

Iodine Nutritional Knowledge of Food Handlers: A Capricorn and Waterberg District Study, Limpopo Province, South Africa

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Abstract : Background: South Africa has indeed made good progress towards IDD elimination, as far as implementation of salt iodization and coverage of iodized salt are concerned, the education and promotion aspects of the iodized salt intervention are seriously lacking. Objective: To determine the iodine nutritional knowledge of food handlers at primary schools under the National School Nutrition Programme in Capricorn and Waterberg district. Design: This study included 300 food handlers recruited from 95 primary schools in Capricorn district and 105 primary schools in Waterberg district, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Primary schools and study participants were conveniently selected. The data was collected by means of a structured questionnaire. Information obtained was on the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, general knowledge on salt fortification and knowledge test. Results: The iodine knowledge for the food handlers in two districts was poor with the entire population's iodine nutritional knowledge of 12% on the Lickert scale. The mean score on the Lickert scale for Capricorn and Waterberg districts was 17% and 8.6% respectively indicated poor iodine nutritional knowledge. Conclusion: The two districts had poor iodine nutritional knowledge. Giving nutrition education to the public on the importance of iodine and the consequences of iodine deficiency disorder (IDD) and continue advocacy on mass media on the iodine fortification as an intervention strategy to combat the escalating problem of micronutrient malnutrition control.

Keywords : food handlers, nutritional knowledge, iodine, National School Nutrition Programme

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