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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### A STUDY TO ASSESS THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BELIEFS INFLUENCING BREAST FEEDING PRACTICES AMONG PRIMI POSTNATAL MOTHERS IN SELECTED URBAN AREA

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#### ABSTRACT

Breast milk is not only the best but is also a must for the babies. Especially exclusive breast feeding during first few months of life is important as it reduces the risk factors for the infant mortality and the morbidity rate. WHO estimates that 1.5 million of infant's life can be saved each year through increased breast feeding. Although the health benefits of breastfeeding are well established, early introduction of formula remains a common practice. Cultural beliefs and practices can have a important impact on breastfeeding. Scientific research studies conducted during the last three decades have clearly proved that breastfeeding provides the most suitable nutrition for an infant. However in India, breastfeeding is inadequately practiced due to prevailing misconceptions and cultural taboos. This study assesses the socio-cultural beliefs influencing breastfeeding practices among 100 primi postnatal mothers in selected UPHC of selected area. In this study, convenient sampling was adopted. A Likert type belief scale were used level.

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## INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is not only the best but is also a must for the babies. Especially exclusive breast feeding during first few months of life is important as it reduces the risk factors for the infant mortality and the morbidity rate. WHO estimates that 1.5 million of infant's life can be saved each year through increased breast feeding. Although the health benefits of breastfeeding are well established, early introduction of formula remains a common practice. Cultural beliefs and practices can have a important impact on breastfeeding. Scientific research studies conducted during the last three decades have clearly proved that breastfeeding provides the most suitable nutrition for an infant. However in India, breastfeeding is inadequately practiced due to prevailing misconceptions and cultural taboos. This study assesses the socio-cultural beliefs influencing breastfeeding practices among 100 primi postnatal mothers in selected UPHC of selected area. In this study, convenient sampling was adopted. A Likert type belief scale were used level.

#### Objective of the study

- To assess socio-cultural beliefs among primi postnatal mothers.

- To find out association between socio-cultural beliefs regarding breast feeding Practices among primi postnatal mothers with selected socio-demographic Variables.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research approach indicates the procedure for conducting the study. It is concerned with the overall framework for conducting the study." The research approach was selected by keeping in mind the objectives of the study. The researcher have undertaken this study to assess socio cultural beliefs regarding breast feeding practices in primi postnatal mothers so the researcher adopted Descriptive research approach for this study.

The research study was conducted in selected UPHC of selected area with 100 samples using Likert type belief scale, as the study is descriptive study. Validity was established by the experts. The Pilot study was conducted to check the feasibility of the study. The reliability of the tool was done using chi square was found to be ( $r = 0.008$ ) the tool was found reliable. The Data collection was done on 100 samples by convenient sampling Method from the selected samples from selected UPHC 126 area. The collected data was tabulated in the master sheet and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

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## RESULTS

The result reveals that 65(65%) of mothers were in the age group of 18-22 years; 33 (33 %) 23-27 years; and (2.0%) 28-32years. 45(45.0%) belong to Hindu; 2(2.0%) Muslim, 6(6.0%) Christian, 47(47.0%) of the respondents from the other caste, 7 (7.0%) belonged to nuclear family; and 93(93.0%) belonged to a joint family. 14(14.0%) monthly income below Rs.5000; 83(83.0%) between Rs. 5001-10000 and 3(3.0%) above Rs, 10,000. Majority of mothers 52(52.0%) have completed their education in primary school; 39(39.0%) middle school; 4 (4.0%) higher school and higher secondary, 5(5.0%)were illiterate. 65(65.0%) subjects unemployed; 26(26.0%) were self-employed, was9(9.0%) were private employees. 94 (94.0%) were receiving the information from elders in the family; 5(5.0%) from friends; 1(1.0%) from mass media. In aspect wise analysis regarding positive belief whole the samples believes that they have to feed every 2-3 hourly and 98% of believes that breast milk is an ideal source for babies, green vegetable is an ideal source for mother, 77% of mothers do regular activities during lactation, 83% of mothers agreed that family problems have adverse effect on milk production and colostrum's have rich nutritive value and should be given to the child. In aspect wise analysis regarding negative belief 93% of mothers believes that honey and sugar water should be given before feed, 67% believed that early breast feed induces milk production, 91% believed they will be cursed by menstrual women, 88% of 127mothers feeding in front of strangers affects milk production, 67% believed that their right breast contains water and left milk. The ( $\chi^2=2.92$ ) in age, in religion ( $\chi^2=2.90$ ), in type of family calculated ( $\chi^2=2.42$ ) in family monthly income Calculated  $\chi^2$  value is 33.50. Education of the mother Calculated ( $\chi^2=35.8$ ). Regarding occupation ( $\chi^2=11.08$ ); in Source of information calculated ( $\chi^2=5.07$ ). Demographic factors like age, religion, type of family, source of information and occupation the calculated value are lower than table value so it was found as not significant at 0.05 levels. Demographic factors like monthly income and education status the calculated value are higher than table value so it was found as significant at 0.05 levels.

## Conclusion

The study was aims at assessing the socio cultural beliefs regarding breast feeding practices among primi postnatal mothers. In this study, the conceptual framework is developed on the basis of review of literature, clinical and community experience of the investigator. The conceptual framework of the study is based on health belief model. According to this model it gives an insight into connection between the way a person sees his or her state of health, illness, and treatment. The health belief model is a psychological model that attempts to explain and predict health behaviours. This is done by focusing on the attitude and beliefs of individuals. This model addresses the relationship between a person's beliefs and behaviour.

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