

Review Article

<https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2019.809.286>

Food Security and Nutritional Status in India- A Review

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

safe and nutritious food, security, World Food Summit

Article Info

Accepted:
24 August 2019
Available Online:
10 September 2019

Food insecurity is a threat for the development and prosperity of any nation. The status of food security and nutrition in India is not up to the mark as per various reports. Global Hunger Index (GHI), 2017 is severely high, i.e. 31.4 which is a challenge for our country. All people in the country should get sufficient and healthy food all the time to achieve food security. GHI reflects that we could not reach at the level of food security. 43 out of 1000 children below 5 years are dying every year due to diseases or malnutrition. Hence, the present paper reviews data on food security and nutritional status in India and their probable reasons. All the government schemes should be monitored properly so that every person can get benefit and food security can be achieved.

Introduction

Food security

Food security is called availability of sufficient, safe and nutritious food to all people at all times to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life due to economic or any other reason (World Food Summit, 1996). Food insecurity is a threat for the development and prosperity of any nation. The status of food security and nutrition in India is continuously improving still not up to the mark as per various reports.

Food security and optimum nutritional status of the whole population can be a benchmark

for a developed nation. There are various parameters to be measured for analyzing food security and nutritional status.

The Global Hunger Index (GHI)

It is designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger globally and by country and region. The GHI highlights the status of hunger reduction and provides an insight into the factors affecting hunger in any country. It is calculated each year by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI).

It is inferred from the Table 1 that GHI is reducing continuously since decades; still it is 31.4 which is a serious issue to be considered

and acted upon. Social and economic upliftment of people can further decrease this index.

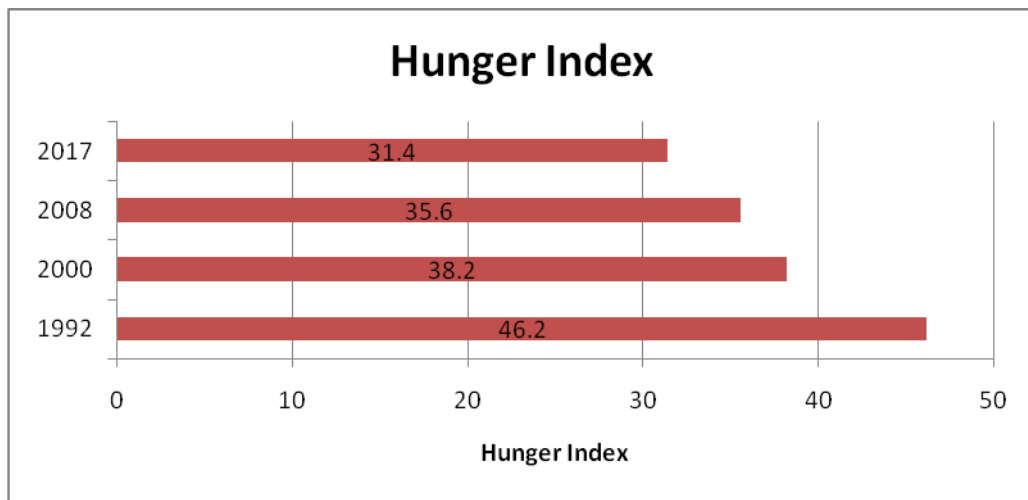
Calorie supply per capita

Calorie supply per capita is amount of food available for consumption, measured in kilocalories per capita per day. This figure is

reached by dividing the total available food supply for human consumption by the population.

This dataset tracks the calorie supply per capita in each country for calories available from crop products. It is showing an increasing trend since 2010.

Table.1 Global Hunger Index of India



Source: Global Hunger Index, 2017

Table.2 Under 5 mortality rate in India

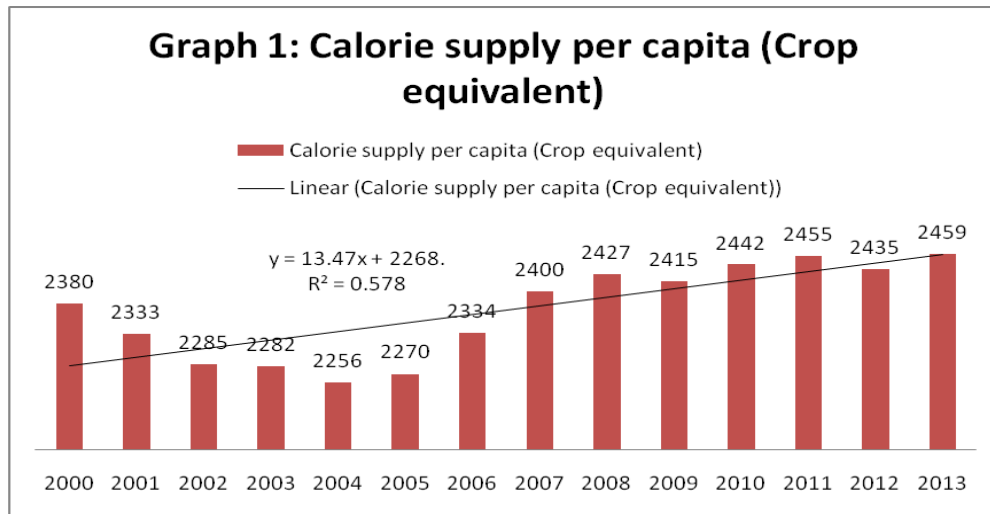
S. No.	Year	Under 5 mortality rate
1.	2009	61.9
2.	2010	58.8
3.	2011	55.9
4.	2012	53
5.	2013	50.3
6.	2014	47.7
7.	2015	45.2
8.	2016	43

Source: <http://www.foodsecurityportal.org>

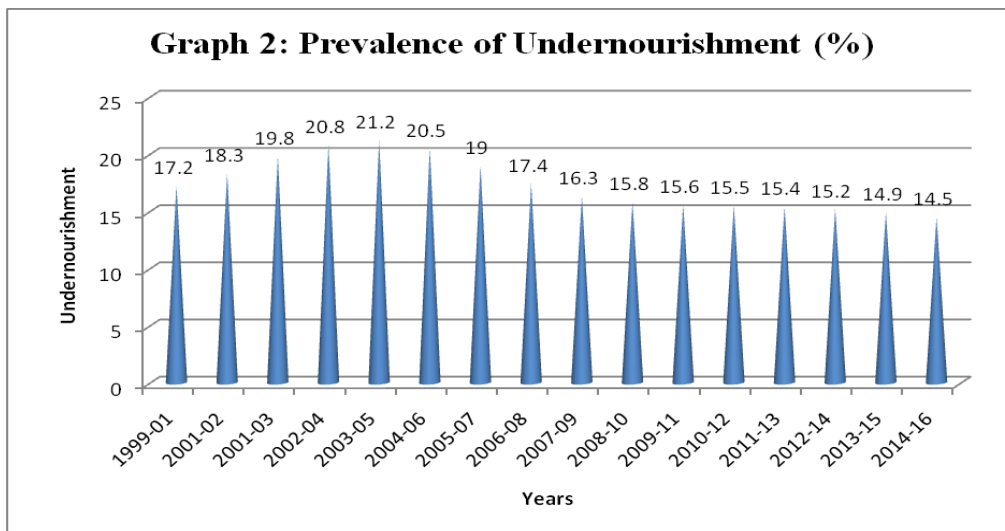
Table.3 Top five districts having poor nutritional status of children in Gujarat

S.No.	Districts	Normal nutritional status	Moderate underweight	Severe underweight	Total underweight
1.	Dang	77.89	20.31	1.80	22.11
2.	Surat	88.12	10.59	1.29	11.88
3.	Tapi	88.49	9.90	1.60	11.51
4.	Chhota Udepur	88.54	10.50	0.96	11.46
5.	Narmada	89.22	9.91	0.97	10.78

Source: Women and Child Development Department (MPR- March 2016), Gujarat



Source: <http://www.foodsecurityportal.org>



Source: <http://www.foodsecurityportal.org>

Prevalence of Undernourishment (%)

Undernourished population is the percentage

of population that is having food intake of less than a minimum dietary consumption for their health according to their age group. The

minimum requirement for dietary energy is usually between 1750 and 2030 kilocalories per person per day. In India, percentage of undernourished population has been decreased from 17.2 % in the year 1999-2001 to 14.5 % in the year 2014-16.

Various government schemes are launched to improve nutritional status of Indian population, especially women and children. Data reflects that the efforts are not enough to eradicate undernourishment and malnutrition in our country. There should be more emphasis on optimizing nutritional status of population. Creating awareness about nutrition and utilizing locally available nutritive food may be helpful to reduce prevalence of undernourishment.

Under 5 Mortality Rate

Under-5 mortality rate is the number of children who die before the age of 5 per 1,000. The mortality rate under 5 was reported 43 in the year 2016 as per the data on food security portal.

A report published on child mortality in India (Bassani and Jha, 2010) uncovered the facts that three major causes accounted for 78% of all neonatal deaths in India were prematurity & low birth weight, neonatal infections and birth asphyxia & birth trauma. Two causes accounted for 50% of all deaths at ages 1-59 months, i.e. pneumonia and diarrheal diseases. Further, it was found in the study boy preference likely affected girl child survival. Hence, not only medical reasons, while other social and economic factors are also associated with the mortality rate in India.

Nutritional status of children in Gujarat

The nutritional status of women and children has been a major issue in Gujarat despite economically developed state. High mortality rate gives a glimpse of poor health and

nutritional status of newborn children. Mother's health directly affects the infant's health. Hence, it is vital to improve health and nutritional status of women and children by implying interventions.

The Table 3 shows top five districts of Gujarat facing the problem of malnutrition. It requires urgent attention of policy makers, scientists and social workers.

There are several factors which causes malnutrition in India. Unemployment, lack of productive assets, gender disparity and the most important inefficient implementation of government schemes were stated major causes of hunger and malnutrition in India (AVARD, 2012). Abundant nutritional schemes were launched by government and most of them have targeted pregnant women and children, that are at higher risk of undernourishment due to increased needs. Yet, low utilization of these schemes is one of the hindrances on the way of malnutrition eradication (Varadharajan *et al.*, 2013).

Improving crop yield and quality in the country, the fortification of food for urban residents, and integrated efforts of the scientists and companies may be a few approaches to tackle with malnutrition issue (Lauer, 2005). India is developing at several fronts such as economic, social, technological etc. Besides these, health and nutrition of people is a paramount issue which needs to be considered urgently. Gujarat is lagging behind the other states regarding health and nutrition. Government schemes should be monitored and controlled properly with wide coverage. People need to be aware about the nutritive food and safety.

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How to cite this article:

Surabhi Singh 2019. Food Security and Nutritional Status in India- A Review. *Int.J.Curr.Microbiol.App.Sci*. 8(09): 2471- 2475.doi: <https://doi.org/10.20546/ijcmas.2019.809.286>