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Food continuity and changes in food consumption pattern of Tibetan refugees in India

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The Food consumption pattern of refugee communities is being carried out by many scholars and few acknowledged about the food continuity, its implications on health of refugees in the host country. The present study highlights food continuity among Tibetan refugees in Bylakuppe settlement, India. Tibetan refugees in India face challenges in terms of procuring a quality health care system; there is a need to educate the Tibetan community about healthy eating habits. There is no such kind of in-depth study that aimed at understanding the food continuity of Tibetans who have been settled in India for six decades after the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959. Tibetan refugees, one of the most vulnerable group having lost its own country facing hardship in terms of resettling in new country leading to the problem of acculturation. This drastic shift in new environment would result in loss of culture, food consumption pattern in turn can have major implication on health. 200 household data were administered to understand food consumption patterns by employing a structured household questionnaire. Simultaneously, 23 individual data were collected consisting of first migrants (15) and second-generation (8) for the qualitative study. Households derive energy mainly from carbohydrates and animal fats, and there is a prevalence of food insecurity among the Tibetan community. It is a proven fact that food insecurity will have serious health consequences in terms of emotional and mental well-being and suggest for the need of further study of food insecurity among Tibetan refugees across the world.

Biography

Tenzin Namgha has completed her PhD at the age of 30 years from Christ University, Bengaluru India. She has worked as a monitoring and evaluation consultant at The Tibet Fund headquartered in New York. After the project completion, she has joined Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education as a lecturer. Post that, she was hired as consultant for Healthy Lifestyle Campaign by Department of Health, Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamsala. Currently, she is an independent researcher and has published research papers in scopus indexed journal. She was 2020 literati award winner for international journal of development issue for her research paper titled "Influence of remittances on capital endowment of Tibetan refugees in India".