

A Study on Early Initiation of Breast Feeding Among Postnatal Mothers in a Tertiary Care Hospital, Visakhapatnam

Dr.G.G Bhavani¹, Dr.P.Radhakumari²

Associate professor, Dept of Community Medicine, Andhra Medical College, Visakhapatnam,

professor, Dept of community medicine, Guntur medical college, Guntur

Corresponding Author: Dr.P.Radhakumari

Abstract: Breast milk is the most ideal and valuable food for the new born baby because it meets the nutritional requirements if given adequately and in appropriate manner. In India there are many barriers for initiation of breast-feeding within half an hour of birth. Hence a study was carried out with an aim to study early initiation of breast feeding and factors affecting early initiation breast feeding among postnatal mothers in a tertiary care hospital, Visakhapatnam.

Methodology: It is a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted in hundred postnatal mothers selected consecutively from postnatal wards in a tertiary care hospital. It was conducted in the month of November 2017 by using pre-tested semi structured questionnaire by personal interview.

Results: About 47% of the mothers initiated breast-feeding within the first half an hour of life in the present study. It was found that lack of knowledge regarding importance of early initiation was the major factor and also knowledge on how to breast-feed especially in primigravida.

Conclusion: There is a greater need for counseling for early initiation of breastfeeding from third trimester of antenatal period.

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I. Introduction

Breast-feeding refers to feeding of infants with breast milk and opposed to using formula feeds from bottles or any other containers. Exclusive breast feeding as per the World Health Organization and United Nations Childrens Fund is defined as feeding of the infant with only breast milk for the first six months of life without giving any water or pre-lacteal feeds except medicines and other vitamin drop.¹

Breast feeding is the standard way of feeding because it enhances sensory and cognitive development and is the most cost-effective way to reduce infant morbidity and mortality² Early initiation of breast feeding helps in reducing half of the perinatal deaths, one third of the neonatal deaths and also helps in proper involution of the uterus there by reducing postpartum hemorrhage.

The exact time of initiation of breast-feeding has been suggested right from birth of the baby even before the separation of placenta in the delivery room itself to within half an hour after delivery.³

In order to ensure proper breast feeding practices it is to be initiated as early as possible after the birth of the baby. Hence the present study was carried out to know the proposition of the postnatal mothers who are initiating breast feeding within half an hour after birth and factors influencing the early initiation of breast-feeding.

II. Methodology

It is a descriptive cross-sectional study conducted among hundred postnatal mothers in the month of November 2017, who were selected consecutively from postnatal wards of a tertiary care hospital, Visakhapatnam. The data was collected by using pre-tested, semi- structured questionnaire by face-to-face interview. An informed consent was taken from the mothers who were willing to participate after briefly explaining the purpose of the study. Confidentiality of the mothers was respected. Mothers who delivered one day before data collection and had normal vaginal delivery were considered for the study. Mothers who were not willing to participate and had undergone other than normal vaginal delivery were excluded from the study. The data was entered in MS Excel sheet and analyzed and represented in the form of tables and figures.

III. Results

Table: 1 Demographic Profile of study Population

Demographic profile	Study group(n=100)
Age	
<18years	1
19-25 years	74
26-30 years	20
>30 years	5
Place of delivery	
Rural	41
Urban	59
Type of family	
Nuclear family	43
Joint family	10
3 generation family	47
Income of the family	
Below poverty line	77
Above poverty line	23
Religion	
Hindu	88
Muslim	8
Christian	4
Occupation	
Professional	3
Semi-professional	1
Clerk	1
Skilled worker	2
Semi-skilled worker	2
Unskilled worker	4
Unemployed	87
Education	
Professional	1
Graduate	13
Intermediate	31
High school	26
Middle school	15
Primary school	7
Illiterate	7
Parity & type of delivery	
Primi	46
Multi	54

In the present study, 74% of the mothers were within the age group of 19 to 25 years, 59% belong to urban area, 47% were from three generation family and 77% belong to below poverty line (White ration card). Among the study subjects, 88% were Hindus and 87% were housewives. It was also found that 71% of the mothers were having educational status of high school and above.

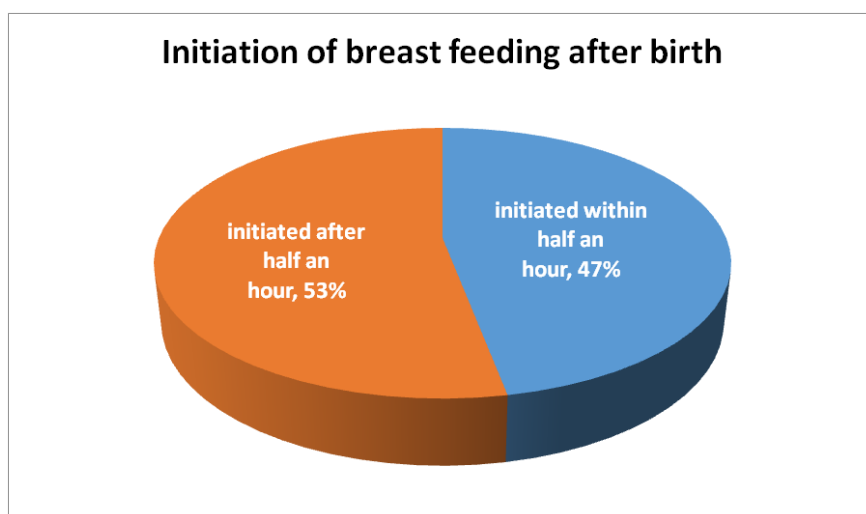


Figure: 1

Present study showed that 47% of the postnatal woman initiated breast-feeding within first half an hour of life. Early initiation was found to be more among multigravida (74%) compared to primigravida (26%) and is found to be statistically significant.

Early initiation was found to be more among mothers from urban areas (51%) than from rural areas (42%). Among the mothers having educational status high school and above early initiation was found to be more (73%) when compared to those below high school education (27%) and found to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

In the present study, 10% of the mothers discarded colostrum on the first day of life because of their cultural beliefs and 20% of the mothers had given pre-lacteal feeds on the first day.

Table 2 : Reasons for not initiating breast feeding within first half an hour of birth.

Reasons for not initiating breast feeding within first half an hour of birth.	No
Fatigue	5
Baby was not with the mother	4
Mother/mother in-law not to feed the baby	7
No milk secretion	11
Baby is not taking	4
Not aware	20
Pain due to episiotomy	2
Total	53

IV. Discussion

In the present study early initiation of breast feeding was found to be high (47%) when compared to a study conducted by Gami .N et al where it was only 18%.⁴ Whereas in another study conducted by Sowmini. P et al in Southern India it was found to be high (61.2%) when compared to the present study.⁵

Early initiation was found to be more among multipara(65%) in the present study whereas a study conducted by Syed Shuja Qadri , showed that the practice of exclusive breast-feeding was found to be higher among multipara.¹

In the present study common reasons for non-initiation of early breast feeding were lack of awareness (20), no milk secretion (11) whereas in a study conducted by Syed Shuja Qadri in Tamilnadu the main reasons were cracked, inverted and sore nipples.¹ Whereas in a study conducted by Bhatt Shetal et al at Vadodhara the main reasons for not initiating breastfeeding within first half an hour after birth were fatigue, C-section and baby was not with the mother.

Early initiation was found to be high in the present study (47%) when compared to NFHS 2014, India (44.6%)

V. Conclusion

Lack of adequate information to mothers is a major factor for late initiation of breast feeding . Lack of knowledge among postnatal mothers is the major factor for non-initiation of early breast feeding. In order to overcome this, dedicated healthcare providers can play significant role in improving the early initiation of breast-feeding.

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