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MONOGRAPH

“CHILD MALNUTRITION IN SOUTH AMERICA IN THE LAST 8 YEARS’ . “

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Gratitude

In this monograph I saw it as a project to learn and experience myself, that needs the patience of many people to finish it, also needs commitment and dedication.

That's why I thank my teachers for the fact that day by day class and class were able to help me land my ideas better and thank my parents for the ideas and support they gave me.

Summary

Malnutrition is an alteration of nutritional health, resulting from food shortages or an inadequate diet, it can be shown with different intensities, mild, moderate or severe and this is due to duration and severity. It is one of the main threats to the survival, health, growth and capacity development of millions of children, as well as to the progress of their countries.

In many countries, however, malnutrition due to a lack of necessary food continues to cause fatalities due to excess food in today's society.

The effects of child malnutrition can be devastating. They can prevent cognitive and behavioral development, school performance and reproductive health, thus affecting their lifelong health status. Children become malnourished when they do not receive enough nutrients for their bodies to resist infection and maintain growth

Their causes can be socio-economic and family, inadequate care for children and women, difficult access to food and poor health services, which can vary across households, communities and countries.

Hunger and malnutrition are not only a consequence of lack of food, but also of poverty, inequality, lack of attention, droughts, forms of government among many others.

There are two categories, primary and secondary malnutrition, the first occurs when there is a little consumption of food, which often occurs as a result of lack of economic resources.

It was identified that the fundamental period for preventing malnutrition exists: pregnancy and the first two years of a child's life, known as the 1,000 crucial days of life.

Secondary malnutrition occurs as a result of the body's inadequate use of nutrients due to problems with absorption, utilization or demand for nutrients.

Child malnutrition has a devastating impact on the lives of millions of children around the world. But ending malnutrition and its impact on children's lives is possible., there are very effective actions against malnutrition. (302)

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Introduction

This monographic work is a research on *"Child malnutrition in South America in the last eight years"* in its various forms is the most common of the diseases at present according to

several specialists in this subject, is a medical complication possible but can be prevented and has a very important impact on the outcome of treatments.

Malnutrition is one of the social problems with the greatest impact in Latin America affecting millions of children and their families, as a result of food scarcity or an inadequate diet. Its causes are due to several factors, some of them fixed, such as the child's genetics or social, economic and cultural factors that can act in a favorable or unfavorable way. When the balance of these factors is altered and nutrition is altered, the growth and development of the child is interrupted, leading to child undernutrition.

The problem of malnutrition is a very complex topic, widely discussed by large organizations such as UNICEF, NGOs, OAS, and great authors who have done great studies like, for example: Julio Berdegue.

Latin America is one of the continents most affected and with the greatest cases of child malnutrition, a devastating disease that affects 6 million children, 700,000 children who are at risk of death because of hunger. It limits their physical, psychomotor and intellectual development and only 1 out of every 9 malnourished children has access to nutritional treatment.

The monograph consists of three chapters: the first deals with the concepts that covers malnutrition, the types and degrees of it, is also about the essential vitamins that a child needs for their development and the benefits of them, the second chapter is the causes and consequences of this disease and finally the third chapter is made known the different ways to prevent it. (300)

Chapter I

Child malnutrition

1.1 Concept of Malnutrition

One of the main needs for the human being is food. A child's health and physical development depend very much on his or her diet, and the consequences of poor nutrition in childhood can have irremediable consequences on his or her state of health. One of the great and main problems in the developing countries of Latin America is child malnutrition.

Malnutrition can be understood as a poor diet a diet low in calories, protein, vitamins, nutrients that are necessary for the body, occurs when we do not eat food and it happens

that the body expends more caloric energy than it consumes. a devastating disease suffered by 50.2 million children under five worldwide. It is the result of food shortages or inadequate diet. It kills more than 3.1 million children each year.

According to UNICEF, Malnutrition is the condition that occurs when a person's body is not getting enough, and needed, nutrients. This condition can result from eating an inadequate or unbalanced diet, digestive disorders, absorption problems or other medical conditions. Gautam (2011) affirms:

The world produces sufficient food to meet the needs of all its men, women and children. Hunger and malnutrition, then, are not only the consequences of lack of food, but also of poverty, inequality and mistaken priorities.

Malnutrition acts as a vicious circle: malnourished women have babies with inadequate weight, which increases the chances of malnutrition in the next generations. In developing countries, approximately 19 million underweight children are born each year. Malnutrition, by affecting a child's intellectual and cognitive capacity, reduces school performance and the learning of life skills. It therefore limits a child's ability to become an adult who can contribute to the progress of his or her community and country. When malnutrition is perpetuated from generation to generation, it becomes a serious obstacle to development and its sustainability. (Wendy Wisbaum, 2011)

1.1.2 Concept of child malnutrition.

Child malnutrition is the result of poor food intake during childhood, with childhood being the stage that requires more nutrients for proper physical and intellectual development.

Malnutrition in children can even begin in the mother's womb.

1.2 Types of child malnutrition

Different types of malnutrition can be classified. They can be mild, moderate, or severe.

Marasmus: It is a disease caused by a low protein diet is more common to appear in the early years of life, resulting from a lack of prolonged breastfeeding without supplementation with other foods.

Lack of calories and protein in early childhood has serious consequences, because protein helps the structure of the body.

There is another type of malnutrition that is Kwashiorkor: This is characterized by being basically protein. They are usually found in children who have been fed for a very long period by their mothers and then receive a very low protein, carbohydrate-based diet.

1.2.1 Grade classification.

One of the classifications is Chronic Malnutrition, one of the most dangerous and harmful, it begins when the child has a bad diet. By not eating properly for a long time, the body becomes accustomed to having a low weight, and as the years go by it becomes difficult to gain kilos.

In the developing world, nearly 200 million children under the age of five suffer CHRONIC DISNUTRITION, the effects of which will be felt for the rest of their lives
''(Wisbaum, 2011 ,p.4).

Acute malnutrition. A disease that mainly affects children under 5 years of age is characterized by rapid weight loss and leading causes of death in children around the world.

Moderate acute. It is characterized to present a weight najo with respect to its height and can be observed measuring in the perimeter of the arm

Serious watering hole. It is a type of malnutrition where the child has a very low weight, and can have a high risk of mortality.

Chronic malnutrition. It is the process that is affecting growth in children by the lack of nutrients necessary for their body. It is very connected to poverty and socioeconomic problems.

1.2.3 The causes of child malnutrition

Immediate causes: The immediate causes are the lack of adequate nutrients in quantity and quality, and the existence of diseases and infections such as diarrhea.

Lower causes: These immediate causes have their origin, the lack of entry to food, the lack of health care, the use of unhealthy water systems.

Basic causes: there are basic causes that include political and economic factors. For example, economic growth is not always conducive to better nutrition of the population.

Equity is necessary to reach the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

1.2.4 Essential vitamins and minerals that need the body.

Vitamin A: This vitamin is fat-soluble that the body gets from food and helps in the sense of sight, immune system and ability to reproduce, helps soft tissues, bone development and skin.

A child who lacks this vitamin is more prone to infection and disease. Some effects may be: increased risk of blindness, damage to the skin, mouth, stomach and respiratory system.

The distribution of vitamin A in the child's body decreases the risk of measles mortality.

Iron and folic acid. iron in a child's diet is essential and necessary for the manufacture of hemoglobin which is composed of red blood cells, which distribute oxygen to all organs of the body.

Iron deficiency affects about 25% of the world's population. Iron deficiency can cause anemia and reduces mental and physical capacity. During pregnancy it is associated with low birth weight, premature births, maternal mortality and fetal mortality. Iron deficiency during childhood reduces learning capacity and motor development, as well as growth; it also damages the defense system against infections. In adults, work capacity decreases.

(Wisbaum, 2011, p.11).

1.3.1 Food right of the children

Health is a fundamental right of children, which must be allowed to any child, independently of his or her nationality or country of origin. A right connected to that of life.

Nutrition and drinking water are two problems that are suffered and must be eliminated. A right given in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that calls on the different

governments of countries to reduce child mortality and improve medical care, in order to fight against diseases, nutritional problems or children with special needs to please.

But malnutrition continues to be one of the main dangers to the survival, growth, health, and capacity development of many children, as well as to the advancement of their countries. The origin of human development includes having the basic necessities to survive covered, as indicated in the pyramid of Maslow's Theory of Motivation.

The factors that promote malnutrition to remain a warning for the survival and development of millions of people are many: lack of attention, high food prices, conflicts, migratory displacements, drought, the cycle of poverty, and many more .(1127)

Chapter II

The cost of hunger

2.1 Who can be malnourished?

When we talk about malnutrition, the image of people living in resource-poor countries comes to our minds. But this is not always the case. No matter what country we are from or what country we live in, malnutrition can be experienced by anyone. It affects people of all ages, although babies, children and adolescents are at higher risk. They may experience more because many nutrients are essential for their growth and development.

The most important time to meet a child's nutritional needs is during the 1,000 days from gestation to her second birthday. During this time, the baby has greater needs due to rapid

growth and development, is more susceptible to infections, more sensitive to biological programming, and depends entirely on others for nutrition, care and social interactions. (Lake, 2013, p.3)

2.2 Causes of Malnutrition

UNICEF Spain (2011) affirms: Adequate nutrition, in quantity and quality, is the key to a child's good physical and intellectual development. A child who suffers DESNUTRITION is affected its survival and the proper functioning and development of its body and its cognitive and intellectual capacities. Malnutrition is a different concept from MALNUTRITION, which includes both lack and excess of food. Malnutrition is a multifactorial problem, so there are several factors such as biological, psychological, social, economic, among others.

We discovered that malnutrition can occur as a result of:

The lack of vitamins in the diet, caused by people not getting enough nutrients. Today we can say that the most affected population is the low-income and indigenous people, whose mothers have a low level of education and who do not have access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The biggest problem is in rural areas, but it also happens that in large cities we find a large number of families affected.

Socio-cultural-economic environment includes elements associated with poverty and equity, schooling and cultural patterns, level of employment and wages.

Environmental factors define the environment in which a subject and his family live, including the risks inherent in the natural environment and its cycles (such as floods,

droughts, frosts, earthquakes and others) and those produced by human beings themselves (such as water pollution, air pollution.

"The world produces enough food to meet the needs of all its men, women and children. Therefore, hunger and malnutrition are not only the consequences of lack of food, but also of poverty, inequality and misplaced priorities" (Kul C.Gautam,2013 p5).

2.3 What are the main consequences of child malnutrition?

Malnutrition hurts people, both physically and mentally. The more malnutrition a person has, the more negative consequences it will have for their health.

The consequences of this condition as well as its signs and symptoms depend on the nutritional deficiency the person suffers. Next, we present the most important consequences in children.

2.3.1 Dizziness and fatigue.

Due to the great dehydration that our body has by not ingesting the necessary nutrients or the right amount of them.

One of the first consequences along with weight loss and muscle strength, is the dizziness we feel. It causes fatigue and makes it impossible for us to perform daily activities.

2.3.2 Poor growth.

This usually occurs more often in children. They need to be eating constantly to develop correctly, or it will affect their physical and mental development negatively.

2.3.3 Low weight.

On the other hand, another consequence of being malnourished is the loss of muscle mass, as well as the thickness of the extremities of the malnourished person.

But nevertheless the organs also suffer from consequences that affect the development to form our body, including the heart which loses strength and tone and this causes its functioning to be impeded and not the correct one.

2.3.4 Dry and scaly skin.

We will also find consequences of malnutrition on the skin as well as on the hair. The skin will look dry and flaky while the hair can be a "straw" and dead and even break easily.

2.3.5 Reduces the immune system.

Not eating food also negatively affects our immune system. It does not perform its functions properly causing us to be more likely to catch infections or get sick because, as with most organs, its level of activity decreases.

2.3.6 Muscle weakness.

On the other hand, the muscles are also affected by losing their muscle mass and consequently their movements. This usually happens to people who present a high level of malnutrition along with a prolonged time to this disease.

2.3.7 Gastrointestinal problems.

Malnutrition is also related to having gastrointestinal problems in the body. Three million people die from diarrheal diseases of these, combined with malnutrition 58%.

2.3.8 Difficulties in learning.

When our body is not well our mind will not be well in order to face a day of school or work. Since they present dizziness, fatigue, abdominal pains etc., and this makes us incapable of paying attention or of being well to learn. And children need more food than an adult because they are in a period of development and growth and this makes them an easy group to suffer this difficulty.

2.3.9 Weak bones.

Due to the lack of certain minerals and vitamins such as vitamin D can cause great bone problems and even make them more weak and easier to break.

2.3.10 Swollen and bleeding gums.

Not having the right vitamins and especially vitamin C makes our gums too irritated to the point that they can bleed.

2.3.11 Problems with the proper functioning of internal organs.

One of the consequences of not having the nutrients necessary for it to work directly affects vital organs, such as the liver which is affected by toxic substances in food. Among others, the functions of the pancreas cease to be performed and consequently do not produce enzymes or hormones that help the absorption of glucose, fat and other nutrients. Last but not least, the kidneys, which are affected in such a way that they begin to accumulate toxic substances for the body and are discarded by the urine.

2.3.12 Slower reaction times and difficulty paying attention.

To the great lack of food, nutrients and vitamins in our body none of our organs and apparatuses will be in a good state to carry out their functions properly and this causes that we are not in full faculty to react quickly and also affects in having problems of concentration in the daily activities.

2.3.13 Irritability.

This is one of the most common symptoms due to the discomfort that occurs during malnutrition, it is possible that people will become depressed and even more irritable than usual this is caused by the lack of vitamins in the body.

There is a lot of information about the consequences of malnutrition in children with the reaction of their abilities, their mortality, their cognitive development. And this sometimes increases the propensity to diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity and disabilities.

The brain and its development can also be affected directly or indirectly as a consequence of child malnutrition.

One of the worst consequences of acute malnutrition is the damage it causes to the brain, which can be permanent which causes it to produce a delay in anthropometric growth, cognitive, emotional and intellectual part by the reduction of glial cells. (1208)

Chapter III

Fighting child malnutrition together, how we can help and prevent

3.1 Why fight against child malnutrition?

Malnutrition causes about 10 million child deaths each year.

To begin with we must say that malnutrition is a problem too complicated and has always existed, and not only affects developing countries. which is difficult to solve because it has been seen that there are too many campaigns against this problem and prevention and promotion, but it can not solve completely, because by so many events and campaigns that are made inviting the prevention and promotion of health, not only that is the problem, if not the consequence and cause of many more such as political, educational, social, economic.

But if we can help a little to diminish this great problem that is lived, and for that reason it is necessary to know how we can and we must manage this situation. After many years of combating this big problem, there are actions that can make a difference and at the same time low cost and very effective.

Shrimpton (2018) says: “In general, malnutrition is much less widespread in places where women control family resources. Where women are oppressed and not treated as equals, there tends to be more malnutrition” (p.18).

3.2 Important actions against malnutrition

1. Access to health or medical care.

It is very important because when medical care is lacking and children do not receive the care they need according to their age, it is difficult to detect possible cases of malnutrition. Thus, if medical care is expanded, it can help reduce malnutrition problems.

2. Education and training of mothers and fathers.

In countries with high levels of malnutrition, food is scarce. However, it has been proven that teaching parents what foods they have available that are most beneficial to their children helps combat malnutrition.

3. Therapeutic food.

It is a paste made from peanut butter mixed with skimmed milk powder, vitamins and minerals necessary for the recovery of children who are malnourished and scarce of basic resources. The benefit of these therapeutic foods is that they come in a paste form that does not need to be mixed with water, which avoids the risk of bacterial proliferation in the event of accidental contamination. The child can consume the product directly. These foods can be stored for up to three or four months outside of refrigerators, even at tropical temperatures.

Its use has spread in recent years, driven by the possibility of using it at home.

4. Breastfeeding.

Milk produced by mothers has been shown to be one of the most effective ways to end malnutrition. It has been proven that when a baby does not receive the benefits of breastfeeding in the first months of life, the probability of dying is multiplied by 14.

5. Access to water and sanitation

In many cases, infections and diseases are poorly processed.

Simple habits such as handwashing, bathing, proper food preservation can prevent many problems.

One of the first causes of malnutrition is not consuming water in a good state, not having access to sanitation this causes infectious diseases. A toilet and a tap are fundamental in the fight of malnutrition.

6. Adequate nutrition in mothers.

It is important to eat well both during pregnancy and while breastfeeding in order to ensure the nutritional quality of milk and avoid low birth weight.

When children suffer from severe acute malnutrition, they are more vulnerable to diseases such as malaria and other water-related diseases. Similarly, if children are trying to recover from a disease, they are more at risk of malnutrition. This is why it is essential to prevent the spread of disease; increase access to proper sanitation practices; and promote healthy feeding practices for infants and children. (Poirier, 2018, p.12)

3.3 What we can do

But the main responsibilities in the fulfilment of children's rights lie with States. But each one of us can help to promote the observance of children's rights and to prevent this great problem and fight against child malnutrition.

Day by day companies have an ever-greater impact on people's lives and opportunities. That is why socially responsible action with children is a considerable way to advance the realization of children's rights. In addition, and as part of their social action, companies support and help in the fight against malnutrition by providing resources and helping the message reach more people every day: customers, employees, suppliers ... They can even raise awareness of this issue and share it with other organizations, promoting far-reaching collective initiatives.

The media also play an essential role. In them is not only to inform emergency situations, but also the reality of malnutrition as we know it affects about 200 million children in the world. That the person knows the causes, the consequences, the ways to prevent and combat malnutrition, and the relationships with other problems such as climate change or agricultural policies.

Each of us individually, we can:

- Inform us on the subject.
- Helping to sensitize others.
- Demand that political governments fulfil their commitment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and give priority to the fight against child malnutrition.
- Financially support organizations and foundations.

3.4 Latin American countries with the highest rates of chronic child malnutrition.

The children who suffer from this malnutrition have limitations in their physical, psychomotor and intellectual development.

And that is unalterable, because children who suffered from chronic malnutrition before the age of five are left with an invisible scar that accompanies them for life. We did something as savage to these children as cutting off a limb (Berdegué, 2018). The big issue is that because chronic child malnutrition is invisible, it doesn't produce "a frightening scandal" as a physical mutilation would cause.

In the following list I will present the countries of Latin America with the biggest percentage of child malnutrition in the last 5 years:

- Guatemala
- Ecuador
- Honduras
- Panama
- Nicaragua (985)

Conclusion

Malnutrition is a social problem, which in recent years has increased impressively and worryingly, since the State, as the pillar of the great problem, does not present it with the great attention it requires and needs.

There are several types of malnutrition: caloric malnutrition or marasmus type, protein malnutrition or kwashiorkor type, and mixed malnutrition.

The main risk factors for malnutrition are the low schooling of the children's teachers, the type of food they receive and the economic level that limits the nutrition of the daily food for a great physical and intellectual development.

Child malnutrition in the world is a complex and deeper economic and food order. Its context and struggle changes according to each country and location, there is no formula to combat it, but there are actions that can help prevent it.

Malnutrition is the key and its application the challenge, resources must be allocated to promote educational initiatives and sustainability of the most affected communities in Latin America. A pantry solves nothing, a transformation in our vision and dialogue with the problems of malnutrition, are the beginning of everything, and thus be able to diminish the problem.

In a child, the cycle of malnutrition begins before birth because the mother is not able to cover a basic diet, and at birth it presents itself with great problems of poverty, and little information on the part of the parents about health, hygiene and nutrition.

We cannot close our eyes to this great problem that is growing more and more all over the world, but at the same time it is not given the importance it needs, so it is necessary to raise awareness and sensitize everyone to help reduce the problem. (300)

Recommendations

At the end of this work it is recommended:

- This avoids the use of other foods that may be contaminated or the absence of protein in the diet of babies and children.
- People are fundamental in the fight against child malnutrition. Their support and contributions form the basis of the work of NGOs. That in times of crisis they reduce income from subsidies.
- A key weapon in the fight against malnutrition is to mobilize the consciences as well as the funds of all those who are called upon to intervene: from political administrations to private companies and the whole of civil society. To be able to make all people aware that this is a delicate and alarming issue, which must be made better known in order to know how we, the citizens who are not directly affected by it, can help the people who every day wake up and carry this disease and problem.
- Therapeutic foods help to combat severe acute malnutrition in children. Among the advantages it has are its ease of storage and distribution.
- Create plans for nutritional surveillance and food donation with the help of the government and insist that people be part of these programs.(200)

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