



Sustaining Food and Nutrition Security for Healthy and Improved Quality of Life

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Editorial

Over the past few decades there was a surge in the production and productivity of food grains particularly those belonging to cereals, millets and pulses. However, the trend is not similar for fresh fruits and vegetable which are important source of vitamins, mineral and other bioactive as well as other nutraceutical phytochemicals. Though, in general, the agricultural systems are moving towards attaining food security, the nutritional adequacy among different populations, communities and demographic groups remains a matter of concern, particularly among women and children. One of the approaches would be to identify the areas where there is probability of nutritional deficiency, characterize or quantify the extent of its prevalence and suggest remedial measure that also includes nutrition education. Another possible approach is to identify the nutritional diversity among different food sources and improvise the processing methods for complete utilization of the nutritional resources from diverse food sources in the form of food supplements and food fortifications. Identification of bioactive components having therapeutic effects on nutritional disorders and associated chronic diseases also aid in bestowing improvement in quality of life. The current issue of Journal of Nutrition Science Research is focused on these approaches and comprises of original research articles on child malnutrition in Nigerian orphanages; nutritional profiling of underutilized jack fruit as well as an alternate therapeutic approach for reducing the burden of cardiovascular diseases.

The recommended allowances for different foods and thus their nutrient levels vary with age, gender and physiological state. The dietary pattern has substantial impact on the growth and metabolism, particularly among growing children. Food sufficiency and nutritional adequacy of children in orphanage is a great concern and it can impact their health outcomes and ultimately their future as responsible citizens. Agugo et al. [1] have studied the correlation between the food consumption pattern among orphanage children of Nigeria and their body mass index. The study was based on food frequency questionnaire responses and measurements of 115 participants from three diverse geopolitical regions of a Nigerian state. The study revealed that consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables was low compared to processed foods and the intake of carbohydrates was more frequent. Quantum of animal source foods consumed by children was low. Both forms of malnutrition such as under and overweight were found among children. The study therefore emphasizes on nutritional counseling for care givers in these orphanages. The demand for natural and fresh foods is growing owing to the rise in population level. However, opting for selected few sources of fresh foods limits their distribution consequently raising their prices. Alternate natural food sources are equally good sources of bioavailable nutrients. Gangaprasad et al. [2] have evaluated the nutritional profile and the antioxidant potential of raw jack fruit, which is an underutilized natural food source. Based on nutritional profiling including the anti-nutrients, anti-oxidant potential and advanced gas chromatography and mass spectrometry analysis of the jack fruit, the study revealed that jack fruit has immense

relevance as a source of nutrients and bioactive components provided proper food processing is undertaken. Among the non-communicable diseases, cardiovascular disease is one of the major public health issues owing to the imbalances in the nutritional intake and improper diet pattern. Based on a study comprising of 13 volunteering participants, Nalapko et al. [3] have studied the effect of phosphatidyl choline (a polyunsaturated fatty acid) on blood glucose and lipid profile. The study revealed a significant lowering of triglycerides, LDL cholesterol and haemoglobin A1c levels. However, high density lipoproteins were also found to be lowered. The study has immense relevance in developing alternate therapeutic approaches for management of lipid metabolism and for reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and disorders.

The articles published in the current issue are of immense relevance in developing and optimizing effective strategies for providing adequate nutrition to the orphanage children, in identification and promotion of underutilized foods and their nutritional components for sustainable food security and in identification and characterization of bio-similar components for prevention, treatment and management of cardiovascular diseases.

References

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