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PART A:

Journal Name:	International Journal of TROPICAL DISEASE & Health
Manuscript Number:	MS: 2012/IJTDH/1337
Title of the Manuscript:	<i>Breastfeeding and weaning practices in urban slum, north western Nigeria</i>
Manuscript received on (Date)	
Review comment submitted (Date)	



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PART B: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part and write here 'Corrected'/ if not agreed, give suitable justifications)
General comment:		
Specific comments:		
Title and abstract	Title Should change as 'In an urban slum area' Abstract- Methods section needs some more information about the methodology. Results- it is better if mentioned 'breast feeding was initiated by 83 mothers within 30 min of delivery.....and main reason for delay was the belief that colostrum was dirty (8-10). Nothing is mentioned about weaning practices. Conclusions- nothing mentioned about weaning	Agreed and effected Agreed and effected Agreed and effected lines 8-10 Agreed and included lines 8-10 Agreed and included line 16
Introduction	Introduction 1 22- 25 - These lines gives a wrong impression that exclusive breast feeding is important only for developing countries. 2 26,27 – This is a wrong statement. There are many countries which have high exclusive breast feeding rates up to 6 months. Further not all countries have adopted the recommendation of exclusive breast feeding up to 6 months. 3 31 – This sentence need to be rephrased. It appears to have been cut and pasted from the original article. 4 The introduction does not give enough information why study of this nature was undertaken and how the results of the study will help this community or the country in general. 5 It would have been better if it was briefly mentioned what this paper adds to the existing knowledge on the subject at the end of introduction.	Noted and deleted Agreed and adjusted Corrections effected lines 31-32 Agreed and corrections effected line 35 Agreed and correction effected line 38
Review of literature (Heading)	Review of literature	Noted but the extensive literature shows



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may differ in the case of review paper)	1 Extensive literature review has been done and cited. I wonder whether this paper discuss more about other studies done on this subject than findings of this study it self. I feel citations need to be cut down.	the much work done in other cnters which were used in the discussion for comparisons
Materials & methods (Heading may differ in the case of review paper)	Materials & methods 1 46,47 -For the sample size calculation exclusive breast feeding rate (EBR) has been taken as 13%, but in this population it was found to be 32%. This has resulted in underestimation of the sample size. 2 Study sample selected is inappropriate for objectives of the study. Study includes 66 children who are less than 6 months of age. Obviously factors like early weaning, premature stopping of breast milk, exclusive breast feeding for 6 months, type of weaning are not relevant for this group. Further, how can one assess exclusive breast feeding rate up to 6 months from a sample containing nearly half the children less than six months. Nature of the term 'exclusive breast feeding' is used throughout the article is also wrong. Exclusive breast feeding is defined as feeding a child with only breast milk, not even water, formula or any other food, but medicines, vitamins, minerals and ORS is excluded. Definition does not include any time duration. One has to mention that a child was exclusively breast feed for 6 months, 4 months and so on. 3 Study sample includes 11 children over 2 years and many aver 1 year. It is questionable the reliability of information like time baby was first breast fed, when was weaning started etc. Particularly in a study sample with more than one third has had no education, reliability of this information is questionable. If investigators had made any special effort to get this information reliably, then it needs to be mentioned. 4 It is not mentioned what actions were taken to minimise inter observer error as there is a large number of participants with no education. Whether the questions were open ended or whether answers were recorded after a discussion with mothers is not mentioned. 5 The operational definitions mentioned are wrong. 6 For a study of this nature where personal data was	Noted but the EBF rate of 13% used for P was from NDHS and the idea was not to underestimate the sample size EBF was taken as giving only breast milk for six months and moreover looking at the inclusion criteria, it was stated that those breastfeeding or had stopped breastfeeding not later than one year ago There are limitations on recall of information however as stated on line59, RAs made concerted efforts in making sure the study subjects supplied correct information including equating dates with special events in the community and the country. This involved proper training our RAs and proper supervision to ensure accurate capture of data Noted and corrected lines 62-74 Verbal consent was obtained and the



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	collected, I feel that obtaining informed written consent is the accepted practice. However if this is keeping with the policy of the journal it is OK.	subjects were given the option to opt out when they so wished
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Results & discussion (Heading may differ in the case of review paper)	Results 1 80, 81 and table 1- Age of mothers has been categorized in to 3 categories. This is inadequate as teenage mothers may have more difficulties and less knowledge which may have been an important finding. Better to break down age group to about 5 categories and have teenage mother in one category. 2 82, 83 – this information is repeated in the table 1. Define what is meant by formal education and so on, as these may have different meaning in different countries. 3 85 -93 – Here again the information in tables are repeated in text. The reason for mothers over 30 years had breast feeding early is because the sample seems to have a large number of teenage mothers. There is nothing new or significant about this fact. If teenage mothers were compared with other mothers it would have been more meaningful. 4 It is not specified whether mother's age is the age at the time of data collection or at time of birth of baby. As sample has a scatter of children more than 2 years of age, and maternal age has been used to compare results this distinction is very important. 5 Table 2. This has categorized initiation of breast feeding as < 30 min and then 30- 6 hours. This should have been more meaningful 30min – 1 hour. Though it is preferable to initiate breast feeding <30 min after birth feeding within an hour is quite acceptable. 6 Results in table 2 and 3 does not match (85- 89). According to table 2 only 60 babies had delayed initiation of breast feeding. But according to table 3 all babies had delayed breast feeding!! It says 99 delayed breastfeeding as they thought colostrum is dirty. This need to be clarified 7 94 -96- If we knew about the antenatal care these mothers received and place of delivery this information would have been more meaningful. 8 97-99- this sentence needs to be rephrased. 9 Table 2 mentions about age of stopping breast feeding and cause for it while methodology (41-42)says only mothers who were	Disagreed- there are standard ways of drawing up the ages with class interval and the idea of classifying based on if they are teenagers or older women does not arise, it is the class interval that matters Agreed and corrected. Formal education has been defined in line 74 Agreed and corrected Disagreed as initiation of breastfeeding is encouraged to be immediate ie 30 minutes, however some authorities report one hour and if its so 30minutes still comes under one hour. Agreed. mistakes detected and corrected Disagreed- the study did not have that in its scope Agreed, sentence rephrased Agreed, this has been reconciled in the inclusion criteria
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	breast feeding (inclusion criteria), were selected for the study. Again these 2 statements are contradicting each other. 10 105 -108 – according to this all babies are on weaning foods at the time of the study. But there are babies who are exclusively breast fed and only 32 had weaning started before 4 months. The study sample contains 66 children less than 6 months. These figures are not compatible with each other. Some serious error has taken place somewhere down the line. Discussion and conclusion will not be meaningful until these factss are verified as they are based on the results.	
Conclusion	Before commenting on conclusion I need to clarify issues related to methodology and results as conclusions are based on this	
References		