

Original article:

Knowledge and belief regarding pre-lacteal feeding in relation to educational status of mothers of rural areas in Jaipur

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Abstract :

Introduction: The present study was conducted to study the knowledge and belief regarding pre-lacteal feeding in relation to educational status of mothers of rural areas in Jaipur.

Method: A cross-sectional door-to-door survey was conducted amongst 500 mothers who were interviewed in relation to their knowledge and belief regarding pre-lacteal feeding and which was subsequently documented in a pre-designed and pre-tested proforma.

Results: 57.6% of the mothers think pre-lacteal feed should be given and majority of them were illiterate. 49.60% of the mother think that 1st feed (colostrum) should be discarded and should not be given to the baby but (25%) of the mother believe that it should be given this was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Ghutti (30%) and honey (30%) were the most popular pre-lacteal feed among others with 'inadequate milk' being the most common reason for their administration.

Conclusion: This study revealed significant inverse relationship between educational status and practice of pre-lacteal feeding. Education is an important influencing factor for correct knowledge, belief and practice regarding breast feeding.

Keywords : Breast feeding , survey

Introduction:

Pre-lacteal feeding is giving liquids or foods other than breast milk prior to the establishment of regular breastfeeding. Introduction of pre-lacteal feeds in form of *ghutti*, top-milk and honey water in the early postnatal period for one or the other reason is a common practice in our country. This deprives the neonate of colostrum and its beneficial . A lack of exclusive breastfeeding contributes to over a million avoidable child deaths each year. Globally, less than

40% of infants less than six months of age are exclusively breastfed^{1,2}. Every day, 3000 - 4000 infants die in the developing world from acute respiratory infections and diarrhea because they are given inadequate amounts of breast milk and were introduced pre-lacteal feeding³. Breastfeeding has the potential to save neonatal, infant and young child lives and to reduce morbidity⁴. It is ranked as one of the safest and most efficient health interventions to achieve the millennium development goal 4 (MDG4):

reduce child mortality ⁵. Although breast-feeding is almost universal but it does not always meet WHO/UNICEF recommendations ⁶. However, there is a paucity of information on social and environmental factors associated with pre-lacteal feeding.

The present study was conducted to study the knowledge and belief regarding pre-lacteal feeding in relation to educational status of mothers of rural areas in Jaipur.

Methods:

A cross-sectional door-to-door survey was conducted amongst 500 mothers who were interviewed in relation to their knowledge and belief regarding pre-lacteal feeding and which was subsequently documented in a pre-designed and pre-tested proforma.

Inclusion criteria:

All mothers with age group of 15-45 having the child in age group of 0-1 year

Exclusion criteria:

Those having contraindication for breast feeding, not willing to participate and mothers who are out of station at the time of home visit are excluded from the study.

Data Analysis:

Data analyzed using SPSS version 16. Proportion and chi square test used.

Observation and results:

The total numbers of 500 mothers were interviewed. Educational status were divided into 5 groups. Majority of the mothers were illiterate (52.4%) or primary (31.6%) (Table-1).

Table-1: Educational status of mothers

Mother's Education	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	262	52.4%
Primary	158	31.6%
Middle	55	11%
Matriculate and above	20	4%
Graduate and above	5	1%

57.6% of the mothers think pre-lacteal feed should be given and majority of them were illiterate. But awareness regarding not to give prelacteal feed (34.6%) was more prevalent in educated class and was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). (Table-2)

Table 2- Distribution of cases according to knowledge regarding pre-lacteal feeds

S.No.	Mother's Education	Pre-lacteal Feed			Total
		To be given	Not to be given	Don't know	
1.	Illiterate	174	69	19	262
2.	Primary	89	54	15	158
3.	Middle	20	30	5	55
4.	Matriculate and above	5	15	0	20
5.	Graduate and above	0	5	0	5
6.	Total	288	173	39	500
	%	57.6%	34.6%	7.8%	

Rows 2,3 are pooled together $\chi^2 = 25.0$, $df=6$, $p<0.0001$

Most of the mother (49.60%) believe that colostrums (1st feed) should be discarded and should not be given to the baby but (25%) of the mother believe that it should be given and the view was more prevalent in most educated mothers and was statistically significant ($p<0.001$) (Table-3).

Table-3: Breastfeeding believe in relation to different educational group regarding colostrums

S.No.	Mother's Education	Supplement with top feeds	Give	Discard	No idea	Total
1.	Illiterate	34	48	150	30	262
2.	Primary	20	32	90	16	158
3.	Middle	18	25	8	4	55
4.	Matriculate and above	4	16	0	0	20
5.	Graduate and above	1	4	0	0	5
6.	Total	77	125	248	50	500
		15.4%	25%	49.6%	10%	

Rows 2,3 are pooled together ; $\chi^2 = 85.1$, $df = 9$, $p<0.001$

Ghutti (30%) and honey (30%) were the most popular pre-lacteal feed among others with 'inadequate milk' being the most common reason for their administration (Table-4 & 5).

Table-4: Traditional Pre-lacteal feeds offered

S.No.	Composition	No.	%
1.	Honey	150	30
2.	Honey fat, Jaggery fat, Honey-jaggery	100	20
3.	Water, Glucose- water, Sugar-water, Jaggery-water, Rose-water	50	10
4.	Herbal decoction 'Ghutti', Castor oil	150	30
5.	Tea	50	10

Table- 5: Explanation for giving prelacteal feeds

S.No.	Explanation	No.	%
1.	Inadequate milk/as a substitute	245	49%
2.	Relative advise	27	5.4%
3.	To make baby healthy	50	10%
4.	Maternal illness	5	1%
5.	To help baby pass urine	44	8.8%
6.	To prevent cold and cough	45	9%
7.	Auspicious	10	2%
8.	No specific reason	29.6	14.8%

Discussion:

Knowledge of breast feeding reflects the attitude, believe and practice prevalent in the women in a community. The present study has made an attempt to assess the prevailing values and practice of breast feeding as they exist under different educational background. The practices of pre-lacteal feed are very prevalent in our country.

In this study, we found that 57.6% of the mothers think pre-lacteal feed should be given which is similar to the findings of studies done by Roy MP et. al⁷, Dawal S et. al⁸ and Kumar D et. al⁹ with 40.1%, 42.7% and 46.8% mothers giving pre-lacteal feeds

respectively. We also found that 49.60% of the mother think that 1st feed (colostrum) should be discarded and should not be given to the baby but (25%) of the mother believe that it should be given. Similarly, Singh J et al.¹⁰ showed that 36% of mothers had discarded the colostrum and 33% mothers given pre-lacteal feeds. Mohd. Shafee et al.¹¹ showed that 60% mothers fed colostrum to their babies. Banapurmath et. al¹² found that rural mothers of central Karnataka delay initiation of BF, reject colostrum, use pre-lacteal foods of bottle feeding and commercial weaning foods. Ghutti (30%) and honey (30%) were the most popular pre-lacteal

feed among others with 'inadequate milk' being the most common reason for their administration in this study, which coincides with the studies done by Mandal et. al¹³, Udgiri R et. al¹⁴ and Chudasana R et. al¹⁵. In this study, we found that the practice of giving pre-lacteal feeds is significantly associated with the educational status of the mother. This finding correlates with the studies done by Dawal. S et. al^[8], Sujatha P et. al¹⁶ and Udgiri R et. al¹⁴. On the

contrary, Kotiratnam K et. al¹⁷ found no significant association between literacy and prelacteal feeding in the studied units.

Conclusion:

This study revealed significant inverse relationship between educational status and practice of pre-lacteal feeding. Education is an important influencing factor for correct knowledge, belief and practice regarding breast feeding.

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