

# THE EFFECTS OF INFANT FORMULA COMPARED TO BREASTFEEDING ON THE WEIGHT GAIN OF INFANTS, IN SHKODËR, ALBANIA.



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## INTRODUCTION

Infant formula means a breast-milk substitute specially manufactured to satisfy, by itself, the nutritional requirements of infants during the first months of life up to the introduction of appropriate complementary feeding. Infant formula is a product based on milk of cows or other animals or a mixture thereof and/or other ingredients that have been proven suitable for infant feeding. Infant formula prepared ready for consumption in accordance with instructions of the manufacturer shall contain per 100 ml not less than 60 kcal (250 kJ) and not more than 70 kcal (295 kJ) of energy.

## OBJECTIVES

A study was based on infant formula compared to breastfeeding for babies aged 0-12 months. The aim of this study is to monitor the effects of different regimens on the body weight gain of infants.

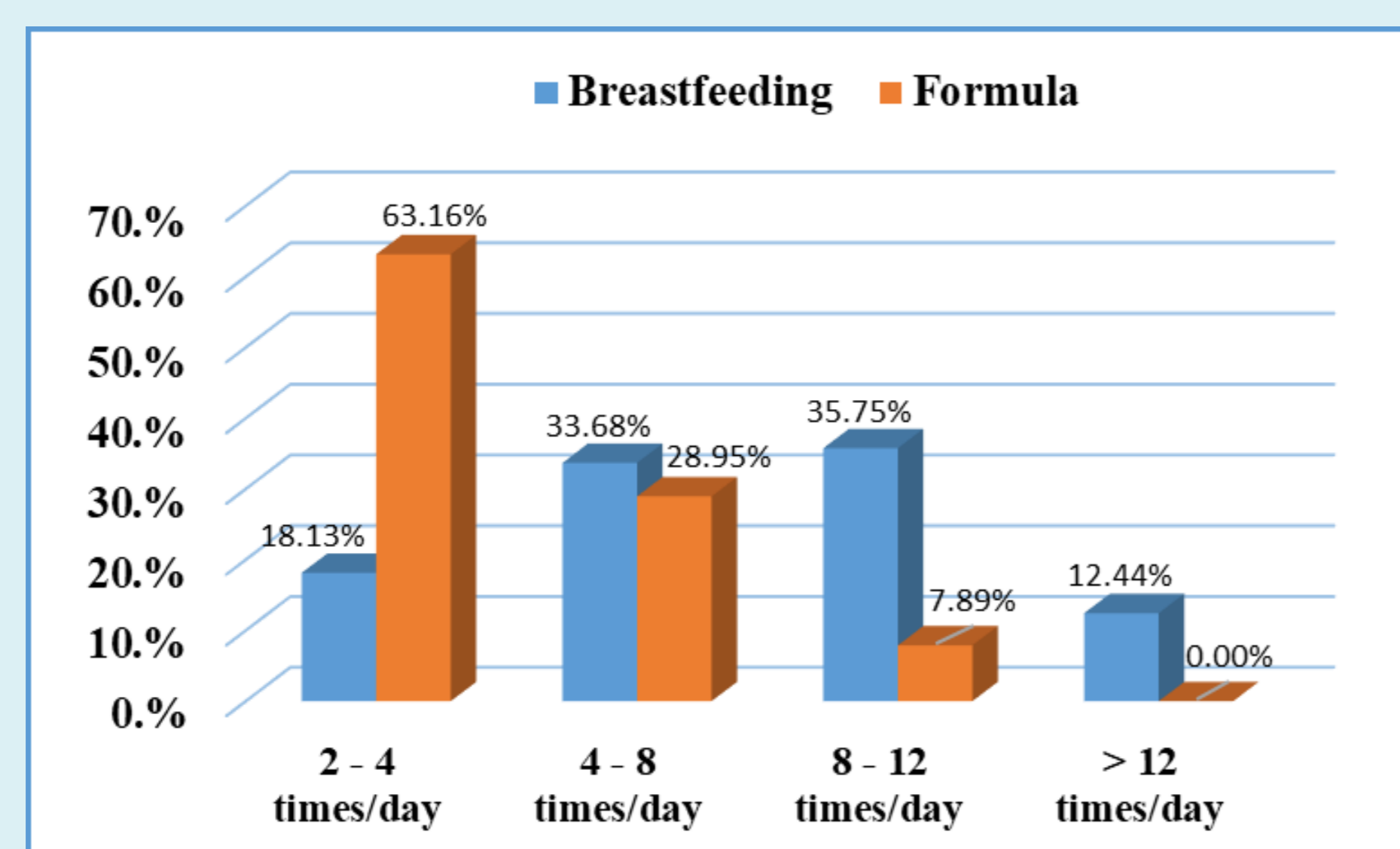
## DATA COLLECTION VIA ONLINE SUVEY

An observation study was conducted through a prepared questionnaire and included 500 mothers of different ages, in Shkodër, Albania. The questionnaire consisted of two sections dedicated mothers who feed their infant with formula compared to breastfeeding to monitor body weight gain of infants.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the statistical processing of the data collected, It is observed that female children predominate with 51.75% compared to male children with 48.25%. Mothers who feed their infant with formula are 22% and breastfeeding 78%.

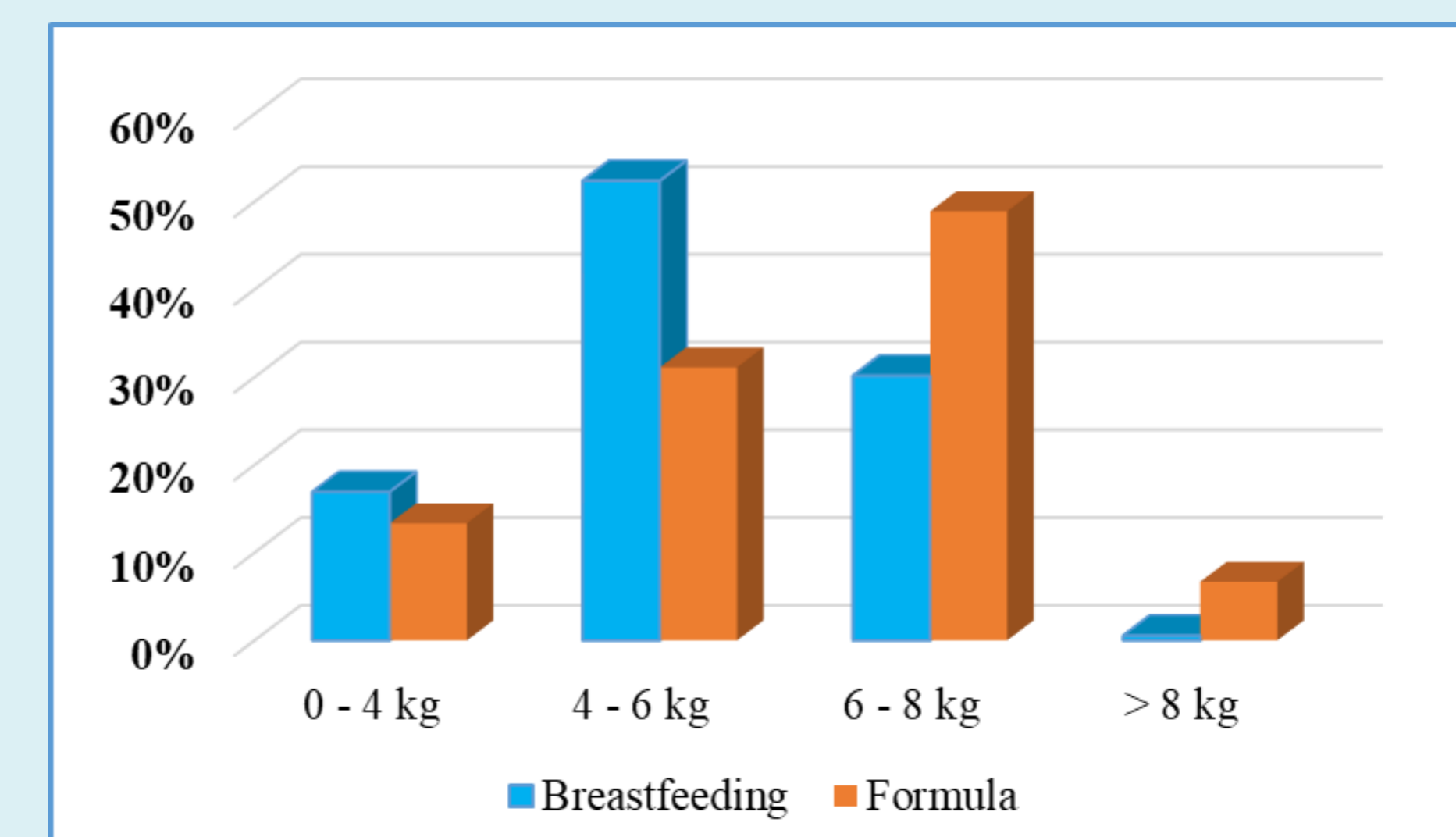
In the comparison on the frequency of feeding infants, It was observed that in breastfeeding, mothers feed their infants 8-12 times a day while mothers with formula feed the infants mostly 2-4 times a day.



**Fig. 1:** How many times a day do you feed your baby?

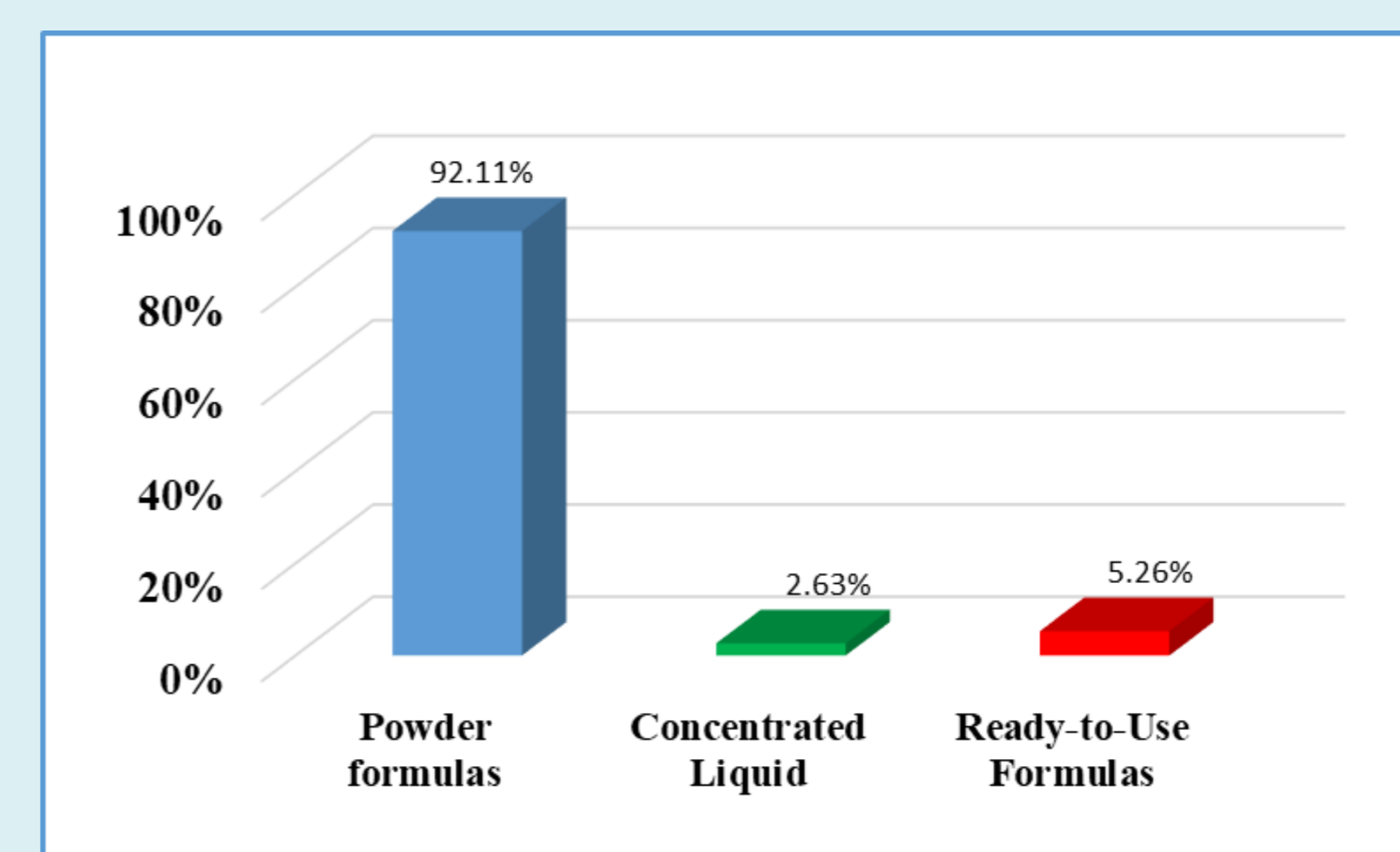
Breastfed babies have gained about 4-6 kg after the first 6 months of life compared with formula infants have gained about 6-8 kg,

this because the formula is riched in nutrients where in some cases cause weight gain higher than needed.

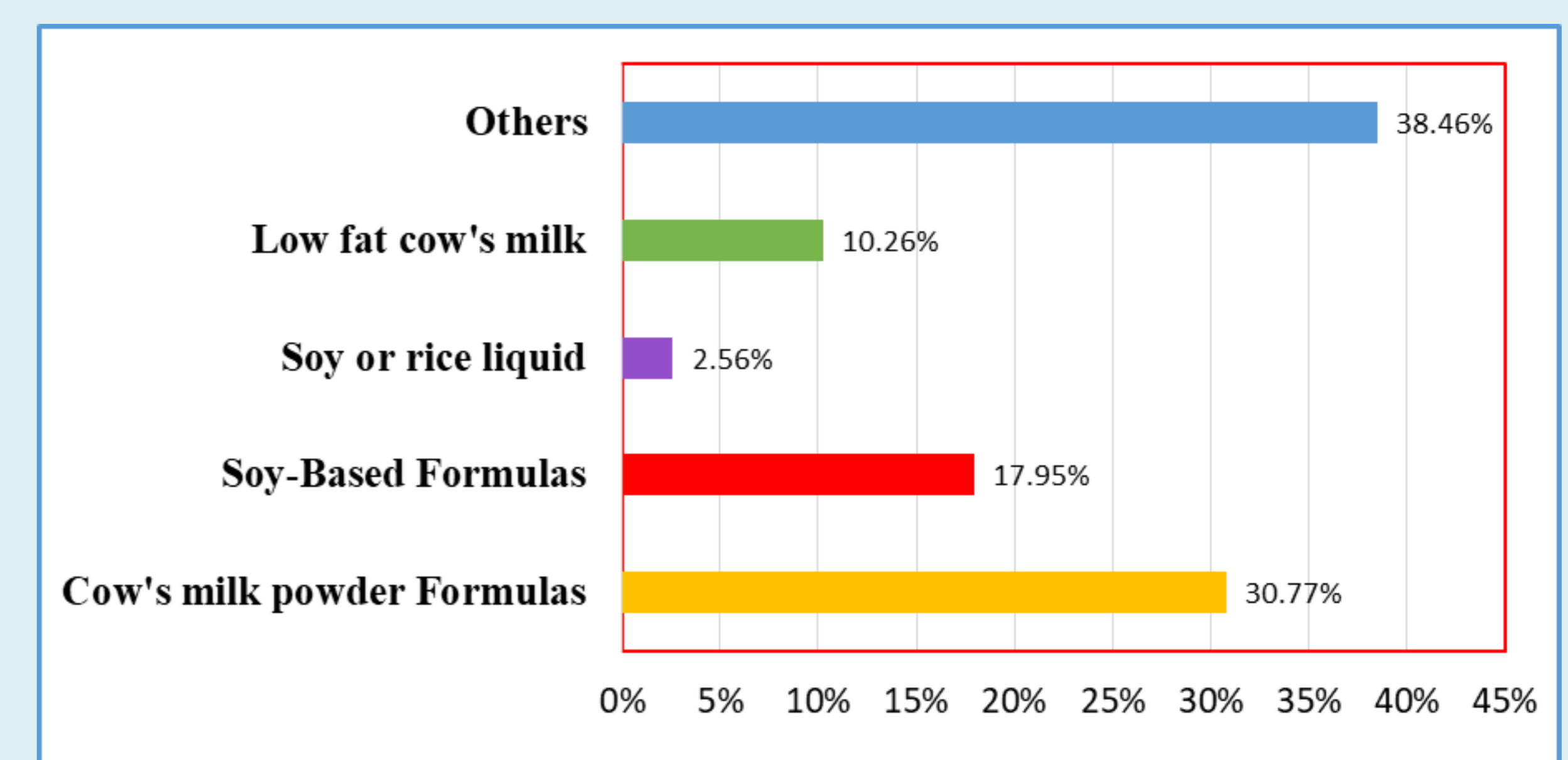


**Fig.2:** Weight gain of infants after 6 months of birth

Most of the interviewees answered that powdered milk is the type of formula their babies have preferred 92.11% and 30.77% of them have proffered cow's milk based formulas.



**Fig.3:** Type of formula used depending on consistency.



**Fig.4:** Type of formula used depending on the content.

**CONCLUSION:** Breast milk provides the ideal nutrition for infants. It has a nearly perfect mix of vitamins, protein, and fat, everything your baby needs to grow. And it's all provided in a form more easily digested than infants formula. If mothers are not able to breastfeed their babies, they should choose the right formula according to the standards.