

Abstract

The garment factories mainly aim to provide employments to the young girls who have just finished the education. A nutritional assessment was carried out with the study population of randomized 40 female workers who were in the age range of 19-30 years in “Jewelknit” garment in Free Trade Zone Katunayake. The objective of this study was to evaluate the diet and the nutritional status in relation to the nutrient intake. To obtain the baseline information of the subjects and the diet records a questionnaire and a three-day diet diary were used. Observation method was used to take a general idea about the working pattern and the diets. Anthropometrics measurements such as Body Mass Index and Waist: Hip ratio was taken to get the nutritional status. To assess the nutrient intake, the mean values of the main nutrients such as energy, protein, fat, carbohydrate, calcium, iron, iodine, vitamin D, B12 and vitamin E were calculated. A paired t test was done to see the significant difference between the Recommended Dietary Allowances and the mean actual intake. Mean values of the intake of energy, protein, fat, carbohydrate, calcium, iron, iodine, vitamin D, B12 and vitamin E were less than the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA). Except energy, vitamin D, E and B12, there was a significant difference between the actual intake and the Recommended Dietary Allowances in other nutrients ($p>0.05$). About 57.5% of the girls were malnourished and 35.5% were probably wellnourished and 5% were possibly obese. About 90% of them had good fat distribution. Performance of hard work, poor attention to the diet, lack of time for meal preparation and consumption, low quality of the food provided by the canteen were some of the reasons for the poor nutritional status of the young working girls. Proper attention should be directed to uplift their nutrition while giving adequate emphasis to reduce occupational health risks.

Key words: Free Trade Zone, garment factory, nutrient intake, nutritional status malnutrition.