SUMMARY

Every infant has physiological needs that must be met. Mothers also have needs, which are usually psychological and educational, moreover, mothers need to learn about their babies for loving care, nutrition, safety, cleanliness, clothing and health care. So increasingly we are seeing mothers as "Health care Agencies" responsible for provision and maintenance of health of their members.

* This study aim:

To assess the primiparous mothers knowledge and practice towards their infant care.

* Setting:

The study was conducted in the M.C.H centers in Benha and Toukgh districts as they represented urban and rural community.

The sample comprised of randomly 120 of primiparous mothers and their infant during the first year of infant's life.

* Tools of data collection:

Three tools were used for data collection to accomplish the aim of the study.
Summary

1- The first part:

Concerned with biosocial data of the mothers and their infants as regards mothers' age, education, occupation, residence, income status, infants' sex and age .. etc.

2- The second part:

Assess the mothers' knowledge about infant care as warmth, sleeping position, breast feeding, weaning, cord care, diaper care, growth & development .. etc.

3- The third part:

Observation checklist was constructed to assess the mothers' practice about infant care as stump care, breast feeding, cord care and baby bath.

The field work started from 15/7/1998 to 15/1/1999, the primiparous mothers were interviewed about their care of infants during their presentation in the M.C.H centers.

- Finding of the current study can be summarized as:

  - The mean correct answers of mother's knowledge about child health care where higher among urban residents than that among rural residents (71 ± 27 & 60 ± 27.3 respectively) P < 0.05.

  - The mean correct answers of mother's knowledge about infant immunization were higher among urban residents comparing with than that among rural residents ( 66 + 21 & 56 + 26.8 respectively) P < 0.05.
Summary

The present study showed that the mean correct answers of mother's knowledge about child health and accident protection were higher among educated mothers comparing with that among illiterate mothers (68.1 ± 27.3 & 55.8 ± 26.7 respectively) and (40 ± 30.5 & 22.2 ± 0.0 respectively) P < 0.05.

The study showed that there is no statistically significant difference was detected between illiterate and educated mothers concerning breast feeding & weaning as well as growth and development (P > 0.05).

- The mean knowledge of correct answers of mothers about infant immunization were higher among educated mothers than that among illiterate (62.1 ± 24.6 & 57 ± 23.8 respectively) P > 0.05.

- The study revealed that the mean of correct mother's practice about infant diaper care were higher among urban than rural residents (124 ± 36.7 & 111 ± 34.7 respectively) P < 0.05.

- The mean of correct mother's practice about breast feeding were higher between urban than rural residents (54.5 ± 27.7 & 49.7 ± 25.6 respectively) P > 0.05.

- The mean of correct mother's practice about diaper care and baby bath were higher among working mothers comparing with that among housewives mothers (134.8 ± 39 & 108.2 ± 31 respectively) and (63.7 ± 8.8 & 59.7 ± 6 respectively) P < 0.05.
The findings of this study can conclude as the following:

- Most of mothers had inadequate knowledge and poor practice regarding the care of their infant is related to the mother's education, occupation and the residence.

- The majority of mother's needs to increase information about their infant care not only from the television, radio and relatives put also the health professionals as physicians and nurse play an important role towards mother's education.

This study recommended that:

1- Encourage expected primparous mothers to attend the ante-natal clinic through:

   A- Approach teaching program for mothers through (Mass media, television, radio).

   B- Improving Quality of service provision in maternal and child health centers and health units especially in rural areas to follow up mothers and infants during anti-natal and post-natal period.

2- An effective health education program is needed to increase primiparous mothers awareness towards the infant care both knowledge and practices through home-visits, mother classes, television and radio.

3- Literacy program for mothers to overcome the problem of illiteracy particularly in rural residents.