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ASSESSING MOTHER'S KNOWLEDGE ON EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING THROUGH LOCALIZED IEC MATERIALS IN BARANGAY BUNDUCAN AND BARANGAY UTOD, NASUGBU, BATANGAS

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ABSTRACT

Exclusive breastfeeding is widely recognized as the optimal method of infant feeding because it provides essential nutrients and natural protection that support the healthy growth and development of infants. Breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months provides important health benefits for both infants and mothers. However, despite existing breastfeeding policies and programs, some mothers continue to experience limited knowledge, misinformation, and lack of adequate support regarding exclusive breastfeeding. These challenges highlight the need for accessible and culturally appropriate Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials to improve mothers' understanding and encourage proper breastfeeding practices. Thus, this study aimed to assess mothers' knowledge, awareness, social influences, and perceptions regarding exclusive breastfeeding through localized IEC materials in Barangay Bunducan and Barangay Utod, Nasugbu, Batangas.

The study employed a descriptive quantitative research design. Forty-six (46) breastfeeding mothers with infants aged 0 to 6 months from Barangay Bunducan and Barangay Utod, Nasugbu, Batangas, were selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire developed based on related references and the

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Statement of the Problem, with the guidance of the research adviser and validation by selected professionals. The data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools, including frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation, to determine the respondents' profile and their perceptions regarding exclusive breastfeeding through localized IEC materials.

The findings showed that most respondents were 26–35 years old, with nineteen (19), or 41.3 percent, representing the largest age group. In terms of gravida status, fifteen (15), or 32.6 percent, were Gravida 2, while twenty (20), or 43.5 percent, were Para 3, representing the largest groups for gravida and para status, respectively. Half of the respondents, or twenty-three (23), or 50.0 percent, were high school graduates, while thirty-two (32), or 69.6 percent, reported a monthly income below ₱10,000. Regarding exclusive breastfeeding, the respondents demonstrated a favorable level of awareness with an overall weighted mean of 3.46 (SD = 0.792), while their perceived knowledge was high, with a grand weighted mean of 3.64 (SD = 0.602). Social influence or subjective norms obtained a grand weighted mean of 2.66 (SD = 1.088), indicating general agreement. Overall, the findings suggest that the respondents had favorable awareness and a high level of perceived knowledge regarding exclusive breastfeeding, while localized IEC materials may serve as a useful educational resource in promoting proper exclusive breastfeeding practices among mothers.

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