

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Knowledge of Breast Feeding Positioning among Primigravida Mothers

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ABSTRACT

Background: Breastfeeding is the natural procedure of feeding a baby with mother's milk which is important for healthy life of a baby. Most common breastfeeding positions for nursing a newborn are cross cradle hold, cradle hold, side-lying and football hold.

Study design: Descriptive cross-sectional study.

Methodology: Non-probability convenient sampling technique were used for this study. The number of primigravida women participated in this study was 350. Instrument used for the study was the standardized questionnaire which gathered details on socio-demographic factors and maternal traits of primigravida women such as their knowledge about postures, positioning, hold practice and latch-on practice. Data was evaluated by using SPSS v.23. Qualitative data was presented as percentage and frequency.

Results: Almost, 56.6% participants had good knowledge while and 43.3% had a poor knowledge of breastfeeding positioning. 68.6% practiced advisable breastfeeding posture. Cross cradle hold (56.9%) was the most common breastfeeding technique with 18.6% cradle hold, 17.7% football hold and 6.9% side-lying position. About 75.7% mothers had baby to breast latch-on practice.

Practical Implication: This study brought attention towards the assessment of knowledge regarding different breastfeeding positions. Moreover, this study helped physiotherapists to evaluate the musculoskeletal problems in early stage so that they can provide awareness to mothers related effective breastfeeding positioning.

Conclusion: It was concluded that primigravida mothers showed the good knowledge of breastfeeding positioning. As all the mothers practiced advisable breastfeeding postures, adopted sitting on the side of bed to breastfeed, worked on cross-cradle hold and baby-to breast latch-on.

Keywords: Breastfeeding Positioning, Knowledge and Primigravida mothers.

INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is the natural procedure of feeding a baby with mother's milk which is important for healthy life of a baby¹. Breastfeeding is essential for having nutritional, developmental, psychological, social and environmental benefits². Breastfeeding also lowers the risk of newborn's health problems such as respiratory, cognitive and other disorders^{3,4}.

The prevalence of Exclusive Breastfeeding (EBF) worldwide is 40% for 6 months old babies. It can be varied in developed countries. According to World Health Organization (WHO), exclusive breastfeeding is advised for 6 months which can be carried up to two years and during the first three months of an infant's life, the newborn should be breastfed eight times a day.¹ Furthermore, 63.5% of women used Ineffective Breastfeeding Techniques (IBT)⁵.

Lactating women and babies can learn to breastfeed with practice and patience. Mothers' awareness of proper nursing positions during breastfeeding may have positive impact on the connection between mother and baby⁶. On the other hand, negative behavior of women towards breastfeeding position is thought to be substantial impediment to continue breastfeeding. It is important to focus on the level of awareness of lactating mothers regarding postures and positions of breastfeeding especially the young mothers who are entering into the motherhood for the first time⁷. Poor breast feeding may be caused due to the primigravida women's lack of understanding⁸. Primigravida working women feel exhaustion and stress, insufficient milk production, incomplete knowledge and anxiety of fussy babies⁹.

Mothers adopt a supporting position while nursing their newborns for comfort. Most typical positions for nursing a baby are cross cradle hold, cradle hold, side-lying and football hold. In cross cradle hold, arms switch roles so infant's body is along the forearm on the other side and it is the most common adapted breastfeeding position. In cradle hold, the head and neck of baby lying along

forearm of mother and his body against her stomach. In side lying, baby and mother lie on their sides next to one another and it is most comfortable position for mothers with cesarean mode of delivery. In football hold position, the mother breastfeed and carry the infant on the same side. Mechanical neck pain, low back pain, brachial plexus pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis, sciatica, radiating pain of elbows and hands are some problems related to ineffective breastfeeding posture. Low back discomfort is common in nursing moms as a result of postpartum weakness and a defective breastfeeding position in which mothers stoop over their babies instead of bringing the baby closer to them¹⁰. Despite the fact that the cradle hold position is related to more discomfort position with increased incisional pain, it improves breastfeeding experience and is more widely accepted as compared to football hold¹¹.

The tool to assess the knowledge among lactating mothers is the self-administrated questionnaire based on the information related to knowledge, sociodemographic and maternal attributes. It has the details related to breastfeeding postures, positioning, hold practice and latching techniques¹. It covers the general information which benefits to mothers and babies. It gives details on effective feeding method, length of feeding duration and breastfeeding issues⁶. This study brought attention towards the assessment of knowledge regarding different breastfeeding positions. Moreover, this study helped physiotherapists to evaluate the musculoskeletal problems in early stage so that they can provide awareness to mothers related effective breastfeeding positioning.

The objective of the study was to find out the knowledge of breastfeeding positioning among primigravida mothers.

METHODOLOGY

A Descriptive cross sectional study was conducted on 350 Primigravida women. Sample size was calculated by using World Health Organization (WHO) sample size calculator with 63.5% prevalence (P), 95% confidence interval (1- α) and 0.05 margin of error. The study settings were Ghurki Trust Teaching Hospital, Lady Willingdon Hospital and Shalamar Hospital. The sampling strategy

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utilized was non probability convenience sampling. The duration of study was 6 months. Permission from the Ethics Committee of the LCPT was obtained. Questionnaire was consisted of an information sheet that outlined the goals of the research, and explained that each individual's approval was taken. The respondents received assurances that their answers would be kept private.

Those primigravida women who aged between 20-35 years were involved. The duration of breastfeeding was 6 months up to 2 years taken. Women with all modes of delivery having breastfeeding positions (cross cradle, cradle hold, side lying, and football hold) were included. Women which were multigravida or with the history of Systematic disease, congenital disease, back pain before pregnancy or previous lumbar and abdominal surgeries were excluded from the study. Instrument used for the study was the standardized questionnaire which collected information on socio-demographic factors and maternal traits of primigravida women for instance as their knowledge about postures, positioning, hold practice and latch-on. Some of data was collected online through Google forms. Knowledge of participants was assessed through this questionnaire and categorized into good and poor knowledge.

Statistical analysis: Data was evaluated by using SPSS v.23. Qualitative data was presented as percentage and frequency. Descriptive statistics (tables and histogram) were used to describe the study's findings.

RESULTS

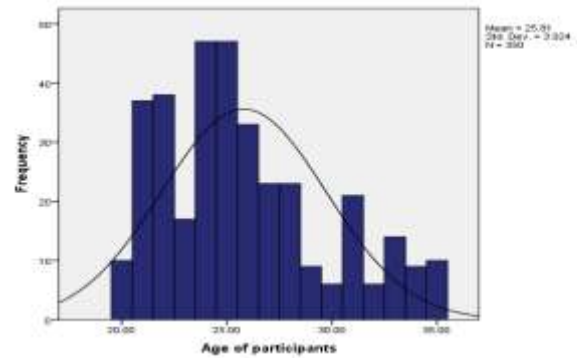
The detailed table representing the frequency and percentage of knowledge of breastfeeding postures, positioning, hold practice and latching technique among participants (Table-1).

The lowest age of participant was 20 years and highest age of participant was 35 years which was used in this study with mean of 25.8086 and standard deviation was 3.92267 as shown by figure-1.

Table-1: Knowledge Regarding Breastfeeding

Variable	Frequency and percentage
Have any one advised you breastfeeding posture practice?	Advisable 240 (68.6%)
	Not advisable 110 (31.4%)
In what position do you often breastfeed your baby?	Side lying 69 (19.7%)
	Sitting on a mat 12 (3.4%)
	Sitting on the side 255 (72.9%)
	Sitting on a chair 14 (4.0%)
Why do you adopt the position indicated in above question?	Comfort of the mother/baby 259(74.0%)
	Convenience 65(18.6%)
	Religion 17(4.9%)
	No obvious reason 9(2.6%)
What is your most common breastfeeding hold practice?	Cradle hold 65(18.6%)
	Football hold 62(17.7%)
	Side-lying 24(6.9%)
	Cross cradle hold 199(56.7%)
What is your latch-on practice?	Mothers who specified breast to baby 39(11.1%)
	Mothers who specified baby to breast 265(75.7%)
	Mothers who specified baby to breast and breast to baby 41(11.7%)
	Mothers who gave no specific answers 5(1.4%)
Which essential ergonomic posture you adopt while sitting to breastfeed?	Slight neck flexion 76 (21.7%)
	Foot rest 9(2.6%)
	Arm support (pillow) 203(58.0%)
	All of above 62(17.7%)
Have you ever experienced any pain, ache and discomfort in your body before as a result of your breastfeeding position?	Yes 305(87.1%)
	No 45(12.9%)
Which one of following positions are you associate with pain, ache and discomfort that you have experienced while breastfeeding?	No pain, ache and discomfort 45(12.9%)
	Side-lying 120(34.3%)
	Sitting on a mat 77(22.0%)
	Sitting on the bedside 32(9.1%)
	Sitting on a chair 67(19.1%)
What is your knowledge of breast feeding positioning?	Not sure 9(2.6%)
	Good 198(56.6%)
	Poor 152(43.3%)

Figure-1: Histogram showing descriptive statistics of age



Out of 350 participants, 10.3% participants (n=36) had lower secondary education, 111(31.7%) had higher secondary education, 153(43.7%) had graduation and 50(14.3%) had post-graduation as shown by table-2.

Table-2: Education of participants

	Frequency	Percent
lower secondary	36	10.3
higher secondary	111	31.7
graduation	153	43.7
post-graduation	50	14.3
Total	350	100.0

Out of 350, 271(77.4%) participants were housewives and 79(22.6%) were working women as shown by table-3.

Table-3: Occupation of participants

	Frequency	Percent
housewife	271	77.4
working woman	79	22.6
Total	350	100.0

Out of 350 participants, 141(0.3%) participants had spontaneous vaginal delivery and 209(59.7%) had cesarean section as shown by table-4.

Table-4: Modes of delivery

	Frequency	Percent
Spontaneous vaginal delivery	141	40.3
Cesarean section	209	59.7
Total	350	100.0

According to this study, out of 350 women 198(56.6%) participants had good knowledge while and 152(43.3%) had a poor knowledge of breastfeeding positioning as shown by table-5.

Table-5: Knowledge of breastfeeding positioning

	Frequency	Percent
Good	198	56.6
Poor	152	43.3
Total	350	100.0

DISCUSSION

The previous study on breastfeeding knowledge was conducted who determined the knowledge, attitude and techniques of breastfeeding mothers. The study assessed the postures, positioning, hold practice and latch-on practice on breastfeeding mothers. The study displayed good breastfeeding knowledge and a positive attitude. The majority of the mothers used recommended breastfeeding positions, preferred to breastfeed while sitting on the chair, and used cross-cradle hold and baby-to-breast latch-on¹. The objective of the current investigation was to assess the knowledge of breastfeeding positioning on primigravida mothers only. The similar findings were seen in this study as it also

supported the advisable, cross-cradle hold and baby-to-breast latch-on practice. The assessment of knowledge of breastfeeding positioning had not been the topic of investigation since now.

In another study, there was association of breastfeeding positioning with musculoskeletal pain in postpartum mothers. The most common posture was cross cradle hold, which was related to mechanical neck pain, whereas other positions revealed some musculoskeletal issues associated with breastfeeding. Mechanical low back pain was also seen in postpartum mothers¹⁰. The results of previous study were in accordance with the present study which shows that mostly primigravida mothers with poor knowledge are those who have musculoskeletal pain due to their improper breastfeeding posture and positioning.

In one of the previous studies, a survey about knowledge and practice of positioning technique and attachment of breastfeeding among postnatal mothers. More than half of postpartum mothers were found to have a reasonable level of understanding and good practice of breastfeeding. Practice was linked to age and equality. Overall knowledge was associated with practice⁶. In comparison with present study, there was no connection between parity and positioning method training. In this study, only knowledge of breastfeeding positioning was observed which shows that primigravida mothers had adequate quality of knowledge about the postures, positioning, hold practice and latch-on practice.

There was a study related to perception and knowledge of breast feeding among females in Saudi Arabia which showed that women in Saudi Arabia were well aware and the newborn's best start came from breastfeeding. The majority of females were well aware that nursing through mother's milk was of great benefit². The current study reflected that majority of the women heard about exclusive breastfeeding but it only had been observed in primigravida women.

The present study revealed that primigravida mothers in Pakistan had good knowledge about breastfeeding positions. The results of this study showed that sitting on the bedside was common and comfort of baby/mother was the important reason for adopting breastfeeding positions. Cross cradle hold was the most common breastfeeding technique among primigravida mothers. The latch-on practice of women was baby to breast. The majority of mothers agreed on the use of arm support with pillow was important while breastfeeding. This study helped the primigravida mothers to be aware of their postures and positioning during breastfeeding.

Limitations of study: The limitations included limited resources, small sample size and finance.

CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that primigravida mothers showed the good knowledge of breastfeeding positioning. As all the mothers practiced advisable breastfeeding postures, adopted sitting on the side of bed to breastfeed, worked on cross-cradle hold and baby-to-breast latch-on.

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