

Exploratory Study to Assess the Cultural Practices Related to Infant Care among the Mothers

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Abstract: *Child and infancy period are culturally important during which there is strong adhere to traditional practices. The objective of this study was to determine the cultural practices among the mothers of the infants and to find out the association between cultural practices with selected socio-demographic variables. Materials and Methods.-A quantitative research approach with exploratory survey design was used. The sample size was 50 by using non-probability simple random sampling technique was adopted. Tool was used structure mixed questionnaire and interview technique was used. Collected data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Results: The percentage of the babies not feed with colostrums was 70%.Pre-lacteal feed given 98.33%.Initiation of breast feeding within one hour reported by 10% of mothers.5% babies bathed immediately after birth. Exclusive breast feeding in 26.60%.Majority of babies (97%) were applied kajal in the eyes. Application of cowdung on the cord was done in 5%.In the olden days, the clothes for infants weared were new as the baby newly comes in home.*

Keywords: Infant, Cultural practices, Mothers.

1. Introduction

Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving. [1]

Infant is a young, tender, bundle of joy who should be nurtured with utmost care from the very beginning to realize his or her potential in later stages of life. Children are a pride and strength of a nation and future torch bearers of their country. To protect them is the real investment for coming generation. Infants are vulnerable to many life threatening diseases due to immature immune system.[1] Cultural values, beliefs and attitudes affect in health and disease. That is why culture is a dynamic factor.[2] Chances of survival during first year of life depends upon many factors but socio cultural factors also play a part in the mortality in this population group. The cultural factors and practices such as delayed initiation of breastfeeding, delayed weaning, inadequate feeding, discrimination between girls and boys may be directly dependent on child mortality. Practices just after delivery and post delivery need attention. [3] Infant mortality rate is the most sensitive and reliable indicator which clearly shows the health care status of a country or region. The infant mortality rate of India was 44 per thousand live births [4]. As per National Family and Health Survey, it has been found out that the status of feeding practices that promote growth in a child is dismal. [5].A simple approach of health education, hands on training of mothers, counseling regarding various practices related to child rearing will give farfetched benefits than any other measures put together to lower the burden of deaths in early childhood which are directly related to unsafe practices[2].

Study was done to assess the infant care practices among mothers with infants aged up to 1 year. Feeding of colostrum, timing of initiation and duration of breastfeeding, umbilical cord care, and measures taken to prevent hypothermia of the newborn are important factors in health. According to sociocultural theories, child development differentiates in different social and cultural contexts. Culturally- specific beliefs and practices in each sociocultural context influence children's development in its unique way. This essay sets out to examine how Chinese children's developments in academic knowledge and temperament are impacted by culturally-specific child rearing in Chinese society. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory are applied to analyze the general practices, the assumptions, the beliefs and the upheld values of child rearing in China³.

Some of the practices followed are first bath of the baby by adding 40 stones or placing a needle to bathwater to babies, not cutting babies 1 nail until the babies were 40 days old, swaddling, removal of umbilical cord, Evil eye, time of breast feeding within one hour of delivery or 8 hours after delivery, wrapping babies with yellow fabric or 2 using lamps with yellow light etc in case of jaundice.

The mothers who are not equipped with sufficient knowledge about newborn care and using traditional child care methods may sometimes cause harm to their 2 infants and even cause handicaps in them. In our community women receive information from family members, elders and traditional birth attendants. Hence, these groups, expectant mothers and mothers of infants should be targeted with educational messages. Infant care, similar to other human behaviors, is influenced by cultural beliefs. Hence exploration of cultural 1 beliefs and practices of infant care is essential.⁴

Cultural practices and beliefs regarding bath.

The cultural practices and beliefs regarding bath revealed that highest percentage (149) 95% of the mothers massaged the baby with oil before bath and the lowest percentage (5)

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3% gave bath to the baby with milk and (5) 3% added a gold coin to the bath water of the baby.

Cultural practices and beliefs regarding feeding

The cultural practices and beliefs regarding feeding revealed that the highest percentage (83) 53% of the mothers gave home remedies for digestion and the lowest percentage (16) 10% of the mothers fed baby with milk mixed with "kumkumkesar".

Cultural practices and beliefs related to umbilical cord care. The cultural practices and beliefs related to umbilical cord care revealed that the highest percentage (87) 55% of the mothers applied ashes or soot or powder or dry cow dung on the umbilical cord of the baby and the lowest percentage (8) 5% made the fathers to place his on the baby's umbilical cord to invert it if the umbilical cord is not inverted.

Cultural practices and beliefs related to care during jaundice. The cultural practices and beliefs in care during jaundice revealed that the highest percentage (115) 73% of the mothers exposed the baby to sun light when the baby's skin turns yellow and the lowest percentage (10) 6% of the mothers dressed the baby with yellow clothes during jaundice.

Cultural practices and beliefs to prevent evil eye

The cultural practices and beliefs to prevent evil eye revealed that the highest percentage (129) 82% of the mothers applied Kajal on the baby's face to prevent bad eye and lowest percentage (99) 63% tied a thread with panchaloham to the baby.

Other cultural practices and beliefs related to infant care

Regarding the other cultural practices and beliefs, the highest percentage (92) 59% of the mothers believe that empty cradle should not be moved and the lowest percentage (5) 3% of the mothers placed the umbilical cord blood in baby's mouth and spread over the back. [5]

2. Need for the Study

Humans are cultural beings. We learn to communicate and understand our world through the context of our languages, traditions, behaviours, beliefs and values. Our cultural experiences and values shape the way we see ourselves and what we think is important. When individuals are part of a cultural group, we learn the ways of that culture (e.g., behaviour and beliefs), which enable us to feel like we belong to our community. Cultural perspectives also influence how we parent, how we understand children, how we help them grow up and how we teach them new skills[6]. This study examined the cultural beliefs and practices related to infant health and development in a group of first-generation, mothers' in India. Fifty mothers of infants aged 0–12 months participated in a structured mixed questionnaires, interview were conducted at their homes, with the collaboration of a female informant. Maternal responses were analysed using a thematic analysis approach. Two cultural models of the child were identified:

The first centred around the infants' physical health and well-being, and supports the idea of a 'pediatric' model

stressing the importance of survival, health and physical growth in order to protect babies from mortal diseases and environmental risks. The second model concerned the early attainment of personal and social autonomy, which mothers tended to promote by fostering infants' motor skills and adaptability in terms of attending to multiple caregivers (e.g. teachers at nursery school). Overall, maternal beliefs and practices largely reflected the traditional Indian culture, although some aspects were influenced by the ecology of the host society. Implications for research and clinical practice are discussed.⁷

At the end, the objective of the research is to put forth the partices that harmful to the infants.

3. Problem Statement

“An exploratory study to assess the cultural practices related to infant care among the mothers at selected sangli, miraj , kupwad corporation area.”

Research Objectives

- To assess existing cultural practices related infant care among the mothers.
- To find out the association between cultural practices with selected socio-demographic variables.

Assumptions

Mothers may follow unhealthy cultural practices,while giving infant care.

Operational Definations

Assess

In this study assess means collected the responses from mothers to questionnaire.

Cultural Practices

It refers to child care practices practiced as traditional method or family ideas .eg=putting kajal in eyes.

Infant Care

In this study refers to the care provided to infant (0-1year) by mother .eg. Feeding, bathing, dressing etc.

Mother

In this study woman who had son or daughter of age 0-1year.

Delimitation-

The study was only limited mothers of infant for infants. Exploratory survey was used. Interview conducted for mothers of infants.

Research Methodology

The methodology of research indicates the general pattern for organizing procedure for gathering valid & reliable data for an investigation.

Research Approach

According to our study, the Quantitative approach was used to select the as our aim, to assess the cultural practices related to infant care among the mothers at selected sangli, miraj, kupwad corporation area.

Research Design

Our overall plan for collecting and analyzing the data, included the exploratory survey.

Research Variable

- Cultural practices
- Infant care

Setting of Study

The study was conducted in selected areas of sangli, miraj, kupwad corporation area i.e urban areas of vijaynagar, samtanagar, wanlesswadi.

Population

In this study, included the population of mothers of the infants.

Sample

Selected Mothers of the infants.

Inclusion Criteria

Mothers who were available at home at the time of data collection .and given consent for study.

Exclusion Criteria

Those who were not available during data collection.

Sample Size

50 Mothers of the infants.

Sampling Technique

For this study, Non probability simple random sampling technique was adopted.

Data Collection Tool

Technique

Interview technique

Tool

Development of tool, means research

Two section;-

Section 1-demographic variables.

Section 2-d structured Mixed questionnaires.

Content Validity

To ensure the content validity of the prepared data collection tool, it was given to 16 experts.15 were been received. Experts from the field of-Midwifery nursing-3Psychiatric-3Pediatricnursing-Community health nursing-3Medical surgical nursing-3

Scoring system

Total 19 questions were conducted in interview.

- If answer is yes '1' score
- If answer is no '0' score

Reliability of Tool

- The reliability is the degree consistency or dependability with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure (Pilot & Hungler).
- The reliability of the tool was determined by mixed structured questionnaires.10% samples were used for

reliability. The karl-Pearson formula is used. The reliability coefficient "r" was found to be $r=0.92$,hence it was more than 0.7,tool found to bereliable.

Procedure of Data Collection

A formal permission was taken from lady medical officer of urban health centre, sangli, miraj, kupwad city corporation area. The study was conducted from 28 Dec to 04 Jan 2017. Interview technique was used with using structure mixed question and data was collected for 50 mothers of infant.

Plan for Data Analysis

Data was analyzed with using Microsoft excel statistical software SPSS-22.

Descriptive statistics: frequency, percentage to get the result and to achieve the objectives.

4. Major Findings of the Study

This study was organized & following results were observed: Knowledge related to cultural practices among the mother of infants was assessed, it was found 20%of mother had a good knowledge score, 30% infant mothers had average knowledge scored but60% of mothers did have poor knowledge about the practices carried on infants in the society. Comparison with the demographic variables was done, regarding gender, age, education, religion, type of family, age of infant, occupation & income. It was found that maximum 50% mothers was participating in the study who are aged between 20 to 30 years20%. The Majority 10% samples were graduating. Most of the samples were Hindu majority 35%, samples were live in joint family& 5000 to 10000 was majority income of families 18%the knowledge regarding cultural practices was assessed after the interview technique, it was found that there was an increase in the score 5% had an excellent knowledge score, which was (0%) in the conducted interview and some mother 20% had good knowledge score which was only30% or who had poor or average knowledge score which was previously 20% respectively.

It can be concluded that, the knowledge related to cultural practices among the mothers of infant is proven effective for the awareness during the care of cultural practices.

Based on the objectives the investigator tried to evaluate the knowledge of 50 samples & find out the awareness about the care during cultural practices among the mothers of infants.

Exploratory design was adopted, the samples were 50 selected by non probability simple random technique. The study conducted that about 20% of mothers had adequate knowledge for care during cultural practice. In the present study 50 samples were taken & non experimental design was used. In the pilot study, 10 samples were taken a small scale version. At the end, overall study have overcome to its goal that the awareness among the mothers of infant in the care of cultural practices.

There is a need for dissemination of information and education regarding optimal cultural practices and for protecting and promoting healthy practices. Involvement

mothers of the infants, elderly women in various activities is desirable as they all have an important role in initiation of carrying the cultural practices and the protection of infants during the practices.

The study can be replicated on a larger sample in different settings; and thereby findings can be generalized for a larger i.e. our samples are 50 for major finding in urban areas.

Comparative study may be undertaken in urban mothers to compare their socio-cultural beliefs which influence their cultural practices.

5. Nursing Implication

Nursing Practice

This study demonstrates to carry the culture practices on infant safely. Present study help the mother to carry safety during culture practices. The implication of the study are that, the practice of culture practices with precaution by the mothers. It also encourages about the information of culture in the society.

Nursing Education

The result of the study is to assess the cultural practices related to infant care among the mothers at selected Sangli, Miraj, Kupwad corporation area. Nursing facility must consider in this research to provide safe culture practices.

In Nursing Research

The result of the study contributes to the body of the knowledge of nursing. In highlight areas, which require future exploration? This research is very helpful. The conclusion & recommendations can be utilized for further studies in the same field.

6. Recommendation

- 1) Studies can be done find out effect of a culture practices on infant by the mothers.
- 2) Study can be conducted to know the condition of the child infant during the culture practice.

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