KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF MOTHERS ON OPTIMUM INFANT FEEDING IN KHARTOUM SUDAN

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Abstract

Infant feeding; the most beneficial form of feeding children in their early life is of great importance as a determinant of child wellbeing as well as setting roots for better health in adulthood.

This study was a community based randomized study. It was conducted in Khartoum Province in three different areas, Al-Riadh (urban elite), Al-Salama (peri-urban moderate) and Mayo (peri-urban poor).

The study was designed and conducted in order to evaluate infant feeding practices among mothers in Khartoum, to evaluate their knowledge and attitude about the optimum infant-feeding practices. 435 children were included in the study, 137 from Al-Riadh, 146 from Al-Salama and 152 from Mayo.

Breast-feeding was practiced by (96.1%) of the population mothers, Breast-feeding initiation was early in 61.1%, Colostrum feeding rate was also high being 88.7%. Most mothers (90.2%) fed their children on demand.

The main mode of feeding practiced by the mothers during infancy was: breast-feeding in (58.6%), (19.1%) were artificially fed while (22.3%) were given mixed feeding.

Exclusive breast-feeding for at least 4 months was practiced by only (45.9%) of the population, early supplementation before the age of two weeks was a common practice in (34.0%), (52.0%) were given complementary feeding during the first four months of life, The main complementary feeds offered was herb extract and juices (43.8%), (21.2%) were given cow milk, (15.0%) were given goat milk, 27 (12.0%) received formula milk, (8.0%) were given a variety of other supplements such as milk cream, boiled rice, asida, custard and so on; feeding bottles were used by (38.9%) while (61.1%) used cups and spoons in giving fluids.

Weaning was gradual in most children (63.9%), sudden weaning mostly due to a new pregnancy

Regarding optimum breast feeding practices, knowledge of mothers was good in (52.2%), while attitude score was good in (72.2%) practice score was good in (80%), Gratifying was the discovery that mothers score on attitude towards breast-feeding was good in (72.2%), average in 71 (16.3%) and poor in a minority of (11.5%). The practices of mothers were good in a majority (80.0%), average in (12.2%) and poor in (7.8%).