

OP 16 Prevalence of malnutrition and its influencing factors among grade-5 children in Jaffna Educational Division

Kalaialagan K¹, Kumaran S², Coonghe PAD²

¹Dept. of Paediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

²Dept. of Community and Family Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Jaffna

INTRODUCTION: Malnutrition is found to be the major problem throughout the childhood. It directly and indirectly affects the child's growth and performance. Even though there is great attempt taken by several authorities the identification of this problem still remain as an iceberg phenomenon. This study aimed to identify the prevalence of malnutrition among the grade 5 students and to describe its associated factors in Jaffna Educational Division.

OBJECTIVES: To identify the prevalence of malnutrition among the grade 5 students and to describe its associated factors in Jaffna Educational zone

METHODS: A descriptive cross sectional school based study was done. By cluster sampling method 404 grade 5 students were recruited and data was collected by self administered questionnaire and a check list for anthropometric measurements. Data was analyzed with SPSS 16

RESULTS: Among the study participants Male: female was 1:1.1. Mean age of the students was 119.2 months. Majority were Srilankan Tamils (90.8%) and Hindus(68.3%). Mean BMI of the students was 15.08. Among these students based on the BMI 63.7% of the students were underweight, 30.3% were normal weight & 6% were

overweight. But 56% of the students commented that they think they have adequate weight. Most of the students (>90%) were having breakfast & dinner from the home but >20% of the students getting lunch only from the students from school mid day meal programme.

CONCLUSION: The estimated under nutrition among this group of students was high and needs to be addressed by health, education and relevant authorities. Parents also have to take special consideration of the nutritional status of their kids