

**Factors influencing complementary feeding practices among infants aged six to nine months, In Trincomalee MOH area**

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The study was done in two phases. In phase one, a tool was prepared by adapting Ruel and Manon tool, which was utilized in the Ethiopian and Latin American countries to assess complementary feeding practices composite Index taking into consideration of the Srilankan context and guidelines. Sub indices were also calculated for breast feeding, bottle feeding, food diversity, food frequency, and frequency of solid and semisolid feedings between the ages of 6-9 months. In the second phase, a cross sectional descriptive community level survey and anthropometric measurement were carried out in 423 randomly selected infants aged 6-9 months in the Trincomalee MOH area. Complementary feeding practices were assessed by using the tool adapted. Socio demographic factors, knowledge on complementary feeding and service provisions of the area were assessed by using an interviewer administered questionnaire. The Z score of anthropometric measurements of weight and length were taken promptly according to the WHO standard and Weight for length, Weight for age, Length of age and Body Mass Index for age were calculated. Study population consisted mainly of Tamil (78.5 percent) followed by Moors (13.7 percent and Sinhalese 7.3 percent). Among them Sinhalese ethnic group had higher overall satisfactory complementary feeding composite index, compare to the other two ethnic groups and the difference was statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The breastfeeding index, higher proportion of the Muslim had satisfactory index than other two communities but the difference observed was not statistically significant ( $p = 0.258$  and  $0.1$  respectively). Non working mothers had a higher level of food frequency and the breast feeding index. The difference observed for the breast feeding was statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) but the food frequency above the O/L and the educational level was significantly associated with the composite index. Higher proportion of educated parents had satisfactory index compared to the low educated parents ( $p = 0.000$ ).