

INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is defined as the sum of the processes by which a person obtains, ingests, absorbs and metabolizes these substances essential for life under all environmental circumstances (Barness, 1975).

Nutrition in infancy is more than a matter of simple nutrients: How babies are fed is as important as what they are fed and had important implications not only for children but also for all society (Barness, 1975).

All children normal and abnormal progressing from infancy to maturity have certain physical needs without which life cannot continue. Also certain psychological needs contentment of the individual for his self resistance and good relationships with other people. They relate both to intellectual and emotional development because these are so closely interwoven that it is difficult to provide them adequately except in combination. These include affection and continuity of individual case, security in a knowledge of belonging stable personal relationships and a familiar environmental conditions..

Among the basic physical needs food stands on the head of the list. The practice of infant feeding is strongly affected by different social, cultural and economic factors of the community and on the other side of the picture not only affect the physical health of the child but also his growth and developmental pattern, mental capacity and social act (Sheridan, 1973). This effect will continue to act

all through his life. More than 1/3 of children in the developing and under-developed countries are suffering from undernutrition. Infection is still an important precipitating factor in this problem (Jelliffe and Jelliffe, 1978)_b.