

# Social Factors Associated with Obstacles to Human Milk Donation

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## Background

- Human breast milk has been shown to improve the health outcomes of infants.<sup>1</sup>
- When an infant's mother's milk is not available, donated breast milk is an option; however, donated breast milk is very costly due to a limited supply.<sup>2</sup>

## Purpose

- To describe the characteristics of women who donate breast milk
- To determine impact of demographics on obstacles encountered during the donation process

## Methodology

**Design and settings:** Cross-sectional online survey with convenience sample

**Subjects:** 227 women who previously donated breastmilk from various regions of the United States

**Procedures and Measurement:** Online survey collected information on demographics and whether they encountered an obstacle (i.e., during the donation process)

**Data Analysis :** Descriptive statistics and logistic regressions were conducted using SPSS software.



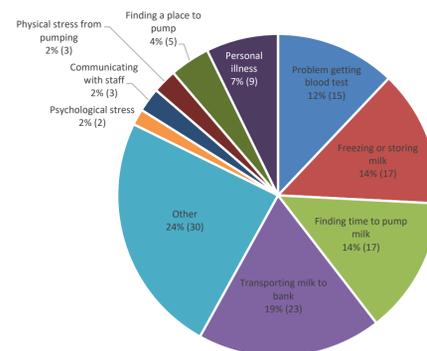
## Results

- Out of the sample of 227 women, the average woman was white, 33 years old, employed, holding a graduate or professional degree, and living in an owned home in a suburban community with a household earnings of \$50,000 or more annually.
- 54.6% of donor women experienced an obstacle during the donation process. The most frequent obstacle was transporting milk to the bank, followed by finding time to pump milk and freezing or storing milk.
- At a significance level of 0.1, there was **no evidence** that race, employment, education, type of residence, community, or household income was associated with a higher rate of obstacles to donate breastmilk encountered.

Table 1. Participants' Demographics (N=227)

Variable	n	%	Variable	n	%
Age Mean = 32.64					
<b>Race</b>			<b>Residence</b>		
White	204	89.9%	Owned House	191	84.1%
Asian	13	5.7%	Owned Apartment	4	1.8%
Black/African American	4	1.8%	Rented House	17	7.5%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	0.4%	Rented Apartment	13	5.7%
More Than One Race	5	2.2%	Homeless	0	0.0%
			Other	1	0.4%
<b>Education</b>			<b>Employment Status</b>		
Graduate/Professional Degree	124	54.6%	Employed	172	75.8%
Bachelors Degree	73	32.2%	Self-Employed	13	5.7%
College/Associates Degree	27	11.9%	Stay-at-home Mom	42	18.5%
HS Diploma/GED	3	1.3%			
<b>Household Income</b>			<b>Community</b>		
\$50,000+	209	92.1%	Suburban	146	64.3%
\$25,000-49,999	13	5.7%	Urban	43	18.9%
\$10,000-24,999	3	1.3%	Rural	38	16.7%
\$10,000 or less	2	0.9%			

Table 2. Obstacles Encountered During the Donation Process



## Conclusion

- Demographics could influence a mother's chances of experiencing obstacles during the process of donating breast milk.
- The population of women who donate breast milk may be represented by a group with specific demographics.
- Response bias and lurking variables may exist.

## Implications

- There is a need for more research including a larger, more diverse population of donor women.
- Future studies might investigate the factors that influence specific demographics to be more prevalent among donor women.
- We need to increase awareness about breast milk donation among minority women.

## References

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