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Predictors of Acute Diarrhoea among Hospitalized Children in Gaza Governorates: A Case-Control Study

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Background and aim: This study aims to determine the predictors of acute diarrhoea among hospitalized children in the Gaza Governorates.

Methods: The case-control design included 140 children (70 cases and 70 controls) in a stratified cluster sample from Naser Medical Complex and Alnasser Pediatric Hospital. An interview questionnaire was used, and face and content validations were performed. Multiple logistic regression was used for the multivariate analysis of risk factors of diarrhoea in children aged less than five years

Results: The results showed a significant association between diarrhoea and family income, residence, complementary feeding, and age of weaning ($p < 0.05$). Children living in villages had lower odds of having diarrhoea by 53.2% than children living in cities. Children of families with incomes between US\$ 485 and 620 had lower odds of having diarrhoea by 80.8% than children of families with incomes less than US\$ 485. Moreover, children who did not receive complementary feeding had lower odds of having diarrhoea by 59.0%. We found that, for one month increase in weaning age, the odds of diarrhoea decreased by 1.06 times (adjusted OR=1.05, 95% CI 1.0180- 1.100). The study concludes that urban residence, lower family income, complementary feeding, and lower age of weaning are risk factors of diarrhoea among children aged less than five years in the Gaza Strip.

Conclusion and recommendations: The results of the study suggest that children of low-income families and those who were not naturally breastfed may warrant more attention for prevention and/or treatment of diarrhoea

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