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THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE, PERCEPTION AND USAGE OF FERMENTED FOODS BY CAREGIVERS FOR FEEDING YOUNG CHILDREN IN HEILBRON, FREE STATE PROVINCE

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Introduction: Use of fermented foods and probiotics has the potential to improve nutritional status when fed to young children. However, there has been insufficient research in South Africa determining the level of knowledge, perceptions and usage of fermented foods among the children's caregivers.

Objective: This study aimed to assess the caregivers' level of knowledge and perceptions and the usage of fermented foods for feeding young children in Heilbron, Free State Province.

Study methods: This was a descriptive quantitative study where data was obtained from participants using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics was employed summarize and present data. Chi Square test was used to determine demographic characteristics associated with feeding of fermented foods. Statistical significance was confirmed for p-values less than 0.05.

Results: From the 325 respondents, majority were aged between 18 and 35 years and female dominated. Commercial fermented foods used by caregivers to feed children under 5 years were Inkomazi (62%) commercial Mageu (82%) and yoghurt at (86%). Majority of caregivers responded that they prepared fermented foods in the household to feed children under 5 years. Most of them 61% (n= 164) reported to be preparing ting ya mabele, followed by ting at 42% (n= 113) and fermented soft porridge 26% (n= 69). Most respondents had adequate knowledge and positive perceptions about fermented foods both commercially prepared and homemade.

Conclusion: This study showed that respondents had substantial knowledge about fermented foods. However, there were mixed perceptions on fermented foods usage.

NUTRITIONAL STATUS AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF FEMALE STREET SWEEPERS IN DELHI

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The present study was designed to assess the nutritional status and quality of life of female street sweepers in New Delhi. Data was collected from 50 adult (>18 years), non pregnant and non lactating female street sweepers using a pre-tested questionnaire-cum-interview schedule, one-day 24 hour recall method and WHOQOL-BREF scale for quality of life. Most of the subjects (68%) belonged to age group of 31 – 45 years, 60 percent were illiterate and 50 % were working for 6 – 8 hours each day. Majority (34%) reported to have their monthly incomes below Rs 10,000. The mean BMI of subject was 24.38 ± 3.09 kg/m² and mean Waist-Hip Ratio (WHR) was 0.82 ± 0.04 . The mean intake for energy and protein was significantly lower than the RDA ($p < 0.01$). The micronutrient consumption was much below the recommended levels ($p < 0.01$) indicating poor nutrient intakes. In terms of food groups consumption, the consumption of fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products was significantly lower than the suggested intakes ($p < 0.01$). The subjects scored significantly lower on the environment domain of quality of life (49 ± 13) as compared to physical (64 ± 10) and psychological (62 ± 14) condition and social relationship (63 ± 13) domain ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that subjects were not satisfied with their financial status, medical services, transport and opportunity for leisure activities but were satisfied with social life, body appearance, personal life, sleep and energy level. High BMI and WHR, high fat-low fibre-low micronutrient intakes, indicates higher risk to developing NCD's even in this low-income group subjects. In terms of QoL, subjects scored best in their physical health domain followed by psychological, social relationships and least in environmental domain.