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KNOWLEDGE ON WEANING PRACTICES AMONG MOTHERS AT SELECTED HOSPITALS OF MANGALURU: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Weaning is the nutritional practice that helps to improve the nutritional status of the baby. Weaning refers to the period during which an infant gradually becomes accustomed to food other than milk. Weaning too early may cause baby at higher risk of developing digestive disorders and allergies to some foods. So there is a necessity to gain adequate knowledge by the mother about weaning practices. Hence an attempt has been made by the investigators to assess the knowledge on weaning practices among mothers at selected hospitals of mangaluru. Statement of the problem "A study to assess the knowledge on weaning practices among mothers at selected hospitals of mangaluru". **Objectives of the Study:** The objectives of the study are

1. To assess the knowledge on weaning practices among mothers.
2. To find the association between knowledge on weaning practices and selected demographical variables.

Methods: Non experimental descriptive research design was considered as appropriate design for the study. The setting of the study is Pediatric OPD, postnatal ward and pediatric wards of selected hospitals of Mangaluru. The participants of the study comprises of mothers of infants aged upto 6 months to 1 year, who are willing to participate in the study and who are available at the time of study. The measurements used for the study is demographic variables and knowledge questionnaire. **Result:** For achieving the research result, the collected data must be processed and analyzed in an orderly coherent fashion. The term analysis means the computation of certain measures that exist among the data collection of 100 mothers of infants regarding knowledge on weaning practices. The data collection was done using structured knowledge questionnaire. The collected information was organized, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Distribution of baseline characteristics of mothers in terms of frequency and percentage n=100

SI. No.	Demographic variables	f	%
1	**Mother's age:**		
	<20	5	5.0
	20-24	38	38.0
	25-29	45	45.0
	30-34	12	12. 0
2	**Religion:**		
	Hindu	36	36.0
	Muslim	55	55.0
	Christian	9	9.0
	Others	-	-
3	**Number of children:**		
	One	42	42.0
	Two	47	47.0
	More than two	11	11.0
4	**Gender:**		
	Male	50	50.0
	Female	50	50.0

5	**Type of family:**		
	Joint	49	49.0
	Nuclear	51	51.0
6	**Education :**		
	No formal education	17	17.0
	Primary school	31	31.0
	High school	31	31.0
	Puc	18	18.0
	Graduate	3	3.0
7	**Occupation :**		
	Home maker	82	82.0
	Sedentary worker	3	3.0
	Government employee	8	8.0
	Private employee	4	4.0
	Self employed	3	3.0
8	**Socio economic status :**		
	APL	50	50.0
	BPL	50	50.0
9	**Information received about weaning during immunization:**		
	Yes	46	46.0
	No	54	54.0
10	**Age at weaning started:**		
	<6 month	23	23.0
	At 6 month	45	45.0
	>6 month	32	32.0
11	**Reason for early weaning:**		
	Working mother	17	17.0
	Lack of knowledge	19	19.0
	Inadequate breast milk secretion	23	23.0
	Family elders advice to start early	23	23.0
	Medical condition of the infant	10	10.0
	Any other	8	8.0
12	**Reason for delayed weaning:**		
	Did not know exactly when to start	15	15.0
	Mother feels that her milk is enough for baby	31	31.0
	Family elders tell not to give before one year	38	38.0
	Mother feels child may not be able to digest it	6	6.0
	Mother did not try as child had no teeth	2	2.0
	Any other	8	8.0
13	**Ideal age to start solid foods:**		
	6 Month	24	24.0
	8 Month	37	37.0
	10 Month	25	25.0
	12 Month	14	14.0

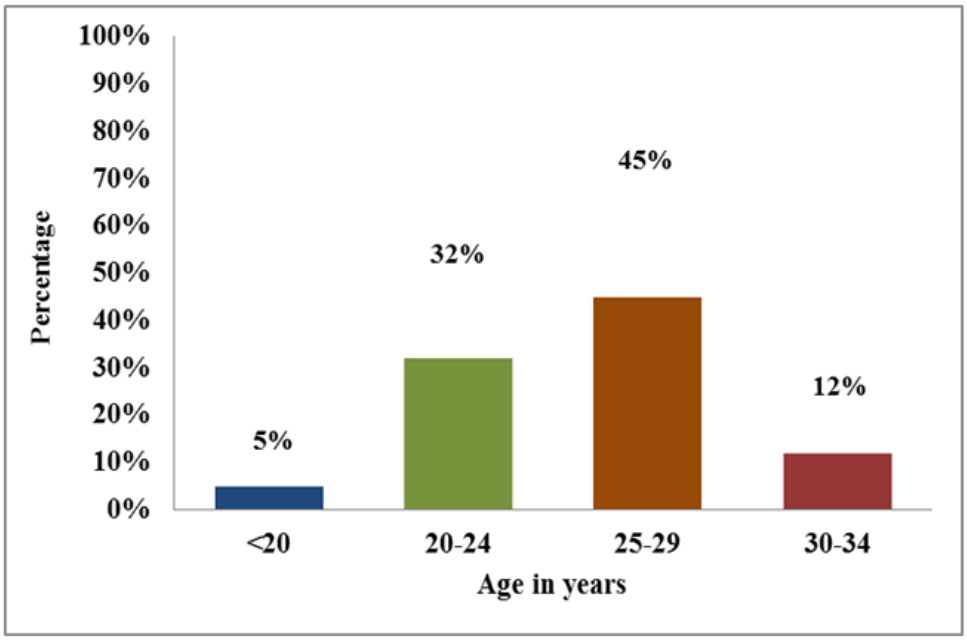

Figure 2: Bar diagram showing distribution of subjects as per the age.

Distribution of subjects as per their age revealed that majority of the subjects was in age group of 25-29 years, 32% of them belong to 20-24 years of age, 12% of them belong to 30-34 years of age, and remaining 5% were in the age group of <20 years.

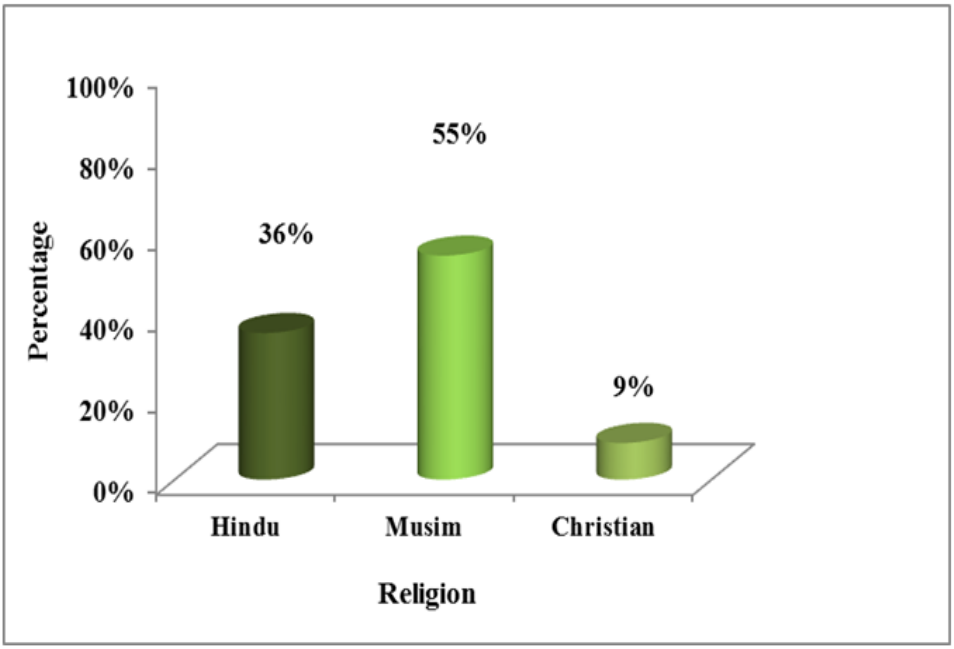

Figure 3: Cylindrical diagram showing religion of the subjects.

Distribution of the subjects as per religion indicates that majority (55%) of the subjects are muslims, 36% of the subjects are hindus, and 9% of the subjects are Christians.

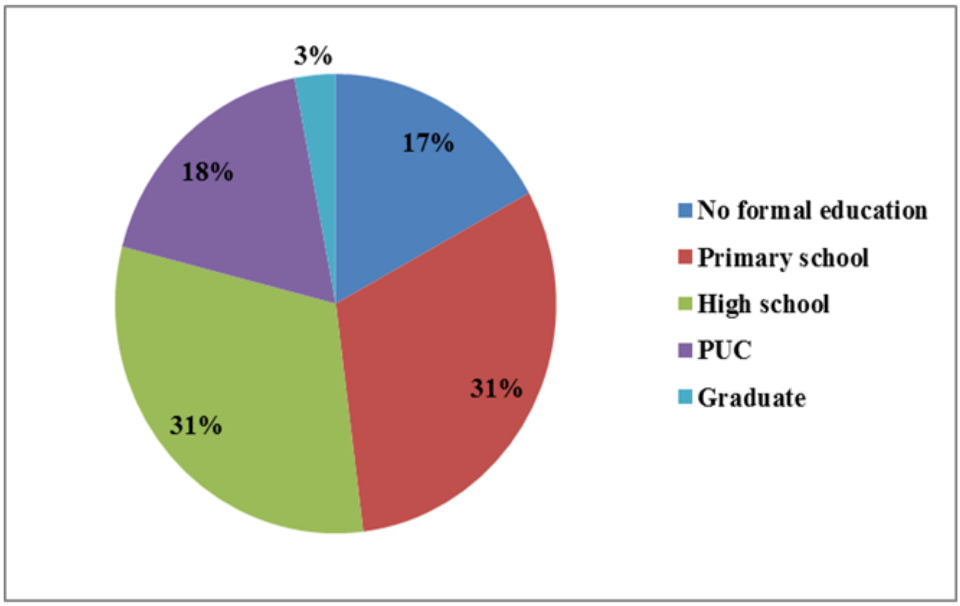

Figure 4: Pie diagram showing education of the subjects.

Distribution of subjects as per education indicates that majority of the subjects (31%) have the education at primary school level as well as high school level, 18% of the subjects have the education at PUC level, 17% of the subjects have no formal education and only 3% of the subjects are graduate.

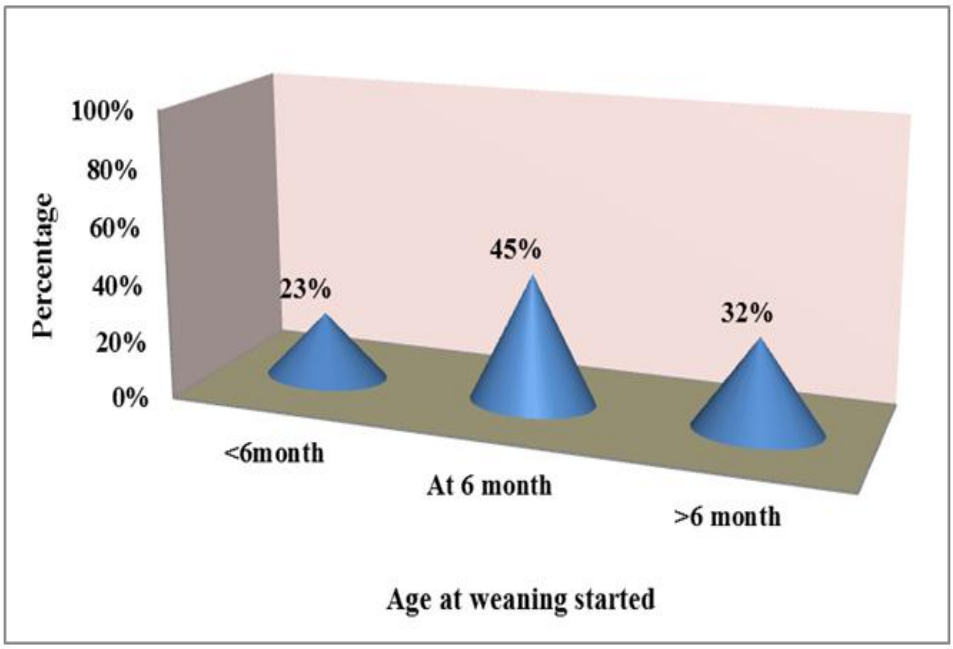

Figure 5: Cone diagram showing age at weaning started for the child of subject.

Distribution of subjects as per age at weaning started for the child indicates that majority (45%) of the subjects started weaning at 6 month, 32% of the subjects started weaning at the age of above 6 month, only 23% of the subjects started weaning at the age of below 6 month.

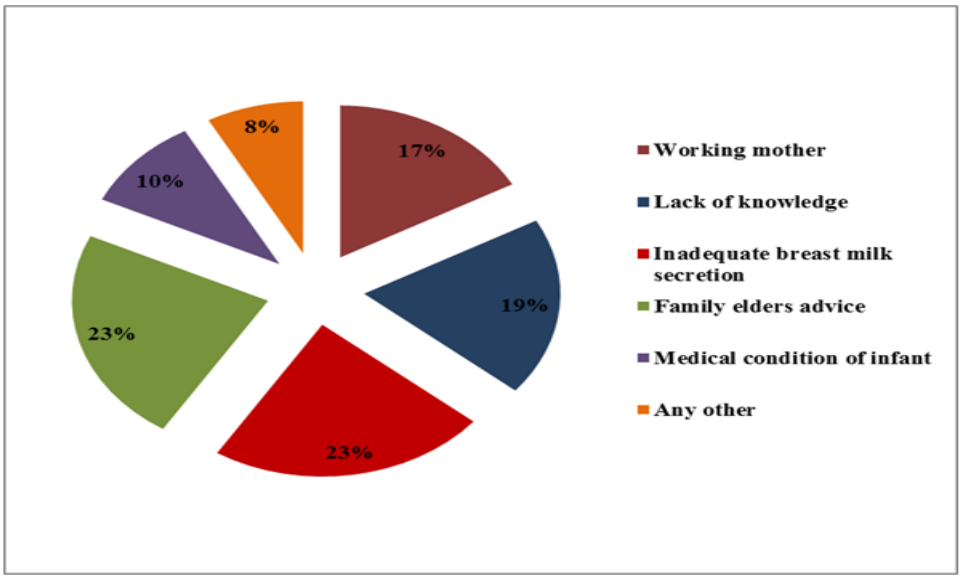

Figure 6: Pie diagram showing reason for early weaning for the child of the subject.

Distribution of subjects as per the reason for early weaning for the child indicates that (23%) of the subjects started early weaning because of inadequate breast milk secretion, 23% of the subjects started early weaning because of family elders advice, 19% of the subjects started early weaning because of lack of knowledge, 17% of the subjects started early weaning as they are working mother, 10% of the subjects started early weaning because of medical condition of the infant and 10% of subjects started early weaning because of other reasons.

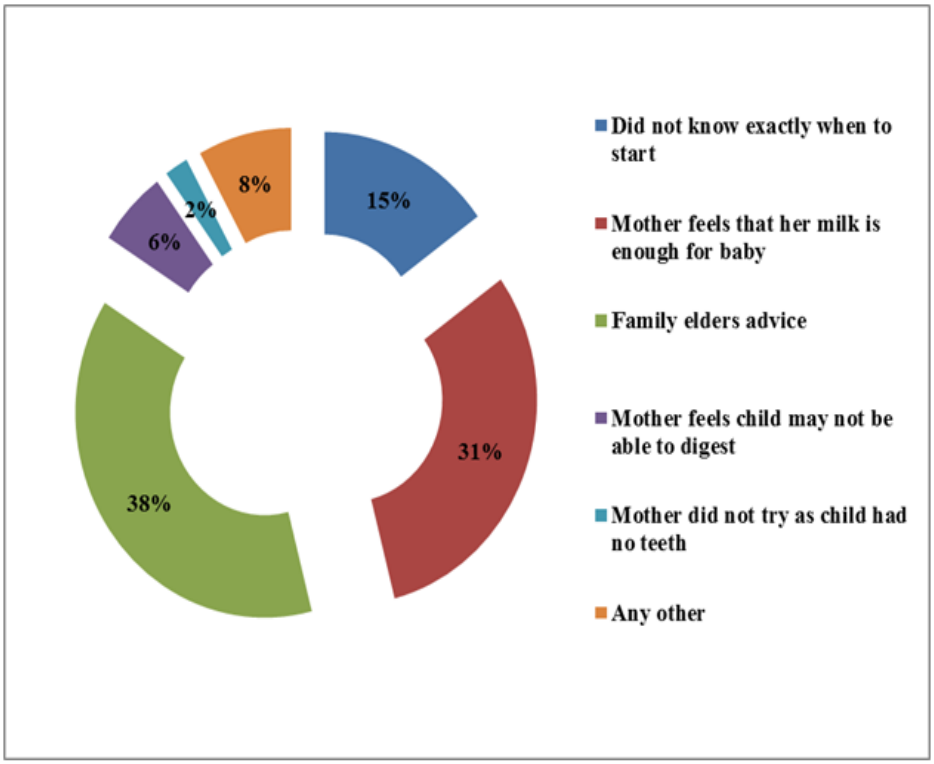

Figure 7: Pie diagram showing reason for delayed weaning for the child of the subjects.

Distribution of subjects as per the reason for delayed weaning for the child indicates that (38%) of the subjects delayed the weaning because of family elders advice, 31% of subjects delayed the weaning because they feels that her milk is enough for baby, 15% of the subjects delayed the weaning because they did not know exactly when to start, 8% of the subjects delayed the weaning because of other reasons, 6% of subjects delayed the weaning because they feels that child may not be able to digest it, only 2% of subjects did not try as child had no teeth.

Association between knowledge of mothers regarding weaning practices and baseline characteristics
n = 100

Sl No	Demographic Variable	Adequate (≥8)	Inadequate (<8)	χ^2	Df	p- value
1	**Mothers age:**			6.09	3	0.10
	<20	0	5			
	20-24	18	20			
	25-29	13	32			
	30-34	5	7			
2	**Religion:**			4.04	2	0.13
	Hindu	12	24			
	Muslim	18	37			
	Christian	6	3			
3	**Number of children:**			1.57	2	0.45
	One	17	25			
	Two	14	33			
	more than two	5	6			
4	**Gender:**			0.69	1	0.40
	Male	16	34			
	female	20	30			
5	**Type of family:**			3.73	1	0.05*
	Joint	13	36			
	nuclear	23	28			
6	**Education:**			19.45	4	0.001*
	No formal education	2	15			
	Primary school	6	25			
	High school	14	17			
	PUC	11	7			
	Graduate	3	0			
7	**Occupation:**			8.38	4	0.07
	Home maker	30	52			
	Sedentary worker	1	2			
	Government employee	0	8			
	Private employee	3	1			
	Self employed	2	1			
8	**Socio economic status:**			2.34	2	0.30
	BPL	15	35			
	APL	21	29			
9	**Information received about weaning during immunization:**			3.01	2	0.22
	Yes	13	33			
	No	23	31			
10	**Age at weaning started:**			0.89	3	0.82
	<6 month	9	14			
	At 6 month	15	30			
	>6 month	12	20			
11	**Reason for early weaning**:			6.54	5	0.25
	Working mother	5	12			
	Lack of knowledge	4	15			
	Inadequate breast milk secretion	13	10			
	Family elders advice to start early	8	15			
	Medical condition of the infant	3	7			
	Any other	3	5			
12	**Reason for delayed weaning:**			12.62	5	0.02*
	Did not know exactly when to start	2	13			
	Mother feels that her milk is enough for baby	12	19			
	Family elders tell not to give before one year	12	26			
	Mother feels child may not be able to digest it	4	2			
	Mother did not try as child had no teeth	0	2			
	Any other	6	2			
13	**Ideal age to start solid foods for the baby:**			1.04	3	0.75
	6 month	10	14			
	8 month	12	25			
	10 month	0	15			
	12 month	4	10			

*=Significant

DISCUSSION

The present study intents to assess the knowledge on weaning practices among mothers at selected hospitals of Mangaluru.

The following of the study are discussed under the following parts.
Section 1: Description of Baseline characteristics of the sample.
Section 2: Analysis of knowledge of the mothers regarding weaning practices.
Section 3: Association between knowledge of mothers regarding weaning practices and selected demographic variables.

Section 1: The study result shows that, majority (45%) of mothers were in the age group of 25-29 years. Most of the (55%) sample were Muslims. Majority (47%) of the mothers were having two children. Gender of the babies were equal (both male & female 50%). Most of the (51%) samples are belongs to nuclear family. Majority (31%) had primary and high school education. Most of the (82%) were home makers. Samples were belongs to both BPL & APL (50%). Majority of the (54%) mothers did not get information regarding weaning during immunization. Most of the (45%) mothers started weaning at 6month. Inadequate breast milk secretion was the reason for early weaning in among 23% of the mothers. Among 38% mothers, the reason for delayed weaning was family elders tell not to give before one year. Less than half of the subjects (37%) reported that the ideal age to start solid food for the baby is 8months.

A study was conducted on feeding and weaning practices among working mothers and non-working mothers at Hariyana. The study result shows that working mothers started giving semi solids by 6 months and non-working mothers started giving these foods between 6-9 months of age. Also about 19% of non-working women fed their children directly with family diet.[15]

Section 2: The study result shows that 33.0% of mothers have poor knowledge, 66.0% of mothers have moderate knowledge and only 1.0% of mothers have excellent knowledge.

A descriptive research study was conducted to assess the level of knowledge regarding weaning practices among mothers of under five children in Poonchari village, Kancheepuram District, Tamilnadu, India. The study revealed that the number of mothers of under five children having moderate knowledge was 28(56%). Inadequate knowledge was (17.25%).[32]

Section 3: The study result shows that there is a significant association of knowledge of mothers regarding weaning practices with education.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of the study was to assess the knowledge on weaning practices among mothers of infants.

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of findings of the study:
The findings of the study revealed that, majority (45%) of mothers were in the age group of 25-29 years. Most of the (55%) sample were Muslims. Majority (47%) of the mothers were having two children. Gender of the babies were equal (both male & female 50%). Most of the (51%) samples are belongs to nuclear family. Majority(31%) had primary and high school education. Most of the (82%) were home makers. Samples were belongs to both BPL & APL (50%). Majority of the (54%) mothers did not get information regarding weaning during immunization. Most of the (45%) mothers started weaning at 6month. Inadequate breast milk secretion was the reason for early weaning in among 23% of the mothers. Among 38% mothers, the reason for delayed weaning was family elders tell not to give before one year. Less than half of the subjects (37%) reported that the ideal age to start solid food for the baby is 8months.

The grading of overall knowledge of mothers shows that 33.0% of mothers have poor knowledge, 66.0% of mothers have moderate knowledge, 1.0% of mothers have excellent knowledge. Most of the mothers have moderate knowledge (66.0).

The chi square test was used to find the association between knowledge and selected demographic variables. There is a significant association of knowledge of mothers regarding weaning practices with education at 0.05 level of significance.

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