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BOOK OF ABSTRACT

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Knowledge, attitude and practice on complementary feeding in mothers with children under 2 years – a study in selected PHM areas in Batticaloa

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Abstract

Background: Malnutrition is a major health problem in developing countries. Children aged 6-24 months are more vulnerable to malnutrition. Exclusive breast feeding for six months followed by complementary feeding, along with breast feeding is vital for proper growth and development of a children. Aim of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitude and practice regarding complementary feeding among mothers of children aged 6-24 months in Public Health Midwives areas with high prevalence of malnutrition in Batticaloa.

Methodology: A cross sectional descriptive study was conducted among 284 mothers of children aged 6-24 months in PHM areas with high prevalence of malnutrition in Batticaloa MOH. Samples were selected by simple random sampling. Data were collected using a pretested questionnaire. The association of knowledge and practice with the demographical factors was assessed by chi square test. Attitude is given as descriptive data.

Results: Total of 284 were recruited for this study. The correct knowledge of initiation of complementary feeding was found in 72.9%. The proportion of those who had knowledge about impact of late initiation of complementary feeding was 79%. Overall knowledge of complementary feeding was satisfactory (53.9%), and that was associated with high level of educated mothers and economic status. Overall attitude toward complementary feeding is positive. Only 49%

were practiced correct frequency of introducing new food per week. Only 4.5% gave adequate amount during illness. Overall practice was satisfactory only in 46% and associated with economic status.

Conclusion: Half of the mothers' overall knowledge regarding complementary feeding was satisfactory but overall practice was unsatisfactory. Education level of mothers and monthly income were significantly associated with complementary feeding. It is essential to give accurate information and education about complementary feeding to prevent malnutrition and improve the health status of children. Education of mothers during antenatal visits and immunization session should be carried out at community level.

Keywords: Complementary feeding, Breast feeding, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, Malnutrition.