**KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND SUPPORTIVE PRACTICES OF ELDERLY MEN TOWARDS EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING IN SELECTED URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES IN UYO, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**CHAPTER 1**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Breast milk is the optimal food for infants and it benefits are numerous (Green *et al.,* 2005). It contains bacterial and viral antibodies, including relatively high concentrations of secretory immunoglobulin(IgA) that prevents microorganisms from adhering to the intestinal mucosa. It also contains substances that inhibit growth of many common viruses such as rotavirus, norovirus and adenovirus. Antibodies in human milk are thought to provide local gastrointestinal immunity against organisms entering the body via this route (Kleigman *et al.,* 2011). Macrophages in human milk may synthesize complement, lysozyme, and lactoferrin. In addition, breast milk contains lactoferrin, an iron-binding whey protein that is normally about one-third saturated with iron and has an inhibitory effect on the growth of *Escherichia coli* in the intestine. The lower pH of the stool of breast-fed infants is thought to contribute to the favourable intestinal flora of infants fed human milk in contrast to formula by containing more bifidobacteria and lactobacilli; fewer *E. coli*. This helps to protect against infections caused by some species of *E. coli*. Human milk also contains bile salt-stimulated lipase, which kills *Giardia lamblia* and *Entamoeba histolytica.* Transfer of tuberculin responsiveness by breast milk suggests passive transfer of T-cell immunity (Kleigman *et al.,* 2011).

Breast-feeding is associated with fewer feeding difficulties, fewer incidence of allergy and intolerance to bovine milk. These include diarrhoea, intestinal bleeding, occult melena, colic, and atopic eczema (Kleigman *et al.,* 2011). It also has well-established short and long term benefits, particularly the reduction of morbidity and mortality due to infectious diseases in childhood such as Otitis media, diarrhoea, upper respiratory tract infections, sudden infant`s death syndrome SIDS, necrotizing enter colitis NEC (Lissanuer and Clayden, 2007) and decreased risk of obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol, type1 DM later on in life. Also breastfeeding is associated with good performance in intelligent test (Lissanuer and Clayden, 2007; Horta and Cesar, 2013). But of disadvantage is its association with maternal-to-child transmission of HIV, but the risk is influenced by duration and pattern of breast feeding and maternal factors, including stage and severity of HIV/AIDS, immunologic status and presence of mastitis (William *et al.,* 2008).

Breastfeeding is important for mothers, families and communities. Compared to women who breastfeed, not breastfeeding may increase the risk of breast cancer, and some forms of ovarian cancer, hip fractures in older age. In addition, not breastfeeding increases retention of fat deposited during pregnancy which may result in later obesity (UNICEF, 2009). When a baby is not breastfed there may be Loss of income through a parent’s absence from work to care for an ill child, higher family expenses to purchase and prepare artificial feeds as well as extra time needed to give these feeds and the expense as a result of the child’s illnesses. In addition, children who are not breastfed have increased illness, therefore increased use of health care services, and increased health care costs, both as infants and later. In addition, healthy infants grow to become healthy, intelligent adults in the workforce, contributing to the wellbeing of their community (UNICEF, 2009). So in respect to the proven benefits of breastfeeding, WHO has recommended that infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life and thereafter to start complementary feeding while continuing to breastfeed for a minimum of two years (WHO, 2003).

Proper early breastfeeding practices are very important for the success of exclusive breastfeeding. Campaigns are being done to spread the knowledge on importance of breast milk and breastfeeding to both infant and mother. Such campaigns also discuss the practices that support the initiation and maintenance of exclusive breastfeeding such as; initiation of breastfeeding within the first 1 hour of life, no offering prelacteal feeds and exclusive breastfeeding, skin to skin contact, rooming in and age appropriate weaning.

**1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Certain cultures and geographic locations determine the practices of people thus affecting their lifestyle. These practices may hinder the progressive lifestyle that promote healthy living. Practices such as the dominant role elderly men play in our societies in terms of being the head of families, clans and communities will always affect the way of life of individuals in the society. If these roles are channeled towards promoting exclusive breastfeeding, it will go a long way to promote child survival rate in our societies.

It is worthy to note that there are enough literature and findings on the knowledge, attitude and supportive practices towards exclusive breastfeeding, but none tangible to indicate the contributions of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding. Hence there is a gap in knowledge which this research work intends to address.

**1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The major objective of this study is to assess the knowledge, attitude and supportive practices of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding in selected urban and rural communities in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. In order to do justice to this major objective, some specific objectives were established. These include:

1. To assess the socio-demographic characteristics of elderly men in the area of study.
2. To assess the knowledge of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.
3. To assess the attitude of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.
4. To assess the supportive practices of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.
5. To assess the anthropometric status of the elderly men within the study area using body mass index and waist-hip ratio.
6. To determine the determinants of knowledge, attitude and supportive practice of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.

**1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Since elderly men play significant roles in our society, this study will provide a framework that will assess the knowledge, attitude and supportive practice of the elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding. This framework when realized will enable researchers come up with ways to enlighten these elderly men on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, thus help promote it in their locality to ensure high child surviving rate.

**CHAPTER 2**

**LITERATURE REIVEW**

2.1 Old age

2.2 Socio-economic characteristics of old/elderly men

2.3 Exclusive breastfeeding

2.4 Knowledge of elderly men about exclusive breastfeeding

2.5 Attitude of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding

2.6 Supportive practices of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.

2.6 Socio-economic determines of attitude and supportive practices of elderly men towards exclusive breastfeeding.

**CHAPTER 3**

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

3.1 Study design

3.2 Area of study

3.3 Population of the study

3.4 Sampling and sampling techniques

3.4.1 Sample Size

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure

3.5 Preliminary activities

3.5.1 Preliminary Visits

3.5.2 Training of Research Assistants

3.6 Data collection

* + 1. Questionnaire design

3.6.2 Questionnaire Administration

3.6.3 Anthropometric Measurement

3.6.3.1 Weight Determination

3.6.3.2 Height Determination

3.6.2.3 Waist circumference

3.6.2.4 Hip Circumference

* 1. Data analysis

3.8 Statistical analysis