

Knowledge and Perception of Mothers on the Use of Banked Human Breast Milk for Feeding of Infants: A Cross-Sectional Study Among Mothers Attending Two Selected Health Facilities in AMAC, Abuja

Bidemi Fatima Suleiman*, Maryam Shindang

Department of Community Medicine and Primary Health Care

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

Background: The burden of inadequate breastfeeding presents a significant global public health challenge, profoundly affecting child survival, growth, and development, contributing to high infant mortality and morbidity, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. Banked Human Breast Milk also called donor breast milk serves as the best recommended alternative of feeding methods when a mothers' own milk is unavailable, yet its acceptance is often limited by knowledge gaps and other factors. In Abuja, there is a paucity of data on the awareness and perception of mothers regarding Banked human breast milk in Abuja, Nigeria.

Aim of this study: To assess the knowledge and perception of mothers attending two selected healthcare facilities in AMAC, Abuja on the use of BHBM milk for infant feeding.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional study design was utilized to test 299 mothers attending two selected health facilities in AMAC, Abuja. The study utilized a multistage sampling technique with random sampling and proportionate sampling to select participants. The collected data was analyzed using statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results: The majority of mothers (50.2%) were aged 26–33 years, educational attainment was notably high, as 89.3% had a tertiary education, 2.7% primary educational level, 6.7% secondary education, while only 1.7% had no formal education. 61.5% reported having heard of BHBM, while 27.1% had not. The overall knowledge of mothers on Banked human breast milk was moderately high, 56.5% of mothers demonstrated good or very good knowledge. Perceptions of mothers were largely positive, with 67.5% having a favorable view. 61.9% of mothers were willing to donate and 70.2% mothers were willing to use banked human breast milk if medically necessary. The main barrier to the use of banked human breast milk was safety concerns with 61.7%. Tertiary education level and religion (Christian) were found to be significant predictors of predictors of good knowledge, which education was the main significant predictor of positive perception. The findings of this study also revealed that healthcare providers were the primary source of information and the most influential factor in decision making.

Conclusion/Recommendation: This study revealed a fertile ground for the introduction of banked human breast milk services in AMAC, Abuja, characterized by a reasonably aware, positively inclined, and willing population of mothers. The high regard for healthcare professionals presents a powerful channel for intervention. However, this potential is conditional upon effectively addressing the significant knowledge gaps and concerns regarding safety and trust. The journey towards the successful integration of BHBM into the infant feeding landscape of Abuja will hinge on a concerted, transparent, and healthcare provider-led strategy that prioritizes education and trust-building.

Keywords: Banked Human Breast Milk (BHBM), Mothers, Knowledge, Perception, Willingness

