

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH

### **Association of Nutritional Status, Feeding Patterns, and their Covariates among Lactating Adolescents 15-19 Years Attending Kilifi County Hospital, Kenya.**

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#### **Abstract**

Adolescent birth rate per 1000 adolescents aged 15-19 is a global phenomenon that translates to greater proportion in early pregnancy and lactation in this group. The prevalence of pre-mature pregnancy in Kenya is at 31.1%. This cohort is at a high risk of nutritional status when they become pregnant due to competition of nutrients. 69.2% of households in Kilifi County consume food at a borderline putting them at risk of malnutrition. The objective of this study was to investigate association of nutritional status, feeding patterns, and their covariates among lactating adolescents aged 15-19. The research approach was both qualitative and quantitative. Respondents attending kilifi hospital, able to provide consent and residing in kilifi were selected for inclusion. Interviews were used to collect data on lactating adolescents', breast feeding practices and anthropometry to determine their nutritional status. The 24-hour recall and food frequency questionnaires aided in obtaining data on nutrients and energy requirements. Data Analysis was done using Nutri-servey and Excel to analyzed all food items consumed, SPSS determined feeding patterns, lactation practices while Logistic Regression explained association between independent and dependent variables. The study findings indicate most adolescent lactating mothers have normal body eight. They may have had stunted growth because height had a Mean of 160 cm below global expected height of 163cm for women aged 18. Insufficient dietary intake and feeding patterns greatly influenced growth. Dietary intake was not uniform due to no monitoring or enough education on nutritional requirements. Essential nutrients missed out in the dietary management of adolescent lactating mothers that impacted on low exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months. Majority of the respondents did not carry out exclusively breastfeeding. Dietary patterns like snacking, low consumption of fruits and faulty dieting, were most likely the cause for low EB patterns.

**Key words:** Lactating adolescent mothers, nutritional status, feeding patterns, lactating practices, Covariat