



**Journal of
THE COLLEGE OF
COMMUNITY PHYSICIANS OF SRI LANKA**

Volume 22, Supplement 1, September 2016

**Abstracts of the
TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS
College of Community Physicians of Sri Lanka**

**1-3 September 2016
Colombo, Sri Lanka**

OP 15

Factors affecting difficulties in breast feeding in mothers attending selected lactation management centers in Colombo district

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Introduction

Exclusive breast feeding (EBF) up to six months is recommended as it is the best food for the infants and provides vast benefits to the mother. The objective of the study was to describe the socio demographic and maternal factors associated with difficulty in breast feeding in mothers with neonates attending selected lactation management centers (LMC) in Colombo District.

Methods

A hospital based descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at LMC in De Soyza Maternity Hospital and Colombo South Teaching Hospital from August to September 2015. 288 Mothers who pay their first visit with the corresponding neonates were selected by systematic random sampling method, proportionate to the monthly admissions. Study instruments were a structured interviewer administered questionnaire, B.R.E.A.S.T Feed observation form and a checklist of the neonate. Chi squared and Fishers exact tests were used for statistical analysis at a significance level of 5%.

Results

Majority (n = 236; 81.9%) of the mothers were referred to the LMC from the hospital where they delivered and 163 (56.6%) had difficulty in breast feeding. Among the socio demographic factors studied, employed mothers (p = 0.009) and nuclear type of family (p<0.0001) were statistically significantly associated with breast feeding difficulty. Among the maternal factors, previous experience in breast feeding (p<0.0001), any type of illness of the mother (p<0.0001), perception of inadequate milk supply (p<0.0001), primi parity (p<0.0001) undergoing instrumental or operative type of delivery (p=0.007) were statistically significantly associated.

Conclusions and/or Recommendations

There are many factors which can be modified most factors above are not modifiable during the ante natal, intra natal and post natal period to overcome breast feeding difficulty. Antenatal health education on breast feeding at the hospital ante natal clinic and after getting admitted to the ward, providing every mother with a bed and a chair are recommended as solutions to overcome breast feeding difficulty.

Keywords: Breast feeding, Breast feeding difficulties, Lactation management centers