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Maternal, social, and workplace factors contributing to exclusive breastfeeding among urban employed mothers in Thailand

Pornnapa Tangsuksan
Mahidol University, Thailand

The most benefit of breastfeeding is its positive impact on child health and development. However, development of breastfeeding slow as only 38% of mothers worldwide exclusively breastfeed. In Thailand, exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) rate is 12% that is one of the ten lowest EBF rates in a global view. Employment is a significant obstacle for mothers to continue EBF. A hospital based case-control study was conducted with 285 urban employed mothers in six selected hospital settings aimed to identify maternal, social, and workplace factors that determine the predictive factors associated with EBF for 6 months. Results presented a model with 0.563 of the Nagelkerke R². Demonstrating that intention to EBF for 6 months was the strongest predictor of EBF for 6 months (AOR. 60.7, 95%CI 5.9-624.1). In addition, mothers who were characterized with monthly family income >30,000 baht (AOR 4.8, 95%CI 1.6-14.1), positive attitudes toward breastfeeding (AOR. 3.6, 95%CI 1.4-9.6), high level of breastfeeding confidence (AOR. 4.0, 95%CI 1.7-9.2) and breastfeeding knowledge (AOR. 2.8, 95%CI 1.2-6.2), working ≤42 hours per week (AOR 3.5, 95%CI 1.2-9.7), and having sufficient workplace breastfeeding policies (AOR 2.6, 95%CI 1.1-6.1) were more likely to continue EBF 6-months. The findings suggested that health care professional (HCP) should extend their role in empowering mothers to intend to EBF for 6 months. Training HCP to provide evidence-based knowledge and support is needed. Furthermore, policy on paid 6 months of maternity leave, appropriate number of working hour, breastfeeding support at workplace should be more concerned and established in most companies.

pornnapa.tan@mahidol.ac.th

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