



Tropentag, September 14-16, 2022, hybrid conference

“Can agroecological farming feed the world?
Farmers’ and academia’s views”

Positive deviance approach in improving child health outcomes: a participatory assessment of child feeding practices in Marsabit county, Kenya

ROSE CHEPKORIR¹, CAROLINE MUSITA²

¹Maseno University, Public health, Kenya

²Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Department of Community Health and Development, School of Public Health, Kenya

Abstract

In order to sustain the gains made by promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, interventions need to extend into the second half of infancy and beyond. In Marsabit County, EBF rates are so high yet malnutrition rates among the under- fives still remains high. This has been attributed to challenges in complementary feeding. Nutrition and health outcomes depends on the level of nutrients consumption found in daily food intake. High quality dish results in good health whereas a poor quality diet results in health deficits. It is the role of mothers or caregivers to ensure provision of adequate diet to the child for positive health outcomes. Thus this study aimed at determining the positive deviant child feeding practices through participatory assessment in Marsabit, Kenya, in order to promote introduction of nutrient dense complementary feeds and other positive deviant child feeding practices in the region.

Data was gathered from consenting mothers and caregivers of children aged 6 to 24 months, in 9 Focus Group Discussions consisting of 10–12 mothers each. Child food samples for nutrient content determination were also collected after completion of each FGD session. Resulting data from the FGDs was categorised into four major themes. These include: Knowledge and perception of the mothers and the caregivers on quality of child feeds, medicinal foods, positive deviant child feeding practices and the nutrient contents of child feeds in Marsabit County. This study showed that indigenous local knowledge is input into the feeding of children, however, the mothers still expressed their concern on knowledge gap on matters child feeding. Medicinal foods in the community are also varied and are used for either prevention or treatment purposes.

In the next steps, knowledge exchange and creation sessions amongst the mothers will be conducted on positive deviant child feeding practices and nutrient value of child feeds.

Keywords: Child feeding, health, maternal knowledge, medicinal foods, positive deviance