

Feeding Practices of Preschool Children in Western Orissa I. Demographic Characters, Prelacteal Feed and Colostrum Rejection

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ABSTRACT The present paper reports the demographic characters of families, practices of giving prelacteal feed and colostrum rejection in newborns in different communities of western Orissa, which are parts of the comprehensive work undertaken by the author to study the various aspects of feeding practices. In general, Hindus dominated the population in all the communities (>94%), and sixty-two percent of rural families belonged to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. The percentage of mothers belonging to the middle income group was 48 in industrial and urban communities whereas seventy-seven percent of rural families belonged to the lower income group. The literacy percentage in rural mothers was 24 and it was the highest (93.5) in urban mothers. Around 10.5 percent of mothers in the industrial area, thirty-two percent in urban and four percent in rural had part-time or petty jobs. About seventeen percent of mothers in the rural community belonged to 15-20 years age-group against less than five percent in the industrial and urban community. The practice of giving the newborns some feed after birth and before initiation of breast-feeding was found to be widespread (100%) in all the communities. The percentage of mothers who discarded colostrum were 55, 50 and 86 in the industrial, urban and rural communities, respectively. The majority of mothers in favour of feeding the colostrum belonged to the educated class.