

FACTORS AFFECTING BREASTFEEDING BELIEFS AND PRACTICES AMONG TEENAGE MOTHERS IN DAVAO CITY

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Objective: To identify the factors affecting breastfeeding beliefs and practices among teenage mothers aged 13-19 years old in Davao City.

Design: This study used analytical cross-sectional design.

Setting: This was conducted in the top four districts in Davao City with the most number of identified teenage mothers namely Talomo North, Talomo Central, Buhangin and Agdao

Participants: Both primigravid and multigravid teenage mothers aged 13 to 19 years old with children aged 0 to 24 months who were living in the aforementioned study settings from November 2019 to March 2020. The initial sample size was 226, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic, data collection was disrupted and only 162 participants were included.

Intervention: None

Main Outcome Measures: Socio-demographic factors

Results: Educational attainment ($X^2=17.298$; $p=0.001$), economic dependence ($X^2=13.541$; $p=0.009$), occupation ($X^2=28.585$; $p<0.001$), number of prenatal visits ($X^2=15.513$; $p=0.004$) and method of delivery ($X^2=18.328$; $p<0.001$) were the socio-demographic factors that have significant association with breastfeeding practices based on Pearson chi-square analysis. Educational attainment was the only socio-demographic factor that has been found to be statistically associated with breastfeeding duration ($X^2=20.163$, $p=0.10$).

Conclusions: The factors that were strongly associated with breastfeeding practice were educational attainment, occupation, economic dependence, number of prenatal visits and method of delivery. Meanwhile educational attainment was strongly associated with breastfeeding duration. Teenage mothers breastfed their babies because they think it is economical but the need to go back to work is the main reason for not breastfeeding for some. They believe that breastfeeding is beneficial to their babies. However, insufficient supply of breast milk is the reason for introducing other types of food before 6 months. The inability of teenage mothers to distinguish between weaning and infant feeding cues might be the underlying reason.

Keywords: *teenage mothers, breastfeeding practices*