

# Mothers' Knowledge Regarding Infant Physical Needs

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## Abstract

Parents' most important need was for accurate and honest information. Needs focused around sensitive infant care and involvement in decision-making. The greatest stressor for parents was alteration to the parental role, followed by infant appearance. A descriptive / Cross-sectional study design is carried to assess the mothers' knowledge regarding infant physical needs in Babylon governorate.

The study conducted in Babylon Governorate in AL-Hashemia district, health centers. The sample size was (100) mother's. The sample of study was multistage sampling, The data were collected through the training of two groups of specialized community health nursing student, each groups consisting of 2 students. They were trained on how to collect the sample and data collection method. The study used a developed questionnaire (Arabic version) The data of the present study are analyzed through the use of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) study concluded A third of the female participants in the study breastfeed their children through a bottle of milk and half of them feed their children 5 times a day, more than half of the participants had moderate information, while 40% of them had little information about caring for their children physically. study recommended new mothers depend on the care of their children on the family inheritance, especially the mother or older sister without adopting the scientific aspects and the development in the care of infants. Therefore, the study suggests developing an educational program that is part of the motherhood and childhood program.

**Keywords:** *Infant physical needs, Mothers' knowledge.*

## Introduction

The connection between mother–infant physical contact and maternal responsiveness has not been investigated <sup>(1)</sup>

Infant feeding is a significant predictor of health outcomes for both mother and infant. Among mothers, never breastfeeding, nonexclusive breastfeeding, or early cessation of breast feeding, are associated with increased risks of breast cancer, ovarian cancer, diabetes, hypertension, and myocardial infarction <sup>(2)</sup>

Parents' most important need was for accurate and honest information. Needs focused around sensitive infant care and involvement in decision-making. The greatest stressor for parents was alteration to the parental role, followed by infant appearance <sup>(3)</sup>

A conceptual model of breastfeeding decisions, this contextual approach to infant feeding focuses on multi-directional influences and the dynamic nature of balance between self and infant care that women experience over time <sup>(4)</sup>

Sleep develops rapidly during the first few years of life and is a highly dynamic process. At birth, infants lack an established circadian rhythm and hence sleep across multiple intervals throughout the day and night in short bouts, which may also be due to infants' feeding needs <sup>(5)</sup>

Sleep is a highly dynamic developmental process, particularly in the first 2 years of life, with a high inter- and intra-individual variability. While many studies have focused on children, the link between variations in sleep and developmental outcomes in healthy infants remains less explored. The objective of this narrative

review is therefore to summarize and evaluate available literature on the relation between infant sleep during the first 2 years of life and cognitive and physical growth in healthy typically developing infants and young children. (6)

Parents respond to their infants’ emotions in ways they believe are most appropriate. These reciprocal interactions make up the infants’ social-emotional environment and appear to guide future development and relationship formation, perceptions of infant emotions were associated with beliefs about basic needs for infants and some mothers expressed stress when their infants fussed or cried. Mothers who reported stress showed fewer mother-infant interactions. However, mothers who did not express stress had infants that fussed and cried more than infants of mothers who reported stress. (7)

The first 1000 days of a child’s life are a delicate yet highly consequential period affecting future physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional growth. The bond between mother and infant within the first 1000 days is especially critical as it is within the bounds of this relationship that a child is fed, cared for, and kept safe. Furthermore, mother–infant bonding lays an essential foundation for future development (8).

This study aims to assess mothers’ knowledge regarding infant physical needs in order to conform the educational program or instruction for new mothers how don’t know how to caring their first infant.

## Methodology

### Study Design

A descriptive / Cross-sectional study design is carried to assess the mothers’ knowledge regarding

infant physical needs in Babylon governorate.

### Setting of the Study

The study conducted in Babylon Governorate in AL-Hashemia district, health centers

### Study Sample

The sample size was (100) mother’s .The sample of study was multistage sampling:

### Tools of the Study

During an extensive review of relevant literature the study instrument is constructed for the purpose of the study by the researcher. It is comprised of five questionnaires parts and the overall items included in these questionnaires are (24) items, including mothers’ knowledge regarding infant physical needs

### Method of data collecting

The data were collected through the training of two groups of specialized community health nursing student, each groups consisting of 2 students. They were trained on how to collect the sample and data collection method. The study used a developed questionnaire (Arabic version)

### Statistical Data Analysis Approach

The data of the present study are analyzed through the use of Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS-23). The following statistical data analysis approaches are used in order to analyze and evaluate the results of the study.

## Results

**Table (1) shows the demographic data of the mothers**

	Mother age	Frequency	Percent
	18-25 Years of age	18	18.0
	26-33 years of age	46	46.0
	34- 41 years of age	25	25.0
	42-49 years of age	11	11.0
	Total	100	100.0

**Cont... Table (1) shows the demographic data of the mothers**

Age of Child		Frequency	Percent
	1-4 Months aged	31	31.0
	5-8 Months aged	34	34.0
	9-12 Months aged	35	35.0
	Total	100	100.0
Educational Level of the mothers		Frequency	Percent
	Primary schools	43	43.0
	Secondary schools	21	21.0
	University graduated	30	30.0
	Postgraduate	6	6.0
	Total	100	100.0
Place of residence		Frequency	Percent
	Urban	69	69.0
	Rural	31	31.0
	Total	100	100.0

This table indicated that 46% of mother aged 26-33 years, 35.5% their infant aged 9-12 months with education level 43% of primary school and 69% of them life in urban area.

**Table (2) identify the infant physical needs**

How to feed a child		Frequency	Percent
	Breast feeding	34	34.0
	Bottle feeding	38	38.0
	Mixed method	28	28.0
	Total	100	100.0
Number of feeding times per day		Frequency	Percent
	Less than 5 times / day	48	48.0
	5-8 Times / Day	43	43.0
	More than 9 times / Day	9	9.0
	Total	100	100.0
Number of hours of sleep during the night		Frequency	Percent
	Less than 5 hours / day	45	45.0
	5-7 hours / Day	49	49.0
	More than 9 hours / Day	6	6.0
	Total	100	100.0

**Cont... Table (2) identify the infant physical needs**

Number of hours of sleep during the day		Frequency	Percent
	Less than 4 times / day	40	40.0
	4-6 Times / Day	54	54.0
	More than 6 times / Day	6	6.0
	Total	100	100.0
Baby sleep		Frequency	Percent
	Back sleep	31	31.0
	Abdominal sleep	69	69.0
	Total	100	100.0

The table showed that 38% of mothers feeding their infant by bottle method, 48% of infant had less than 5 times / day, 49% sleep s-7 hours during the night and 54% sleep 4-6 hours during day, th 69% of infant had sleep on abdomen.

**Table (3) identify the infant cleanness care**

How many diapers does he need during the day?		Frequency	Percent
	Less than 5 times / day	40	40.0
	5-7 times / Day	50	50.0
	More than 9 times / Day	10	10.0
	Total	100	100.0
How many diapers does he need during the night?		Frequency	Percent
	Less than 2 times per day	37	37.0
	3-5 Times per day	45	45.0
	more than 5 times per day	18	18.0
	Less than 5 times per day	30	30.0
	6-9 Times per day	50	50.0
	more than 10 times per day	20	20.0

The table showed that 50% of infant diapers changed 5-7 times per day, 45% 3-5 times per night

**Table (4) shows the mothers' knowledge regarding infant physical needs**

Mothers' knowledge	frequency	%
Low knowledge	40	40.0
Moderate knowledge	54	54.0
High knowledge	6	6.0

The table indicated that half of the participants had moderate knowledge and 40.0% had low knowledge

### Dissection

Study results indicated that 46% of mother aged 26-33 years, 35.5% their infant aged 9-12 months with education level 43% of primary school and 69% of them life in urban area.

The results showed that mothers still young with infant child and low educational level

Mjwara, N., & Maharaj, P. <sup>(10)</sup> study showed that Young mothers wanted to assume financial responsibility for their children but they were finding it difficult to do so. Many faced numerous obstacles as they were no longer in a relationship with the father of their child and depended on their own parents for support. Participants described how the difficulties they faced in their daily lives and their new roles as mothers impacted negatively on their education and career aspirations.

In another hand 38% of mothers feeding their infant by bottle method, 48% of infant had less than 5 times / day, 49% sleep 7-8 hours during the night and 54% sleep 4-6 hours during day, th 69% of infant had sleep on abdomen this result agree with such study

Infant feeding is essential for survival. The primary infant feeding modalities for infants under 6 months of age are breastfeeding and bottle-feeding. The ideal feeding modality for mothers and infants is breastfeeding. Global initiatives aim to enhance uptake and duration of breastfeeding (World Health Organization (WHO) & United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2003).

Bottle-feeding advice concentrates on more procedural recommendations: cleaning and sterilizing of feeding equipment, correct preparation of formula, and the storage and transport of formula (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) UK, 2015).

Sleep problems, typically identified as difficulty settling to sleep and frequent night waking, are common in young children, with prevalence estimates of 25% children across the world

Past research indicates that sleeping arrangements are one of the strong predictive factors for young children's sleep problems. For example, co-sleeping

was shown to be associated with persistent child night waking and bedtime struggles <sup>(7,9, 10,11)</sup>

### Conclusion

A third of the female participants in the study breastfeed their children through a bottle of milk and half of them feed their children 5 times a day. Half of the participants let their children sleep more than seven hours a day and two-thirds of the participants let their babies sleep on their abdomen

The study concluded that half of the mothers participating in the research work on cleaning their babies well, about 5-7 times a day.

When analyzing the information regarding mothers' knowledge about the physical care of the infant, it was found that more than half of the participants had moderate information, while 40% of them had little information about caring for their children physically..

### Recommendations:

New mothers depend on the care of their children on the family inheritance, especially the mother or older sister without adopting the scientific aspects and the development in the care of infants. Therefore, the study suggests developing an educational program that is part of the motherhood and childhood program and is the basis for continued care and follow-up by doctors and nurses in health centers or private clinics within the care program, from the beginning of registration in the center, the completion of pregnancy and childbirth.

Finding methods and supporting mothers' participation in an educational program as part of community support or non-governmental community-based organizations

**Ethical Clearance:** The Research Ethical Committee at scientific research by ethical approval of both environmental and health and higher education and scientific research ministries in Iraq

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