

# **NON EXCLUSIVE BREAST FEEDING AT INFANCY, SOURCE OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR AMONG ADOLESCENTS, PERCEPTION OF EKITI STATE RESIDENT NIGERIAN NUTRITIONISTS.**

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## **Abstract**

This study is concerned with finding out the perception of Ekiti State Resident Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour. 250 nutritionists selected from Ekiti Central Senatorial District of Ekiti State constituted the sample for the study. A self designed questionnaire entitled ‘non exclusive breast feeding and unacceptable behaviour (NEBUB)’ was used to collect data for the study. The three hypotheses raised and tested using t-test statistics were accepted in their null forms. Findings from the study revealed that the perception of Ekiti State resident nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour is negative. Both male and female nutritionists were not different in their perceptions. Ekiti State resident Nutritionists in the private operations were also not different from their colleagues in the government establishments in their perceptions towards non exclusive breast feeding as the cause of unacceptable behaviour in adolescents. Also, the educational background of the nutritionists did not cause any difference in their perceptions towards non exclusive breast feeding as the cause of unacceptable behaviour in adolescents. It was recommended that though exclusive breastfeeding is encouraged for the well being of an infant and indeed the most balanced diet in their early years, it has no valuable influence in their moral development across puberty and adolescence stages of development. It was suggested that other factors that could be responsible for unacceptable behaviour among adolescents should be investigated.

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**Keywords:** Perception, Nutritionists and Breastfeedi

## **Introduction.**

Unacceptable behavior seems to be very rampant among the Nigerian adolescents from all works of life nowadays. As rampant and as commonplace as this behaviour type is, it is still labeled 'unacceptable'. Most common among such behaviour are pickpocketing, truancy, gangsterism, absenteeism and the host of others. Bolajoko (2004) reported that the aforementioned behaviour and other related ones are sourced in the original Adamic disobedience in the garden of Eden. The fact that the first man was cursed because he disobeyed could be why disobedience has a grip of subsequent generations after Adam. The most irritating and the commonest of unacceptable behaviour of adolescents from all facets of life according to Joshua (1999) is 'disobedience' which could be considered as an abnormal behavior in most cultures. Several perspectives and theories attempt to explain the sources of unacceptable behaviour. Those who hold a medical perspective of the causes of unacceptable behaviour focus on biological and physiological factors as the sources. Others too are of the opinion that the family upbringing, particularly the mother child interaction at the infancy plays a major role on the nature of behaviour such an infant displays at adolescence.

## **The Problem**

The psychodynamic perspective of abnormal behavior that evolved from Freudian psychoanalytic theory contends that unacceptable behaviour is a psychological disorder, the consequence of anxiety produced by unresolved and unconscious conflicts. Treatment focuses on identification and resolution of the conflicts. The behavioural perspective of unacceptable behaviour contends that it results from faulty or ineffective learning and conditioning. Treatments are designed to reshape disordered behaviour using traditional learning procedures, to teach new, more appropriate and more adaptive responses. The cognitive perspective claimed that adolescents display unacceptable behavior because of particular thoughts and behaviour that are often based upon their false assumptions. Treatments are oriented towards helping the maladjusted individual develop new thought processes and new values. The social-cultural perspective of unacceptable behaviour revealed that it is learned within a social context range from the family and the community. It is the social cultural approach to unacceptable behaviour that embraces the entire parent child relationship from the prenatal stages of development (Gamete, Zygote, Embryonic and Fetal stages) over to the post natal stages starting from the neonatal stage. Emphasis is mostly placed on the mother- child cares of the early years particularly in the area of feeding.

Breastfeeding seems to be universally cross cultural. It is the process of releasing the breast lactations into an offspring's nutritional system through the mother's nipples via the esophagus for a varied period of time

depending on the family culture, mothers' preference and other circumstances. Exclusive breastfeeding is an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants. The World Health Organisation (WHO) (1998) opined that exclusive breastfeeding, the feeding of an infant with undiluted breast milk for the first six months after birth promotes sensory and cognitive development as well as protects the infants against infectious and chronic diseases. The more a mother engages in breastfeeding, it seems the higher the tendency of the reduction in the risk of ovarian and breast cancer and hence an increase in the family and national resources.

Considering the above propositions, researches seem to be highly inconclusive on the influence of breastfeeding (particularly the WHO's celebrated exclusive breastfeeding) on the behavioural pattern of adolescents. What becomes globally obvious is the amazing rate at which adolescents misbehave. Secondary school adolescents throw stones at their teachers for not allowing them to cheat in examination while the apprentice adolescents sell off their boss' equipments and tools and run away. The adolescents that spiritual organizations look up to as leaders of tomorrow are discovered to engage themselves in premarital sexes leading to abortion and hence untimely death. Truancy and gangsterism become the order of the day while stealing, arm robbery and pickpocketing are considered to be the attributes of adolescents of this time. It is yet commonly mentioned that only the adolescents that were not opportuned to be exclusively fed with breast milk in their infancy that engage themselves in all manners of hostile disdains ridiculous and absurdities of this nature in their later years. The fact that researches are highly inconclusive on the possible influence the breastfeeding pattern, particularly exclusive breastfeeding may have on the behaviour of later years is what led to this research study.

The research question raised in this study is 'What is the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents?'

The null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance in this study are:

H<sub>01</sub>: Gender difference will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

H<sub>02</sub>: Employment type will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

H03: Educational Background will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

### Research Method

A descriptive research design was adopted in this study. The sample of the study consisted of 250 respondents selected using proportional stratified random sampling technique. the sample was made up of 35 respondents that operate standard private nutrition centres, 90 nutritionists employed by various governmental agencies and 125 local nutritionists. a questionnaire titled *non exclusive breast feeding and unacceptable behaviour (NEBUB)* was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was divided into two sections, A and B. Section A explores the biodata of the respondents while section B contains 25 items that explore the feelings of the respondents towards *non exclusive breast feeding and unacceptable behaviour*. The instrument was validated by giving copies of it to test experts in the field of tests and measurement of Ekiti State University. Some ambiguous items were reframed and some that appeared irrelevant deleted. After the corrections, the researchers were asked to proceed in the research work using the material. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach alpha estimate. The calculated r was 0.72. This was considered high enough to determine the reliability of the instruments.

The instrument was personally administered by the researchers with the co-operation of some of the personnels in each of the centres. The data collected were analysed using percentage score and t-test statistics. The hypotheses raised were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

### Results

The results of the study were presented based on research question and hypotheses.

### Research Question

The research question raised in this study is What is the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents?

Table 1: **Percentage and frequency table showing the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.**

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	80	32
Negative	170	68
TOTAL	250	100

Table 1 above shows that 170 of the nutritionists have a negative perception towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents? This implies that a huge number of the nutritionists did not see any connection between exclusive breastfeeding and behaviour of the later years.

The null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance in this study are:

H0<sub>1</sub>: Gender difference will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

**Table 2: Percentage and frequency table showing the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists Based on gender**

Group	N	X	S.D	t-cal	t-value
Male	68	47.15	28.92	1.34	1.96
Female	192	36.88	25.44		

P > 0.05

Table 4 above reveals that the t-cal (1.34) is greater than the t-value (1.96). This implies that gender has no influence on the perceptions of the respondents. The hypothesis that says gender difference will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breastfeeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents is accepted.

H0<sub>2</sub> : Employment type will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breastfeeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

**Table 3: Showing the t-test Analysis of the Nutritionists’ perception according to Employment type.**

Variables	N	X	S.D	Df	t-cal	t-value
Nutritionists in government establishment and other cognate organisations	125	84.94	15.02	248	1.00	1.96
Nutritionists in Private operations	125	83.15	13.25			

p>0.05

Table 3 above shows the employment type of the respondents and their perceptions towards non exclusive breastfeeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents. The t-cal (1.00) is lower than the t-value (1.96) and this implies that the hypothesis that says employment type will not significantly influence the perception of Ekiti state resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breastfeeding at

infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents is accepted.

H03: Educational Background will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

**Table 4: t-test table showing the difference in the perceptions pool of the nutritionists based on Educational Background.**

Duty Post	N	X	S.D	t-cal	t-value
Below Higher National Diploma (HND)	182	45	49.81	1.29	1.96
Psychiatric doctor	68	32	29.57		

$P > 0.05$

Table 4 above shows that t-cal (1.29) is lower than t-value (1.96). This implies that whether the nutritionists were graduates or not did not significantly influence their perception towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents. The hypothesis that says Educational Background will not significantly influence the Perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents is accepted.

### Discussion

Consequent upon the analysis of data as presented above, the following findings were arrived at. In an answer to the research question raised in the study, 68% of the respondents displayed a negative reaction to c

Hypothesis 1 indicates a non significant difference in the perceptions of the nutritionists based on gender differences (male and female). This finding is in line with Richard (2003) in the claim that whether a behaviour is acceptable or not could easily be determined by all experts in the field of behavioural sciences, hence opinions on such would be the same.

Also, it was revealed in hypothesis 2 that employment type has no significant influence on the perception of the nutritionists, the t-cal, 1.34 is lower than the t-value 1.96. This implies that perception was the same whether or not a respondent was in a private business or in a government own parastatals. Finally, it was revealed in the test of hypothesis 3 that Educational background (graduate or no graduate) has no significant influence in the perceptions of the nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents.

### Implication of the Study

The main implication of this study was that clear causes of most of the challenging behaviour in the societies are yet to be discovered in spite of

the fact that behaviour analysts are busy discovering strange behaviour on daily bases.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

It is concluded in this study that the perception of Ekiti State resident Nigerian Nutritionists towards non exclusive breast feeding at infancy as the source of unacceptable behaviour among adolescents is negatively the same. The study revealed that the respondents were not different in their perceptions inspite of the differences in sex, employment type and educational bacvkground. Based on this, it is recommended that the hands of behaviour analysts should be on deck in finding courses to some of the behaviour that threatens the world of adolescents and youths of nowadays.

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