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Research Article

**KNOWLEDGE, APTITUDE AND PRACTICES OF MOTHER'S  
VISITING PEDIATRICS OPD OF VARIOUS PUBLIC SECTOR  
HOSPITALS OF LAHORE, REGARDING IMPORTANCE OF  
BREASTFEEDING****<sup>1</sup>Dr. Muhammad Hassaan Zafar, <sup>2</sup> Dr. Saad Zafar Butt, <sup>3</sup> Dr. Nadeem Sabir**  
<sup>1</sup>Jinnah Hospital, Lahore. Pakistan**Abstract:**

**Background and Objectives:** Although breastfeeding is a common practice in Pakistan, proper breastfeeding is on the decline. The impact of knowledge about breastfeeding practice is poorly understood. The current study is designed to explore the practices, attitude and knowledge towards breastfeeding and their misconceptions. Objective of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of mothers regarding breastfeeding.

**Material and Methods: Methods:** This is Cross sectional type of study conducted at Pediatrics outdoor departments of various public sector Teaching hospitals of Lahore including "Mayo Hospital, Services Hospital, Jinnah Hospital and Lahore General Hospital" during January – march, 2015 (03 months) with sample size of 170 patients. Consecutive non-probability sampling technique was used to recruit the patients.

**Data Collection and analysis:** The mothers who agreed to participate were given a self-designed questionnaire consisting of closed and open ended questions. The questionnaire covered basic characteristics of baby, family socio-economic status and knowledge, aptitude and practices regarding breastfeeding. Data analyzed in SPSS Version: 17.0 Results were recorded as percentages, graphs, means and standard deviations.

**Results:** 58.2% mothers belonged to age group 21-30 years, 40.5% mothers were under metric, 30% were illiterate and 21% were metric pass. 80% of the mothers think breastfeeding is ideal for babies, 26.5% think benefits of breastfeeding last as long as the baby is breastfed and 79% mothers think breastfed babies are healthier than formula fed babies.

**Conclusions:** The study showed that the lower rates of breastfeeding are influenced by factors like education, age, etc. Other unacceptable practices like pre-lacteal feed, lack of early initiation of breastfeeding and early weaning were found prevalent.

**Key words:** Breastfeeding, Colostrum's, KAP of Breast feeding

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## INTRODUCTION:

Breastfeeding has always been the ideal feeding practice for infants. There is extensive evidence of short-term and long-term health benefits of breastfeeding for infants and mothers. In addition to specific health advantages for infants and mothers, breastfeeding also benefits the society by reducing health care cost, parental employee absenteeism and associated loss of family income. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding (breast milk only, excluding water, other liquids, and solid foods) for the first six months of life, with supplemental breastfeeding continuing for two years and beyond [1]. Breastfeeding is associated with a reduced risk of infections Otitis media, gastroenteritis, respiratory illness, sudden infant death syndrome, necrotizing Enter colitis, obesity, and hypertension [2] as well as it protects mothers from breast cancer [3]. Human milk is species specific to optimize the growth and development of growing infant. 64th world health assembly in Geneva in May 2001 affirmed the importance of exclusive breast feeding for six months without even adding a drop of water to it [1].

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Turck.D conducted a study on the health benefits of breast feeding for both mother and child. The study revealed that breast milk contains hormones, growth factors, cytokines, cells etc. and offers many advantages over cow's milk or infant formulae [4]. Breastfeeding allows normal growth until at least 6 months. Breastfeeding is associated with slightly enhanced performance on tests of cognitive development. Exclusive breastfeeding for at least 3 months is associated with a lower incidence and severity of diarrhea, Otitis media and respiratory infection. Very few medications contraindicate breastfeeding. Breast feeding is also associated with a decreased risk of breast and ovarian cancer in the premenopausal period and of hip fractures and osteoporosis in the postmenopausal period. The investigator concluded that breast feeding should be on exclusive basis.

Dr. Jane Grassley conducted a study about the Mother's Guidance. To talk about her study on grandmothers' breastfeeding support for mothers, Dr. Jane Grassley talked to Hamish Holewa for IPP-SHR Podcasts. It was found that a grandmother's own infant feeding practices influenced mothers' decisions to initiate and continue breastfeeding. Open encouragement and support from grandmothers assisted a mother's decision to breastfeed and helped protect the mother from ongoing justification of breastfeeding [5]. It was also shown that there were

numerous myths that persisted in relation to breastfeeding; including: concern that a mother is not making enough milk, which exclusive breastfeeding did not deliver all dietary requirements and that breastfeeding "just did not work anymore". Practical implications suggest including grandmothers in breastfeeding conversations with health professionals, encouraging grandmothers to tell stories about their experiences, and providing additional information to grandmothers.

Vandenplas conducted a study about the Myths and facts about breastfeeding. The study shows that Exclusive human milk feeding during the first 6 months of life, with delayed introduction of solids, is the recommended feeding for human infants. Human milk reduces the incidence and morbidity related to infection and allergy to cow's milk proteins [6]. Dietary maternal restrictions during pregnancy or lactation cannot be recommended, but may be advised in special cases. A maternal elimination diet seems more effective if associated with environmental hypoallergenic intervention. Milk from mothers consuming cow's milk proteins contains small amounts of beta-lacto globulin, which appear to introduce in the majority of infants both atopic and non-atopic tolerance rather than sensitization. However, it is uncertain whether breastfeeding also reduces the incidence of later atopic disease, since its etiology is multifactorial.

## OBJECTIVES:

The objective of the study was to assess mother's knowledge, attitude and practices regarding breastfeeding, and identify breast feeding.

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION:

According to WHO various forms of breastfeeding are

- **Exclusive Breastfeeding:** It requires that the infant receive breast milk only (including milk expressed or from a wet nurse). It allows the infant to receive ORS, drops, syrups (vitamins, minerals, medicine) but not anything else.
- **Predominant Breastfeeding:** It requires that the infant receive breast milk as the predominant source of nourishment. It allows the infant to receive certain liquids (water, juice etc.), ritual fluids and ORS, drops and syrups but not anything else.
- **Complementary Feeding:** It allows that the infant receive breast milk along with some solid or semi-solid foods.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:****Methods:**

This is Cross sectional type of study conducted at Pediatrics outdoor departments of various public sector Teaching hospitals of Lahore including “Mayo Hospital, Services Hospital, Jinnah Hospital and Lahore General Hospital” during January – march, 2015 (03 months) with sample size of 170 patients. Consecutive non-probability sampling technique was used to recruit the patients.

**Data Collection and analysis:**

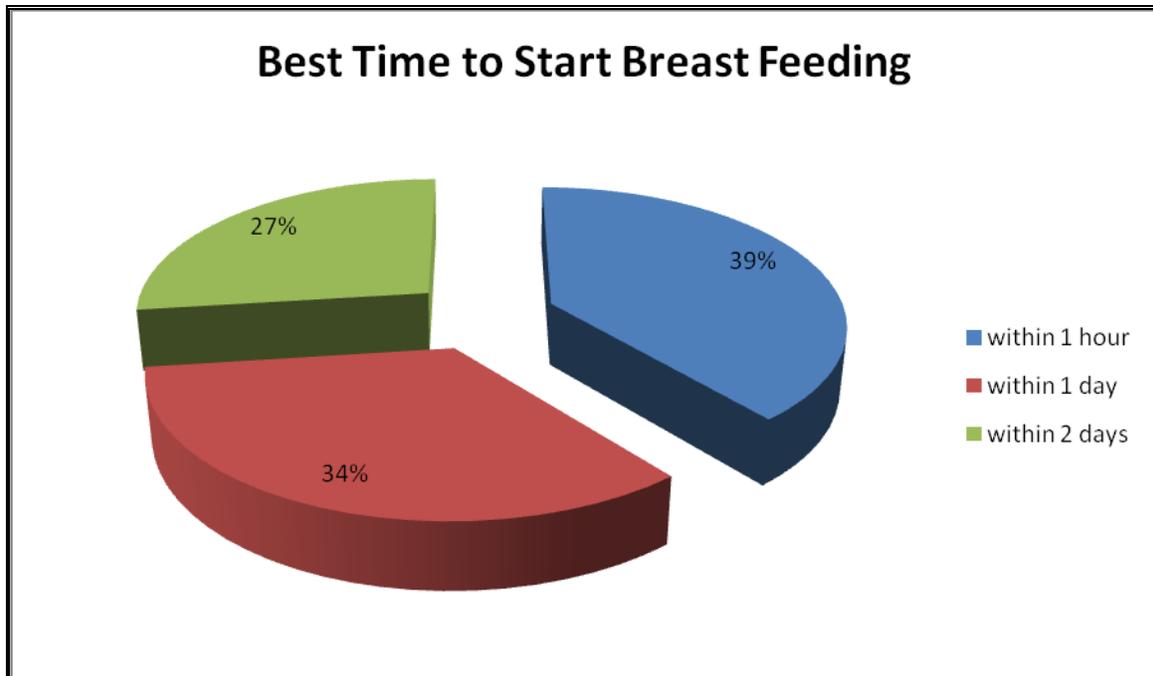
The mothers who agreed to participate were given a self-designed questionnaire consisting of closed and open ended questions. The questionnaire covered basic characteristics of baby, family socio-economic status and knowledge, aptitude and practices regarding breastfeeding. Data analyzed in SPSS Version: 17.0 Results were recorded as percentages, graphs, means and standard deviations.

**RESULTS AND MAIN FINDINGS:**

**Table 1: Ideal food for baby, duration of benefits of breast milk and comparison of health between breast fed and formula fed babies.**

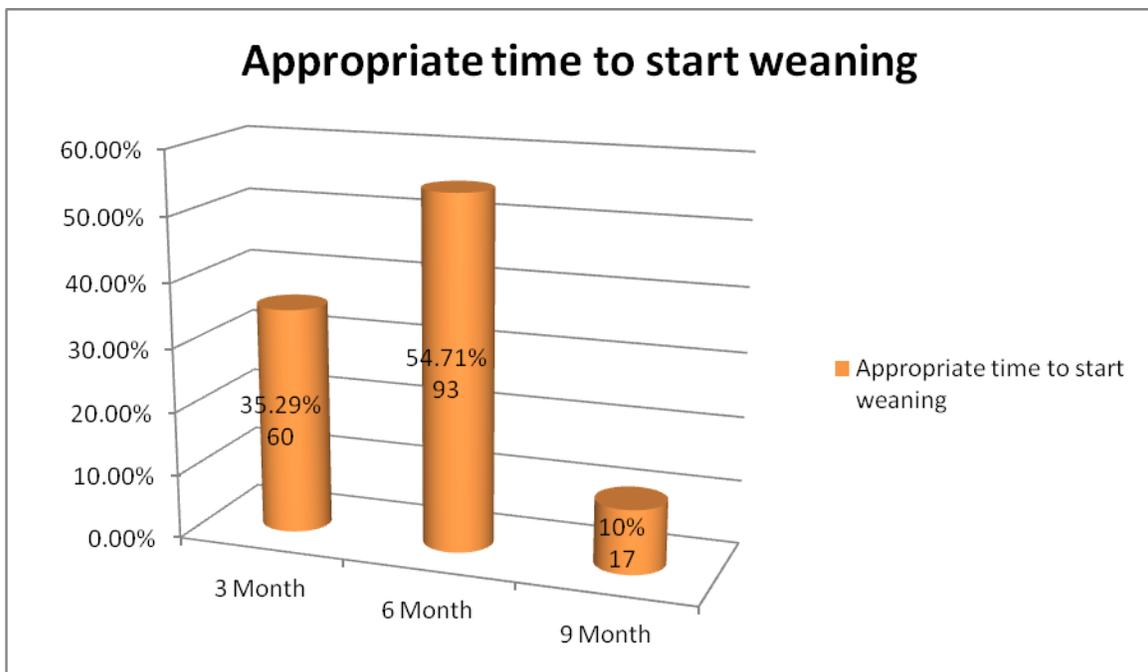
		Breast milk is ideal for babies		Benefits of breastfeeding last as long as the baby is breastfed		Breast fed babies are healthier than formula-fed babies	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	34	20.0	125	73.5	36	21.2
	Yes	136	80.0	45	26.5	134	78.8
	Total	170	100.0	170	100.0	170	100.0

**Graph 1: Best time to start breastfeeding**



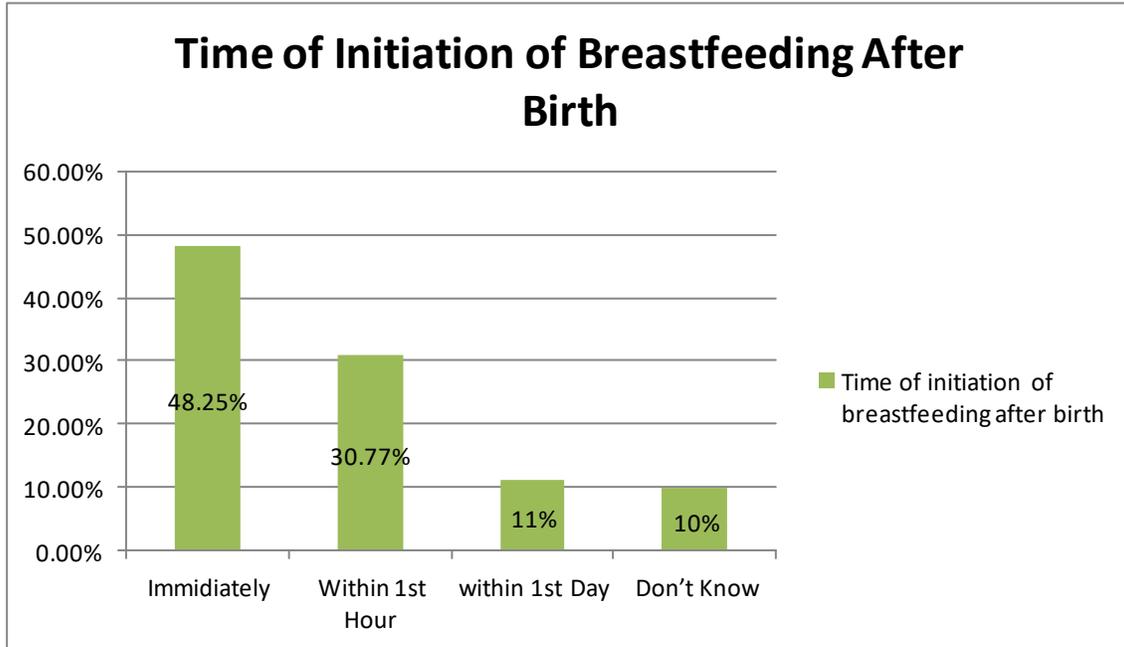
**Table 2: Age of baby to give only breast milk**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 months	51	30.0	30.0	30.0
	5 months	19	11.2	11.2	41.2
	6 months	88	51.8	51.8	92.9
	Don't know	12	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	100.0	

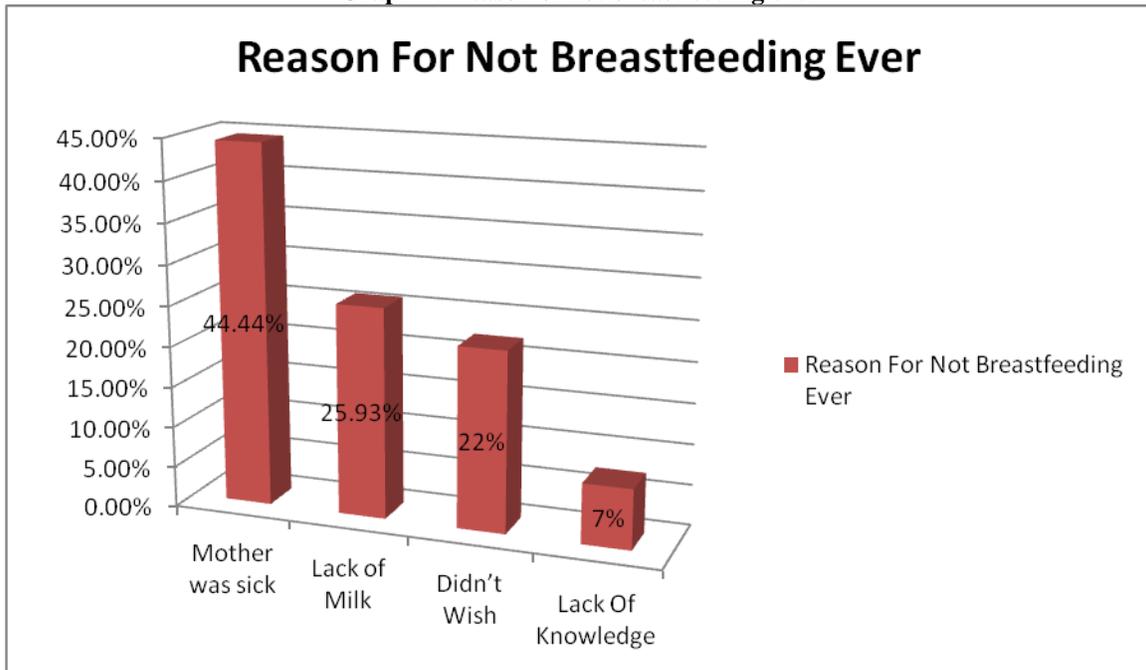
**Graph 2: Appropriate time to start weaning****Table 3: Why is it good to breastfeed your baby**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Gives baby protection	46	27.1	27.1	27.1
	Creates a bond between baby & mother	72	42.4	42.4	69.4
	Makes child intelligent	22	12.9	12.9	82.4
	It is the right food for the baby	30	17.6	17.6	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Graph 4: Time of initiation of breastfeeding after birth



Graph 5: Reason of not breastfeeding ever



Graph 6: Time of introduction of foods other than breast milk

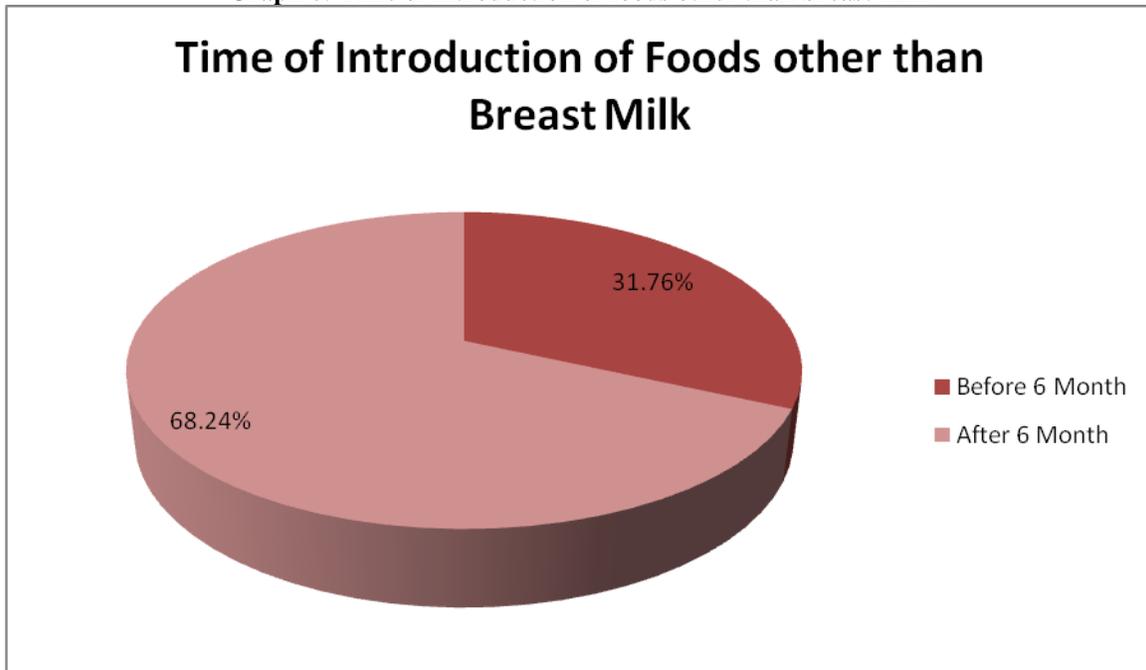


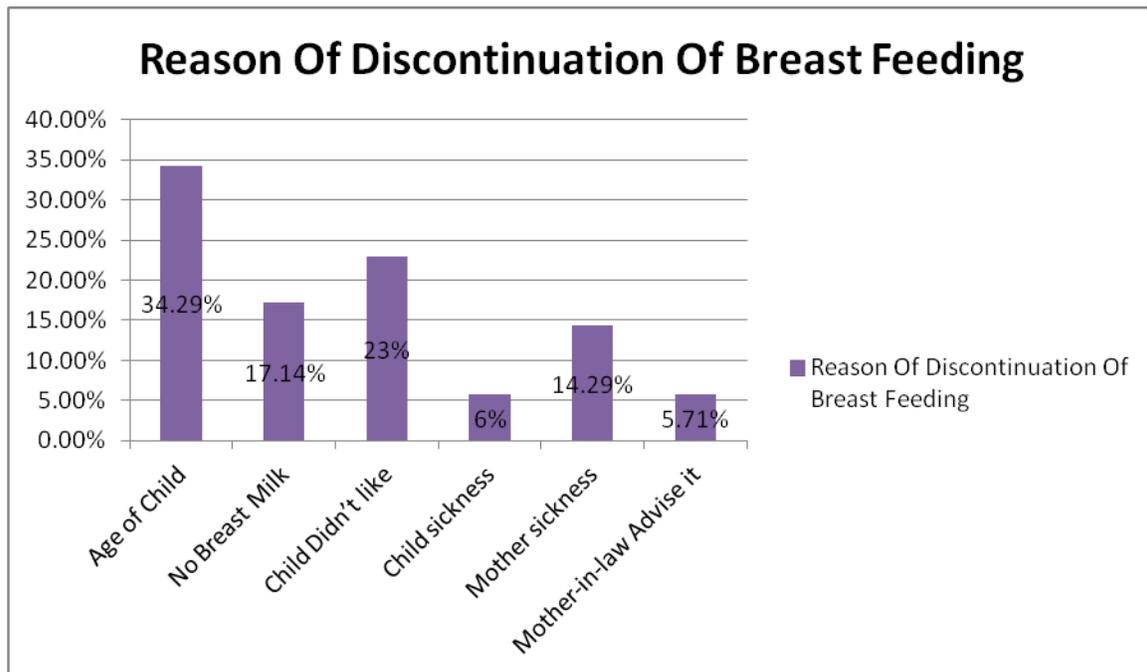
Table 4: Frequency of giving other foods before breast milk and frequency of mothers currently breastfeeding

		Giving other food to child before breast feeding		currently breastfeeding child	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Valid	No	105	61.8	35	20.6
	Yes	65	38.2	135	79.4
Total		170	100.0	170	100.0

Table 5: For how long do you intend to breastfeed your child

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not breastfeeding currently	35	20.6	20.6	20.6
	Less than 2 years	40	23.5	23.5	44.1
	Up to 2 years	86	50.6	50.6	94.7
	Greater than 2 years	9	5.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	100.0	

Graph 7: Reason of discontinuation of breastfeeding

**RESULTS:**

Out of 170 respondents, 58.2% mother's belonged to age group 21-30 years and 4.1% belonged to age group less than 20 years. While 40.5% mothers were under metric, 30% were illiterate, 21% were metric pass and 8% were above metric. 80% of the mothers think breastfeeding is ideal for babies, 26.5% think benefits of breastfeeding last as long as the baby is breastfed, 79% mothers think breastfed babies are healthier than formula fed babies. 39.4% mothers think it is best to start breastfeeding within 1 hour of delivery, 33.5% mothers think it is best to start breastfeeding within 1 day and 27% mothers think it is best to start breastfeeding within 2 days. 51.8% mothers think up to age of six months of age, baby should be given only breast milk, 30% mothers think that up to age of four months, baby should be given only breast milk, 11.2% mothers think that up to age of five months, baby should be given only breast milk.

55% mothers think that the appropriate time to start weaning is six months, 35% mothers think that the appropriate time to start weaning is three months. 42% mothers think that it is good to breastfeed babies because it creates a bond between mother and baby, 27% mothers think that it gives the baby protection, 13% mothers think it makes the child intelligent. 16% mothers have never breastfed their child. 48% mothers immediately breastfed their child,

31% mothers breastfed their child within first hour, 11% mothers breastfed their child within first day. 45% mothers didn't breastfed their child because of sickness, 26% didn't breastfed because of lack of milk. 32% mothers added foods other than breast milk before six months. 38% mothers give other foods to their child before breastfeeding, 79% mothers are currently breastfeeding their child. Among the currently breastfeeding mothers, 50% intend to breastfeed up to 2 years, 23% mothers intend to breastfeed less than 2 years. 34% mothers discontinue breastfeeding because of the age of child; 22% discontinue because the child didn't like.

**DISCUSSION:**

I have compared my results with a study conducted in Tajikistan<sup>7</sup> in 2007. According to that study, 99.6% women had never breastfed their child while according to our study 16% women had never breastfed their child. According to that study, 90% initiated breastfeeding within 1 hour while according to our study 31% mothers initiated breastfeeding within 1 hour. According to that research, 29% mothers introduced liquids other than breast milk before six months while according to our research 32% mothers introduced liquids other than breast milk before six months. According to that research, 46.5% mothers are currently breastfeeding while according to our study, 79% mothers are currently breastfeeding. According to that research, 63.8%

mothers stopped breastfeeding because of the age of the child while according to our research 34% mothers stopped breastfeeding because of the age of the child. According to that research, weaning was started before 4 months in 3% of the cases while according to our study, weaning was started before 4 months in 35% of the cases.

According to that study, 76% mothers think that breastfeeding is beneficial because it provides protection while according to our study 27% mothers think that breastfeeding is beneficial because it provides protection. According to that research, 90% mothers think that breastfeeding should be started within the first hour of delivery while according to our research 31% mothers think that breastfeeding should be started within the first hour of delivery. According to that research, 14.8% mothers said that they had given something else before breastfeeding for the first time while according to our study, 38% mothers said that they had given something else before breastfeeding for the first time.

### CONCLUSION:

The study showed that the lower rates of breastfeeding are influenced by factors like education, age, etc. Other unacceptable practices like pre-lacteal feed, lack of early initiation of breastfeeding and early weaning were found prevalent. Women were aware of advantages and disadvantages of breast and bottle feeding but a disparity was observed between knowledge and practice.

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