

Behaviors, Attitudes, and Knowledge of Exclusive Breastfeeding for 6 Months. In Health Service Zone 10

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Abstract

The objectives of the quantitative research were to: 1) Study the level of behavior, attitude, and knowledge 2) Study the relationship between behavior, attitude, and knowledge of breastfeeding for 6 months of postpartum mothers in Health Service Zone 10, a sample of 514 people, randomized by strata between June 2023 and January 2024. Statistical significance is set at 0.05.

The results of the study showed that a total of 56.31% of postpartum mothers breastfed their babies for 6 months and 46.69 percent who were breastfeeding for less than 6 months. Postpartum mothers have an overall breastfeeding behavior level of more than 70.00 percent. ginger tea It has the highest frequency of the practice level. 95.91 percent. There was a high level of attitude about breastfeeding for 6 months, and the overall level was very high ($\bar{X} = 4.47$, S.D. = 0.46). 50.39 percent is very high. 47.08 percent, respectively. The overall score was the highest ($\bar{X} = 21.92$, S.D. = 1.74). 94.16 percent, medium knowledge level, 5.84 percent, respectively

The relationship between behavior attitudes and knowledge were found to be about breastfeeding It was found that behavior, attitudes, and knowledge were statistically significant correlated with breastfeeding at the level of 0.05. Proper attitude and knowledge for mothers after giving birth so that breastfeeding alone can be completed for the next 6 months.

Keywords: Behavior, Attitudes, Knowledge, Breastfeeding Exclusive

Introduction

By 2025, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) The goal is to increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months to at least 50%. It was found that only 44% (World Health Organization, 2023) even though breast milk contains more than 200 nutrients, including white blood cells, hormones, and immunomodulators. It can help reduce the illness of infants (Siraporn Sawasdiwan, 2010). Breast milk also strengthens bonds. Whereas not receiving breast milk increases the risk of infection and diarrhea several times (Chananchida Somsuk, 2013). It also creates a burden of millions of dollars per year for mixed milk and disease treatment (UNICEF, 2016) for Thailand. Statistics in 2012 showed that the rate of breastfeeding alone in 0-1 month, 3 months, and 6 months was only 30%, 15% and 12.3%, respectively. MICS Data 2015-2016 It increased to 23.17%, but it was still below the target. MICS6 data in 2019 indicates that it

is only 14% below the global average and is considered the lowest in Southeast Asia (National Statistics Office, 2020).

The main problem is due to a lack of knowledge, skills, and preparation before returning to work. Mothers who work outside the home often do not breastfeed their babies for 6 months due to a lack of environment and support in the workplace. Kanchanasit and Pannatat In addition, social changes to single families and migration have led to a decrease in assistance (National Statistics Office, 2021).

Health Service Zone 10 (Sisaket, Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnatcharoen and Mukdahan) The rate of breastfeeding alone for 6 months fluctuated between 2013 and 2022, with many provinces still clearly lower than the WHO target (National Health Security, Region 10, 2022). Next 6 months.

Objectives

The specific research objectives that guided this study were as follows:

1. To study the level of behavior, attitude, knowledge and breastfeeding for 6 months.
2. To study the relationship between behavior, attitude, and knowledge and breastfeeding for 6 months.

Literature Review

Breastfeeding behaviors are high initial success, followed by a sharp decline over time. For example, the EBF rate may decrease from 95.3 percent in a 1-month-old infant to only 45.5 percent at 6 months of age. (Sisay Awoke and Belete Mulatu, 2021) The difference between a high onset rate and a sharp decline in the baby's 3-6 months He emphasized that the real challenge of promoting EBF is to maintain continuity, not just initiation. The fact that working mothers in Bangkok had a 6-month EBF rate of 38.1 percent, while the 3-month EBF practice rate reached 78.6 percent, further underscores the problem of maintaining continuity over the 3-6 months. (Nesrain Mubarak Alhamedi et al., 2025)

Although the majority of mothers (93.6 percent) had been informed about EBF, only a minority (34.7 percent) had accurate knowledge of the recommended duration of 6 months. (Nesrain Mubarak Alhamedi et al., 2025) Inequality has a direct impact on the success of EBF due to a lack of understanding of the rigor of the definition of EBF (that is, it is forbidden to give even plain water). This causes a number of mothers to make mistakes early on. It has been reported that some mothers give their babies water or other food from the first month of life (more than 38 percent in one study). The fact that healthcare professionals are the primary source of information (62.7 percent) but knowledge of the rigors of the definition remains low suggests that the communication of transferred knowledge may focus on raising awareness rather than emphasizing the technical validity required for a complete EBF practice. This lack of operational clarity is a major factor in the mispractice of infant health. (Peter Nwenfu Kakute et al., 2005)

The attitude of most mothers towards EBF is positive, with 89.5 percent expressing a desire to breastfeed only their babies. However, a positive attitude is often not strong enough to resist negative pressure or conflicting beliefs. In addition, cultural barriers, such as the belief that breast milk does not gain weight, or pressure from elders to feed traditional supplements, undermine efforts to treat EBF. (Niguse Tadele et al., 2016) Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy (BFSE) is a critical psychosocial variable that acts as a bridge between knowledge and attitude and behavior. (Wu, S.-F.V. et al., 2021) If the mother has a positive

attitude but is faced with common problems such as pain or concerns about perceived insufficient milk supply (PIMS), the feeling of low BFSE will weaken the positive attitude and lead to early termination of EBF. Effective interventions must therefore focus on building BFSE through counseling that helps mothers build "performance mastery". Overcoming challenges to strengthen a sense of self-efficacy leads to a commitment to sustainable EBF practices. (Roseline Galipeau. et al., 2018)

Research Conceptual Framework

This study conducts a review of concepts, theories, and related research and develops into a research conceptual framework, divided into primary variables consisting of behavior, attitude and knowledge. Breastfeeding for 6 months and breastfeeding for less than 6 months as shown in Figure 1

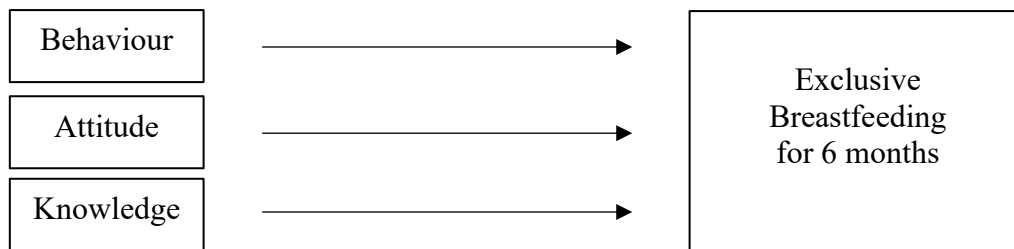


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Research Format This study is a quantitative research and data was collected in January 2024.

Population After giving birth in Health Service Zone 10, namely Sisaket, Ubon Ratchathani, Yasothon, Amnatcharoen, and Mukdahan, 25,279 people (Department of Health, 2022)

Inclusion Criteria:

1. Postpartum mothers with children aged 7-12 months in the area of Health Service Region 10

2. Willing to participate in the research

Exclusion Criteria:

1. postpartum mothers whose children are sick and unable to breastfeed.

2. Postpartum mothers with severe complications from childbirth, such as postpartum hemorrhage, etc.

The sample used in this study was postpartum mothers in Health Service Zone 10, calculated the sample size using the Taro Yamane formula (Boonchom Srisat, 2013). In order to prevent mortality during the study, the researchers determined an additional 30 percent of the sample size for 119 people, for a total of 514 people.

Research Tools

The tool used in this research is a questionnaire developed by the researcher from the review of the documents. Theories and related research are divided into 3 parts as follows:

1. Part 1 is a questionnaire about the characteristics of respondents, consisting of: Question General Information Factors of Respondents The questions are close-ended questions and open-ended questions in a check-list format.

2. Part 2 is a questionnaire on breastfeeding behavior. There are 14 questions, requiring respondents to choose to answer 2 options: Yes and No. as follows Answer Yes has a score of 1 point. Answer No, there is a score equal to 0 points.

3. Part 3 is a questionnaire about breastfeeding attitudes and knowledge only. It is divided into 2 areas: attitude and knowledge. The question is as follows:

3.1) Attitudes about breastfeeding only 16 questions were positive and negative. It is characterized by a rating scale that requires respondents to choose 5 options: strongly agree, moderately agree, and disagree. Strongly disagree, there are scoring criteria. as follows.

Comment level, positive messages, negative messages Strongly agree 5 Rating 1 score Agree 4 Rating 2 score Medium 3 Rating 3 score Disagree 2 Rating 4 score Strong Disagreement 1 Rating 5 score

The evaluation criteria divided the attitude level towards breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months, divided into 5 levels. An average score of 4.51-5.00 means that there is an attitude about breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months. An average score of 3.51-4.50 means that there is an attitude about breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months. An average score of 2.51-3.50 means that there is an attitude about breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months. An average score of 1.51-2.50 means that there is an attitude about breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months. An average score of 1.00-1.50 means that there is an attitude about breastfeeding exclusively for 6 months

3.2) In terms of knowledge of breastfeeding alone for 6 months, a total of 23 questions, the respondents are required to answer 2 options: yes and no. as follows Answer correctly, have a score equal to 1 point. Wrong answer has a score of 0 points. The researcher divided the level of knowledge into 3 levels based on the arithmetic criteria of the score. The level of knowledge is determined into 3 levels, based on knowledge which is based on the interpretation criteria. Using numbers to indicate the level of quality. (Prakong Kornsut, 1999) Score in the range of more than 19.00-23.00 points. Average knowledge, score in the range of 14.00-18.00 points. Low level of knowledge, score in the range of less than 0-13.00 points.

Instrument Quality Inspection

Instrument Quality Inspection 1. Content Validity by 5 experts to consider the Index of item objective congruence (IOC) of the question and the research objective from 0.75 or higher. It shows that the question is consistent with the issue to be evaluated and can be used (Waltz, Strickland, and Lenz, 2010). 2. Reliability Test: Try out the revised questionnaire with 30 non-sample postpartum mothers and analyze the Alpha-Coefficient according to Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient method (Teerawut Ekakul, 2009). It was found that the Kronbach's alpha coefficient of the attitude questionnaire was 0.806 and the knowledge was 0.772

Data Collection

After approval by the Human Research Ethics Committee. Ubon Ratchathani University We took the following steps:

1. Request a letter from Ubon Ratchathani University to the Director of Public-Private Hospitals Public-private organizations to obtain permission to conduct research and collect data.
2. Quantitative data collection The researcher collected the data by himself. 514 people
3. Check the completeness, accuracy, clarity and completeness of the data in order to analyze the questionnaire further

Data Analytics

After collecting all the information, Bring a questionnaire to check the integrity of the data. The scoring and coding of the data were prepared for computation using a ready-made computer program, including the distribution of frequencies, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and chi-square, with a statistical significance level of 0.05

Research Ethics

This research has been accredited by the Human Research Ethics Committee. Ubon Ratchathani University for Human Research Ethics Certification No. UBU-REC-98/2566 dated October 19, 2023.

Research Finding

Part 1 Personal information

Most of the postpartum mothers were between the ages of 20-34 years old, 77.04 percent had marital status, and 83.46 percent had the highest level of education in high school, diploma/diploma/or equivalent. 46.30 percent have general contract occupations, 22.76 percent have an income of less than 15,000 baht per month. 56.61 percent had extended family characteristics (parents/children/grandparents/ Grandparents / relatives) 72.76 percent and the right to medical treatment with a gold card 59.14 percent.

Part 2 Breastfeeding Behavior

Breastfeeding behavior of postpartum mothers It was found that 53.31% of mothers after giving birth had breastfeeding behavior for 6 months and breastfeeding behavior for less than 6 months 46.69% as shown in Table 1

Table 1: Percentage of Breastfeeding Behavior (N=514)

Breastfeeding Behavior	Amount	Percent
Breastfeeding for 6 months	274	53.31
Breastfeeding for less than 6 months	240	46.69
Overall	514	100.00

The breastfeeding behavior of the postpartum mothers is classified according to the presence and absence of breastfeeding behavior. It was found that most postpartum mothers have breastfeeding behavior. In the list, mothers often eat milk-nourishing foods such as tubers. ginger tea It has the highest frequency of the practice level. 95.91 percent, followed by mothers who regularly breastfeed their babies every 3 hours (92.22 percent) and mothers who breastfeed their babies from the breast from 30 minutes after birth (90.86 percent). The mother was on fire according to the advice of relatives. The mother regularly squeezes milk into a refrigerated bottle for her child. The percentage of practice was the lowest compared to the whole category, which was 70.23% and 70.62%, and when looking at the overall picture, it was found that the level of practice related to breastfeeding behavior of mothers after childbirth exceeded 70.00%, respectively, as shown in Table 2

Table 2: Number and percentage of postpartum mother's breastfeeding behavior and non-behavior (n=514)

List	Behaviour	
	Yes (percentage)	None (percentage)
1. Mothers often eat milk-nourishing foods such as tubers. ginger tea	95.91	4.09
2. Mothers regularly feed their babies every 3 hours.	92.22	7.78
3. Mothers let their babies suckle from the breast from 30 minutes after birth.	90.86	9.14
4. Mothers reduce work to have time to breastfeed their babies.	88.52	11.48
5. My mother used to take herbal medicine to stimulate milk.	79.57	20.43
6. My mother received 5 massages and herbal compresses from Thai traditional medicine.	73.54	26.46
7. My mother has been treated with herbs 5 times by Thai traditional medicine.	72.37	27.63
8. My mother was crushed by the doctor 5 times. Thai Plan	71.98	28.02
9. My mother used to consult herbal medicines from local doctors when the milk river did not flow.	71.60	28.40
10. The mother regularly squeezes milk into a refrigerated bottle for her child.	70.62	29.38
11. The mother was on fire according to the advice of relatives.	70.23	29.77

Part 3 Breastfeeding attitudes

Postpartum mothers' attitudes about breastfeeding were found to have a high level of attitude towards breastfeeding for 6 months, with the overall level ($\bar{X} = 4.47$, S.D.= 0.46). 259 people, 50.39 percent, very high. 242 people, 47.08% as shown in Table 3

Table 3: Number And Percentage of Samples Classified by Level of Attitude Towards Exclusive Breastfeeding of The Postpartum Mother Sample (N=514)

Attitude Level	Score Range	Amount	Percent
most	4.51 – 5.00	259	50.39
very	3.51 – 4.50	242	47.08
moderate	2.51 – 3.50	13	2.53
little	1.51 – 2.50	0	0.00
least	1.00 – 1.50	0	0.00
Overall		517	100.00
$\bar{X} = 4.47$ S.D. = 0.46			

Results of the analysis of attitude data on breastfeeding of postpartum mothers. When considering attitudes about breastfeeding exclusively for six months, it was found that postpartum mothers had an attitude about breast milk that was probably the best food for newborns up to six months. Breast milk is more valuable than anything else for the baby ($\bar{X} = 4.76$, S.D. = 0.49) and breastfeeding increases the love and bond with the baby ($\bar{X} = 4.75$, S.D. = 0.52). The item with the lowest average value is that mixed breastfeeding is not as convenient as breastfeeding but increases the cost of buying mixed milk ($\bar{X} = 3.86$, S.D. = 1.39) as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Attitudes About Breastfeeding Exclusively

Attitude	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	Results
1. Breast milk is probably the best food for newborns up to six months.	4.80	0.44	most
2. Breast milk is more valuable than anything else for the baby.	4.76	0.49	most
3. Feeding your baby from the breast increases the love and attachment to the baby.	4.75	0.52	most
4. If there is not enough milk, the mother should find every way to get enough milk.	4.72	0.59	most
5. Breastfeeding saves money.	4.72	0.56	most
6. Even if you are tired from work, it is important to let your baby suckle from the breast.	4.65	0.59	most
7. Completing 6 months of breastfeeding leave is an important period of life.	4.64	0.68	most
8. It is very important to express or pump chilled milk to deliver to the baby during the mother's work in a remote area.	4.58	0.71	most
9. Pumping milk in the refrigerator and heating it for your baby to eat is very valuable.	4.42	0.93	very
10. It is necessary to work to earn money to buy mixed milk for your child.	4.42	0.91	very
11. The use of mixed milk to feed the baby is necessary when the mother has to work outside the home.	4.37	0.89	very
12. Mixed milk should be given when breast milk is insufficient.	4.34	0.95	very
13. Mixed breastfeeding is used when breast milk is not enough.	4.34	0.95	very
14. Working to earn money to buy mixed milk to feed your baby only increases the cost and also has lower nutrients than breast milk and is not more necessary than breastfeeding.	4.19	1.17	very
15. Breastfeeding, although it makes the breast shrink, will give the baby good immunity. Have a healthy body.	3.96	1.20	very
16. Mixed breastfeeding is not as convenient as breastfeeding, but it increases the cost of buying formula.	3.86	1.39	very
Overall	4.47	0.46	very

Part 4 Knowledge about breastfeeding

Knowledge of breastfeeding of postpartum mothers was found to have a knowledge level score on breastfeeding alone for 6 months ($\bar{X}$ = 21.92, S.D. = 1.74). 484 people, 94.16 percent, moderate knowledge, 30 people, 5.84 percent, respectively, as shown in Table 5

Table 5: Number and Percentage of 6 Months of Exclusive Breastfeeding Knowledge (N=514)

Level	Score Range	Amount	Percent
high	19.00-23.00	484	94.16
moderate	14.00-18.00	30	5.84
low	0-13.00	0	0.00
Overall		514	100.00
$\bar{X}$ = 21.92 S.D. = 1.74			

Part 5 The relationship between behavior and breastfeeding

Breastfeeding behavior the correlation with breastfeeding was statistically significant at the level of 0.05 (χ^2 = 31.85 and p-value = 0.00), showing that mothers with appropriate breastfeeding behaviors were more likely to breastfeed for a longer period of time than those without improper breastfeeding behaviors. In the group with breastfeeding habits. It was found that mothers who breastfed their babies for 6 months had a high rate of 58.13%, while the group without breastfeeding behavior for 6 months had only 41.72%. 6 months, up to 58.28% as shown in Table 6

Table 6: Number and Percentage of Behavioral Levels Related to Breastfeeding for 6 Months

Behaviour	Breastfeeding				Overall	
	6 months		Less Than 6 months			
	amount	percent	amount	percent	amount	percent
yes	211	58.13	152	41.87	363	100.00
none	63	41.72	88	58.28	151	100.00
total	274	53.31	240	46.69	514	100.00
x ²	31.85*					
p	0.00					

*p-value < .05

Part 6 The Relationship Between Attitude and Breastfeeding

Attitudes toward breastfeeding are statistically significantly correlated with breastfeeding at the level of breastfeeding. 0.05 ($\chi^2 = 18.78$ and p-value = 0.01) indicates that mothers with moderate breastfeeding attitudes have the highest breastfeeding rate of 77.03% for 6 months. The highest breastfeeding rate for 6 months reached 61.15%, which corresponds to mothers with the highest attitude towards breastfeeding at 44.79%, respectively, as shown in Table 7

Table 7: Number and Percentage of Attitudes About Breastfeeding at 6 Months

Attitude	Breastfeeding				Overall	
	6 months		Less Than 6 months			
	amount	percent	amount	percent	amount	percent
moderate	10	77.03	3	22.97	13	100.00
very	148	61.15	94	38.85	242	100.00
most	116	44.79	143	55.21	259	100.00
total	274	53.31	240	46.69	514	100.00
x ²	18.78*					
p	0.01					

*p-value < .05

Part 7 The Relationship between Knowledge and Breastfeeding

Knowledge was correlated with breastfeeding at a significance level of 0.05 ($\chi^2 = 2.780$ and p-value = 0.43), indicating that the level of knowledge of the mother directly influenced breastfeeding decisions. The group of mothers with high knowledge is more likely to breastfeed their babies. 6 months (54.13%) Meanwhile, mothers with moderate knowledge breastfed their babies for less than 6 months at a higher proportion (60.00%) as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Relationship Between Knowledge and Breastfeeding

Knowledge	Breastfeeding				Overall	
	6 months		Less Than 6 months			
	amount	percent	amount	percent	amount	percent
moderate	12	40.00	18	60.00	30	100.00
high	262	54.13	222	45.87	484	100.00
total	274	53.31	240	46.69	514	100.00
x ²	2.780					
p	0.43					

*p-value < .05

Discussion/Conclusion

Behavior is directly related to breastfeeding and is an important predictor of complete breastfeeding. According to the recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), an important behavior is to allow the baby to breastfeed within the first hour after birth to stimulate effective milk production and secretion. (Kusumali Bothipassa et al., 2022), which increases the chances of continuous breastfeeding. Breastfeeding babies frequently for 2-3 hours (Health Center 9, 2020) instead of other supplementary feeding is a practical behavior that affects the maintenance of milk levels. Inadequate behaviors to deal with breastfeeding problems, such as breast compresses, drinking ginger tea, eating nourishing milk from the supply of family members, etc. (Achara Srisuvaphan, 2012), as well as expressing or pumping milk for proper storage. (Sunanda Sitvej et al., 2023) are all the main behaviors that help mothers maintain exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months.

Maternal attitudes are psychosocial factors that correlate with the intention and outcome of completing exclusive breastfeeding. 6 months (Acharobol and Pinkaew, 2023) Mothers with a positive attitude towards breastfeeding. It is confident that breast milk is highly nutritious and optimal for babies. There is a tendency to have the intention to complete breastfeeding alone. Therefore, encouraging mothers to have a positive attitude towards breastfeeding is an important strategy to increase the success rate of breastfeeding alone. 6 months.

A mother's knowledge of breastfeeding is classified as a modifiable factor that correlates with the success of complete breastfeeding. 6 months, mothers who have the correct knowledge and understanding of the benefits of breast milk (Kusumali Bothipassa et al., 2022), such as the most complete nutrition or strengthening immunity, etc., the correct practice, such as breastfeeding the baby as soon as possible within 1 hour after birth, or pumping as often as the baby wants, etc. This correct knowledge influences the mother's decision to choose breastfeeding exclusively and also strengthens the mother's confidence and self-efficacy in breastfeeding (Mayura Story Seri and Warathip Kaenkarn, 2019), which leads to correct and sustainable behaviors. 6 months because knowledge is the cornerstone to change attitudes and behaviors in accordance with the right practices.

Suggestion

1. Utilization of research findings: Promoting knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in accordance with the cultural context of the mother after childbirth.
2. Suggestions for the next research: The structure of the problem and solutions should be studied with the single mother group. Teenage mothers or low-income mothers

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