

A Study on Breast Feeding Practices Among Mothers of Urban Slums of Guntur

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Abstract: The optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding is one of the crucial public health issues that the World Health Organization (WHO) has been continuously emphasising. Continued and frequent breastfeeding protects child health by reducing risk of morbidity and mortality.

Methodology: This cross sectional study was conducted from April 1st 2017 to May 31st 2017 in slum areas of Guntur city. Mothers of all infants between 0- 6 months were selected by Purposive sampling technique. Subjects were interviewed using a pretested semi structured questionnaire. A Total 100 mothers were interviewed.

Results: 42% of the mothers started breast feeding within 1 hour; of those who have undergone Cesarean section only 18% gave breast feeding within 1 hour. 8% did not receive any advice regarding breast feeding. 11% of the mothers have given prelacteal feed to their children. 96% of the mothers have given colostrum to their newborn. 67% of the women have given exclusive breast feeding for six months for 6 months. The common reasons for not giving exclusive breast feeding for 6 months were not enough milk in 10% and religious custom 23%.

Conclusion: All the health professionals should give advices to the mothers regarding breast feeding practices.

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I. Introduction

The major responsibility of a mother is to maintain and improve her child's health. After all a well-nurtured healthy infant of today is the healthy workforce of tomorrow's nation. Appropriate breast feeding practice ranks first among the most effective interventions to improve child health. Children in the age group of 0-1 year constitute 2.92% of the total population in India.^[1] The optimal duration of exclusive breastfeeding is one of the crucial public health issues that the World Health Organization (WHO) has been constantly emphasising to ensure better child survival.^[2] Continued and frequent breastfeeding protects child health by reducing risk of morbidity and mortality^[3] A mother needs knowledge regarding early initiation of breast feeding within 1 h of delivery, no prelacteal feeding, no discarding of colostrum, and giving only breast milk till 6 months of age^[4]. It depends on the mother's Socio demographic profile also. Some inappropriate breast feeding practices do exist in urban slums of India. Hence, this study was taken up to know the breast feeding practices in urban slums with the objectives:

1. To study about the breast feeding practices.
2. The factors influencing incorrect practices.

II. Methodology

This cross sectional study was conducted from April 1st 2017 to May 31st 2017 in slum areas of Guntur city. Mothers of all infants between 0- 6 months were selected by Purposive sampling technique. Subjects were interviewed using a pretested semi structured questionnaire. Total samples of 100 mothers were interviewed. Inclusion Criteria- Mothers of all infants between 0- 6 months of age, who were willing to participate in the study. Statistical Analysis: Data were entered in MS-Excel and analyzed in SPSS V22. Qualitative data was represented with the percentages. Chi-square test was applied for finding significance. P<0.05 was considered as statistically significant.

III. Results

Table-1: Initiation of breast feeding

Initiation of breast feeding	Frequency	Percentage
< 1hr	42	42
4 to 6 hrs	44	44
> 6 hrs	14	14
Total	100	100

42% of the mothers started breast feeding within 1 hour. 44% were started between 4 to 6 hours. The remaining 14% were started after 6 hours.

Table-2: Association between Type of delivery & Breast feeding initiation

Type of delivery	Breast feeding initiation						
	<1hr		4-6hrs		>6hrs		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
Normal vaginal delivery	33	66	14	28	3	6	50
C-Section	9	18	30	60	11	22	50
Chi-square value =24.1; df = 2; P<0.001							

Of those who had C- section only 18% gave breast feeding within 1 hour as compared to those who delivered vaginally (66%).

Table-3: Advice on Exclusive Breast Feeding

Advised by	No. of women	%
Doctor	36	36
Health worker/UHC	42	42
Relative	14	14
No body	8	8
Total	100	100

42% of the mothers got breast feeding advice from the UHC health worker, 36% were given advice by the attending doctor, 14% received from relatives. 8% did not receive any advice at all.

Table-4: Infant Feeding Practices

Infant Feeding Practices	Count	Percentage
Prelacteal feeds	11	11
Colostrum	96	96
EBF	67	67

11% of the mothers gave prelacteal feed to their children. 96% of the mothers given colostrum. 67% of the women have given exclusive breast feeding for 6 months.

Table-5: Reasons for non Exclusive breast feeding

Infant Feeding Practices	Count	Percentage
Religious customs	23	23
Not enough milk	10	10

The common reason for not giving exclusive breast feeding for 6 months was insufficient milk in 10% and religious customs in 29% of women. Hindu families practice Annaprāsana which involves giving the child solid foods on the 6th day of the 5th month. After this ceremony they usually continued weaning foods.

IV. Discussion

In the present study, 42% of the mothers started breast feeding within 1 hour and it was matched with the study conducted by Gupta P. et al in the slums of Lucknow^[5] In their study mothers who initiated breast feeding within one hour were 30% of the total. In this study 8% of the mothers did not receive any advice at all regarding breast feeding. These findings are similar to that of CES2009^[6]. The present study shows that 67% of the women had given EBF for 6 months. These results are similar to studies conducted by K.S. Negi and SD Kandapal in rural areas of Dehradun^[7]. In the present study, 96% of the mothers have given colostrum these results are matching with the study conducted by Sofia Noor. et. al in the urban slums of Rourkela^[8]. It was 76.6% in their study.

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