

# Knowledge and Practice Regarding Breastfeeding among Primipara Mothers of Obstetrics Ward, Guwahati, Assam

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**Abstract:** Breastfeeding is an ideal form of feeding to neonate. It is the most precious gift a mother can give and is free of cost. It should be started as soon as possible after birth. Breast milk is a species-specific complete food. Human milk facilitates effortless digestion for infant and is well absorbed by the newborn. It helps to stimulate the production of breast milk, protect against infection and facilitate mother - infant bonding, and promotes better brain growth. For mothers breastfeeding helps in the involution of uterus, delays pregnancy, and lowers risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Every year around 57,000 children below 5 years of age lose their lives, among which 54 percent die within the first month of life. The data stated that 22 percent of newborn death can be prevented through breastfeeding within 1st hour of birth. Mother play a very important roles in reducing neonatal mortality and neonatal morbidity rate by their knowledge and practice while feeding their baby. **Method:** A descriptive correlation study design was conducted in August 2021 at Pratiksha Hospital, Guwahati, Assam. The sample size was 50 primi para mothers. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select the sample. Semi - A structured interview schedule and observation checklist were prepared according to objectives which comprised questions related to demographic variables, Knowledge to assess breastfeeding, and an observational checklist to assess practice Data was collected by administering this structured questionnaire to the primipara mothers. **Result:** In the study, 31 (62.0%) had adequate, 19 (38.0%) had moderate, and none had inadequate knowledge regarding breastfeeding. 23 (46.0) had good, 27 (54.0%) had satisfactory and none of them had poor practice on breastfeeding. The results show that there was a moderate degree positive correlation between knowledge and practice.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Practice, Breastfeeding and Primipara Mothers

## 1. Introduction

Breastfeeding is an ideal form of feeding to neonates and should be started soon after birth, it also facilitates effortless digestion and is well absorbed by the newborn. It protects against infection, facilitates mother-infant bonding, and promotes better brain growth. For mothers breastfeeding helps in the involution of the uterus, delays pregnancy, and lowers the risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Every year around 57,000 children below 5 years of age lose their lives, among which 54 percent die within the first month of life. Sustainable Development Goals target for neonatal mortality i.e least 12 deaths per 1,000 live births and at least 25 or less under 5 mortality by 2030 unless urgent action is taken. (WHO,14th March 2024). The data stated that 22 percent of newborn deaths can be prevented through breastfeeding within 1st hour of birth.

### Objectives:

- 1) To assess the knowledge regarding breastfeeding among primipara mothers.
- 2) To assess practice regarding breastfeeding among primipara mothers.
- 3) To find out the correlation between knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding.

### Hypothesis:

There is a significant positive correlation between Knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding among primipara mothers.

### Need of the study:

Breastfeeding has been accepted as the most vital intervention for reducing infant mortality and ensuring optimal growth and development of children. (International Baby Food Action Network, IBFAN, 2007). Research conducted worldwide indicates that babies who are not on breast milk are 25 times more susceptible to disease (2014). According to the National Family Health Survey -4, 78.9 % of deliveries in India occur in institutes, although only 42.6% of new mothers initiate breastfeeding within 1 hour of delivery. Given the above statistics, I strongly feel that breastfeeding knowledge and practice level is still low in India. Hence as a researcher, I felt the need to conduct this study.

### Variable under study:

- **Demographic variables:** Age, Religion, Place of Resident, Method of Delivery, Educational level, Occupation of mother, Monthly Family Income, Type of Family, Source of information
- **Research variables:** knowledge and Practice regarding Breastfeeding.

## 2. Materials and Methods

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted to assess the Knowledge and Practice Regarding Breastfeeding among breastfeeding Primipara Mothers in the Post Natal Ward, Pratiksha Hospital, Guwahati. A structured Interview Schedule was used to gather the information from 50 primigravida mothers using a non-random purposive sampling technique. The reliability of the tools was tested by

using the Split half method with Spearman's Brown Prophecy formula and was found to be reliable at  $r$  (correlation coefficient) = 0.92. An Observational Checklist to assess practice regarding breastfeeding.

### Description of tool:

The instrument consists of three sections:

**Section 1-** Structured Interview Schedule consists of 9 items to assess demographic data.

**Section 2-** Structured Interview Schedule which consists of 30 items to assess the knowledge regarding breastfeeding. For each correct response, the score is given one; for every wrong response, the score is zero. So, the maximum score was 30.

**Section 3:** An Observational Checklist Containing 8 items with two options Yes/ No to assess practice regarding breastfeeding.

**Scoring:** The total questions of the structured interview schedule was 30 and each question had 4 options. The score is given one for each correct response, and for every wrong response, the score is zero. So, the maximum score was 30. In this study knowledge levels were categorized as adequate, moderate, and inadequate knowledge in Table:1 and practice scores as good, satisfactory, and poor practice shown in Table 2

**Table 1:** Knowledge score

Levels of Knowledge	Score (in marks)	Score (in percentage)
Adequate Knowledge	>23	>75 %
Moderate Knowledge	15- 22	50- 75%
Inadequate Knowledge	<15	<50%

**Table 2:** Practice score

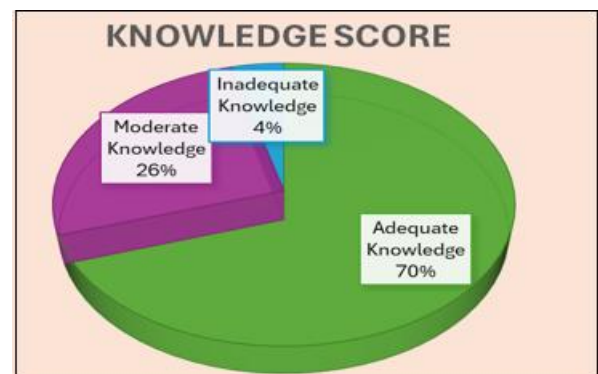
Levels of Practice	Score (in marks)	Score (in percentage)
Good Practice	>6	>75 %
Satisfactory Practice	04- 06	50- 75%
Poor Practice	<4	<50%

### Statistical Analysis

The collected data were tabulated, analysed, and interpreted through frequencies, percentages and standard deviation. Excel and SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) were used for the analysis of data.

### 3. Results

The study was conducted among 50 breastfeeding primigravida mothers in the Post Natal Ward, Pratiksha Hospital, Guwahati. In the present study, the majority of the respondents 25(50%) belonged 15-20 Years of age, 38(76%) were Hindu, 41(82%) resided in rural areas, 41(82%) had undergone vaginal delivery with episiotomy, 27( 54%) were non-formal education, 19 (38%) belongs to joint family, 42(84%) were housewife, 27(54%) have Rs.25,000/- and above per month income, 45(90%) have received information from family and friends respectively.



**Figure 1:** Pie diagram showing the knowledge score of respondents regarding breastfeeding.



**Figure 2:** Pie diagram showing the Practice score of respondents regarding breastfeeding

**Table 3:** Correlation between Knowledge and Practice score regarding breastfeeding.

Study Variables	Correlation	P Value
Knowledge	0.562*	0.000
Practice		

\*Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows that the coefficient of  $r$  was 0.562. This indicates that the knowledge level of mothers and their practice was positively correlated with each other. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and the research hypothesis was accepted. This means that when there is an increase in knowledge, practice scores will also improve.

#### 4. Discussion

The present study reveals that a maximum 35(70 %) of mothers who participated in the study had adequate knowledge, and 23(46%) of them practiced satisfactorily. According to a survey study carried out on Knowledge and practices of breastfeeding among 100 rural postnatal mothers who attended immunization clinic / Pediatric Out Patient Department at a tertiary care hospital, Indore, MP, India. Study shows that one third (34%) of the mothers were either illiterate or received only primary education. Only 18 % mothers had received antenatal counseling about breast feeding and 28% had their breast examination done. Although majority of the mothers (86%) were breastfeeding their babies, 22 % had initiated breastfeeding within an hour of delivery. 70% mothers knew that exclusive breastfeeding should be given for first six months and only 58% believed that it should be continued till 2 years age. 18 % mothers knew about the correct technique of breastfeeding. This study reveals that the knowledge and practices of postnatal mothers regarding breastfeeding are far from satisfactory and emphasizes the need for education of mothers especially during antenatal visits and whenever the healthcare providers get an opportunity to sensitize them about the correct technique, early initiation and exclusiveness of breastfeeding for first 6 months.

This study reveals that out of 50 mothers, 35 (70%) of women had adequate knowledge, 13 (26%) had moderate knowledge, and only 2 (4%) had inadequate knowledge of breastfeeding. 20 (40%) had good practice, 23 (546%) had satisfactory, 7 (14%) and poor practice on breastfeeding. The results show that there is a moderate degree of positive correlation between knowledge and practices.

#### 5. Conclusion

The study was developed to assess the knowledge and practices regarding breastfeeding among breastfeeding primipara mothers. In this study, a total number of 50 primipara mothers of the postnatal ward of Pratiksha Hospital, Guwahati were selected to assess the knowledge and practice regarding breastfeeding. The majority, 35(70 %) of mothers who participated in the study had adequate knowledge, and a maximum, 23(46%) of them practiced satisfactorily. The results show that there is a moderate degree of positive correlation between knowledge and practices. Thus, it can be concluded that provision of health teaching and demonstration is the only factors contributing to healthy breastfeeding practices among the mothers.

#### 6. Implications

##### Nursing Practice:

- Enhanced to conduct health education for the mothers to improve their knowledge and practices regarding breastfeeding.
- Training and demonstrations of different breastfeeding techniques should be integrated into clinical practice sessions to ensure students are well-prepared to demonstrate.
- Nurses with the required knowledge can be utilized to promote nursing health services.

##### Nursing Education:

The nursing curriculum should focus on the necessity of improving the strategies to strengthen breastfeeding practices. A nurse educator needs to know the existing level of knowledge and impart more insight into subjects that are important to the group. The midwifery students are taught to teach each mother about breastfeeding in the clinical posting using advanced technology, organize a breastfeeding week program, emphasize the need of breastfeeding for a healthy baby, and conduct practical and hands-on training.

##### Nursing Administration:

##### Nursing Administration

Staff development programs through continuing education, in-service education, short-term training courses, seminars as well as workshops can be planned and implemented for nurses to update their knowledge focusing on early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding.

##### Nursing Research:

Further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of educational interventions on NSI prevention and to explore innovative teaching methods.

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