

Nutritional Status of *Bhil* Tribal Children in Madhya Pradesh, India: A Cross Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT A cross-sectional study of the nutritional status was conducted on 254 *Bhil* tribal children (133 boys and 121 girls aged 4 to 12 years) in the Goklyakund Gram Panchayat of Indore district of Madhya Pradesh, India. In this study, 24 hours dietary recall method was used to assess dietary intakes of children. Anthropometric measurement in the form of height and weight were recorded and children were classified by WHO criterion (Z-score) using nutritional indices that is, weight for age, height for age and weight for height. Mean intake of energy and protein per day was calculated and compared with Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) for Indians. The data revealed that the overall (age-sex combined) prevalence of undernutrition among *Bhil* tribal children was as follows: underweight (69.3%), stunting (63.4%) and wasting (58.7%). In girls, prevalence of underweight (72.7%) and wasting (61.1%) was higher in comparison to boys (66.2% underweight and 56.4% wasting). However, boys suffered more by undernutrition than girls in the age group of 4-6 years. The average consumption of all foods except cereals (maize) and average consumption of protein and energy were also much lower among *Bhil* tribal children than the RDA in all age groups. The results of the study will be useful in the implementation of nutritional intervention programs for improving of *Bhil* tribal health with special focus on children.