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A STUDY ON KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF BREASTFEEDING AMONG PARENTS IN POST NATAL WARD

Paediatrics

Dr. Vanaparthy Lahari Priyadarshini — Postgraduate, Department of Paediatrics, Alluri Sitarama Raju Academy of Medical Sciences, Eluru, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh 534005, India.

Dr. Ramavath Sai Rashmee — Senior resident, Department of Paediatrics, Alluri Sitarama Raju Academy of Medical Sciences, Eluru, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh 534005, India.

Dr. Arigela Vasundhara* — Professor and HOD, Department of Paediatrics, Alluri Sitarama Raju Academy of Medical Sciences, Eluru, West Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh 534005, India. *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Background: The close contact between the mother and the child during breast feeding fosters an emotional and psychological bond, leading to healthy growth and development of the child. Breast feeding confers short-term and long-term benefits on both child and mother. **Aim:** To study the knowledge, attitude and practice of breastfeeding among parents. **Methods:** Data was collected using structured questionnaire from October 2022 to December 2022. After obtaining consent, necessary information was collected by interviewing parents of newborns in post natal wards. Parents who were found to have lack of knowledge / wrong attitude/ abnormal practice of breast feeding were given health education regarding breast feeding after assessment. **Statistical Analysis:** Data entered in MS excel sheet was analysed by using SPSS 20 version. Association of different variables were assessed by using Pearson's Chi square test. A p value of <0.05 was considered as statistically significant whereas a p value <0.001 was considered as highly significant. **Results:** Among 250 interviewed parents, 81.2% of mothers and 80.8% of fathers had satisfactory knowledge about breastfeeding and 76.2% of mothers and 58% of fathers had satisfactory attitudes towards breastfeeding and 64.8% of mothers had satisfactory breastfeeding practices. Among parents knowledge on breastfeeding parameters like mother's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status, father educational status, party of mother had significant effect with p value < 0.05. Among parents attitude on breast feeding parameters like mother's age, father's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status, father educational status had significant effect with p value < 0.05. Among mother practice on breast feeding parameters like mother's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status had significant effect with p value < 0.05. **Conclusion:** Breastfeeding knowledge, attitude, practice are influenced by parental age, education status, socio-economic status, working mothers.

KEYWORDS

breastfeeding, knowledge, attitude, practice.

INTRODUCTION

1. Breastfeeding is a mother's privilege, a baby's right. From the beginning of human civilization, generation after generation have grown up on mother's milk, natures complete diet for the newborn.
2. Breast milk is a complete food in itself and it provides an ideal form of nutrition. It contains all the nutrients required for all round development of the baby. Further, it is easy to feed, clean, is always at the right temperature, requires no mixing or sterilization and is freely available.
3. The close contact between the mother and the child during breast feeding fosters an emotional and psychological bond, leading to healthy growth and development of the child.1
4. Breastfeeding confers short-term and long-term benefits on both child and mother, including helping to protect children against a variety of acute and chronic disorders[2]. Some studies from developing countries shows that infants who are not breastfed are 6– 10 times more likely to die in the first few months of life than infants who are breastfed. In spite of the well recognized importance of exclusive breastfeeding as emphasized by WHO & UNICEF, South Asian countries have witnessed only a modest surge from 40% in 1995 to 45% in 2010[7].
5. The review of studies from developing countries shows that infants who are not breastfed are 6– 10 times more likely to die in the first few months of life than infants who are breastfed.
6. The Knowledge possessed by a community refers to their understanding of breastfeeding. Attitude refers to their feelings towards breastfeeding, as well as any preconceived ideas that they may have towards it.
7. Practice refers to the ways in which they demonstrate their knowledge and attitude through their actions. Understanding the levels of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice will give better insight for policy makers to form appropriate breastfeeding promotional strategies at community level.

AIM

To study the knowledge, attitude and practice of breastfeeding among parents.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted among parents in post natal ward in a tertiary care hospital. Data was collected using structured questionnaire. After obtaining consent, necessary information was collected by interviewing parents of newborns in post natal wards. Parents who were found to have lack of knowledge / wrong attitude/ abnormal practice of breast feeding were given health education regarding breast feeding after assessment.

Type Of Study: Descriptive study

Inclusion Criteria

Parents of new born babies in postnatal ward.

Exclusion Criteria

Sick Mothers, parents not given consent, parents who's babies are in NICU.

1) To assess the Breastfeeding knowledge the following questions were asked to parents.

1. First feed of the baby–
2. Knowledge about colostrum.
3. Knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding.
4. Benefits of breastfeeding to babies.
5. Contraceptive benefits of breastfeeding.
6. Other Benefits of breastfeeding to mothers.
7. Adequacy of breastfeeding

2) To assess the attitude regarding breastfeeding the following questions were asked to parents.

1. Attitude about exclusive breastfeeding
2. Attitude of mothers towards breastfeeding when baby is ill.
3. Attitude of mothers towards breastfeeding when mother is ill.
4. Attitude about breast milk storing among working women.
5. Attitude on duration of breastfeeding in working mothers
6. Attitude on early initiation of breastfeeding & Reason for delay in initiation of breast feeding

3) To assess breast feeding practices the following questions were

asked to mothers.

1. Early initiation of breastfeeding
2. Practice of pre lacteal feeds
3. Correct position of breast feeding
4. Correct attachment while breast feeding.
5. Practice of burping after feeds.

For all questions, one mark was given for each accurate response. Parents who provided more than 50% of the correct answers were deemed to have provided satisfactory answers, while those who provided less than 50% of the correct answers were deemed to have provided unsatisfactory responses.

Statistical Analysis

The data was entered in MS excel sheet and analyzed by using SPSS 20 version. Association of different variables will be assessed by using Pearson's Chi square test. A p value of <0.05 was considered as statistically significant whereas a p value <0.001 will be considered as highly significant.

RESULTS

During the project, a total of 250 parents in postnatal period were assessed with the questionnaire.

Table 1: Demographic Details Of The Study

	Frequency	Percentages(%)
Age of father (years)		
<20	0	0
21-25	40	16.2
26-30	138	55.0
31-35	72	28.8
Age of mother (years)		
<20	25	10.2
21-25	142	56.6
26-30	80	32.0
31-35	3	1.2
Socioeconomic status		
Upper class	2	0.8
Upper middle class	89	35.4
Middle class	81	32.6
Lower middle class	67	26.6
Lower class	11	4.6
Type of family		
Nuclear	179	71.4
Joint	71	28.6
Parity of mother		
Primipara	116	46.6
Multipara	134	53.4

Age Of Parents

Majority of mothers 56.6% , 32%, 10.2%,1.2% were in the age group of 21-25 years, 26-30yrs, <20years , 31-35years respectively. Majority of fathers 55%, 28.8%,16.2% , 0% were in the age group of 26-30years, 31-35years, 21-25years, 20years respectively.

Socio-economic Status Of Parents

35.4%, 32.6%, 26.6%,4.6%, 0.8% of families belonged to upper middle class, middle class, lower middle class, lower class and upper class respectively.

Type Of Family

71.4%, 28.6%were living in a nuclear and joint family.

Educational Status Of Parents

Majority of mother (76%) and majority of fathers (69%) had completed secondary education, 14.8% of mothers and 19.2% of fathers were graduates, 7.6% of mothers and 11% of fathers had completed primary education, and 1.6% of mothers & 0.8% of fathers were illiterate.

Parity Of Themother

Majority of mothers were multiparous 53.4% and primipara 46.6%.

Religion Of Parents

Majority of the parents belonged to Hindu religion 69.6%, 21.8% belonged to Muslim, 8.6% were Christians.

Working Status Of Mother

78% were working women and 22% were non working.

Breastfeeding Practices

64.8% mothers were having satisfactory breastfeeding practices.

Table 2: Knowledge, Attitude, Practice Versus Breastfeeding

Knowledge					
	Satis-factory	unsatis-factory	Chi-square	P	Inference
Age of father	203 (81.2%)	47	5.34	.069 (>0.05)	Not significant
Age of mother	202 (80.8%)	48	13.5599	0.00357 (<0.001)	Highly significant
Socioeconomic status	200 (80%)	50	14.428	0.0064 (<0.05)	Significant
Type of family	203 (81.2%)	47	0.9063	0.34110 (>0.05)	Not significant
Education status of mother	202 (80.8%)	48	11.5917	0.0089 (<0.05)	Significant
Education status of father	208 (83.2%)	48	14.4891	0.00231 (<0.001)	Highly significant
Parity of mother	203 (81.2%)	47	15.6608	0.000076 (<0.001)	Highly significant
Attitude					
Age of mother	145 (58%)	105	9.1018	0.0279 (<0.05)	Significant
Age of father	179 (71.6%)	71	40.8419	.00001 (<0.05)	Significant
Socioeconomic status	144 (57.6%)	106	9.6907	0.0401 (<0.05)	Highly significant
Type of family	145 (58%)	105	2.3733	0.123 (>0.05)	Not significant
Education status of mother	150 (60%)	100	10.0756	0.0179 (<0.05)	Significant
Education status of father	147 (58.8%)	103	10.6134	0.014 (<0.05)	Highly significant
Parity of mother	145 (58%)	105	0.3432	0.557 (>0.05)	Not significant
Practice					
Age of mother	178 (71.2%)	72	14.9468	0.00186 (<0.05)	Significant
Socioeconomic status	169 (67.6%)	81	13.8886	0.007 (<0.05)	Highly significant
Type of family	138 (55.2%)	112	0.8105	0.3679 (>0.05)	Not significant
Education status of the mother	163 (65.2%)	87	11.1284	0.0096 (<0.05)	Highly significant
Parity of the mother	162 (64.8%)	88	0.002	0.9664 (>0.05)	Not significant

Among 250 interviewed parents 81.2% of mothers and 80.8% of fathers had satisfactory knowledge about breastfeeding and 76.2% of mothers and 58% of fathers had satisfactory attitudes towards breastfeeding and 64.8% of mothers had satisfactory breastfeeding practices.

Among 250 interviewed parents knowledge on breastfeeding parameters like mother's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status, father educational status, party of mother had significant effect with p value < 0.05.

Among 250 interviewed parents attitude on breast feeding parameters like mother's age, father's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status, father educational status had significant effect with p value < 0.05.

Among mother practice on breast feeding parameters like mother's age, socioeconomic status, mother education status, had significant effect with p value < 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The mother is the usual person responsible for feeding the baby. Her knowledge, attitude and practice regarding breastfeeding are influenced by various factors. Even when knowledge is adequate, they may not practice it correctly nor have favourable attitude towards

breastfeeding. It has been shown that even fathers have a significant role in effective breast
feeding.

In our study majority of mother (56.6%) were in the reproductive age group of 21-25yr and least (1.2%) were in the age group of 31-35yrs, this is similar to the study conducted by Khare DC et al[19] in which majority (54%) of mothers were in the age group of 21-25yrs and least (1%) were in the age above 36yrs. In our study the mean age of fathers was 32yrs which is similar to the mean age of fathers (36yrs) in the study conducted by Noraini Mohamadetal[20].

In our study, 80.8% of mothers and 83.2% of fathers who had education had satisfactory knowledge about breastfeeding. Our finding is similar to the study conducted by Ekambaram et al[21] where, mothers who had completed their graduations had maximum score for breastfeeding knowledge.

In our study, 80% of Mothers belonging to middle class of the society had satisfactory knowledge regarding breastfeeding. This finding is similar to the one conducted by Mallik S.et al [22] were 90% of mothers from middle class of the society had satisfactory knowledge about breastfeeding. In our study breastfeeding knowledge was influenced by increasing parental age, better parental educational status & better socio-economic status.

In this study breastfeeding attitudes were influenced by increasing parental age, better parental education and better socio-economic status, similar findings were also observed in the study conducted by Vaaler ML et al [23.]

In our study 65.2% of mothers who had education had satisfactory breastfeeeding practices.

Similarly in the study conducted by Raval Detal [24] mothers in the age group of 26-35yrs and educated mothers had good breastfeeding practices 67.6% of mothers had satisfactory breastfeeding practices in our study, which is similar to the study by Raval D et al [24.]

CONCLUSION

Breastfeeding knowledge, attitude, practice are influenced by parental age, education status, socio-economic status, working mothers.

Limitations of the study: No follow up of parents.

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