Prevalent infant feeding practices of infants among the missing tribes of Jorhat district, Assam

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Study was conducted to record the prevalent infant feeding practices of the community. Total of 120 infants (1-12 months) were selected from 6 villages, an interview schedule was constructed to elicit information on prevalent infant feeding practices. Infant feeding practices showed that higher percentage of mothers (66.66%) practiced prelacteal feeding. 33.33 per cent infants were exclusively breast fed up to 6 months. Major percentage of the mothers (60.00%) fed colostrum to the new born, while 40 per cent mothers initiated breast feeding only after 2-3 days of birth of the baby. All the newborns were breast fed for 10-12 times per day almost upto first 2 weeks of birth. The frequency of breast feeding seemed to have taken a downward trend thereafter. Supplementary feeding at 6 months were introduced only by 33.33 per cent of mothers. Supplementary foods used were mainly cereal based mixed with milk and sugar or sometimes with dal water. Banana was commonly used fruit while potato and greens were found to be the common vegetables included in infants diet within 6-9 months (60%). Faulty feeding practices such as prelacteal feeding by majority of the mothers were rampant and needs to be corrected.


Key Words: Infant feeding practices, Breast feeding, Supplementary feeding, Prelactial feeding, Colostrum