

The Effects Of Empowerment In Conjunction With The Practical Skills Program Towards Knowledge, Attitudes And Skills In Promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding Among Postpartum Primigravida

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<p>Index Terms—</p> <p>Postpartum Primigravida / the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) / Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding.</p>	<p>Abstract— Background and importance of the problem: Exclusive breastfeeding, where mothers exclusively breastfeed their infants, is the most natural and beneficial way to feed a baby. Postpartum Primigravida are a key group to educate, change attitudes, and build skills to promote exclusive breastfeeding. This research aims to study the effects of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) towards knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida, compared to the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual.</p> <p>Materials and methods: The study was conducted on postpartum primigravida who were admitted to the postpartum Department, with a total of 90 people, between April and May 2025 using a quasi-experimental research method with 2 groups (Two group pretest-posttest design), which divided the sample into 2 groups with an equal number of 45 people each the study group and the control group. The study group received the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), while the control group received the standard knowledge program for breastfeeding as usual. The questionnaires used in the research were examined for content validity by three experts, including the personal factor questionnaire, the knowledge test in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (IOC=0.50-1.00), the attitude questionnaire in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (CVI=0.93), the skill assessment form in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (CVI=0.90), and in-depth observation interviews using the LATCH Score assessment form with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient reliability values of 0.71, 0.76 and 0.94, respectively. General data were analyzed using percentage statistics, means, and standard deviations. Research hypotheses were tested using Paired t-test and Independent Sample t-tests.</p> <p>Results: The result showed that the average mean scores on knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding after being given the program in the intervention group were higher than the score of the capacity in all three domains in the control group, statistically significant at 0.05 (p-value =0.000 all).</p> <p>Conclusion of the research: The research results concluded that the average mean scores on knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding after participating in the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) in the study group were significantly higher than the standard knowledge program for breastfeeding as usual in the control group at the 0.05 level. Accordingly, the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) for postpartum primigravida was able to promote knowledge, attitudes, and skills of exclusive breastfeeding with statistically significant at the 0.05 levels.</p>
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I. INTRODUCTION

Mother's milk is the best and most natural food for a baby, providing optimal nutrition, immune system support, antioxidants, vitamins, and even living cells, including beneficial bacteria for the baby's digestive system. Importantly, breastfeeding is a way to build a strong bond between mother and child, as well as promote optimal brain development and intellectual, emotional, moral, and patient intelligence. While breastfeeding is considered the optimal source of nutrition for infants, only 28.6% of mothers exclusively breastfeed for six months [1]. It was found that the number of infants who received breast milk as their main source of nutrition, along with water and beverages containing water, was as high as 45.3 percent, an increase from the survey in 2019, which found 42.1 percent. The Ministry of Public Health has a policy to promote, support, and protect breastfeeding for all children, following the World Health Organization's recommendations: breastfeeding within the first hour after birth, exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life, and continued breastfeeding alongside complementary foods until the age of 2 years or longer [2]. The goal is for 50% of infants to be exclusively breastfed for six months by 2025, aligning with global targets, as this is a crucial foundation for the health and quality of life of Thai children [3].

Strategic initiatives should align with and respond to the aforementioned policies and goals. Effective learning that creates maximum efficiency, which should focus on enabling learners to gain knowledge and skills in various practical skills that can be put into practice immediately after receiving the program. That is, the learner can immediately perform or act correctly, completely, and skillfully [4]. Therefore, pregnant women who have given birth or postpartum mothers are the main target group because they are at the most suitable time to learn in order to achieve the desired results. Postpartum mothers are in the period from the birth of the placenta until 6 weeks after giving birth, and this is a period when various organs change and return to normal as before pregnancy. In particular, mental changes have a great impact on the mother. Including physiological and psychological changes that prepare for breastfeeding [5]. Also, in the context of exclusive breastfeeding among primiparous mothers or first-time mothers after childbirth, who lack experience in exclusive breastfeeding, it has found that their attitudes and perceived self-efficacy in breastfeeding are moderate. Additionally, there are reported problems with breastfeeding during the first 6 months in primiparous mothers [6]. Supplementing this group of infants puts them at risk of infections and malnutrition, potentially leading to disability and death in infancy. In the long term, it also negatively impacts physical, social, and emotional development. The quality of human life should start in the womb and immediately after birth, which is the most important period for postpartum mothers, who should give importance to care, prevention, and reduction of mental complications, and enhance self-care and child care. Therefore, promoting exclusive breastfeeding is a key and essential measure for postpartum primigravida [7].

The research study on the concept and theory of promoting exclusive breastfeeding that focuses on the potential of postpartum primigravida. Knowledge, attitudes, and skills to promote exclusive breastfeeding should be developed. The researchers integrated the concept of empowerment, as defined by Gibson (1993) [8], which emphasizes self-management, with Harrow's (1972) [4], skills-based teaching approach, specifically for activities promoting exclusive breastfeeding in postpartum primigravida. This combined approach aimed to evaluate learning success related to knowledge, performance, and behavior, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, according to Bloom's taxonomy (1956) [9].

For the above reasons, researchers are interested in and aware of the importance of developing the potential of postpartum primigravida to gain knowledge, adjust attitudes, and increase skills to promote exclusive breastfeeding with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. In accordance with the policy of the Nursing Council [10]. By studying and developing a program to promote exclusive breastfeeding in postpartum primigravida. The researchers therefore studied the issue "The effects of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program towards Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills in promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding among Postpartum Primigravida."

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research aims to examine the effects of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) towards knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida, compared to the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on postpartum primigravida, who were admitted to the postpartum Department, Bhumibol Adulyadej Hospital, with a total of 90 people, between April and May 2025 using a quasi-experimental research method with two groups (a two group pretest-posttest design), which divided the sample into two groups with an equal number of 45 participants each the study group and the control group. The study group received the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), while the control group received the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual. The questionnaires in the research were examined for content validity by three experts, including the personal factor questionnaire, the knowledge test in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (IOC=0.50-1.00), the attitude questionnaire in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (CVI=0.93), the skill assessment form in promoting exclusive breastfeeding (CVI=0.90), and in-depth observation interviews using the LATCH Score assessment form with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient reliability values of 0.71, 0.76 and 0.94, respectively. General data were analyzed using percentage statistics, mean, and standard deviation. Research hypotheses were tested Paired t-test and Independent Sample t-tests.

IV. RESEARCH MATERIALS AND METHOD

This quasi-experimental study with research materials consisted of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in which the researcher integrated Gibson's (1993) [8] empowerment model with Bandura's (1997) [11] concept of perceived self-efficacy within the framework of social cognitive theory. This essentially means the study combined the idea of empowering individuals with the understanding that their belief in their own ability to succeed (self-efficacy) plays a crucial role in the empowerment process. The four-step process for empowerment was as follows: Discovering Reality, Critical Reflection, Taking Charge, and Holding on. In conjunction with Harrow's (1972) [4] practical skills teaching Harrow's (1972) [4] psychomotor domain model outlines five stages of skill development: Reflex Movements, Fundamental Movements, Perceptual Abilities, Physical Abilities, and Skilled Movements. This model emphasizes a progression from basic, involuntary movements to complex, coordinated actions. It is suitable for activities promoting exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida and can be used to assess the success of learning related to thoughts, performance, and behavior, which covers all three competencies: Cognitive domain (knowledge), Affective domain (attitudes) and Psychomotor domain (skills) [9]. This program consists of documents and teaching aids such as a Learner's guide, a Trainer's guide, a PowerPoint, a Supermom bag, a Video on breastfeeding, and a Guide on promoting breastfeeding. as shown in **Figure 1**: The Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP)

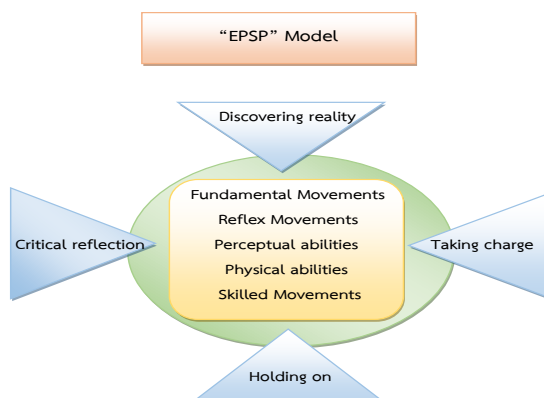


Figure: 1 The Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP)

I. RESEARCH RESULTS

The sample size was defined as 90 participants, divided into two equal groups of 45, the study group and the control group. The initially calculated sample size of 44.9 or 45 individuals per group might have led to errors, impacting the accuracy and reliability of the research. Therefore, the researcher has increased the sample size to 50 individuals per group to mitigate potential errors arising from sample loss during the study. The selection of participants was assessed for the qualifications of research participants. After that research participants signed a consent form to participate in the study, and purposive selection of study and control groups was performed. During the study, 45 participants were retained in each group, with 5 participants (10%) excluded from each group. Due to sample loss during the research, those participants were unable to participate in the project. The study group received Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), while the control received the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual, as summarized in **Figure 2: Sample Screening**.

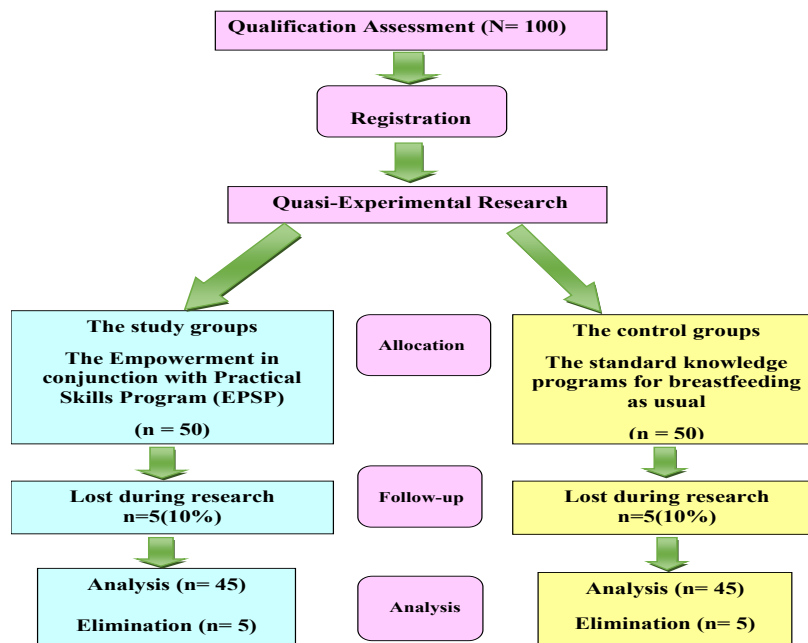


Figure 2: Sample screening

A comparison of the average score of knowledge before and after receiving the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group found that the average score of knowledge before receiving the program was 8.18 (S.D. = 2.55), while after receiving the program, the average score had decreased to 6.56 (S.D. = 2.03). The Paired t-test showed a T-value of 3.076 and a p-value of 0.004, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This showed that the average knowledge score of the control group decreased significantly after the change compared to the period before receiving the program. A comparison of the average score of attitudes before and after receiving the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group found that the average score of attitudes before receiving the program was 2.75 (S.D. = 0.47), while after receiving the program, the average score decreased to 2.69 (S.D. = 0.46). The paired t-test showed a T-value of 0.619 and a p-value of 0.539, which is greater than the significant level of $p = 0.05$. The results showed that the average attitude scores of

the control group before and after participating in the program were not significantly different. A comparison of the average score of skills before and after receiving the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group found that the average score of skills before receiving the program was 2.84 (S.D. = 0.41), while after received the program, the average score decreased to 2.59 (S.D. = 0.44). The paired t-test showed a T-value of 3.000 and a p-value of 0.004, which is less than the significance level of $p = 0.05$. The results showed that the average skills scores of the control group before and after participating in the program were significantly different, with a tendency to decrease after participating in the program, as described in **Table 1**. Table of results comparing the average score of Knowledge, Attitudes and skills before and after received the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group

	Trial period	\bar{x}	S.D.	df	T	P
Knowledge scores	Before	8.18	2.55	44	3.076	.004
	After	6.56	2.03			
Attitudes scores	Before	2.75	0.47	44	0.619	.539
	After	2.69	0.46			
Skills scores	Before	2.84	0.41	44	3.000	.004
	After	2.59	0.44			

Table 1. Table of results comparing the average score of Knowledge, Attitudes, and skills before and after receiving the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual, in the control group

A comparison of the average score of knowledge before and after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) in the study group, found that the average score of knowledge before receiving the program was 9.22 (S.D. = 5.93), while after receiving the program, the average score increased to 18.87 (S.D. = 1.75). The paired t-test showed a T-value of -9.788 and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the significance level of $p = 0.05$. It showed that the average knowledge score of the study group after joining the program was significantly higher than before joining the program, reflecting the program's effect on effectively increasing the knowledge of postpartum primigravida. A comparison of the average score attitudes before and after received the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) in the study group found that, the average score of attitudes before received the program was 3.29 (S.D. = 0.94), while after received the program, the average score increased to 4.72 (S.D. = 0.38). The paired t-test showed a T-value of 8.666 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). This indicated that the attitude scores of the study group after participating in the program were significantly higher than before participating in the program, reflecting that the program can clearly promote positive attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding. A comparison of the average score skills before and after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) in the study group found that the average score of skills before receiving the program was 3.13 (S.D. = 1.05), while after receiving the program, the average score increased to 4.51 (S.D. = 0.29). The paired t-test showed a T-value of -7.832 and a p-value of 0.000, indicating statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). It showed that the average skills score of the study group after received the program was significantly higher than before receiving the program, reflecting the program's success in developing skills for promoting exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida, as shown in **Table 2**. Table of results comparing the average score of Knowledge, Attitudes, and skills before and after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group.

Trial period		\bar{x}	S.D.	df	T	P
Knowledge scores	Before	9.22	5.93	44	-9.788	.000
	After	18.87	1.75			
Attitudes scores	Before	3.29	0.94	44	-8.666	.000
	After	4.72	0.38			
Skills scores	Before	3.13	1.05	44	-7.832	.000
	After	4.51	0.29			

Table 2. Table of results comparing the average score of Knowledge, Attitudes, and skills before and after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group

A comparison of the average scores of knowledge, attitudes, and skills after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group and the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group found that the study group had average knowledge, attitude, and skill scores of 18.87, 4.72, and 4.51, respectively (S.D. = 1.75, 0.38 and 0.29 respectively), while the control group had the average knowledge, attitudes, and skills scores of 6.56, 2.69 and 2.59 respectively (S.D. = 2.03, 0.46 and 0.44 respectively). The results of the test for the difference in scores between groups using the Independent Sample t-tests found that the T values for knowledge, attitudes and skills were 30.802, 22.846, and 24.512 respectively, the p-value was 0.000 all, which is less than the significance level $p < 0.05$. The results showed that the average score of knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the study group were significantly higher than the control group. This demonstrates the effectiveness of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in promoting knowledge, attitudes, and skills towards exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida, as shown in **Table 3**. Table of results comparing the average scores of Knowledge, Attitudes, and skills after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group and the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group

Sample group		\bar{x}	S.D.	df	T	P
Knowledge scores	Study group	18.87	1.75	88	30.802	.000
	Control group	6.56	2.03			
Attitudes scores	Study group	4.72	0.38	85	22.846	.000
	Control group	2.69	0.46			
Skills scores	Study group	4.51	0.29	75	24.512	.000
	Control group	2.59	0.44			

Table 3. Table of results comparing the average score of Knowledge, Attitudes, and skills after received the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group and the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group

Breastfeeding skills were assessed using the LATCH score, which evaluates five variables to assess: latch or suckle on the nipple and areola, the sound of swallowing, the shape of the mother's nipple, the comfort of the breast and nipple, and the baby's holding position or positioning during breastfeeding. The evaluation results showed that after participating in the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) in the study group, the breastfeeding skills score (LATCH score) was greater than or equal to 8 at 24 hours after birth, which was 32 (71.11%). In contrast, the control group had a LATCH score of greater than or equal to 8 at 24 hours

postpartum, there is only 13 (28.89%). The results of the test for the difference in score between the groups found that the p-value was 0.001, which is less than the significance level $p < 0.05$. The results showed that the LATCH score of greater than or equal to 8 at 24 hours after birth in the study group was significantly higher than in the control group. This reflects the effectiveness of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) that can effectively promote exclusive breastfeeding skills among postpartum primigravida, as shown in **Table 4**. Table of results comparing the level of LATCH score after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group and the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group

the level of LATCH score	Study group quantity (percentage)	Control group quantity (percentage)	P value
< 8	12 (26.67)	33 (73.33)	.001*
>=8	32 (71.11)	13 (28.89)	

* $P < 0.05$

Table 4. Results comparing the LATCH score levels after receiving the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in the study group and the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group

V. DISCUSSION

Discussion of the study “The Effects of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program towards Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills in promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding among Postpartum Primigravida”, a quasi-experimental study composed of the research objectives, research methodology, research hypothesis, and research results. The purpose of the research was to investigate whether the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program or EPSP towards knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida, compared to the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual.

The results showed that the average scores of knowledge, attitudes, and skills in the study group were significantly higher than the control group. This demonstrates the effectiveness of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP), in promoting knowledge, attitudes, and skills toward exclusive breastfeeding among postpartum primigravida. This is consistent with the research hypothesis, which supports the effectiveness of Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) that the researcher has integrated Gibson's (1993) [8] empowerment model with Bandura's (1997) [11] concept of perceived self-efficacy within the framework of social cognitive theory. This essentially means the study combines the idea of empowering individuals with the understanding that their belief in their own ability to succeed (self-efficacy) plays a crucial role in the empowerment process. The four-step process for empowerment is as follows: The First step is Discovering Reality, which encourages opportunities for the direct exchange of experiences and provides an opportunity for self-exploration in terms of knowledge, understanding, thoughts, and feelings. As well as past actions regarding the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding, having the opportunity to talk in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere will help build trust. The Second step is Critical Reflection, that provide an opportunity to exchange experiences and reflect on different ideas, leading to learning new concepts about exclusive breastfeeding. There is still an opportunity to use reason to consider one's own problems carefully. The Third step is Taking Charge, which encourage opportunities to learn, meet the own needs, increase self-confidence, and demonstrate appropriate behavior. And Holding on is The Final step, that develop a sense of self, being able to manage oneself and the environment, receiving encouragement, moral support, and good relationships with others.

In EPSP conjunction with Harrow's (1972) practical skills teaching Harrow's (1972) [4] psychomotor domain model outlines five-stage of skill development: The First stage is Reflex Movements, that Research participants were able to observe practices related to promoting exclusive breastfeeding, but were not able to learn or observe all the details. But at least they will be able to tell what are the main steps of practice in promoting exclusive breastfeeding. The Second stage is Fundamental Movements, which research participants saw and were able to articulate the steps of promoting exclusive breastfeeding that they wanted to learn, let allowing practice without any role models. they may practice according to the researcher's instructions or follow the researcher's instructions written in the manual. By practicing according to the teachings, even though the they may not be able to practice completely, at least the participants will gain experience in practicing and discovering various problems by themselves, which helps them learn and adjust their practice to be more correct and complete. Third stage is Perceptual Abilities, in the research participants were trained in promoting exclusive breastfeeding until they were able to do it correctly and completely without the need for a role model or instruction from the researcher. They will be able to do it correctly, accurately, and completely. Fourth stage is Physical Abilities, where the research participants were given more opportunities to practice promoting exclusive breastfeeding until they were able to perform it correctly, perfectly, fluently, quickly, smoothly, and with confidence. The final stage is Skilled Movements, that research participants were able to practice promoting exclusive breastfeeding comfortably and automatically. Without feeling the need for extra effort, which would otherwise require frequent practice in a variety of situations regarding the promotion of exclusive breastfeeding. This model emphasizes a progression from basic, involuntary movements to complex, coordinated actions. Suitable for activities promoting exclusive breastfeeding for postpartum primigravida and can be used to assess the success of learning related to thoughts, performance, and behavior, which covers all three competencies: cognitive domain (knowledge), affective domain (attitudes) and psychomotor domain (skills) (Bloom, B., 1956). This program consists of documents and teaching aids such as a Learner's guide, a Trainer's guide, a PowerPoint, a Supermom bag, a Video on breastfeeding, and a guide on promoting breastfeeding [12].

The research results are consistent with the research of Sirirat Kamacheewa and Jongkon Buakaew (2024) [13], on "The Learning Management Based on Harrows' s Instructional Model for Psychomotor Domain on Learning Achievement and Practical Skill on Making Thai Desserts of Grade 8 Students". The research results found that 1) Learning performance after learning management based on Harrow's instructional model for the psychomotor domain was higher than before learning, with results statistically significant at 0.05 level) Grade 8 students' practice skills after learning management based on Harrow's instructional model for the psychomotor domain were higher than the criteria of 80%, with the level being statistically significant at $p < 0.05$). Grade 8 students' satisfaction with learning based on Harrow's model for the psychomotor domain was the highest. And is also consistent with the research of Mrs. Peangpaitoon Namsak, Miss. Massarinpron Jooma, Miss. Nattiya Suphapu, and Miss. Phatcharida Orrapim (2023) [12], on "The Effect of Breastfeeding Promoting Program to Knowledge and Behavior of Postpartum primigravida in Private Ward VIP 4, 5 at Nongkhai Hospital". The research results found that Mothers' knowledge about breastfeeding of the postpartum primigravida after using the program was higher than before using the program, statistical significance at the level of $p < 0.05$. The breastfeeding behavior of postpartum primigravida was higher after using the program than before using the program, with statistical significance at the level of $p < 0.05$. In addition, consistent with the research of Maryam Dehghani, Ashraf Kazemi, Zeinab Heidari, and Fatemeh Mohammadi (2023) [14], on "The relationship between women's breastfeeding empowerment and conformity to feminine norms". The research conclusions indicate a positive relationship between the level of conformity to feminine norms and breastfeeding empowerment. Accordingly, it is recommended that supporting breastfeeding as a valuable role of women be considered in programs designed to improve breastfeeding empowerment.

CONCLUSION

The research results concluded that the average mean scores on knowledge, attitudes, and skills in promoting exclusive breastfeeding after participating in the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program

(EPSP) in the study group were significantly higher than the standard knowledge programs for breastfeeding as usual in the control group at the $p < 0.05$ level. Accordingly, the Empowerment in conjunction with the Practical Skills Program (EPSP) for postpartum primigravida was effective in promoting knowledge, attitudes, and skills of exclusive breastfeeding with statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level.

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