



Dietary Diversity and Nutritional Status of Women and Children in India

Kalyan Das*

Department of Food and Nutrition, Madras Medical College, Poonamallee High Rd, Park Town, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

ABOUT THE STUDY

The nutritional imbalance refers to malnutrition which occurs due to deficiencies or excesses in an individual's energy or nutrient intake and is a widely-prevalent health issue. The Global Nutrition Report 2018 notes that the global burden of malnutrition is unacceptably high and that the progress to date is simply not good enough. Currently, it is estimated that worldwide 151 million children are stunted, 51 million are wasted and 38 million are overweight or obese. It is alarming to note that every country in the world is affected by malnutrition of at least one type such as childhood stunting, anaemia in adult women and overweight in adult women. The nutrition transition in developing countries is being known as an emerging crisis due to shifting health profiles. While undernutrition is not being addressed to a considerable level, it coexists with overnutrition in nations such as India. In India, nearly every third child is malnourished, underweight, or stunted. Furthermore, according to the NFHS-4 data, every second child is anaemic.

According to NFHS-3, every third woman in India was malnourished (35.5 percent had a low BMI) and every second woman (15-49 years) was anaemic. The high population base and a slow progress in nutritional well-being, India is home to the largest number of stunted and wasted children, 47 million and 26 million, respectively. India is also home to more than 1 million overweight children. It shows that the government has not placed enough emphasis on women's and children's nutrition, leading to more investigation into why high levels of undernutrition remain in India.

India has a unique setting, with distinct areas at various levels of development in terms of nutrition policies and programmes, and

has taken a variety of approaches to enhancing its nutrition services to women and children. These policies also provide and insight into what's being done to improve women and children nutrition status and what more needs to be done. The double burden of malnutrition is of increasing concern for India, with the prevalence of overweight among women being greater than underweight. It provides powerful stories of diverse country agendas for improving women and children nutrition. Yet, for India, women and children nutrition is very much unfinished business and, as country himself acknowledge, much more must be done to enable women to avoid the perils of undernutrition and, indeed, the growing risk of overweight/obesity.

Several associations were discovered between eating patterns and health outcomes, indicating that nutrition has an effect on health. The strongest evidence pointed to a link between eating pattern and body size. The prevalence of snacks as a major dietary component was common to several of the dietary patterns linked with less favourable risk factor profiles. Snacks in India are typically high-fat, high-salt fried dishes with trans-fats. In the age groups 0-12 months, 28 percent of children are moderately underweight. Among women, underweight is decreases with increasing wealth quantile, from 15 percent in poorer wealth to 51 percent in richest wealth have less chance to underweight compare to the poorest women. On the other side being obese and overweight chance increases from poorer to richest wealth. Among women, overweight and obesity increasing with increasing wealth quantile, it shows positive association. About 41 percent women is underweight in 15-19 age-group, 62 percent normal in 20-24 age-group, 25 percent overweight and 10 percent obese in 45-49 age-group.

Correspondence to: Kalyan Das, Department of Food and Nutrition, Madras Medical College, Poonamallee High Rd, Park Town, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, E-mail: kdasyan@gmail.com

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