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Perceptions, beliefs and societal factors impacting on exclusive breastfeeding of primiparous mothers: An exploratory study

Fahima Mohammed Said Al Harthy

Royal Hospital, Ministry of Health (MOH), Oman

Background: The WHO Global Data Bank (2003), that analyses data from 94 countries, indicates that only an estimated 35% of infants are exclusively breastfed between zero and four months.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2008) recommends that infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health. Therefore, the scope of this study is to explore the perception of Omani Primi mothers towards exclusive breastfeeding.

Materials & Methods: This qualitative exploratory study was conducted at Royal hospital from March till November 2020. Purposive sampling was applied to recruit primigravida mothers and face to face interview was done for data collection. Ten primigravida mothers were recruited for the study based on inclusion criteria. Interview protocol along with prompts was used to guide researchers during interview.

The protocol included question about demographical details such as age, place of living, job status. Specific questions were written to assess mothers' knowledge of exclusive breastfeeding, source of information, influencing factors toward exclusive breastfeeding and intention to exclusive breastfeeding.

Result: Thematic analysis was applied for data analysis and revealed six themes that are: Knowledge, The most influencing members to decide about breastfeeding, Impact of social life on breastfeeding, Mothers believes about factors that affect exclusive breastfeeding, early days after delivery, and mothers concern of emotional comfort for successful exclusive breastfeeding.

Conclusion: This study revealed that primi gravida mothers lack the knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding, and the national Breastfeeding Policy (10 steps of breastfeeding policy). moreover, grandmothers and husbands were found to be the most influencing member to decide about exclusive breast feeding. The Mothers were having Major concern of milk adequacy in first few days and expressed that emotional support play a major role in breastfeeding.

Recent publications

1. Fahima Al Harthy (2021), Perceptions, beliefs and societal factors impacting on exclusive breastfeeding of primiparous mothers, 2324-7959

Biography

With an experience of 16 years as staff Nurse / Midwife, She is working at Royal Hospital, the biggest Hospital in Oman as a tertiary hospital which received all high-risk cases all over Oman. She has graduated from Muscat Nursing Institute in Oman as staff Nurse in 2004 and from Oman Specialized Nursing institute as a Midwife in 2008. She has been working in Maternity Unit with different experiences as staff Nurse, Senior Nurse, Shift In charge, Midwife and ward in charge for the last 16 years. Then from April 2021 till December 2021 she joined PMS project at Royal Hospital as a core member & received 160 hours coaching from HR consultant. Since April 2022 she has been assigned as acting deputy nurse in maternity unit. From 11 September 2022 she has been appointed as Unit Nurse of Maternity Department in Royal Hospital.

e: Kemoharthy@gmail.com