COLLEGE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
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RT: Effect of Nurse-Led Educational Intervention on Infant Feeding, Weaning and Outcome in Ogun State, Nigeria
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AB: Infant feeding and weaning practices usually influence child's health, growth and development (anthropometry). Infant feeding includes Exclusive Breastfeeding (EBF) and gradual introduction of complementary feeding (weaning) while breastfeeding continues for two years. However, inadequate feeding of zero to two years old children, as a result of mothers' knowledge deficit, has led to malnutrition and increased infant mortality both locally and globally. Past studies have shown deficiencies in knowledge of mothers on best infant feeding practices with few studies addressing the deficiencies with educational intervention. Therefore, this study assessed the effect of nurse-led educational intervention on infant feeding, weaning and outcome in Ogun State, Nigeria.

The study adopted one group pre- and post-test quasi-experimental design. The study location (Egba division) was randomly selected from the four divisions of Ogun State. The population of the study was 601 mother-infant pairs attending selected infant welfare centres in Egba division. Cochran formula was used to determine the sample size of 340 participants. Participants were selected using proportionate sampling. Validated structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients ranged from 0.7 to 0.8. The response rate was 100%. Adapted training packages on infant feeding and weaning practices were used for the

intervention that lasted for four months. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential (t-test, linear regression and chi-square) statistics at 5% level of significance.

Findings showed mean age of the mothers as 28.0 ± 0.98. Only 34% attended antenatal clinic more than eight times and 58% of the index child were less than six months. Pre-intervention 72% of the participants had poor infant feeding practices with mean score of 3.90 ± 1.17 and 52% had poor weaning practices with mean score 44.0 ± 4.41. Post- intervention 0% had poor infant feeding practices while 12% had poor weaning practices with mean score 44.0 ± 4.41 and 53.3 ± 3.14 respectively. Pre-intervention, 53% of the participants exclusively breastfed the index child while post-intervention, 88% exclusively breastfed the index child. Study also revealed that, 12% and 27% of the participants' breastfed their children beyond 12 months pre- and post-intervention. Pre-intervention 44% of the participants disagreed to starting weaning before first six months of life while post-intervention 86% disagreed to starting weaning before first six months of life. The study revealed significant differences between pre- and post-intervention of self-reported weaning practices (mean difference = 9.3, $t_{(339)} = 4.86$, $p < 0.000$). There were significant differences between pre- and post-intervention outcomes of infant feeding and weaning practices on the anthropometric parameters (mean diff. = 0.04, $t_{(339)} = 16.97$, $p < 0.05$). Mother's demographic characteristics examined have no significant effect ($p > 0.05$) on infants feeding and weaning practices of children except the economic factor ($p < 0.05$).

The study concluded that nurse-led educational intervention improved the knowledge and enhanced the practice of mothers on infant feeding, weaning and anthropometric outcome of the index child. It is therefore recommended that, nurses should emphasize infant feeding and weaning during antenatal and postnatal health education to improve outcome.

Keywords: Infant feeding, Infant weaning, Infant feeding outcome, Nurse-led educational intervention, Outcome of intervention

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