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## Knowledge, attitude and practices regarding weaning of Bharia tribal women of Patakot valley of Tamia Blok Chhindwara district, M.P

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### Abstract

A cross sectional study was carried out in Patakot area of Tamia block of Chhindwara district, Madhya Pradesh. 113 mothers were interviewed regarding their knowledge, attitude and practices about weaning. It was observed that although 81% of mothers had knowledge regarding timely initiation of weaning food only 2% of the mothers actually practiced it. Higher percentage 81% of mothers initiated weaning at the age of 9 months and above. 43% of mothers had knowledge regarding special weaning foods however only 2% actually prepared special weaning foods for the kids rest 98% mother either gave boiled maize pej, kutki gruel, bhaat, boiled agitha. 21% reported to have knowledge and positive attitude regarding increase in iron requirement at the age of six months but only 3% of the respondents actually practiced it.

**Keywords:** Blok Chhindwara, Bharia tribal women, Patakot valley

### 1. Introduction

The tribal population is recognized as socially and economically vulnerable. Their life style and food related practices are different from other rural neighbors. The food related practices are highly influenced by their tradition and environment. Gathering food from forest, hunting and agriculture are common method of procuring food which varies widely according to the region. Knowledge of nutrition and attitude are important factors in determining the dietary practices. Knowledge and attitude are mainly affected by cultural and traditional beliefs of the community. Positive parental attitude towards infant feeding is an important component in child nutritional health. Pre-school children constitute the most vulnerable segment of any community.

Thus in the present study data was also collected regarding weaning food for children.

### 2. Methods and Materials

A pre tested Performa was used to assess Knowledge attitude and practices regarding weaning. Women were random purposefully selected with at least one child aged less than 35 months for the interviewed.

Age of introduction of supplementary food, type of weaning food was recorded.

### 3. Results

**Table 1:** Distribution of subjects according to supplementary feeding practices

S. No	Name of the weaning food	No. of Respondents	% of Respondents
1.	Maize Pej	93	82.3
2.	Kutki Gruel	86	76.1
3.	Boiled Rice	56	49.5
4.	Boiled Potato	63	55.7
5.	Take Home Ration of ICDS	9	7.9
6.	Boiled Agitha	76	67.2
7.	Biscuit	32	28.3
<b>N = 113</b>			

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**Table 2:** Distribution of subjects based on their knowledge regarding weaning

Knowledge	Response	Percentage (%)
Weaning should be started at six month after birth.	Yes	81
Special food should be prepared for weaning.	Yes	43
Take home ration from ICDS is nutritious food for the baby	Yes	23
Requirement of iron increases at the age of six month	Yes	21

**Table 3:** Distribution of subjects based on their attitude regarding weaning

Attitude	Response	Percentage (%)
Early weaning is associated with the higher weight gain	Agree	64
Special food should be given for weaning	Agree	23
Diluted milk should be given as weaning food	Agree	79
Take home ration from ICDS should be given as supplementary food.	Agree	56
Iron rich food such as green leafy vegetables should be included in the diet after six month of age.	Agree	21

In the present study the 113 mothers with children in the weaning age were interviewed and data regarding the indigenous foods introduced in weaning were recorded. It was observed that although 81% of mothers had knowledge regarding timely initiation of weaning food only 2% of the mothers actually practiced it. Higher percentage (87%) of mothers initiated weaning at the age of 9 months and above. 43% of mothers had knowledge regarding special weaning foods however only 2% actually prepared special weaning foods for the kids, rest 98% mother either gave boiled maize pej, boiled agitha, kutki gruel, bhaat. 19% of mothers practiced giving diluted animal milk to the child in addition to regular diet as consumed by the other member of the family. Low adherence to recommended Infant and Young Child Feeding practices and low acceptability of weaning foods (9% of the selected respondents) provided by ICDS centres is reflected in their nutritional status. An equal percentage of respondents (21%) reported to have knowledge and positive attitude regarding increase in iron requirement at the age of six months but only 3% of the respondents actually practiced it.

**Table 4:** Distribution of subjects based on their practices regarding weaning

Practice	Response	Percentage (%)
Weaning was started	< 6months	2
	>6months	11
	>9months	87
Special weaning foods are planned and cooked	Yes	2
Milk is diluted as weaning food	Yes	19
Take home ration from ICDS is given to the child	Yes	9
Green leafy vegetables is given to the child	Yes	3

The analysis of data further revealed that the average weaning age among selected Bharia tribes was between 9 to 16 months. However, 6 mothers (5.3%) had not introduced weaning at the age of six months. In spite of the fact that the respondents were

educated about the variety of weaning foods, most of them were observed to feeding their babies with only cereal preparations, similar to the diet consumed by the adults of the respected families. Table 1 shows the common weaning foods among selected Bharia tribes. The common weaning foods were 'Maize pej', 'Kutki Gruel' 'Boiled Agitha'. The take home ration given at ICDS centers were observed not to be given to the child and were consumed by the entire family. The mothers further reported that if milk was available they prefer to give chapatti soaked in milk as they were aware of the fact that it was nutritious for the child.

Majority of women in all livelihoods knew that even after introducing other forms of milk, porridge or food, breastfeeding must continue along these feeds until the child was stopped from breastfeeding when the child was 2 years old or the mother gets pregnant.

Similar, studies were reported by Patro *et al.* (2012) [2], who in his study among Paroja Tribe of Orissa found that the more than 68% respondents were observed to fed their babies with cereal preparation. Dakshyani and Gangadhar (2008) [1] reported in their study that the type of complementary foods commonly used was Rice/roti (85%), bread and biscuits (8%) and milk (7%). None of the mothers reportedly gave commercial baby foods to their children.

**Conclusion.**

It was found that Bhariayas tribes were not giving any special weaning food to their children whatever was in their routine diet was being provided to wean the child. Programmes regarding infant child feeding practices should be promoted for educating mothers.

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