

Assessment of infant and young child feeding practices among mothers attending the out-patient department at a tertiary care centre in shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Background: Infant and young child feeding practices in India are extremely poor which may be because of the lower literacy rates, lack of IYCF education among mothers. Mothers also bear wrong perceptions and false beliefs of towards the age for initiating the complementary feeding. **Aim of the study:** To evaluate the infant and young child feeding practices among mothers attending OPD, Government medical college Shivpuri, MP, India. **Methods:** A total of 560 infants attending the outpatient department were included in the study. Face to face interview was conducted with mothers having children <2 years. Average time for interview was 30 minutes. A structured questionnaire was prepared which included Infant and Young child feeding practices related information, maternal knowledge about IYCF, information on maternal education and socioeconomic status of family. **Statistical analysis:** Descriptive analyses (Frequency and percentage) were used to report the dependent and independent variables. **Results:** The study findings revealed that out of 560 children studied 66.3% were put on breast fed within one hour of birth and 64.8% children were exclusive breast fed for upto 6 months. In 6 to 9 months old infants, only 33.8% were receiving minimal meal frequency and only 29.5% of babies were receiving adequate diversity food group. Among the age group 9 to 24 months only 42.7% babies were receiving Minimal meal frequency and 44.8% of children were fulfilling Minimum diversity criteria. **Conclusion:** There is a need for more data from India especially in Madhya Pradesh on nutrition practices so it will enable the primary care givers to provide support and counselling to the parents in an effective manner.

Keywords: IYCF practices, Breast feeding, Complementary feeding practices, weaning.

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INTRODUCTION

Infant feeding practices have a major role in determining the nutritional status of children and are associated with household socioeconomic and demographic factors. Breast feeding and start of complementary feeding are the key regulators of malnutrition prevalence in India. The period from birth to two years of age is considered as a critical window of opportunity as during this period the foundation for healthy growth and development in later years is laid down.¹ Poor feeding practices render the children more vulnerable to irreversible consequences of stunting, poor cognitive development and significantly increased risk of diarrhoea and acute respiratory infection,^{2,3,4} According to NFHS 5, India has unacceptably high levels of stunting ,

despite marginal improvement over the years. Out of the states surveyed the level of stunting worsened in 11 states. The population of underweight also increased in 11 states and all five union territories.⁵ WHO recommends that optimal nutrition practices for infants and children include Early initiation of breastfeeding within first hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months followed by continued breastfeeding for up to two years and beyond with appropriate complementary foods after completion of 6 months is the most appropriate feeding strategy.⁶ IYCF practices in India are extremely poor which may be because of the lower literacy rates, lack of IYCF education among mothers. Mothers also bear wrong perceptions and false beliefs of towards the age for initiating the complementary feeding. The present study aims to evaluate the infant and young child feeding practices among mothers attending OPD, government medical college Shivpuri.

Aim: To assess the IYCF practices among mothers of infants aged 0 to 24 months at a tertiary care centre in Shivpuri.

Objectives: 1) To know about the breast-feeding practices in mothers. 2) To Assess the appropriate weaning practices among the participants.

Methodology

Study Design– Descriptive Cross-Sectional Study

Study Period– September 2020 to Aug 2021

Study Sampling Methods– Convenient sampling was used

Study Population– Mothers having children of age ≤ 2 years attending OPD at SRVS Medical College hospital Shivpuri.

A total of 560 infants attending the outpatient department were included in the study. After taking informed consent case study forms were filled by interviewing the infants mothers. Face to face interview was conducted with mothers having children <2 years. Average time for interview was 30 minutes. A structured questionnaire was prepared which included Infant and Young child feeding practices related information , maternal knowledge about IYCF, information on maternal education and socioeconomic status of family . Descriptive analyses (Frequency and percentage) were used to report the dependent and independent variables.

RESULTS

The study findings revealed that out of 560 children studied 66.3% were put on breast fed within one hour of birth and 64.8% children were exclusive breast fed for upto 6 months. As per NFHS -5 , data of the national level showed proportion of exclusive breast feeding for 6 months as 63.7 %which is slightly lower than our study .Breast feeding rate till 2 years of age was 68% which is reasonably good practice . But initiation of complementary feeding was late, only 36.3 % babies were started on complementary feeds at 7 months of age. Maximum babies were started on diluted or undiluted milk in addition to breast feeding. Out of total infants aged 6 to 9 months, only 33.8% were receiving minimal meal frequency and only 29.5% of babies were receiving adequate diversity food group. Among the age group 9 to 24 months only 42.7% babies were receiving Minimal meal frequency and 44.8% of children were fulfilling Minimum diversity criteria.

Table 1: Distribution of participants as per feeding practices

FEEDING PRACTICES		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE%
Initiation of early breast feeding (n= 517)	< 1 hour	343	66.3%
	1-24 hours	168	32.5%
	After 1 day	6	1.2%
	Upto 1 year	29	5.6%
	Upto 1.5 years	117	22.7 %
Continuation of breast feeding	Upto 2 years	352	68%
	>2 years	19	3.7%
	< 6 months	58	11.3%
Exclusive Breast Feeding	Upto 6 months	335	64.8%
	>6 months	124	23.9%
COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING (n=420)	At 6 months	99	23.5%
	At 7 months	152	36.3%
	At 8 months	82	19.6%
	At 9 months	70	16.9%
	>9 months	17	3.7%
MEAL FREQUENCY n=420	6-9 MONTHS	141	33.8
	9-24 MONTHS	179	42.7%
MINIMUM DIETARY DIVERSITY OF FOOD GROUPS	6-9 MONTHS	123	29.5%
	9-24 MONTHS	188	44.8%

DISCUSSION

This study revealed that breast feeding practices are reasonably good till 2 years of age however initiation of appropriate complementary feeding practices are strikingly poor especially in the age of 6 months to 10 months. Common reasons being lack of awareness about appropriate weaning practices.

CONCLUSION

There have been considerable developments in the status of IYCF practices yet appropriate weaning practices are still lagging. There is a need for more data from India especially in Madhya Pradesh on nutrition practices so it will enable the primary care givers to provide support and counselling to the parents in an effective manner .

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