

## Household Food Insecurity, Maternal Mental Health and Self-Efficacy

**Authors :** Nahid Salarkia, Nasrin Omidvar, Erfan Ghassemi, Vahideh Arab-Salari, Tirang Reza Neyestani

**Abstract :** Background: Household food insecurity has an adverse impact on the maternal mental health. This study was carried out to assess the relationship between household food insecurity, maternal depression and mother's self-efficacy in Varamin, Iran, in 2014. Methods: In this cross-sectional study 423 mothers with children under 2 years old, with mean age  $28.1 \pm 5.2$  year; weight  $66.3 \pm 13.4$  kg; height  $160.3 \pm 5.7$  cm and BMI  $25.7 \pm 4.8$  kg/m<sup>2</sup> were selected by a multistage random sampling scheme. The instruments were: Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-III) and mother's self-efficacy questionnaire. Data was analyzed using  $\chi^2$  test, ANOVA and Pearson correlation. Results: Mildly, moderately and severely food insecure households were 39.5, 9.7 and 3.1%, respectively. Mild, moderate and severe depression was: 18.7, 13.9 and 5.7%. Mean score of depression in moderate and severe food insecure ( $8.6 \pm 5.3$ ) was more than mild food insecure ( $4.8 \pm 4.7$ ) and food secure ( $3.1 \pm 3.6$ ) mothers. Frequency of very good, good and low mother's self-efficacy were 62.8, 36.5, and 0.7%, respectively. Very good mother's self-efficacy in food secure mothers (33.4%) was more than mild (25.4%) and moderate-sever food insecure groups (4%). There was a negative significant association between household food insecurity and mother's self-efficacy ( $r = -0.297$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and between mother's depression and self-efficacy ( $r = -0.309$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). Conclusion: Empowerment of mothers with educational programs and social support can decrease mothers' depression and increase self-efficacy that lead to improve maternal practices in food insecure households.

**Keywords :** Household food insecurity, Iran, mothers, physiological characteristics, self-efficacy

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