

Title: Understanding Mothers' Perspectives on Breastfeeding: Knowledge, Attitudes, Challenges, and Limitations

INTRODUCTION

Breast milk is universally acknowledged as the ideal source of nutrition for newborns, offering essential nutrients and immunity. However, despite its benefits, many mothers face barriers to successful breastfeeding. Only about 50% of infants under 1 month and 30% of those aged 1 to 5 months are exclusively breastfed. This study aims to explore the limitations and challenges faced by mothers in achieving exclusive breastfeeding (EBF).

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study was to identify and assess the challenges hindering successful breastfeeding among mothers. Secondary objectives included exploring confounding factors such as lack of privacy in joint families, employment, medical conditions, and use of galactagogues, as well as issues like mastitis, galactoceles, nipple discharge, and chemotherapy.

MATERIALS & METHODS

A prospective study was conducted over 18 months at KEM Hospital, involving 400 mothers. Data was collected through structured interviews and clinical assessments, focusing on maternal health, socio-economic factors, and breastfeeding-related issues.

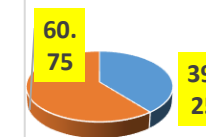
Inclusion Criteria: Postnatal women aged over 18 years, women with a history of poor obstetric outcomes (e.g., IUFD), women working at least 35 hours/week, women admitted to the ICU, women with communicable diseases.

RESULTS

- Majority of mothers were between 21 to 30 years old, 46.75% of the sample, followed by 31 to 40 years (25.5%) & no significant association was found between age and EBF.
- The study reported a 61.75% prevalence of EBF among mothers.
- Higher EBF rates (76.3%) among literate mothers compared to illiterate mothers (35.7%).
- Only 41.8% of employed mothers adhered to EBF versus 68.5% of non-working mothers.

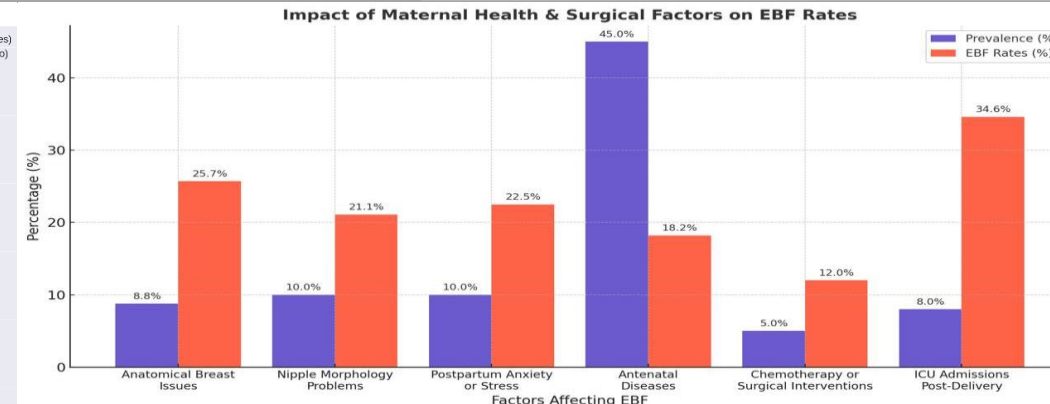
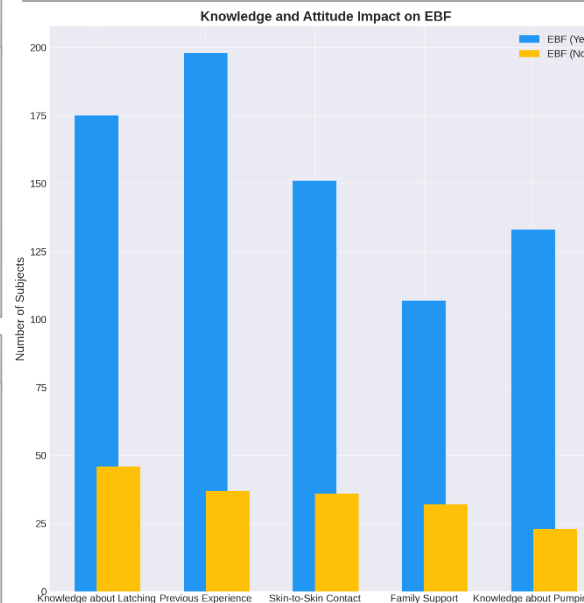
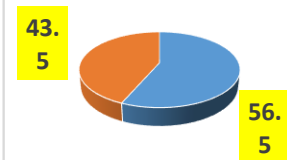
Prelacteal feeds

■ Yes ■ No



Lactation counselling

■ Yes ■ No



CONCLUSION

Improving maternal education, widespread lactation counselling, creating breastfeeding-friendly policies can enhance EBF. Interventions must target working mothers and with medical conditions to reduce barriers.

REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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