

## Household Food Insecurity and its Association with under Five Children Nutritional Status in Sekela District, Western Ethiopia; A Comparative Cross-Sectional Study

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**Background:** Child malnutrition and food insecurity remain main problems in Ethiopia. Studies across different parts of the world revealed mixture of evidences about the relationship between household food insecurity and child nutritional status. Therefore; this study was conducted to compare children under nutrition in food secure and insecure households in Sekela District, Western Ethiopia.

**Method:** Five hundred seventy six mothers/caregivers living in Sekela District were interviewed using structured questionnaire during February of 2014. Household food insecurity was measured using household food insecurity access scale. The height and weight of children were taken; anthropometry indices were calculated & interpreted according WHO 2006 cutoff point. After checked for completeness and consistency data was entered onto Epi. Data 3.2. and exported to SPSS 21.0 for further analysis. Binary logistic regression model was used to assess the association of independent and outcome variables.

**Result:** A total of 555 households with children aged 6-59 months participated in the study. The children mean age was  $31.39 \pm 13.64$  months and sex ratio was one. The mean household food insecurity score was  $8.16 \pm 6.01$  and the prevalence of food access insecurity measured by household food insecurity access scale was 74.1%. The prevalence of stunting, underweight and wasting was 36.9%, 19.8% and 11.5% respectively. Household food insecurity had association with only underweight (AOR=2.25; 95% CI=1.29, 3.94). Sex of child, age of child, colostrum feeding, upper respiratory infection, feeding frequency and maternal education were factors associated with chronic under nutrition. Child experience of upper respiratory infection was associated with underweight and child experience of fever had association with wasting.

**Conclusion:** In the main, household food insecurity and children under nutrition were critical problems in the study setting. Only underweight associated with household food insecurity. Socio demographic factors, child caring practices and infection lead to high prevalence of children under nutrition in the study setting. Thus, there should be multisectorial community based nutrition interventions and initiation of income generating livelihood to the community to curtail under nutrition and household food insecurity in the locality.

**Key Words:** Household Food insecurity, under five children, stunting, underweight, wasting, Ethiopia

### Biography:

Ermiyas Mulu is currently an Assistance Professor at Ambo University, Ethiopia. He had obtained his MPH in nutrition and B.Sc. in Public Health from Haramaya University and Hawassa University, respectively. He has published two original articles scientific journals, contributed a lecture note and learning modules and participated in many national nutrition and related events.