

Breastfeeding Behaviour in a Suburban Community*

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Abstract: Objective: To analyse the breastfeeding situation and understand mothers' breastfeeding behaviour in a suburban community of Nakhon Pathom province.

Design: Qualitative research.

Implementation: The subjects were 11 mothers aged between 17 and 35 whose babies were aged between 9 days and 4 years. Data were collected by means of in-depth interviews at the informants' homes based on prepared questions. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed verbatim by the researcher. The data were analysed using content analysis.

Results: The subjects displayed two types of breastfeeding behaviour. In the first type, the mothers breastfed their babies and gave them water at intervals for a short period of 2 to 3 months. When the mothers returned to work, they gave their babies water, milk mixed with other liquid, or food supplements.

In the second, the mothers continued breastfeeding for 3 to 4 months, after which they began giving their babies water, milk mixed with other liquid, or food supplements. The mothers continued breastfeeding until their babies reached 1 to 4 years.

According to the outcomes, none of the mothers was able to continue breastfeeding for 6 months as recommended by the World Health Organisation and Thailand's Ministry of Public Health. The mothers' main reasons were (i) need to return to work; (ii) insufficient milk; and (iii) fear of their babies becoming addicted to suckling.

Recommendations: Obstetric nurses are recommended to develop a standard operational plan to educate and assist every mother on breastfeeding, to ensure she has proper breastfeeding knowledge before being discharged. In addition, nurses are advised to plan visits to post-delivery mothers, especially working mothers, to provide additional assistance.

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Keywords: qualitative study; breastfeeding behaviour; using breastfeeding as the only means of feeding babies; suburban community

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