



“AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MOIST HEAT APPLICATION FOR REDUCTION OF POST EPISIOTOMY PAIN AFTER NORMAL VAGINAL DELIVERY AMONG POSTNATAL MOTHERS IN SELECTED HOSPITAL, GUWAHATI, ASSAM”.

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Abstract: The present study aimed to assess the effectiveness of moist heat application for reduction of post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery with the objectives to assess the level of post episiotomy pain before and after moist heat application and to find out the association between moist heat application for reduction of post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers with their selected demographic variables.

Index terms: effectiveness, moist heat application, postnatal mothers, post episiotomy pain.

Introduction: Care of episiotomy wound begins immediately after delivery and like any other wound it has to be addressed and if neglected may lead to severe complications like infection, wound gapping etc. Mothers usually face difficulties in carrying out the daily activities of living as well as to take care of herself and her baby and also to breastfeed the baby due to episiotomy pain. Therefore it is very important to give special attention to maintain perineal hygiene and episiotomy care. Frequent sitz baths can help reduce pain and keep the area clean.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the level of post episiotomy pain before moist heat application after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers.
2. To assess the level of post episiotomy pain after moist heat application after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers.
3. To assess the effectiveness of moist heat application for reduction of post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers.
4. To find out the association between the moist heat application for reduction of post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers with their selected demographic variables.

Methodology: With an evaluative approach, a pre experimental one group pre-test post-test design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Guwahati Medical College and Hospital, Assam and 60 samples of postnatal mothers were selected using purposive sampling technique. **Modified Ludwig Von Bertalanffy (1968) General System Theory** conceptual framework was used in this study. The tools used for the study were demographic performa and numeric pain rating scale. The analysis was done by using descriptive and inferential statistics in terms of frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, paired 't' test and chi square test.

Result: The present study showed that in selected demographic variables, majority of the postnatal mothers were in the age group of 24-29 years i.e., 36.7% (22), 38.4% (23) of the mothers had completed high school, 51.7% (31) of the mothers were primi gravida and had medio-lateral episiotomy of 100% (60) with interrupted method of suturing of 100% (60).

Table 1: mean, mean difference, standard deviation, t- value and p- value of pain score before and after moist heat application among postnatal mothers. n=60

Pain score	Mean	Mean difference	Standard deviation	t- value	Df	p-value	Inference
Pre test	7.92	4.39	1.013	29.85	59	0.00001	*S
Post test	3.53		1.081				

*S= Significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance ($t_{59} = 2.0010$)

Table 1 represents that the mean post test pain (3.53) score was lower than the mean pre test score (7.92). The calculated $t_{59} = 29.85$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.00001$ was significant at $p < 0.05$, thus research hypothesis (H_1) was retained. Therefore, moist heat application was proved to significantly reduce post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers.

The result of chi-square analysis revealed that there was no significant association between the pre-test level of pain score with the selected demographic variables i.e., age, educational status, gravida, type of episiotomy and method of suturing. Hence, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was accepted and research hypothesis (H_2) was rejected inferring that there is no association between the pre-test level of pain score with the selected demographic variables.

Conclusion: The study revealed that moist heat application is effective for reduction of post episiotomy pain after normal vaginal delivery among postnatal mothers. The recommendations suggested were, a similar study can be replicated in different settings with larger sample to strengthen the study findings and a similar study can also be done by using pain reducing herbs or agents along with moist heat application to know its effectiveness on reducing episiotomy pain.

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