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# Breastfeeding Discourses Through Thai Narratives from 1932-2022

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### Abstract

This textual analysis examines mother-related narratives published between 1932 and 2022, from education to entertainment-based, and from traditional to social media platforms, to study the discontinuity and construction of breastfeeding discourses in the media. The result shows that the discourses rupture into five eras: (1) prior to the framework: Buddhism mythologies ignite the meaning of breastmilk that signified the love of mother and mother's blood. (2) Breastfeeding is the natural method of feeding infant: the meaning and motherhood identity are reproduced from the previous era though textbooks and songs. (3) The power of advertisements and the episteme of nutrition science turn infant formula as the dominant choice for middle-class mothers. (4) The episteme of medical science with the power of authority controls over all media platforms, bounce back breastfeeding domination, in which signify infant formula as poison and the non-breastfeeding mothers as impatient and uneducated. Oppositional discourse is rarely seen, (5) the social media takes a significant role of discursive interaction. There are some negotiated and oppositional breastfeeding discourses found, however the breastfeeding discourse still dominate. The meaning of infant formula as poison is moderated. The meaning of breastmilk diminishes objectively to human's milk. The researchers found out that the breastfeeding discourses throughout the history in Thai culture is the interaction between Buddhism mythologies and medical science, the middle-class mothers are influenced by the upper-class in every era, while capitalism and patriarchy find a way to engrave in both infant formula and breastfeeding in a form of advertising and publicity.

**Keywords:** encoding/decoding, feminism, Foucault, media studies

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