

Factors Influencing the Decision to Breast-feed and the Duration of Breast-feeding in Imo State, Nigeria¹

Ndugasa C. Okemgbo and Obby C. Odimegwu

Department of Demography and Social Statistics, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

KEYWORDS Breast-feeding. Duration. Parents. Determinants. Socio-economic Correlates

ABSTRACT Using data collected in a fieldwork in selected parts of Igboland in South-eastern part of Nigeria, this paper examines the patterns and determinants of the extent and duration of breast-feeding in the area. The survey was originally intended to collect data on the socio-economic correlates and demographic consequences of location among the Igbo of Eastern Nigeria living in Imo State, Nigeria. After the examination of the patterns and differentials, the paper identified the factors influencing the decision to breast-feed and the duration of breast-feeding both in the area as a whole and controlling for the place of residence. The factors identified as the predictors of the decision of breast-feed are education, age, working status, sex of the child, place of delivery and delivery assistants while various factors were identified as predictors of specific duration of breast-feeding in the area. The statistical technique used in the analysis is the logistic regression model. The policy implications of the findings are discussed.