

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

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Background

- In Marsabit County, EBF rates are so high, 75.7% (KAP Survey, 2017), yet malnutrition rates among the under- fives still remains high, 19.8% GAM rate (SMART Survey, 2022). This has been attributed to challenges in complementary feeding (Mutuku et al.,2020).
- In the same setting however, there are children with good health and nutrition status. This could be attributed to caregivers successfully applying positive deviant child feeding practices.
- Thus this study aimed at determining the positive deviant child feeding practices through participatory assessment in Marsabit, Kenya.

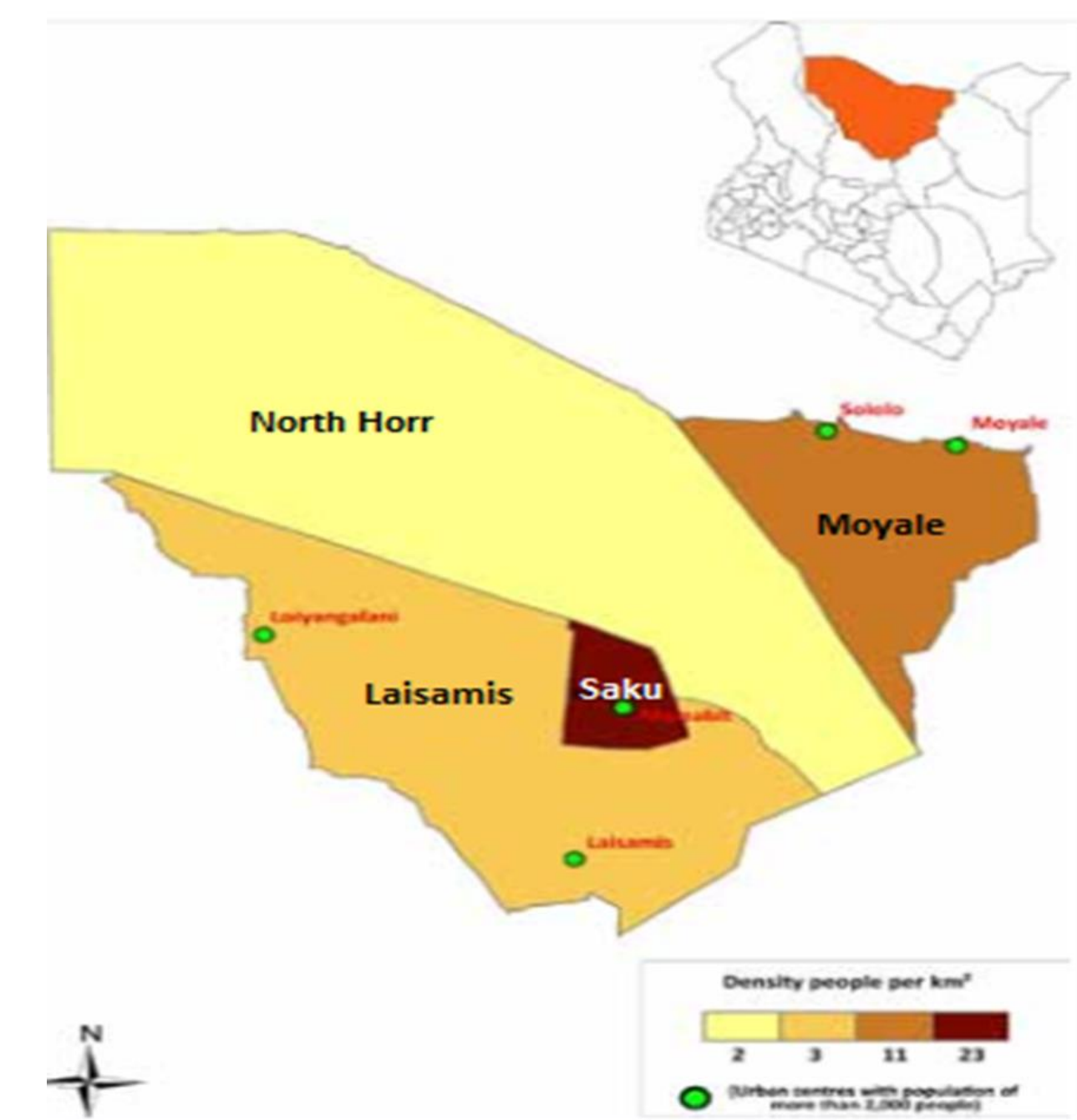


Societal actors in a group photo

Objectives

- To assess maternal knowledge and perception on the quality of child foods.
 - To identify medicinal foods fed to children 6-24 months.
 - To determine nutrition quality of the child feeds through laboratory analysis.
- To determine the deviant child feeding practices in Marsabit County

Study Area



Marsabit County, Kenya

- ASAL county.
- Livelihood zones: Pastoralism, agro-pastoralism, fishing and formal employment
- Experience acute food insecurity (IPC, 2021).

Materials and Methods

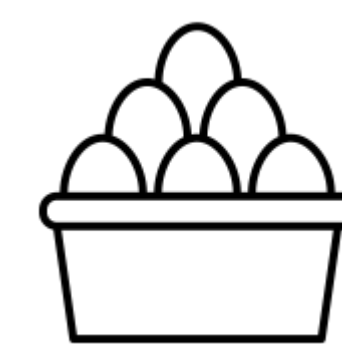


FGDS (N=9 groups)



Narrative interviews

Free uninterrupted conversation on:
Knowledge and perception of mothers on quality of child foods
Medicinal foods and Deviant child feeding practices



Child food sample Collection

Results

Maternal Knowledge and perception on quality of child foods

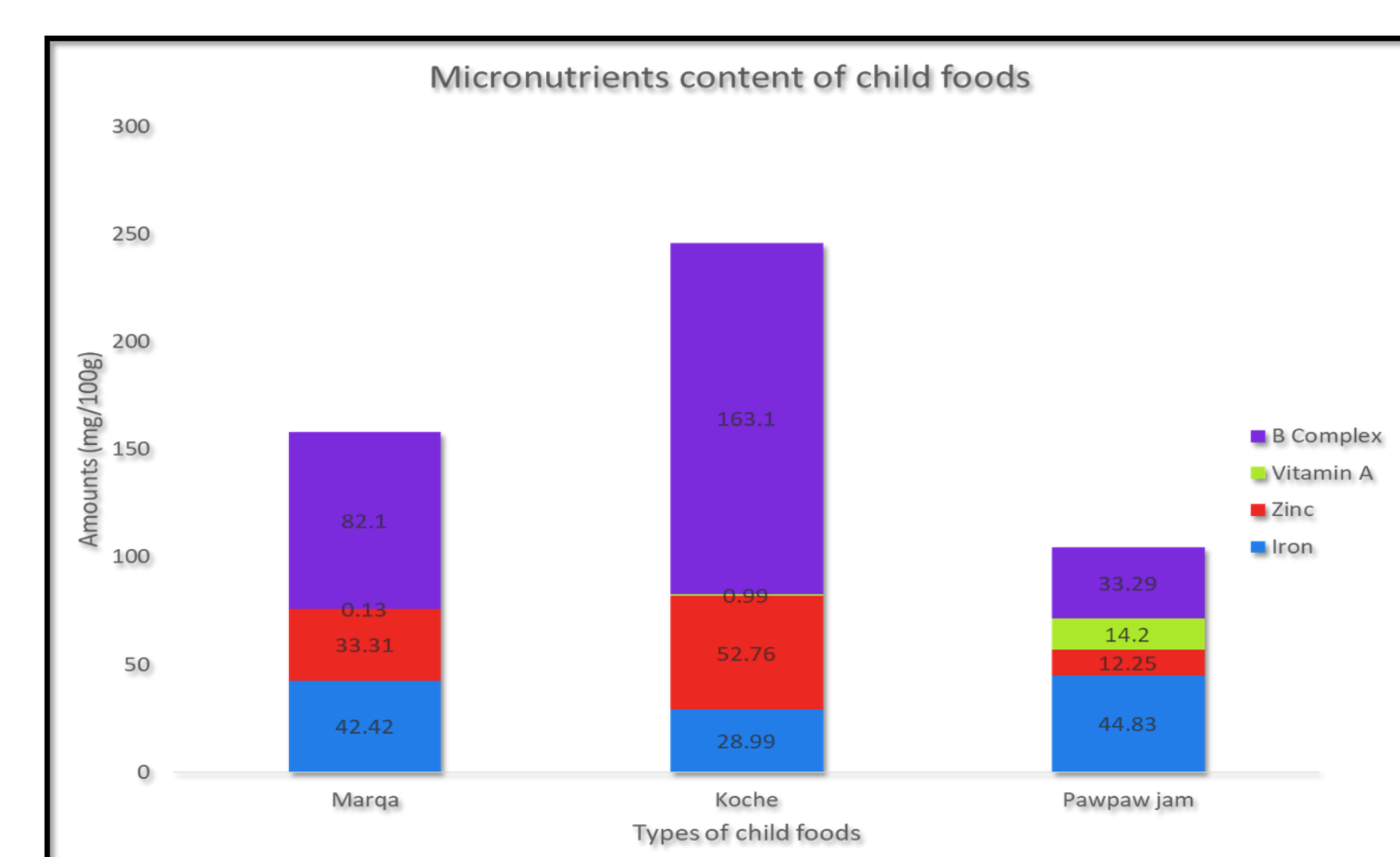
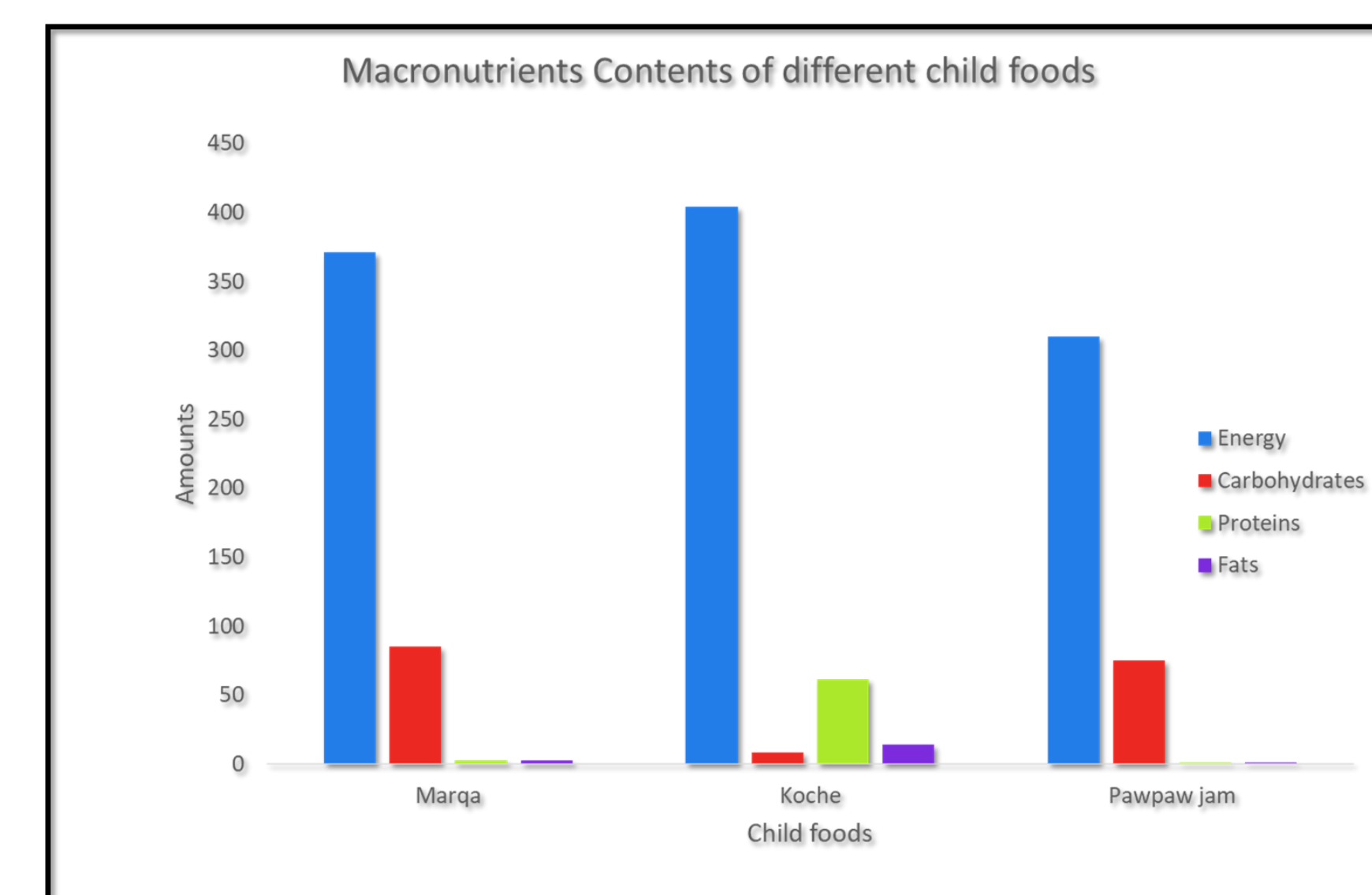
- Indigenous local knowledge is largely input into the feeding of children.
- Milk, blue band and ghee is added to child food to enrich it.
- Common child food was porridge prepared from a mixture of flour (maize, sorghum, millet, barley, beans, omena, groundnuts, fenugreek, terere, cassava)
- Mothers perceive porridge mix to be highly nutritious since their children are healthy and strong.

Medicinal foods

- Medicinal foods in the community are used for either prevention or treatment purposes.
- Fenugreek seeds boiled in milk is widely used to boost immunity and in treating stomach upsets in children.
- Deviant child feeding Practices

Nutrient Contents of child foods

- Energy, carbohydrate, proteins and fat content in the porridge flour mixture ranged from 330-374kcal, 62-76, 8-11 and 1-6 (%/100g) respectively.
- Iron, zinc and vitamin A contents (mg/100g) in the porridge flour mix ranged between,37-149, 14-33 and 0-2 respectively.
- Child foods prepared by roasting or fermentation had high nutrients levels (Zinc, Iron and Vitamin B complex). These include, barley and fermented porridge.



Conclusion

The findings of this study provide a basis for the promotion of local indigenous knowledge and positive deviant child feeding practices that are more sustainable since they are being practiced already by mothers in the same setting.



Focus group discussion with Biftu women group



Group of mothers in a group discussion during feedback session

