

Objective: Dietary or nutritional supplements are substances which act either nutritionally to reverse or prevent deficiency or pharmacologically, to alter some physiological processes. The purpose of the present study was to determine the extent of knowledge, consumption levels and identify factors or reasons that influenced the utilization of dietary supplements by male rugby players in Kenya.

Methodology and results: The study adopted the descriptive survey design. The target population was 210 players from seven teams that participated in the Kenya Cup League. Simple random sampling was used to select 140 (67%) respondents out of the target population of 210. Percentages were used to describe the players' knowledge levels. Generally, rugby players had moderate knowledge about the dietary supplements. This was rated at 44.9% for creatine monohydrate, antioxidants - 11.3%, multivitamins – 44.2%, glutamine – 14%, whey protein – 37.3% and Zinc Magnesium Aspartate (ZMA) -8.6%. The consumption levels (15.1% took and 53.8% never took) were low. Hypothesis testing confirmed that there was significant difference ($p < 0.005$) between the variables (age, academic qualification, occupation, experience and club affiliation) and the reasons for taking dietary supplements as well as the consumption patterns by the male rugby players

Conclusion and application of findings: There were definitely low levels of use of dietary supplements among rugby players. The Kenya Rugby Football Union should organize clinics, courses and seminars for rugby coaches and teachers regarding dietary supplementation and its role in enhancing the nutritional status of the players. Further research should be conducted on the use of other dietary supplements and their effect on performance.