

A STUDY ON SATISFACTION OF MOTHERS WITH THE USAGE OF BABY DIAPERS

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ABSTRACT

Health friendly baby care products are more in demand, to take care of baby's sensitive skin, and avoid common skin problems. The present study was conducted with the aim to explore the satisfaction of mothers, on the use of baby diapers –cloth vs. disposable diapers. The study was conducted with 50 mothers of young babies, using a structured interview schedule in Udaipur city. The findings revealed that, the majority of the respondents were satisfied with existing diapers used commonly by them for their babies, whether; it was cloth diaper or disposable diapers.

KEY WORDS: Satisfaction, Use, Baby, Diaper

INTRODUCTION

Health and hygiene are the primary requirements to live comfortably, as the young babies form a most vulnerable group of the society, ensuring their good health is of prime concern to all members of the society. With the advent of new technologies, the growing needs of the consumer in the wake of baby care and hygiene can be fulfilled without compromising the issues related to safety, baby care and environment. ¹ There is increasing awareness towards baby hygiene, demand for baby care products less prone to skin infections, body odor and improve physiological comfort value. Research and development activities are trying to keep pace by developing more and more effective and safe solution. ²

Disposable diapers have been the standard for baby hygiene for many years. A disposable diaper is an absorbent pad sandwiched between two sheets of non-woven fabric. The pad typically contains chemical crystals that can absorb up to 800 times of their weight in liquid, and hold it in gel form. That helps to keep liquids away from baby's skin. Most disposable diapers can absorb far more liquid than a child is likely to produce during a single use. Disposable diapers are undeniably more convenient and popular among young mothers and their usage is likely to grow due to the growing population.

Cloth diapers are usually made from softer, thicker and absorbent fabrics: Cotton fleece, terry, flannel, and unbleached hemp, wool and/or other materials. Flannel is the softest against the skin and the most absorbent. Many parents still choose to swathe their babies in cloth diapers. Proponents of cloth diapering cite issues from environmental friendliness to baby health as good reasons to use cloth. Since one child can contribute thousands of disposable diapers to the local landfill before they are potty-trained. Fully washable diapers tend to be less expensive to maintain, than those that need disposable inserts. Some cloth diapering systems can be used with a variety of inserts—washable, flushable, etc.

So many different options are available for cloth to maintain than those that need disposable inserts. Some cloth diapering systems can be used with a variety of inserts—washable, flushable, etc. With so many different options available for cloth diapering, finding just the right one baby can seem nearly impossible. From eco-friendliness, to comfort for baby, and convenience for mom, there are many different factors to consider.³

Diaper rash or nappy rash, is a generic term applied to skin rashes in the diaper area that are caused by various skin disorders and or irritants. If the wetness is prolonged, this can lead to softening and breaking down of skin which makes it more susceptible to friction from the surface of the nappy.⁴ This infection also results in peeling of the skin. Nappy rashes create irritation on the baby's skin, especially in the region of the diaper that is the crotch, buttocks and stomach.⁵ The present study was conducted with the aim to explore the satisfaction of mothers regarding use of baby diapers –cloth vs. disposable diapers.

METHODOLOGY

For the present investigation, a sample of 50 mothers having babies/babies less than three years of age was purposively selected from Udaipur city. A structured interview schedule was used to elicit information; about the socioeconomic profile of the selected respondents, information about the type and frequency of using baby diapers and their satisfaction with its usage. The developed schedule was pre-tested on ten non sample subjects. The collected data were analyzed for statistical treatment in the light of objective of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The background information of the respondents has been furnished in Table 1.

Age, Education

The data presented in table 1 show that the majority of respondents (46%) were in the age group of 21 to 25 years, 36 per cent were between the age groups of 26 -30 years and 14 percent belonged to the age group of 31-35years. The majority (42%) of the respondents was qualified up to graduation level followed by 38 per cent respondents who were educated up to post graduation level. It was observed that 14 percent respondents had their education up to higher secondary level, respectively.

Family type & Occupational Status

The majority of the respondents (62 %) belonged to the nuclear family, and the rest of them (38%) belonged to joint family. Regarding occupation, the data revealed that, majority of the respondents (66%) was in the non working category, while remaining 34 per cent respondents were among the working category.

Monthly Family Income

The table depicts that, 46 per cent of the respondents were in the income range of Rs. 40,000-50,000 per month, 26 percent in Rs. 30,000-40,000 per month and 18 percent respondents belonged to the income range above Rs. 50,000 per month. It was found that, none of the respondents had income below Rs. 10,000 per month.

Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents on the Basis of Their Age, Education Level, Family Type, Occupational Status and Monthly Income n = 50

Aspects	Category	Respondents	
		Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Age (in years)	21-25	23	46
	26 - 30	18	36
	31-35	9	18
Education	Primary School	-	-
	Secondary	3	6
	Higher Secondary	7	14
	Graduate	21	42
	Postgraduate and Above	19	38
Family type	Nuclear	31	62
	Joint	19	38
Occupational Status	Working	17	34
	Non-Working	33	66
Monthly Family Income (in Rs)	Below 10,000	-	-
	10,000-20,000	1	2
	20,000-30,000	4	8
	30,000-40,000	13	26
	40,000-50,000	23	46
	Above 50,000	9	18

Source: primary data

Preference of type of Diaper

The data presented in table 2 shows that, 38 per cent respondents were using disposable diapers, out of this 10 per cent respondents were using open diaper and 28 per cent were using Baby Pant Diapers. The reason given by the respondents for frequent use of disposable diaper was its hygienic character, convenient to use and comfortable in the baby's tender skin.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Their Preference of Type of Diaper n=50

Aspect	Category	Respondents	
		Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Preference of diaper	Disposable diaper	19	38
	Open Diaper	5	10
	Baby Pant Diaper	14	28
	Cloth diaper	23	46
	Homemade diapers	7	14
	Ready-made diapers	16	32
	Both	8	16

Source: primary data

The majority of the respondents (46%) were using cloth diapers, in which, 14 per cent were using homemade diapers and 32 per cent were using ready-made cloth diapers, because in their opinion, it was cheap and comfortable for the baby skin. It was also found that, few of the respondents (16%) were using both types of diapers for their baby. On the basis of findings, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents preferred ready-made cloth diaper, followed by baby pant diaper under category of disposable diapers.

Reasons of Using Different type of Diapers

The researcher was curious to know about the reason behind their choice of diapers and frequency of using them. The data gathered revealed in table 3 that, cent per cent respondents were using cloth diapers as it was found convenient, comfortable, reusable, cost effective, easy changeability and hygienic as revealed by 54 per cent respondents. It was also found that cent per cent respondents using a disposable diaper found it as convenient, comfortable for baby, easily available, less energy consuming, have more absorption capacity, and less infectious.

Table 3: Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Reasons of Using Different Type of Diapers: n=50

Aspect	Category	Number Of Respondents	
		Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Reasons of using cloth diapers	Convenience	50	100
	Comfort	50	100
	Reusability	50	100
	Hygienic	27	54
	Cost effective	50	100
	Easy to change frequently	50	100
Reasons of using Disposable diapers	Convenience	50	100
	Comfort	50	100
	Easily available	50	100
	Less energy consuming	50	100
	Absorption capacity	50	100
	Hygienic	50	100

Respondents were having multiple responses.

Satisfaction with use of Different Types of Baby Diapers

In general, the respondents were asked to reveal their opinion about the satisfaction level for all types of diapers. Data presented in Table-4 revealed that, the majority of the respondents (82%) were satisfied with their existing diaper, while 6 per cent of them were dissatisfied and expressed the need of diapers providing better skin protection, because they found diaper rashes on the baby skin by using ready-made diapers and problem of wet skin by using cloth diapers. However, 12 per cent of the respondents were neutral in their response, satisfied sometimes.

Satisfaction with Frequency of Washing and Changing of Cloth Diapers

Cloth diapers, though frequently preferred and used by many respondents for their babies for comfort & hygienic purpose, still have some drawbacks, major among them is need of frequent changing and washing, this frequency also increases during winter and rainy seasons, due to dampness in an atmosphere, which also creates drying problem of cloth diapers.

When asked about the frequency of washing and changing of cloth diaper from the respondents, data in table 13 reveals that, 26 per cent of the respondents were found to satisfy, whereas, 66 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied, because of variability in number of cloth diapers used per day. In general, the respondents' practice of washing cloth diapers revealed that was diapers of 3-4 usage were kept aside separately and washed daily with some antiseptic liquid wash, however, they did not wash the cloth diaper after every use, due to time and other constraints.

Table: 4 Percentage Distribution of Respondents by their Satisfaction with use of Diapers n=50

Aspect	Category	Number Of Respondents	
		Frequency (F)	Percentage (Per Cent)
Satisfaction with existing diapers used commonly	Yes	41	82
	No	3	6
	Sometimes	6	12
Satisfaction with frequent washing and changing of cloth diapers	Yes	13	26
	No	33	66
	Sometimes	4	8
Satisfaction with the use of available disposable diapers	Yes	23	46
	No	19	38
	Sometimes	8	16
Satisfaction about materials used in disposable diapers	Yes	43	86
	No	3	6
	Sometimes	4	8
Satisfaction with fitting of readymade cloth diapers	Yes	7	14
	No	32	44
	Sometimes	11	22
Satisfaction with ability to prevent leakage in disposable diapers	Yes	32	64
	No	7	14
	Sometimes	11	22
Satisfaction with construction quality of readymade diapers	Yes	14	28
	No	17	34
	Sometimes	19	38
Satisfaction with price of disposable diapers	Yes	19	38
	No	27	54
	Sometimes	4	8
Satisfaction with the information provided on the packet	Yes	39	78
	No	3	6
	Sometimes	8	16

Source; primary data

Satisfaction with the use of Available Disposable Diapers

The findings further revealed that, 46 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the use of available disposable diapers, because it is convenient, whereas 38 per cent reported their dissatisfaction with available disposable diapers, in terms of creating skin rashes on baby skin, besides being costly. About 16 per cent respondents said that, they were satisfied sometimes, with the use of disposable diapers, because of its convenience in journey and outdoor activities like shopping or attending some social function, but were not satisfied as disposable diapers also creates rashes on tender baby skin.

Satisfaction with Materials used in Disposable Diapers

Reusable cloth diapers, whether purchased or homemade, can be constructed of a variety of materials. Each material used in diaper making provides its own attributes. Synthetic, or manmade, materials are usually less expensive than natural materials, but tend to be more susceptible to odors.⁶ In response to the question asked about satisfaction with materials used in disposable diapers, it was found that majority of the respondents (86%) were satisfied and only 6 per cent were dissatisfied, because, sometimes inner material come outside and stick on baby skin. However, few respondents (6%) were satisfied sometimes because they faced problem sometimes

Satisfaction with Fitting of Readymade Cloth Diapers

With respect to fitting of readymade cloth diapers, the data presented in table-1 reveals that, 14 per cent of the respondents were satisfied while, 64 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied with the fitting of readymade cloth diapers, and complained that cloth diapers were available in the market in fixed sizes only. On the other hand, 22 per cent respondents were satisfied sometimes with fitting of readymade cloth diapers.

Satisfaction with Ability to Prevent Leakage by Disposable Diapers

Perusal of the table further reveals that majority of the respondents (64%) were satisfied with the functional ability of disposable diapers to prevent leakage in its use, followed by 14 per cent respondents, who were dissatisfied because, they found leakage problem while using disposable diaper on baby skin for long time.

Satisfaction with Construction Quality of Readymade Diapers

With regards to construction quality of readymade cloth diapers, data in table reveals that more than one fourth of the respondents (28%) were satisfied, while 34 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied, because they found loose fitting at the backside of the diapers, and they also found improper stitching in the diapers. However, 38 percent respondents said that they were satisfied sometimes with construction quality of readymade cloth diapers.

Satisfaction with Cost of Disposable Diapers

It is clear from the table that, more than half of the respondents (54%) were dissatisfied with the cost of disposable diapers, and found them very expensive in routine use, followed by 38 per cent respondents, who were satisfied with the cost of disposable diapers available in the local market. Remaining 8 per cent respondents were found satisfied sometimes.

The key benefits, as stated by Pham and Brown (2009) are that, reusable diapers are less expensive and healthier to use.

Satisfaction with the Information Provided on the Packet

With respect to the satisfaction with the information provided on the packet, table 1 apparently state that majority of the respondents (78%) were satisfied while 6 per cent respondents were dissatisfied.

CONCLUSIONS

From the findings it can be concluded that majority of the respondents were satisfied with existing diapers used commonly by them for their babies, whether, it was cloth diaper or disposable diapers.

However, respondents using cloth diapers were found dissatisfied with frequently washing and changing of cloth diapers, and also with the fitting and construction quality of readymade cloth diapers. About half of the respondents were satisfied with ability of disposable diapers in preventing leakage, and the information provided on the packet of disposable diapers. Majority of the respondents were dissatisfied with high price of disposable diapers.

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