

Infant Feeding Practices and Beliefs in Working and Non-working Urban Lactating Mothers of Ludhiana

Rajbir Sachdeva, Paramjot Kaur and Jasvinder K. Sangha

Department of Foods and Nutrition, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana 141 004, Punjab, India

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ABSTRACT The present investigation was undertaken to assess infant feeding practices and beliefs of working (W) and non-working (NW) lactating mothers. A sample of 50 urban mothers of Ludhiana aged between 21-35 years from middle socio-economic group were divided equally into W and NW groups. The mean per capita monthly income was Rs. 1367 /- and Rs. 1670 /- in WG and NWG, respectively. Information regarding infant feeding practices was recorded during sixth and ninth month of location. The prelacteal feed mostly given to the infants was honey (60% in WG and 80% in NWG). Other prelacteal feeds were plain water and *Janam ghuti*. Majority of the mothers fed colostrums in WG (93.3%) and NWG (80%). All mothers of NWG continued to breast feed till nine months of age, whereas forty percent of WG discontinued before six months of age. The results of present study indicated that significantly ($p < 0.01$) higher number of subjects of WG fed their infants at fixed intervals. It was noted that initiation of supplementation was earlier in WG. Commercial supplements were preferred for their infants by WG. Common home-made supplements given were *Suji kheer*, rice kheer, biscuits etc. It was also observed that morbidity status of infants belonging to WG was found to be comparatively poor. Appropriate intervention measures should be taken to ensure continued success of lactation without deterioration in infant feeding practices in working lactating mothers.