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## Regional disparity analysis for dietary diversity and food and nutrient adequacy of school-going children from Punjab, India

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A survey was conducted to assess food and nutrient intake and dietary diversity among 1050 school children (11-17y) selected from urban and rural government schools of three regions of Punjab, namely, Majha (n=210), Doaba (n=210) and Malwa (n=630) using thirty-cluster multistage sampling technique. For multiple comparisons between regions, analysis of variance followed by Tukey's post-hoc test was applied. The diets of the selected school-going children were predominantly composed of roots and tubers followed by Pulses, Cereal and Millets and Sugar; moderate amount of Fats and Oils and Vegetables and highly inadequate quantity of Green Leafy Vegetables, Milk and Milk products, Fruits, Meat and Poultry. Further, the diets of children were inadequate in energy, Protein, Fat, Thiamine, Riboflavin, Niacin, Vitamin B12, Folic acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron and Zinc. The overall mean household dietary diversity and food variety scores of the children from Punjab were 5.8 out of 12 and 19.3 out of 44, respectively, which indicated that their diets had poor diversity. Mean food variety scores of the children from Malwa region were significantly ( $p \leq 0.01$ ) higher in comparison to that of Majha and Doaba region; whereas, no regional disparity was seen in the mean household dietary diversity scores. Irrespective of region, it was inferred that all the subjects had poor nutrient adequacy with moderate dietary diversity. The study highlights the points to ponder for policy makers in framing and strengthening health programs for better nutritional status of school going children from different regions of the state.

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