Aim/Purpose/Objective: The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of maternal employment during the COVID-19 pandemic on the breastfeeding relationship between breastfeeding mother and infant dyads and its relationship to maternal emotions and to explore maternal breastfeeding experiences. The purpose of the study was met.

Sample: A sample of breastfeeding mothers who had initiated direct breastfeeding and wanted to continue to direct breastfeeding even after mothers 1) returned to work outside of the home, 2) returned to work from home (e.g., telework), or 3) stayed at home full-time with their infants were enrolled in the study (N = 81).


Study Type: Mixed Methods

Methodology: Descriptive and Exploratory

Methodology Details: Data was collected at four timepoint when infants were 4, 12, 20, and 24 weeks old via an online survey. After 3 weeks of publicly available direct link deployment, suspicious online fraud responses were noticed. Thereafter, recruitment and enrollment were amended to videoconferencing for self-referrals and phone calls for professional referrals (Wood 2023).

Summary: Most mothers were White, non-Hispanic, and multiparous. There were no differences in the Breastfeeding Relationship Scale among the three groups over time. Maternal emotions were positively associated with the Breastfeeding Relationship Scale. The qualitative analysis identified that mothers who were committed to direct breastfeeding attained emotional well-being in return for their engagement.

Conclusions: Findings showed there is a relationship between the breastfeeding relationship and maternal emotions. Mothers’ experiences described emotional well-being through direct breastfeeding.

Implications: Information about maternal emotional well-being of direct breastfeeding needs to be provided to new mothers who want to continue to breastfeed. Interventions for increasing direct breastfeeding are needed to examine the improvement of maternal emotional well-being.
References:


