



UNDERSTANDING MATERNAL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES ON WEANING: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

This extensive research analyzes maternal education regarding weaning techniques as it relates to actual weaning practices. The research shows that mothers maintain an intermediate understanding of weaning concepts, although they demonstrate substantial distance between theoretical knowledge and real-life implementation. Multiple studies from different geographical areas indicate that educational background drives mothers' abilities to learn about healthcare information and to put it into practice. External social factors and maternal work status, along with cultural standards, directly impact the way people wean their children. First-time mothers, together with rural residents, experience difficulties in applying appropriate weaning techniques even when they have a basic understanding of better feeding practices. The review establishes that healthcare providers require delivering culturally adapted educational programs while providing ongoing support, particularly to high-risk groups. The recommended actions for policymakers involve establishing structured community-based programs that provide better access to nutritious complementary foods, together with weaning education programs in maternal and child health policies. Successful weaning practices need to apply specific training and supportive surroundings that handle barriers occurring in individual settings along with community networks and institutional systems.

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

The gradual method of combining complementary foods with reduced breastfeeding is called weaning, which stands as a core development step for a child's nutritional path. Evolutionary weaning methods remain vital for achieving healthy physical growth as well as stopping the development of malnutrition. The knowledge that mothers possess about weaning competes with what they implement in their weaning practices. This article gathers research evidence to explain the present weaning situation and the associated patterns alongside influencing elements and their implications for healthcare professionals and governmental figures.

Maternal Knowledge And Practices: General Knowledge

Trends Research data from multiple cross-sectional investigations show that mothers possess a combination of moderate and good understanding regarding infant weaning practices. The study by Wizra Faiz et al. observed that 90% of mothers visiting a tertiary hospital in Lahore possessed good to satisfactory levels of knowledge according to the assessment scale put forth by the researchers [1]. Research conducted in Saudi Arabia and Nigeria shows mothers have a satisfactory understanding of fundamental weaning principles as noted in two reports [2]. The study conducted by Musalli Ali et al. found that three out of ten mothers demonstrated sufficient knowledge while four out of ten showed inadequate understanding, and this variability pointed out regional differences [3]. The current data demonstrates how population demographics and cultural characteristics demand education strategies that direct information specifically towards those groupings.

Practice Patterns and Gaps Knowledge-related performance among healthcare providers remains strong, but it does not translate into equivalent application of weaning methods. The research done by Merita Berisha et al., together with Nirmala Kumari et al., showed that mothers possess adequate knowledge about proper weaning practices, but only a limited number execute those techniques properly [4,5]. The study reveals that educational understanding exists, but practitioners in all investigated areas fail to live up to the given standards [6].

Disparities Between Knowledge And Practice Statistical Evidence Of Gaps

Throughout all studies, the literature shows a clear difference between mothers' cognitive understanding and feeding practices. Research in Kosovo demonstrated that most mothers (88.4%) had decent knowledge, yet only a minority (38.4%) practiced effectively per Berisha et al. [4]. Research in Bangladesh demonstrated that mothers had comprehensive knowledge about breastfeeding, yet they did not translate this into everyday practice.

Factors Influencing the Gap and background information shows a significant difference between mothers' known information and their actual feeding methods, which consists of multiple factors. Proper

guidance and follow-up is necessary to prevent issues regarding complementary feed. Policies for breastfeeding need to be promoted in Bangladesh due to the practice of prelacteal feeding that is connected to the type of delivery, certain regions, and antenatal care [7].

Cultural feeding norms and restrictions in cost force people to buy insufficient supplementary food products

- Inadequate time or resources among working mothers
- The study illustrates that achieving knowledge improvement cannot substitute for the necessary support of structural and behavioural interventions.

Sociodemographic Influences Role Of Education

The research showed that educational attainment stood as the key determining factor for knowledge acquisition and proper practice implementation. Repeated research findings established that mothers with higher levels of education consistently displayed better comprehension of weaning requirements which made them adopt suggested practices [8,9].

Socioeconomic Status And Occupation

The socioeconomic characteristics strongly impact both parents' ability to obtain information and their capability to buy food. Working mothers persistently struggle to handle feeding schedules because of their employment. Research conducted in Nigeria, together with India, presented compelling statistical correlations between occupational standing and earning capacity with nutrition practices of the population [10,11].

Special Populations: Primipara Mothers And Rural Communities

The first-time mothers and mothers located in rural areas tend to lack both weaning knowledge and lack of confidence in this method. Many primipara women practiced suboptimal weaning methods despite knowing the basics according to research studies by Atif et al. and Hendricks et al. [12,13]. Support systems need to address specific populations with interventions which build their education levels and enhance their belief in weaning abilities.

Evidence From Comparative And Intervention Studies

Various studies analyzing working mothers versus non-working mothers as well as urban mothers versus rural mothers showed distinct weaning practice patterns [9,14]. Studies which educated mothers about weaning produced positive impacts on their knowledge retention but very limited research examined the effect on their actual practices over time [15].

Implications For Healthcare Practice And Policy For Healthcare Providers

Healthcare providers need to teach useful culturally appropriate knowledge which extends theoretical concepts. The provision of continuous support services and multiple follow-up meetings should

happen during all weaning process transitions. The healthcare practice should deliver educational support specifically to primipara mothers and mothers with low socioeconomic status.

For Policymakers

The implementation of structured community-based intervention programs must be developed to benefit healthcare initiatives. The policy should work to offer better access to nutritious complementary foods in underserved communities. The national maternal and child health policies need to include weaning education in all their stages. Conclusion Through this concept-based synthesis study researchers have uncovered that maternal understanding about weaning processes is normally adequate yet actual feeding practices fall short because of several social along with economic and cultural elements. Finding success between theory and real-life application needs a complex solution that tackles obstacles throughout personal, community and organizational systems. Better child health outcomes result from providing mothers with customized educational programs and appropriate environmental backing in order to ensure effective and knowledgeable weaning processes.

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