

Attitude and Practice Regarding Sunning of Babies among Mothers of Selected Communities of Selected Area

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For centuries, sunlight has been used for therapeutic purposes. Mothers still sun their infants to treat neonatal jaundice, nappy rash or mostly to supply vitamin D for bone development because of health beliefs. Therefore, this study is designed to assess the attitude and practice of mothers regarding sunlight and sun protection. A descriptive study was conducted among the mothers having infant children to assess the attitude and practice regarding sunning babies in the Anandpur, Kallangur and Narayan communities of Bharatpur 13 Municipality. A total of 50 mothers having an infant child were selected for the study using stratified sampling technique and the data was collected using a semi-structured interview schedule. The study findings revealed that the mean age of 50 enrolled mothers was 23 years, 62.0% were in the age group of 25-35 years. Most of them had single child (54.0%) and 58.0% were male. Eighty percent of mothers were housewives with an educational level of bachelor above (24.0%). Sunlight was considered beneficial for bone development 72.0% and 76.0% believed sunlight would prevent jaundice in baby. Sunning was reported as a traditional practice in

society (82.0%). In case of neonatal jaundice, all of the participants 100% reported that they would consult a physician. Most of the participants, 82.0% were sunning their babies in shade, 82.0% mothers were sunning their babies before 10 a.m. and/or after 4 p.m. but 62.0% of mothers displayed inappropriate behavior keeping baby for longer duration than 15 minutes. Only 8.0% of mothers reported using sunscreen for their babies. This study shows most of the participants were aware of the benefits of sunlight, especially for bone development. However, they were displaying inappropriate behavior while sunning their babies for health reasons. More education should be given to parents about the danger of sunlight at primary health care units while advising their babies, if any.

1. Introduction

Background of the study

Infants are children below the age of 1 year i.e., from birth to 12 months of age. Infancy is the beginning of life totally dependent on the mother or the caregiver. Child Health is greatly depending upon family's physical and social environment which includes lifestyle, family size, Parents education, cultures, customs taboos, child rearing and childbearing practices. Child need appropriate care for survival and healthy development (Datta, 2009). In the second half of the 19th century, it was realized that sunshine could have a bactericidal effect as well as a therapeutic role in rickets (Roelandts & Albert, 2003). Repeated exposure to sunlight has been determined to be the most important risk factor for skin cancer. A strong association exists between skin cancer and overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which comprises only three percent of the total solar rays reaching the earth (American Cancer Society, 1997). Apart from being the main cause of tanning in exposed skin, on the negative side, UV-B is associated with skin and lip cancers, eye diseases and immune suppression. The other component of UVR, ultraviolet-A (UV-A) penetrates deeper layers of the skin causing photo-ageing but producing no vitamin D benefit. UV-A constitutes about 95% of ambient UVR and is present with relatively stable intensity during daylight. UV-B can vary considerably by season, time of day and location, peaking in summer around solar noon, dropping to relatively low winter levels, especially at high latitudes, and to its lowest levels early and late in the day. UV-B increases with altitude and surface reflectivity (Lucas, Michael, Smith & Armstrong, 2006). In Nepal, Sun Exposure for babies is practiced with perceived benefits from sunlight like bone development, treating neonatal jaundice, protection from cold, treating diaper rashes commonly.

Justification for studying the problem

Children are more sensitive to ultraviolet (UV)radiation damage than adults, and sunburn during childhood increases the risk of skin cancer and eye damage (particularly cataracts) later in life, and suppresses the immune system (WHO, 2003).A direct relationship between UVB and melanoma has been demonstrated, with a 10% increase in average annual UVB irradiation correlating with 19% increased risk of melanoma (Fears & Bird, 2002). Although sunlight provides irradiance in the 425- 475 nm band to provide phototherapy, the practical difficulties

in safely exposing a naked newborn to sun either inside or outside (and avoiding sunburn) preclude the use of sunlight as a reliable therapeutic tool, and it therefore is not recommended (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2007). Therefore, keeping these aspects in mind and researcher's self-experience of mothers practicing sunning babies in the community without knowing the health effects of unprotected sun exposure, researcher felt the need to conduct research on attitude and practice of sunning babies among mothers in the community and provide health education regarding sunning babies.

Significance of the Problem

The findings of the study will be significant to identify the attitude and practice of mother regarding sunning babies.

The findings of the study will be helpful in implementation of awareness program regarding safe sunning practice.

The findings of the study will provide baseline information for future researchers.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the level of attitude of mothers towards sunning their babies
2. To identify the status of practice of mothers regarding sunning their babies
3. To identify the association between attitude and selected demographic variables To identify the association between practice and selected demographic variables

2. Methodology

A descriptive study design was used in the study. The main objective of the study was to identify attitude and practice towards sunning babies among mothers having infant children. The target population of the study was 50 mothers having infant child currently living in the selected community of Bharatpur 13, Anandapur, Kalyanpur and Narayanpur. Probability stratified random sampling method was used to collect desired sample i.e 50 mothers having infant child. The study was conducted at three different communities of Bharatpur-13 Municipality such as Anandapur, Kalyanpur and Narayanpur.

Inclusion Criteria

Mothers who are willing to participate in the study. Mothers currently living in the community.

Mothers having infant child.

Research Instrument

The research instrument, the Likerts Scale and Checklist was developed after reviewing the related literature and consulting with the subject expert. Semi- structured interview schedule was used for this study. The research instrument consists of three parts.

Part I: Questions related to the socio-demographic data.

Part II: Statements reflecting attitude towards sunning babies among mother having an infant child and information was collected using Likert scale.

Part III: Checklist of questions reflecting practice of sunning babies among mothers having an infant child.

Content validity of the instrument was obtained by developing instrument based on consultation with subject experts.

Pretest among 10% from total sample size (5 mothers having an infant child) was conducted prior data collection in another similar setting in Bharatpur-14, Torikhet, Chitwan.

Ethical Consideration

Research proposal was approved by the College of Nursing, Chitwan Medical College (P). LTD authority to conduct the study. Permission was obtained from the authority concerned of Bhagalpur 13 ward office. Written consent was obtained from each respondent. Confidentiality of the respondents was maintained by assuring them that the information given by them will not be disclosed to others and be used only for Study purpose. Privacy was maintained by taking the information from respondents separately.

Data Collection Procedure

After the administrative approval from the college authority and concerned authority of Bharatpur-13 ward office, the data collection was started. In the study, researcher herself collected data after interviewing the participants through a semi-structured interview schedule. The data was collected after taking the written consent from each of the participants.

3. Results

The data was collected from 50 respondents from the Anandapur, Kalyanpur and Narayanpur community of Bharatpur 13, Chitwan. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics in terms of frequency and presented. Concerning age of the respondents 19 (38%) respondents were below 25 years of age and remaining 21 (62%) were 25-35 years old, Concerning number of children of the respondents majority 27 (54%) had single child and regarding sex of current child, majority were male child 29 (58%).

Table:1 Respondents Attitude regarding Sunning of Babies

Statements	Responses		
	Agree	Unsure	Disagree
Sunlight is good for baby.	49 (98.0%)	1 (2.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Child's skin is very sensitive to sunlight.	4 (80.0 %)	8 (16.0 %)	2 (4.0%)
There are harmful rays in the sunlight	30	9	11 (22.0%)

	(60.0%)	(18.0%)	8
Sunlight prevents jaundice in baby.	38	4	(16.0%)
	(76.0 %)	(8.0%)	2
Sunlight is good for bone development	36	12	(4.0%)
	(72.0 %)	(24.0 %)	
Children need to get some direct	38	0	12
sunlight to be healthy	(76.0%)	(0.0%)	(24.0%)
Sunlight exposure without protection	41	3	6
may potentially harm baby's skin.	(82.0%)	(6.0%)	(12.0%)
We don't need to protect babies from	39	1	10
sun during winter season.	(78.0%)	(2.0%)	(20.0%)
Morning rays are safe than mid-day	49	0	1
sunrays	(98.0%)	(0.0%)	(2.0%)
Baby oil gives protection from sunlight	27	16	7
for the baby	(54.0 %)	(32.0%)	(14.0%)
I like my baby to have a suntan.	13	1	36
	(26.0 %)	(2.0%)	(72.0%)
I believe I do a good job in protecting	30	3	17
my child from sun.	(60.0%)	(6.0%)	(34.0%)
I find it difficult to protect my child	12	2	36
from sun.	(24.0%)	(4.0%)	(72.0%)
Exposing baby in sun is a traditional	41	3	6
practice in our society	(82.0%)	(6.0%)	(12.0%)
My mother taught me to expose baby	44	0	6
to sun	(88.0%)	(0.00%)	(12.0%)

Table: 2 Respondents' Level of Attitude regarding Sunning of Babies n=50

Level of Attitude	Frequency Percentage
Negative	25 50.0
Neutral	5 10.0
Positive	20 40.0

The level of attitude was statistically non-significant with sex of current child ($p=0.774$) and family type ($p=0.239$).

Association between the status of practice and selected demographic variables could not be calculated because it was not feasible for further analysis.

4. Discussion

Concerning the demographic characteristics, this study revealed that 38.0% of the respondents belong to the age group between 20-25 years and all of respondents 100% were literate. Eighty percent were housewife. The finding of this study was supported by Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) done to assess parents knowledge and behaviour towards sunning babies in Turkey' which revealed that 35.3% respondents were from age group 20-24 years with mean age of 27.9 years, 97.1% were literate. Among literate respondents 71.6% had educational level of more than 6years and 81.4% of respondents were housewife.

Majority of respondents, 98% had positive attitude towards the statement sunlight is good for baby. About 72% mothers believe sunlight is good for bone development of child. The finding of this study is supported by the study done by Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) which revealed that 86.4% mothers reported sunlight was good for baby's bone development. In the same study, 12.7% respondents claimed sunlight was good for jaundice which is much high in this study as 76 % mothers agreed that sunlight prevents jaundice in baby.

Concerning if the child develops signs of jaundice , 100% respondents in this study would consult a doctor which is in contrast with the study done by Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) where 72% of respondents would go see a Physician.

Regarding the sensitivity of child's skin to sunlight, 80% mothers in this study believed child's skin is sensitive to direct sunlight and this is supported by study done by Lowe, (2002) to identify behaviour of care givers to protect their infant from exposure to sun in Queensalnd, Australia where 89% of respondents agreed childhood is when most of damage that lead to cancer.

Similarly, 12% mothers disagreed that child need to get some direct sunlight to be healthy which is inconsistent with the study of Lowe, (2002) which revealed that 50% of them believed children need to get some direct sunlight to be healthy.

Majority (80%) of the respondents had positive attitude towards sunlight exposure without protection may potentially harm baby's skin which showed the similar findings with the study of Lowe, (2002) which revealed that 82% respondent disagreed getting burnt occasionally won't do any harm.

Concerning the statement, there are harmful rays in the sunlight, 18% of the respondents were unsure to the statement which is supported by study of Lowe, (2002) which revealed 18% of respondents were unsure sunlight would do harm to the skin.

In the study, 24% agreed to the statement, I find it difficult to protect my child from the sun which is supported by Lowe, (2002) which revealed 20% reported they find it difficult to protect the child.

Concerning the statement, I believe I do a good job in protecting child from sunlight, 60% agreed to the statement which is inconsistent with the findings of study of Lowe, (2002) where 90% believed they do a good job in protecting their child from sunlight.

Concerning sunning practices, majority (82.0%) of the respondents showed appropriate practice in avoiding mid day sun (10am- 4pm) while sunning babies which is inconsistent to the study of Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) which showed 56% respondents displayed appropriate behavior in sunning infant before 10am and/or after 4pm.

Majority (92.0%) of the respondents would avoid direct sunlight or place the baby in shade which is similar to the study findings of Lowe, (2002) which revealed 93% mothers would keep the baby in shade.

Majority (92.0%) of respondents would avoid keeping baby naked during sunning. The finding is inconsistent with the findings of study done by Lowe, (2002) where 77% of respondents would put protective clothing on baby while sunning.

Most (62.0%) of the respondents showed inappropriate practice by exposing baby for more than 15 minutes in the direct sunlight. This is supported by Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) as 44.9% would expose the baby to sun for longer than 15 minutes.

Similarly, 13.6% respondents reported using sunscreen on baby's skin before sun exposure which is similar to findings of the study done by Aladag, Filiz & Topsever (2006) which revealed that 8% mothers were using sunscreen for sun protection.

Majority (64.0%) of the respondents would put on a hat on baby while going out in sun which is inconsistent with the study findings of Lowe, (2002) which revealed that 80% of respondents would put hat on baby while going out in sun.

5. Conclusion

The conclusions made are based on the findings of the study. Most of the mothers had negative attitude towards sunning of babies.

From the findings, regarding behavior of mothers about sunning of babies, majority of the mothers displayed appropriate behavior in safe sunning practice.

Based on study findings, it is concluded that parents believed that sunlight is good for health, *Nanotechnology Perceptions* Vol. 20 No.1 (2024)

especially for bone development. However, they were still displaying inappropriate behaviour about sun exposure of their baby. Therefore, it is critical that parents be informed about the potential benefits and risks of sunlight exposure to their children.

Limitations of the study

Study population is confined to mothers residing in Anandapur, Kalyanpur and Narayanpur Communities of Bharatpur Municipality. The study is limited to 50 samples of Bharatpur-13 Municipality. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other settings and it lacks external validity.

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