RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Theme 1: Community reactions and attitudes regarding infant feeding: finding the spread of HIV to infants and new born babies as well as children

Discussions with participants revealed that mothers want to stick to feeding options that are healthy to avoid HIV infection in the babies. However, most community members believe it difficult for those mothers to follow safe infant feeding practices. During interviews, the following emerged: Lack of disclosure makes it difficult for HIV positive mothers to stick to chosen method of infant feeding and cultural beliefs regarding infant feeding.

1.1. Lack of disclosure makes it difficult for HIV positive mothers to stick to chosen method of infant feeding

Participants indicated that failure to disclose makes it difficult for them to feed their infant correctly in order to avoid HIV infection. Discussions of the category will be given in detail in subsequent paragraphs. The quotations provided below have been followed by literal quotes.

"Disclosure is not easy, however, I am not working and I stay with my husband and my mother-in-law. Whenever I am afraid, should I disclose? I may be kicked out and I don’t have anywhere else to go.“

I told my sister about my status from that day she turned her back from me and now I imagine that is going to happen when I tell my aunt when my turn. Flesh and blood treat me like this.

Theme 2: Cultural beliefs regarding infant feeding

Participants illustrated that babies get hungry at an early age and the need for breast milk supplementation becomes higher.

"Traditionally, when a baby wakes up at night, a baby needs to breastfeed because if a baby goes hungry, a baby can’t sleep. A baby can’t sleep because a baby can’t eat. A baby needs to first eat before he can sleep.“

Theme 3: Physical problems experienced by mothers who are breastfeeding

Breastfeeding revealed that there are challenges experienced by mothers which are likely to make breastfeeding difficult. Two categories emerged and the quotations have been presented in the subsequent paragraphs.

3.1. Sore breasts make it difficult to breastfeed

"Most of the time, my breasts is sore and painful and I feel breastfeeding would kill me and at each I would prepare soft porridge to give to my baby and I feel the baby want to suck off the soft porridge.

"Maybe you were fortunate you have never experienced painful breasts, the type of pain is horrible and when the baby sucks you feel as if sharp pin is piercing your heart.

3.2. Severe illness resulting in lack of energy hampers feeding option for the baby

"When I am sick I struggle a lot failing to take of the baby and my in laws would ask me what is the matter, I don’t have any choice but to.“

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