



AWARENESS ABOUT SANITATION AND HYGEINE AMONG MOTHERS OF CHILDREN LESS THAN TWO YEARS IN RURAL AREA OF SALEM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

According to WHO estimates, 3.8 million children aged less than two die each year from diarrhoea and acute respiratory tract infections. Inadequate and unsafe water, poor sanitation, and unsafe hygiene practices are the main causes of diarrhoea, which results in at least 1.9 million under-2 child deaths annually. The public health importance of some practices like hand washing and food hygiene are important in reduction of diarrhoea. Socio- economic factors may directly or indirectly affect environmental, behavioural and nutritional risk factors. This prospective – cross sectional study mainly focus on the socio demographic characteristics of children, hand washing practice of mothers, source of drinking water, water treatment methods, duration

of lactation, childhood illness and level of knowledge. A total of 100 mothers having children less than 2 years are collected from rural area and information were collected from the structured questionnaires. Out of 100 mothers 85% of mothers wash their hands with soap after defecation, 66% of mothers their primary source of drinking water is from municipal tap and 67% of population used boiling water only. 58% of mother did their breast feeding from 6 months to 1 years and 16 % of childrens were affected from diarrhoea. Our present study shows a remarkable evidence regarding the importance of sanitation and hygiene among mothers.

KEYWORDS: Sanitation, Hygiene, Breast Feeding, Diarrhoea.

INTRODUCTION

Sanitation generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and faeces.^[1] According to World Health Organisation (WHO) "Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that helps to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases".^[2] sanitation is one of the determinants of quality of life and human development index. For every human being potable drinking water, sanitation and healthy hygiene practices are important to sustain healthy life.

India is far behind many developing countries in the area of sanitation and hygiene. Communicable diseases continue to be the major contributor to global morbidity and mortality. Worldwide, the second leading cause of death in under five children is diarrhoea.^[3] The prevalence of hand washing practice in Kerala was found to be 35%.¹ Low socio-economic status, scarcity of potable water behavioural factors such as unhygienic practices, inadequate sanitation, faulty feeding practices, all may cause diarrhoea in children.^[4] Timely initiation of breastfeeding can help to prevent neonatal deaths caused by infections such as sepsis, pneumonia and diarrhoea.^[5] Estimates from the WHO and UNICEF show that about 1.1 billion people lack access to improved water supplies and 2.6 billion people lack adequate sanitation worldwide.^[6] Previous studies have suggested that promoting hand hygiene may be one of the most cost-effective means of reducing the global burden of disease.

In a study conducted in Assam, India it was observed that, out of 384 cases, 330 women (86%) always washed their hands before cooking food while 16 women (4%) never washed their hands prior to cooking. 93% of these women always washed hands before eating food, of which 31% washed with soap.^[7] Globally infant and young child deaths occur mainly due to inappropriate infant feeding practices and infectious diseases. Directly or indirectly, malnutrition has been responsible for 60% of 10.9 million under five deaths.^[8] In countries where there is high neonatal mortality, infection contributes to almost half of all neonatal deaths. Timely initiation of breastfeeding can help to prevent neonatal deaths caused by infections such as sepsis, pneumonia and diarrhea.^[9] WHO recommends infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. Moreover, the early initiation of breastfeeding and feeding of colostrum provides a natural immunity against many infections.^[10]

From the above data, the present study will focus on sanitation and hygiene in mothers having children less than two years. The present study is undertaken to study the behavioural factors among the mothers influencing occurrence of diseases in under- two year children. It is important to study the linkage between water quality, household practices and diarrhoea morbidity among under-two. A study which include the factors that potentially determine the occurrence of diarrhoea in children include malnutrition, poor personal hygiene, environmental problems, water availability and quality, unhygienic feeding practices, improper use of latrines, early discontinuation of breast feeding, child's age, maternal education and household income The remarkable reduction of diseases is possible by the various health promotion and education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A Prospective observational study was conducted in rural areas of salem district such as Attyampatty, Kondapainckenpatty, Tamilnadu.100 mothers of children less than two years were included in the study. The data from the 100 mothers were collected by using a structured questionnaires, and the data were collected during the time period of six months November 2016 – April 2017. The results are tabulated by simple statistical methods. Mothers of children less than two years were selected in between the age of at least 18 and atmost 40 are included in study.

RESULTS

A total of 100 mothers from the rural areas of kondapanickenpattyand attayampatty villages of salem district were enrolled in the study conducted. The majority number of participants belonged to the age group of 26 – 30 years (42%) and 4% of mothers only belonged to the age greater than 36 years. Table no: 1 presents the socio demographic characteristics of children, 48% belonged to the age group of 1- 2 years and the majority of children 52% were males.

Table No: 1.

S. No.	Age of Children	Male	Percentage (%) of male	Female	Percentage(%) of female
1	<6 months	08	8.0	09	9.0
2	6months-<1year	19	19	16	16
3	1year-2year	27	27	21	21
	Total No. of study Population	54		46	

Majority of mothers wash their hands after defecation (85%) and cleaning the child bottom (78%) but fewer women only wash their hands with soap before cooking, before eating and before feeding. The women who wash their hands with their hands with water only after defecation is 15% (figure no: 1). About more than half of the study populations received municipal tap.

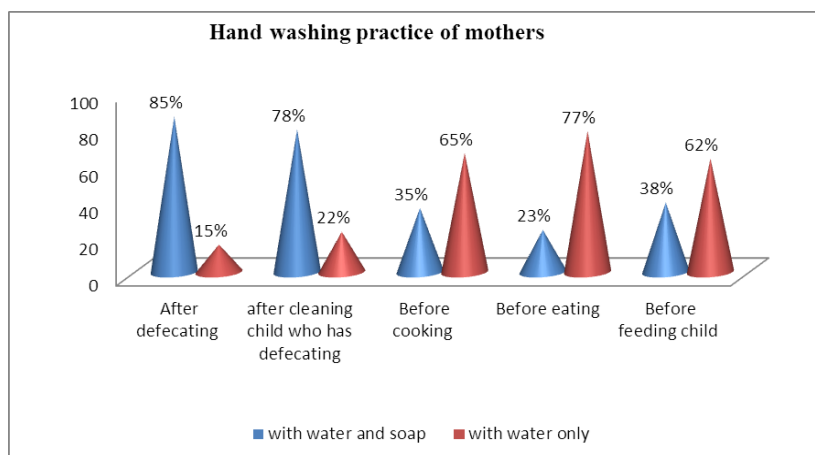


Figure. No: 1.

The study population were distributed on the basis of the different ways of treating water before drinking (figure no : 2). The distribution was made by the different treatment ways such as boiling, chlorination, filtration and no treatment also. About more than half of population used to drinking water with purification at household level. Boiling is the commonest method (67%) And other purification methods such as chlorination and filtration is also done by populations. Among 13% of population is only used to drink water with out any purification.

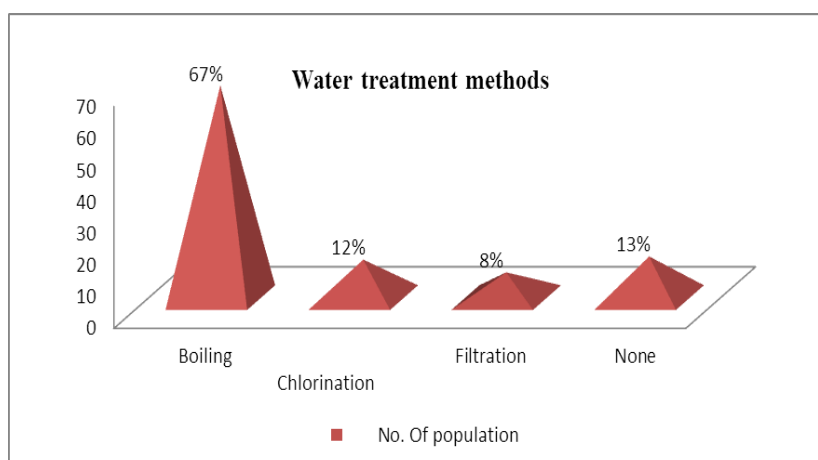


Figure. No: 2.

About 58% of mothers did breast feeding to their babies up to one years. 25% of mothers did exclusive breast feeding up to two years. 52% of the mothers said that the breast milk is more effective than the other milk (table No: 2). When asked about the type of illness respondents, most of the children which was free from all diseases. children usually came down with diarrhoea was the commonest and then followed by fever.

Table. No: 2.

S. No.	Duration of lactation	No. Of population (n=100)	Percentage (%)
1	<6 months	17	17
2	6 months- <1 year	58	58
3	1 year – 2 year	25	25

Here the awareness about sanitation and hygiene among mothers in Attayampatty and kondapanickenpatty was found to be good and moderate respectively.

Research shows that the improved hygiene practices among mothers having children less than two years which reduces the rate of diseases during lactating period and the complications related to children. Evidence suggest that the mothers who are more knowledgeable about sanitation and hygiene may be more likely to achieve better life.

DISCUSSION

Hygiene is a practice of keeping oneself, one's living and working environment clean in order to prevent illness and diseases. Sanitation is the effective use of tools and action that keep our environment healthy. A cross sectional study was done to analyse the awareness about sanitation and hygiene among 100 mothers having children less than two years in the rural areas of Attayampatty, Kondappaninckenpatty, Salem, Tamil nadu.

Out of 100 subjects were enrolled and they were classified according to age wise distribution of which 42% of mothers were in the age group of 26 – 30 and 40% were in the age group of 21 – 25. About the socio demographic characteristics of the children, 48% belongs to the age group of 1 – 2 years and majority of the children were males. The practice of hand washing in studies of Aigbiremolen A. O *et.al*¹¹, showed that Over two-third (70.6%) of respondents had good knowledge of hand washing and 73.18% washed hands after defaecation, 63.91% after cleaning the child who had defaecated and 29.98% before feeding the child respectively and our study shows that 85% of mothers wash their hands with soap and water after defecation. The present study shows that most of them received drinking water from

municipal tap and 29 % of population getting drinking water from bore well. The practice of boiling water before drinking was very much higher the prevalence of boiling water was of the study 67 % in the present study. Dr. Maumita *et.al*^[12], showed that among half (47%) of the study subjects who purified the drinking water, boiling is the common practice for purification and it correlates with our study.

Victor Mogre *et al*^[13] study shows that About 26 % (n = 50) of them were unable to define EBF; 66 % (n = 33) defined EBF as giving the child breastmilk and water. Almost 42 % (n = 79) of the mothers did not exclusively breastfeed their babies. But our study shows that the 58% of mothers did exclusively breast feeding up to 6 months and 25% of mothers were continued up to the 2 years and also 52 % of mothers knows about the beneficial effects of breast milk and they were preferred as the best food for children.

The 52% of children were free from common illness due to the improved practice of sanitation and hygiene and 16 % of children were affected by diarrhoea due to poor sanitation, unsafe water supply and certain behavioural factors such as inadequate personal hygiene of the care givers. The study respondents demonstrated good knowledge of sanitation and hygiene and most of them have a good attitude towards the hand washing and majority of them agree about the importance of sanitation and hygiene in our life. Our study shows a positive attitude among respondents.

CONCLUSION

Our present study shows a remarkable evidence regarding the importance of sanitation and hygiene among mothers. The remarkable reduction of diseases is possible by the various health promotion and education. In resource constraint country like India, in addition to application of other tested interventions worldwide towards improvement in hand washing practices; health workers such as anganwadi workers, ASHA under the aegis of NHM should also be motivated and promoted who have better penetration among the communities towards promotion of information Education & Communication (IEC) activities to promote proper and regular hygiene practices.

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