Original Article

Post Natal Exercise for maternal health: Attitude & Practice

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ABSTRACT:

Background: *The postpartum exercise changes the quality of life, physical activity, health, functional capacity, and physical fitness of postpartum women. This study is aimed at analyzing the adherence and practice of PNE.*

Objective: *To evaluate the adherence & practice of Post Natal Exercise (PNE). To analyze the effect of postpartum exercise on maternal health.*

Methods: *A hospital based physical interventional study conducted on 44 postnatal women who admitted for delivery. Data was obtained by interviews with patients and from hospital records.*

Results: *A total of 44 postnatal women were enrolled in the study. Regarding the attitude of PNE, 98.2% of the study population felt that it is essential, regular adherence is needed and they will emphasize others. On analysis of practice of PNE 68.18% responded. Among them 47.73% did exercise and 20.45% did not perform. Within the practiced group 70% performed daily and 30% performed occasionally, 93.3% experienced benefits regarding physical activity.*

Conclusion: *Education and motivation are important for practice of PNE. Also, obstetricians or health workers may influence continuously for adherence & practice.*

Key Words:
Postpartum period, Post Natal Exercises (PNE))

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Introduction

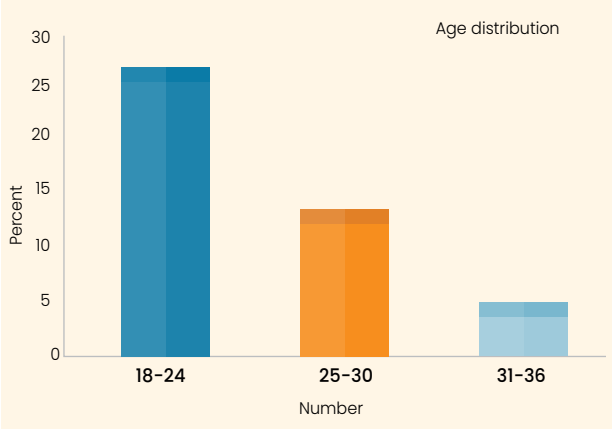
The puerperium, or postpartum time, presents challenges for women in resuming or sustaining physical exercise. Fatigue resulting from inadequate sleep and the obligations of child nursing may also lead to reduced physical activity levels.[1,2] The advantages of physical activity for the general populace are well recognized.[3] During this phase, the advantages include postpartum healing, facilitation of the return to pre-pregnancy weight, less risk for future chronic health disorders, enhancement of fitness metrics, mother-infant connections, and social engagement.4 PNE may start shortly after delivery with basic activities and progressively develop according on the individual's comfort level.[5,6] Although numerous studies have demonstrated that pelvic floor muscle exercises (PNE) significantly mitigate complications such as bladder urinary tract infections, many women remain uninformed about the comprehensive advantages of postnatal exercise. Additionally, certain cultural customs and superstitions may deter postnatal women from engaging in physical activity.[7,8,9] In light of the significance of exercise during the postpartum period attributes

of women in this phase, and the guidelines from leading international organizations, a targeted exercise program was created and verified.[10] This research aims to assess the attitudes and practices of post-natal moms about PNE.

Methods

This research was conducted at the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital in Dhaka, Bangladesh, during a duration of six months, from May 2024 to October 2024. Informed permission was obtained from participants participating in the research using convenience sampling. The inclusion criteria consisted of postpartum women aged 18 to 40 years without any medical contraindications for engaging in postnatal activity. Criteria for exclusion were any medical limitations to postnatal exercise. This prospective physical interventional trial used convenience sampling. Postpartum exercises were conducted in small groups or on an individual basis. A systematic questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was obtained from interviews and hospital records. A telephonic short-term follow-up was conducted one month later on the practice of PNE. Statistical analysis was conducted with SPSS version 22.

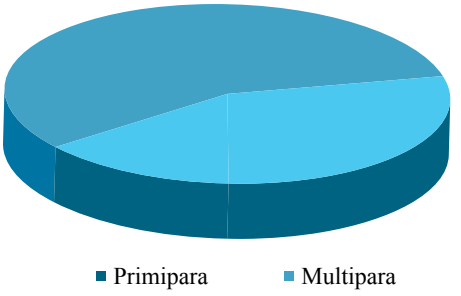
Results: A total of 44 postnatal women hospitalized for delivery were participated in the research. The sociodemographic features of the research group indicated that 61.36% of patients were under 24 years of age and had education levels below Secondary School Certificate (SSC).



Educational qualification

Education	Number	Percent
<SSC	27	61.36
>SSC- HSC	8	18.18
>HSC	9	20.45
Total	44	100

Parity status



Mode of Delivery

Mode of Delivery	Number	Percent
VD	25	56.82
CS	19	43.18
Total	44	100

Practice of PNE

Performance	Number	Percent
Performed	21	47.73
Not Performed	09	20.45
Not responded	14	31.28
Total	44	100

Regarding the attitude of PNE, 98% of the study population felt that it is essential, regular adherence needed and they will emphasize others.

On analysis of practice of PNE 68.18% responded. Among them 47.73% did exercise and 20.45% did not perform. Follow up not possible 31.82% cases. Within the practiced group 70% performed daily and 30% performed occasionally. Regarding the barriers of performance, baby care and household work were in 20.45% and 15.9% cases. Benefits of PNE experienced in 93.3% % cases among the practiced group.

Discussion

Total of 44 women with 61.36% cases <24 years of age were enrolled in the study. Of them 56.82% delivered vaginally and 43.18% delivered by the caesarean section. 52.27% were primigravida and 47.73% were multipara. This study group was similar with Jawaher et al, Mbada et a[8,9].

On analysis of the attitude of the study population revealed that 98.2% of the women felt PNE is essential. This is similar with the study of Sundaramurthy R et al[11]. This positive attitude may be constantly encouraged by subsequent postnatal visit or over phone consultation.

Regarding the barriers which prevent postnatal exercise, it is revealed that household work and baby care were 20.45% and 15.9% cases. This is also similar with the study of Sundaramurthy R et al[11].

On analyzing the practice of PNE showed that 70% practicing PNE daily, 30% practicing once or twice a week. Benefits of PNE regarding physical activity were experienced by 93.3% of cases among the practiced group. Sundaramurthy R et al found that 56% practice daily and 36.3% practice once a week and 88.8% experienced benefits[11].

There was no significant correlation between any socio-demographic characteristics with attitude and practice of PNE. In comparison to studies by Jawaher et al, Aiharqi et al, there is a positive association between women's education and knowledge with PNE[8,12].

Conclusion: Education and motivation are important for practice of PNE. Also, obstetricians or health workers may influence continuously for adherence & practice.

Recommendations: Awareness of people about the postnatal exercise is needed for the improvement of women health. Also, postnatal visits or consultation may influence the adherence of PNE.

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