

A29 A survey on the knowledge of proper breastfeeding practice and the existence of galactagogue food in habitual diet: A comparison between health science and non-health science female students

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Stunting is one of the silent pandemics that has affected 21.3% of the world population aged below 5 years. Breastfeeding is one of the practices that contributes to the reduction in rate of stunting prevalence. Food that contains galactogenic properties can be the alternatives to stimulate breast milk supply and prevent early cessation of breastfeeding. Hence, this study intended to assess and compare the level of knowledge among IIUM health and non-health sciences female students on the proper breastfeeding practice and the existence of galactagogue food in the routine dietary intakes. This was a cross-sectional study involving 110 IIUM female students where 54 of them were health science and 56 of them were non-health science students. Self-administered questionnaires were adapted from previous studies as research instruments. The results of the study indicates that on overall, 50% ($n=55$) of the respondents had poor knowledge on breastfeeding practice followed by 23.6% ($n=26$) of them categorised as having intermediate level of knowledge. Only 26.4% ($n=29$) of them met the mark of having high level of knowledge. Meanwhile, 63.6% ($n=70$) of the respondents were having poor knowledge on galactagogue food, 21.8% ($n=24$) in the group with intermediate knowledge and only 14.5% ($n=16$) met the knowledge score of higher level of knowledge. Among the respondents, the health science group (7.65 ± 0.329) demonstrated significantly ($p<0.001$) better knowledge scores of breastfeeding practices compared to the non-health science group. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference for knowledge score on the galactagogue food, despite non-health science female students (4.70 ± 2.456) attaining higher scores than health science female students (4.15 ± 2.736). Prior exposure to accurate breastfeeding knowledge should be increased among female university students to ensure they are well-prepared for their motherhood journey and carry out proper breastfeeding practices in future.