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Level of knowledge of Complementary Feeding and Its Associated Factors among Mothers of Children Aged 6–24 Months.

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Introduction & Objectives: Complementary feeding is the introduction of solid, semi-solid, and soft foods to infants at six months of age while continuing breastfeeding up to two years of age or beyond. This study was aimed to assess the level of knowledge of complementary feeding and its association with selected socio-demographic factors among mothers of children aged 6–24 months in the Nallur Medical Officer of Health (MOH) area.

Materials & Methods: A community-based descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 252 mothers of children aged 6-24 months in the Nallur MOH area using simple random sampling. Data were collected using a pre-tested, interviewer-administered questionnaire comprising socio-demographic characteristics and knowledge-related questions on complementary feeding. The knowledge assessment covered the timing of initiation, risks of early and late introduction, introduction of salt and sugar, introduction of family diet, feeding style, meal and snack frequency, feeding environment and position, feeding during illness, and food consistency. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the chi-square test in IBM SPSS statistics version 26.

Results: The mean age of mothers was 31 years, with 41.3% having completed GCE Advanced Level education and 61.1% being housewives. Regarding knowledge, 55.2% had an average level, 36.1% poor and 8.7% good. Knowledge level was significantly associated with maternal education ($p < 0.001$), paternal education ($p < 0.001$), maternal occupation ($p < 0.001$), paternal occupation ($p = 0.018$), and family income ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: Mothers had average level of knowledge of complementary feeding, influenced by parental education, occupation, and family income, highlighting the need for nutrition education.

Keywords: *Complementary feeding, knowledge, mothers, Jaffna.*