

International Conference on

Nutritional Science and Food Technology

July 02-03, 2018 Rome, Italy

The prevalence of malnutrition and its associated risk factors among women of reproductive age in Ziway Dugda district, Arsi Zone, Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia

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Abstract

Objectives: Adequate nutrition is an important factor to determine the health and wellbeing of women, children and society as a whole. Although various nutritional policies were formulated and aimed at reducing malnutrition at the global level, the magnitude of malnutrition (body mass index [BMI] <18.5 kg/m²) among women remained between 10% and 40% in most low- and middle-income countries. We aimed to determine the prevalence of malnutrition and to identify the associated risk factors among women of reproductive age. Study design: A cross-sectional study was conducted in Ziway Dugda district in Ethiopia among 430 women of reproductive age between September 20 and November 21, 2015.

Methods: A systematic sampling method was used to select the study participants. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression were used to determine the prevalence of malnutrition and to identify associated independent risk factors such as women's age, housing conditions, drinking water sources, habits of hand washing, dietary intake and food insecurity.

Results: The mean values of weight, height and BMI of the study participants were 51 kg, 157 cm and 18.1 kg/m², respectively. Prevalence of malnutrition (BMI <18.5 kg/m²) among women of reproductive age was found to be 48.6%. Being in the age group of 26 e35 years (adjusted odds ratio [AOR] 1/4 0.50, 95% confidence interval [CI] 1/4 0.26 e0.84), thatched housing conditions (AOR 1/4 1.83, 95% CI 1/4 1.16 e2.89), unprotected sources of drinking water (AOR 1/4 1.65, 95% CI 1/4 1.06 e2.57), lack of habit of hand wash after using the toilet (AOR 1/4 1.62, 95% CI 1/4 1.06 e2.47), consumption of fish (AOR 1/4 2.12, 95% CI 1/4 1.12 e3.99), consumption of dairy products (AOR 1/4 2.40, 95% CI 1/4 1.42 e4.03) and food insecurity (AOR 1/4 2.44, 95% CI 1/4 1.50 e3.95) were considered as independent predictors of risk for having malnutrition among women of the same age group compared to women from food secured households.

Conclusions: High prevalence of malnutrition (48.6%) was observed among women of the reproductive age. Although nutrient rich foods were available, their consumptions had not been enough so far. Hence, it is strongly recommended to have behavioural change communication for enhancing the adequate intake of diversified diet, and to promote environmental and hygienic condition of women through improving their socio-economic status.

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