FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH INCREASE IN UNDERNUTRITION AMONG CHILDREN AGED 6-59 MONTHS IN KAMORIONGO VILLAGE, NANDI COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Malnutrition is an imbalance in a person’s intake of nutrients and other dietary elements needed for healthy living. It can manifest itself as undernutrition or overnutrition. Undernutrition encompasses stunting, wasting, and deficiencies of essential vitamins and minerals. The general objective of this study was to determine the factors associated with increase in undernutrition among children aged 6-59 months in Kamoriongo village, Nandi County. The specific objectives were to determine the extent of stunting, underweight and wasting and identify the possible causes of undernutrition among these children. The study was a cross-sectional descriptive study and the data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire, anthropometric measurements and food frequency questionnaire and direct observation was done to validate the results given by respondents. One hundred and one children between 6-59 months in Kamoriongo Village, Nandi County, Kenya, were purposefully selected to participate in the study and their anthropometric measurements taken after permission from their parents had been granted. Data entry was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and analysis of anthropometric nutritional data was done Emergency Nutrition Assessment (ENA) Software to determine the Z-score values. Chi-square was used to determine relationships between the variables. According to the study, the prevalence of wasting showed a high rate of 57.1%, moderate wasting 17.1% and severe wasting of 25.7%, the prevalence of stunting was 39.0%, moderate stunting of 17.1% and severe stunting of 22.0%. The prevalence of underweight was 53.7%, moderate underweight of 17.1% and severe underweight of 30.0% and the factors that contributed to the increase in undernutrition were; length a mother exclusively breastfed their children and the period of introduction to other foods, and poverty.

Keywords: Undernutrition, Stunting, Wasting, Underweight, Kamoriongo.