

ABSTRACT of Master's Dissertation

No.1

Course	Master of Public Health	Name	Haruna Teraoka
Thesis Title	<i>Exploring feeding practices of mothers of children aged 1-2 months in Kwale County, Kenya</i>		
<p>Background: Breastfeeding is said to be optimal nutrition for children. It can help decrease mortality of about 823,000 children under five years of age annually. Although WHO recommends that babies should receive exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) until six months, less than 50% of the babies can achieve this target all over the world between 2015 and 2020. Although many studies on barriers to conduct EBF have been conducted, little have focused on the first and second months of postpartum period, where drastic physical and emotional changes are observed in mothers.</p> <p>Objectives: This study aims to explore the feeding practice of mothers in the first two months postpartum, and the factors affected either to continue or stop exclusive breastfeeding.</p> <p>Methods : Kinango sub-county, Kwale county, Kenya was selected as the study site. Mothers who came to Kinango sub-county hospital for vaccination of their infant at six weeks in April 2022 were recruited. The study was conducted using a semi-structured interview guide. Interviews were conducted at two different timings: the first session was around six weeks of postpartum, and the second was around ten weeks. Of 25 mothers agreed to participate in this study, two interview sessions were conducted with 24, and one first session was conducted with one. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. Then, practices and perceptions related to infant's feeding were analysed.</p>			

Abstract of Master's Dissertation

No.2

Course	Master of Public Health	Name	Haruna Teraoka
<p>Results: At six weeks postpartum, all 25 mothers responded that they practiced EBF. At ten weeks, three mothers said that they started to add complementary food. Other five said that they plan to add it soon, because they felt that amount of human milk was not sufficient for their babies. The perception that the child was still too young to have complementary food at six weeks, which worked as a barrier. On the other hand, at ten weeks of age, there was a perception that the child had grown, and it was acceptable to add complementary food. Twenty-four out of twenty-five mothers knew that breastfeeding up to six months of age was ideal. However, only five mothers were aware of the risks of feeding complementary foods. Some mothers said they had learnt to make close body contact with their child while breastfeeding and hold the breast to avoid suffocating the baby. Despite EBF until six weeks postpartum, some mothers did not have stable milk production even ten weeks postpartum.</p> <p>Conclusion : The mothers remembered most educational content about the ideal duration of full breastfeeding. Twenty-two out of twenty-five mothers said they had received education on breastfeeding, indicating that knowledge of breastfeeding is becoming more prevalent in the Kinango sub-county. However, some mothers perceived that human milk was insufficient, even though they continued EBF. No one added complementary food in the first 1-2 months postpartum as a cultural practice, and only one person added it on the advice of a family member. Adding complementary food becomes more acceptable as the infants get older. In particular, it was suggested that education on breastfeeding techniques is needed. (Word count 496)</p>			