



E-ISSN: 2664-1305
P-ISSN: 2664-1291
www.paediatricnursing.net
IJRPN 2024; 6(2): 85-88
Received: 03-05-2024
Accepted: 05-06-2024

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Assessing the impact of a health worker training program on early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers in selected hospitals of Dharwad district, Karnataka: A pilot study

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26641291.2024.v6.i2b.175>

Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to assess the Impact of a Health Worker Training Program on Early Initiation of Breastfeeding among Healthcare Workers in Selected Hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka.

Methods: Pilot study utilized a quantitative research approach with a quasi-experimental pre-post intervention design to evaluate the impact of a Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) on early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers in selected hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka. A total of 10 healthcare workers, both male and female, with degrees or diplomas in nursing or auxiliary nurse midwifery (ANM) training, were purposively sampled. Data were collected before and after the HWTP intervention to assess changes in breastfeeding initiation practices. The independent variable was the HWTP, and the dependent variable was the early initiation of breastfeeding. Demographic data such as age, gender, religion, habitat, family income, educational status, and prior breastfeeding training were also gathered. Healthcare workers not present during data collection were excluded.

Results: Knowledge scores significantly improved post-intervention, with 70% demonstrating good knowledge compared to 10% pre-intervention. The mean knowledge score increased from 10.13 (SD = 5.40) to 18.8 (SD = 5.13), with a mean difference of 8.7 ($t = 27.54, p < 0.05$). Practice scores also showed improvement, with 40% having good practice post-intervention compared to none pre-intervention. The mean practice score rose from 6.13 (SD = 5.40) to 11.8 (SD = 3.13), with a mean difference of 5.67 ($t = 21.54, p < 0.05$). No significant association was found between the pre-test knowledge and practice scores and any demographic variables.

Conclusion: The Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) significantly improved both the knowledge and practice of early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers in selected hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka. Post-intervention, there was a marked increase in the number of participants with good knowledge and practice scores. However, no significant associations were found between the pre-test scores and the socio-demographic variables. This suggests that the training program was effective across diverse groups of healthcare workers, highlighting the importance of targeted educational interventions in enhancing breastfeeding practices.

Keywords: Impact, health worker training program (HWTP), health care workers

Introduction

Breastfeeding stands as a crucial element in maternal and infant health, delivering a multitude of benefits to both mothers and new-borns. The early commencement of breastfeeding, ideally within the initial hour of life, is acknowledged as a vital practice contributing to the overall well-being of infants. It supplies essential nutrients, fortifies the infant's immune system, and fosters the bond between the mother and child. Despite the extensively documented advantages of early breastfeeding initiation, global statistics reveal a significant number of new-borns do not receive this optimal start in life^[1, 2]

In the Indian context, where maternal and child health takes precedence, continuous efforts are being made to advocate and support the early initiation of breastfeeding. Healthcare workers assume a pivotal role in promoting and facilitating this crucial practice, serving as the primary point of contact for mothers and new-borns in healthcare settings. These healthcare professionals, encompassing nurses, midwives, doctors, and lactation consultants, are well-positioned to offer guidance, support, and education to mothers regarding breastfeeding^[3-5].

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The "Impact of Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) on Early Initiation of Breastfeeding among healthcare workers working in selected hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka" study aims to investigate the effectiveness of a structured training program in enhancing the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of healthcare workers regarding early breastfeeding initiation. Specifically, the study seeks to assess whether the HWTP results in increased awareness and competence among healthcare workers in promoting and facilitating early initiation of breastfeeding.

Dharwad District, situated in the southern state of Karnataka, India, serves as the setting for this research. The impact of the HWTP will be examined within the healthcare facilities of this district. Similar to many other regions in India, Dharwad District faces unique challenges and opportunities in maternal and child healthcare, making it a significant site for the study.

The findings of this study have the potential to inform policy, training, and practices related to breastfeeding initiation in healthcare settings, not only in Dharwad District but also in other similar regions. Enhanced training and knowledge among healthcare workers can contribute to a substantial increase in the early initiation of breastfeeding, resulting in healthier newborns and mothers. Ultimately, the study aims to support ongoing efforts to promote maternal and child health in the region and beyond.

Aim

To assess the Impact of a Health Worker Training Program on Early Initiation of Breastfeeding among Healthcare Workers in Selected Hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka: A Pilot Study

Objectives of the proposed research

1. To assess the pre-interventional level of early initiation of breastfeeding among health care workers.
2. To design and implement a comprehensive training program aimed at improving early initiation of breastfeeding practices among health care workers.
3. To assess the impact of the Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) on the rates of early initiation of

breastfeeding among health care workers.

4. To find out the association between the pre-interventional level of early initiation of breastfeeding and selected demographic variables among health care workers.
5. To provide evidence-based recommendations to health care workers for the integration and scaling up of health worker training programs to enhance early initiation of breastfeeding practices in the community.

Methodology

Research Approach: A Quasi experimental approach will be selected for this study.

Research Design: In this study Quasi-experimental pre-post intervention research design.

Research design: Quasi-experimental pre-post intervention research design.

Independent Variable: The independent variable is Health Worker Training Program (HWTP).

Dependent Variable: Knowledge and practice regarding breast feeding.

Target Population: Health care workers.

Sampling criteria

Health care workers

1. Both male and female.
2. Who are having degree/diploma in nursing & auxiliary nurse midwives (ANM'S) training.
3. Who are willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria

Health care workers

1. Who are not present at the time of data collection.

Results

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of subjects according to socio-demographic variables n=10

Sl. No.	Demographic Variable	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age in Years		
	<20	3	30
	21-30	4	40
	31-40	2	20
	41-50	1	10
	>50	0	00
2.	Gender		
	Male	03	30
	Female	07	70
3.	Religion		
	Hindu	04	40
	Muslim	02	20
	Christian	04	40
	Others	00	00
4.	Marital status		
	Married	04	40
	Unmarried	06	60
	Divorced	00	00
5.	Type of Family		
	Nuclear	6	60
	Joint	4	40

	Extended	0	0
6.	Area of Residence		
	Urban	7	70
	Rural	3	30
7.	Qualification		
	ANM	05	50
	GNM	03	30
	B.Sc Nursing	02	20
	P B B.Sc Nursing	00	00
	M.Sc Nursing	00	00
8.	Experience in nursing (yrs.)		
	<1 year	03	30
	1-5 years	04	40
	6-10 years	03	30
	>10 years		
9.	Area of work (ward)		
	General ward	04	40
	OPD	03	30
	Labour room	02	20
	Pediatric	01	10
	Others Specify	00	00

Table 2: Comparison of Mean, Standard deviation and Mean difference in the level of knowledge scores regarding early initiation of breastfeeding among health care workers n -10

Variables	Maximum Score	Pre-Test		Post Test		Mean difference	't' Value	DF
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Knowledge	30	10.13	5.40	18.8	5.13	8.7	27.54*	9

*($p < 0.05$)

Table 2 compares the mean, standard deviation, and mean difference in knowledge scores before and after the Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) on early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers. Prior to the intervention, the mean knowledge score was 10.13 (SD =

5.40), increasing significantly to 18.8 (SD = 5.13) post-intervention. The mean difference was 8.7, with a high t-value of 27.54 ($p < 0.05$), indicating a substantial improvement in knowledge due to the HWTP.

Table 3: Comparison of Mean, Standard deviation and Mean difference in the level of knowledge scores regarding early initiation of breastfeeding among health care workers n-10

Variables	Maximum Score	Pre-Test		Post Test		Mean difference	't' Value	DF
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Practice	14	6.13	5.40	11.8	3.13	5.67	21.54*	9

*($p < 0.05$)

Table 3 compares mean, standard deviation, and mean difference in practice scores before and after the Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) on early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers. Pre-test mean score: 6.13 (SD = 5.40); post-test mean score: 11.8 (SD = 3.13). Mean difference: 5.67. The high t-value of 21.54 ($p < 0.05$) indicates a significant improvement in practice due to the HWTP.

No significant association was observed between the knowledge and practice of early initiation of breastfeeding among health care workers and any demographic variables.

Conclusion

Health Worker Training Program (HWTP) significantly improved both the knowledge and practice of early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers in selected hospitals of Dharwad District, Karnataka. Post-intervention, there was a marked increase in the number of participants with good knowledge and practice scores. However, no significant associations were found between the pre-test scores and the socio-demographic variables. This suggests that the training program was effective across diverse groups of healthcare workers, highlighting the importance

of targeted educational interventions in enhancing breastfeeding practices.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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How to Cite This Article

Divya MR, Vijaykumar S. Assessing the impact of a health worker training program on early initiation of breastfeeding among healthcare workers in selected hospitals of Dharwad district, Karnataka: A pilot study. International Journal of Research in Paediatric Nursing 2024; 6(2): 85-88.

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