



Assess The Level Of Knowledge Regarding Malnutrition And Its Prevention Among Mothers Of Under Five Children In The Community Area, Amloh, Punjab

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Abstract: Nutritional deficiency illnesses are a significant public health issue in India and other developing nations, affecting 55% of childhood deaths. Mothers play a crucial role in providing children under five with the necessary nourishment for growth and development. To help children establish healthy eating patterns from an early age, exposure to healthy food and eating patterns at home and beyond the family should encourage favourable attitudes towards good nutrition. This is especially important for children between the ages of zero and five. Aim: The aim of the study is to assess the level of knowledge regarding malnutrition and its prevention among mothers of under 5-year children in community area, Amloh, Punjab. A descriptive survey approach has been utilized in the study to assess the knowledge regarding malnutrition, its prevention and control among mothers of under five children's. The sample for the study composed of 40 Mothers who were selected by nonprobability purposive sampling technique. The data was collected by self-structured questionnaire. The results shows that 17.5% of mothers had adequate knowledge, 47.5% had moderately adequate knowledge and 35.0% had inadequate knowledge regarding dietary practices in prevention of malnutrition. The Chi-square value shows that there is significance association between the score level and demographic variables which include number of under five children and type of food consumption. The calculated chi-square values were more than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. There is no significance association between the level of scores and other demographic variables. This includes Age of the mother, educational status, occupation, type of family, monthly income of family, religion, and source of health information. The calculated chi-square values were less than the table value at the 0.05 level of significance. In the study it was concluded that most of the women have moderate knowledge that is 47.5% and only 17.5% women have adequate knowledge.

Index Terms - Malnutrition, Children under 5 years.

I. INTRODUCTION

A well-nourished child population is crucial for a healthy and productive labor force in the future. Nutritional status should be neither deficient nor excessive, as it improves children's learning abilities and increases the strength of the labor force, contributing to economic growth. Therefore, proper nutrition is critical for healthy, functioning people, families, and nations.

Preschool children (ages 3 to 5) are concerned because they are still forming their eating habits and require encouragement to consume nutritious meals and snacks. These kids are ready to learn. They frequently emulate adult eating practices. They require monitoring at mealtime since they are still developing chewing and swallowing abilities. A child's physical and mental development require a well-balanced diet. A child's diet should include a range of foods such as cereals, fruits, and vegetables, both organic and conventional.

Healthy living significantly enhances the enjoyment of life while simultaneously reducing the risk of serious illnesses and the likelihood of premature death. It is a holistic approach that goes far beyond merely avoiding diseases; it involves actively pursuing well-being in various dimensions of life. Nutritional status plays a crucial role in this journey, as it reflects the body's overall condition. This status is determined by factors such as nutrient intake, absorption, and utilization, all of which must be balanced against the body's demands. By prioritizing a balanced diet and mindful living, individuals can cultivate a vibrant life filled with energy and vitality.

Nutritional status serves as a vital indicator of the body's overall condition, shaped by the intake and absorption of essential nutrients. This status is intricately influenced by various diseases and health conditions, which can impair nutrient utilization. Furthermore, achieving a balanced nutrient intake in relation to energy expenditure is crucial for promoting growth, supporting reproductive functions, and maintaining optimal health throughout life.

OBJECTIVES:

- To assess the level of knowledge regarding Malnutrition and its prevention among Mothers of Under Five Children's in the community area.
- To determine the association between the knowledge scores with the selected sociodemographic variables in the community area.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION:

- Knowledge: It refers to the information and awareness acquired for malnutrition and its prevention.
- Malnutrition: Malnutrition has been defined as a pathological state resulting from a relative or absolute deficiency or excess of one or more essential nutrients.
- Prevention: It means serving to avert absolute deficiency or excess of one or more essential nutrients.
- Mothers with under five Children: In this study it refers to women having children between the age group of 1-5 years.
- Children under five years: It refers to children who are less than 5 years old, especially those who are not in full time education.

Literature

Tahilramani G, Meena RK and Mathur A (2021) A study of 65 mothers with children under five suffering from severe acute malnutrition found significant gaps in their knowledge about antenatal care and infant and young child feeding practices. 30.7% were unaware of malnutrition causes, and only 23% identified feeding-related issues as contributing factors. The study emphasizes the need for targeted health education programs to improve maternal knowledge and attitudes towards nutrition.

Anas Abdulrahman Aljohani, Mujahid Abdulrahman Aljohani (2020) A study assessing mothers' knowledge about children's malnutrition found that 62.25% knew about it, with 62.5% relying on doctors. Demographic factors such as age, education, income, number of children, breastfeeding, and source of knowledge significantly influenced mothers' knowledge, with demographics such as age, education, income, number of children, breastfeeding, and source of knowledge also playing a role.

Chetan Bharmu Ambupe (2020) A study was conducted to assess the knowledge of under-five mothers in Ratnagiri City about malnutrition prevention and control. A total of 60 mothers were surveyed using a

structured questionnaire. Results showed that 55% had average knowledge, 31.66% had good knowledge, 13.33% had satisfactory knowledge, and 0% had excellent knowledge.

Kalpna ganesh sawane, Sheetal barde (2019) A study in Pune assessed the knowledge of mothers about nutrition for under five children. A total of 100 children and their mothers were surveyed using a structured questionnaire. Results showed that most mothers had average knowledge, 34% had good knowledge, and 3% had poor knowledge.

Midhun Ashok, Taj Mohammad (2019) A study in Nigeria assessed the effectiveness of nutritional education in improving feeding patterns for malnourished children. A total of 115 mothers were surveyed, with a knowledge score of 27. Over two-thirds had low knowledge (68%), while nearly one-third had average knowledge (32%). No one had high knowledge about Protein-Energy Malnutrition. The mean knowledge score was 12.91, with a standard deviation of 3.11.

Sonika Sangra, Nida Nowreen (2019) A cross-sectional study in rural settings assessed the knowledge, attitude, and practice of 300 mothers regarding under-five nutrition. Results showed that 45% had good knowledge, 32% had fair knowledge, and 23% had poor knowledge. Attitude scores were also low, with 30.3% having good attitudes and 55.6% having fair attitudes. Practice scores were low, with 43.6% having good practices and 44% having poor practices.

Jessily Elsa George, N Thivya (2019) A study in Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu, assessed the knowledge of Protein Energy Malnutrition among mothers of under five children. Results showed that 20% had adequate knowledge, 63% had moderate knowledge, and 17% had inadequate knowledge. The study used purposive sampling.

Materials and Method

Research Approach:

A descriptive survey approach has been utilized in this study to assess the knowledge regarding malnutrition, its prevention and control among mothers of under-five children's.

Research Design:

Nonexperimental descriptive study design used in this study.

Research Setting:

The research study was conducted in the research setting in Selected areas of Amloh Town.

Target Population:

The target population for the present study consists of mothers of under five-year children residing in village Saunti.

Sample and Sampling Technique:

The sample for the present study composed of 40 Mothers who meets the designated set of criteria. Sampling technique is the name or other identification of the specific process by which the entities of the sample have been selected. Non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select the samples for present study.

Development of Research Tool:

The tool was developed after thorough review of literature and consultation with experts in the field of Research and Nursing.

Description of Tool:

As the study was to assess the knowledge regarding malnutrition and its prevention among mother of under 5-year children in community area Amloh, Punjab. The review of literature, expert's opinion and investigator's own experience provided the basis for construction of the tool.

The structured questionnaires consist of two sections-

Part A: DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Consist of items seeking information regarding socio demographic characteristics of mothers, such as: obtaining personal information about subjects i.e., age (in years), birth order in family, type of family, academic standard, educational status of mother, educational status of father, occupation of mother, occupation of father, family income per month, source of information.

Part B: SELF STRUCTURED KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONNAIRE

This part consists of multiple-choice questionnaire regarding knowledge and prevention of malnutrition among mothers of under five children of village Saunti, Punjab. Total numbers of questions were 30. Each question has 4 options. Each correct response 1 mark and 0 mark for incorrect response so maximum score was 30 and minimum score was 0.

Reliability of tool

The reliability of the self-structured tool to assess the knowledge was established by testing for stability and internal consistency, stability was assessed by test-retest method where Karl Pearson correlation of coefficient formula was used. The value was found to be reliable ($r=0.9$). Internal consistency was assessed by split half method where spearman's brown prophecy formula was used. The value was found to be reliable ($R=0.9$).

Data Collection Procedure

The research was conducted in a village area of Saunti, India, with 40 mothers as participants. The researcher obtained written consent from the mothers and verbal consent from those under five children's mothers. Data was collected through a questionnaire and non-probability purposive sampling technique. The data was collected for 15 minutes from one mother. The study's purpose was explained to the participants, and the data was analyzed using statistical measurements and tabulated. The study aimed to understand the impact of maternal health on child development.

Plan of data analysis:

The study aims to organize data in a master data sheet, analyze demographic variables using descriptive and inferential statistics, and assess the knowledge level of mothers of under-five mothers using frequency and percentage distribution. The Chi square test will be used to determine the association between perceived academic stress and selected demographic variables, with a significance level of $p<0.05$.

Finding: The knowledge regarding dietary practices in prevention of malnutrition of 40 mothers in which 19(47.5%) of the mothers had moderate knowledge, 14 (35.0%) had inadequate knowledge and 7 (17.5%) had adequate knowledge.

DISCUSSION:

The study analyzed the knowledge of 40 mothers, with 7 (17.5%) having adequate knowledge, 9 (47.5%) having moderately adequate knowledge, and 14 (35%) having inadequate knowledge. the data showed that the majority of mothers had a low level of knowledge about dietary practices to prevent malnutrition. The mean score for each area was 0.56%, 0.86% for causes, 1.20% for healthy dietary habits, 4.58% for nutrient deficiency diseases and nutrient rich diets, 0.26% for prevention, and 0.15% for complications. The findings are consistent with the findings of 40 mothers of under five children selected using non-probability purposive sampling technique. The study found that 35% of mothers had inadequate knowledge, 47.5% had moderately adequate knowledge, and 17.5% had adequate knowledge regarding protein energy malnutrition.

The study found a significant association between mothers' knowledge of dietary practices and malnutrition prevention, based on six demographic variables: age, education, occupation, monthly income, religion, and source of health information. However, other demographic variables like family type, number of under five children, and food consumption types showed no significant association.

Conclusion:

The study it was concluded that most of the women have moderate knowledge that is 47.5% and only 17.5% women have adequate knowledge.

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