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A study to assess the prevalence of malnutrition and its associated factors among under-five children in selected migrant population of Udupi district

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"ABSTRACT

A research study titled, “A study to assess the prevalence of malnutrition and its associated factors among under-five children in selected migrant population of Udupi district” was conducted by Ms. Ameeka Shereen Lobo in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing at Manipal College of Nursing Manipal, Manipal University, Karnataka.

The objectives of the study were to determine the prevalence of malnutrition among under five children with the help of assessing the anthropometric measurements, to describe the factors associated with malnutrition among under five children by using a semi-structured questionnaire and to find the association between the prevalence of malnutrition and the selected factors.

The conceptual framework of this study was based on the Health Belief Model (HBM) by M.H. Becker and his colleagues in 1974. A survey approach with a cross-sectional design was adopted for the study. Clustered sampling was the sampling technique used in the study.

Content validity was established by giving the tools to seven experts and modifications were made as per the expert’s suggestions. The pretesting was done among five migrant children and their mothers of Udupi district. Reliability was done among 20 migrant children and their mothers of Udupi district. Reliability was established for the socio-economic status scale by test-retest method, using Karl Pearson’s formula with r=0.99, anthropometric measurements using inter-rater method with r=1, factors associated with malnutrition using test-retest method with r=0.97, and knowledge questionnaire by split half method using Spearman Brown Prophesy formula with r=0.90.

Data were collected using demographic proforma, modifiied Kuppuswamy’s Socio economic status scale, anthropometric measurements, factors associated with malnutrition and knowledge questionnaire regarding malnutrition.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The major findings of the study are, that maximum 114 (43.8%) children were preschoolers, 106 (40.8%) children were toddlers, and 40 (15.4%) children were infants. The prevalence of malnutrition was seen in 151 (50.07%) children. Maximum 109 (41.92%) children were normal, 86 (33.08%) were in the grade I degree of malnutrition, and 4 (1.54%) were in grade IV degree of malnutrition. The prevalence of malnutrition among the under-five children of the migrant population was 58.07%.

Majority 21 (52.5%) infants, 59 (55.7%) toddlers, and 64 (56.1%) preschoolers have malnutrition. Maximum 19 (47.5%) infants were normal, 13 (32.5%) infants were stunted, 11 (27.5%) were underweight, and 11 (27.5%) infants were at possible risk for overweight. Maximum 32 (30.2%) toddlers were in the Grade I category of malnutrition, maximum 48

(45.3%) toddlers were severely stunted, 25 (23.6%) were underweight, and 28 (26.4%) were at possible risk of overweight. Maximum 42 (36.8%) preschooler were in the Grade I category of degree of malnutrition, most 43 (37.7%) were stunted, 39 (34.2%) were underweight, and 15 (13.2%) preschoolers were wasted. Majority of the mothers, i.e. 148 (56.92%) of them had good knowledge and 112 (43.08%) mothers had average knowledge.

The study found that there is significant association between prevalence of malnutrition and gender (=7.117, p value= 0.008), spacing between two children (=6.886, p value= 0.032) and mid arm circumference of the child (=6.894, p value= 0.05). There is significant association between prevalence of malnutrition and father's education (=7.083, p value=0.034) and spacing between two children (=5.746, p value=0.024) in infants. There is significant association between the prevalence of malnutrition and number of siblings (=6.691, p value=0.03) in toddlers.

Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations have been made:

• A similar study can be replicated on a larger sample.

• The strength between prevalence of malnutrition and associated factors can be established.

• A case control study can be conducted by taking the normally nourished children as control group, and malnourished children as cases.

• A comparative study between two factors can be conducted to find the strongest association

• A longitudinal study can be conducted to find out the effectiveness of rehabilitative programme on malnutrition.

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