

Abstract

Introduction: Under nutrition is a condition under malnutrition involving eating or the intake of nutrients below the normal body requirements where the affected individuals present stunted, emaciated, with a dry pale skin that is not succulent or with an abnormal body mass index.

Main objective: The study was set to establish the knowledge levels towards under nutrition, the socio-demographic and socio-economic factors plus the cultural factors towards under nutrition in the gulf area of Kitintale zone 12 Nakawa division.

Methodology: A descriptive study was therefore done involving 384 respondents from households of Kitintale gulf zone 12. The data was then collected on knowledge of under nutrition among children under five years of the area, socio-economic and cultural factors towards under nutrition were also identified using an interviewer administered questionnaire that was later analyzed by SPSS program version 18.

Results: Results revealed that 96.1% respondents had knowledge on under nutrition with 70.8% getting it from health workers, family and media. A majority of about 81% knew causes like inadequate food intake, inadequate breastfeeding plus health problems. And 54.7% had food insecurity yet 45.3% never experienced food security.

Those with adequate knowledge were 68%, 32% with inadequate knowledge and 81% gave adequate breastfeeding while 19% did not, then 90.8% had knowledge on a balanced diet being a requirement for children under five years for proper growth and development. Socio-economic factors revealed 88% being well nourished and 12% under nourished, due to fewer meals had per day and not eating nourishing foods like eggs, milk, chicken and others. Cultural factors were also a problem because of food taboos, weaning and limitations for breastfeeding.

Conclusion of the study: Findings revealed that despite the higher levels of knowledge towards under nutrition among under five year children, there are also other factors contributing to under nutrition among under five years of the area of study including socio-economic and cultural factors that need to be addressed so as to sensitize the population, creating awareness about them and their existence plus their impact o under nutrition so that it can be eradicated in this community.