

ABSTRACT

Globally, umbilical hernias in babies were very common in both developed and least developed countries (Perkins, 2008) and occurred in 10 to 20 percent of all children (Perkins, 2008). They also occurred in various ages under 5 years (Slakey, Benz, Joshi, Regenstein and Flornnan, 2005). Although complications from umbilical hernias rarely occurred in children, if the umbilical cord was trapped, additional complications could occur and intestines that could not be pushed back through the stomach wall sometimes did not get adequate blood supply which caused pain and even killed the tissue (gangrene), which resulted in a dangerous infection (Choi et al, 2011).

A descriptive cross-sectional study was therefore carried out involving 50 respondents in Kayunga Town Council. Data was collected using interview guides which contained questions on demographic characteristics as well as the knowledge, attitude and practices towards the management and care of children with umbilical hernia. The data was then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS) version 18.0.

The results of the findings indicated that most respondents were knowledgeable about umbilical hernia and 30 (60%) understood umbilical hernia as a bulge from the child's umbilical cord, 24 (48%) mentioned twisting of the intestine as a cause of umbilical hernia, 50 (100%) were aware of the signs and symptoms of umbilical hernia, 30 (60%) mentioned swelling of the umbilical cord as a sign and symptom and 50 (100%) were aware of the potential dangers of umbilical hernia. Respondents had positive attitudes towards management of umbilical hernia and all 50 (100%) agreed that umbilical hernia was dangerous, 40 (80%) said it was true that umbilical hernia led to poor quality of life for the children, 50 (100%) said it was true that umbilical hernia led to stigmatization of the child and the child's family. However, 40 (80%) said it was true that umbilical hernia was caused by witchcraft.

Respondents had poor practices towards management of children with umbilical hernia and all 50 (100%) had ever seen a child suffering from umbilical hernia although 30 (60%) reported that children with umbilical hernia were cared for by applying local herbs on it to disappear and 42 (84%) said children with umbilical hernia were not taken for screening as well as 40 (80%) reported that children with umbilical hernia were not taken for review.

In conclusion, the study revealed that most respondents lacked adequate knowledge about the management and care of children with umbilical hernia and despite awareness of the dangers of umbilical hernia, most respondents did not have good practices for managing and caring for their children.