

Assessment of Breakfast Eating Habits Among Students of Takoradi Polytechnic

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to assess breakfast eating habits of students of Takoradi Polytechnic. Descriptive research design, which is a non-experimental research design, was applied. The sampling method adopted was the non-probabilistic convenience sampling technique. The data used was basically primary and qualitative in nature which was collected via the questionnaire administration method of the survey technique. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 16. It was discovered that majority of the students regard breakfast as the most important meal of the day. Also, the results revealed that the most common reason for eating of breakfast among students of the Polytechnic is to boost energy to start the day. Moreover, it was evidenced that majority of the students were ignorant about the constituents of a complete breakfast. It was further evinced that students perceive breakfast as a good eating habit. Individual preference was also revealed the principal determinants of students' food choice and breakfast eating habits. It was finally discovered that lack of energy is a possible effect of skipping breakfast. The study concluded with such recommendations, among others, that the Polytechnic should require the services of a Nutritionist to brief students on the importance of eating breakfast and what a good breakfast should contain. Students should be guided to stock their cupboards with ready-to-eat breakfast they can grab and go with. The teaching calendar of the Polytechnic should be revised so that students can have time to eat breakfast before leaving for class to avoid headache when they attend lectures in the morning. The Polytechnic should consider an establishment which serves breakfast at an affordable price on campus to encourage breakfast eating among students in the Polytechnic.

Keywords: Breakfast, constituents of complete breakfast, food choice, Takoradi Polytechnic, students' eating habits.

1. INTRODUCTION

Breakfast is the first meal of the day, eaten before or at the start of daily activities, within two hours of waking, typically not later than ten o'clock in the morning and of an energy level between 20 and 35 percent of total daily energy needs (Timlin and Pereira, 2007). According to Burns (2007), breakfast is the first meal of the day eaten before performing the day's activities. Among English speakers, breakfast can be used to refer to a meal composed of traditional breakfast foods (such as eggs, oatmeal and sausage) served at any time of the day. The word literally refers to breaking the fasting period of the prior night. Breakfast helps to boost metabolism. Metabolism is the engine in the human body that controls how the body uses energy throughout the day. It is especially important for the brain to have energy for thinking and learning (Wilson, 2004). Breakfast foods vary from place to place, but often include a carbohydrate such as grains or cereals, fruits and/or vegetables (such as orange, pineapple, cucumber or tomatoes), a protein food (such as eggs, meat, or fish) and a beverage (such as tea, coffee, milk or fruit juice). Eating breakfast has been significantly associated with better concentration, performance and test scores among students (Moore, 2007). Students should never go to school hungry because hunger is linked to irritability and fatigue. It is hard to learn and interact in class when students are irritated and tired (Nelson, 2006).

However, it is good to choose a breakfast that will benefit the body and mind not to mention a breakfast that will make one full for a while. A good breakfast should include a balanced variety of foods and should be nutritious as well. There is that popular proverb that goes, 'Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a pauper' (Davis, 1974). The idea behind this is that having the biggest meal of the day in the morning provides energy for the work day. In addition, the calories in foods eaten earlier in the day are processed more efficiently than those in foods eaten at night. The benefit of eating this way include not only more energy for school but also weight loss. Individuals should start the day with a good breakfast and to avoid large meals at night. After not eating for the past 8 to 10 hours, one's goal is to start the day by giving the body foods that provides energy and nutrients.

Breakfast is considered an important meal because it breaks the overnight fasting period, replenishes the supply of glucose and provides other essential nutrients to keep the energy levels up throughout the day (Anderson, 2013). Breakfast provides a significant proportion of the day's total nutrients intake and offer the opportunity to eat foods fortified with nutrients such as iron, B vitamins, calcium, zinc and fiber. Essential vitamins, minerals and other nutrients can only be gained from food, so one needs to consume the right proportion of these nutrients to maintain good health and vitality. Though a large range of preparation and ingredients are associated with breakfast globally, nutritional experts have referred to breakfast as the most

important meal of the day, citing studies that find that people who skip breakfast are disproportionately likely to have problems with concentration, metabolism, weight, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes which may in turn lead to a heart attack over time (Leah, 2013). According to Anderson (2013), breakfast skippers tend to be deficient in minerals such as zinc, iron, in addition to not getting enough fruits and vegetables that provides important vitamins.

In the past several years, research has shown that regular breakfast consumption has important implication for improving health (Szajewska and Rusczyńska, 2010) as well as improving cognitive performance and reducing mental distress in young people (Lien, 2007). Despite these reported advantages, 10 to 35 percent of young people in many westernized countries regularly skip breakfast and these numbers are higher in girls compared with boys (Graham and Uphold, 1992). From a health perspective, breakfast consumption may favorably affect nutrition, body composition and chronic disease risk makers, all of which have considerable relevance given public health concerns of obesity and associated cardio metabolic disorders in young people, including insulin resistance, dyslipidaemia and hypertension (Burke, 2006). This is particularly concerned with young generation since the transition from adolescent to adulthood appears to be a high risk period for weight gain (Larsen, Adair, Nelson and Popkin, 2004) and the temporal reduction in insulin sensivity during the pubertal period (Goran and Gower, 2001).

Although what we put in our bodies matters, when we choose to eat that food also has an impact on how our bodies will process it and our likelihood of gaining weight from it. The timing of when we eat can influence body weight (Kerns, 2008).

Basically, there are various types of breakfast such as continental breakfast, English breakfast, American breakfast, French breakfast, and Chinese breakfast (Aragane, 2010). For many people, changing eating habits is very hard. One may have had certain eating habits for so long that the person does not realize they are unhealthy. Or ones habit has become part of his daily life, so therefore do not think much about them. The term eating habit refers to why and how people eat, which foods they eat and with whom they eat, as well as the ways people obtain, store, use and discard food. Individual, social, cultural, religious, economic, environmental and political factors all influence peoples eating habits and food choice (Rodriguez, 2004).

The intake of breakfast has been referred to as the most important meal of the day by nutritional experts. The intake of breakfast does not only break the early morning fast but also provides incredible result to the individual. People who eat breakfast tend to perform better at school and tend to have healthier diets overall (Moore, 2007). The importance includes; high energy level, high productivity, weight maintenance, brain function and so on. However, the researcher observed on Takoradi polytechnic campus that many students were still struggling to reach a real understanding of breakfast eating habit, some did not know what a healthy breakfast should contain, others did not regard breakfast and made it a habit of skipping it while some were also following a daily routine of breakfast eating habit.

It is upon these problems that the study put the searchlight on the assessment of breakfast eating habits among Takoradi polytechnic students.

Basically, the main objective of the study was to assess breakfast eating habits among students of Takoradi Polytechnic. The specific objectives were:

- To ascertain the importance of breakfast eating habits among Takoradi polytechnic students.
- To find out what basically constitutes breakfast among Takoradi Polytechnic students.
- To identify the factors that influence eating habits and food choice of breakfast among Takoradi Polytechnic students.
- To find out on the knowledge on the effects of skipping breakfast among Takoradi Polytechnic students.

To achieve these objectives, the study sought to find answers to the following research questions:

- What are the importance of breakfast eating habits among Takoradi polytechnic students?
- What constitutes breakfast among Takoradi polytechnic students?
- What are the factors that influence eating habits and food choice of breakfast among Takoradi polytechnic students?
- What are the effects of skipping breakfast among Takoradi polytechnic students?

The study is significance because can help to erase all the negative perceptions students had about breakfast eating habits and give them a better understanding of eating breakfast as the most important meal of the day. More so, the study can create awareness to students about the importance of breakfast eating habits, it constitutes, factors that influence one's eating habits and food choice of breakfast and the effects of skipping breakfast. Furthermore, the outcome of this paper can assist in making meaningful recommendations to students which can guide them on the right measures to adopt for good and healthy living.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This section presents the research design, population and sample characteristics, sampling technique, data collection procedure, data collection instrument and data analysis.

Research Design

Research design is a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed (Parahoo, 1997). According to Burns and Grove (2003), research design is a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over other factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. This study was a non-experimental research thus adopting the descriptive research design. This was because the researcher did not manipulate any of the variables. Non experimental research design does not involve a manipulation of the situation, circumstance or experience of the participants (Bell, 1999). Descriptive research is designed to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens. It may be used to justify current practice and make judgment and also to develop theories (Burns and Grove, 2003). For the purpose of this study, descriptive research was used to obtain a picture of the respondent's opinions on breakfast eating habits in Takoradi polytechnic with a view of improving the standards of eating habits of students. The study employed survey. Survey is a way of collecting information that represents the views of the community or group in which the researcher is interested in. In survey method, participants answer questions administered through interviews or questionnaires. After participants answer the questions, researchers describe the responses given (Jackson, 2009). The study was carried out in four schools within Takoradi polytechnic. Survey was used because it helped the researcher to gather information systematically from a sample of respondents by means of questionnaires across the schools within the polytechnic and this enabled the students to describe their concerns and ideas about the study.

Population and Sample Characteristics

Polit and Hungler (1999) referred to population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specification. According to Dillon, Madden and Firtle (1990) target population refers to the set of people, subjects, products, firms, market and so forth that contains the information that is of interest to the researcher. The target population of the study included respondents from the four schools within Takoradi polytechnic. Sample frame is a list of all those within a target population who can be sampled, and may include individuals, households or institution (Sarndal, Swensson and Wretmann, 2003). The sample frame comprised of respondents from school of applied science, applied art, business, and engineering. Sample size is the number of respondents or observations used for calculating estimates of a given population (Julious, 2009). A sample size of sixty was selected meaning fifteen respondents from each school.

Sampling Technique

According to the United States Bureau of the Census (1998) sampling technique is the name or other identification of the specific process by which the entities of the sample have been selected. In this study, non-probability sampling was used, thus employing convenience sampling approach. Non probability sampling is a sampling technique where the samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the individuals in the population equal chances of being selected (Babbie, 2001). Convenience sampling is simply one in which the researcher uses any subjects that are available to participate in the research study (Babbie, 2001). The technique was appropriate because the sample was selected at the convenience of the researcher such that respondents who happened to be chanced upon were given questionnaires to answer or respond to address the topic.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypothesis and evaluate outcomes (Lescroel et al, 2014). To obtain relevant information for this research, Primary source of data was collected to achieve the objectives of the study. Primary data is the type of data where the investigator collects directly from the subjects of study. This is done with the aid of survey instrument like observation, questionnaire and face to face interviews (Turkson, 2012). A survey was used to collect primary data and this relied on questionnaire administration. A survey is a way of collecting information that represent the views of the community or group in which the researcher is interested in. In survey method research, participants answer questions administered through interviews or questionnaires. After participants answer the questions, researchers describe the responses given. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents in their various class rooms and hostels and was collected on the same day of delivery.

Data Collection Instrument

Data collection instrument is a device or tool used to collect data such as questionnaires, opinionnaires, interview guide and observation forms (Brown, 2001). The data used in this study was collected by means of questionnaires. Questionnaire is a data collection instrument mostly used in normative surveys. This is a systematically prepared form or document with a set of questions deliberately designed to elicit responses from respondents or research information's for the purpose of collecting data (Annum, 2014). It comprised one set questionnaires. The questionnaire contained both open and close ended type of questions. With the open ended questions, respondents were not given answers to choose from. According to Annum (2014) open ended

questions calls for a free response in the respondents own words. The respondent frames and supplies the answer to the question raised in the questionnaire. Spaces are often provided for respondents to make their inputs. This helped the researcher to obtain views and ideas from the respondents. More so, with the close ended questions, lists of possible responds were provided for the respondents to choose from. Close ended question are those in which some control or guidance is given for the answer. This may be described as closed form because the questions are basically short, requiring the respondent to provide a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response, or checking an item out of a list of given responses (Annum, 2014). The researcher administered questionnaires to respondents to fill in order to obtain as much evidence and information as possible.

Data Analysis

According to Ader and Mellenbergh (2008), Data analysis is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making. The data was edited, coded and presented in the form of frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs which helped to reveal the findings of the research using Micro Soft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Coding can be defined as the transformation of data into a form understandable by computer software (Hay, 2005). Editing simply means correction of mistakes or errors in the data. Errors can occur at various stages of the study; during the instrument designing stage, collection of data and at the stage of entering data into the computer (Turkson, 2012).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Characteristics

The table 1 displays the frequency distribution of sex of respondents selected for the study. The table clearly indicates that majority of the respondents were males which recorded 32 respondents representing 53%, while the remaining 28 respondents representing 47% were females.

Table 1. Sex of Respondents

Sex of respondents	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	32	53.3
Female	28	46.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work

Table 2 displays the frequency distribution of age of respondents who participated in the survey. The table shows that the common age groups among the respondents were 21-25 years, which recorded 44 respondents representing 73%, followed by age group 26-30 years, which recorded 13 respondents representing 22%, 31-35 years which recorded 2 respondents representing 3% and 16-20 years which recorded 1 respondent representing 2% respectively.

Table 2. Age of Respondents

Age of respondents (Years)	Frequency	Percent (%)
16-20	1	1.7
21-25	44	73.3
26-30	13	21.7
31-35	2	3.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work

Table 3 presents the frequency distribution of schools of affiliation of the respondents. In consensus each school was given the same number of questionnaires to be distributed among the respondents. Therefore, all the four schools received equal proportion of 15 questionnaires representing 25% per school as indicated in the figure above.

Table 3. School of Affiliation

Schools	Frequency	Percent (%)
School of Applied Art	15	25.0
School of Business	15	25.0
School of Engineering	15	25.0
School of Applied Science	15	25.0
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work

Table 4 is the frequency distribution of year of study of the respondents. It can be observed that year 3

respondents participated most in the survey, which recorded 26 respondents representing 43%, followed by year 2 respondents which recorded 20 respondents representing 33% and year 1 which recorded 14 respondents representing 23% out of the total.

Table 4. Year of Study

Year of study	Frequency	Percent (%)
Year 1	14	23.3
Year 2	20	33.3
Year 3	26	43.3
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work

Table 5 shows the frequency distribution of religious status of the respondents selected for the survey. The analysis indicated that the majority religious group among the respondents was Christianity which recorded 53 respondents representing 88%, followed by Muslims which recorded 6 respondents representing 10% and the least religious denomination among the respondents was traditional which recorded 1 respondent representing 2% respectively.

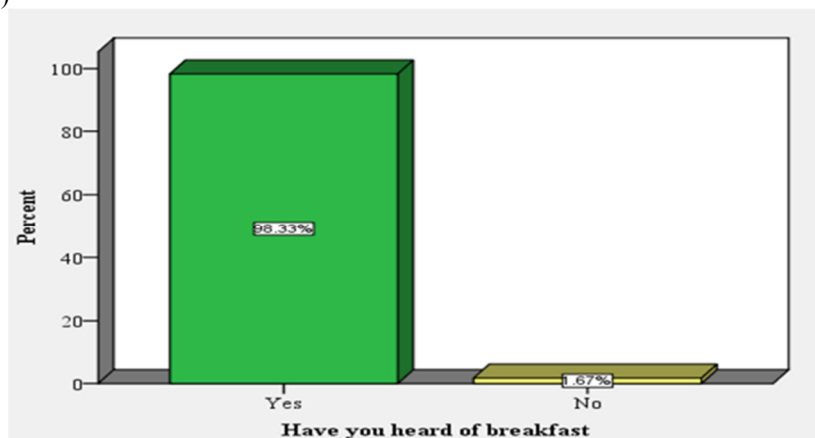
Table 5. Religious Status

Religious status	Frequency	Percent (%)
Christian	53	88.3
Muslim	6	10.0
Traditional	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work

3.2 Importance of Breakfast

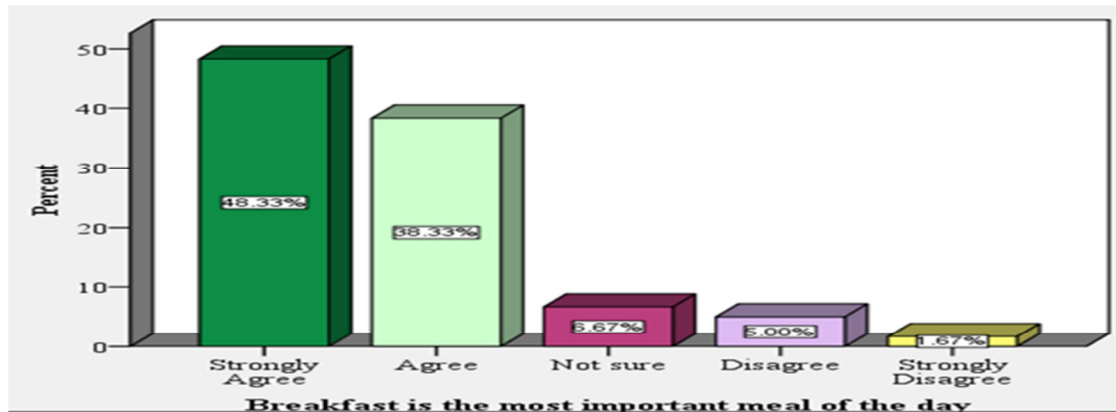
When respondents were asked whether they have heard of breakfast, 59 respondents representing 98% indicated that they have heard of breakfast and one respondent representing 2% indicated that breakfast was a new thing to him (see Figure 1)



Source: Field work

Fig. 1. Have You Heard of Breakfast

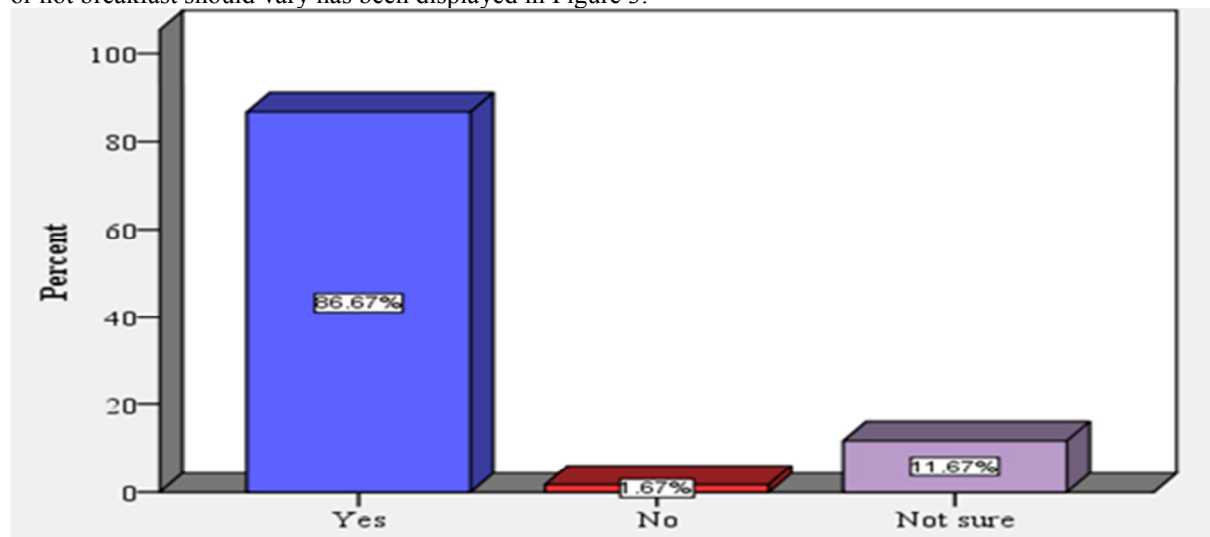
Respondents' notion as to whether breakfast represents the most important meal of the day has been displayed in Figure 2. It can be seen that 29 respondents representing 48% strongly agreed and 23 respondents representing 38% agreed to the fact that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. However, 4 respondents representing 7% were not sure as breakfast while 3 respondents representing 5% disagreed and 1 respondent representing 2% strongly disagreed that breakfast being the most important meal of the day believing that there were other meals said to be important than breakfast. According to Zelman (2012), breakfast is the most important meal of the day and should never be skipped. Citing that when breakfast is skipped, one can end up going for long periods of time without food and this period of semi starvation can create a lot of physical, intellectual and behavioral problems for the individual. Thus, the outcome of this paper in connection with the importance of breakfast is in line with Zelman's as majority of the respondents indicated that breakfast was the most important meal of the day.



Source: Field work

Fig. 2. Breakfast, the Most Important Meal of the Day

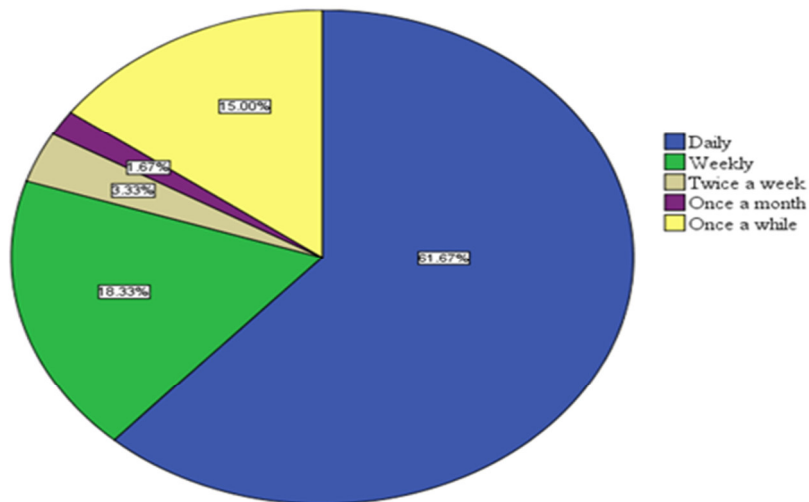
On the notion whether breakfast should vary, most respondents indicated that breakfast should vary as 52 respondents representing 87% responded yes, 7 respondents representing 12% were not sure whether breakfast should vary and one respondent representing 2% believed that breakfast should not vary. The result on whether or not breakfast should vary has been displayed in Figure 3.



Source: Field work

Fig. 3. Variance of Breakfast

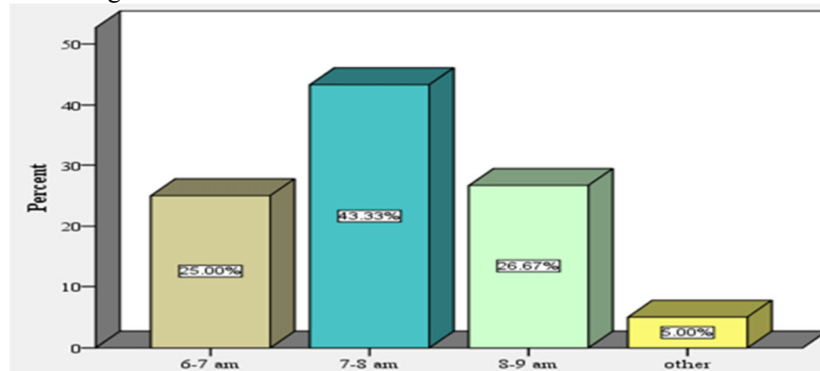
Figure 4 depicts the distribution of how often respondents do eat breakfast. From the analysis, it became evidently clear as 37 respondents representing 62% revealed that they eat breakfast every day, 11 respondents representing 18% indicated that they eat breakfast weekly, 9 respondents representing 15% confirmed that they eat breakfast once a while, 2 respondents representing 3% indicated that they eat breakfast twice a week and one respondent representing 2% indicated that he eat breakfast once a month respectively.



Source: Field work

Fig. 4. Frequency of Breakfast Intake

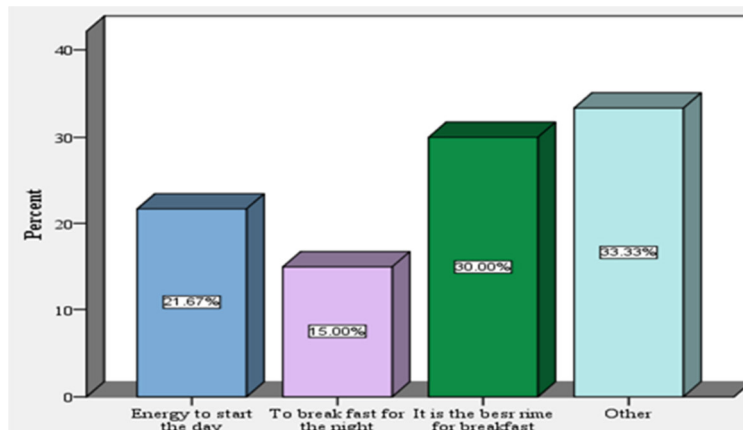
Results on time respondents eat breakfast has been summarized in Figure 5. It can be perceived that 26 respondents (43%) confirmed they eat breakfast between 7am and 8 am. However, 16 respondents (27%) indicated that they eat breakfast between 8am and 9 am. Also, 15 respondents (25%) revealed that they eat breakfast between 6am and 7 am while 3 respondents (5%) had other times for eating breakfast, which included 10am, whenever I feel to eat my breakfast among others. According to Kerns (2008), breakfast should be served before 10:00 am. Thus, the attitude of students in Takoradi Polytechnic in respect of time breakfast should be taken affirms Kerns' finding.



Source: Field work

Fig. 5. Time of Breakfast Intake

With regards to why respondents eat breakfast (Figure 6) at the time they indicated, out of 60 respondents interviewed for the study, 20 respondents representing 33% had different reasons as to why they ate breakfast at that time.

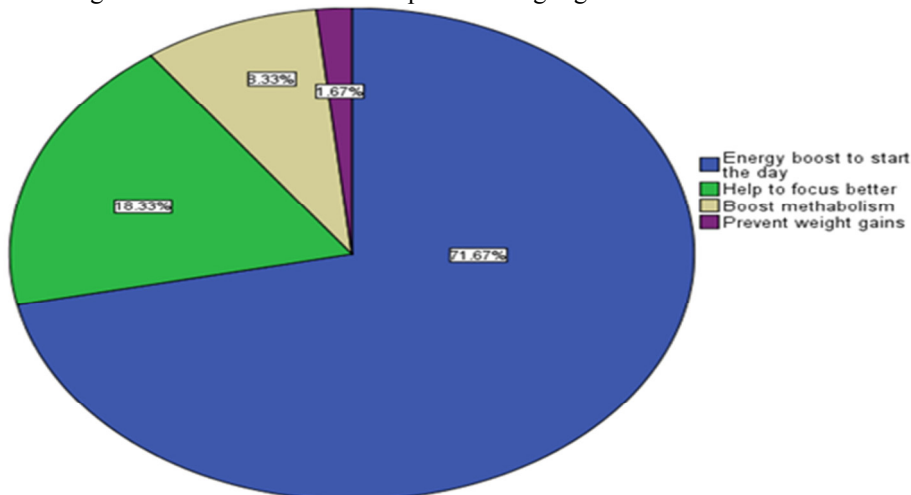


Source: Field work

Fig. 6. Reasons for Taken Breakfast at Given Time

Among the reasons were, for the food to digest early, attend to lectures early, to stabilize the sugar level, health conditions among others. However, 18 respondents representing 30% indicated that it is the best time for breakfast. Also, 13 respondents representing 22% revealed that it boost energy to start the day and 9 respondents representing 15% indicated to break the fast for the night was why they ate breakfast.

In general, respondents' reasons for eating breakfast were sought as presented in Figure 7. All the respondents interviewed had their reasons for eating breakfast. Among the 60 respondents interviewed, the commonest reason as to why they eat breakfast was energy boost to start the day as 43 respondents representing 72% believed so. Other respondents also made their reasons known; 11 respondents representing 18% revealed that breakfast helps to focus better, 5 respondents representing 8% claimed that it boost metabolism and one respondent representing 2% indicated that breakfast prevent weight gain.



Source: Field work

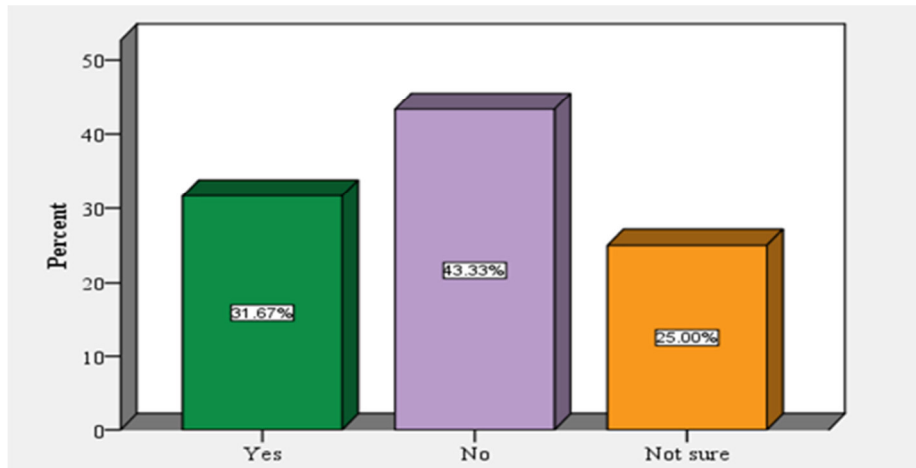
Fig. 7. General Reasons for Taken Break Fast

According to Yanjun (2013), if a person feels sluggish in the morning, then a nutritious breakfast can give the person the energy needed to get through the day. Our results confirm this assertion as majority of the respondents attributed their reasons for taken breakfast to energy boost. Also, it has been established that by eating breakfast every morning, one is able to be more focused and productive on work and school until it is time to refuel at lunch (Cenzon, 2011) which has also been affirmed by this research.

3.3 What Constitutes a Breakfast

Figure 8 shows a distribution of the results on respondents' knowledge as regard the ingredients of a complete breakfast. Although most respondents ate breakfast daily (as indicated in Fig. 4) a greater percentage (43%) indicated that they have no idea as to what make up a complete breakfast. However, 32% revealed they knew what makes up a complete breakfast. Also, 25% indicated they were not sure as to what made a complete breakfast.

When respondents were asked to elaborate on it, 65% left a blank space without stating anything, meaning they had no idea as to what made up a complete breakfast, 23% gave answers such as tea and bread, porridge and bread, it should be a balanced meal, it should be hot and light whilst 12% listed carbohydrate, protein and vegetables. In reference, a healthy breakfast should constitute a cold or warm beverage to hydrate the body such as tea, coffee, water, milk and fruit juice (Saettel, 2000). Carbohydrates like a whole grain provides energy and the best ones also deliver high fiber to help digestion (Davis, 2009). Proteins, by aiming for about 12grams from lean sources such as eggs or an egg substitute (about 6 grams per large egg or egg equivalent, low fat cottage cheese (14 grams per half cup), skim milk (about 8 grams per cup) or soy bacon or sausage (about 3 to 6 grams per ounce) (Gillette, 2014). It comprises healthy fats and sugars by including good sources like canola or olive oil, avocados, nuts, seeds and fatty fish like salmon. Also, in small quantities one can include some sugars (honey, jam, fruits) (Saettel, 2000) and fruits and vegetables which provide good sources of fiber to help digestion and maintain good health as well (Davis, 2009). All these constituents of breakfast improve health and vitality. In fact, our results reveal the complete ignorant of students of Takoradi Polytechnic as to the constituents of a complete breakfast.

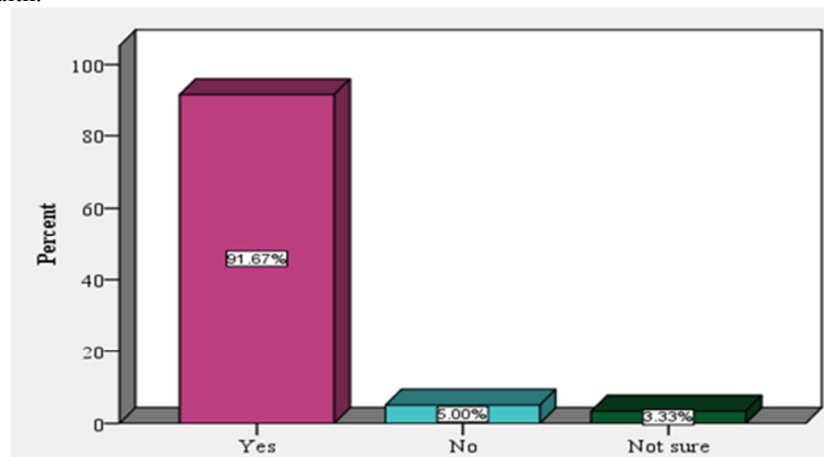


Source: Field work

Fig. 8. Constituents of Complete Breakfast

3.4 Factors that Influence Food Choice and Eating Habit

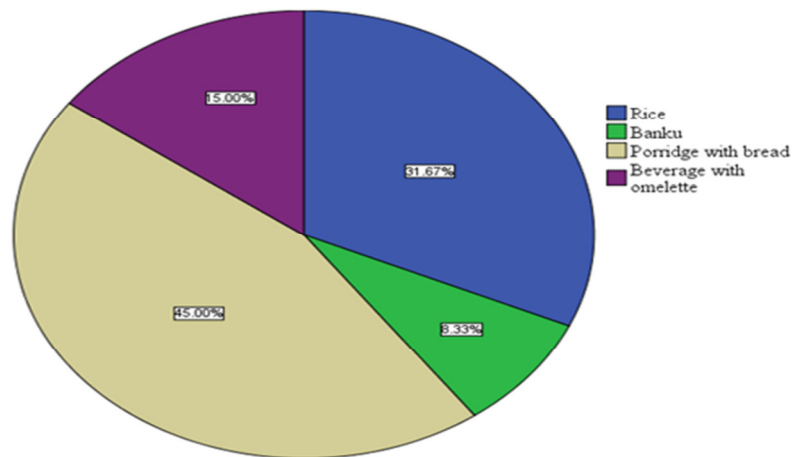
Figure 9 shows a summary of responses to the issue of whether breakfast is a good eating habit. As indicated, most of the respondents who ate breakfast daily, 92% revealed breakfast as a good eating habit indicating a high degree of consistency between how often respondents ate breakfast and breakfast being a good eating habit. However, 5% revealed breakfast as not being a good eating habit while 3% were not sure of whether breakfast is a good eating habit. In reference, this result is in consonance with that of Giovannini, *et al.* (2008) which established that breakfast is a good eating habit and that it should be practiced by all individuals in order to improve their health.



Source: Field work

Fig. 9. Breakfast, a Good Eating Habit

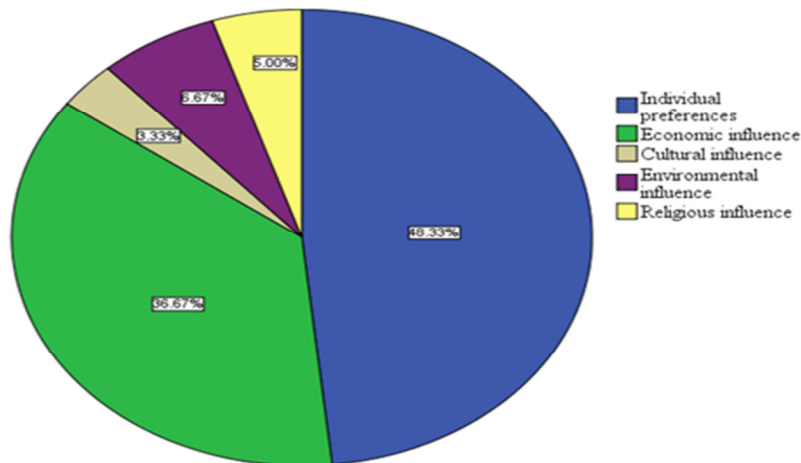
The distribution of what respondents ate as breakfast has been illustrated in Figure 10. From the chart, it came clear that as most respondents do attend lectures early, therefore 45% took porridge with bread as breakfast, 32% revealed rice and stew as their breakfast, 15% indicated beverage with omelet as their breakfast while surprisingly, 8% revealed Banku and soup as their breakfast.



Source: Field work

Fig. 10. Food Ate as Breakfast

Regarding the factors which had the tendency to affect food choice as represented in Figure 11, 29 respondents representing 48% cited individual preference as a factor which can influence their food choice. Again, 22 respondents representing 37% indicated economic influence as a determinant of their food choice. However, 4 respondents representing 7% indicated environmental influence was a factor. Also, 3 respondents representing 5% revealed religious influence as a factor that can influence their food choice and 2 respondents representing 3% confirmed cultural influence as the major determinant of their food choice. In reference to Rodriguez (2004), all the above factors influence people's food choice, as affirmed by the results of this study.

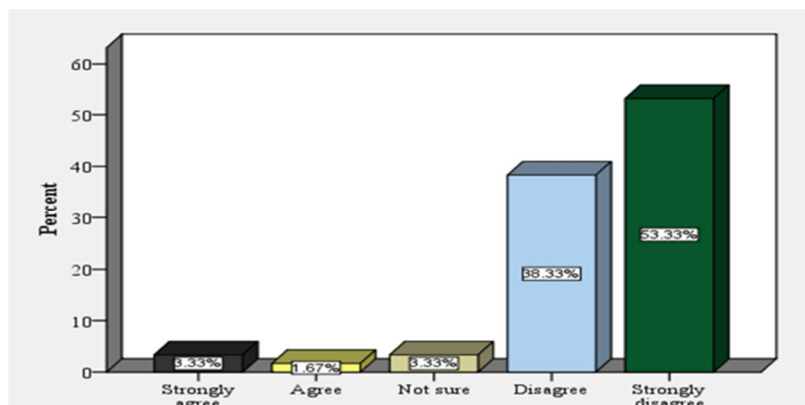


Source: Field work

Fig. 11. Determinants of Food Choice and Eating Habit

3.5 Effects of Skipping Breakfast

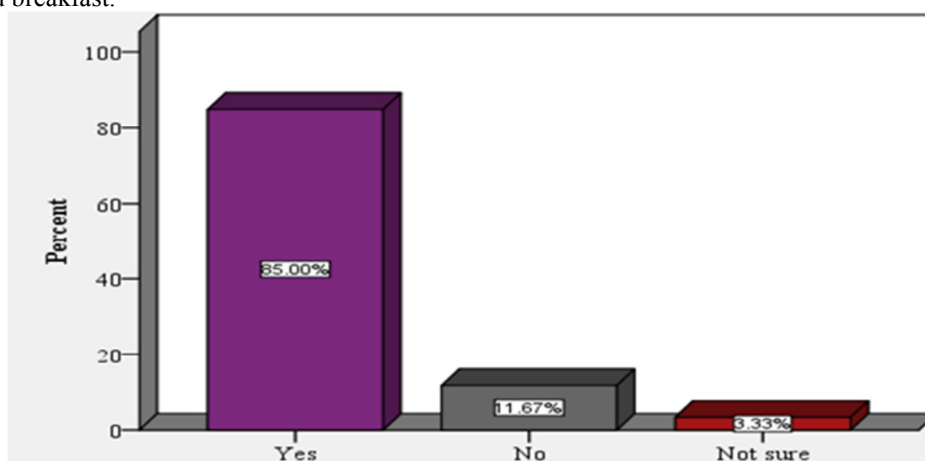
Figure 12 is a distribution of responses on the issue of breakfast not being good for human consumption. The analysis reveals that 91% did not perceive breakfast as not being good for human consumption as they strongly disagreed (53%) or disagreed (38%) to the fact that breakfast is not good for human consumption. However, 3% strongly agreed that breakfast was not good for human consumption, 3% were not sure whether breakfast is not good for human consumption, while 2% agreed that breakfast was not good for human consumption (Figure 12).



Source: Field work

Fig. 12. Breakfast, Not Good for Human Consumption

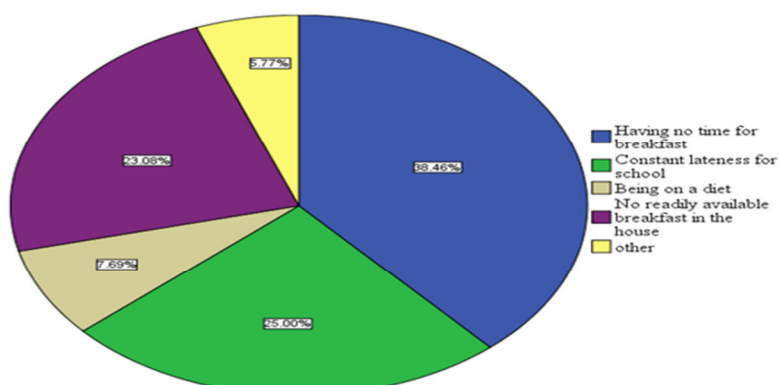
Figure 13 presents evidences of whether respondents have skipped breakfast before. It can be seen that 85% have skipped breakfast before, 12% have not skipped breakfast before while 3% were not sure whether they have ever skipped breakfast.



Source: Field work

Fig. 13. Evidence of Skipping Breakfast

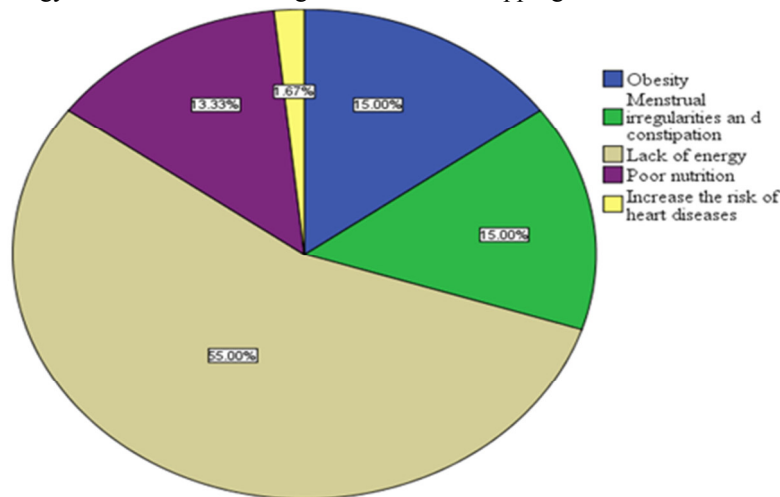
Figure 14 is a pie chart showing a percentage distribution of why respondents skipped breakfast. It can be observed that 38% skipped breakfast because they had no time for it. However, 25% skipped because of constant lateness for school. Thus, 23% revealed that they skipped breakfast because nothing was readily available as breakfast. Also, 8% indicated that they skipped by virtue of the fact that they were on a special diet, while 6% revealed among other factors such as busy attending to other things at the time for breakfast, feeling lazy to cook in the morning as reasons for skipping breakfast. In reference, our results on reasons for skipping breakfast is in line with that of an anonymous study (2012) which evinced such factors as having no time for breakfast, constant lateness for school, being on a diet and no readily available breakfast in the house, as reasons for skipping breakfast.



Source: Field work

Fig.14 Reasons for Skipping Breakfast

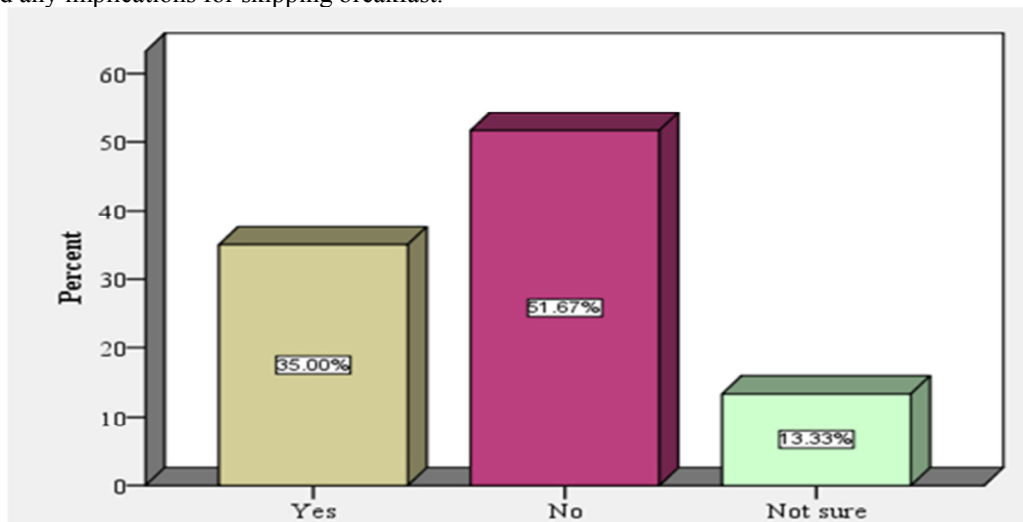
Regarding what respondents thought were the problems for skipping breakfast (Figure 15), 55% revealed that lack of energy is problem one is likely to suffer for skipping breakfast, 15% indicated that skipping breakfast would result in menstrual irregularities and constipation, 15% also revealed obesity as a problem for skipping breakfast. However, 13% made it known that skipping breakfast could result in poor nutrition and 2% believed breakfast skipping would increase the risk of heart diseases. The outcome of this study in respect of possible effects for skipping breakfast is in agreement with the finding of an anonymous study conducted in 2013 which asserts that lack of energy is one of the most negative effects of skipping breakfast.



Source: Field work

Fig. 15. Problems Associated with Skipping Breakfast

To ascertain whether respondents have had any implications for skipping breakfast, a summary of results has been presented in Figure 16. It can be indicated that 52% have not had any implications for skipping breakfast. However, 35% have had implications for skipping breakfast while 13% were not sure of whether they have had any implications for skipping breakfast.



Source: Field work

Fig. 16 Evidences of Implications for Skipping Breakfast

When respondents were asked to elaborate further, 65% did not indicate any implication they suffered from, 5% revealed that they suffered from dizziness, another 5% indicated that they suffered from weakness while 7% indicated stomach pains as an implication they suffered from. According to Michel (2014), skipping breakfast increases the risk of hypoglycemia or low blood sugar and this condition can bring on physical symptoms such as shakiness, dizziness, weakness, headache, tingling and a rapid heart rate. The result of this current study is not consolidation with Michel's.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been established by the results that majority of the students agreed to the fact that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. However, a few who were ignorant and did not regard breakfast eating habits as important were made known of its importance. Also, the study has evinced that the commonest reason for taking

breakfast is to boost energy to start the day. Moreover, the study has revealed that majority of the students are ignorant about the constituents of a complete breakfast. Furthermore, the study has been able to establish that majority of students regard breakfast as a good eating habit. It has also been revealed that individual preference is a major determinant of one's food choice and eating habits of breakfast. Lastly, it has been settled that lack of energy could be a possible problem for skipping breakfast.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

- The Polytechnic should require the services of a nutritionist to brief students on the importance of eating breakfast and what exactly a good breakfast should contain during orientation of fresh students in order to put to bare what the body must have in the morning and at the correct time.
- The students should be guided to stock their cupboards with ready to eat breakfast they can grab and run with.
- Individuals should be advised to avoid skipping this important meal of the day and follow a daily routine of eating breakfast.
- The teaching calendar of the Polytechnic should be reviewed so that students will have the time to eat breakfast before leaving for class to avoid headache when they attend lectures in the morning.
- The Polytechnic should make it mandatory to every school to have a seminar on breakfast eating during school week celebration as well as SRC week celebration to promote breakfast eating among students in the Polytechnic.
- The students should be advised go to bed half an hour earlier and wake up half an hour earlier so that they can have that extra bit of time to eat breakfast.
- The students should be guided to eat a wholesome, freshly prepared breakfast which will fill them up, give the necessary nutrients and take one through to lunch.
- The Polytechnic should consider an establishment which serves breakfast at an affordable price on campus to encourage breakfast eating among students in the Polytechnic.

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