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Baby-friendly workplace initiatives in child feeding practice as predictors of infant and young child anthropometric indices in public health facilities of Southern Ethiopia

Abstract:

Background: Baby-friendly workplace is an effective evidence based initiative developed by the World Health Organization to protect and support maternal knowledge, beliefs, and confidence in infant and young child feeding practices. However, studies that show the effect of the baby-friendly workplace initiative on the nutritional status of infant and young children are not available in Ethiopia. Therefore, this study aimed to assess the nutritional status among baby friendly initiatives service utlizers and non utlizers children age 6–24 months in public health facilities of Southern Ethiopia.

Methods: We conducted a comparative cross-sectional study from 1 to 30 June 2022 among 220 mothers with children aged 6–24 months. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews using a structured questionnaire. Data were entered into Epidata Software version 4.2 and then exported to IBM SPSS version 26 software for analysis. Chi-square and Fisher exact test were used to assess the differences between users and non-users of the baby friendly workplace initiative. Logistic regression model was used to determine the association between dependent and independent variables. Adjusted odds ratio (AOR) with a 95% confidence interval was computed. P-values<0.05 at a 95% confidence level were considered statistically significant.

Result: The mean (SD) scores of weight for age (WAZ), height for age (HAZ), and weight for height (WHZ) were -0.38 (1.34)-0.17(2.62) and-0.35 (1.84) respectively. After adjusting for Covariates, children aged 6–24 months who did not use baby friendly workplace initiatives were 2.26 times more likely to have stunting compared to the users of baby friendly workplace initiative (AOR 2.26, 95% CI: 1.05, 4.88). However, both wasting (AOR: 0.42; 95% CI:0.13, 1.37) and underweight (AOR: 1.09; 95% CI: 0.45, 2.60) were not significantly associated with the use of baby friendly workplace initiatives.

Conclusion: The use of baby friendly work place initiatives was successful in improving nutritional status, specifically chronic malnutrition in children. Strengthening and scaling up the baby friendly work place initiative program has the potential to reduce chronic malnutrition in Ethiopia and other similar settings with high burden of malnutrition areas, by implementing it in public facilities.

Biography

Habtamu Hasen has completed his MSc in Human nutrition from Jimma University Ethiopia. He is the lecturer and director of Educational development center at Hossana College of Health Sciences. He has published more than 12 papers in reputed journals and has been serving as a reviewers in different journals.