

Status of Infant and Young Child Feeding in 49 Districts (98 Blocks) of India 2003



This document provides you the summary findings from a report "Status of Infant and Young Child Feeding in 49 districts of India: 2003" conducted by the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI). It provides a national picture of quantitative findings and a brief summary of qualitative behaviour study. In the end, the table shows District wise quantitative data.

Background

The World Health Organization and UNICEF jointly developed the *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding*, which recognizes appropriate infant feeding practices to be critical for achieving optimal nutrition, health and development of infants and young children.

India is one of the first countries that have taken lead in harmonizing the global recommendations on infant and young child feeding in its national legislation and policies. The Tenth Five-Year Plan 2003-2007 of government of India has for the first time formulated national and state specific targets to increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding during the first 6 months from around 40 %¹ to 80% initiation of breastfeeding within one hour to 50 % from 15 % and complementary feeding rate for 6-9 months old infants to 75 % from 33.5 %. The enactment of the *Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Amendment Act, 2003* is another step forward in harmonizing with the global

recommendations. The National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) in its policies addresses the issue of infant feeding and HIV through informed choices. It is now expanding to open PPTCT centers at district level. RCH-2 has planned to increase emphasis on this issue.

Recognizing this, Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) launched the initiative to stimulate such action in 2002. BPNI conducted a study on "Status of Infant and Young Child Feeding in 49 districts" (from 25 states and 3 UT's) through a well-trained district team. Data was collected from 8953 mothers and families of infant's 0- 9 months old using household surveys.

1. Approximate average of exclusively breastfed children during the first 6 months. As it is 55.2 % for <4 months 27.3% for 4-6 months). Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS-2) 1998-99

Who can use this?

This document will be very useful to programme managers and policy makers, NGOs working on child health, and development UN agencies; and all others to assist in strengthening IYCF policy and programme.

Findings of Quantitative Study

1. Initiation of breastfeeding

In this study, 28 percent of mothers initiated breastfeeding within one hour. Another 30 percent initiated within 1-4 hours and 42 percent started breastfeeding after 4 hours or more. (Fig. 1)

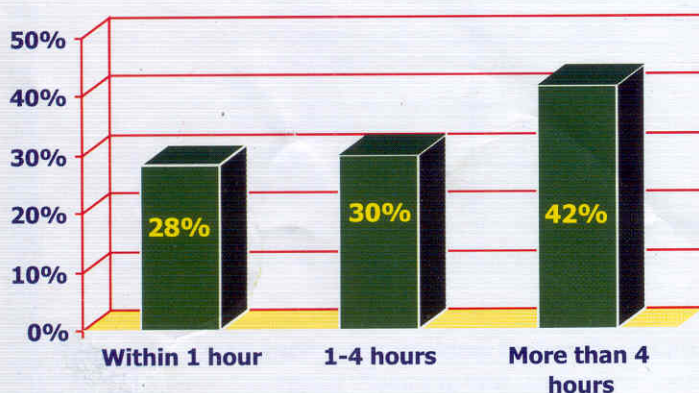


Fig. 1: Initiation of Breastfeeding within 1 hour

2. Pre-lacteal feeding and type of pre-lacteal feeds given to newborn

Around 49 percent of mothers gave pre-lacteal feeds to baby. Of the pre-lacteal feeds given to the newborns, the most common were honey (30%), followed by sugar water (20%) and plain water (14%).

3. Exclusive Breastfeeding

More than half of the children (54%) in the age group of 0-3 months are exclusively breastfed whereas this percentage is much lower (26%) for children in the age group of 4-6 months. Thus, only 39.7 % infants during the first 6 months are exclusively breastfed. (Fig. 2)

4. Bottle-feeding

As seen from above data, artificial feeding rate is quite high. It was interesting to note that the rate of bottle-feeding is not as significantly high (23%) during this period 0-6 months.

5. Continued breastfeeding period

In this study one third of the mothers planned to continue breastfeeding for a period less than 18 months, about half of them intended to continue breastfeeding for 18-24 months and only one fifth planned to continue breastfeeding beyond two years. During 6-9 months most mothers continued breastfeeding (98.6%).

6. Frequency of breastfeeding and night feeding

Majority of women (96.7%) breastfeed more than 5 times during the day and almost all practiced breastfeeding during night.

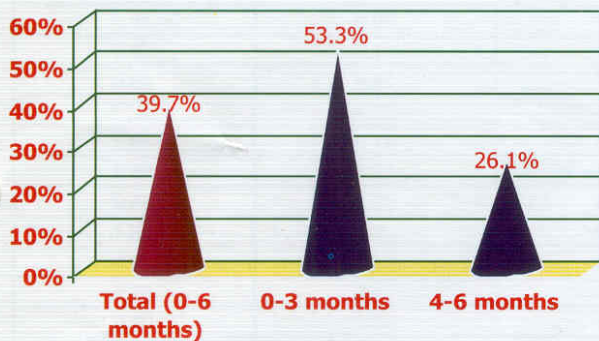


Fig. 2: Exclusive breastfeeding 0-6 months

7. Complementary feeding practices (ages 6-9 months):

In this study, 70 percent of mothers were giving solid/semi-solid food to the children aged 6-9 months and most mothers continued breastfeeding (98.6%). However, several different types of foods and liquids were also given to babies as shown in Fig. 3.

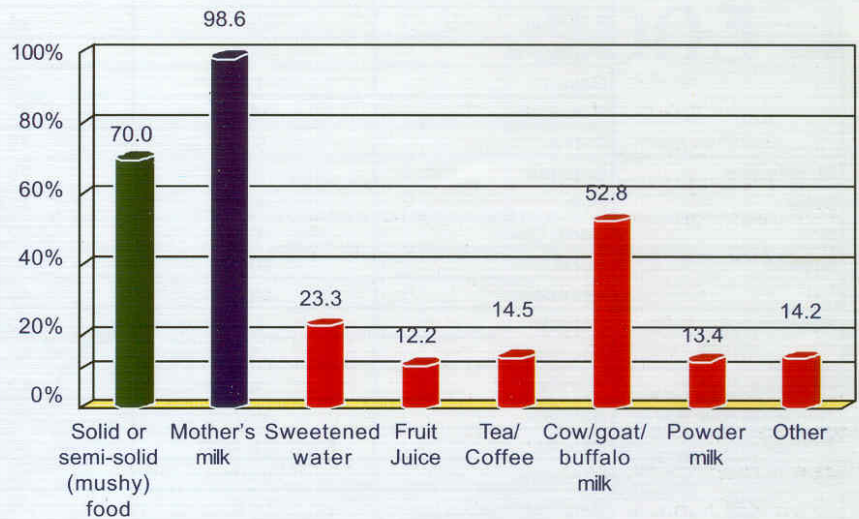


Fig. 3: Type of complementary foods during 6-9 months

This set of data provides a fresh insight in the existing situation regarding infant and young child feeding in our country. District wise data could also be used as a baseline while developing action plans.

Findings of Qualitative Study

Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews of mothers, fathers, mother-in laws, doctors, and community health workers, to find out barriers and positive deviants. Some highlights:

- Lack of knowledge of optimal infant feeding practices in the community as well as in the healthcare system.
- Universal lack of counselling on IYCF to the community during antenatal period and the postnatal period.
- Most mothers/families practice giving pre-lacteal feeds, as a tradition.
- Separation of mother and baby immediately after delivery

continues in hospitals, particularly in private sector.

- Mothers-in-law and other elders in the family have good influence on the breastfeeding practices.
- Some traditional/local food preparations are generally given to enhance lactation.
- Long working hours in offices and in the field for women are detrimental to optimal feeding practices.
- Lack of skills among doctors, nurses and community workers in IYCF counseling.
- Confusing/conflicting messages by health functionaries continue to be detrimental to the practice of breastfeeding.

Recommendations

1. The study calls for a nationwide action to improve infant and young child feeding practices "as a means" to improve nutrition, health, development and survival of all infants. Recognizing that, strong scientific evidence is now available on how to achieve high percentage of exclusive breastfeeding, it should be applied.
2. Skilled inputs are critical at family level, to achieve behaviour changes.
3. The study also calls for provision of accurate information to health workers to pass on to families.
4. Public should be directly informed of optimal infant feeding practices, with new information on benefits of exclusive breastfeeding including prevention of obesity, long-term health benefits, and neuro and psychosocial development benefits

Table: Infant Feeding Practices: District Wise Quantitative Data

State / UT	District	Initiation of BF within 1 hour (%)	Giving Pre-lacteal Feed (%)	Exclusive Breastfeeding 0-6 months (%)	Complementary Feeding 6-9 months (%)
Andhra Pradesh	Anantpur	21.0	49.2	77.4	57.8
	Guntur	21.2	26.3	58.9	83.3
	Kurnool	17.8	39.4	69.7	50.8
Arunachal Pradesh	East Kameng	26.7	8.3	55.8	76.7
Assam	Kamrup	63.7	7.8	81.4	98.3
	Sonitpur	29.4	46.1	47.9	61.7
Bihar	Begusarai	13.6	73.4	17.6	97.8
	Gaya	1.3	72.1	57.0	53.8
	Nawadah	17.2	33.6	20.3	38.8
	Patna	5.5	89.0	15.8	73.8
Chattisgarh	Bilaspur	9.5	20.7	60.6	46.7
Delhi	Delhi	2.8	75.0	11.4	88.9
Goa	North Goa	18.3	52.7	26.4	80.6
Gujarat	Surat	20.8	70.8	22.4	100.0
	Vadodara	28.8	46.2	41.3	49.2
Haryana	Rohtak	6.1	87.8	17.8	66.7
	Sonepat	13.3	80.3	13.3	65.0
Himachal Pradesh	Shimla	16.2	60.3	3.8	86.4
Jammu & Kashmir	Badgam	46.7	98.3	45.3	45.0
Jharkhand	Ranchi	15.4	50.0	54.6	83.9
Karnataka	Banglore	64.7	28.8	49.2	90.0
	Devangere	57.2	25.3	66.4	83.3
	Gulbarga	16.0	38.1	78.3	39.3
Kerala	Kannur	81.7	5.0	40.0	95.0
Madhya Pradesh	Bhopal	3.3	46.1	37.0	63.3
	Gwalior	1.1	61.1	54.2	71.7
Maharashtra	Alibagh	69.2	18.1	27.5	81.7
	Amravati	7.2	18.9	33.3	78.3
	Borivli	28.9	42.2	37.3	68.9
	Thane	68.3	84.4	6.8	96.7
Manipur	Imphal	36.7	69.4	89.9	81.7
Orissa	Cuttak	60.2	31.4	27.1	24.1
	Sundergarh	58.2	21.2	59.6	71.4
Punjab	Ludhiana	1.7	97.8	11.0	83.3
Rajasthan	Jaipur	21.1	76.6	36.4	16.4
	Kota	30.0	46.1	31.9	88.3
Sikkim	Gangtok	54.4	33.3	31.7	93.3
Tamil Nadu	Chidambaram	53.3	33.9	29.1	88.3
	Chengelpattu	71.0	20.8	19.8	74.0
Tripura	Agartala	17.6	46.7	52.5	28.6
Uttar Pradesh	Allahabad	16.7	60.0	60.5	48.3
	Gorakhpur	25.0	47.8	60.7	68.3
	Lucknow	4.4	78.5	15.8	44.3
West Bengal	24 Paraganns South	39.6	51.0	42.5	76.9
	Murshidabad	NA	68.3	19.5	100.0
	Nadia	12.2	56.1	20.0	63.3
Chandigarh	Chandigarh	27.1	58.0	33.9	88.3
Daman & Diu	Daman	74.1	44.4	45.7	40.5
Pondichery	Pondichery	24.5	10.6	22.7	72.3
INDIA		28.3	49.2	39.7	70.0



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