EFFECT OF SANITATION AND HAND WASHING PRACTICES ON NUTRITIONAL STATUS AMONG UNDER-FIVE CHILDREN IN RURAL NEPAL

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Background and Objectives

Malnutrition is a major cause of disease and death among under-five aged children, affecting billions of people worldwide. The main objective was to measure and compare the effect of Sanitation and Hand Washing Practices on Nutritional status among the under-five aged children in Rural Nepal.

Literature Review

According to the NMICS (2014), the Stunting rate of the under-five children was 37 %, upon the target to 28 %. Similarly, under-weight among under-five children was 30%, where MDG target was 27 %. In addition, the Wasting cases were 11 % upon with the MGD target of 5 %.

Methodology

A cross-sectional comparative study was conducted among 207 respondents from 3 VDCs (now Rural Municipalities) of Nuwakot and Sindhupalchowk District. Mothers with under-five children were taken for data collection, where simple random sampling was followed and semi-structured questionnaire survey and observation checklist were used and data were analyzed and interpreted with SPSS, version 20.0.

Findings/Results:

Access and use of toilet facility has found significant with all three nutritional parameters such as underweight, wasting and stunting. Overall sanitation practice is associated directly with wasting. It has clearly shown that quality of sanitation has direct association with acute and chronic malnutrition. The association between critical times of Handwashing and nutritional status are found significant with wasting, so as in handwashing with soap as well. Seeing the comparison of Hygiene practice, it has found that Hygiene Practice is found associated with wasting and stunting.

Conclusions/ Recommendations and/Policy Implications

Since Sanitation and handwashing/hygiene practices are found associated with stunting, wasting and underweight, the possible consideration from policy to implication level most be closely focused and monitor the progress accordingly.

Key words: *Nutrition, Underweight, Wasting, Stunting, Toilet, Handwashing*