



0-24 Months for Increasing Breast Milk of Mothers with Traditional Applications

0-24 Aylık Çocuğu Olan Annelerin Anne Sütünü Arttırmaya Yönelik Geleneksel Uygulamaları

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Research is made to be a descriptive study to identify traditional practices of increase breast milk of mothers with children 0-24 months.

Methods: This research was conducted between November-December 2013. The universe of study is made to constitute by Inonu University Turgut Ozal Medical Center Pediatric Outpatient Clinic, newborn and mother admitted to the Intensive Care Unit admissions the mothers with children 0-24 months. It is consisted of 220 mothers determined by the power analysis sample. Mean and Standard deviation values have been calculated and this was use data for the evaluation of percentage.

Results: The research covered 23.6±6.3 years, the average age of mothers and 88.6% of babies breast feeding present during the investigation was found. Mother of 44.1% give breastmilk after birth as the first breastfeed, mother of 49.1% give food, mother of 45.5% start to breast feed the babies after birth the first hour after borning, mother of 32.3% breast feed the baby when the baby cries and mother 44.5% intend to continue to breast feed in fants Mothers believe that nutrients in most legumes (90.0%), the water in all drinks (95.9%) increase in breast feeding. Mothers believe that their milk increases with traditional practices. Mostly applications for nutrition and fluid intake is located.

Conclusions: For efficient and last longer than expected for the period of breastfeeding during pregnancy, traditional structures and beliefs should be taken in to consideration and training should be done regularly and mothers should be informed.

Keywords: Breastmilk, breastfeeding, traditional practices and culture

Öz

Giriş ve Amaç: Araştırma 0-24 aylık çocuğu olan annelerin anne sütünü arttırmaya yönelik geleneksel uygulamalarını saptamak amacıyla tanımlayıcı olarak yapılmıştır.

Yöntem: Bu araştırma Kasım-Aralık 2013 tarihleri arasında yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini; İnönü Üniversitesi Turgut Özal Tıp Merkezi Pediatri Poliklinikleri, Yenidoğan Yoğun Bakım Ünitesi'ne başvuran ve Anne Ünitesi'ne yatışı yapılan 0-24 aylık çocuğu olan anneler oluşturmaktadır. Yapılan güç analizi ile belirlenen 220 anne örnekleme oluşturmuştur. Verilerin toplanmasında araştırmacı tarafından oluşturulan Soru Formu kullanılmıştır. Verilerin değerlendirilmesinde yüzdellik, ortalama ve standart sapma değerleri hesaplanarak kullanılmıştır.

Bulgular: Araştırma kapsamına alınan annelerin yaş ortalaması 23.6±6.3 yıl ve %88.6' sının bebeklerini araştırma sırasında halen emzirmekte olduğu bulunmuştur. Annelerin %44.1'inin doğumdan sonra ilk gıda olarak anne sütü, %49.1'inin ise mama verdiği, %45.5'inin bebeklerini doğumdan sonra ilk bir saatten sonra emzirmeye başladığı, %32.3'ünün bebeğini ağıladıkça emzirdiği ve %44.5'inin bebek emdiği süre emzirmeye devam etmeyi düşündüğünü ifade etmiştir. Anneler besinler içinde en çok baklagilin (%90.0), içeceklerden ise suyun (%95.9) anne sütünü arttırdığına inanmaktadır.

Sonuç ve Öneriler: Anneler geleneksel uygulamalarla sütlerinin arttığına inanmaktadırlar. Çoğunlukla beslenme ve sıvı alımına yönelik uygulamalar yer almaktadır. Etkin ve daha uzun sürmesi beklenen bir emzirme dönemi için daha gebelik sırasında geleneksel yapı ve inanışlar göz önüne alınması, düzenli olarak eğitimler yapılması ve annelerin bilinçlendirilmesi önerilebilir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Anne sütü, emzirme, geleneksel uygulamalar, kültür

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INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is highly necessary and important for the development of the newborn and for protecting and maintaining his/her health ⁽¹⁾. The World Health Organization and UNICEF recommend that infants are only breastfed up to the first six months and they are fed with breast milk from sixth months until at least two years of age provided that nutritional supplements are given together ^(1,2). Despite these recommendations, it has been reported that rates of being fed only by breast milk and continuing breastfeeding are lower than the expected ⁽²⁾.

Although many incentive studies have been conducted on breastfeeding in the first six months in Turkey as in all over the world, according to the data of Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS), it has been determined that only 57.9% of the infants are breastfed in the first two months of their lives. This rate decreases rapidly with age of the child, it decreases to 9.5% in 4-5 month-old infants and 2.4% in 6-9 month-old infants. According to this data, it has been reported that initiating the nutritional supplements early and feeding with feeding bottle are common ⁽⁴⁾. As the main reasons for these problems, the factors like the low educational level of the mother, their employment status, starting to breastfeeding late, not being informed enough about breastfeeding, not being supported or not being supported enough by the health professional when starting to breastfeeding, inadequate support of the family, starting the nutritional supplements early or late, giving water or sugared water as the first food before breastfeeding, and using feeding bottle and pacifier have been shown ⁽⁵⁻⁷⁾.

The most important reason behind why mothers do not only breastfeed their infants in the first 6 months and start the nutritional supplements in the early period is that they think the milk is inadequate ^(8,9). Although every woman has the capacity to produce milk to raise two infants, the studies have revealed that the number of the mothers, who think that their milk is inadequate, is quite high ^(10,11). The mothers who think that their milk is inadequate and who want to breastfeed their infants employ various methods to increase their milk and traditionally give importance to consume some foods and herbal beverages ^(9,11).

The results indicating that there are correlations between the traditional practices used by the mothers to increase their milk in the postpartum period and their socio-demographic attributes are also increasing gradually ⁽¹²⁻¹⁴⁾. And this is important as it demonstrates that the traditional practices may vary between regions, cities and the communities sharing in the same city. In Turkey, the traditional practices including the practices for increasing the breast milk in the postpartum periods are quite common.

It is important to know the traditional beliefs and practices that will increase the breast milk during the breastfeeding period. In this period, the health services provided for the mothers and the families will be guiding in providing and maintaining breastfeeding. In addition, the results of this study will make contribution to the health personnel in being aware of the traditional practices and developing the maternal and infant health and will be a source they can apply to in this subject.

This study was conducted to determine the traditional practices of increasing the breast milk of the mothers with 0-24 month-old children.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This was a descriptive study. The population of the study consisted of the mothers who applied to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of Turgut Özal Medical Center Pediatric Outpatient Clinics in İnönü University and were admitted to the Mother Unit and had 0-24 month-old children. The minimum sample size was calculated as 220 mothers by using significance level of 0.05, confidence level of 0.95 and the power to represent the population at the bi-directional significance level of 0.95 in the power analysis. The mothers were selected from the population using improbable random sampling method.

Data Collection Tools

The data of the study were collected between November-December 2013. A questionnaire prepared by the researcher was used. This form involved 32 questions for determining the socio-demographic characteristics of the mothers and their infants, their breastfeeding situation, and their traditional practices for increasing the breastfeeding

and the breast milk. The questionnaire was filled by the researcher using the face-to-face interview technique with 220 mothers.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the SPSS 16.0 package for Windows. The percentage, mean and standard deviation values were used in the statistical analyses of the data.

RESULTS

The average age of the mothers participating in the study was 23.6±6.3. 60.5% of the mothers were aged between 20 and 30 years. 83.2% of the mothers were housewives and 35.5% were high school graduates. It was determined that 74.1% of the mothers had an elementary family and 53.6% lived in the city center of Malatya (Table 1.). It was found that 83.6% of the mothers participating in the study got married at the age of 18 and over and 29.5% of them gave their first birth in the age range of 16-20 years (Table 1).

It was found that 53.2% of the infants participating in the study were male and 58.2% of them were born by cesarean section and 68.6% were born with a weight of 2500-3999 grams. It was determined that a great majority of the mothers participating in the study (90.0%) were still breastfeeding their infants. It was determined that 49.1% of the infants took formula as the first food and 63.2% were fed with breast milk and the nutritional supplements at that time (Table 2).

It was determined that 45.5% of the mothers started breastfeeding in more than one hour in the postpartum period. 32.3% breastfed their babies as they cried. 44.5% of the mothers thought to breastfeed their infants as they sucked milk (Table 3).

All of the mothers stated that they had knowledge on breastfeeding and the practices on increasing the breast milk. It was determined that 41.8% of 220 mothers got information from the family elders, 34.5% from the healthcare personnel, and 13.6% from the written sources like books and magazines (Table 4).

The mothers mostly believed that legumes (90.0%) among foods and water (99.1%) among beverages increased the breast milk. Among other foods and

Table 1. The Descriptive Characteristics of the Mothers in the Sample Group

Some features of mothers	N	%
Age (year)		
18 - 20 age	8	3.6
20 - 30 age	133	60.5
31 - 41 age	69	31.4
42 age and older	10	4.5
Educational status		
Uneducated	30	16.8
Primary school graduate	47	21.4
Secondary school graduate	18	8.2
High school graduate	78	35.5
Graduated from a university	40	18.2
Profession		
Housewife	184	83.6
Officer	19	8.6
Worker	13	5.9
Other	4	1.8
Family type		
Elementary family	164	74.5
Extended family	56	25.5
Living place		
City centre	119	54.1
County	52	23.6
Village	44	20.0
Marriage age		
Aged 18 and below	36	16.4
Aged 18 and above	184	83.6
Age at first labor		
16-20 age	65	29.5
21-25 age	102	46.4
26-30 age	45	20.5
Aged 31 and above	8	3.6

beverages, meat and meat products were 75.5% ayran was 65.9%, molasse was 63.2% and onion and garlic were 65%. And in other practices, the mothers stated that massage (56.4%), walking (42.3%) and shower (11.4%) were useful.

Table 2. The Distribution of the Infants of the Mothers, Participating in The Study, According to Some of Their Characteristics and Nourishment Status

Some features of babies	N	%
Sex		
Male	117	53.2
Female	103	46.8
Birth type		
Vaginal	92	41.8
Cesarean section	128	58.2
Birth weight		
2500 gr below	60	27.2
2500-3999 gr	151	68.6
4000 gr and above	9	4.2
The first food given to the baby		
Breastmilk	97	44.1
Formula	108	49.1
Sugar water	13	5.9
Water	2	0.9
Nutrition style		
Breastmilk	57	25.9
Breastmilk and nutritional supplements	141	64.1
Only nutritional supplements	22	10.0
Aged 31 and above	8	3.6

DISCUSSION

It was determined that 49.1% of the mothers included in the study gave formula to their babies as the first food. In the literature, there are studies indicating that mothers give their infants high amounts of zam-zam water (50%) and sugared water (46.3%)⁽¹⁷⁾. In the TDHS-2013 report, it has been stated that 26% of the children are fed by another before being fed by the breast milk⁽¹⁸⁾. In the study by Üstüner et al., it was determined that 81.8% of the mothers gave breast milk to their infants as the first food; in the study by Bölükbaş et al., it was determined that most of the mothers (88.7%) gave breast milk and 1.0% gave sugared water as the first food, and in the study by Kahraman et al., it was determined that 91.3% of the mothers gave colostrum to their infants as the first food^(15,19,20). The result of this study was not in accordance with the literature. This is because it was determined that a great majority of the mothers (57.3%) included in the study gave birth by cesarean

Table 3. The Distribution of the Mothers According to Their Views and Practices on Breastfeeding

Opinions and practices related to breastfeeding	N	%
Time to start breastfeeding		
First half hour	13	5.9
Half hour - one hour	75	34.1
More than one hour	100	45.5
Other	32	14.5
Breastfeeding frequency		
Half an hour at	10	4.5
Per hour	46	20.9
When baby cry	71	32.3
2 in one hour	68	30.9
Other	25	11.4
Desired breastfeeding time		
As long as you want to suck	98	44.5
Up to 1 year	26	11.8
Up to 2 years	70	31.8
Other	26	11.8
Total	220	100.0

Table 4. The Sources Used by the Mothers to Get Information on Breastfeeding and Increasing the Breast Milk

Sources of information	N	%
Family elders	92	41.8
Health professional	76	34.5
Book and magazine	30	13.6
Neighbor-friend	14	6.4
Television	6	2.7
Internet	2	0.9
Total	220	100.0

section and 45.5% of them started to breastfeed their infants more than one hour later.

Starting breastfeeding early is beneficial both for the mother and the infant. Early breastfeeding has an effect increasing the lactation. This early period, which is the first half-hour period after the birth of the infant, lapses affects the success and duration of breastfeeding negatively. According to TDHS 2013, 50% of the breastfed children were started

to be breastfed within the first hour after birth ⁽¹⁸⁾. According to the results of this study, 40% of the mothers started to breastfeed their infants within the first hour. This result is lower at the rate of 10% compared to the TDHS 2013 data. In our hospital, there are adjustments encouraging breastfeeding in the first half-hour within the scope of the concept of the baby-friendly hospital. However these studies have fallen insufficient as is also understood from the results.

It was found that 32.3% of the mothers included in the study stated that they did not limit breastfeeding their infants and they breastfed them whenever their infants wanted. The breastfeeding frequencies determined in the previous studies were different from each other ^(15,21,22). The result of this study is behind those studies. This may be due to differences in regional culture and practice. Because the baby should not be waited to cry for breastfeeding, no hour limits should be made, and the breastfeeding should be a process directed by the baby. The mother should intuit from some of his/her behaviors that the infant is ready to suck milk and start to breastfeed whenever the infant wants ⁽²³⁾.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that infants are breastfed until the age of 2 years. In this study, when the mothers were asked for how long they planned to breastfeed their infants, 31.8% of them answered that they planned to breastfeed their infants until the age of 2 and 44.5% of them answered that they planned to breastfeed their infants as long as they sucked. In the study conducted by Eker and Yurdakul in Mersin in 2005, 14.1% of the mothers planned to breastfeed their infants until the age of 2 years ⁽²⁴⁾. The result of this study is higher. With this result and the elevation of the general educational level in years, as a result of the health training supported by the healthcare personnel, it may be concluded that the consciousness level has raised.

It was found that 44.1% of the mothers included in the study gave breast milk to their infants just after the birth as the first food. 91.8% of the mothers stated that they had knowledge about breastfeeding and the practices on increasing the breast milk. 34.5% of the mothers, who had training, stated that they obtained information from the healthcare personnel, 13.6% from the books and magazines, and 41.8% from the family elders. According to the findings by Gökdoğan 77.8% of the mothers did not receive

training about breastfeeding and the practices increasing the breast milk, only 22.2% received the training. Of the 48 mothers who received treatment, 77.1% stated that they received this training from the midwives, 20.8% from the doctors, and 2.1% from the nurses ⁽²⁵⁾. It is a remarkable finding that the rate of receiving the training on breastfeeding and the practices increasing the breast milk is quite high.

Although breastfeeding the infants with the right techniques and frequent intervals, emptying the breasts, adequate sleep and rest and increasing the self-confidence of the mothers are reported as effective practices to increase the breast milk, mostly various cultural practices are performed in practice. It is remarkable that these are generally practices for food and beverage consumption. Also in this study, a great majority of the mothers performed various practices in order to increase the breast milk. The mothers mostly believed that legumes (90.0%) among foods and water (99.1%) among beverages increased the breast milk at most. In other foods and beverages, meat and meat products were 75.5% ayran was 65.9%, molasse was 63.2% and onion and garlic were 65%. And in other practices, the mothers stated that massage (56.4%), walking (42.3%) and shower (11.4%) were useful (Table 5.). Drinking plenty of water and breastfeeding frequently, in addition to the daily food, is enough to ensure that the breast milk of the mother is abundant ⁽²²⁾. According to the results of the studies, 63.7% of the mothers living in Tokat stated that they drank weak tea, 62.4% ate dessert; 55.3% of the mothers in Mersin stated that they drank puerperant sherbet (a postpartum beverage); 43% of the mothers in Şanlıurfa stated that they breastfed their babies frequently; 75.9% of the mothers living in Kütahya stated that they drank water and were fed by liquid foods and 30.1% stated that they used herbal tea (generally the fennel tea at the rate of 76.9%) and 39.3% of the mothers in Çankırı stated that they drank hot milk, soup etc. ^(10,11,26). These practices are performed not only in Turkey but also in the countries like Thailand and Iran ⁽²⁷⁾. The need for calorie is at the top level in the first month of the lactation ⁽¹⁸⁾. Considering that the daily amount of liquid, to be required for adequate milk production, is 3000 ml and 500 calories and should be added to the total calorie, it should be taken into consideration that these practices are useful but excessive dessert consumption and excessive calorie may cause gaining weight ⁽²⁸⁾. It is stated that herbal tea is consumed in different cultures in order to increase the breast milk ⁽²⁷⁾. According to Gökçay,

Table 5. The Distribution of the Mothers in Terms of the Status of Believing in the Practices They Performed to Increase Their Breast Milk

Applications	Consumption level		Believed to benefit		Unbelieved to benefit	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Drinks						
Water	218	99.1	209	95.9	9	4.1
Molasses	139	63.2	115	82.7	24	17.3
Milk	91	41.4	69	75.8	22	24.2
Herbal tea	128	58.2	118	92.1	10	7.9
Ayran	145	65.9	128	88.2	17	11.8
Juice	141	64.1	128	90.7	13	9.3
Coke	11	5.0	2	18.1	9	81.9
Mineral water	41	18.6	31	75.6	10	24.4
Other	14	6.4	14	100.0	0	0.0
Food						
Meat and meat products	166	75.5	155	93.3	11	6.7
Bean	198	90.0	192	96.9	6	3.1
Sesame / Sesame	87	39.5	66	75.8	21	24.2
Onion / Garlic	143	65.0	133	93.0	10	7.0
Other	56	25.5	42	75.0	14	25.0
Other applications						
Walk	93	42.3	53	56.9	40	43.1
Massage	124	56.4	117	94.3	7	5.7
Swimming	3	1.4	1	33.3	2	66.7
Medicine	9	4.1	6	66.6	3	33.4
Other	25	11.4	18	72.0	7	28.0

drinking water is the ideal type of fluid intake. It has been stated that the consumption of daily 600-700 ml herbal tea is objectionable. It is also known that consuming beverages like tea, coffee decreases milk production. The amount of the caffeinated beverages should be reduced ⁽²⁸⁾.

According to the study results, the most effective method to increase the breast milk is the lactation consultation ⁽¹⁷⁾. However, in Turkey, the nourishment maintains traditionalism rather than scientificness. According to a study conducted in Şanlıurfa, it was found that 88.0% of the mothers performed the practices on increasing the breast milk. It was reported that the mothers performed practices like breastfeeding frequently (43.0%), having liquid foods (27.5%), and eating rice dish (17.0%) ⁽²⁹⁾. It the study conducted by Gökdoğan in Aydın, 80%

of the mothers stated that they did not perform any practice on increasing their milk. The mothers stated that they mostly consumed water (71.1%), milk (41.0%), and dessert (29.9%). The mostly used herbal tea in order to increase the breast milk was the fennel tea (76.9%). The commercial herbal tea consumption was 13.8% ⁽²⁵⁾.

Also in this study, all of the literate and illiterate mothers (100%) stated that they performed traditional practices on increasing the breastfeeding and breast milk. In the study conducted by Gün et al., in city center of Kayseri, the traditional practices in child care were found to be more common among those with low educational level ⁽³⁰⁾. This difference may be thought to be caused by the fact that the study was conducted in a university hospital with a group whose educational level may be considered as

high and that both the written and verbal training on infant care, breastfeeding and the breast milk were increased in time.

In the comparison made based on the settlements, it was observed that the traditional practices were performed in all the regions, however all those (100%) living in the villages performed a practice on breastfeeding and increasing the breast milk. This may signify that the people living in the rural area are lacking in accessing information or the personnel providing the health training is not effective enough in the rural area. Also, the rural area may be considered as more effective in terms of the traditional practices and the cultural sanctions, compared to the urban region.

All the mothers, who do not receive information and training on breastfeeding and increasing the breast milk perform the traditional practices on breastfeeding and increasing the breast milk. In the study by Gökdoğan, 25% of the mothers, who did not receive training in increasing the breast milk, and 2.1% of the mothers, who received the training, did not perform any practice for increasing their milk ⁽²⁵⁾. The result obtained from this study is compatible with the study by Gökdoğan. The fact that all of those not receiving the training performed a traditional practice made us think that they were an important group in terms of the training requirement. Because, without the recommendation of the health personnel, damages of the non-scientific and hearsay traditional practices are possible. And it may mean they are a group that is commercially open to exploitation.

The mothers do not have problems in breastfeeding their infants in the first half hour. But the main problem is that regardless of breastfeeding enough, the mothers tend to perform the traditional practices with a concern that they do not have enough milk.

CONCLUSION

In accordance with the results obtained from the study performed; in the study, it was concluded that the breastfeeding rate was low in the first half-hour in the cesarean deliveries, the breastfeeding rate of the mothers, who got married under 18, was quite low in the first half-hour, the rates of breastfeeding frequency, the breastfeeding in the first half-hour and feeding only with breast milk were lower in primiparous women compared to the multiparous

women and they learned the traditional practices they performed for increasing their milk mostly from the family elders.

In accordance with the results obtained from the study; it may be recommended that the mothers, who give birth by cesarean, are supported in the first half-hour to breastfeed, training on the objections of the marriages under 18 are provided and the adolescent pregnancies are reduced, the training on the breastfeeding and feeding with breast milk for these groups is planned, and the breast milk alone is enough in the first 6 months and the mothers feel confidence about their milk is aimed in these trainings, the primiparous mothers are treated more sensitively in breastfeeding trainings, the useful and harmful sides of the traditional methods are told to the mothers and their family elders in detail, the effects of the practices, that the mothers believe to increase their milk, on the breast milk is explained exactly, by keeping in mind that the lactation consultancy is the most effective method in increasing the breast milk, the breastfeeding problems of the mothers are solved in time by home care practices in the postpartum and the continuity of the breast milk is provided.

Author contribution

Study conception and design: ZÜ and BE; data collection: ZÜ; analysis and interpretation of results: BE; draft manuscript preparation ZÜ and BE. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Ethical approval

The study was approved by the İnönü University Ethics Committee (Protocol no. 2013/179).

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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