INCIDENCE AND CAUSES OF MALNUTRITION AMONG UNDER- FIVE CHILDREN IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE BAYELSA STATE, NIGERIA

ONASOGA OLAYINKA A*; ALADE AMOS O**; OSAJI TERESA ACHI***; BOSINDO ERIMOBOERE****

*Department of Maternal and Child Health Nursing, Faculty of Nursing, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

**Faculty of Nursing, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

***Faculty of Nursing, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

****Faculty of Nursing, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study explored the incidence and causes of malnutrition among under- five in primary health care centre in Bayelsa State from July 2009-June 2011. A purposive sampling technique was adopted in which all under-five children who were admitted with the diagnosis of malnutrition at the primary health centre from July 01, 2009 and 31, June 2011 and who satisfy the inclusion criteria were used. The data for the study was collected using a checklist. It was discovered that out of the 468 under five children treated in the Health Centre from July 01, 2009- June 31, 2011, only 79 cases of malnutrition were recorded with the highest incidence in 2009 and lowest in 2011. The study showed that the rate of malnutrition were highest among those between aged 24-35 months and among males. Out of the seventy-nine cases of malnutrition that received treatment in the health center, 61 (77.2%) were cases of kwashiorkor and 18 (22.8%) were cases of marasmus, however, there was no case of kwashiorkor. Poor nutrition, malaria, worm infestation and diarrhoea were the major causes of malnutrition. Study also revealed 73 (92 marasmic %) of the malnourished children were cured while 6 (8%) died. It was recommended that Nurses should intensify effort in giving demonstration lesson on balanced diet with locally available foods and provide hygiene education on food preparation to mother.

Key Words: Incidence, Causes, Malnutrition, under-five kwashiorkor, marasmus

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