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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A PROSPECTIVE STUDY OF AWARENESS OF BREASTFEEDING AMONG RURAL WOMEN FROM TAGARAPUVALASA

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ABSTRACT

Background: World Health Organization advocates exclusive breastfeeding for six months. Promotion and support of breastfeeding is a global priority and is important child-survival intervention. Existing antenatal counseling on breastfeeding is inadequate in the population studied and which needs strengthening.

Some of these problems can overcome by

a) Antenatal women are informed about the benefits of breastfeeding

b) Prepare herself mentally for exclusive breastfeeding.

c) Health care providers (Nurses, Medical officers, Specialists, Neonatologists and House surgeons) need education training on breastfeeding support and management.

This study was taken up to identify the awareness, to remove misconceptions and to counsel them regarding breast feeding techniques. The sample is Antenatal mothers from rural areas attending Department of Obstetrics, NRIMS, Sangivalasa. This programme initially started at Main hospital, and later was extended to UHC and RHC attached to hospital around Tagarapuvalasa from 2012. During Antenatal visits the anatomical defects like retracted nipples and other abnormalities identified. A pro-forma was made and the women were grouped in to primies and multiparous women. Most of the multi parous women fed their babies after 3 days, they never took normal diet till third day postpartum which prompted to initiate this study. Most of the women who deliver have lot of misbeliefs individually or by the influence of others like- mother, mother-in-law, friends, neighbours and sister-in-law. It is general observation that most of these women have information that breast feeding should start 3 days after delivery. A pro-forma was made in local language and results were tabulated for 100 women out of whom 87% were aware of importance of breastfeeding, 13% were unaware of importance of breast feeding. Most of them had doubts regarding frequency, duration and adequacy of breast feeding. The results were tabulated according to the answers.

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INTRODUCTION

World Health Organization advocates exclusive breastfeeding for six months. Promotion and support of breastfeeding is a global priority and is important child-survival intervention.

- All Ante-Natal woman were informed about the benefits of breastfeeding
- Preparing herself mentally for exclusive breastfeeding by timely support and Healthcare education. Existing antenatal counseling on breastfeeding is inadequate in the population studied and which needs strengthening. Informing all pregnant women about the benefits and management of breastfeeding should be a priority during antenatal visits.
- Health care providers also need education training on breastfeeding support and management. House surgeons posted in the wards and nursing students as a part of medical education and training. With this aim the study was planned and implemented.

To sustain a continuous breast feeding tradition supported by the Family, Community leaders, Trained health workers, Lactation consultants, Partners

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a prospective study conducted at NRI Institute of medical sciences, Anil Neerukonda General Hospital, Sangivalasa. The study was conducted from 1-8-2016 to 1-8-2017. A pro-forma was given to women attending antenatal clinic and postnatal ward by house surgeons in the ward and nursing students as part of medical education. This is to improve and regulate breast feeding in the wards and also after patient goes home. 100 women were selected randomly and the pro-forma was prepared in local language (Telugu) and explained to them individually by house surgeons and nurses posted in the postnatal ward. The results were tabulated. The awareness programmes were conducted by slide shows of techniques of breast feeding, diet during lactation, advice regarding retracted nipples like nipple exercises, use of nipple shield, how to express excess milk and prevention of cracked nipples and breast abscess in local language. Nurses demonstrated the importance of breast feeding by small skits.

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Section 1. Association between Knowledge and selected Demographic variables of age, educational status family monthly income and religion: (n=100)

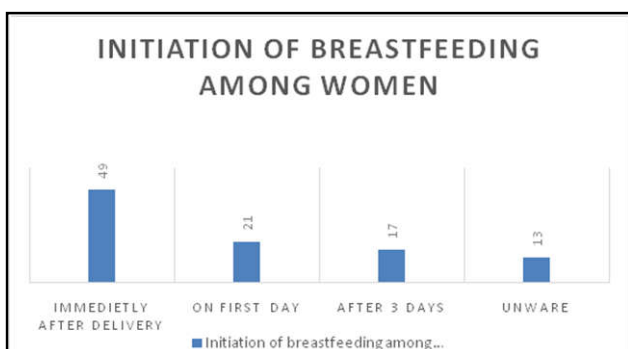
Serial No.	Name of Demographic variable	No & %	Test value & P values
1. Age Group:			
	21-25	33	X ² value = 18.24; d.f=3; P < 0.001
	26-30	33	
	31-35	27	
	36-40	07	
2. Educational Status:			
	Illiterate	47	X ² value = 34.16; d.f=3; P < 0.001
	Primary	20	
	High school	27	
	Graduate	06	
3. Family monthly income in rupees :			
	< 5,000	24	X ² value = 11.6; d.f=3; P < 0.01
	5,000 – 15,000	37	
	15,000 – 30,000	26	
	>30,0000	13	
4. Religion :			
	Hindus	40	X ² value = 19.3414; d.f=3; P < 0.001
	Muslims	13	
	Christians	47	
	Others	00	

Type of Locality :			
	Rural	43	X ² value = 31.04 d.f=3; P < 0.001
	Urban	33	
	Tribal	17	
	City	02	
Type of Family:			
	Nuclear	37	X ² value = 8.1808 d.f=3; P > 0.05
	Joint	43	
	Extended	20	
Occupational status:			
	Government	23	X ² value = 8.64 d.f=3; P > 0.05
	Private	23	
	House wife	37	
	Un-employed	17	
Type of delivery :			
	Normal	67	X ² value = 11.56 d.f=1; P < 0.001
	Cesarian	33	
Source of information:			
	Doctor	50	X ² value = 49.52 d.f=1; P < 0.001
	Television	07	
	Health workers	33	
	No idea	10	

Section 2. Assessment of knowledge on practice of breast feeding techniques among mothers of under 5 years children: (n= 100)

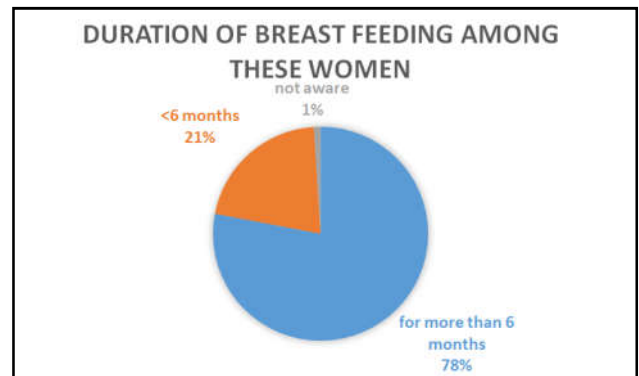
S. No.	Level of knowledge	No & %	Test & P values
	In adequate (< 50 % of score)	56	X ² value = 31.8843 d.f= 2 P < 0.001
2.	Moderate (50-75 % of score)	34	
3.	Adequate (> 75 % score)	10	

Chart-1



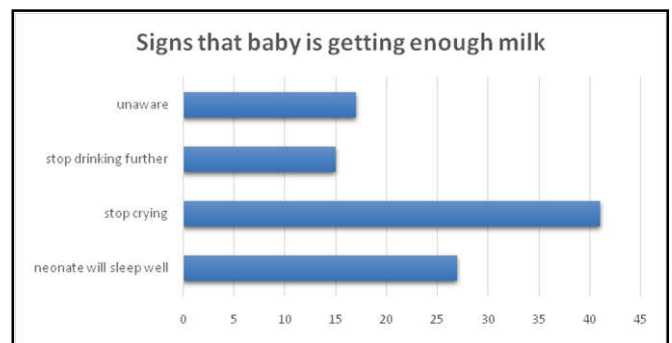
- 87% of the women are aware about the importance of breast milk.
- 49% of the women have breast fed immediately after delivery, 21% not immediately but within first day, 17% breastfed after 3 days, 13% women were primi gravida who are aware to breastfeed immediately after delivery

Chart- 2



78% of the women have breastfed adequately (≥6 months) the remaining 21% of women are aware to breastfeed at least for 6 months. 1% women were not aware

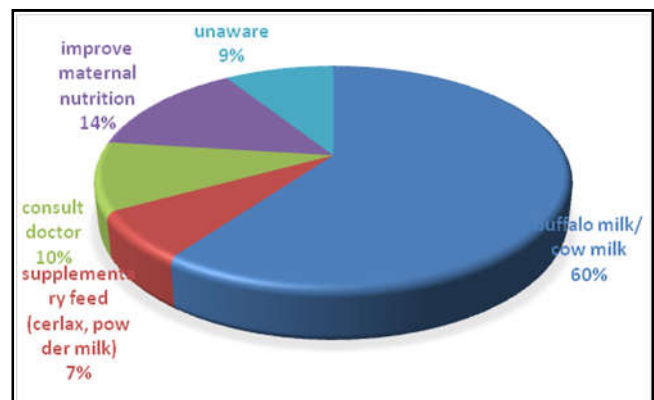
Chart-3



27% women answered that after sufficient feeding the neonate will sleep well, 41% women answered that the neonate would stop crying after sufficiently breastfed, 15% of them answered that the neonate would stop drinking further from breast. And 17% of the women are not aware how to identify whether their neonate is breastfed sufficiently.

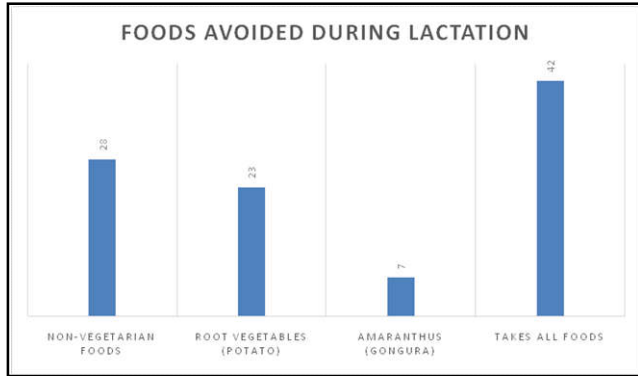
Chart-4

Supplementation with/ without consultation



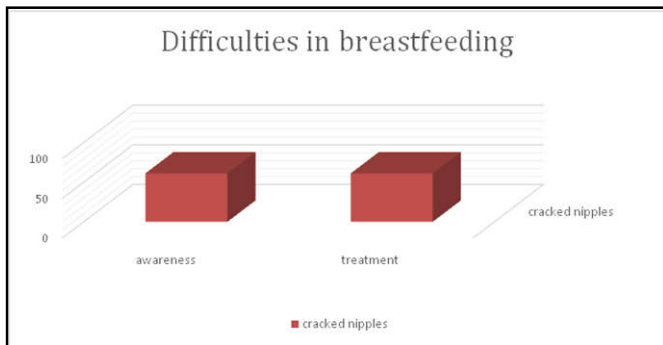
60% women answered that they would give bottle-feeds with buffalo milk/ cow milk if they don't have sufficient breast milk, 7% women would give supplementary feeds, 10% women would consult a doctor, 14% women would improve their nutrition. The remaining 9% women were unaware what to do if they don't have sufficient breast milk.

Chart-5



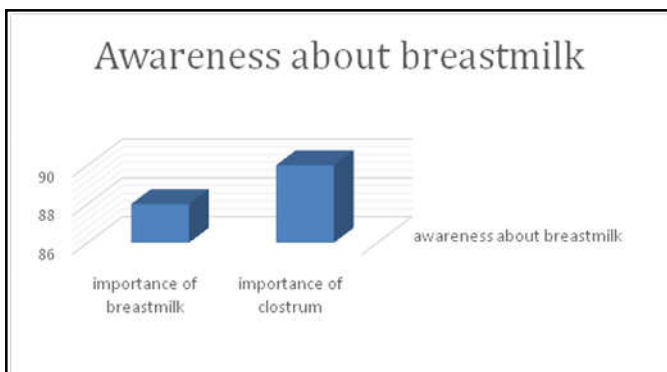
28% women avoid non-vegetarian foods during lactation period, 23% women avoid root vegetables like potato, red potato etc.; 7% women avoid amaranths, and 42% do not avoid any food during lactation period.

Chart-6



- 73% of women were aware of breast engorgement if proper breastfeeding is not given and equal number of women knew how to empty their breast in case of breast engorgement.
- 61% women knew about nipple cracking and its treatment.

Chart-7



84% women are aware about the techniques of breastfeeding

Conclusion

Antenatal counseling on breastfeeding and postnatal lactation support are likely to improve rates of exclusive breastfeeding. This descriptive study was undertaken to assess whether antenatal visits were utilized for promotion of exclusive breastfeeding in addition to the routine obstetric services. All the women were counselled based on their answers and were given advice regarding breastfeeding. Barriers because of which woman avoids breast feeding were identified. a) Breast Pathology Flat/inverted nipples, breast reduction surgery that severed milk ducts, previous breast abscess, extremely sore nipples (cracked, bleeding, blisters, abrasions), B)Hormonal pathology: Failure of lacto genesis, hypothyroidism, C) Overall health: Smoking, anemia, poor nutrition, depression, D) Psychosocial: Restrictive feeding schedules, mother without support system, not rooming in with baby, bottle supplementing when not medically required E)Other: Previous breastfed infant who failed to gain weight well, perinatal complication (hemorrhage, Hypertension, infection). Key to successful breastfeeding is Information, Education, Communication aiming at behavior changes it is evident that though counseling on breastfeeding is given due importance as part of antenatal visits many women do not follow. we took this as a project at NRI Medical college and it is an ongoing protocol in post natal wards. Posters were kept so that post natal mothers will get proper awareness.

Timely support and Healthcare education is mandatory.

- Continuous support
- Intimation
- To sustain a continuous breast feeding tradition supported by the

Family, Community leaders, trained health workers, Lactation consultants, Partners. Awareness related to breastfeeding among mothers in the "counseled" group was better than those in the "not counseled" group.

- women who received antenatal advice would be more likely to practice exclusive breastfeeding;
- Follow up studies can validate our hypothesis.
- In the "counseled" group awareness among mothers with regard to correct breastfeeding technique has improved. But concept of continuing breastfeeding during illness in the baby is not different from those in the "not counseled" group which needs further study.

REFERANCES

Study by Sable and Patton from Missouri, USA in 1989-91:- only 37% of antenatal women reported that their health providers advised them to consider breastfeeding. In tertiary hospital in Pondicherry, India:- 75% of the antenatal mothers were "Booked", 21% had received antenatal counseling on breastfeeding. A trial by Alexander et al suggested that Routine breast examination during antenatal care does not increase the chances of successful breastfeeding. Detection of retractile nipples in the antenatal period followed by appropriate maneuvers to make the nipples protractile May help in detection of any other pathologies