



# Practice Enhancement for Exclusive Breastfeeding (PEEB): Women and Partners' Self-Reported Breastfeeding Attitudes and Self-efficacy

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## Background:

Rates of exclusive breastfeeding in Ireland remain amongst the lowest in Europe despite its health, economic and environmental benefits.

Breastfeeding is a public health issue, and a woman's choice. Partners' inclusion in breastfeeding promotion is recognised as improving exclusive breastfeeding rates and reducing the occurrence of lactation problems.

This study design is guided by implementation science principles, to promote the systematic uptake of research findings into routine practice, hence improving the quality and effectiveness of health services.

## Methods:

- Women and their partners who intended to breastfeed were recruited at the twelve-week booking appointment from Oct 2021 – March 2022 following ethical approval.
- All participants completed a **Demographics Form** and the **Iowa Infant Feeding Attitude Scale (IIFAS)**
- Additionally, women completed the **Prenatal Rating of Efficacy in Preparation to Breastfeed**
- Data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

Table 3: Prenatal Rating of Efficacy in Preparation to Breastfeed (Women n=64)

	Individual processes (/140)	Interpersonal processes (/160)	Professional advice (/40)	Social support (/50)	Total score (/390)
Min score	74	49	25	4	192
Max score	140	159	40	50	389
Average (SD)	114.65 (17.6)	118.15 (24.9)	35.93 (4.36)	35.25 (10.54)	304 (42.7)

## Aim:

To investigate the self-reported breastfeeding attitudes and self-efficacy of women and partners antenatally, in order to inform future breastfeeding supports.

## Results:

Table 1: Participant demographics

	Women (n=64)	Partners (n=30)
Age category (yrs)		
>30	12	3
31-34	16	10
35-39	30	13
40+	6	4
Gender		
Male		21
Not specified		9
Irish	48	24
Education status		
Secondary level	11	10
Third level	53	20
Employment status		
Employed	49	28
Unemployed	8	1
Student	2	1
Home-maker	5	0
Living status		
With partner	58	30
On own	2	0
Other	3	0
Gestational age (weeks)	Mean 14.6 (SD 2.6) Range 9-23	Mean 14.9 (SD 2.25) Range 11-20
Other children		
1 child	17	9
2 children	16	6
3+ children	4	1
Prior experience of breastfeeding	37	

Table 2: Iowa Infant Feeding Attitude Scale (IIFAS)

	Women (n=64)	Partners (n=24)
Min score (/85)	51	51
Max score (/85)	79	77
Average (SD)	62.78 (6.27)	63.3 (SD 6.86)
Attitude to breastfeeding		
Positive (70-85)	8	4
Neutral (49-69)	56	20

## Conclusion:

- The findings of this research provide evidence of women and partner knowledge and experience of exclusive breastfeeding in early pregnancy, and the importance of partner inclusivity to guide future breastfeeding practice enhancement strategies.
- This research will be expanded upon with follow-up of women and partners at three additional timepoints by the time they reach three months post-partum.

### Further information:

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- Social Media Hashtag #PEEBKerry

## References:

- Victora CG, Bahl R, Barros AJD, França GVA, Horton S, Krasevec J, et al. Breastfeeding in the 21st century: epidemiology, mechanisms, and lifelong effect. *The Lancet*. 2016;387(10017):475-90.
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