

Thesis Title A Process and Factors Influencing Breastfeeding
 : Case Studies in Adolescent Mothers

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Abstract

The study of process and factors influencing breastfeeding in adolescent mothers , is one of the important problems due to the decreasing rate of breastfeeding among adolescent mothers. The design of the study was a qualitative research study on adolescent mothers. Five cases of them were selected among those adolescent mothers who attended services at prenatal care clinic, Siriraj Hospital. All cases were interviewed in depth and were observed, starting from the labour period to the end of their breastfeeding, during which each observation period was not longer than five months.

The ages of the studied cases were in between seventeen and nineteen years old. Their education varied from Pathom 6 to Mathayom 6. Two cases of them were from upcountry, whereas the rest was from urban. All of them decided their choices for feeding to their infant and duration before their deliveries. The upcountry adolescent planned to give breastfeeding for 6 to 12 months, whereas the urban adolescents planned to give breastfeeding with a much shorter duration of only 1 month.

After deliveries, it was found that the actual practices of some adolescent mothers deviated from what they planned. During the first 2nd or 3rd day after the deliveries, all new mothers in the hospital were imposed on breastfeeding. As a result, it swayed one case of the urban adolescent mothers who had intended to choose bottlefeeding at the beginning to give breastfeed for a short period. However, this influence of the hospital personnels faded away shortly within 1 month. During the second week after the deliveries, most of the adolescent were taken care by their mothers, and were supported to give breastfeeding for their babies. However, at the beginning of the third week, the conflicts in their mother roles and their own needs in the group of the adolescent mothers, as well as the suggestion of their mothers in using of the bottlefeeding were the causes of quitting in breastfeeding of some of the adolescent mothers during this week. On the other hand, such conflicts were relatively low in the upcountry adolescent mothers. Moreover, they were continuously supported to give breastfeeding for their infants; A strong belief in the value and benefits of breastfeeding prevailed over the upcountry adolescent mothers, whereas no such belief and appreciation of the breastfeeding in the urban adolescent mothers.

Nevertheless, there was one case of the adolescent mother who was successful in a long duration of the breastfeeding. She was influenced by two most important factors namely: the influence and appropriate supports of her mother roles by her mother. Since she had continuously been supported by her mother, during the first 2 months, in order to encourage her to nurse her infant by herself, without the replacement of her own mother roles by her mother, until she was able to adapt herself to her new roles. Finally, it happened that this helped her to establish a firm bonding and attachment with her baby. Her change in longer breastfeeding was firm since it came from herself internally. Hence, only the

change in attitude of the breastfeeding and proper supports will be effectively in assisting adolescent mothers in longer duration of breastfeeding.

Readiness for motherhood is another important factor in establishment of forming a firm bonding and attachment between a mother and her infant. If it has been developed and established firmly after the delivery, it will stimulate the adolescent mother to be willing to sacrifice herself and patiently to nurse her infant in breastfeeding for a long period. Lack of sex education and family planning are important factors which cause most of the cases in this study became mothers without intention. Hence, provision of sex education to adolescents would help to prevent undesired outcomes.

All cases of this study had financial burden but it was relieved by their mothers and was not a main obstruction in their breastfeeding. Hence, a decision of the urban adolescent mothers to bottlefeeding for working outside their home might be a consequence of other factors other than the financial burden since this behavior was not found in the upcountry mothers. Therefore, the recommendation from this study including the use of the differences in the nature of upcountry and urban adolescent mothers found in this study to improve a policy in the promotion of the breastfeeding.