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Topic: The first 1000 days, infant feeding, and early childhood development

Title: Mother's nutritional intake practices during pregnancy and child feeding practices among the tribal population of Gadchiroli, Maharashtra India.

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Introduction

Nearly 100 million tribal population lives in India and their nutritional intake during pregnancy and child feeding practices are not documented. The study intended to examine the type of food consumption patterns, beliefs and misconceptions of food items among the tribal population. The study also examines the child feeding practices.

Methods

The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods to address the objectives. A cross-sectional study was conducted in rural Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra, India, during November 2014–March 2015 including a representative population-based sample of 385 men whose wife gave birth in the last two years and age 15-49 years. Qualitative data were collected using key in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with elderly women and health care providers in the study area. Univariate and bivariate analysis have been performed. Ethical issues were addressed before the study was conducted.

Results

Only 30% of women consumed any special food item during pregnancy. Out of this 25% of women eat fruits, 20% non-veg food items. Only 6% of women had fish during pregnancy. In qualitative results, it is found that tribal communities' nutritional awareness is very low. Looking at child feeding practices, it is evident that 32.7% of newborns were given breast milk after 24 hours of birth, and late initiation of breastfeeding is very common, and tribal communities do not feed the colostrum, 13% of mothers have initiated breastfeeding after five hours of birth.

Conclusion

Awareness about nutritional healthy food intake practices among tribal communities need. Addressing the cultural practices and community beliefs are crucial to addressing the problem.