

Maternal Care Practices on Nutritional Status of Pre School Children in Dass Local Government Area of Bauchi State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Introduction: Child undernutrition remains one of Africa's most fundamental challenges for improved human development because the time and capacities of caregivers are limited; far too many children are unable to access effectively amenities they need for a healthy life. Methods and procedures: This cross-sectional, descriptive study evaluated the maternal care practices on nutritional status of pre-school children, 150 mothers were selected by systematic random sampling in Dass L.G.A., Bauchi-State, Nigeria. Information on relevant parameters were collected by questionnaire, analysed by various indices of descriptive statistics using SPSS version 16.0. Spearman's rank correlation was used to test for associations between the variables. Results: Thirty-five (23.3%) of the respondents were aged 21-25 years. Thirty-three (28.0%) had secondary education, while forty-nine (32.7%) were full housewives. Majority 79(52.7) earned N1,000- N10,000 monthly versus 10(6.7%) who earned N11,000- N20,000. 113(75.3%) married while 7(4.7%) of respondents were separated. Sixty-one (40.7%) practiced exclusive breastfeeding within six months. Only seventy-one (47.3%) initiated breastfeeding between 7 and 13 months. Five (3.3%) of children were mildly underweight while nine (6.0%) were severely stunted. Conclusion: The outcome suggested that working time of mothers is a major determinant on their child nutritional status. However, there is a significant relationship on the working time of mothers, income level and educational level of mothers to the nutritional status of their children ($P < 0.05$). Recommendation: Good policy programmes should aim at eradicating poverty, better child care practices that would reduce malnutrition among under-five children.

Keywords : maternal care, nutritional status, preschool children, Dass L.G.A.

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