

## **Feeding Practices of Preschool Children in Western Orissa II. Breast-Feeding**

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**ABSTRACT** Studies on the breast-feeding and related practices among infant and preschool children of western Orissa reveals that breast-milk continue to occupy a place of pre-eminence in infant-feeding. Around eighty percent of mothers from industrial and urban communities and ninety percent from rural community initiated breast-feeding within 72 hours of birth and the percentages of mothers initiating breast-feeding within 24 hours of birth were 17.5, 26 and 31.5 in industrial, urban and rural communities respectively. The percentage of mother breast-feeding exclusive upto 3 months were 58.5, 45.5 and 10.5 against 79.5, 91 and 54.5 upto 6 months respectively. About 7.5 percent of rural mothers continued exclusive breast-feeding upto 12 months. The lesser duration of exclusive breast-feeding was more prevalent among educated and caste mothers whereas the total duration was beyond 2 years in seventy percent of rural children against twenty-eight percent industrial and thirty percent urban children. Literacy status, income level and caste had inverse relation with length of exclusive breast-feeding.