

# Assessment of Maternal Knowledge and Impact of Health Facilities on the Breastfeeding Practices of Mothers In Lagos and Ogun State, Nigeria

Olufemi SS, Faborode MB, Mustapha RA, Oyegoke TG

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Rufus Giwa, Polytechnic, P M B 1019, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

Adeniran SM

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, C.S.T, Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna

All Corresponding to: Olufemi SS, olufemisamuel2175@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

**B**ackground: Breastfeeding is certainly an important child feeding practice, which promotes the wellbeing and survival of children especially in the first two years of life. Objective: The objective of the study is to assess the impact of maternal education and health facilities on the breastfeeding practices of mothers in Lagos and Ogun State, Nigeria. Material and Methods Three hundred and two (302) breastfeeding mothers and their children were selected using systematic sampling techniques from (5) government and private hospitals in Lagos and Ogun States. Semi-structured interviewer administered questionnaire was administered to obtain information on socio-demographic status, clinical status, knowledge and attitude of mothers towards breastfeeding practices and impact of health facilities on the breastfeeding mothers. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation method. Results: Results showed that more than 60% (198) of the children were between the ages of 0-8 months of which half were males. Majority (76.8%) of the mothers had post-secondary education. More than half 62.3% earning an income of #30,000-#50,000. Clinical characteristics of the breastfeeding mothers showed that majority of the children were delivered through normal delivery and 2.6% had low birth weight. Mothers' knowledge of breastfeeding practice revealed that half of the population initiated breastfeeding one hour after delivery and majority (94.4%) of mothers gave colostrum to their children. The result also showed that 48.3% of the mothers preferred private hospital and 33.8% of the mothers preferred government hospital. More than half (55.3%) of the mothers gave birth in the private hospital. Conclusion: The study concluded that prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding is low while a high number of mothers preferred private facilities to public facilities during child birth. Recommendation: There is a need for policies which will promote exclusive breastfeeding, encourage mothers and improve quality of health facilities to promote the practice of breastfeeding in both private and public health facilities in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Exclusive breastfeeding, Breastfeeding practices, Health facilities, Children, Mothers

## INTRODUCTION

**B**reastfeeding is the feeding of an infant or young child with breast milk directly from female human breasts (i.e. via lactation) rather than using infant formula from a baby bottle or other container [5]. According to a statement by World Health Organization (WHO), Breastfeeding is the ideal method suited for the physiological and psychological needs of an infant [19]. Breastfeeding is an important public health strategy for improving infant and child morbidity and mortality, improving maternal morbidity, and helping to control health care costs [12]. The Nigerian health care has suffered several down-falls. Despite Nigeria's strategic position in Africa, the country is greatly underserved in the health care sphere. Health facilities (health centers, personnel, and medical equipments) are inadequate in this country, especially in rural areas [10]. According to the 2009 communiqué of the Nigerian national health conference, health care system remains weak as evidenced by lack of coordination, fragmentation of services, dearth of resources, including drug and supplies, inadequate and decaying infrastructure, inequity in resource distribution, and access to care and very deplorable quality of care [18].

Furthermore, It is difficult to ascertain the size of the private health care sector in Nigeria since a sizeable number of existing health facilities are believed to be operating without appropriate licensure by State Ministries of Health (SMOHs). Furthermore, private facilities seldom forward to the SMOH information reflecting health facility case-loads,

available personnel and technologies in any given year [3]. In particular, information on private sector personnel resources is compromised by the fact that a considerable proportion of health workers (especially doctors, pharmacists, radiographers and laboratory technicians) working in the private sector hold full-time appointments in the public sector [10]. Faith-based providers are grouped as part of the private, nonprofit sector, and often integrate themselves into national health systems by agreeing with the government to provide specific services. Yet faith-based providers are often more "public" than "private" in both practice and ethos. They often fill gaps left by others, or are designated district hospitals to which other private or lower-level public facilities report. The most obvious example is in Nigeria, where a coalition of churches and faith-based providers manage and operate more than half the national health system [13]. Therefore, this study aimed at assessing maternal knowledge and impact of health facilities on breastfeeding practices of mothers in Lagos and Ogun State.

## MATERIALS AND METHOD

### Study Design

A cross-sectional descriptive study was used to assess the impact of health facilities on the breastfeeding practices of mothers in selected health facilities in Lagos and Ogun state.

### Study Location

The study was carried out in some selected Local Government Areas (L.G.A) in Lagos and Ogun State