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Factors contributing to mixed feeding practices amongst mothers and caregivers of 0-6 months infants at Maloma village, Limpopo province

Hilda Shilubane and Eric Mgozeli
University of Venda, RSA

The objective of this study is to investigate the perceived factors contributing to mixed feeding practices amongst mothers and caregivers of infants 0-6 months at Maloma village, Sekhukhune district of Limpopo province. A qualitative, descriptive research design was used in this study. The population for this study consisted of mothers and caregivers of infants 0-6 months. Data were collected through semi-structured individual interviews with 14 mothers and caregivers until data saturation was reached. Data were analyzed using eight steps as described by Tesch's open coding. Four themes emerged from the raw data which are: lack of knowledge about safe infant feeding practices; cultural and traditional beliefs; perceptions about the feeding choice and related risks; and poor support system. This study recommends that infant and young child feeding policy should be everybody's responsibility, and strategies to enhance safe feeding be employed. Full support should be given to new mothers immediately after childbirth to promote exclusive breastfeeding, thereby minimizing the use of formula and mixed feeding.