

RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Study on weaning practices adopted by mothers of ICDS beneficiaries

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ARTICLE CHRONICLE :

Received :

15.06.2016;

Revised :

13.07.2016;

Accepted :

23.07.2016

SUMMARY : Infant feeding practices constitute a major component of child rearing practices apart from socio – cultural, economic and demographic factors. Somehow these practices constitute one of the most neglected deterrents of young child malnutrition, In spite of their important role in growth pattern of children. Survey was conducted with objectives to study socio economics status, weaning practices, month of weaning, type of food given to babies of ICDS beneficiaries. Rural ICDS block were selected purposely and result were recorded and factors responsible for not weaning at proper time were discussed with beneficiaries.

How to cite this article : Kulkarni, Madhumati (2016). Study on weaning practices adopted by mothers of ICDS beneficiaries. *Agric. Update*, 11(3): 310-312, DOI : 10.15740/HAS/AU/11.3/310-312.

KEY WORDS :

ICDS, Beneficiaries, Weaning, Growth, Breast feeding, Food

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

ICDS services , a national intervention programme for children started in 1975 on an experimental basis in 33 blocks the services was aimed to full-fill on the WHO'S goal i.e. GOBI FFF, growth monitoring, oral dehydration, breast feeding, immunization, food supplementation, female literacy and family planning (Anita and Khyrunissa, 2008) Hence it was a national development programme mainly meant for children under six years, through strengthening the child care and improved access to basic services at the coming level. It is one of the largest and unique intervention programmes of the world (Aganwadi for all- Singh and Jean Dre'ze, 2008).

Child rearing practices which is

recognized to have a direct effect on child health is mainly influenced by customs, Superstitions, beliefs, cultural pattern, socioeconomic status of families and practices prevailing in that area. Exclusive breast feeding practice though found to be associated with reduction of child morbidity, the increasing trend for bottle feeding and early weaning are threats in developed and developing countries. Poor knowledge of mothers and literacy have also made it worse.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Nanded district in rural ICDS block. Deliberately rural block was selected. In rural area it was interesting to know when mothers are offering weaning foods to their babies.

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The Degloor rural block was selected purposefully because researcher has good kind of rapport with Degloor taluka ICDS functionaries. Degloor block is somewhat developed taluka in Nanded district comparatively with other talukas because educational, social, medical, spiritual environment is desirable and participation level of public is high in different fields. Randomly five Anganwadis were selected for study which were near to road and having variety of class. From each Anganwadi 30 student mothers were selected and interviewed personally. Total sample size was 150 respondents. Due to face to face contacts, discussion, observations different minute things came out. Survey was conducted in different five villages, namely Vanali, Vazarga, Khanapur, Hanegaon, Degaon data were interpreted by using percentage and frequency. The study was conducted in the year 2013- 14.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present investigation are given in Table 1 to 3.

According to caste, the 90 per cent respondents fell under OBC category and 40 per cent under open category and only 13 per cent respondent belonged to SC ST category.

Regarding religion maximum respondents were in the Hindu category, only 20 per cent belonged to muslim community and 20 per cent felled under other religion means Christian, Sikh, Boudh.

Regarding marital status maximum respondents were married only 10 per cent were widows. 60 per cent respondents reside in Kaccha house and only 40 per cent were having Pakka house.

About education it is very clear that 40 per cent mothers were illiterate, 40 per cent were having education less than 10th class. Only 20 per cent were 10th passed and 6.66 respondents were 12th and above.

Data regarding occupation shows maximum percentage of respondents were having farming as main occupation whereas, 23 per cent peoples were working as labour and 20 per cent were engaged in business and only 6 per cent were occupied in services.

Income is an important variable which contributes directly to development in this study maximum respondents were having income rupees 25000 to 50000. Where as, 33 per cent respondents falled in the category less than 25000 thousand. Same numbers of respondents

falled in the category of rupees 51000 to 75000 thousand and above.

This Table 2 throws light on the main objective of study. It is very interesting to note that maximum percentage of respondents were introduced weaning foods to their babies after 1 year. Only 3 per cent respondents' started weaning after 4 months and 13 per cent respondents offered weaning food at the age of 6 months. Actually weaning babies should start at the age of 3-4 months, even it is better if it is started in 6 months. But it is not seen, which is very late, here researcher find scope for Home Science education like nutrition, child development practices, also functionaries working with ICDS need to be trained and refreshed so knowledge regarding child development and nutrition will

Table 1 : Socio- economic status of the respondents

Sr. No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Caste		
	Open	40	26.26
	OBC	90	60
	SC/ST	20	13.13
2.	Religion		
	Hindu	105	70
	Muslim	20	13.13
	other	25	16.66
3.	Marital status		
	Marital	135	90
	Unmarried	0	0
	Widow	15	10
4.	Type of house		
	Kaccha	90	60
	Pakka	60	40
5.	Education		
	No education	60	40
	Less than 10 th	60	40
	10 th	20	13.33
	12 th Above	10	6.66
6.	Occupation		
	Service	10	6.66
	Business	30	20.00
	Labour	35	23.33
	Farming	75	50
7.	Income		
	Less than 25000	50	33.33
	26000 to 50000	60	40
	51000 to 75000	20	13.33
	75,000 to above	20	13.33

Table 2 : Time of introducing weaning food to their babies

Sr. No.	Variable	Numbers	Percentage
1.	4 th month	5	3.33
2.	6 th month	20	13.33
3.	1 year	125	83.33

Table 3 : Type of food given to babies

Sr. No.	Type	Number	Percentage
1.	Only liquid	132	88
2.	Liquid + soft	126	84
3.	Liquid+ soft+solid	105	70

be very useful to increase functional literacy among ICDS staff. Here lies the thought of rethinking and replanning the government schemes. According to child development each child should wean at the age of 4 months but it is not seen in the same case.

Regarding type of foods given to babies shows that each respondent had given more than one option, 88 per cent respondents were offered liquid food, whereas, 84 per cent were given liquid + soft food and 70 per cent mother were offered liquid + soft + solid food. Though they have given food to their child but it was not weaned at proper age. 84 per cent people gave liquid+soft food, it is encouraging for development of child and which gives some kind of positive thought to the researcher to report feedback to researcher, planner, academicians to plan developmental programmes based on felts needs of clientele. At the age 1 year child should eat half of the mothers' diet. While discussing with them no child found who eats half of the mother's diet. This is due to lack of efforts taken by mother, which throws light on education of mother, exposure, training, reading habits, family background income and many more factors.

Though ICDS Personnel's working in rural area but expected change is not seen which again complaints about their intimacy about work. For such things, it is always true that not only one person, one scheme, one agency is responsible but the whole system need to be assessed. Which is challenge for all them who are directly or indirectly concerned with these particular aspects *i.e.* integrated child development scheme.

Conclusion :

From this study it is very clear that need for educating mothers for promotion of proper infant feeding practices and other aspects of child care have also been felt necessary. In spite of Anganwadi centers, TV programs, News papers and all other medias disseminating information on child development, still need of education of nutrition and child development was observed strongly. It is also suggested to offer extension services giving message of improved child rearing practices at Rural and family level. Health education of parents who performs the decision making role in the community needs to be intensified. The package of functional literacy should be given to the target group. Hence it can be concluded that ICDS scheme is under utilized by the community and required immediate attention by ICDS authorities, social workers, extension workers, health authorities.

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