Food insecurity and some associated socioeconomic factors among children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in Tehran: a case control study

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Abstract

Background:
Food insecurity is defined as the limited or uncertain availability of enough food for permanent active and healthy life. Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) is the most common neurobehavioral disorder of childhood, presenting with pervasive and impairing symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, impulsivity, or a combination. There is scientific evidence that some dietary strategies and socioeconomic factors may be useful to improve the symptoms of ADHD and benefit the social, cognitive and academic performance of children and adolescents with ADHD. This Study is aimed at determining the association between food insecurity and ADHD in newly diagnosed patients.

Methods:
This case-control Study was conducted in Iran in 2017 among 146 patients with ADHD as cases and 146 healthy children as controls, who referred to health and medical centers under the supervision of Tehran universities of medical sciences, while, age, sex and location of living had matched. The general and United States Department of Agriculture household food security questionnaires were completed. A structured questionnaire was used with a wide range of questions for the evaluation of Socioeconomic Status (SES) and the presence of ADHD was diagnosed using the questionnaire of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fifth edition.

Results:
The food insecurity prevalence was 68.5% and 40.4% in cases and controls, respectively. Food insecurity, low economic level and ethnicity were significantly associated with this disorder (P<0.05).

Conclusion:
Food insecurity was one of the important risk factors for Children with ADHD that health care providers should consider it.