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A COMPARATIVE STUDY TO ASSESS KNOWLEDGE REGARDING COMPLEMENTARY FEEDING AMONG MOTHERS AND FATHERS OF CHILDREN AT SELECTED RURAL AREA BHILWARA

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ABSTRACT

Complementary feeding is a crucial component of infant and young child nutrition, beginning at six months of age along with continued breastfeeding. Adequate knowledge of parents regarding appropriate complementary feeding practices plays a significant role in preventing malnutrition and promoting optimal growth and development in children. The researcher has personally experienced and witnessed a low knowledge level of fathers regarding complementary feeding comparatively mothers.

Keywords: Complementary Feeding, Mother, Father

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INTRODUCTION

According WHO, Complementary feeding, the process of providing foods in addition to milk when breast milk or milk formula alone are no longer adequate to meet nutritional requirements, generally starts at age 6 months and continues until 24 months of age. This is a developmental period when it is critical for children to learn to accept healthy foods and beverages and establish long-term dietary patterns. It also coincides with the peak period for risk of growth faltering and nutrient deficiencies.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"A Comparative Study To Assess The Knowledge Regarding Complementary Feeding Among Mothers And Fathers Of Children At Selected Rural Area Bhilwara"

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among mothers of children at selected rural area Bhilwara.
2. To assess the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among fathers of children at selected rural area Bhilwara.
3. To compare the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among mothers and fathers of children at selected rural area Bhilwara.
4. To find out association between the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among mothers of children at selected rural area Bhilwara and their selected demographical variables.
5. To find out association between the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among fathers of children at selected rural area Bhilwara and their selected demographical variables.

METHODOLOGY

A comparative research design was adopted to assess the knowledge regarding complementary feeding among mothers and fathers at Dhamniya Gram Panchayat, Bhilwara. The study included 50 mothers and 50 fathers selected through convenient sampling. Data were collected using a validated socio-demographic Performa and 26 items structured knowledge questionnaire. Content validity was established by seven experts, and reliability of the tool was confirmed by using KR-21($r = 0.93$). The pilot study was conducted at Ralayata Gram Panchayat, Bhilwara. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis, with chi-square test, Unpaired 't' test applied at 0.05 LOS.

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Part A: Socio-demographic Performa. It consists of 6 items age, education, occupation, type of family, number of children, source of knowledge.

Part B: Self-administered knowledge questionnaire. A structured knowledge questionnaire was prepared, which consists of 26 items regarding knowledge of complementary feeding among mothers & fathers. The maximum obtainable score was 26. A right answer was given a score of one (1) and for a wrong answer or omitted question, a score of zero (0) was allotted.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The overall knowledge score of mothers, shows that 74% have average knowledge, 18% have good knowledge and 08% have poor knowledge. Same as the overall knowledge score of fathers, shows that 60% have average knowledge, 38% have poor knowledge and 02% have good knowledge. The **Unpaired 't'- Test** (t) value for the mean difference between mothers and fathers' knowledge is **4.857701**. The mean difference between mothers and fathers' knowledge is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance but not by chance. There was a significant association found between the knowledge of Mothers and the selected socio-demographic variable of **Education** (χ^2= 18.37), **occupation** (χ^2= 30.171) and **source of information** (χ^2= 19.042) at 0.05 level of significance. There was no significant association found between the knowledge of Mothers and their selected socio-demographic variables such as age, type of family, number of children, at 0.05 level of significance. There was a significant association was found between the knowledge of Fathers and the selected socio-demographic variable of **education** (χ^2=19.13), **number of children** (χ^2=13.520), and **source of information** (χ^2=15.533) at 0.05 level of significance. There was no significant association found between the knowledge of Fathers and their selected socio-demographic variables such as age, occupation, and type of family, at 0.05 level of significance.

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TABLE NO. 1 Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables of Mothers.

(N=50)

S.N.	Socio-Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Age (in years)	Less than 25	**20**	**40**
		25 – 30	**21**	**42**
		More than 30	**09**	**18**
2	Education	No any formal education	**00**	**00**
		Primary	**08**	**16**
		Secondary	**16**	**32**
		Sr. sec. or above	**26**	**52**
3	Occupation	Govt Job	**08**	**16**
		Private Job	**08**	**16**
		Business	**00**	**00**
		House wife	**34**	**68**
4	Type of family	Nuclear	**27**	**54**
		Joint	**23**	**46**
		Extended	**00**	**00**
		Single mother	**00**	**00**
5	No. of children's	1	**17**	**34**
		2	**21**	**42**
		More than 2	**12**	**24**
6	The source of information	Family, friends & relatives	**41**	**82**
		Mass media	**09**	**18**
		Training program	**00**	**00**
		Health team member	**00**	**00**

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TABLE NO. 2 Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic variables of Fathers.

(N=50)

S.N.	Socio-Demographic Variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Age (in years)	Less than 25	**13**	**26**
		25 – 30	**24**	**48**
		More than 30	**13**	**26**
2	Education	No any formal education	**00**	**00**
		Primary	**08**	**16**
		Secondary	**12**	**24**
		Sr. sec. or above	**30**	**60**
3	Occupation	Govt Job	**10**	**20**
		Private Job	**20**	**40**
		Business	**20**	**40**
		Unemployed	**00**	**00**
4	Type of family	Nuclear	**27**	**54**
		Joint	**23**	**46**
		Extended	**00**	**00**
		Single father	**00**	**00**
5	No. of children's	1	**16**	**32**
		2	**26**	**52**
		More than 2	**08**	**16**
6	The source of information	Family, friends & relatives	**34**	**68**
		Mass media	**16**	**32**
		Training program	**00**	**00**
		Health team member	**00**	**00**

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TABLE NO. 3 Mean, mean percentage, median, mode, and standard deviation of knowledge scores regarding complementary feeding among Mothers

(N=50)

S. N.	Area of knowledge	Max. Score	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
1	Knowledge regarding complementary feeding	26	17.12	17	16	3.345

INTERPRITATION- Table no. 3 reveals that the obtained overall mean (17.12), median (17), and mode (16) are found to be very close to each other with SD (3.345). The researcher can say that mothers have average knowledge regarding complementary feeding.

TABLE NO. 4 Mean, mean percentage, median, mode, and standard deviation of knowledge scores regarding complementary feeding among Fathers

(N=50)

S.N.	Area of knowledge	Max. Score	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
1	Knowledge regarding complementary feeding	26	13.8	14	17	3.307

INTERPRITATION- Table no. 4 reveals that the obtained overall mean (13.8), median (14), and mode (17) are found to be very close to each other with SD (3.307). The researcher can say that fathers have average knowledge regarding complementary feeding.

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TABLE NO. 5 Difference between knowledge scores regarding complementary feeding among Mothers and Fathers.

(N=50)

Difference between knowledge scores regarding complementary feeding among Mothers and Fathers.	Mean	Unpaired 't' Test: Two Sample for Mean	df	Tabulated value	L.O.S. @0.05
Knowledge score of mothers	17.04	4.857701	98	1.984467	S
Knowledge score of fathers	13.8				

INTERPRITATION- Table no.5 clearly states that the obtained Unpaired 't' Test: Two Sample for Mean for the difference between knowledge score of mothers and fathers is **4.857701** which shows a low level of knowledge of fathers comparatively mothers. However, it is found to be more than tabulated values (**1.984467**) at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that the difference between knowledge level of mothers and fathers is statistically significant by chance. Hence researcher fails to accept the Null Hypothesis i.e. H_{01}.

TABLE NO. 6 Association between knowledge regarding complementary feeding among Mothers and their selected socio-demographic variables

(N=50)

S. N.	Socio-Demographic Variables and Categories	Frequency (f)	Knowledge score			Chi-square (χ^2)	df	Tabulated value @ 0.05 LOS	
			Poor	Average	Good				
1	**Age (in years)**								
	Less than 25	20	1	15	4	3.6236	4	9.488	NS
	25 – 30	21	1	17	3				
	More than 50	09	2	05	2				

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	Total	50	4	37	9				
2	**Education**								
	No any formal education	00	0	00	0	18.371	4	9.488	S
	Primary	08	3	05	0				
	Secondary	13	1	12	0				
	Sr. Sec. or above	29	0	20	9				
	Total	50	4	37	9				
3	**Occupation**								
	Govt. Job	08	0	02	6	30.1718	4	9.488	S
	Private Job	08	0	05	3				
	Business	00	0	00	0				
	House Wife	34	4	30	0				
	Total	50	4	37	9				
4	**Type of family**								
	Nuclear	25	2	20	3	1.15	2	5.99	NS
	Joint	25	2	17	6				
	Extended	00	0	00	0				
	Single mother	00	0	00	0				
	Total	50	4	37	9				
5	**Number of children**								
	1	17	2	o3	3	4.5578	4	9.488	NS
	2	21	2	03	6				
	More than 2	12	0	11	0				

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	Total	50	4	37	9				
6	**Source of information**								
	Family, friends and relatives	42	4	35	3	19.0423	2	5.99	S
	Mass media	08	0	02	6				
	Training program	00	0	00	0				
	Health team member	00	0	00	0				
	Total	50	4	37	9				

INTERPRITATION- Table no. 6 clearly states that the obtained chi-square ($\chi^{2)}$ values for the association between knowledge regarding complementary feeding among Mothers and their socio-demographic variables of **education, occupation, source of information** are found to be greater than their respective tabulated values at 0.05 level of significance. So, there was a significant association between the level of knowledge and the variable of **education, occupation, source of information** at the 0.05 level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted i.e. H_2

TABLE NO. 7 Association between knowledge regarding complementary feeding among Fathers and their selected socio-demographic variables

(N=50)

S. N.	Socio-Demographic Variables and Categories	Frequency	Knowledge score			Chi-square (χ^2)	df	Tabulated value	Inference @ 0.05 LOS
			Poor	Average	Good				
1	**Age (in years)**								
	Less than 25	13	05	08	0	3.561	4	9.488	NS
	25 – 30	24	18	15	1				

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	More than 50	13	06	07	0				
	Total	50	19	30	1				
2	**Education**								
	No any formal education	00	00	00	0	19.1318	4	9.488	S
	Primary	08	06	02	0				
	Secondary	12	09	03	0				
	Sr. Sec. or above	30	04	25	1				
	Total	50	19	30	1				
3	**Occupation**								
	Govt. Job	10	01	08	1	7.411	4	9.488	NS
	Private Job	20	09	11	0				
	Business	20	09	11	0				
	Unemployed	00	00	00	0				
	Total	50	19	30	1				
4	**Type of family**								
	Nuclear	27	10	16	1	0.871	2	5.99	NS
	Joint	23	09	14	0				
	Extended	00	00	00	0				
	Single father	00	00	00	0				
	Total	50	19	30	1				
5	**Number of children**								
	1	16	02	14	0	13.5202	4	9.488	S
	2	26	12	14	0				
	More than 2	08	05	02	1				
	Total	50	19	30	1				
6	**Source of information**								

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	Family, friends and relatives	34	19	15	0	15.533	2	5.99	S
	Mass media	16	00	15	1				
	Training program	00	00	00	0				
	Health team member	00	00	00	0				
	Total	50	19	30	1				

INTERPRITATION- Table no. 7 clearly states that the obtained chi-square ($\chi^{2)}$ values for the association between knowledge regarding complementary feeding among Fathers and their socio-demographic variables of **education, number of children, source of information** are found to be greater than their respective tabulated values at 0.05 level of significance. So, there was a significant association between the level of knowledge and the variable of **education, number of children, source of information** at the 0.05 level of significance. It means there is an influence of **education, number of children, source of information** on knowledge regarding complementary feeding among Fathers. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted i.e. H_3

DISCUSSION

Findings of the present study regarding complementary feeding among mothers and fathers revealed that the mean score of mother's knowledge was 17.12, the standard deviation was 3.35, the mean score of father's knowledge was 13.8 and the standard deviation was 3.30. It was also revealed that 08% of mothers and 38% of fathers had poor knowledge, 74% of mothers and 60% of fathers had average knowledge and 18% of mothers and 02% of fathers had good knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The majority of Mothers and Fathers have average knowledge regarding complementary feeding. The difference between mothers' knowledge and fathers' knowledge, it was statistically significant.

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