

PREOCUPĂRILE MAMELOR REFERITOARE LA ALĂPTARE ÎN PERIOADA PRENATALĂ

CONCERNS OF MOTHERS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING IN ANTENATAL PERIOD

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Abstract:

Aim: To determine the concerns of pregnant women regarding breastfeeding.

Methods: This descriptive and cross-sectional study was performed on 207 mothers who had either a vaginal or a caesarian section-birth between April and July 2014 at the maternity clinic of the state hospital in Çanakkale, Turkey. An individual identification form consisting of 23 questions was used in collecting the research data. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, chi-square test and ANOVA test.

Results: 34.8% of women in the study were between 24 and 29 years old. It was found that women were concerned about breastfeeding during pregnancy in six areas: pain in breast, lack of milk, breast deformity, adequate nutrition in pregnancy, frequency and effectiveness of breastfeeding and anxiety/embarrassment. There were statistically significant differences in terms of age, many pregnancies and the number of children among the women with and without breastfeeding concerns ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: pregnant women have a concern related to breastfeeding during the antenatal period.

Rezumat:

Scop: determinarea preocupărilor mamelor privind alăptarea în timpul sarcinii.

Metode: Acest studiu descriptiv și transversal a fost efectuat pe 207 mame care au născut în perioada aprilie-iulie 2014 la clinica de OG a unui spital de stat din Çanakkale, Turcia. În colectarea datelor de cercetare a fost utilizat un formular individual de identificare format din 23 de întrebări. Datele au fost analizate prin statistici descriptive, testul chi-pătrat și testul ANOVA.

Rezultate: 34,8% dintre femei au avut vârsta între 24-29 ani. Au existat diferențe semnificative din punct de vedere statistic în ceea ce privește vârsta, numărul de sarcini și numărul de copii în rândul femeilor cu și fără preocupări legate de alăptare ($p < 0,05$).

Concluzie: Mamele au preocupare legate de alăptarea în timpul perioadei prenatale.

Key-words: *pregnancy, breastfeeding concern, infant, postpartum period, exclusively breastfeeding*

Cuvinte cheie: *sarcina, alăptarea, copilul, perioada postpartum, alimentație exclusivă la sân*

Introduction

Breastfeeding is one of the oldest and most important activities used to feed the baby since the creation of human beings. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in a powerful way supports breastfeeding as the opted way of feeding for newborns and babies and recommends exclusive breastfeeding until the infant is nearly six months of age (American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

ACOG committee opinion no. 756. 2018). Today, the World Health Organization (WHO) suggests that exclusive breastfeeding should be given for the first six months and breastfeed until the age of two with supplementary foods (World Health Organization 2013). Despite the evidence supporting the positive impact of exclusive breastfeeding on infant and maternal health, the prevalence of this practice continues to give grounds for concern. The benefits of

breastfeeding in terms of infant health, maternal health and community health are known, but the rates of breastfeeding in Turkey and around the world are low attention. According to the United Nations 2025 Global Nutrition Goals, rates of exclusive breastfeeding are 38% (United Nations 2015). In Turkey, the results from the Turkey Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) show that although 58% of newborns in that study were exclusively breastfed for the first two months of their life, the rate of breastfeeding decreased to only 10% at four to five months after birth (Turkey Demographic and Health Survey 2013).

It is known that one of the most important reasons for this situation is that mothers have concerns about breastfeeding during pregnancy (Ahluwalia IB, 2005; Avery A, 2009; Cernadas JM, 2003; Kronborg H, 2015; Wagner EA, 2013; Ware JL, 2014). In Archabald et al (2011)' study, 44.9% of breast-feeders most commonly during pregnancy identified truth-based concerns such as that the milk is not enough for the baby, baby not latching on. In another study, the most common reasons announcement for breastfeeding cessation were determined as concerns about breast milk supply and pain in the breast because of latch difficulty (Hornsby PP, 2019). Mother's concerns about breastfeeding during pregnancy increase the risk of breastfeeding cessation, termination of breastfeeding and early formula use in the first month in the postpartum period (Archabald K, 2011). Although there are many studies related to interruptions and barriers to breastfeeding during the early postpartum period and in the first six months, there are very few studies investigating affecting factors and concerns about breastfeeding in the antenatal period. Prenatal breastfeeding concerns of mothers should be considered in solving postpartum breastfeeding problems. Therefore, this study aims to determine women's concerns related to breastfeeding during the postpartum period and affecting factors.

Research questions

1. What are the postpartum women's concerns about breastfeeding during pregnancy?
2. What are the factors that affect mothers' concerns about breastfeeding during pregnancy?

Methods

This study was descriptive and cross-sectional design. This study was conducted at the obstetrics clinic of a state hospital in Çanakkale, Turkey, between April and July 2014. The sample of the study consisted of 207 postpartum women hospitalized in an obstetric clinic. The participants were selected using a random sampling method. The women who agreed to participate in the research within the first 24 hours postpartum, having no complication on herself and her baby during the birth and postnatal period, who had a live birth, having no seeing or hearing problems, being open to communication and cooperation were included in the study. Women with medical conditions in which breastfeeding is not recommended, or with infants unable to breastfeed secondary to congenital anomalies or other medical situations such as extreme prematurity were excluded from the study.

Procedure

After the consent was obtained from participants, the data was collected by the authors within the first 24 hours postnatal at the obstetrics clinic. The questionnaire including women's socio-demographic characteristics and the information about breastfeeding concerns were filled out by the mothers during a face-to-face interview that lasted approximately 15-20 minutes.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 18.0 (IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 18.0. IBM Corp: Armonk, NY). The characteristics of the participants of the study related to socio-demographic and obstetric history are presented using descriptive statistics (numbers, percentages). ANOVA and independent t-test were used in data analysis. The findings of the study were evaluated at a 95% confidence interval and statistical significance was defined as a p-value less than or equal to 0.05.

Ethical consideration

Signed permission from the ethical committee and approval from the institution where the study was performed, were taken before the study. The aim of the study was explained to all women participating in it and permission was taken from them. Researchers

notified the participating mothers about the confidentiality of their information.

Results

Features of the sample

Table 1 shows the demographic and obstetric characteristics of women. 34.8% of women were between 24-29 years. Among all participants; 36.2% were primary school graduates, 80.2% were unemployed, 61.8% had an equal to expenses, 46.4% had second pregnancy, 49.8% had two children, 96.6% had prenatal follow-up and 53.6% did not receive breastfeeding education.

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of postpartum women (n= 207)

Socio-demographic variables	n	(%)
Age group		
18-23 years	51	(24.7)
24-29 years	72	(34.8)
30-35 years	63	(30.4)
36 years and older	21	(10.1)
Education status		
Primary education graduate	75	(36.2)
Secondary education graduate	46	(22.2)
Higher education graduate	54	(26.1)
University graduate	32	(15.5)
Employment status		
Yes	41	(19.8)
No	166	(80.2)
Income level		
Lower than expenses	64	(30.9)
Equal to expenses	128	(61.8)
Higher than expenses	15	(7.3)
Family type		
Nuclear family	176	(85.0)
Extended family	31	(15.0)
Number of pregnancy		
One	66	(31.9)

Two	96	(46.4)
Three	35	(16.9)
Four and more	10	(4.8)
Number of children		
One	70	(33.8)
Two	103	(49.8)
Three	29	(14.0)
Four and more	5	(2.4)
Prenatal follow-up status		
Yes	200	(96.6)
No	7	(3.4)
Receiving breastfeeding education		
Yes	111	(53.6)
No		
Total	207	(100.0)

The Findings Related to Breastfeeding Concern

Prenatal breastfeeding concerns of postpartum women are shown in Table 2. According to the results, it has been founded that concerns of mothers about breastfeeding in pregnancy are six subjects: pain in breast, insufficient milk supply, and breast deformity, adequate nutrition in pregnancy, not frequent and effective breastfeeding and anxiety / embarrassment. There is a significant difference in terms of pain in the breast, deformity in the breast, inadequate milk supply, and no frequent and effective breastfeeding between the mothers with and without breastfeeding concern (p<0.05).

Table 2.

The thoughts related to the concerns about breastfeeding in pregnancy period of postpartum women

Table 2. The thoughts related to the concerns about breastfeeding in pregnancy period of postpartum women

Variables	Breastfeeding concern				χ^2	p
	Yes		No			
	n	%	n	%		
Pain in breast						
Yes	35	42.2	48	57.8	9.010	0.003
No	28	22.6	96	77.4		
Insufficient milk supply						
Yes	56	54.9	46	45.1	20.421	0.000
No	17	16.2	88	83.8		
Disfiguration of the breast						
Yes	18	46.2	21	53.8	5.608	0.021
No	45	26.8	123	73.2		
Inadequate nutrition in pregnancy						
Yes	29	39.2	45	60.8	4.169	0.058
No	34	25.6	99	74.4		
Not frequent and effective breastfeeding						
Yes	38	23.9	23	76.1	13.833	0.000
No	25	52.1	121	47.9		
Anxiety/embarrassment						
Yes	46	35.4	31	64.6	0.733	0.474
No	17	28.9	113	71.1		

There was a statistically significant difference between the age, number of pregnancies and the number of children (there was a statistically significant difference between the age, number of pregnancies and the number of children ($p < 0.05$), there was no significant relationship between education level, income level, employment status, family type, prenatal follow-up status and

breastfeeding education among women with and without breastfeeding concern, but there was no significant relationship between education level, income level, employment status, family type, prenatal follow-up status and breastfeeding education ($p < 0.05$) among women with and without breastfeeding concern.

Table 3. The factors related to the concerns about breastfeeding in pregnancy period of postpartum women

Characteristics	Breastfeeding concern				χ^2 /F	p
	Yes		No			
	n	%	n	%		
Age group						
18-23 years	21	41.2	30	58.8	2.720	0.046
24-29 years	25	34.7	47	65.3		
30-35 years	14	22.2	49	77.8		
36 years and older	3	14.3	18	85.7		
Education status						
Primary education graduate	17	22.7	58	77.3	1.845	0.140
Secondary education graduate	13	28.3	33	71.7		
Higher education graduate	19	35.2	35	64.8		

University graduate	14	43.8	18	56.3		
Employment status						
Yes	17	41.5	24	58.5	7.024	0.087
No	46	27.7	120	72.3		
Income level						
Lower than expenses	16	25.0	48	75.0	0.842	0.432
Equal to expenses	41	32.0	87	68.0		
Higher than expenses	6	40.0	9	60.0		
Family type						
Nuclear family	56	31.8	120	68.2	5.742	0.305
Extended family	7	22.6	24	77.4		
Number of pregnancy						
One	35	53.0	31	47.0	9.470	0.001
Two	21	21.9	75	78.1		
Three and more	7	15.6	38	84.4		
Number of children						
One	36	51.4	34	48.6	5.210	0.001
Two	23	22.3	80	77.7		
Three and more	4	11.8	30	88.2		
Prenatal follow-up status						
Yes	61	31.5	137	68.5	43.706	0.076
No	0	0.00	7	100		
Receiving breastfeeding education						
Yes	34	35.4	62	64.6	7.980	0.149
No	29	26.1	82	73.9		

Discussion

The results of this study to determine the concerns of mothers on breastfeeding in pregnancy showed that postpartum women were concerned about breastfeeding during pregnancy in six subjects. There was a significant difference in terms of pain in the breast, deformity in the breast, inadequate milk supply, and no frequent and effective breastfeeding between the mothers with and without breastfeeding concern. In Kronborg, Harder, Hall's study was founded that the majority of mothers were concerned because they could not produce enough milk to feed their babies (Kronborg H, 2009). Avery, Zimmerman, Underwood, and Magnus (2009) found that pregnant participants expressed fears regarding the ability to produce a sufficient milk supply (Avery A, 2009). Prenatal intention to breastfeed has been and proceeds to be one of the strongest determinatives of breastfeeding duration among postpartum women. In the prenatal period, perceived concerns about breastfeeding negatively affect exclusively breastfeeding in the

postnatal period. The findings obtained from this study are thought to result from breastfeeding classes not spread until childbirth preparation classes in Turkey. Besides, it may be possible for pregnant women to be worried about the negative impact of their social environment when the socio-cultural factors affecting breastfeeding are taken into consideration. In another study, the most common concerns of pregnant women about breastfeeding include inadequate milk, pain in the breast, not being able to pay attention to their own nutrition/health, limiting social life and disrupting the body image. These findings are similar to our results. The concern that pregnant women will be a pain in the breast involved in breastfeeding concerns may be more associated with previous negative breastfeeding experience. Exclusively breastfeeding and total breastfeeding time are adversely affected due to problems caused by mother or baby during the postpartum period. Maternal problems usually arise within the first 1-2 weeks of breastfeeding. At the beginning of these problems, problems

related to the breast, especially pain in breast, are coming and these sometimes reach the dimensions to prevent breastfeeding (Ahluwalia IB, 2005; Matare CR, 2019).

The other finding obtained from the study, while there was a statistically significant difference between the age, a number of pregnancies and the number of children, there was no significant relationship between education level, income level, employment status, family type, prenatal follow-up status and breastfeeding education among women with and without breastfeeding concern. Similar to our research findings, in Archibald, Lundberg, Triche, Norwitz, Illuzzi's study (2011) was found to be greater of the average age and multiparous of women without breastfeeding concern (Archabald K, 2011). The contrary to our findings, there are studies in the literature that indicate that low educational status, low-income level, not breastfeeding education is an important determinant of their intention to exclusively breastfeed their babies (Hornsby PP, 2019; Ihudiebube-Splendor CN, 2019; Moore ER, 2006; Qureshi AM, 2011). The results of our study may be due to the number of pregnancy and birth is high in Turkey. Also, because childbirth preparation classes widespread after mother-friendly hospitals occur at public hospitals in Turkey, these classes were not widespread in the hospital where the study was conducted.

Limitation of study

The research was performed at the obstetrics clinic of a state hospital and using the random sampling method. Because of this, the data obtained are representative only of the women participating in the study.

Conclusion

It has been concluded that women experienced concerns about breastfeeding during the prenatal period such as insufficient milk supply, pain in breast, disfiguration of the breast, inadequate nutrition in pregnancy, not frequent and effective breastfeeding, anxiety, age, the number of pregnancies, number of children and these are factors affecting breastfeeding. Because exclusive breastfeeding intentions of mothers during pregnancy can be suppressed they were concerns about breastfeeding. Saunders-Goldson

(2004) also found that African American women who had greater levels of prenatal confidence and self-efficacy in the ability to breastfeed had higher intentions to breastfeed (Saunders-Goldson, S.; 2004). In spite of the cognizance being created by organizations such as WHO, APA, ACOG on the utilities of EBF, statistics are still indicative of insufficient knowledge and inadequate using of EBF among women (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2005; American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2018; Ware JL, 2017). Therefore, health professionals, especially midwives and obstetrics nurse, should offer approaches and training to eliminate the concerns of pregnant women about breastfeeding as part of antenatal classes or breastfeeding classes and routine antenatal care.

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Conflicts of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest relevant to this article.

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