

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Today, science widely accepts the benefit of 'breastfeeding' as the best way to feed a baby (Knodel & Nibhon Debavalya, 1990). The discovery shows that breast milk is the perfect food for human babies and has all the nutrients needed for growth and development for at least the first six months of life (Anderson, Johnstone and Remley, 1999). Besides the fact that it is easily digested, breast milk helps protect babies from problems like chest infections, fever, earaches, diarrhea, vomiting and reduces the risk of allergies (Durongdej, 1997).

Moreover, breast milk can change to suit each stage of a baby's growth (Ministry of Public Health, Department of Health, 2000). It is convenient, always at the right temperature, never out of trend and costs nothing. For the mother, breastfeeding can yield benefits to both body and mind. It can help new mothers lose extra weight gained in pregnancy, and helps the womb return to its normal size more quickly. Also, breastfeeding protects women from breast cancer later in life. It may also reduce the risk of future hip fracture and/or ovarian cancer (Ministry of Public Health, Department of Health, 1994)

The Thai government has several policies supporting breastfeeding; they started with the plan for a National Economic and Social Development Board in the years 1977-1980 until the years 2002-2006 (Ministry of Public Health, Department of Health, 2007). In addition, the Thai government asked all hospitals in Bangkok, the test area, to support new mothers during the six month breastfeeding period. This support includes information provision, training courses and the enlisting of nurses (Dora, 2006).

With this plan, the Thai government aims to gain interest and encourage breastfeeding among new mothers (Ministry of Public Health, Department of Health,

2007). This government attempt satisfied UNICEF and the World Health Organization criteria, then, Thailand was chosen to be one of the 12 Asian countries involved in conducting a research project in breastfeeding (Wirapong Chatranon, 1988). The project promoted six months of breastfeeding for infants and it aimed to increase the number of breastfeeding moms in order to dispute the dominance of cow milk companies.

Presently, new mothers have new information about breastfeeding. Beliefs related to breastfeeding in term of low nutrition or insufficient feeding time for babies were changed (Ciba Foundation, 2006). Nurses and hospitals corrected these beliefs with information from the research of Bardwick (1971) which showed that breastfeeding can increase a baby's intelligence quotient or IQ. This alerted a lot of new mothers to feed their babies with their own milk. In addition, the research of the World Health Organization (1993) stated that breastfeeding is a 'behavior' which needs to be supported. There are many factors that affect breastfeeding behavior; work, time, family, food, environment, disease, baby for example. It could be said that the breastfeeding behavior of new mothers should be taught, informed and well-trained. Mothers themselves, should understand the values and benefits of feeding babies with their own milk and have enough endurance to feed their babies beyond the first six months.

However, from a study of Thai laws related to pregnancy (Nag, 2005), Thai women are allowed a 3 month break (with pay) before or after their babies are born. This time is too limited compared with other Asian countries (6 months for China, Taiwan and Korea). This is one factor that has resulted in a rate of breastfeeding in Thailand as low as 12.4 percent for the first 1-3 months and a decrease to 3-6 percent for 4-6 month old babies (Chayovan, Napaporn, Peerasit Kamnuansilpa and John Knodel, 1998). Others factors may be the heavy promotion of milk companies, HIV, the pain from cesarean sections, etc.

As a result of the benefits of breastfeeding for babies, the researcher was inspired to conduct the research on this topic to discover what the factors affecting the

6 month breastfeeding period in new mothers were. The factors would be personal factors (such as age, income, education and occupation), physical factors (such as pain experienced from cesarean section, the existence of disease) and external factors (such as marketing and promotion of milk brands, support from hospitals/nurses, support from society, support from family and friends). The result from this research will benefit the development and support of breastfeeding in Thailand in the future.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1.2.1 What are the benefits of six months breastfeeding?

1.2.2 What are the factors affecting the six months breastfeeding period in Bangkok, Thailand?

1.2.3 How can the six months breastfeeding behavior in Bangkok, Thailand be promoted?

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are the following:

1.3.1 To investigate the benefit of the six months breastfeeding period in Bangkok, Thailand

1.3.2 To find the key barrier factors for the six months breastfeeding period in Bangkok, Thailand.

1.3.3 To create guidelines for the best marketing practice to promote six month breastfeeding behavior in Bangkok, Thailand.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

The definitions of the terms of this study are as follows:

Breastfeeding	refers to mothers who give their own milk as baby food
Six month breastfeeding	refers to the period in which mothers should give their own milk as baby food, following the guidelines of the World Health Organization in 1993
Breastfeeding behavior	refers to a mother's actions when feeding babies, this includes (1) pre-breastfeeding behavior such as cleaning their hands and breasts, (2) behavior during breastfeeding such as the way of sitting and holding baby and (3) post-breastfeeding behavior, such as burping the baby, etc.
Cesarean section	refers to a surgical procedure in which a baby is delivered after an incision in to the abdomen and uterus. Used when a woman cannot give birth vaginally or if the baby is in distress.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study of “Factors Affecting Breastfeeding in the First 6 months: A case study of Bangkok’s New Mothers” is designed as a quantitative research. According to Johnson & Christensen (2004), the quantitative research approach normally emphasizes the use of deductive conception in scientific method to test the theory by collection of quantitative data. In this study, the researcher specifies the population as ‘new mothers’, who just got their babies in the year 2008.

In this research, the researcher employs a non-probability convenience sampling method by launching questionnaires to 400 new mothers who were the patients of Saint Louis Hospital, BNH Hospital, Bumrungrad Hospital and Bangkok Christian Hospital between August 1-30, 2008. The size of the sample is directed by

Yamane (1967) Table. Since the researcher did not know the exact size of the population, the sample size was set as 'unknown' and the researcher expects a 95% confidence level or 0.05% error level for this research. Therefore, the sample size needed to be at least 400.

For this research, the researcher set variables as:

1. Independent Variables, divided into 3 groups. These groups were:

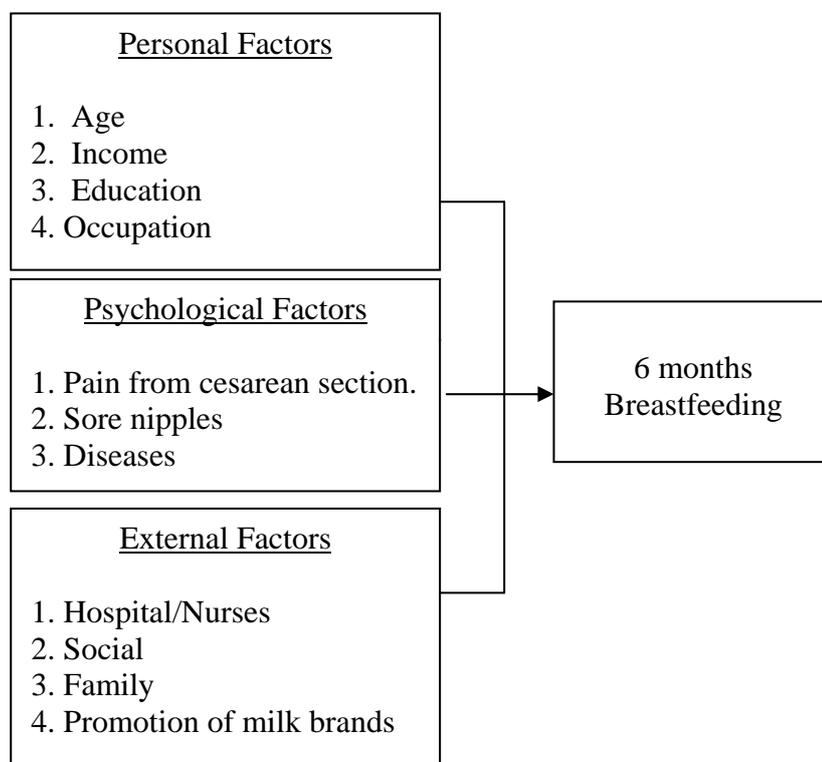
Personal factors: such as age, income, education and occupation. The researcher thinks these factors may be related to the 6 month breastfeeding behavior because of the research of Mohammad, Ehlayel, and Abdulbari (2008), which stated that low income mothers tended to breastfeed to save money and younger mothers tended to breastfeed for longer than older mothers.

Psychological factors: such as the mother's pain from a cesarean section and disease. The researcher found that many related literatures, articles and journals stated that HIV or breast cancer affect the willingness to breastfeed among new mothers (Seow & Wong, 2005). In addition to disease, pain is another important factor that deters breastfeeding in new mothers from a cesarean section or sore nipples, for example.

External factors: such as the effect of hospitals/nursing support, the effect of support from family and friends, support from society and the effect of milk brand promotion. The researcher believes that these factors may affect a mother's breastfeeding behavior. These factors include Thai laws related to activities that do not support breastfeeding, or the heavy promotion on TV, radio, or in magazines of milk brands.

2. The dependent variable, i.e. the 6 month breastfeeding period for new mothers in Bangkok, Thailand.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the research.



The researcher divided 400 samples into 4 groups from 4 hospitals: such as Saint Louis Hospital, BNH Hospital, Bumrungrad Hospital and Bangkok Christian Hospital. Each hospital comprised 100 samples equally. The researcher and research assistants randomly gave out questionnaires to participants who were willing to cooperate in this survey. The participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire and give the completed questionnaire back to the researcher. The questionnaire will be collected between August 1-30, 2008, the researcher scheduled a plan of research activities as follows:

Table 1. Activities Chart

Activities	2008		
	Aug	Sep	Oct
Review all literatures	✓		
Collect data and identify best practice	✓	✓	
Design questionnaire and launch	✓	✓	
Analyze and summarize		✓	✓
Recommendations and finish report			✓
Project writing up and submit			✓

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 The factors affecting the 6 month breastfeeding behavior of new mothers in Bangkok, Thailand will be established. This knowledge may be used to assist with the future government plans.

1.6.2 Direction could be given for support of breastfeeding projects in all Thai hospitals.

1.6.3 The study can be a source of information related to the benefits of breastfeeding for new mothers in Thailand.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study of Factors Affecting Breastfeeding in the First 6 months: A Case Study of Bangkok's New Mothers is divided into five chapters.

- Chapter 1-Introduction: The chapter presents the introduction of the research topic, the aim and objectives, the methodology and the structure of the research.
- Chapter 2-Review of literature: The chapter contains the literature and references from various sources, which relate to the research topic.
- Chapter 3-Methodology: This part presents methods used for analysis of the data and limitations of the study.

- Chapter 4-Results: This section presents the interpretations of the findings from the results of data collection and data analysis from Chapter 3.
- Chapter 5-Conclusions, Discussion and Recommendations: This chapter provides conclusions about the outcome shown in previous chapters and recommendations to support the aim of the study.