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Socio-economic condition, dietary pattern and nutritional status of pre-school children among settlers and ethnic communities in Bandarban district of Bangladesh

Md Monoarul Haque[1] and **Khaleda Islam**[2]
[1]Bangladesh University of Professionals, Bangladesh
[2]University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Nutrition in children of all ages is instrumental for healthy development in all areas of living -physical, psychological and social wellbeing. The geographic and demographic factors affect food and nutrition. Life of the tribal people is extremely fascinating. This study focuses socio-economic condition, dietary pattern and nutritional status of preschool children among major ethnic groups and settlers at a single point in a specified time in sadar upazila of Bandarban district. This area was conveniently selected to collect sample because both settlers and ethnic groups reside here concurrently. Each union/ward was one cluster and from each cluster sample was collected by visiting door to door and asking people which house has 3 to 5 years children until desired number gathered. The dietary energy intake of the study subjects was determined by three days 24 hour recall method questionnaire. Data were analyzed by computer technology SPSS version 22.0. ENA for SMART - Software for Emergency Nutrition Assessment was used to find out WAZ (Weight for age Z-score), HAZ (Height for age Z-score) and WHZ (Weight for height Z-score). WHO child growth standard 2005 was used as reference for Z-score value. Mean age of the children was 4.07±0.87 (ethnic) and 4.09±0.84 (settler). Most of the parents can do sign only. Father of the children was day labor and mother was housewife. Average monthly family income among ethnic and settler was 17633.92±9705.92 and 18614.52±9711.35 BDT. Average weight and height of ethnic children was 14.94 kg and 96.38 cm whereas settler children carried 13.91 kg weight and 94.37 cm height and this difference was statistically significant. Normal and underweight ethnic children were 73.80% and 26.20% whereas 67% and 33% among settler group. Distribution of normal and stunted ethnic children were 67.30% and 32.70% and among settler it was 54.50% and 45.50%. About 11.30% and 15% children were wasted among ethnic and settler. Distribution of sanitary (water sealed) latrine among ethnic and settler group was 70.20% and 70.10%. Ethnic group consumed tube well water as drinking water three times higher (57.1%) than settler (18.4%). De-worming status was 60.70% and 55.30% among ethnic and settler children respectively. Statistical significant association was found between condition of latrine and ethnic children nutritional status (WAZ) (p=0.012). No statistical significant association was found between condition of latrine and settler children nutritional status. Significant association was found between source of drinking water and ethnic children nutritional status. No statistical significant association was found between source of drinking water and settler children nutritional status. Average calorie intake of ethnic children was 1066.88 per day whereas settler children took 981.48. Mean protein and carbohydrate intake of ethnic children was higher than settler children and it was statistically significant. Monthly family income, condition of latrine, housing status and group (ethnic/settler) influence significantly nutritional status of children. It is concluded that nutritional status of pre-school children among settlers and ethnic communities is not equal though they live in same geographical area and ethnic children were comparatively better in terms of weight, height, calorie intake, protein consumption and carbohydrate intake, immunization coverage and deworming status. These research findings will be helpful for policy maker and planner to develop new plan and strategy to combat undernutrition.

monoarmunna@yahoo.com