

A Descriptive Study to Assess the Level of Knowledge Regarding Weaning Among Primipara Mothers of Infants

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Abstract

Introduction: The birth of a child is a significant event in any family. Health of the growing child is always a matter of a great concern to the parents. Physical health is important because it is associated with mental and social development. Good nutrition is very important to promote physical health of the child in order to build up healthy life. Nutritional status of infant will be based on breast feeding and weaning practices. The objective of the study were To assess the level of knowledge regarding weaning among primipara mothers of infants and To associate the level of knowledge of primipara mothers of infants with their selected demographic variables. **Materials and methods:** Research approach was quantitative and research design was descriptive research design. 30 samples that fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected by non-probability convenient sampling technique. The tool used for the data collection comprises of 2 sections: section A – demographic variables; section B – A structured questionnaire to assess the knowledge on weaning among primipara mothers of infants. Data collected were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. **Results:** the analysis reveals that 56.6% (17) mothers of infants have inadequate knowledge; 40% (12) have moderate knowledge; 3.3% (1) have adequate knowledge. There is a significant association found between the “educational status, occupation, type of family and no. of children” with knowledge. **Conclusion:** The study findings concludes that majority primipara mothers of infants 56.6% (17) have inadequate knowledge. The nurse administrator should plan to conduct health education programs in community to initiate healthy weaning practices.

Keywords: Infants, primipara mothers, weaning

INTRODUCTION

Weaning was derived from an English word ‘weanien’ meaning ‘accustom’ literally means to be taken off or alienated from an accustomed pursuit. By weaning, we try to take off the baby from the accustomed feeding of breast milk and to introduce him to solid food along with breast milk. Weaning is the second most important step for independent existence. Thus weaning is defined as the systematic process of introduction of suitable food at the right time in addition to mother’s milk in order to provide needed nutrients to the baby [1].

Weaning begins from the moment supplementary food is started and

continues till the child is taken off the breast completely. Infants in India thrive on breast milk alone up to six months of life and their growth rate during this period is satisfactory. Breast milk alone is not able to provide sufficient amounts of all the nutrients needed to maintain growth after the first six months. Increasing need of calories and protein of growing children cannot be met by the diminishing output of mother’s milk. Milk is also a poor source of vitamin C and supplementation with fruit juice is essential. Iron stores in liver of the infant would last only up to 4-6 months. Hence iron-rich foods should be given at least from six months onwards. Milk is also deficient in vitamin D. If the

baby is to maintain the expected rate of growth and remain healthy and well nourished, supplementary feeding has to be resorted to round about the 6th month of life [2].

Need for the study

Early weaning is often due to ignorance and leads to contamination and infection related to unhygienic preparation. Late weaning leads to malnutrition and growth faltering. Weaning foods should be cheap, easily available and acceptable to the custom. Slowly other foods can be introduced. Semi solids and fruit juices can be started from 4-6 months of age, items that can be mashed with fingers can be started from 6 months of age. Vegetables, roots, tubers, fruits, fish, meat etc., can be added. By one year of age the child must be taking all the items that are cooked at home [3].

A sound knowledge and practical application of nutritional requirements must be the basis of choice of infant foods. The socioeconomic status and education of the mother have also been known to influence infant feeding practices. Socio cultural and economic aspects and prevalent feeding habits of the community also have to be taken in to account when the parents are advised regarding weaning procedures [4].

Statement of the problem

A descriptive study to assess the level of knowledge regarding weaning among primipara mothers of infants at selected rural areas, Visakhapatnam.

Objectives

- To assess the level of knowledge regarding weaning among primipara mothers of infants.
- To associate the level of knowledge of primipara mothers with their selected demographic variables.

Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive research design was adopted.

Setting

The study was conducted at Jalaripeta village, Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh.

Sample and Sampling Technique

30 primipara mothers of infants were selected by using convenient sampling technique.

Criteria for Sample Selection

Inclusive criteria

- Primipara mothers of (6 months–1 year) infants
- Mothers who were willing to participate in the study

Exclusive criteria

- Mothers who cannot speak and understand Telugu
- Mothers who were not willing to participate in the study.

Data collection Instrument

The tool used for the data collection comprises of 2 sections:

Section I: It consists of socio demographic variables.

Section II: A structured questionnaire on knowledge regarding weaning among primipara mothers of infants.

Score Interpretation

The score were interpreted in the following manner.

<50%: Inadequate knowledge

50–75%: Moderately Adequate knowledge

>75%: Adequate knowledge

Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the demographic variables of primipara mothers of infants (N=30).

S.NO	Demographic variables	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Age	17-20 yrs.	10	33.3%
		20-23 yrs.	11	36.6%
		23-26 yrs.	6	20%
		Above 26 yrs.	3	10%
2	Education	Illiterate	14	46.6%
		Primary education	13	43.3%
		Secondary education	3	10%
		Degree & above	0	0%
3	Occupation	House wife	22	73.3%
		Daily labour	7	23.3%
		Business	1	3.3%
		other	0	0%
4	Type of family	Small family	24	80%
		Large family	6	20%
5	No. of children	1	17	56.6%
		2	11	36.6%
		3	2	6%
		4% above	0	0%
6	Eating habits	vegetarian	1	3.3%
		Non-vegetarian	29	96.6%
7	Religion	Hindu	23	76.6%
		Christian	7	23.3%
		Muslim	0	0%
		other	0	0%

Table 2: Distribution of level of knowledge on weaning among primipara mothers of infants.

S.no	Level of knowledge	frequency	Percentage
1	Inadequate	17	56.6%
2	Moderate	12	40%
3	Adequate	1	3.3%

Table 2 reveals that 17 (56.6%) mothers of infants have inadequate knowledge; 12(40%) have mothers of infants; 1(3.3%) have adequate knowledge.

There is a significant association found between the “educational status, occupation, type of family and no. of children of the mother” with knowledge.

CONCLUSION

In this study, most of the primipara mothers of infants had inadequate knowledge and moderate knowledge regarding weaning of infants. These findings suggested extensive health education program were needed to bring awareness among primipara mothers of infants on weaning practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The same type of study can be done in all community areas.
- A comparative study can be done between urban and rural mothers.
- A similar study can be conducted on large sample for better generalization.

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