

## Determinants of Child Malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa

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**Abstract :** Child under nutrition has long-term consequences for intellectual ability, economic productivity, reproductive performance and susceptibility to metabolic and cardiovascular disease. The unacceptably high prevalence of malnutrition in young children of the region has not changed much over the last decades, which could make the achievement of the corresponding Millennium Development Goals very unlikely. Despite the well-documented problems of child malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is few systematic review of evidences on determinants of child malnutrition in the region. The current available evidence on determinants of child under nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa is systematically reviewed. The method used in searching relevant literature was using bio medical databases PUBMED, Google scholar and the website of the World Health Organization on nutrition using the following key words: "Determinants ", "Child Malnutrition", and "Sub-Saharan Africa". The search was limited to articles published in and after 1995 up to date. In all the reviewed articles, the data were analyzed using multivariate regression analysis and or odds ratios for significance of determinants in child malnutrition. Synthesis of 40 published articles from various countries of the region is done and noted that household economic status, maternal education, disease, breastfeeding practices, age and sex of a child, birth interval and residential areas were found to be determinants of child under nutrition. Poverty remains the main factor of malnutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa and poor education of parents aggravates the malnutrition through perpetuation of poor nutrition practices. Male children under five years are the most affected ones. Understanding of these determinants of poor nutritional attainment would provide insights in designing interventions for reducing the high levels of child malnutrition in this region. Large-scale multi-sectoral community-based interventions are urgently needed for a sustainable improvement of child nutritional & health status in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Keywords :** child malnutrition, determinants, Sub-Saharan Africa, health status

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