



KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICES OF ANC WOMEN AND PNC MOTHERS REGARDING BREAST FEEDING - A PROSPECTIVE CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY CONDUCTED AT GGH, SURYAPET

Dr. K. Sushma¹, Dr. Padmini Soujanya Balla², Dr. T. Sunitha Reddy³, Dr. S. Srikanth Bhatt^{4*}

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Suryapet, Telangana, India.

²Associate Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Suryapet, Telangana, India.

³Associate Professor, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Suryapet, Telangana, India.

^{4*}Professor & HOD, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Suryapet, Telangana, India.

***Corresponding Author:** Dr. S. Srikanth Bhatt

Professor & HOD, Department of Paediatrics, Government Medical College, Suryapet, Telangana, India.

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

Breastfeeding is a natural response in all the mammals thriving on earth, but humans are lagging behind other mammals with a lot of interference, myths and misconceptions. WHO aims at achieving 50% exclusive breastfeeding till 180 days of life. According to NFHS 5 India has achieved 63.7% exclusive breastfeeding below 6 months.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

knowledge, attitude and practices of antenatal women and postnatal mothers was assessed regarding breastfeeding practices with a questionnaire after taking consent from these women admitted in GGH, Suryapet. 75 antenatal women and 50 postnatal mothers were included in the study group. Various different questions were framed in a questionnaire and given to the study population. Their knowledge, attitude and practices were assessed according

RESULTS

Among the study population 75 antenatal women and 50 postnatal mothers, most of them responded positively to knowledge of colostrum, early initiation of feeding, burping. Negatively regarding prelacteal feeds, concept of foremilk and hindmilk, complementary feeding and duration of feeding, EBM etc., when their attitude was questioned 44% of ANC women felt breast milk should be stopped during illness, 49% of postnatal mothers also felt the same. When practices were assessed they answered, they learnt breastfeeding KAP from elderly women in the family. Nearly 84% ANC and 80% PNC mothers have given the same answer.

CONCLUSION

From this study, we conclude that KAP of antenatal women and postnatal mothers needs to improve in the aspects of prelacteal feeds, concept of foremilk and hindmilk, and complementary feeding. As

health care professionals we need to assess and change or improve their KAP regarding breastfeeding from grassroot level. Awareness has to be brought in during antenatal checkups, postnatal period.

KEY WORDS

Breast Feeding, Prelacteal Feeds, Colostrum, Alternative Feeds, Expressed Breast Milk, Beauty of the Mother.

INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is a natural response in all the mammals thriving on earth; The initial growth of a child depends upon the duration and frequency of breastfeeding it receives, since the breast milk provides important nutrients to infants and young children and protects them against certain infections and helps in the child survival. Breastfeeding the child at the earliest is one of the most important initiatives to reduce the neonatal and infant mortality rate. Breastfeeding is considered as the first four strategies promoted by UNICEF for improving infant and child survival.^[1] Exclusively breastfed neonates had a lower risk of mortality and infection-related deaths in the first month than partially breastfed neonates. Exclusively breastfed neonates also had a significantly lower risk of sepsis, diarrhea and respiratory infections.^[2]

Humans are the only species lagging behind with all the myths, misconceptions and interferences. Though intellectually smart human beings are behind other species in early initiation, continuation and other issues concerning practices of breastfeeding. WHO aims at achieving 50% exclusive breastfeeding till the first 180 days of life. According to NFHS-5, 41.85 of mothers initiated breastfeeding within the first hour of life, 63.7% of mothers achieved exclusive breastfeeding below 6 months of life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We interviewed 75 antenatal women and 50 postnatal mothers with pre-prepared questionnaire regarding knowledge, attitude and practices on breastfeeding after taking consent from these women admitted at GGH, Suryapet.

Inclusion Criteria

All the consenting women visiting OPD, GGH, Suryapet from May to June 2024 were included. All the consenting postnatal mothers delivering at maternity ward, GGH, Suryapet from May to June 2024 were included.

Exclusion Criteria

Postnatal mothers with complications
Mothers of babies who were unable to breastfeed their babies
Women and mothers who didn't consent to participate in the study

Sample Size

Antenatal women 75
Postnatal mothers 50

Procedure

A pre-prepared questionnaire with 23 questions were given to the study group and their knowledge, attitude and practices were assessed and analysed.

Statistical Analysis

Data entry and management was done in excel, pre-determined data format have been introduced as datasets for quantitative data which was incorporated into a single master computer at the base. The

data sets were transferred into SPSS version 16 after data cleaning and recoding with data definitions. Results of were summarized with frequencies and percentages. The chi-square test was used for assessing the significance of breast feeding practices and various independent variables of interest. The p -value less than 0.01 was considered statistically significant.

In Antenatal women Beauty of mother decreases by breast feeding - p value was statistically significant at 0.4426 (table 1).

Knowledge of complementary feeding along with breast feeding also was statistically significant with a P value of 0.55 (table 1).

S.no	Question	ANC				One tailed i.e p<p0 at 5% l.o.s (Z test)		
		Total sample size	Yes		No		Assuming 80% are aware	Conclusion
			Number	%	Number	%		
1	Knowledge of prelatic feeds	75	27	36%	48	64%	<0.01	Reject Ho
2	Concept of lose milk and third milk	75	42	56%	33	44%	<0.01	Reject Ho
3	EBM Knowledge	75	27	36%	48	64%	<0.01	Reject Ho
4	Attitude of mother during baby's illness to pause breast feeding	75	33	44%	42	56%	<0.01	Reject Ho
5	Beauty of mother decreases by breast feeding	75	16	21%	59	79%	0.4426	Accept Ho
6	Complementary feeding along with breastfeeding	75	14	19%	61	81%	0.5573	Accept Ho
7	learnt breastfeeding techniques from elders	75	63	84%	12	16%	<0.01	Reject Ho
8	Practice of prelacttial feeds	75	23	31%	52	69%	0.0151	Reject Ho

Table 1: Statistical analysis of Antenatal women

In PNC mothers, practice of prelacteal feeds gives a significant P value of 0.3618(table 2) Beauty of the mother decreases while breastfeeding also gives a significant P value of 0.98 (table 2).

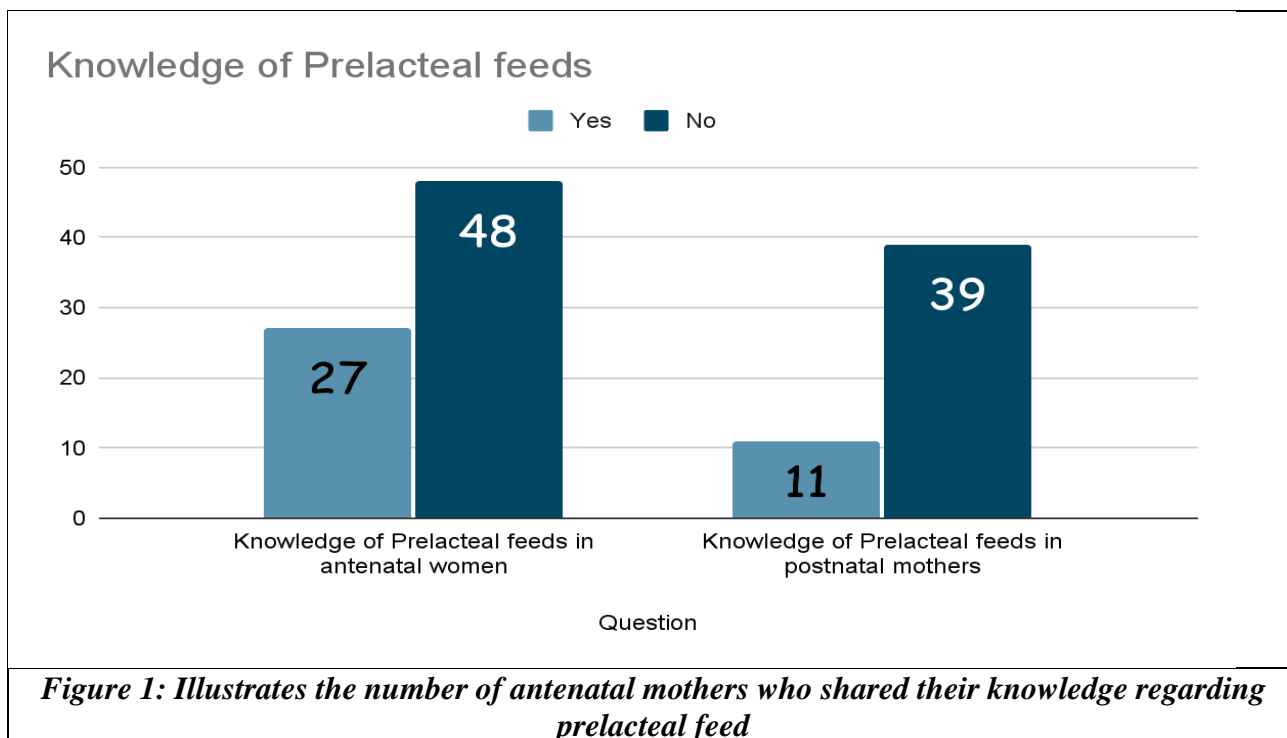
S.no	Question	PNC				one tailed i.e p<p0 at 5% l.o.s (Z test)		
		Total sample size	Yes		No		Assuming 80% are aware	Conclusion
			Number	%	Number	%		
1	Knowledge of prelacteal feeds	50	11	22%	39	78%	0.3618	Accept Ho
2	Concept of foremilk and hind milk	50	24	48%	26	52%	<0.01	Reject Ho
3	EBM Knowledge	50	27	54%	23	46%	<0.01	Reject Ho
4	Attitude of mother during baby's illness to pause breast feeding	50	24	48%	26	52%	<0.01	Reject Ho
5	Beauty of mother decreases by breast feeding	50	4	8%	46	92%	0.9831	Accept Ho
6	Complementary feeding along with breastfeeding	50	21	42%	29	58%	<0.01	Reject Ho
7	learnt breastfeeding techniques	50	40	80%	10	20%	<0.01	Reject Ho

	from elders							
8	Practice of prelacttical feeds	50	34	68%	16	32%	<0.01	Reject Ho

Table 2: Statistical analysis of postnatal mothers

RESULTS

When we interviewed antenatal and postnatal mothers with the questionnaire, the results were like this. Regarding the knowledge of prelacteal feeds 48 (64%) out of 75 antenatal women answered they should not be given, 27(36%) felt they may be given 39(78%) postnatal mothers opined that they should not be given, 11(22%) said they may be administered after birth.



Regarding concepts of foremilk and hindmilk, surprisingly 44% of antenatal women and 51% of postnatal mothers do not know the significance of emptying one breast completely and then switching to another breast.

When asked for knowledge of alternate feeds other than mother’s milk 74.8% of antenatal women and 67% of postnatal mothers answered buffalo milk as an alternative, only 18.6% of ANC women and 18% of PNC mothers thought formula milk as an alternative and 6.6% of ANC women and 15% of PNC mothers were aware of donor milk.

When tested for concepts of expressed breast milk in question number 13 for working mothers, 64% antenatal women and 46% of postnatal mothers were of opinion that EBM cannot be given in the absence of the mothers.

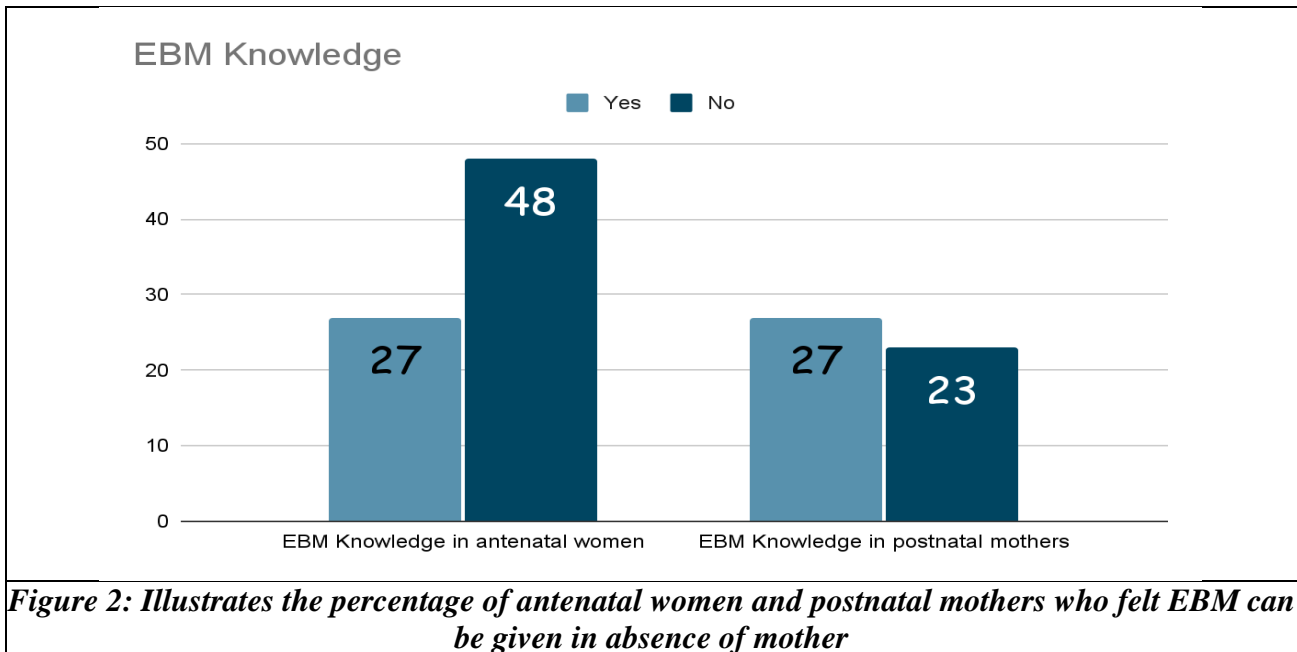


Figure 2: Illustrates the percentage of antenatal women and postnatal mothers who felt EBM can be given in absence of mother

Few questions were aimed to test the attitude of study population during illness of the baby, illness of the mothers and beauty of the mothers etc.

When asked if they would pause feeding the baby if baby has fever or cold nearly half of them 44% of antenatal women and 49% of postnatal mothers answered “yes”

When enquired if the beauty of the mother decreases by breastfeeding the baby 21% of antenatal and 8% of postnatal mothers answered yes.

Regarding complementary feeding and continued breastfeeding only 18.5% of antenatal women and 42% of postnatal mothers felt breast feeding should be continued.

84% of the antenatal and 80% of the postnatal mothers learnt breast feeding techniques from their elders.

When asked if they practiced prelacteal feeds in their previous pregnancies, 30% of antenatal 69% of postnatal mothers answered honey, holy water were given to babies after birth.

Breast feeding initiated only in 78% of previous deliveries of antenatal and 52% of prenatal mothers within one hour of delivery.

When compared with other studies, Breast feeding knowledge and techniques were mainly learnt from mothers of responders during their antenatal period in 84% women and 80% in postnatal women while 16% antenatal women and 20% postnatal mothers had not learnt regarding practices from anyone. The results of our study closely mirror those reported by Sultania et al^[3] where 61% was from family members and only 35% from health care workers.

Previous studies by Ekambaram^[4] et al (2010) focused on knowledge regarding expressed breast milk where 34% knew regarding technique of expressing milk and only 2% knew about breast milk storage. Our research found that 63% of antenatal mothers and 43% of postnatal women felt EBM can't be given in absence of mother.

Our study corroborates the findings of Susheela^[5] et al (2015) where 36.1% mothers felt breast feeding should be stopped when child had sickness. In our questionnaire 44% pregnant women and 49 % of postnatal mothers felt the same.

21% antenatal women and 8% postnatal mothers perceived there would be loss of beauty due to breast feeding similar to observations made by Mohammed^[6] et al where 76.5% agreed breast feeding leads to loss of figure.

Early initiation of breast feeding within one hour was done by only 52% postnatal mothers though they had knowledge. In a similar questionnaire based study by Dipen Patel^[7] 57.5% followed early breast feeding.

98% of mothers in study gave colostrum just like study by Priya, Sultania et al 82% mothers fed baby with colostrum.

69% of mothers were influenced by practice of giving pre lacteal feeds, these results align with Hiremath et al^[8] where 66.1% mothers gave prelacteal feeds , sugar water being most common (49.6%).

In a study done by Vyas Kumar^[9] et al Overall, 66 infants (52.8%) aged 0–5 months were exclusively breastfed. Water followed by animal milk was the most common form of artificial feed. The results were similar to our study with animal milk being considered the main alternative of breast milk.

DISCUSSION^[3-9]

In our study, let us first discuss, the positive aspects, almost all of them, know the importance of colostrum, and have fed the babies with colostrum in previous pregnancy or present pregnancy, and are aware of benefits of breastfeeding.

When knowledge of early initiation of breast feeding was questioned almost all of them agreed it has to be started within one hour of birth, but when it came to practice of feeding within 1hr 78% antenatal women in their previous pregnancy and 52% of postnatal mothers ,only initiated within one hour of birth.

When questioned about knowledge of prelacteal feeds 36% of antenatal women and 22% of postnatal mothers felt they are not harmful for the baby and they answered giving honey, sugar water before initiation of breast milk is not harmful.

Knowledge and practice of burping for prevention of discomfort and colic in babies, after each feed was noted to be practiced in 92% of antenatal women in their previous pregnancy and 50% of postnatal mothers. Simple practice like burping needs to be improvised in postnatal mothers with involvement of other family members.

There is a need to create awareness regarding donor milk or formula milk as the only alternate feed that can be given during non availability of mothers' feeds at least up to age of 9 months. As pediatrician's we should insist on introduction of animal milk only after the age of one year.

Only 6% of antenatal and 15% of postnatal mothers were offering water and other fluids before completion of 180 day and presumed it is important to give additional water and fluids to meet the demands.

Concepts of EBM, has not reached many mothers and it can be a hindrance for working mothers to continue their career and miss an opportunity to be on par with men in career.

Most of the mothers opined breastfeeding needs to be paused during the baby's illness like common cold, diarrhea and fever. They were practicing to pause feeding during their illness and baby's ill.

CONCLUSION

In our study we conclude that practice of prelacteal feeds needs to be focused and prevented which might indirectly affect the NICU admissions due to sepsis. There is a need to inculcate and encourage the concept and practice of expressed breast milk, so that women are getting equal opportunity in workplace and career advancement.

The major observation that was made during the study was that though so many programmes like WBW, BFI and others, most of the mothers were getting help in breastfeeding from their mothers and relatives. There is a need to improve involvement of health care workers like ASHA, ANMs, midwives from very early stages of ANC checkup, in the labour room to achieve the new concept of breast crawl, in 100% of babies.

Finally we conclude that mothers need to be encouraged and relieved of their taboos, fears and misconceptions through interactive sessions with experienced mothers, healthcare workers, lactation counselors, role plays, audio visual aids, awareness programmes are the need of the hour. The goal is to never deny the right of early and exclusive breastfeeding to every baby born in this country.

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