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A STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ON BREAST FEEDING AMONG THE ANTENATAL MOTHERS

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ABSTRACT

Breast feeding is the feeding of an infant or young child with the breast milk directly from female human breast that is lactation rather than from a baby bottle or other container. Babies have a sucking reflex that enables them to suck and swallow milk. Most mothers can breastfeed for six months or more, without the addition of infant formula or solid food. Breast feeding should be initiated within an hour of birth instead of waiting several hours. It helps to establish feeding and a close mother child relationship known as bonding. Objectives: To assess the knowledge of pregnant women regarding breast feeding. To associate with demographic variables of antenatal mothers regarding breast feeding. Research Design: Non-experimental research design. Descriptive study. Sample and size: antenatal mothers 40, sampling technique: Randomised purposive sampling, Discussion: About 40% of the antenatal mothers have inadequate knowledge about breast feeding, 33% of antenatal mothers have moderate level of knowledge and 27% have adequate knowledge. Recommendations: Health education regarding breast feeding can be given to antenatal mothers.

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INTRODUCTION

Human breast milk is the healthiest form of milk for human. Breast feeding promotes health helps to prevent disease and reduces health care and feeding costs. Artificial feeding is associated with more death causing diarrhea in developing and developed countries. Experts agree that breast feeding is beneficial and about the risks of using artificial formulas. Emphasizing the value of breastfeeding for both mothers and children the World Health Organization and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended exclusive breast feeding for at least one year and up to two years or more.

Research Statement

A study to assess the knowledge on Breast feeding among the antenatal mothers.

Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge of antenatal mothers regarding breast feeding.
2. To associate with demographic variables of antenatal mothers regarding breast feeding

Operational Definition

Assess: Refers to estimating or determining or evaluating the knowledge

Breast feeding: Feeding of an infant with breast milk directly from human breast.

Knowledge: is the level of understanding

Sampling Technique: Randomised purposive sampling

Sampling size: 40 antenatal mothers

Need for the study

The past ten years have witnessed a raising trend in the prevalence and duration of breast feeding. Most importantly breast feeding rates increase in an unequal way, they are higher among with higher levels of income and education, which is consistent with reports from other countries in Europe and elsewhere. Antenatal mothers in the grass root level were found to lack in knowledge regarding breast feeding and its benefits.

Review of Literature

Miriam Falco *et al* (2010) explained the vast majority of extra costs incurred each year could be saved "if 80 to 90 percent of women exclusively breastfed for as little as four months and if 90 percent of women would breastfeed sometimes until six months" Despite strong evidences in support of EBF for the first six months of life, its prevalence has remained low worldwide and it is estimated that only about one-third of infants were exclusively breastfed. In line with previous research, mothers from urban background had higher score on IIFAS and indicate more positive attitudes toward breastfeeding. Maternal education has been described as one of the strongest determinants of the practice of EBF. Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is defined as "an infant's consumption of human milk with no supplementation of any type (no water, no

juice, no nonhuman milk, and no foods) except for vitamins, minerals, and medications until six months.

Research Methodology

Research design adopted was Non-experimental Research design and research approach Descriptive survey. Sampling technique for the study was Randomized purposive sampling and 40 samples selected. Tool used for the study was structured interview schedule. Keeping in view the basic objectives of the study interview schedule was prepared, with 20 questions and scoring done. Data collection was done after checking for the reliability and validity of the tool by pilot study. Data analysis was done after tabulating.

Table1 Demographic variables of the subjects

S.NO	Demographic variables	Frequency	Percentage(%)
1.	Age(years)	26	86.6
	18-24	4	
	25-30	0	
2.	Education	4	13
	Illiterate	22	74
	Higher secondary	4	13
3.	Occupation	2	6.6
	Business	13	43.4
	Housewife	15	50
4.	Income	6	20
	Below Rs.2000	12	40
	Rs.2000-5000	12	40
5.	Religion	22	73.3
	Hindu	7	24.4
	Christian	1	2.3
	Muslim		

Table1 shows majority of mothers were 26(86.6%) between 18-24years, 24(73%) were higher secondary, 15 (50%) and 12(40%) earn between Rs.2000-5000, 22(73.3%) of them were Hindus.

Table 2 Distribution of level of knowledge on Breast feeding among antenatal mothers.

S.no	Level of Knowlegde	frequency	percentage
1.	Adequate	8	27%
2.	Moderate	10	33%
3.	Inadequate	12	40%

Table 2 shows the level of knowledge on breast feeding among antenatal mothers. 40% of mothers have inadequate knowledge, 33% have moderate knowledge and 27% have adequate knowledge.

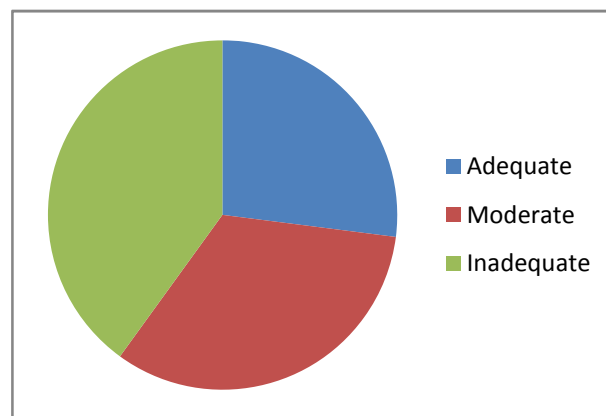


Figure 1 Level of knowledge among antenatal mothers on breast feeding

Fig 1 shows the level of knowledge on breast feeding among antenatal mothers. 40% of mothers have inadequate knowledge, 33% have moderate knowledge and 27% have adequate knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The study was done to assess the knowledge of antenatal mothers on Breast feeding, the study revealed mothers have inadequate knowledge regarding breast feeding. To conclude the researcher can create awareness regarding breast feeding and improve the knowledge level and in turn the morbidity rates of infants due to diarrheal diseases may be prevented.

Recommendations

Similar study can be done in larger samples. Awareness programme can be done to improve the knowledge level.

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