

Food Intake Pattern and Nutritional Status of Preschool Children of Chakma Ethnic Community

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Abstract : Nutritional status is a sensitive indicator of community health and nutrition among preschool children, especially the prevalence of undernutrition that affects all dimensions of human development and leads to growth faltering in early life. The present study is an attempt to assess the food intake pattern and nutritional status of pre-school Chakma tribe children. It was a cross-sectional community based study. The subjects were selected purposively. This study was conducted at Savar Upazilla of Rangamati. Rangamati is located in the Chittagong Division. Anthropometric data height and weight of the study subjects were collected by standard techniques. Nutritional status was measured using Z score according WHO classification. χ^2 test, independent t-test, Pearson's correlation, multiple regression and logistic regression was performed as $P < 0.05$ level of significance. Statistical analyses were performed by appropriate univariate and multivariate techniques using SPSS windows 11.5. Moderate (-3SD to <-2SD) to severe underweight (<-3SD) were 23.8% and 76.2% study subjects had normal weight for their age. Moderate (-3SD to <-2SD) to severe (<-3SD) stunted children were only 25.6% and 74.4% children were normal and moderate to severe wasting were 14.7% whereas normal child was 85.3%. Significant association had been found between child nutritional status and monthly family income, mother education and occupation of father and mother. Age, sex and incomes of the family, education of mother and occupation of father were significantly associated with WAZ and HAZ of the study subjects ($P=0.0001$, $P=0.025$, $P=0.001$ and $P=0.0001$, $P=0.003$, $P=0.031$, $P=0.092$, $P=0.008$). Maximum study subjects took local small fish and some traditional tribal food like bashrool, jhijhipoka and pork very much popular food among tribal children. Energy, carbohydrate and fat intake was significantly associated with HAZ, WAZ, BAZ and MUACZ. This study demonstrates that malnutrition among tribal children in Bangladesh is much better than national scenario in Bangladesh. Significant association was found between child nutritional status and family monthly income, mother education and occupation of father and mother. Most of the study subjects took local small fish and some traditional tribal food. Significant association was also found between child nutritional status and dietary intake of energy, carbohydrate and fat.

Keywords : food intake pattern, nutritional status, preschool children, Chakma ethnic community

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