

## Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Mothers on Feeding and Growth of Young Children in Tea Plantation Sector in Sri Lanka

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The period of first five years from birth is very important in human life. Growth and development of children are adversely affected by insufficient and incorrect feeding practices. Mothers play a major role in child feeding. The prevalence of stunting and underweight of young children is high in the estate sector in Sri Lanka. This study attempted to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) of mothers on feeding and growth of children and to determine the association of KAP of mothers on nutritional status of children.

This was a cross sectional study conducted in four estates in Nuwara-Eliya district. Two hundred mother-child pairs were selected randomly. Mothers were interviewed using a pre-tested questionnaire. Child weight was measured. The results showed that the prevalence of underweight was 28 %. Sixty two percent of mothers had low level of knowledge on feeding practices and 65 % of mothers had low level of knowledge on growth of children. More than half (56%) of mothers had high level of attitude towards feeding practices and most (80%) of the mothers had high level of attitude towards growth of children. Feeding practices of mothers were not satisfactory. Practices of mothers related to growth of children were high (94%). KAP of mothers on exclusive breast-feeding, feeding practices during child illness and interpretation of growth charts were low. Age of children and number of children in the family showed a significant relationship with nutritional status of children. In conclusion, there was no significant association between KAP of mothers on feeding and growth of children with the nutrition status (underweight) of children.

Key Words: knowledge, Attitudes, Practices, Feeding, Growth

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