

HOUSEHOLD AND CHILD FEEDING PRACTICE FACTORS AFFECTING STUNTING STATUS AMONG RAGLAI CHILDREN UNDER FIVE IN KHANH HOA PROVINCE, VIETNAM

TRUONG HOANG VIET 5738529 PRRH / M

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THESIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE: KERRY RICHTER, Ph.D., AMARA SOONTHORNDHADA, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Little is known about ethnic minorities in Vietnam, and few studies have been conducted on nutrition among these populations. Ethnic minorities living in mountainous areas like the Raglai have low socioeconomic status, which is strongly related to poor nutrition. Data from the National Institute of Nutrition of Vietnam shows that all ten provinces with the highest stunting prevalence are located in mountainous regions, which often get no attention or support from the government. The objectives of this study were: 1) to explore the stunting prevalence among Raglai children in Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam; 2) to identify the association between stunting status of Raglai children and factors relating to household conditions and child feeding practices in Khanh Hoa province, Vietnam.

This research was a cross-sectional non-experimental study. It used secondary data from an Anthropometric and nutritional combined research of Ethnic Minority Raglai People in the two mountainous districts of Khanh Hoa province. Data from 0-4 age group (under-five) was taken from the original study (under-50), which used a two-stage cluster and systematic random sampling. The sample was 1,365 after dropping out implausible values. Descriptive analysis was used to illustrate the mean and percentage distributions. Bivariate analysis and multivariate analysis with odds ratio were used to examine the relationship between the outcome variable and the selected factors.

Findings indicated that 1) there was a very high stunting prevalence among Raglai children in Khanh Hoa province, that two-thirds of children were stunted in 2013; 2) residential area, age, gender and weight at birth of the children were found to be significantly related to child stunting. Girls were twice as likely to be stunted as boys; 3) most of the household factors were found to be statistically associated with stunted growth. The mother's educational attainment was considered the most important factor, since it represents the well-being of a community, which strongly affects the nutritional status; 4) among child feeding practice factors, only duration of breastfeeding was found significantly associated with stunting in bivariate analysis.

KEY WORDS: ETHNIC MINORITY/ RAGLAI/ MOUNTAINOUS/ STUNTING/ UNDER-FIVE CHILDREN/ HOUSEHOLD/ CHILD FEEDING PRACTICE

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