

NUTRITION KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES AND DIETARY PRACTICES AMONG FOOTBALLERS AT LEAD CITY FOOTBALL ACADEMY

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

Inadequate nutrition knowledge among football players might lead them to indiscriminately use dietary supplements and opt for unhealthy food choices. Adequate knowledge of nutrition is believed to influence the performance of footballers; improving nutrition knowledge helps foster optimal performance by improving dietary practices and attitudes. This study examined the nutrition knowledge, attitudes, and dietary practices of footballers at Lead City Football Academy.

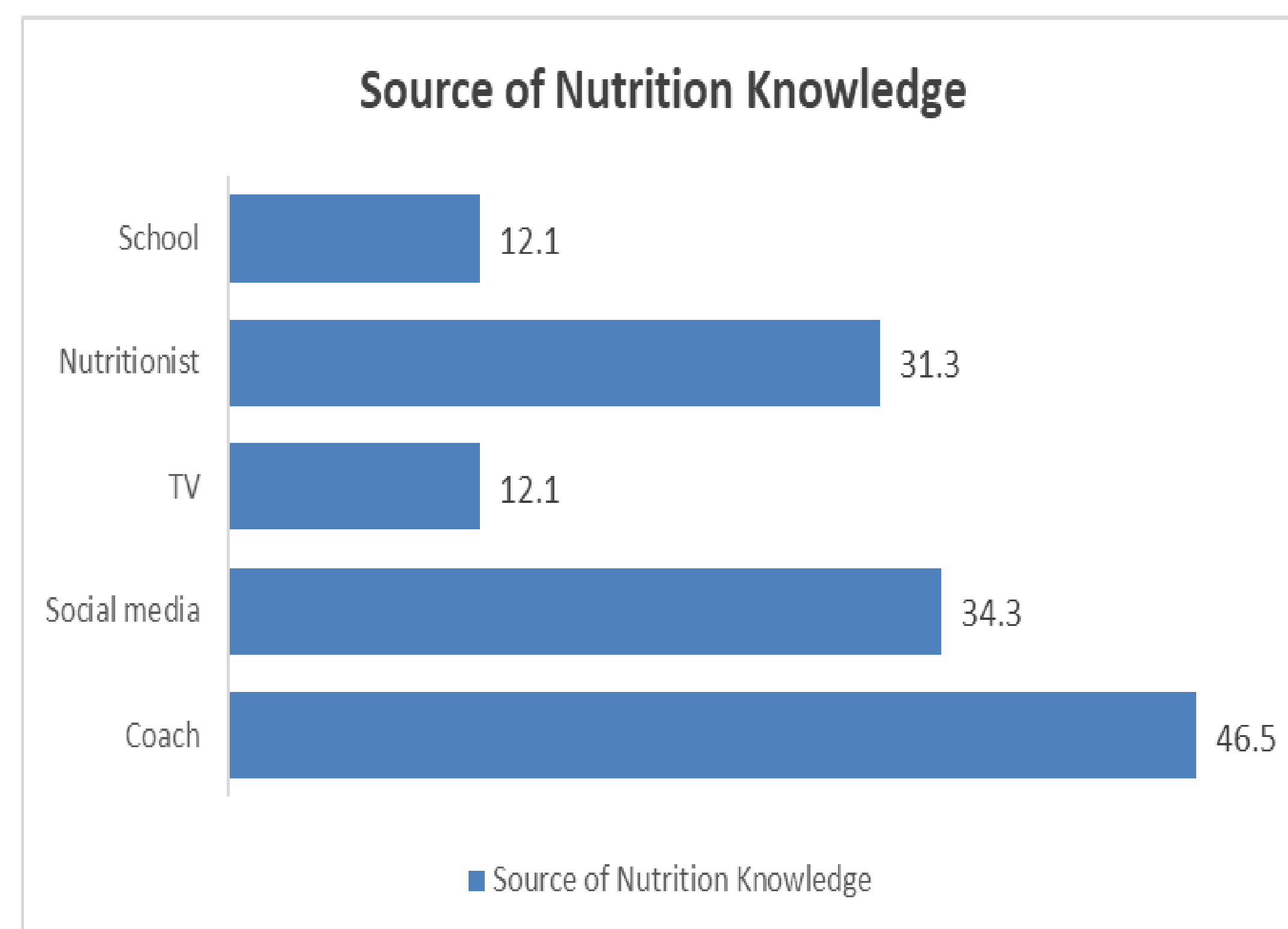
METHOD

A descriptive cross-sectional study design was adopted, and a purposive sampling technique was employed to select 100 male football players for this study. A semi-structured questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of sections on personal data, nutrition knowledge, attitudes towards nutrition, dietary practices, and food frequency consumption. 90.9% reported having received tertiary education.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

It was observed that 62.6% of respondents were between 18 and 20 years, with a mean age of 19.02 years (± 2.290 SD). The sources of nutrition information identified by the footballers were coaches (46.5%), social media (34.3%), nutritionists (31.3%), schools (12.1%), and TV (12.1%). Additionally, 57.6% agreed that basic sugars are suitable energy sources, while a majority (96.0%) agreed that vitamin supplementation is recommended for physically active people.

The findings also revealed that the majority of the footballers had positive attitudes towards the importance of good eating habits for health (100%), and that coaches had a good attitude towards nutrition (97.0%) and recognized the impact of food choices on physical performance (96.0%).



CONCLUSION

Our findings suggest that Lead City footballers have optimal dietary practices and good nutrition knowledge. Encouraging ongoing nutrition education from coaches, particularly dietitians and nutritionists, to continuously refine and enhance nutrition knowledge, attitudes, and practice among the footballers.

FUTURE WORK

Individualized nutrition support may help these footballers meet their nutrition requirements and support their health and performance.