University Students’ Knowledge and Attitudes toward Breastfeeding in Hong Kong: Implications for Breastfeeding Promotion

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1. Study Background

- Breastfeeding rates in Hong Kong are low when compared with other countries.
- Within 66.2% of mothers initiating breastfeeding in 2008, only 22% are considered exclusive breastfeeding is rare.
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2. Study Aims

- The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and breastfed status of students in Hong Kong to identify any perceptions that may facilitate or hinder breastfeeding promotion.

3. Research Method

- This study was conducted at a large publicly-funded university in Hong Kong.
- A convenience sample of 386 male and female university students were recruited.
- Only current Chinese-speaking Chinese students were included in this study.
- Students who were not fluent in English were excluded.

4. Results

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5. Discussion and Conclusion

- Even in a group of young adults not intentionally considering pregnancy and childbirth, infant breastfeeding knowledge scores were already high. Less than 30% of the participants believed that breastfeeding is a personal right, and 30% believed that breastfeeding has health benefits. However, at least 20% of the participants believe that breastfeeding should be provided to all women.
- Infant feeding education can improve the knowledge and attitudes of university students in Hong Kong toward infant feeding.
- Social marketing campaigns aimed at modifying societal perceptions of what is considered "normal" infant feeding practices are required.
- Normative influence is often the effect of increasing young adults' exposures to breastfeeding, which has been associated with more positive attitudes and higher likelihood of choosing breastfeeding in the future.
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