

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND
FOOD PROVIDED TO CHILDREN AGED FROM 6 TO 24
MONTHS IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE, VIETNAM**



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HO DAC CHIEN 5238102 ADPM / M

M.P.H.M.

THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: JIRAPORN CHOMPIKUL, PhD, SANTHAT SEMSRI, PhD.

ABSTRACT

A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted to determine the relationship between the nutritional status and food provided to children aged from 6 to 24 months in Quang Ngai province, Vietnam. The study factors included parental socio-demographics, maternal knowledge, food provision practices, and maternal and child health care. Stratified sampling was used to select 250 mothers who had children aged from 6 to 24 months. After the mothers consented to participate in this study, they were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. Their children were measured for weight and height. The statistics used were Chi-square test and Multiple logistic regression.

Nearly 31% of the children were underweight. The following factors influenced the likelihood of children being underweight: maternal education, father's education, family income, child birth weight, maternal knowledge regarding food provision and child growth monitoring, frequency of essential food provision, orange juice provision, separation of food, amount of food eaten, the number of prenatal checkups, medical checkups before delivery, duration of day sleep, washing mother's hands before preparing food, drinking Oral Rehydration Solution, and latrines. Children who were fed with protein and iodine salt inappropriately had a greater risk of being underweight. When adjusting for other factors, children who were fed with protein inappropriately had a 2.18 times greater risk of being underweight than those who were appropriately fed.

Appropriate food feeding programs focusing on protein and iodine salt provision and raising maternal awareness of maternal and child health care should be implemented, especially for high risk groups (mothers with low education, mothers of low birth weight children, households without latrines, low family income) to reduce the prevalence of underweight children.

KEY WORDS: NUTRITIONAL STATUS/FOOD PROVISION/CHILDREN AGED 6 TO 24 MONTHS/UNDERWEIGHT

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