

# A Study to Assess the Knowledge of Primigravida Mothers Regarding Exclusive Breastfeeding in Selected Hospital at Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh

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## Abstract

**Background:** Human milk is the ideal nourishment for infants' survival, growth, and development. Breast milk contains all the nutrients an infant needs in the first six months of life. Exclusive breast feeding means that the infant receives only breast milk. Exclusive breast feeding in the first six months of life stimulates babies' immune systems and protects them from diarrhea and acute respiratory infections. Exclusive breast feeding for the first six months of life is now considered as a global public health goal that is linked to reduction of infant morbidity and mortality, especially in the developing world.

**Aim:** The aim of the study was to assess the knowledge of Primigravida mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding and to associate the knowledge with their demographic variables.

**Methodology:** Quantitative approach with descriptive design was used to assess the knowledge of the Primigravida mothers at selected hospital at Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh in May 2018. A total of one hundred Primigravida mothers were selected by using convenient sampling technique. A structured knowledge questionnaire was used to collect the data.

**Results:** Out of 100 participants, majority (71%) had moderate knowledge, many (27%) had inadequate knowledge and very few (2%) had adequate knowledge. Significant association was found between the knowledge of exclusive breastfeeding among the Primigravida mothers with their occupation ( $\chi^2=40.22$ ) at 0.05% level of significance.

**Conclusion:** Breastfeeding is very important for an infant. Prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding up to six months is still low in India. Majority of the Primigravida mothers had inadequate knowledge regarding exclusive breastfeeding. Exclusive breastfeeding counseling in all reproductive and child health clinics especially during the antenatal and postnatal periods may help to improve the mothers' knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Primigravida Mothers, Exclusive Breastfeeding.

## Introduction

“There is no substitute for mother's love; there is no substitute for mother's milk.”

### William Gouge

The birth of the baby is an important event in the family. It is therefore important for the mothers to have a healthy baby. Breast milk is the best food for the babies as breast fed babies are healthier than formula fed babies.<sup>1</sup>

Child birth and breast feeding are unique experiences for women. They can only be cherished and nurtured by the health care workers, and the baby friendly way.<sup>2</sup>

Exclusive breastfeeding as defined by the WHO and UNICEF is the practice whereby the infant receives only breast milk from the mother.<sup>3</sup>

Breast feeding is the most natural way of infant feeding to satisfy nutritional, metabolic and psychological needs of the baby. A child who is breast fed has greater

chances of survival than a child artificially fed. Breast feeding significantly reduces the risk of death especially from diarrhoea and pneumonia in infants compared to formula fed babies<sup>4</sup>. It also protects the infant from early malnutrition and some infections.<sup>5</sup>

Breast feeding has shown to ensure quality survival, the risk of adult onset of disease like diabetes, allergic disorders like asthma, CAD, hypertension, celiac diseases, lymphoma and cataract is substantially reduced in later life. Breast feeding has advantage to both the baby and the mother. Owing to the advantages of the breast milk to the infants, WHO in 1993 took efforts to improve infant and young child nutrition by promoting breastfeeding WHO and UNICEF created and promoted Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in 1991, to ensure that all maternity services whether free standing or in a hospital, becomes centers of breastfeeding support.<sup>6</sup>

The World Health organization (WHO) recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life followed by breastfeeding along with complementary food for up to two years of age or beyond.<sup>7</sup>

According to breast feeding promotion network of India only 10% of hospitals and maternity facilities in India had BFHI status in 2005.<sup>8</sup>

### Objectives

1. To assess the knowledge of Primigravida mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding.
2. To find out the association between the Primigravida mothers with their selected demographic variables.

### Hypothesis

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their age.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their religion.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their occupation.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their education.

**H<sub>5</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their income.

**H<sub>6</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their dietary pattern.

**H<sub>7</sub>:** There will be significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding and their source of information.

### Methodology

**Research approach:** A quantitative research approach was adopted for the present study.

**Research design:** A descriptive design was adopted with a primary objective to assess the knowledge of the Primigravida mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding.

**Setting of the study:** The study was conducted at antenatal OPD in NRI general hospital, Chinakakani, Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh.

**Sample and sampling technique:** A total of 100 Primigravida mothers who were less than 36 weeks, who were not in active phase of labor and were attending the antenatal OPD at NRI general hospital were selected by using the convenient sampling technique. The study excluded the Primigravida mothers who were more than 36weeks and were in active phase of labor.

**Ethical considerations:** The ethical committee of the hospital approved the study.

**Method of data collection:** A structured knowledge questionnaire was used to collect the data from the subjects.

**Data collection procedure:** A written permission is obtained. The investigator informed the participants about the purpose of the study and has taken an informed consent from the same. The data were collected during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of May. All the Primigravida mothers (100) answered the questionnaire.

**Tool:** The data collection tool used in the present study was a 30 structured questionnaire. The tool was developed by reviewing various books, Studies and taking suggestions and opinions from the experts.

The tool was organized under the following sections: section A and section B.

**Section A** consists of questions on the demographic variables of the subjects such as: age, religion, occupation, education, income, dietary pattern and source of information of exclusive breastfeeding.

**Section B** consists of 30 knowledge items on all the aspects of exclusive breastfeeding. The items are closed ended questions. Each correct response is allotted a score ‘one’ and score ‘zero’ for each incorrect response. Maximum score for section B is 30.

**Plan for data analysis:** The data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The data collected was organized, tabulated and analyzed by using frequencies, percentage mean and standard deviation. Association between the knowledge with the selected demographic variables was analyzed by using chi-square test.

**Validity:** The structured questionnaire for the present study was validated by subject experts consisting of Obstetrics and Gynecological nursing personnel.

**Reliability:** The reliability of the test obtained was ‘0.89’. Hence the tool was considered reliable for proceeding with the study.

**Pilot study:** The pilot study was conducted by using 10 samples on 18.4.2018.

**Results**

**Table-1: Frequency and percentage distribution of socio-demographic characteristics of Primigravida mothers**

N=100

S. No.	Sample Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	<b>Age</b>		
	(a) 18-21 years	40	40%
	(b) 22-30 years	54	54%
	(c) 31-35 years	4	4%
2	<b>Religion</b>		
	(a) Hindu	55	55%
	(b) Muslim	22	22%
	(c) Christian	23	23%
3	<b>Occupation of Mother</b>		
	(a) Daily wages	5	5%
	(b) House wife	83	83%
	(c) Business	6	6%
	(d) Employee	7	7%

4	<b>Education</b>		
	(a) Illiteracy	2	2%
	(b) Primary	49	49%
	(c) Secondary	21	21%
5	<b>Income Per Month</b>		
	(a) 2,500-5000/-	17	17%
	(b) 5,001-10,000/-	25	25%
	(c) 10,001-15,000/-	42	42%
6	<b>Dietary Pattern</b>		
	(a) Non- vegetarian	4	4%
	(b) Vegetarian	7	7%
	(c) Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian	85	85%
7	<b>Source of Information</b>		
	(a) Families	55	55%
	(b) Colleagues	2	2%
	(c) Health Care Personals	24	24%
	(d) Media	19	19%

**Table-2: The mean knowledge score of the sample with standard deviation**

S. No.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Knowledge	16.82	3.53

The mean knowledge score of sample is 16.82 with a standard deviation of 3.53.

**Table-3: Distribution of sample by their level of knowledge with regard to exclusive breastfeeding**

N=100

S. No.	Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Adequate knowledge	2	2%
2.	Moderate knowledge	71	71%
3.	Inadequate knowledge	27	27%

The values in the above table shows that very negligible (2%) number of the Primigravida mothers had adequate knowledge, majority (71%) had moderate knowledge and a few (27%) of the Primigravida mothers had inadequate knowledge regarding the exclusive breastfeeding.

**Table-4: Chi-square value showing association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding with their socio-demographic variables.**

S. No.	Demographic Variables	Chi-Square Value	Table Value	Degree of Freedom
1.	Age	5.25 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6
2.	Religion	1.93 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6
3.	Occupation of mother	40.22*	12.59	6
4.	Education	2.44 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6
5.	Income	5.98 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6
6.	Dietary pattern	10.21 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6
7.	Source of information	2.57 <sup>NS</sup>	12.59	6

\*\*–indicates significant at 0.05 level of significance  
 ‘NS’–indicates non-significant at 0.05 level of significance.

**Discussion**

The present study was conducted with an aim to assess the knowledge of Primigravida mothers regarding exclusive breastfeeding. The results revealed that out of 100 participants 71% had moderate knowledge regarding exclusive breast feeding. This is supported by the results of the study conducted by Esha Sharma and Shantha Seelan who reported that out of 100 Primigravida mothers 77% had average knowledge.<sup>9</sup>

The present study showed significant association between the knowledge of Primigravida mothers on exclusive breastfeeding with their occupation ( $\chi^2=40.22$ ).

**Conclusion**

1. Majority of the Primigravida mothers were lacking knowledge regarding exclusive breastfeeding.
2. Significant association is there between the knowledge of Primigravida with their occupation.

Hence, there is need for the nursing personnel to impart knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding and its various aspects. Preparation of cost effective material and usage of the same for teaching by the nurse educator to be encouraged to conduct such education programs. Nursing students should be taught the importance of exclusive breastfeeding which will help them to educate the Primigravida mothers about the same.

**Recommendations**

1. A similar study can be undertaken on one sample with different demographic variables.
2. A similar study can be conducted using a large sample.
3. A comparative study can be taken up between primipara and multipara mothers/ Primigravida and multigravida mothers.
4. Studies on all aspects of exclusive breastfeeding can be conducted.
5. A study can be taken up with pre- experimental design.

**Conflict of Interest:** Nil

**Source of Funding:** Self

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