

A study to understand the attitude of mothers towards breast and infant feeding using Iowa Infant Feeding Attitude Scale at Pediatric and Obstetrics OPD of a 50 bedded Medical Center in Hyderabad.

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I. Introduction:

The Iowa Infant Feeding Attitude Scale (IIFAS), developed by De la Mora and Russell ⁶, has been found to be a reliable and valid instrument to assess women's attitudes regarding infant feeding and to predict the choice of feeding methods and duration of breastfeeding in diverse populations and in a number of countries ⁷⁻¹⁵Breast milk is recognized worldwide as the optimal food for newborns as it confers substantial health advantages to both the child and the mother ¹. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life is recommended, with the gradual introduction of complementary foods and continuation of breastfeeding up to 2 years of age or beyond ². However, most women do not follow them. Lack of education and local traditions and attitudes play a role in this. Psychosocial factors, such as maternal attitudes about infant feeding, have been found to be better predictors of feeding methods compared to sociodemographic factors ^{3,4}. The use of IIFAS was supported by a systematic review ¹⁶. Chen and Chi have shown that the maternal positive attitudes towards breastfeeding are associated with continued breastfeeding at the first postpartum month⁵A similar study was conducted in Mumbai with the title "Do fathers' attitudes support breastfeeding? A cross-sectional questionnaire- based study in Mumbai, India "by Sunil Karanda andSanjayPerkar.

II. Aim & Objectives:

The aim of this study was to understand the attitude of mothers towards breast and infant feeding .

III. Methodology:

A cross sectional questionnaire based study was done.IOWA infant feeding attitude scale developed by De La Mora and Russell has been used for this study.

IOWA infant feeding attitude scale

		SD	D	N	A	SA
1	The nutritional benefits of breast milk last only until the baby is weaned from breast milk.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Formula-feeding is more convenient than breast- feeding.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Breast-feeding increases mother-infant bonding	1	2	3	4	5
4	Breast milk is lacking in iron.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Formula-fed babies are more likely to be overfed than are breast-fed babies.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Formula-feeding is the better choice if a mother plans to work outside the home	1	2	3	4	5
7	Mothers who formula-feed miss one of the great joys of motherhood.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Women should not breast-feed in public places such as restaurants.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Babies fed breast milk are healthier than babies who are fed formula.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Breast-fed babies are more likely to be overfed than formula-fed babies.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Fathers feel left out if a mother breast-feeds.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Breast milk is the ideal food for babies.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Breast milk is more easily digested than formula	1	2	3	4	5
14	Formula is as healthy for an infant as breast milk.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Breast-feeding is more convenient than formula	1	2	3	4	5

	feeding					
16	Breast milk is less expensive than formula	1	2	3	4	5
17	Amother who occasionally drinks alcohol should not breast-feed her baby	1	2	3	4	5

For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree by circling the number that most closely corresponds to your opinion. You may choose any number from 1 to 5.

- 1 = *strong disagreement* [SD],
- 2 = *disagreement* [D].
- 3 = *neutral*[N],
- 4 = *agreement* [A],
- 5 = *strong agreement* [SA]).

Another questionnaire was distributed to the patients where there demographic data and the time period of exclusive breast feeding was noted.

Place and Time of study: The study was conducted at SIAMedical Rehab, a 50 bedded center located in Hyderabad, South India. Pediatrics and Obstetrics OPD was selected for the study. The study was done for a period of 6 months from January 2019 to June 2019.

Prior Permission to conduct the study was taken from the Hospital Management.

Sample size: A convenience sample of 50 mothers who visited the Pediatrics and Obstetrics OPD of the hospital was selected.

Inclusion Criteria:

All the mothers who had infants > 6 months and <1 year old.

Exclusion criteria:

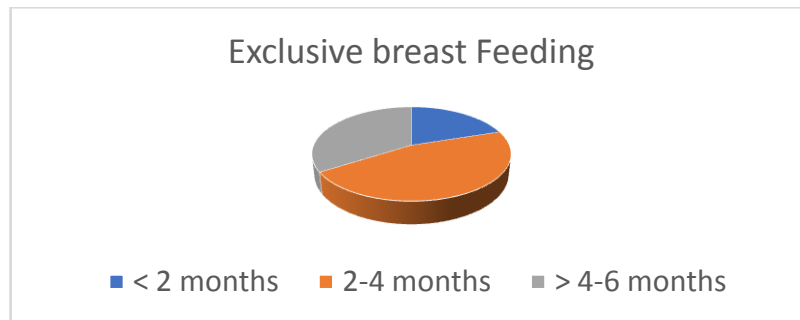
Mothers who had delivered Twins

Results:

Exclusive breast feeding for < 2 months – 10

Exclusive breast feeding for 2-4 months – 23

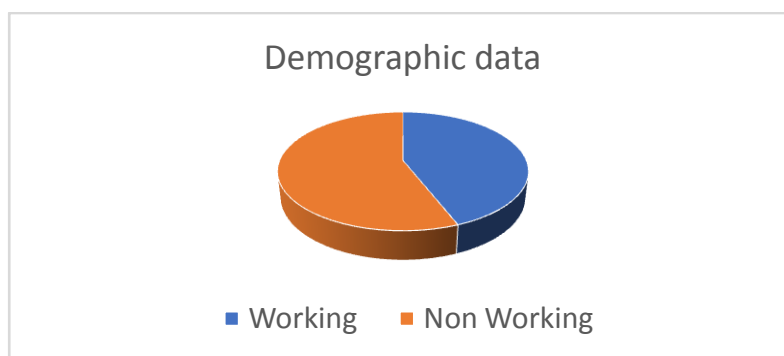
Exclusive breast feeding for 4 - 6 months or greater –17



Demographic data of mothers

Working -22

Non working – 28



S.no	Question	< 2 months N - 10	2-4 months N - 23	4-6 months N -17
1	The nutritional benefits of breast milk last only until baby is weaned from breast milk.	4.1	3.2	2.3
2	Formula-feeding is more convenient than breast- feeding.	3.6	3.7	3.7
3	Breast-feeding increases mother-infant bonding	4.2	4.5	4.9
4	Breast milk is lacking in iron	3	3.1	2.7
5	Formula-fed babies are more likely to be overfed than are breast-fed babies.	3.2	3.4	3.3
6	Formula-feeding is the better choice if a mother plans to work outside the home	4	3.8	3.8
7	Mothers who formula-feed miss one of the great joys of motherhood.	3.8	4.5	4.8
8	Women should not breast-feed in public places such as restaurants.	3	2.6	2.8
9	Babies fed breast milk are healthier than babies who are fed formula	3.8	4.2	4.6
10	Breast-fed babies are more likely to be overfed than formula-fed babies.	2.6	2.6	2.4
11	Fathers feel left out if a mother breast-feeds.	3	3.1	2.6
12	Breast milk is the ideal food for babies	4.6	4.8	5
13	Breast milk is more easily digested than formula	3.5	4.1	4.2
14	Formula is as healthy for an infant as breastmilk.	3.7	3.2	2.8
15	Breast-feeding is more convenient than formulafeeding	3.2	3.7	4
16	Breast milk is less expensive than formula	4.6	4.7	4.8
17	A mother who occasionally drinks alcohol should not breast-feed her baby	3.2	2.4	2.4
	TOTAL	61.1	61.6	61.1

IV. Discussion

According to the above study, of the sample size of 50 mothers, 10 gave exclusive breast feeding for less than 2 months, 23 mothers gave for 2-4 months and 17 mothers gave for more than 6 months.

The total IOWA score for the first category is 61.1, second category is 61.6 and third category is 61.1. Though the total scores are mostly similar, it is because of the mix of positive and negative questions.

For positive questions favouring breast milk such as Q 3 Breast milk increases Mother Infant bonding, it has been observed that mothers who exclusively breast fed the infants for a prolonged period had a higher score. Other such questions included Question nos 3, 7, 9, 12 and 13. For question no 12, Breast milk is the ideal food for babies, all the mothers who had exclusively breast fed for more than 6 months selected the strongly agree option resulting in an average score of a full 5.

Responses on similar lines were noted in another study done in Mumbai by Sunil and Sanjay Perkar.

V. Scope for Further study

A bigger sample can be selected and Statistical analysis can be applied to find out the correlation between Mothers positive attitude towards breast feeding and Mothers period of exclusive breast feeding. The scope of the current study was small in nature and hence the above could not be done.

VI. Conclusion

Mothers who have exclusively breast fed for a prolonged period have a more positive attitude towards breast feeding.

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