

**Maternal Psychological Wellbeing, Pre-School Feeding
Practices and Musculoskeletal Development Status
among Mukono Infants**

Magala Dan

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Abstract

When Psychologists liaise with Nutritionists and Health personnel to optimize care and development, affection ties between the unresponsive pre-school infants and their disillusioned parents get mended. The endeavor is essential in realizing the complete functional and intellectual needs of the rapidly growing Pre-school infants thus preventing: late school entry, general physical weakness, absenteeism, mild cretinism, compromised functioning in the cognitive and psychosocial placement, depressive symptoms, impulsivity, hypo-activity, marginalization, low motivation among others which deter their capacity to academically achieve.

This study was aimed at establishing the relationship between the maternal psychological wellbeing, pre-school nutritional care practices and the musculoskeletal development reputed of infants. It was a cross sectional survey conducted in Mukono district. A sample of 329 dyads of complementary feeding mothers and their infants were selected through both purposive and simple random sampling. Questionnaires and observation checklists were used to collect data. Anthropometric data was entered into the Emergency Nutrition Assessment (ENA) software and compared with the WHO anthro 2005 values to determine the Anthropometric status of infants. Other data was analyzed using SPSS (version 18.0). Statistical associations were tested using Spearman's rank correlation, t-test analysis and Pearson Chi-square at 95% confidence level.

Most mothers (56.2%) had a low overall psychological wellbeing with maternal psychological wellbeing being significantly associated with all the maternal socio-demographics. All maternal socio-demographics were also significantly correlated with preschool dietary practices and the prevalence of all forms of musculoskeletal development discrepancies relative to the national averages was very high; wasting (13.7%), stunting (31.9%) and underweight (19.1%). Infant socio-demographics were also significantly associated with all the musculoskeletal development discrepancies and maternal psychological wellbeing was also significantly positively correlated with the specific pre-school infant feeding practices. The three musculoskeletal development discrepancies were also significantly associated with the pre-schools' dietary practices and mothers to the normal infants had a significantly higher maternal psychological wellbeing

Most of the mothers had an appalling mental welfare which was significantly associated with dreadful socio-demographic attributes. The combination compromised pre-schools' level of dietary care and considerably caused a high prevalence of musculoskeletal development discrepancies. The mental delight of women who are the primary care takers of the pre-school children ought to be prioritized by the government, and other stakeholders through educational, financial and cultural empowerment. Nutrition information to manage the abnormally high prevalence of musculoskeletal discrepancies among pre-schools should also be packaged by the district health personnel and availed to the mothers as part of infant postnatal care.