

Comparative Evaluation of Weaning Knowledge, Attitudes and Feeding Practices among Mothers in Benue and Zamfara States of Nigeria

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Abstract : The present study was aimed at investigating the weaning knowledge, attitudes and practices among mothers with infants in Benue and Zamfara States, Nigeria. A questionnaire consisting of both open and close-ended questions was adopted for this study. Socio-demographic information was captured with this questionnaire. This is in addition to capturing data linked to respondents' knowledge and attitude to weaning and the weaning practice itself. 400 questionnaires were distributed, and 329 was filled and returned. Results obtained from the study revealed that the mother's location; mother's level of education, her occupation, her age; and her level of education would have an effect on her practice of and attitude to weaning. Essentially, mothers based in Zamfara who were full-time housewives, tailor or trader were more likely to start weaning at a later age than mothers who have the same occupation but based in Benue. Furthermore, the results revealed mothers who were uneducated and based in Zamfara were more likely to wean their babies later than the uneducated mothers, mothers educated to primary, secondary or tertiary level based in Benue. It was also evident that mothers who were low-income earners and based in Zamfara were more likely to start weaning later than the low, average or high-income earning mothers in Benue. Moreover, younger mothers in Zamfara age 20-25 years were more likely to start weaning later than mothers of other age groups. In overall, mothers had a good understanding of best practices with regards to weaning. Notwithstanding, mothers could be further encouraged and educated about the advantages of exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices as well as the benefits therein to enhance the healthy growth of the children.

Keywords : breastfeeding, complementary feeding, socio-demographic, weaning

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