

EXCLUSIVE BREAST FEEDING-KNOWLEDGE IN DIFFERENT GROUPS OF WOMEN IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS OF LUCKNOW DISTRICT.

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ABSTRACT

A cross-sectional study on 86 females was conducted in the rural and urban areas of Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh to assess the knowledge of females about exclusive breast-feeding. Knowledge from adolescent girls, married and lactating women was assessed by a pre-tested questionnaire for biosocial correlates (such as marital status, educational status, medium of education, working status, socio-economics status and family size), sources of information, time of initiation of breast-feeding and the best method of feeding a baby <4 months of age. Only 9.8% in urban and 13.3% in rural areas had complete knowledge of Exclusive breast-feeding. Educated females had more knowledge in both urban and rural areas of initiating breast-feeding within 1hr of delivery as compared to un-educated females.

The study highlights the needs for continuing medical education and for including knowledge about Exclusive breast-feeding in school curriculum of adolescent girls.

KEY WORDS : Exclusive breast-feeding, Factors affecting breast feeding, Colostrum feeding, Adolescent Girls.

Introduction :

In the recent years there has been a world-wide campaign for promotion of breast-feeding. The reasons for declining trend of breast-feeding are many fold-mainly due to nuclear pattern of families, working mothers, commercial pressure, inadequate knowledge among health personnel about breast-feeding, false beliefs and traditions. While women in developed countries have reverted back to this age old practice, their counterparts in third world countries are drifting away. To study the knowledge in different groups of women about exclusive breast-feeding a study was conducted in the rural and urban areas of Lucknow district.

Material and Methods :

A cross-sectional study was conducted on 786 cases (420 in rural area and 366 in urban area) in the rural and areas of Lucknow from January, 1997 to December, 1997. A detailed pretested proforma was prepared to collect relevant information. Unmarried (mostly adolescent) girls, married women with our without pregnancy and lactating were interviewed from girl's schools, households, primary health centres, subcentres in rural area and from colleges, households, women attending Lucknow. Women were interviewed about the source of knowledge of Exclusive Breast Feeding, use of

first-feed, time of initiation of breast feeding ,whether anything other than breast-milk was given to the baby upto the age of 4 months, about various beliefs about breast-feeding and breast-feeding during maternal and infant illness.

Results :

Out of a total of 786 females there were 366 urban and 420 rural females. In the urban there were 21.3% married and 78.7% unmarried females while in rural area 55.2% were married and 44.7% were unmarried. In the urban rea there were 2.7% and in the rural area there were 29.5% illiterates, while in the urban area there were 82.5% literate above 10th class while in the rural area 36.6% were literate above 10th class. 74.7% females in urban area and 97.3% females in rural area were educated in Hindi medium. Only 25.3% in urban and 2.7% and in the rural area were educated in English medium. In the urban area there were 97.3% and in the rural area 92.0% non-working. In the urban area there were 18.6% in upper class and 42.0% in lower class and in the rural area there were only 1.4% in upper class and 79.5% in lower class. In the urban area 63.1% and in rural area 50.5% females had family size of 4 to 6 members.(Table-1)

In the rural area more women (13.3% had knowledge of Exclusive Breast-Feeding while in the urban

area it was 9.8% but the difference was statistically not significant.(table-II)

In the urban area maximum source of information was from doctor and paramedical which was only 5.1% while in rural area it was 7.1%. Least source of information was 0.5% in urban and none in rural area, from newspapers and magazines.(Table-III)

In the urban area 33.3% unmarried females while in rural area 74.0% unmarried females had knowledge of initiation of breast-feeding in less than 1hr of birth. More educated females had knowledge of initiation of breast-feeding in less than 1hr, in both rural (52.4%) and urban (24.7%) areas. In urban area more women (35.7%) of upper class while in rural area more women of middle class (66.6%) had knowledge of initiation of breast-feeding in less than 1hr of birth. In the working group none in urban area and 53.0% in rural area had knowledge of initiation of breast-feeding in less than 4hr.(Table-IV)

In the urban area (51.9%) and in rural area 48.6% females had knowledge of 1st feed (Colostrum). (Table-V)

70.0% females in urban area and 42.8% females in rural area considered breast-feeding as the best method of feeding a baby less than 4 months of age. (Table-VI)

Discussion :

Knowledge of breast-feeding amongst adolescent girls reflect the attitude, beliefs and practices prevalent amongst the women in a community.

In the present study it was seen that breast-feeding was considered to be the best method of feeding a baby less than 4 months of age in 70% females in urban and 42.8% females in rural area while in a study conducted by Kapil et al (1990)¹ found that 91% females were aware that breast milk is the best for a child upto 4 -5 months of age.

The studies conducted by Agarwal et al (1986)² Isenlumbe et al (1987)³ Karnawat et al (1987)⁴ Kumar et al (1984)⁵ and Subhalaxmi et al (1990)⁶ were consistent with the findings found in the rural area for knowledge of 1st feed (colostrum) while it was in consistent with the finding of Banic (1975)⁷.

In our study 51.9% females in urban and 48.6% females in rural urban had knowledge that similar to that of Karnawat et al (1985)⁴ Sharma et al (1977)⁸, and Kapil et al (1970)¹.

In this study number of females having knowledge about time of initiation of breast feeding in 1hr was 20% in urban and 15.5% in rural area. This finding was similar to the findings of Kumar et al (1984)⁵.

In our study number of females having knowledge of feeding colostrum was 51.9% in urban and 48.6% in rural area while 36.0% in urban and 20.5% in rural area had no idea of colostrum as 1st feed (Table-V). These findings are in contrast to the study of Khan et al (1985)⁹ Subulaxmi et al (1990)⁶.

In this study 70% females in urban and 42.8% females in rural area considered breast-feeding as the best method of feeding an infant <4 months of age while 30% in urban and 57.2% in rural area considered other methods or mixture of methods as the best method of feeding. These finding were similar to that of Sharma et al (1977)⁸ Satpati et al (1984)¹⁰ Dattal et al (1984)¹¹ and Isenalumbe et al (1987)³.

5.1% females in urban and 7.1% females in rural area attained knowledge of exclusive breast-feeding from doctors and paramedical staff (Table-III) while in a study of Indira Bai et al (1981)¹² only 0.4% doctors and 1.2% paramedical staff in rural area and 3.8% doctors and 0.2% paramedical staff in urban area advised breast-feeding.

Table I Bio-social co-relates of respondents

Bio-social co-relates	Urban		Rural		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
(A) Marital status						
Married	78	21.30	232	55.20	310	39.40
Unmarried	288	78.70	188	44.70	476	60.60
Total	366	100.00	420	100.00	786	100.00
(B) Educational status						
Illiterate	10	2.7	124	29.5	134	17.0
5 Class	0	0.0	32	7.6	32	4.0
5-8 Class	8	2.2	26	6.2	34	4.3
8-10 Class	46	12.6	84	20.0	130	16.5
10-12 Class	216	59.0	146	34.8	362	46.0
Graduate	86	23.5	8	1.2	94	12.0
Total	366	100.00	420	100.00	786	100.00
(C) Medium of education						
Hindi	266	74.7	288	97.3	554	85.0
English	90	25.3	8	2.7	98	15.0
Total	356	100.00	296	100.00	652	82.9
(D) Working status						
Working	10	2.7	34	8.0	44	5.6
Non-working	356	97.3	386	92.0	742	94.4
Total	366	100	420	100	786	100
(E) Socio-economic status						
Upper	68	18.6	6	1.4	74	9.4
Middle	144	39.3	80	19.0	224	28.5
Lower	154	42.0	334	79.5	488	62.1
Total	366	100.00	420	100.00	786	100.00
(F) Family Size						
≤3	26	7.2	24	5.7	50	6.5
4 to 6	332	63.2	212	50.5	444	56.5
7 to 9	100	27.3	152	36.2	252	32.0
>9	8	2.3	32	7.6	40	5.0
Total	366	100.00	420	100.00	786	100.00

Table II- Distribution of females according to knowledge of Exclusive Breast-feeding

knowledge of Exclusive Breast-feeding	Urban		Rural		Test of significance
	No.	%	No.	%	
Yes	36	9.8	56	133	Z = 0.21
No	330	90.2	364	86.7	P > 0.05
Total	366	100.00	420	100.00	Z = 1.44, P > 0.05

Table III- Various sources of information of Exclusive Breast-feeding

Source of information	Urban (N = 36)		Rural (N = 56)		Total (N = 92)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Family	8	2.10	17	4.0	25	27.0
Doctor / Paramedical	19	5.1	30	7.1	49	53.2
TV / Radio	7	1.9	9	2.1	16	17.3
Newspaper / Magazines	2	0.5	0	0.0	2	2.1

Table IV-Factors affecting knowledge of initiation of breast-feeding (in hrs.)

Biosocial co-relates	Urban %			Rural %		
	1 hour	1-6hour	≥ 6 hour	< 1 hour	1-6 hour	≥ 6 hour
(A) Marital Status						
Unmarried	33.3	18.3	48.4	74.0	16.0	10.0
Married & lactating	11.8	58.8	29.4	26.0	14.0	60.0
(B) Educational Status						
Uneducated	20.0	66.0	20.0	15.5	5.1	79.4
Educated	24.7	31.2	44.1	52.4	14.5	33.1
(C) Socio-economic status						
Upper	35.5	25.0	39.3	60.0	0.0	40.0
Middle	17.8	32.2	50.0	66.6	11.1	22.3
Lower	25.0	0.0	75.0	29.2	17.2	53.6
(D) Working status						
Working	0.0	50.0	50.0	53.0	5.8	41.7
Non-working	25.8	32.2	42.0	37.5	11.8	50.7

Table V - Knowledge of Ist - feed (colostrum) in rural and urban females.

Use of Ist feed	Urban (N=366)		Rural (N=420)		Test of significance
	No.	%	No.	%	
No idea	132	36.1	86	20.5	Z = 6.00 P < 0.05
Discard	24	6.5	112	26.7	Z = 1.07 P > 0.05
Give	190	51.9	204	48.6	Z = 1.07 P > 0.05
Supplement with top-feed	20	5.5	18	4.2	Z = 0.16 P > 0.05

Table VI - Knowledge of best method of feeding a baby upto 4 months of age in urban and rural females.

Method of feeding	Urban		Rural		Total		Test of Significance
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Breast - feeding	256	70.0	180	42.8	436	55.5	Z = 6.00 P < 0.05
Bottle - feeding	20	5.5	54	12.8	74	9.5	Z = 1.07 P > 0.05
Spoon - feeding	8	2.2	6	1.4	14	1.7	Z = 0.11 P > 0.05
breast+Bottle-feeding	66	18.0	146	34.8	212	27.0	Z = 0.53 P < 0.05
All	16	4.4	34	8.1	50	6.3	Z = 0.53 P > 0.05
Total	366	100	420	100	786	100	

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