



A Comparative Study on Nutritional Problems in Preschool Aged Children of Nepal

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Measure the level of knowledge, attitudes & beliefs about nutritious food for children amongst poor rural and urban mothers.

Methods: Quantitative questionnaire study.

Results: The study included more urban mothers (56%) than rural mothers (44%). Major barriers to recommending nutritious foods included: lack of knowledge (15%); high market prices (19%); and cultural influences or beliefs (6%). The study shows nearly 55% children are providing fruits once in week. Similarly nearly 15% of families never give salad to their children. Nearly 16% of mothers cannot choose nutritious food from the grocery store. Likewise 12% respondents lacked food. Nearly 57% children had been taken at least once to a spiritual healer and 16% on multiple occasions for the treatment. Nearly 20% of mother believed eating green leafy vegetables and fruits during illness affect child health. Nearly 8% respondent feed meat, fish, egg and milk during times of illness to their children but 92% do not.

Conclusions: Knowledge and attitudes towards nutritious food of rural and urban mothers are still poor in both societies. Beliefs about food practice are still strongly embedded in Nepal. Urban mother had better food recommendation, whereas rural mother experienced huge barriers. Meat, fish, egg and dairy products are not provided to children due to cultural influences. Mothers from both communities have high faith in spiritual healers.

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