

### Evaluation of the Relationship Between Socio-Demographic Characteristics and Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy, as well as Bonding in Mothers with Healthy Newborns

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#### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Mother-infant bonding is a vital connection that ensures the baby's sense of security and significantly impacts lifelong development. Healthcare professionals play a key role in supporting this process during prenatal, birth, and postpartum periods. The Mother-Infant Bonding Scale (MIBS) effectively measures bonding during the first 12 weeks postpartum, offering consistent insights into maternal psychological states. Similarly, breastfeeding self-efficacy, defined as a mother's confidence in her ability to breastfeed, is crucial for initiating and sustaining breastfeeding. The Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale (BSES), a 14-item tool developed by Dennis, assesses this competency and highlights its importance in breastfeeding success.

**Materials and Methods:** This study was conducted at Izmir Buca Seyfi Demirsoy Education and Research Hospital. Data were collected by researchers through face-to-face interviews with mothers in their rooms during their available hours. Each interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. In addition to demographic data, the Mother-Infant Bonding Scale (MIBS) and the Postpartum Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale (PBSES) were administered. In MIBS, the lower score indicates better bonding, while higher PBSES score indicates higher breastfeeding self-efficacy sensation. Before data collection, written permission was obtained from the institution, and verbal consent was received from the participating mothers after they were informed about the study.

**Results:** A total of 33 mothers participated in the study. The mean age of the mothers was  $28.3 \pm 5.6$  years, and the median gestational week at delivery was 39 (37–41 weeks). It was observed that the MIBS score decreased as the gestational week increased ( $p=0.030$ ). When mothers were asked how long they intended to breastfeed, those in the "2 years and beyond" and "as long as the baby wants" groups had lower MIBS scores but higher PBSES scores ( $p=0.021$  and  $p=0.019$ , respectively). Both non-pacifier users and non-working mothers had lower MIBS scores ( $p=0.037$  and  $p=0.032$ , respectively). No statistically significant difference was found between nationality or mode of delivery and the MIBS and PBSES scores.

**Discussion:** The findings indicate that several factors, including gestational age, breastfeeding duration intention, pacifier use, and maternal employment status, may influence mother-infant bonding and breastfeeding self-efficacy.

On the other hand, the absence of statistically significant differences in MIBS and PBSES scores based on nationality or mode of delivery indicates that these factors may not be primary determinants of bonding or breastfeeding self-efficacy in the early postpartum period. This aligns with existing literature, which suggests that individual maternal characteristics and behaviors may play a more significant role than these broader demographic variables.

**Conclusion:** Healthcare professionals should provide tailored guidance and support to mothers, particularly those with shorter gestational periods or specific breastfeeding goals, to ensure a balanced