

Prevalence and Associated Factors of Protein-Energy Malnutrition Among Children Aged 6-59 Months in Babile Town from April to June 2016

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Abstract : Malnutrition is a significant problem in developing countries, particularly among children, due to inadequate diets, lack of proper care, and unequal distribution of food within households. High rates of malnutrition have been shown in Ethiopia, including stunting, underweight, and wasting. This study aims to assess the prevalence and associated factors of Protein-Energy Malnutrition (PEM) among children aged 6-59 months in Babile Town. The study utilized a community-based cross-sectional design conducted in Babile Town, Eastern Ethiopia. Two kebeles were randomly selected, and a census was conducted to identify eligible households. A total of 391 households with children aged 6-59 months were included in the study. Data was collected using structured questionnaires, and anthropometric measurements were taken to assess the weight and height of the children. The study found that a majority of the mothers (72.34%) and fathers (43%) had no formal education. Among the mothers who could read and write, a small percentage had completed primary (14%) or secondary (14%) education, and even fewer had higher education (2.7%). Similarly, among the fathers who could read and write, a majority had completed primary (46.15%) or secondary (27.22%) education, with smaller percentages completing preparatory (8.4%) or higher education (6.29%). The prevalence of malnutrition in the study area was high, with 38.85% of children experiencing stunting (8.2% severely stunted), 50.13% wasting (9% severely wasted), and 41.43% underweight (6.65% severely underweight). These findings indicate a significant burden of malnutrition in Babile Town, likely exacerbated by the high prevalence of infectious diseases such as diarrhea. The study concludes that the prevalence of malnutrition, particularly stunting, wasting, and underweight, is high in Babile Town. The findings indicate the urgent need for interventions to address malnutrition and improve nutrition and healthcare practices in the study area. These results can serve as a baseline for future studies and inform policymakers and healthcare providers in their efforts to combat childhood malnutrition.

Keywords : protein-energy malnutrition, children 6-59 month age babble town, Marasmus

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