Negative Reactions to Public Breastfeeding: The Influence of Gendered Behaviors

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INTRO
• The initiation and continuation of breastfeeding can be faced with obstacles such as inappropriate interpretation of breastfeeding, maternal employment, time constraints, and many others (Gartner & Eidelman, 2005).
• One of the many obstacles, specifically, is the unwelcoming environment of the public towards public breastfeeding.
• Public breastfeeding is understood to be morally and socially repugnant within today’s society (Dettwyler, 2017).
• The way in which men and women use gender-congruent tactics determines how comfortable or receptive they influence others to be (Smith et al., 2013).
• The purpose of the current research is to determine if the way in which women communicate with others determines the way in which they are perceived when breastfeeding.

METHODS
• N = 331 participants (55% women, 44% men, 1% other)
• Data form surveying platform Qualtrics.
• Between subject design with 6 (control, acknowledgement, moral-positive, moral-negative, body-positive, body-negative) possible conditions, randomly presented.

RESULTS
• Control: “First of all, hope it’s okay I have this water bottle in here.”
• Acknowledgement: “First of all, hope it’s okay I’m breastfeeding.”
• Body negative: “First of all, hope it’s okay I’m breastfeeding, I’m engorged and leaking and the baby’s hungry.”
• Body positive: “First of all hope it’s okay I’m breastfeeding, It reduces the risk of cancer and the baby’s hungry.”
• Moral negative: “First of all hope it’s okay I’m breastfeeding. It’s totally wrong but the baby’s hungry.”
• Moral positive: “First of all, hope it’s okay I’m breastfeeding, It’s totally natural and the baby’s hungry.”

DISCUSSION
• Results did not support the hypothesis of the effect of conditions on overall negativity.
• Limitation of the study was an artificial scenario that may not represent reality.
• Helps in furthering the research of the psychological influence of negative reactions towards breastfeeding.

REFERENCES

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