

# A Descriptive Survey to Assess and Compare the Breastfeeding Practices among Working and Non-Working Mothers of Infants (6-12 Months) Attending Well Baby Clinic of Selected Hospitals and MCH Centre

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## Abstract

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the mothers 98 mothers (49%) had LSCS, 88 mothers (44%) had normal vaginal delivery and 14 mothers (7%) had abnormal delivery, 180 mothers (90%) mothers delivered at full term whereas 13(6.5%) mothers delivered at preterm. 52(26%) mothers were giving water in between feeds to their infant who were less than 6 months and on exclusive breastfeeding. 108(74%) mothers used bottle for top feeding. 135(67.5%) mothers clean the utensils used for feeding by boiling. 16(32%) working mothers gave honey/ghutti immediately to their infants after birth whereas the number was 60(40%) for the non-working mothers. 20(40%) working mothers started complementary feeding within 4-6 months of their delivery whereas it was 95(63.3%) for non-working mothers. 18(36%) working mothers gave mashed food as complementary feed to their infants in the age group of 6-9 months whereas 32(21.3%) non-working mothers gave above items. Working mothers were giving better complementary feed to their infants but were having difficulty continuing breast feeding. The study findings revealed that there is need to impart knowledge on practice of mothers on infant feeding.

**Keywords:** Complementary feed, Mother, Infant, Working mothers, Non-working mothers

## Introduction

Proper feeding practices from early childhood are important for normal physical and mental growth, development, optimum immunity, reducing atopic conditions and training the mothers to correct feeding habits. It is well established that under nutrition as well as obesity in early childhood is associated with increased morbidity and mortality in later life <sup>1</sup>.

Children are our future and the most precious resource. After birth, the health of the baby depends

upon the nurturing practices adopted by their families <sup>2</sup>.

Traditionally, it has been believed that exclusive breastfeeding is the best form of infant and young child feeding which ensures optimum growth, enhances intellectual and emotional development and improves protection against infections, diseases and malnutrition for infant <sup>3</sup>.

Today's children are tomorrow's citizens. Healthy children make a healthy nation hence it is important to

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feed Infant and young child feeding practices include exclusive breastfeeding for six months, timely and appropriate complementary feeding after six months with continued breastfeeding<sup>4</sup>.

Breastfeeding is an important public health strategy for improving maternal morbidity rates and helping to control health care costs. Just as there is no substitute for mother's love, there is no substitute for mother's milk<sup>5</sup>.

This suggests that nurses can play an important role in the initiation of breastfeeding and for the promotion of colostrum feeding.

Due to inadequate knowledge and ill practices of mothers, many of them discard colostrum. Prolactal feeds and early formula feeding increase the risk of infections such as lower respiratory tract infection and diarrhoea which may lead to hospitalization contributing to neonatal mortality and morbidity<sup>13</sup>.

#### Indian Govt. Policies for Working Mothers

1. Government of India initiated "National Crèche Scheme" for the children of working mothers which provides day care facilities to the children.
2. Working women hostel
3. Provision of 6 months Maternity leave for mothers.

#### Welfare Schemes for Women in India to Promote Breast Feeding:

1. Mother and child tracking system (MCTS)
2. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojna (PMMVY) in 2017
3. National action plan for Children
4. ICDS programme

### Material and Methods

#### Research Design

In the present study the research design was descriptive survey to assess and compare the breastfeeding practices among working and non-working mothers of infants attending well baby clinic of selected hospitals and MCH centre, New Delhi.

#### Statement of the Problem

A descriptive survey to assess and compare the

breastfeeding practices among working and non-working mothers of infants (6-12 months) attending well baby clinic of selected hospitals and MCH centres, New Delhi.

#### Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the breast-feeding practices of mothers attending well baby clinic of selected hospitals and MCH centre of New Delhi.
2. To assess the supplementary feeding practices of mothers attending well baby clinic of selected hospitals and MCH centre of New Delhi.
3. To compare the breastfeeding practices of working and non-working mothers.

#### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

- **Practice:** The exclusive breast feeding of the baby for 6 months and complementary feeding after 6 months.
- **Well baby clinic:** A health service clinic for preventive monitoring, health education and advice for parents of babies from birth to 5 years of age.
- **Complementary feed:** The feed which is given after 6 months of age for additional requirements of the infant.
- **Mother:** A woman having child in the age group of 6 months to 12 months of age.
- **Infant:** A child in the age group of 6 - 12 months.
- **Working mothers:** The mother of an infant who is earning her income from being employed in a business/profession or some organization
- **Non-working mothers:** Those mothers who are not employed in profession or business and are home-makers.

#### Variables under the study

Age, educational status, type of family, sex of child, order of birth, type of delivery, any postnatal complication, maturity of child, major illness, ANC visit, congenital anomaly, the first part also contained additional information for working mothers regarding type of job, job site, resumption of duties after delivery, maternity leave, shift duties, information regarding the individual who is taking care of the infant in her absence, breastfeeding facilities like crèche.

## Assumptions

- Mothers have the knowledge about the exclusive breastfeeding practice.
- Working Mothers have difficulty in practicing exclusive breast feeding.

## Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework used for the study was based on Orem's Self Care Theory.

## Setting

The physical location and conditions in which data collection has taken place in a study is setting of the study. The present study was conducted in selected hospitals of Delhi

## Sample and Sampling Technique

### Population

The population was mothers of infant of age group 6 months-12month attending well baby clinic

### Sample

Samples were selected mothers of infant in the age group of 6 months-12 months attending well baby clinic selected hospital and MCH centre of Delhi.

### Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling technique was used for the present study.

### Inclusion Criteria

- Mothers of infant who were willing to participate in the study
- Mothers of infant within the age group of 6months - 12 months
- Mothers who were available during data collection time.

### Exclusion Criteria

- Those mothers who had never breastfed their child.
- Mother having child with any physical or mental sickness.
- Mother suffering from any major physical or mental illness.

## Sampling Size

The sample of the present study consisted of 200 mothers who fulfilled the criteria (50 working mothers and 150 non-working mothers in a group).

## Ethical consideration

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical Committee of Holy Family Hospital, New Delhi. The investigator explained the purpose of the study to mothers and their written consent was obtained after explaining them about the study.

## Data Collection Tools and Techniques

The data was collected using a structured Interview Schedule and practice checklist. The tool was organized in 2 parts i.e; Demographic characteristics (working mothers and non-working mothers) and Practice questionnaires on Infant Feeding. Data analysis and interpretation was done by using descriptive statistics

## Validity of the tools

The Content Validity of the tool was established by submitting the tools to 11 experts. Out of them 4 were gynaecologist and 7 were Nursing faculty from Obstetrical and Gynaecological nursing

## Reliability of the tools

It was administered to 20 mothers. Reliability of practice checklist was established by Cronbach alpha formula. The value of 'r' was found to be 0.82. Thus the tool was found to be reliable.

## Procedure for final data collection

Data was collected from 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019 - 15<sup>th</sup> February 2020 from well-baby clinic of Holy family Hospital, Okhla, well-baby clinic at Dilshad Garden after obtaining formal administrative approval.

1. Informed consent was taken and the purpose of the study was explained to the mothers of infants (6-12 months) and an average time of 10-15 minutes was given to each participant.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1: Practice Checklist and Questionnaires Regarding Initiation of Breastfeeding Practices of Mothers of Infant in the Age Group of 6-12 Months**

n=200

Breastfeeding practices	Working (50)		Nonworking (150)	
	f	%	f	%
Did you breast fed your child	50	100%	150	100%
Are you still breastfeeding?	32	64%	150	100%
Did you feed the first milk (colostrum) to your baby?	50	100%	128	85.3%
Did you give honey/ ghutti immediately after birth?	16	32%	60	40%
When did you initiate the breastfeeding (hours)?				
(a) Within 1 hour	12	24%	44	29.3%
(b) 1-6	12	24%	33	22%
(c) 6-12	6	12%	6	4%
(d) 12-24	6	12%	23	15.3%
(e) 24-48	6	12%	16	10.6%
(f) 48-72	4	8%	2	1.3%
(g) After 72 hours	4	8%	26	17.3%
(h) Never fed the baby	0	0%	0	0%

- All 100% working and non-working mothers breastfed their child.
- 36% working mothers had stopped breast feeding whereas 100% non-working mothers were still breastfeeding their infant.
- 50(100%) working mothers fed the first milk (colostrum) to their baby whereas 128(85.3%) non-working mothers fed the first milk (colostrum) to their baby
- 16(32%) working mothers gave honey/ ghutti immediately after birth whereas 60(40%) non-working mothers gave honey/ ghutti immediately after birth.
- 14(28%) working mothers were giving water

to the infant in between feeds when the infant was less than 6 months of age and on exclusive breastfeeding whereas 38(25.3%) non-working mothers gave water to their infant in between feeds when the infant was less than 6 months of age and on exclusive breastfeeding.

- The percentage of non-working mothers 44(29.33%) who initiated breastfeeding within 1 hour of delivery was higher than that of working mothers 12(24%). It was found that the percentage 4(8%) of working mothers who initiated breastfeeding during 48-72 hour was higher than that of 2(1.3%) of non-working mothers.

**Table 2: Practice Checklist and Questionnaires Regarding Supplementary Feeding Practices of Mothers of Infant with the Age Group of 6-12 Months**

n=200

Breastfeeding practices	Working (50)		Nonworking (150)	
	f	%	f	%
Are you giving the top feed (milk)				
Yes	30	60%	130	86.7%
No	20	40%	20	13.3%
If yes, which of the following?				
Natural milk (cow/buffalo/goat)	11	16%	49	32.6%
Forms milk (Lactogen)	15	16%	43	28.6%
Mother dairy/DMS/AMUL/NESTLE	4	8%	38	2.6%
Pasteurized milk	0	0%	0	0%
None of the above	0	0%	0	0%
How do you give top feed?				
Bottle	30	60%	78	52%
Katori and spoon	16	32%	59	39.3%
Glass	2	4%	0	0%
Cup	0	0%	0	0%
Paladay	0	0%	0	0%
Not giving	2	4%	13	8.67%
When did you start with bottle/katori/glass feeding to the baby?				
1-2 months	2	4%	11	7.33%
2-3 months	11	22%	2	1.33%
3-4 months	6	12%	1	0.67%
4-6 months	20	40%	20	13.33%
After 6 months	10	20%	95	63.33%
Not yet	1	2%	21	14%
Did you introduce complementary feed?				
Yes	22	44%	136	90.67%
No	28	56%	14	9.33%

What type of complementary feed you are giving age group (6-9 months)?				
Mashed food	18	36%	19	12.6%
Thick vegetable soup	17	34%	25	16.6%
Above items with breast milk	16	32%	32	21.3%
Sooji, Kheechri	8	16%	6	4%
Chapatti	1	2%	6	4%
biscuits	2	4%	4	2.6%
Only breast milk	0	0%	0	0%
Others, Or	0	0%	0	0%
what type of food complementary feed you are giving to the age group (10 - 12 months)			0	
Breast milk alone	3	6%	3	0%
Semisolid diet	19	38%	42	2%
Family diet along with breast milk	0	0%	0	28%
Liquid diet				0%
How do you clean the utensils used for feed?				
Disinfectant solution	9	18%	0	0%
Only with Tap water	0	0%	15	10%
Hot water	7	14%	8	5.33%
Soap and water	10	20%	35	23.33%
Boiling	39	78%	96	64%

- There is a slight difference in the practice of giving pre-lacteal feeds. 32% working mothers had given honey and ghutti to the infant whereas it was 40% in case of non-working mothers.
- There were 28% working mothers who had given water to the infant in between feeds when the infant was less than 6 months of age & on exclusive breastfeeding whereas it was 60% for the non-working mothers.
- Top feeds were started early i.e. before 6 months of infant's age by 88% of working mothers, whereas 22.66% of non- working mothers started top feeds before 6 months of infant's age.
- There were 18(36%) working mothers who gave mashed food type of complementary feed to their infant of age group (6-9 months) whereas 32(21.3%) non-working mothers gave above items with breast milk type of complementary feed to their infant of the age group (6-9 months).



**Figure 1: Bar diagram showing distribution of the study subjects based on their breastfeeding practices.**

Data presented Figure 1 represents that 64% working mothers were still breast feeding whereas 100% of non-working mothers did this. 50(100%) working mothers fed the first milk (colostrum) to their baby whereas it was 128(85.3%) for non-working mothers. 16(32%) working mothers gave honey/ghutti immediately after birth whereas it was 60(40%) for non-working mothers. 40(80%) working mothers washed their hands before breast feeding whereas 76(50.6%) non-working mothers followed this practice.

### Discussion

The discussion has been presented in context to the objectives and findings of the study conducted in relation with the findings revealed by the other researchers.

In the present study the sample size was 200, out of which 50 were working and 150 were non-working mothers. The findings revealed that 32% of working women practiced pre-lacteal feed and none of the working mother practiced formula milk. The findings of subjects as revealed in the study conducted by Thenisha.A in which the sample size was 172, out of which 60 were working mothers and 112 were non-working mothers. This study shows that nearly 65% of working women practice pre-lacteal feed and 70% of working women practice formula milk.

In the present study, the findings revealed that 54% of mothers used bottle for feeding. The findings

of subjects in the study conducted by Asif revealed that (66.9%) mothers breastfed their youngest child and 320(77.9%) mothers used bottle for feeding.

In the present study, the findings revealed that out of 200 sample 56(28%) mothers had started breastfeeding within 1 hour after their deliveries. Colostrum was given by 89% of mothers. The findings of subjects in the study conducted by Bagul AS, Supare MS et al, revealed that out of the 384 enrolled mothers, 125(32.56%) mothers had started breastfeeding within 1 hour of their deliveries. Colostrum was given by 82 (21.38%) working mothers.

In the present study, the findings revealed that 24% of the non-working mothers and 29.3% of the working mothers had initiated breastfeeding within one hour of birth. 100% working and 85.3% non-working mothers fed the colostrum to their infant. The findings of subjects in the study conducted by Vindhya Polineni<sup>1</sup>, Prakash Boralingiah<sup>2</sup>, Praveen Kulkarni<sup>3</sup>, Renuka Manjunath revealed that 53.3% of the non-working women and 42.1% of the working women had initiated breastfeeding within one hour of birth. 95.3% of non-working women and 97.2% of the working women had fed their children with colostrum.

In the present study, the findings revealed that 38% mothers gave pre-lacteal feed to their infant. 52.5% mothers initiated complimentary feed within 4-6 months of infant's age. The findings of subjects in

the study conducted by Senthilvel V. et al., revealed that 19% mothers fed pre-lacteal feed to their infant. Only 28% mothers initiated complimentary food within 4-6 months of infant's age.

### Conclusion

There is need to impart knowledge on practice of mothers on infant feeding.

- All working and non-working mothers breastfed their child. Working mothers had stopped breastfeeding whereas all the non-working mothers were still breastfeeding their infant.
- Working mothers started giving top feed to their babies early as compared to non-working mothers.
- Mothers started to give mashed food type of complementary feed to their infant of age group (6-9 months) whereas non-working mothers gave above items with breast milk type of complementary feed to their infant of the age group (6-9 months).
- None of the (working and non-working) mothers gave 'breast milk alone and liquid diet' type of complementary feed to the age group (10 - 12 months).

**Ethical clearance-** Taken from. Holy family hospital committee

**Source of funding-** Self

**Conflict of interest-** Nil

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