

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Improving infant and young child feeding practices plays a critical role in health and development of children and impact child survival. The objective of the study was to assess the knowledge attitude and practices of caretaker"s towards complementary feeding in kilembe mines hospital.

Methodology: This study was cross sectional study done at kilembe mines hospital applying purposive sampling method using semi structured questionnaire from July 2016 to august 2016. All caretakers having children of 6-24 months of age who attend maternal child health for immunization and those admitted in the pediatric ward during our study period were included as our sample population. The data collected was exposed to statistical analysis version 17, presented with aid of Microsoft excel and word in form of percentages, frequencies tables and figures.

Results: The findings revealed that 89% had knowledge about the age of initiation of complementary feeding with attitude 93% agreeing that complementary feeding should start at six months but practice is low with 60% giving complementary feeds at 3-4months of age, (85%) knew frequency of feeding but only(37%) feed thrice a day and (76%) had knowledge of the importance of giving variety of complementary feeds and attitude was good (73%) but practice about dietary diversity was low as shown by majority of the children being fed on cereal based feeds 88% legumes (60%) and stem and tubers (23%) which is below the recommendations of WHO. (79%) revealed that children should given bottle feeding in case they do not get satisfied. And also (80%) reported that children should be given complementary feeds before six months if they do not gain weight. Social demographic factors like age of the attendant, religion, number of children, age of the child and relationship with the child were statistically significant associated with practices of complementary feeding.(chi-square test; $p=0.000$, $p=0.000$, $p=0.004$, $p=0.0001$) respectively. Knowledge of age of introduction of complementary

feeding was statistically significant associated with practices of complementary feeding. (Chi-square test=0.000)

Conclusions: The study findings indicate appropriate knowledge in terms initiation age, frequency, importance of dietary diversity with some negative attitudes in terms feeding before six months in case the child does not gain weight and giving bottle feeding in case the breast milk is not enough. Inappropriate practices are observed in terms of initiation age of complementary feeding, frequency, and dietary diversity.