Eleven primary studies conducted in school setting in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh was included in the final review. The key risk factors with statistically significant associations to overweight and obesity included: Lack of physical activities reported in six studies; prolonged TV watching/playing computer games reported in four studies; frequent consumption of fast-food/junk food reported in four studies; frequent consumption of calorie dense food items reported in two studies; higher socioeconomic status reported in four studies and family history of obesity reported in three studies. This review provides evidence of increasing burden of obesity and overweight among children and adolescents in South Asia and demonstrates the nutritional transition which characterizes other developing countries. The findings have implications for policy, practice and the development of interventions at various levels to promote healthy eating and physical activity among children and adolescents in the region as well as more globally.

Biography

Sabuj Kanti Mistry has completed both his Graduation and MSc in Nutrition and Food Science from University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. Later, he has received Commonwealth Scholarship to study MSc in Public Health from University of Bedfordshire, UK and passed with a Distinction. He is currently working as Senior Research Associate in Research and Evaluation Division, BRAC and involved with research related to maternal, neonatal and child health and nutrition; food security and nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene. He has published several research reports and journal articles and a number of them are currently under process of publication.

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