



Iron Status of Children Aged 6-59 Months in Kaduna State of Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: Iron deficiency and iron deficiency anaemia (IDA) are serious public health problems in Nigeria especially in the under-five children. Iron is of great importance for adequate development of brain, which is completed by age 5. Iron deficiency has serious consequences for cognitive, psychomotor, physical and mental development of children. Iron deficiency in childhood lowers IQ scores, impairs mental development and psychomotor functions, reduces work capacity and causes irreversible abnormalities in brain growth and differentiation. The study examined the iron status of children 6-59 months in Kaduna State of Nigeria. The result of the study will be useful in planning nutrition programmes for under- five children in the State.

Methods: Eighty under- five children aged 6-59 months were used for the study. Their iron status was assessed using haemoglobin levels. Haemoglobin was determined using the Cyanomethemoglobin method.

Results: Haemoglobin (Hb) levels showed that 22.6% of the children had mild anaemia (Hb 10.00-10.99 g/dl), 15.50% had moderate anaemia (Hb 8.00-9.99 g/dl), 15.50% had severe anaemia (Hb <8.00 g/dl) while 46.40% were normal (Hb ≥11.00 g/dl). More than 50% of the children were anaemic.

Conclusions: There is high prevalence of anemia in the children studied. Nutrition intervention to improve iron status of U-5 children in Kaduna State of Nigeria is imperative to save the children from irreversible abnormalities in brain growth and development.

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