

**PROBLEMS FACED BY THE WORKING MOTHERS IN EXCLUSIVE
BREAST FEEDING AND THEIR COPING STRATEGIES**

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ABSTRACT

A descriptive cross sectional survey was conducted to assess the problems faced by the working mothers with 0-6 months old child in exclusive breast feeding and their coping strategies in Vinayaka Mission Institutions, Salem from 2.11.07 to 24.11.07. Purposive sampling technique was used to collected data from 45 mothers through semi-structure interview schedule.

Demographic characteristic revealed that most (76%) of mothers were in the age group of 21-30 years, 56% of mother had 5-6 months old infant, 47% of mother were post graduate where as 51% of mother were health personnel. Most of (82%) them were Hindus and 60% of them from joint family, 53% of mother were residing within 5-10 km area and almost all (90%) of mothers were on general duty and 62% of them going to work for 6-8 hours. Almost all (91%) of mother's continuing breast-feeding during working hours and 82% of the mothers were facing problems related to exclusive breast feeding. Majority (64.4%) of them had problems of going to home and feed the child during working hours whereas 48.8% of working mothers had problem of expressed breast milk, 31.11% of mother had the expressed breast milk storing problem, 51.1% of mother had problem of insufficient breast milk and 4.4% of mothers stated that they did not get family support during working hours.

Significant association was found between going to home and feed the child and problem related to expressed breast milk with age of mother. There was significant association between Insufficient expressed breast milk for child and distance of working place, There was significant association between storing the expressed breast milk and Pattern of work, There was significant association between going to home and feed the child and working hours and there was no

significant association between problems and age of her child, education, occupation, religion, type of family.

Keywords: problems faced by the working mothers, exclusive breast feeding, coping strategies, expressed breast milk.

Introduction and back ground

The human brain and the child have to grow very fast in the first two year of life. Breast feed provides complete nutrition for 6 months of life and continues to be an important source of nutrition in second year of life (IPA, 2006).

Breast-feeding practices at a glance , Initiation of breast-feeding (BF) within one hour: 1.7%, Initiation of BF within 1-4 hour: 15%, Incidence of giving Pre-lacteal feed: 97.8%, Exclusive BF 0-3 months: 18.3%, Exclusive BF 4-6 months: 3.4%, Complementary feeding 6-9 months: 83.3% (Gulati Rajinder, 2004)

Exclusive breastfeeding is the practice of feeding only breast milk (including expressed breast milk) and allows the baby to receive vitamins, minerals or medicines. Water, breast-milk substitutes, other liquids and solid foods are excluded (Singh Girish, 2006).

The exclusive breast-feed babies are likely to have better weight gain because the child will drink more milk when thirst.(Singh Meharban, 2004),

Working women have many reasons for stopping early breast feeding including working place, working time, not secreting enough milk, nipple and breast pain, poor latching to the nipple by the infant, lack of support from friend and family. (M. Jane Helng, 2004),

Sixteen in every 100-latching mother (16.2%) stopped breastfeeding because they went back to work and got busy. But mother can continue breastfeeding even after going back to work expressed feeding. (Estrella F. Palafox, 2004).

A descriptive study was carried out to find out the problems faced by the working mothers in exclusive breast feeding and their coping strategies In Vinayaka Mission Institutions, Salem.

Objective of the Study

To assess the

- problems faced by the working mother in exclusive breast feeding.
- coping strategies of working mother.

Null hypotheses were formulated and Extensive review was made of literature regarding Introduction Meaning of breast-feeding, importance of exclusive breast-feeding, composition of breast milk, prelacteal feeding, supplement feeding, problems of working mothers in exclusive breast-feeding.

Material and Methods

Research Approach and Design:

Descriptive survey approach was used to collect data from working mother, about Exclusive breast-feeding.

Setting of the study

The study was conducted in Vinayaka Mission Institutions such as Hi-tech hospital, medical college, nursing college, homeopathic college, engineering college, Physiotherapy College, dental college and Pharmacy College.

Population

The exclusive breast feeding working mothers who were working in Vinayaka Mission Institution

Sample :

The exclusive breast feeding working mother's who were working in Vinayaka Mission Institution Salem.

Sample size

The sample sizes were 45 exclusive breast-feeding working mother

Sampling Technique : Non-probability purposive sampling technique were used to select the sample

Sample Selection Criteria

Mothers who

- had child below six months of age
- were working in Vinayaka mission Institution, Salem
- were willing to participate in the study
- was be available during the period of data collection
- were continuing breast feeding on Job

Validity:

The content validity of the tool was established in consultation with guide & research committee members.

Permission from the concerned authority

Prior to collection of the data, permission was obtained from the concerned authority and sampling unit.

Finding and discussion

Most of exclusive breast feeding working mother were in the age group of 21-30 years and having 5-6 month child were post graduate in that most of professional health personnel and belonged to Hindu religion or living in joint family most of mother were residing at 5-10k.m. form working place and majority of them going to general duty for 6 – 8 hours. Most of mothers had exclusive breast feeding problem and adopting positive coping strategies.

Table 1: Percentage wise distribution of various problems faced by working mothers in exclusive breast-feeding.

Problems faced by the working mothers	No.	Percentage
Going to home and feed the child during working hours	29	64.4
Related to expressed breast milk	22	48.8
Storing the expressed breast milk	14	31.1
Insufficient expressed breast milk for child	23	51.1
No family support during working hours	2	4.4

Almost all (91%) of mother's continuing breast-feeding during working hours and in this 82% of mothers facing problem. Majority (64.4%) of mothers had problems of going to home and feed the child during working hours.

- ❖ Problem of going to home and feed the child during working hours of exclusive breast-feeding working mother's shows that highest percentage (62%) of mothers given expressed breast milk
- ❖ Problem of expressed breast milk of exclusive breast feeding working mothers shows that almost all 91% of working mother given artificial milk
- ❖ Problem in storing the expressed breast milk of exclusive breast feeding working mother shows that highest (46.6%) percentage of mother storing at room temp
- ❖ Problem of expressed breast milk is insufficient for child highest percentage (45.4%) of working mothers using cow's milk
- ❖ Problem that family member not supporting to mother during working hours majority (67%) of working mothers were send the child to relatives house and some of them appointed a servant for caring the child

Association between the problems of exclusive breast feeding working mother with demographic variable reveal that there was significant association between going to home and

feed the child and problem related to expressed breast milk with age of mother, There was significant association between Insufficient expressed breast milk for child and Distance of working place, There was significant association between storing the expressed breast milk and Pattern of work,

There was significant association between going to home and feed the child and working hours and there was no significant association between problems and age of her child, education, occupation, religion, type of family. Hence, the research hypothesis rejected.

Conclusion

Most of mothers had exclusive breast feeding problems and adopting positive coping strategies.

Recommendations

Based on the finding the following recommendation have been made for further study

- A study can be conducted to compare problem of exclusive breast feed working mother and non-working mother.
- A study can be conducted to find out the attitude of the family members toward exclusive breast feeding working mothers.

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50 – 51

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