



**KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE REGARDING BREASTFEEDING AMONG
POSTNATAL MOTHERS ATTENDING AT BHARATPUR HOSPITAL, CHITWAN**

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: To find out the knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding among postnatal mothers. **Materials and methods:** A descriptive cross-sectional study design was used to collect data from 90 Postnatal mothers. Mothers were selected purposively from postnatal ward of Bharatpur Hospital. Data was collected by using semi-structured interview schedule to find out the knowledge and observational checklist was used to assess practice regarding breastfeeding. Data was entered into IBM SPSS version 20 and analyzed by using of descriptive and inferential statistics. **Results:** Out of 90 respondent mean age was 23.68±4.31 years, 84.4% of respondent followed Hinduism and 46.7% were in house hold job. Mothers who had child had satisfactory practice than the mother who did not have previous child (p=0.001). More than one fourth of postnatal mother have poor level of knowledge on breastfeeding and nearly half of the mother have unsatisfactory level of practice on breastfeeding. Mother's knowledge was higher on meaning of breastfeeding (92.2%), meaning of colostrums (97.8%) whereas lower on continuous duration of breastfeeding (34.4%). Similarly mother's breastfeeding practice was satisfactory on sitting comfortable position (93.3%), whereas unsatisfactory on cleaning breast before feeding (4.4%) and burping baby after breastfeeding (2.2%). **Conclusion:** One fourth of postnatal mothers have poor knowledge and nearly half of mothers had unsatisfactory practice regarding breast feeding. Therefore breastfeeding awareness and proper breastfeeding technique should be conducted through health institution and community level for women to increase the level of knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding.

KEYWORDS: Breast Feeding, Postnatal Mother, Knowledge and Practice.

INTRODUCTION

Early breastfeeding is a practice of feeding newborn baby soon after birth or with 1hour of birth. Exclusive breast feeding (EBF) is the practice of feeding infant for the first six months of life on breast milk only, without any other types of food, not even water.^[1] Globally an estimated 1.3 million lives are lost each year due to inadequate exclusive breast feeding. Less than 35% of infants worldwide are exclusively breastfed during the first six months of life. Malnutrition is responsible for one-third of the 8.8million deaths annually among children under five. Over two of these deaths, which are often associated with inappropriate feeding practices such as bottle-feeding. Breastfeeding within one hour of birth was more common in urban areas (51%) than in rural areas (44%). Fifty-five percent of children in the Far-western region were breastfed within one hour of birth, compared with (34 %) of children in the Central region. Children born in a health facility were more likely to start breastfeeding within one hour of birth (56%) than children delivered at home (36%).^[2]

Proper breast feeding provides all essential nutrients for the first 6 months and is the most cost-effective

intervention for reducing childhood morbidity and mortality.^[3] Every year 57,000 under-five children lose their lives, among which 54 % of death occurs within the first month of life, 22 % of newborn deaths can be prevented through breastfeeding within the first hour of birth. Currently, only 53% of babies in Nepal are breastfed exclusively till the age of 6 months and 35% are breastfed within the first hour of birth.^[4] Promotion of proper breastfeeding practices for the first six months of life is the most cost-effective intervention for reducing childhood morbidity and mortality.^[5] Kathmandu Medical College Teaching Hospital (KMCTH) in Nepal among 100 women which revealed that 74% of women had heard about colostrum, 69% knew that it is nutritious milk to be fed to the new born babies. There were still many women (26%) who lacked knowledge about colostrum, majority being uneducated and who came from the rural areas.^[6] A study on infant feeding practices of mothers in an urban area in Nepal and a total of 168 mothers were interviewed. Findings revealed that the prevalence of breastfeeding was 99.4%. Only 43.5% of the mothers initiated breastfeeding within one hour of birth and 60.5% were practicing exclusive breastfeeding at 5 months. Almost 40% of the mothers started

complementary feeding before the recommended age of 6 months and 22.5% delayed introduction of complementary feeding beyond the recommended age.^[7]

Thus, this study aims was to find out these real facts of knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding among postnatal mothers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A descriptive cross sectional research method was used on October 2016 in the postnatal mothers at Bharatpur Hospital, Chitwan, Nepal. The purposive sampling technique was used; the sample size was 90 postnatal mothers. Those postnatal mothers who have baby with them and who were willing to participate within the 24 hours after delivery was inclusion criteria for this study were interviewed. Ethical approval was obtained from CMC, Institutional Review Committee. Informed verbal consent was taken from women for participation. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the study. The interview schedule was comprised of three sections to gather information regarding socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge and practice regarding breast feeding technique. Knowledge part consisted of 25 score. Each correct answer was given 1 score and 0 score for incorrect answer. The score was categorized as good knowledge (score of $\geq 50\%$) and poor knowledge (score of $< 50\%$). Practice was assessed by using observational checklist. The total practice score was 14 and the total score was converted into percentage. Similarly practice score was categorized as Satisfactory practice (score of $\geq 50\%$) and Unsatisfactory practice (score $< 50\%$).

Pretesting was done among 10% of the total sample size and necessary modifications were made. Outcome variable was measured by assessing the level of knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding. The independent variables were age, number of child, level of education, antenatal visit (ANC visit), and family structure, type of delivery, religion, mass/media and sex of the child. SPSS 20 version was used for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to calculate frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Chi-square test was used to find out the association between the independent and dependent variables. The level of significance is 0.05.

Ethical Consideration

Research proposal approval was obtained from College of Nursing, CMC. Permission for data collection was obtained from superintendent of Bharatpur Hospital. Informed verbal consent was taken from all the participants by clarifying objectives to ensure their rights. Confidentiality was maintained by using code number instead of name and interviewing each respondent separately. Confidentiality was assured by not disclosing the information to others. Respondents were allowed to leave anytime if they wish. Information was used only for the study purpose. Technical jargons were avoided while developing the instrument.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows socio-demographic variables of the respondents. Out of 90 respondents, 60 (66.7%) were between age of 21-30 years, 25 (27.7%) were of ≤ 20 years and 5 (5.6%) were of ≥ 31 years. The mean \pm SD (min, max) age was 23.68 ± 4.31 (16, 33).

Table. 1: Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics.

Variables	Frequency	(%)
Age in years		
< 20	25	(27.8)
21-30	60	(66.7)
> 31	5	(5.6)
Religion		
Hindu	76	(84.4)
Buddhism	14	(15.6)
Education level		
Read and write	5	(5.6)
Primary level	19	(21.1)
Secondary level	33	(36.7)
Higher secondary and more	33	(36.7)
Occupational status		
Service	5	(5.6)
Business	13	(14.4)
Farming	30	(33.3)
Housemaker	42	(46.7)
Family structure		
Nuclear	37	(41.1)
Joint	53	(58.9)
Number of child		
One	41	(45.6)
Two or more	49	(54.4)
Sex of newborn baby		
Male	45	(50.0)
Female	45	(50.0)

Mean age \pm SD=23.68 \pm 4.31year, Mini age= 16years, Max age= 33 years.

Table. 1. Respondents' Socio-demographic Characteristics (n=90).

Regarding religion, (84.4%) respondents followed hinduism and (15.6%) followed buddhism religion. Concerning toward educational status cent percent were literate. In relation to occupation, most of the respondents (46.7%) were house maker. Similarly, (33.3%) were in farming, (14.4%) were in business, (5.6%) were job holders. Most, (58.9%) respondents were belong to joint family.

Similarly, (54.4%) respondents have two or more baby and (45.6%) respondents have one baby. regarding sex of the baby (50.0%) respondents have male baby and (50.0%) respondents have female.

Table. 2: Respondents' Knowledge regarding Meaning of Breastfeeding and Colostrum.

Meaning	Frequency	(%)
Breastfeeding		
Normal way of feeding mother's milk to baby*	83	(92.2)
Feeding animal's milk to baby	1	(1.1)
Feeding mother's milk only after 24 th hour of birth	6	(6.7)
Immediate breastfeeding		
Breastfeeding soon or within 1hr of birth*	72	(80.0)
Breastfeeding after 5hrs of birth	7	(7.8)
Breastfeeding after 24hrs of birth	8	(8.9)
Breastfeeding baby along with honey and water	3	(3.3)
Exclusive breastfeeding		
Feeding only breastmilk upto 6months of age*	47	(52.2)
Feeding alternative foods upto 6months of age	33	(36.7)
Feeding breastmilk upto 1 year of age	1	(1.1)
Feeding breastmilk till 1 and half years of age	9	(10.0)
Colostrum		
First milk after birth of the baby*	88	(97.8)
Milk that secretes after 2days of birth	2	(2.2)

*Correct answer.

Table 2 Respondents' Knowledge regarding Meaning of Breastfeeding and Colostrum (n=90).

Table 2 shows that (92.2%) respondent answered normal way of feeding mother's milk to the baby is the correct meaning of breastfeeding. Regarding meaning of immediate breastfeeding, most (80.0%) respondents answered that breastfeeding soon or within 1 hour of birth and least (3.3%) respondents answered breastfeeding along with honey and water after the birth of the baby.

Accordingly, more than half (52.2%) respondents answered that feeding only mother's milk up to 6 months is the meaning of exclusive meaning of the breastfeeding. Almost all (97.8%) respondents answered first milk after the birth of the baby is the correct meaning of colostrum.

Table. 3: Respondents' Practice on Observation during Breastfeeding.

Variables	Yes n (%)	No n (%)
Mother sitting in comfortable position	84 (93.3)	6 (6.7)
Mother holding baby in comfortable position	42 (46.7)	48(53.3)
Mother cleaning her breast before breastfeeding	4 (4.4)	86 (95.6)
Baby's head and body are well supported	31 (34.4)	59 (65.6)
Baby facing towards breast with nose close to the nipple	76 (84.4)	14 (15.6)
Mother holding her breast in 'C' shape	28 (31.1)	62 (68.9)
Baby's chin touching breast during sucking	65 (72.2)	25 (27.8)
Baby's mouth opening wide	59 (65.6)	31 (34.4)
Baby's lower lip turning outward while sucking breast	51 (56.7)	39 (43.3)
Above areola is visible during breastfeeding	53 (58.9)	37 (41.1)
Sucking is good if there is slow deep suck with pauses	35 (38.9)	55 (61.1)
Mother talking and having eye contact with baby	8 (8.9)	82 (91.1)
Mother completely feeding one breast at a time	8 (8.9)	82 (91.1)
Burping after breastfeeding	2 (2.2)	88 (97.8)

Table 3. Respondents' Practice on Observation during Breastfeeding (n=90).

Table 3 shows that on observation out of 90 respondent (93.3%) were sitting in comfortable position and (53.3%) mothers hold their baby in comfortable position during breastfeeding. Accordingly, only (4.4%) respondents clean their breast with clean cloth and water before breastfeeding.

Seventy six (84.4%) respondents' during feeding baby faced toward breast close to the nipple and only (31.1%) hold their breast in C shape.

More than half (58.9%) respondents' areola was visible while breastfeeding. Only (8.9%) respondents had eye to eye contact with their baby while breastfeeding and eight (8.9%) respondents had completely feed one breast at a time.

Nearly two third (65.6%) respondent well supported the head and body of the baby during feeding. More than half (58.9%) respondents' areola was visible while breastfeeding. However only (8.9%) respondent have eye to eye contact with baby while breastfeeding and (8.9%) completely feed one breast at a time.

Table 4. Respondents' Level of Knowledge regarding Breastfeeding.

Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Good Knowledge	66	73.3
Poor Knowledge	24	26.7
Total	90	100.0

Mean Score \pm SD 14.8 \pm 3.46.

Table 4 shows only (73.3%) had good knowledge regarding breastfeeding. The mean knowledge score&SD was 14.8 \pm 3.46.

Table 5: Respondents' Level of Practice regarding Breastfeeding.

Level of Practice	Frequency	Percentage
Satisfactory practice	47	52.2
Unsatisfactory practice	43	47.8
Total	90	100.0

Mean score \pm SD (6.08 \pm 2.89)

Table 5 shows that only (52.2%) had satisfactory practice regarding breastfeeding. The mean practice score &SD was 6.08 \pm 2.89.

Table 6. Association between Level of Practice regarding Breastfeeding with Selected Variables.

Variables	Level of Practice		χ^2	p value
	Satisfactory n(%)	Unsatisfactory n(%)		
Age group				
\leq 24 years	31(62.0)	19(38.0)	4.311	0.380
>24 years	16(40.0)	24(60.0)		
Educational level				
Primary education	9(37.5)	15(62.5)	2.843	0.920
Higher education	38(57.6)	28(42.4)		
Occupational status				
Service holder	9(50.0)	9(50.0)	0.450	0.833
Non service holder	38(52.8)	34(47.2)		
Number of child				
One	15(30.6)	34(69.4)	12.702	<0.001
Two or more	28(68.3)	13(31.7)		

Level of significance at <0.05 Where, p value is computed from chi-square test.

Table 6 illustrates that number of child of respondent is significantly associated with the level of knowledge regarding breastfeeding. (p<0.001).

Table 7. Correlation between Knowledge Score and Practice Score Regarding Breastfeeding

Variables	(r)	P value
Knowledge Score Practice Score	0.221	0.036

Level of significance at <0.05 , r= Pearson correlation coefficient.

There was significant correlation between knowledge score and practice score regarding breastfeeding. It means that increase in knowledge increases practice regarding breastfeeding and vice versa.

DISCUSSION

As per the finding 52.2% of mothers heard about exclusive breastfeeding which is similar to the finding conducted by Tadele, Habta, Akmel and Deges (2016) which revealed that 59.3% have heard about exclusive breastfeeding.^[8] Likewise, 80% of respondent of this study knew about meaning of exclusive breastfeeding similar with the findings conducted by Mbada et al. (2013) which revealed that 80% of respondent knew about exclusive breastfeeding.^[9]

Similarly, 96.7% of participants said colostrum protects the baby against infection, which is similar to the study conducted by Joshi, Barakoti and Lamsal

(2012) which revealed that 41% of participants knows about colostrums that protects baby against infections.^[5]

Majority 65.6% of respondents were aware about burping which is supported by study conducted by Poreddi and Mythili (2015) which revealed that 91.8% of respondents were aware about burping. More than three fourth (90%) of mother said that it helps in mother and child bonding, which is supported by study conducted by Poreddi and Mythili (2015) which revealed that 97.5% mothers said it helps in mother child bonding.^[10]

Concerning on immediate breastfeeding 52.2% of mother know that immediate breastfeeding mean feeding within 1hour. Whereas the study conducted by Joshi, Barakoti and Lamsal (2012) which revealed that 92% of participants knew about the immediate breastfeeding.^[5]

Regarding duration of breastfeeding 34.4% of respondents said up to 2 years baby can be breastfed. This findings is similar to the finding conducted by Mbada et al. (2013) which revealed that 32.9% of respondents said up to 2years of age baby can be breastfed. Regarding benefits of breastfeeding 41.1% said it acts as family planning device. This findings is

similar to the finding conducted by Mbada et al. (2013) which revealed that 48% of mother said it acts as family planning device.^[9]

CONCLUSION

Three fourth of the respondents have good knowledge and more than half respondents have satisfactory practice regarding breastfeeding among postnatal mothers. All the respondents were literate but there is still lack of knowledge and some do not have well practice of breastfeeding technique. So, different concerning health institution should conduct different breastfeeding awareness program to teach mothers and care givers about the importance of breastfeeding and improve breastfeeding practice through different level in the community.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Authors have no conflict of interests.

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