



**Factors Related to Mother's Behavior in Providing Exclusive Breastfeeding**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Exclusive breastfeeding continues to pose a global problem, especially in Kuwait. While 94% of mothers in Kuwait commence nursing at delivery, hardly 10% sustain exclusive breastfeeding for six months, much below the WHO objective of 50% by 2025. Inadequate maternal awareness of the advantages of breastfeeding and insufficient medical assistance constitute substantial obstacles. Infants without exclusive breastfeeding encounter heightened risks of respiratory infections, gastrointestinal issues, and compromised immune systems. The Kuwaiti government has initiated awareness campaigns and orientation programs at baby-friendly hospitals to enhance maternal and community comprehension of exclusive breastfeeding. This study seeks to elucidate the determinants affecting maternal behavior in exclusive breastfeeding and to enhance experiences and support systems to elevate exclusive breastfeeding rates. This study approach utilizes a scoping review based on Arksey and O'Malley's framework, employing the PICO model. Articles published in English and Indonesian between 2019 and 2024, concentrating on exclusive breastfeeding, were selected utilizing the PRISMA Flow Chart Checklist. Data were obtained from PubMed, Wiley, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar using the keywords "(Influencing Factors) AND (exclusive breastfeeding)." Studies that satisfied the inclusion criteria were evaluated for quality based on the guidelines of the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) and underwent rigorous assessment. The research findings indicate that the analysis of five studies revealed three primary elements affecting maternal behavior: maternal knowledge, mother attitudes, and support from healthcare providers. These characteristics were collectively acknowledged as essential to the effectiveness of exclusive breastfeeding.*

*Keywords: Exclusive Breastfeeding, Maternal Knowledge, Maternal Attitude, Health Worker Support*

## **ABSTRAK**

*Pemberian ASI eksklusif terus menjadi isu yang kompleks di tingkat global, termasuk di Kuwait. Meskipun 94% ibu di Kuwait memulai menyusui saat lahir, hanya 10% yang mempertahankan pemberian ASI eksklusif hingga enam bulan. Angka ini jauh di bawah target WHO sebesar 50% pada tahun 2025. The Kuwaiti government has instituted numerous attempts to tackle this issue, including awareness campaigns and hospital-based programs designed to improve mothers' and the community's comprehension of the need of exclusive breastfeeding. This research aims to identify and analyze evidence about the factors influencing maternal behavior in the provision of exclusive breastfeeding. This seeks to cultivate a thorough comprehension and create efficient support structures to enhance exclusive breastfeeding rates. Metode penelitian ini menerapkan Tinjauan Cakupan yang mengikuti kerangka kerja Arksey dan O'Malley, serta using model PICO. Artikel yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2019 dan 2024 dalam bahasa Inggris and Indonesia, dengan fokus pada pemberian ASI eksklusif, dipilih berdasarkan kriteria yang ditetapkan dalam Daftar Periksa Alur Prisma. Data dikumpulkan via sumber-sumber seperti PubMed, Wiley, ScienceDirect, dan Google Scholar dengan using kata kunci "(Faktor yang Mempengaruhi) DAN (ASI Eksklusif)." Studi yang memenuhi kriteria mencakup evaluasi kualitas berdasarkan pedoman Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) dan melalui proses penilaian kritis. This research reveals that an analysis of five studies identifies three primary factors influencing maternal behavior: knowledge, attitudes, and support from healthcare professionals. These characteristics regularly exhibit a substantial influence on the efficacy of exclusive breastfeeding.*

*Kata kunci: Pemberian ASI Eksklusif, Pengetahuan Ibu, Sikap Ibu, Dukungan Tenaga Kesehatan*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past decade, there has been a 10 percent increase in exclusive breastfeeding rates globally, with 48% of babies worldwide now receiving exclusive breastfeeding. The objective set by the World Health Assembly is to achieve a 50% target by the year 2025. (Global Breastfeeding Scorecard, 2023). Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals that although ninety-four percent (94%) of mothers in Kuwait commence nursing at birth, hardly around 10% maintain exclusive breastfeeding until the infant reaches six months of age. This underscores the necessity of undertaking initiatives to tackle this issue, particularly by adhering to the World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, which require that at least 50% of newborns be exclusively breastfed until six months of age by 2025 (WHO., n.d.).

The Government of Kuwait, in partnership with the WHO Country Office and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, has implemented several measures to enhance the exclusive breastfeeding

success rate. A primary initiative is a public campaign conducted during World Breastfeeding Week, from November 6 to 10, with the subject “Moving Forward to Breastfeeding: Education and Support.” This campaign aims to enhance public knowledge of the benefits of breastfeeding for maternal and baby health. The government has instituted several initiatives, such as campaigns in healthcare facilities, educational programs for mothers, and orientation programs for the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in private hospitals, to guarantee optimal support for mothers and infants during breastfeeding. The government has exhibited its dedication by facilitating support from healthcare professionals, families, and the community to maintain breastfeeding beyond the age of 2, in accordance with sustainable health development objectives.

Government initiatives aimed at promoting the exclusive breastfeeding program: The Government of Kuwait, in collaboration with the WHO Country Office and the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, has implemented various initiatives aimed at enhancing exclusive breastfeeding rates within the nation. A significant step involved a public awareness campaign conducted during World Breastfeeding Week from November 6-10, featuring the slogan "Moving Forward to Breastfeeding: Education and Support". The program aims to improve public understanding of the benefits of breastfeeding for mother and baby health outcomes. The government is focused on increasing the exclusive breastfeeding rate for children up to 6 months, in accordance with WHO standards, which target 50% exclusivity by 2025.

The initiatives include awareness campaigns at health institutions, open events for mothers, and orientation programs centered on the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative in private hospitals. The program ensures that moms and infants receive the essential care to promote optimal breastfeeding results. The government is committed to assisting women by partnering with health service providers, families, and communities to encourage the sustained practice of exclusive breastfeeding for a duration of up to 2 years or more. These programs promote the advancement of sustainable development goals by improving the health and well-being of persons in Kuwait (WHO., n.d.)

Factors influencing maternal behavior in exclusive breastfeeding include maternal knowledge, positive attitudes towards breastfeeding, education level, occupation, parity, and birth attendants. These elements also impact the success of exclusive breastfeeding, as experience and medical support can enhance maternal commitment to breastfeeding (Karo, 2021). The consequence of infants not receiving exclusive breastfeeding is their increased vulnerability to respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses. Moreover, infants who do not receive exclusive breastfeeding are vulnerable to immune-related disorders and face an increased risk of mortality from diarrhea (Mempengaruhi, 2021). The research undertaken by Lubis et al., titled "The scoping review titled "Factors Associated With Exclusive Breastfeeding Sustainability Among Working Mothers" comprised 13 studies examining various elements that affect mother practices about exclusive breastfeeding (S. R. H. Lubis et al., 2024). This research is innovative due to its incorporation of recent journal publications from the past five years, which emphasize the varied perspectives on factors influencing maternal behavior in exclusive breastfeeding. The research topic is articulated clearly as follows: "What are the primary factors that affect maternal behavior in the provision of exclusive breastfeeding?"

## **METHOD**

This research is a Scoping Review designed to delineate the evidence on the elements that affect mothers' behavior in delivering exclusive breastfeeding. This Scoping Review adheres to the systematic methodology established by Arksey and O'Malley, encompassing the identification of research questions, the selection of pertinent studies, the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria for article selection, data mapping, and the final compilation, summarization, and reporting of findings (Arksey, H., and O'Malley, 2005)

## Identifying Research Questions or Identifying Review Focus Using the PEOS Framework

Examine Focus Identification utilizing the PEOS Framework (Population, Exposure, Outcome, Study Design). This scoping study utilizes the PEOS Framework for journal searches, delineating criteria for inclusion and exclusion while identifying pertinent papers. The evaluation question is "What factors influence maternal behavior in exclusive breastfeeding?"

Table 1. PICO Framework

Framework	Keywords
Population	Mothers who have babies ( 0 - 6 months )
Exposure	Factors that influence maternal behavior in providing exclusive breastfeeding.
Outcome	The Existence of Factors Related to Mother's Behavior in Providing Exclusive Breastfeeding
Study Design	<i>Cross Sectional</i>

## Identify Relevant Articles

Researchers defined explicit inclusion criteria, encompassing journals published between 2019 and 2024, both English and Indonesian publications, pertinent journals, and studies examining factors that affect mothers' behavior about exclusive breastfeeding. The exclusion criteria encompassed papers that were not available in full text and those that failed to examine many facets of Maternal Behavior in Exclusive Breastfeeding. Perform a search for articles with Boolean operators: (factors influencing) AND (exclusive breastfeeding). This scoping review utilizes four separate database sources: PubMed, Wiley, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar.

Table 2. Article Search Keywords

Population	Exposure	Outcomes	Study Design
-	(Influencing AND breastfeeding)	Factors)- (exclusive)	<i>Cross Sectional</i>

## Article Selection or Identifying Literature With PRISMA Flow Chart

Articles were selected by removing duplicates, reading titles and abstracts, and doing a comprehensive evaluation to verify the suitability of the research articles for a scoping assessment (i Arksey, H. dan O'Malley, 2005) The Prisma Flow Chart Checklist is crucial for offering a comprehensive picture of the processes involved in identifying scientific publications, assembling review reports, and presenting information pertinent to the utilized research approaches (i Arksey, H. dan O'Malley, 2005).

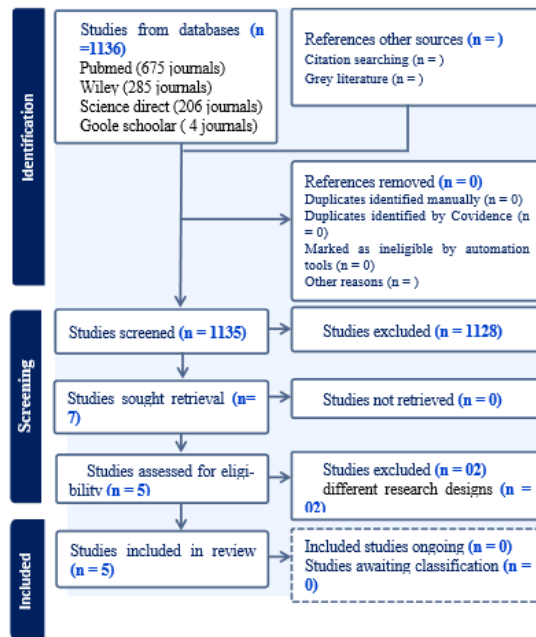


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Chart

The search results reveal that 1,135 magazines have been recorded in the database. All articles have been methodically entered into Mendeley and later exported to Covidence. The inquiry indicates the absence of duplicate journals. A total of 1,128 papers were assessed, resulting in the selection of seven investigations based on their titles and abstracts. Subsequently, the seven papers were evaluated for eligibility, leading to the exclusion of two that failed to meet the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The review includes five journals that meet the established criteria. Compilation of article specifics utilizing Data Charting: Author, Year, Country, Title, Research Design, Data Collection Methods and Instruments, Sampling Techniques, Number of Respondents, Data Analysis Methods, and Data Mapping Results.

### Data Charting

Five meticulously evaluated articles were later extracted to include the key article. The prerequisites include author, year, country, research title, objectives, research design, data collection methods and tools, sampling processes, number of respondents, data analysis methodology, and outcomes. The data development was defined through conversations with the second author, who utilized the modified Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) framework. The author recorded and examined the extracted data, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 3. Charting Data

No	Author/ Year/ Country/ Title	Research Design	Data collection methods and instruments	Sampling techniques and the number of respondents	Results
A1	(Dadzie et al. 2023) Africa, <i>Investigating factors that influence the practice of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers in an urban general hospital in Ghana: a cross-sectional study</i>	Cross-sectional study	Interviews and questionnaires	A simple random sample was 222 mothers.	Results: Among the 222 moms surveyed, 68.8% exclusively nursed their infants for the first 6 months. Mothers with adequate understanding are over three times more likely to deliver exclusive breastfeeding to their children (P=0.022). Individuals with a

							favorable disposition towards exclusive breastfeeding are approximately four times more likely to engage in it, P=0.008, compared to those with an unfavorable disposition. Mothers whose partners expressed dissatisfaction with exclusive breastfeeding were about three times more likely not to practice exclusive breastfeeding for their infants (P=0.018). Factors associated with breastfeeding were higher maternal age p=0.004, minority group p=0.004, lower level of education p=0.023, lower exclusive breastfeeding knowledge score p=0.009, and subjectively feeling unwilling or neutral to implement exclusive breastfeeding p<0.001.
A2	(Chen et al. 2023) India, <i>Factors associated with exclusive breastfeeding during postpartum in Lanzhou city, China: a cross-sectional study</i>	Cross-sectional study	Interviews questionnaires	and	Purposive sampling: Total 3,738 postnatal mothers		Results: The study involved 400 mothers aged 18 to 41. Over fifty percent of the participants (57.8%) were aged between 26 and 33 years, and 30.5% possessed a primary education level. Merely 26.8% of participants engaged in exclusive breastfeeding. Individuals with higher education (AOR = 10.00, p < 0.001), civil servants (AOR = 12.51, p < 0.001), those aware of exclusive breastfeeding (AOR = 3.65, p = 0.002), those possessing accurate knowledge of exclusive breastfeeding (AOR = 4.61, p < 0.001), those exhibiting a favorable attitude towards exclusive breastfeeding requests (AOR = 0.51, p = 0.050), and those receiving community support (AOR = 9.87, p < 0.001) were more inclined to engage in exclusive breastfeeding practices.
A3	(Sabo et al. 2023), Knowledge, attitude, and practice of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers of childbearing age.	cross-sectional	Interviews questionnaires	and	Simple random sampling of 400 mothers		Results: In all, 64.6% of women were aware of exclusive breastfeeding, and 71% recognized that it should be practiced for a minimum of six
A4	(Cascone et al. 2019), Evaluation of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices about Exclusive Breastfeeding among Women in Italy	cross-sectional	Interviews questionnaires	and	Simple random sampling of 506 mothers		

months. Merely 48% of moms with a single kid possessed this knowledge. Nearly all (92.9%) participants were aware that breast milk contains antibodies given to the infant, and 84.8% recognized that breast milk decreases the risk of specific infectious disorders. Moreover, 57.5% of women accurately recognized that breastfeeding decreases the risk of many non-communicable diseases, including asthma, obesity, and diabetes. In contrast, merely 45.5% and 31% accurately indicated that nursing decreases the risk of breast cancer and several non-communicable diseases (diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis) for the mother, respectively. The majority asserted that nursing offers optimal nutrition for infants during the initial six months of life (91.1%), saw breastfeeding as the most straightforward nutritional method for mothers (61.9%), and concurred that breastfeeding fosters a healthy bond between mother and child (76.3%).

The study's findings indicated that knowledge ( $p = 0.015$ ), attitude ( $p = 0.015$ ), family support ( $p = 0.015$ ), health workers ( $p = 0.001$ ), and breastfeeding rights ( $p = 0.003$ ) were associated with the pattern of exclusive breastfeeding. The variables exhibiting the most substantial correlation were attitudes, with an influence of 13.57 times, and support from health personnel, with an influence of 26.60 times, on exclusive breastfeeding compared to individuals who did not exclusively breastfeed.

A5 (Lubis 2022), The relationship between knowledge, attitudes, family support, the role of health workers, and breastfeeding rights on exclusive breastfeeding patterns in working mothers in the industrial sector that has breastfeeding facilities. cross-sectional Interviews and questionnaires Total of 32 mothers

## Critical Appraisal Of Individual Sources Of Evidence

Critical evaluation refers to a thorough and systematic assessment process concerning scientific research findings, aimed at appraising the quality of an article (Al-Jundi, 1, and Salah Sakka, 2017). This Scoping Review assessed the quality of articles utilizing Critical Appraisal for quantitative research. Five research publications were assessed by Critical Appraisal, utilizing the following evaluation criteria:

Inquiries are comprehensively handled and clarified in detail.

The probe has been resolved, albeit without a thorough explanation.

The article fails to address or elucidate the question.

An assessment of the article is performed, subsequently classifying its quality into four criteria:

A: Final Score 16-20

B: Final Score 11-15

C: Final Score 6-10

D: Final Score 0-5

Table 4. Critical Appraisal Used Cross-Sectional For Article Selection Based on Inclusion Criteria

No	Component	Articles				
		<i>A1</i>	<i>A2</i>	<i>A3</i>	<i>A4</i>	<i>A5</i>
1	Are explicit definitions utilized to delineate the criteria for sample inclusion in the study?	2	2	2	2	2
2	Is a comprehensive elucidation offered concerning the research topic and its context?	2	2	2	2	2
3	Are exposure measurement methods valid and reliable?	2	2	2	2	2
4	What are the criteria used to measure standard and objective conditions?	2	2	2	2	2
5	Have any influencing or interfering factors been identified?	2	2	2	2	2
6	Are there any strategic efforts described to address interfering or inhibiting factors?	2	2	2	2	2
7	Are the accomplishments or data generated assessed by procedures deemed valid and reliable?	2	2	2	2	2
8	Is the employed statistical analysis suitable?	2	2	2	2	2
	TOTAL	16	16	16	16	16
	OVERALL	A	A	A	A	A

All five articles received an A rating in the quality evaluation, signifying that they were of high quality and provided detailed explanations.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of Articles by Country

The research articles included in this Scoping Review originate from various nations, such as Africa, India, Malaysia, and Italy. Figure 2 illustrates the attributes of artieen.

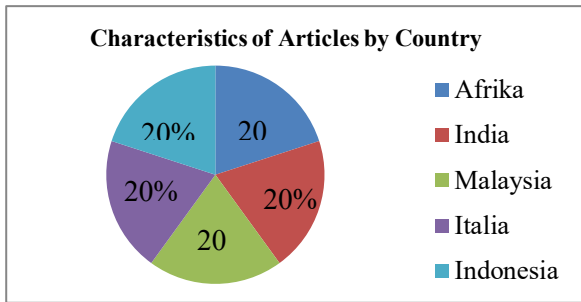


Figure 2. Characteristics of articles by country

### Characteristics of Articles Based on Year of Publication

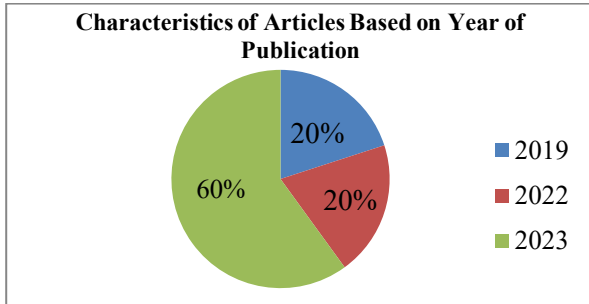


Figure 3. Characteristics of Articles Based on Year of Publication

Characteristics of articles by year of publication: 1 article in 2019, 1 article in 2022, and 3 articles in 2023.

### Theme Analysis

Upon examining the topics and assessing the quality of the journals using data extraction, the principal theme identified from the selected journal is as follows:

Table 4. Theme Analysis

No	Theme	Research Articles
1	Mother's Knowledge	A1,A2,A3,A4,A5
2	Mother's Attitude	A1,A2,A3,A4,A5
3	Health Workforce Support	A5

### Mother's Knowledge

Knowledge is the most significant factor related to behavior, followed by subjective norms, practice control, and attitudes. The higher the mother's knowledge about breastfeeding, the more likely she is to breastfeed her baby exclusively (Chen et al., 2023). The comprehension of Exclusive Breastfeeding (EBF) practices encompasses the principle that the introduction of water and complementary foods should commence only after the infant attains 6 months of age, alongside the recognition of colostrum as the optimal initial sustenance for breastfeeding, due to its abundant nutrients and antibodies that are crucial for fortifying the infant's immune system during the early stages of life.

In addition, those who deeply understand the various benefits of breastfeeding, such as increasing the baby's immune system, supporting brain development, and strengthening the bond between mother and baby, will be more motivated and committed to maintaining compliance with EBF practices. This shows that good knowledge of the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding increases awareness and positively impacts the success and sustainability of exclusive breastfeeding itself (Dadzie et al., 2023).

Mothers lacking comprehensive knowledge regarding the advantages and practices of exclusive breastfeeding are more inclined to discontinue it prematurely, owing to an insufficient comprehension of breast milk's significance in promoting baby health. This misinformation frequently leads women to be swayed by myths or erroneous information regarding the significance of breast milk, resulting in feelings of uncertainty or being overwhelmed by obstacles. Mothers with substantial knowledge are more adept at surmounting challenges and maintaining dedication to exclusive breastfeeding, as they comprehend the critical significance of breastfeeding during the early stages of an infant's life and its profound influence on the child's long-term health and the emotional connection established (Kelkay et al., 2020).

Awareness of exclusive breastfeeding, encompassing the recommended duration, the associated health benefits for both mother and infant, and the necessity of breast milk as the sole nutritional source for the infant during the initial six months, can pose a considerable challenge for mothers striving to maintain consistent exclusive breastfeeding practices. Non-adherence to breastfeeding standards may ultimately impede the attainment of exclusive breastfeeding for a whole six months (Sultana et al., 2022).

### **Mother's Attitude**

Planned behavior, such as thorough preparation and planning before giving birth regarding exclusive breastfeeding, can influence positive attitudes towards breastfeeding and increase mothers' intentions or desires to breastfeed exclusively, because with a clear understanding and belief in the long-term benefits of breastfeeding, both for the health of the baby and the mother, the mother will be more motivated to follow existing medical recommendations (Dadzie et al., 2023). Positive attitudes among mothers contribute significantly to higher exclusive breastfeeding practices because supportive attitudes and beliefs in the benefits of breastfeeding will encourage mothers to be more committed to breastfeeding their babies for extended periods. This can be explained by the fact that mothers who have positive attitudes towards breastfeeding tend to be more motivated to overcome challenges that may arise during the breastfeeding period, such as problems with milk production or fatigue, because they understand how important breastfeeding is for the health and optimal development of their babies.

With a positive attitude, mothers will be more confident in maintaining exclusive breastfeeding without being tempted to provide complementary foods or other fluids prematurely, thus increasing the chances of successfully implementing EBF (Exclusive breastfeeding during the initial six months of an infant's life, which of course has an impact on the long-term health development of both the baby and the mother herself. Conversely, negative attitudes or doubts about breastfeeding can influence mothers' decisions to stop or replace breastfeeding with formula milk or other foods sooner, which can reduce the effectiveness of exclusive breastfeeding (Sultana et al., 2022).

An individual's attitude towards a behavior, such as the choice to exclusively breastfeed, is shaped by a multitude of internal and external influences that interact reciprocally. Internal elements, including information, personal experience, and beliefs, significantly influence an individual's perspectives, since a deeper understanding and stronger convictions increase the likelihood of behaviors aligning with their positive attitudes. Moreover, external influences, including social support from partners, family, friends, and healthcare professionals, can significantly affect an individual's attitude by offering encouragement, precise knowledge, and motivation to sustain or alter specific behaviors (T. Lubis, 2022). The mother's perspective on exclusive nursing is contingent upon the variables that shape her attitude. The mother will have a cheerful attitude if the influencing factors are favorable. If the factors are adverse, the mother will likewise exhibit a bad disposition. Attitude constitutes a disposition or inclination to act, rather than the execution of a specific motivation (T. Lubis, 2022).

## **Health Workforce Support**

Healthcare professionals are essential in advocating for and encouraging exclusive breastfeeding. They serve as the primary facilitators in this initiative, particularly inside hospital or maternity settings, where they disseminate information that promotes exclusive breastfeeding. Health workers must create conditions that support positive behavioral changes that focus on improving maternal and infant health through effective and persuasive communication, which includes attention, understanding, and the ability to influence clients' memories and attitudes. Good communication will build a strong relationship between health workers and clients, encouraging mothers to take actions that benefit their health and their families (T. Lubis, 2022).

The assistance of health professionals significantly affects women's perceptions of exclusive breastfeeding, as the information they offer is typically regarded as more credible due to its scientific and factual basis. When health workers, such as nurses and midwives, encourage and support mothers to breastfeed, mothers will feel more motivated and confident in exclusively breastfeeding their babies. Health workers also act as the primary source of information about exclusive breastfeeding, including the correct method of giving, so that mothers feel more confident in carrying out correct breastfeeding practices (T. Lubis, 2022).

Social support from health workers is seen in their actions that provide explanations, invite, give sympathy, and provide examples of healthy behavior. This encouragement is significant in helping mothers face various breastfeeding challenges, overcome problems that may arise, and provide relevant information regarding lactation management. Health workers also encourage mothers to breastfeed confidently by paying attention to the mother's condition, including work and other situations. Mothers who receive support from health workers tend to be more successful in providing exclusive breastfeeding and have a longer duration than mothers who do not receive similar support (T. Lubis, 2022).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

This scoping review reveals that maternal behavior regarding exclusive breastfeeding is affected by three primary factors: maternal knowledge, maternal attitude, and support from healthcare professionals. Of the 1,135 publications identified, five studies that satisfied the inclusion criteria consistently shown a substantial correlation between these three characteristics and the success of exclusive breastfeeding practices. The primary factor is maternal education regarding the advantages, methods, and significance of exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers with substantial understanding are demonstrated to be more adept at sustaining exclusive breastfeeding for a duration of six months. Secondly, favorable maternal attitudes influenced by experience, beliefs, and preparedness for the nursing process significantly enhance mothers' dedication to exclusive breastfeeding.

Mothers exhibiting supportive attitudes are generally more adept at surmounting challenges associated with nursing. Third, support from healthcare professionals is a crucial factor in breastfeeding success since it offers the education, inspiration, and assistance that mothers require. Health worker interventions can enhance moms' confidence and capacity to properly offer exclusive breastfeeding. This study's findings underscore the necessity of a complete approach to enhance exclusive breastfeeding rates by boosting maternal knowledge, cultivating positive attitudes, and reinforcing the role of health professionals in delivering ongoing education and support. These findings are anticipated to provide a foundation for governments, healthcare institutions, and medical professionals in developing more effective intervention programs to enhance exclusive breastfeeding rates, especially in nations with low performance levels like Kuwait.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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