

**PREVALENCE OF DIARRHOEAL DISEASES AMONG UNDER- FIVES IN
KITILESUB LOCATION, MWALA SUB-COUNTY, MACHAKOS COUNTY**

BY

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Q32/CE/8128/2012

**A PROJECT PRESENTED IN FULFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A DEGREE IN
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY**

FEBRUARY, 2015

ABSTRACT

Diarrhoea is a disease condition characterised by the passage of three or more loose stool per day or more frequent passage than is normal for an individual. Global mortality estimates from diarrhoea and its complications range from 1.5 to 5.1 million deaths per year for children under the age of five years. Diarrhoea diseases are a major killer especially in the developing countries where children under the age of 3 years experience about three episodes of diarrheal every year and common among poor people, Diarrhoea remains a major public health problem in East African nations such as Kenya. In Kenya diarrhoea remains the second leading cause of under-five mortality with 27,400 deaths annually. Nearly one in five children under the age of five dies as a result of dehydration, weakened immunity or malnutrition associated with diarrhea.

The general objective of the study was to determine factors contributing to diarrhoea diseases among under- fives in Kitile sub location, Mwala sub-county, Machakos County. The specific objectives were to determine the level of knowledge among parents and caregivers on diarrhoea diseases, to establish the factors contributing to under-five diarrhoea and to determine the frequency of diarrhoeal diseases amongst under-fives in Kitile sub location Mwala-sub County, Machakos County.

The study size was 243 but 140 parents and guardians of children less than five years of age in Kitile sub location Mwala Sub County Machakos County were interviewed due stated limitations. A questionnaire, interviewer schedules and a check list were used to capture the information from the respondents. A descriptive cross-sectional study was used. Analysis and presentation of data was done by use of figures, percentages, bar charts, tables and graphs.

The study faced the challenge of some parents, caregivers and guardians were too busy to create time to participate in the study.

A focus on the study can play a significant role in reducing the under-five mortality rate and quicken the country's footsteps in its journey towards the realization of MDG 4. The results obtained from this study may help create an understanding on the importance of provision of safe domestic water, environmental sanitation, knowledge on nutrition, personal hygiene and rotavirus vaccine in the prevention of under-five diarrhoea to the community.

In conclusion the study found that diarrhoea was prevalent in the study area as 63% of the

respondents' children had experienced diarrhoea in the last one month. The prevalence was in conjunction with, low water quality hygiene, excreta disposal, and child's feeding practices. Knowledge did not influence the prevalence as per this study.