

A Study to Assess the Breast Feeding Practices among Postnatal Mothers in Selected Hospitals at Puducherry

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Abstract: Breast feeding may be the single most important thing a mother can do for the health of her infant in the first year of life. Exclusive breast feeding is recommended worldwide as the optimal feeding for first 6 months of life and semisolid foods are recommended to be introduced after 6 months of age while breast feeding is continued up to 2 years to meet the increased physiological requirements of the infant. Even though majority of the mothers are aware of the importance of breastfeeding and have desire to breastfeed, still than they are not able to fulfil with full potency due to inappropriate feeding practices. So a study was undertaken to assess the breast feeding practices among postnatal mothers using a Breast Feeding Observation Checklist. Sample size was 53 and convenient sampling technique was used in this study. The results showed maximum mothers 32(60%) had appropriate position during breast feeding, about 19 (36%) had moderately appropriate and only 2 (4%) of the postnatal mothers had inappropriate positioning. With regard to baby's position during lactation maximum babies 27(51%) had appropriate position, 16(30%) babies were in moderately appropriate and 8(15%) babies were in inappropriate position during breast feeding. Regarding how mother initiates a feed showed majority 39(74%) of the babies were appropriate in reaching the breast, 12(23%) of the babies had moderate and only 2(4%) babies were inappropriate in reaching the breast. During breast feeding the signs of appropriate attachment indicated that maximum 42(79%) babies had appropriate attachment, 7(13%) of the babies were moderately appropriate and only 4(6%) had inappropriate attachment. Babies behaviour showed that 43(81%) had appropriate behaviour, 7(13%) had moderately appropriate and 2(4%) had inappropriate behaviour during breast feeding. Regarding babies behaviour at the end of the feed 37(70%) babies showed appropriate, 13(25%) were moderately appropriate and 3(6%) were inappropriate.

Keywords: Exclusive breast feeding, infant, optimal feeding, signs of attachment.

I. INTRODUCTION

“Children are a priceless resource and a nation which neglects those does at its peril” [Mahler, Director General, WHO, 1984].

Children represent the nation and bringing them in a healthy way is the responsibility of the citizens. Breastfeeding is the unique source of nutrition that plays an important role in the growth, development, and survival of infants. The benefits of breast feeding especially exclusive breast feeding are well established, particularly in all environments where the early introduction of other milk is of particular concern because of the risk of contamination and over dilution of milk leading to increased risk of morbidity and under nutrition.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To assess the breast feeding practices among postnatal mothers.
2. To develop an educational interventions in terms of knowledge and practice about breast feeding.

2. METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN:

Quantitative research design and Descriptive research approach

POPULATION:

All postnatal mothers at selected hospitals

SAMPLE:

100 postnatal mothers at selected hospital who were present during the time of data collection

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

Convenient sampling technique

SETTING:

Selected hospital at Puducherry

DATA COLLECTION TOOL:

The tool consists of section A and section B

- Demographic data.
- Breast feeding observational checklist

SECTION A:

It contains demographic variables, such as age & number of children

SECTION B:

Breast feeding observational checklist.

The tool consist of two sections namely the mothers position and baby's position during breast feeding and there are totally six parts under this two sections. The questionnaire is in the form of observation check list which is classified into six parts. It includes the Mother's Position, Baby's Position, how mother initiates breastfeed, and signs of attachment and at the end of the feed.

SCORING KEY

	INAPPROPRIATE	MODERATELY APPROPRIATE	APPROPRIATE
Mother's Position	0-1	2-3	4
Baby's Position	0-1	2-3	4
How Mother's Initiates Breastfeed	0-1	2-3	4-5
Signs Of Attachment	0-1	2-3	4
Baby's Behavior During Feed	0-1	2-3	4
At The End Of The Feed	0-1	2-3	4

3. RESULT

Table: I Frequency and percentage distribution of postnatal mothers according to demographic variables (n=53)

SL.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (n)	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	AGE (in years)		
	<30 years	30	57
	31-40 years	17	32
	>40 years	6	11
2	No. of children		
	Primi Mother	30	57
	Second gravid	22	41
	More than two children	01	02

Description of socio-demographic variables of postnatal mothers:

This section deals with the data pertaining to the baseline information of postnatal mothers. It is analysed and presented in terms of frequency and percentage distribution.

Table 1 describes that maximum postnatal mothers belonged to the age group less than 30 years (57%) and lowest, 6(11%) were of more than 40 years. Almost all 30(57%) mothers were primi mothers and only one mother was third gravida.

Table II-Assessment of breast feeding practices among postnatal mothers

	Inappropriate	Moderately appropriate	Appropriate
Mother's Position	32(60%)	19(36%)	2(4%)
Baby's Position	27(51%)	16(30%)	8(15%)
How mother's initiates breastfeed	39(74%)	12(23%)	2 (4%)
Signs of attachment	42(79%)	7(13%)	4(6%)
Baby's behavior during feed	43(81%)	7(13%)	2 (4%)
At the end of the feed	37(70%)	13(25%)	3(6%)

Table II describes that during breast feeding maximum mothers 32(60%) had appropriate position, about 19 (36%) had moderately appropriate and only 2 (4%) of the postnatal mothers had inappropriate positioning during breastfeeding, maximum babies 27(51%) had appropriate position, 16(30%) babies were in moderately appropriate and 8(15%) babies were in inappropriate position during breast feeding, majority 39(74%) of the babies were appropriate in reaching the breast, 12(23%) of the babies had moderate and only 2(4%) babies were inappropriate in reaching the breast during initiation of breast feeding, maximum 42(79%) babies had appropriate attachment, 7(13%) of the babies were moderately appropriate and only 4(6%) had inappropriate attachment. Babies behaviours showed that 43(81%) had appropriate behaviours, 7(13%) had moderately appropriate and 2(4%) had inappropriate behaviour during breast feeding, 37(70%) babies showed appropriate practice, 13(25%) were moderately appropriate and 3(6%) were inappropriate at the end of the feed.

4. DISCUSSION

Table 1 describes that maximum postnatal mothers belonged to the age group less than 30 years (57%) and lowest, 6(11%) were of more than 40 years. Majority of 30 (57%) mothers were primi and only one mother was third gravid. Breast feeding observation includes mother's position, baby's position, how mother initiates a feed, signs of appropriate attachment, baby's behaviours during the feed and at the end of the feed.

With regard to mothers position during breast feeding maximum mothers 32(60%) had appropriate position, about 19 (36%) had moderately appropriate and only 2 (4%) of the postnatal mothers had inappropriate positioning.

With regard to **baby's position** during lactation maximum babies 27(51%) had appropriate position, 16(30%) babies were moderately appropriate and 8(15%) babies were inappropriate during breast feeding. Regarding **mothers initiation of breastfeed**, majority 39(74%) of the babies were appropriate in reaching the breast, 12(23%) of the babies were moderately appropriate and only 2(4%) babies were inappropriate in reaching the breast. During breast feeding maximum 42(79%) babies had appropriate attachment, 7(13%) of the babies were moderately appropriate and only 4(6%) had inappropriate attachment. Babies behaviour showed that 43(81%) had appropriate behaviour, 7(13%) had moderately appropriate and 2(4%) had inappropriate behaviours during breast feeding. **at the end of the feed** 37(70%) babies showed appropriate practice, 13(25%) were moderately appropriate and 3(6%) were inappropriate.

The study revealed that majority of the postnatal mothers had appropriate breastfeeding practice in positioning the babies and attaching to the breast. All the mothers were given pamphlets which contains benefits of breastfeeding, breast feeding practices and also complementary foods which are homemade. The pamphlet was prepared both in English and Tamil to benefit the mothers.

5. CONCLUSION

53 postnatal mothers were selected by convenient sampling techniques. Breast feeding observation checklist was used to assess the breast feeding practices of the mothers which includes mother's position, baby's position, how mother initiates a feed, signs of appropriate attachment, baby's behavior during the feed and at the end of the feed. Majority of the postnatal mothers had appropriate breastfeeding practice in positioning the babies and attaching to the breast. Breastfeeding is the single effective measure to promote child health and to prevent child morbidity and mortality. So to achieve the millennium development goal in relation to child health it is the responsibility of all health care professionals to educate all antenatal mothers about the benefits of exclusive breast feeding and the proper feeding practices.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ A study can be conducted on knowledge of breastfeeding among antenatal mothers
- ✓ A study can be conducted on knowledge of breastfeeding among postnatal mothers
- ✓ A similar study can be done on a large sample.
- ✓ A longitudinal study can be conducted to evaluate the benefits of exclusive breast feeding on the growth and development of children.

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