

Abstract:

*The present study was conducted to evaluate the different practices and consumption aspects of milk and milk products in three different socioeconomic groups of families (poor class, middle class and higher class) in Khartoum North. Forty-five household women (15 from each group) were randomly selected. A survey and questionnaires addressing the comparison of milk sources, quantities consumed and their preference in terms of sources and dairy animals, dairy products, and the methods of preservation were conducted. Fresh milk samples were similarly collected in sterile containers from each family, participating in the present study; for microbial analysis, using the Resazurin reduction test, which is an indirect method for grading the microbial load. The laboratory analysis of milk samples revealed that 46.7% of the samples were graded as excellent milk, 35.6% were graded as good milk and 17.8% were reported as accepted milk, while no rejected milk sample was detected in the selected milk samples. Moreover, in the poor families the excellent milk grade was 46.7, the good milk grade was 40% and the accepted milk grade was 13.3% of the tested samples. In the middle class families, 53.3%, 33.3% and 13.3% were found to obtain excellent, good and accepted grades of milk, respectively. However, in the higher class families the excellent, good and accepted grades of milk were recorded as 6.7%, 66.7% and 27.7%, respectively. The study also evaluated the ownership of animals and their rearing practice, methods of milk transportation and preservation and preparation of yoghurt. The result of milk analysis together with some advices on the hygienic handling and safety of milk and milk products were clearly explained to the selected women, participating in the study. It was concluded that the economic situation influences the type and amount of milk and milk product consumed and the use of labourers to run the business of the farm. Also the freshness of milk is an important factor in grading milk in Khartoum North, regardless of educational and handling practices. This could be achieved by the efficient transportation and handling and further storage and preservation. Processing of milk instead of keeping the extra raw milk is essential and important in obtaining good quality products. In order to ensure the quality of milk and milk products during handling and processing to consumption, it is necessary to organize training and extension programmes especially*