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Social- cognitive predictors of exclusive breastfeeding among primiparous mothers in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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**Background:** Despite availability of high impact interventions to improve infant and young child feeding, only about 52% of mothers in Ethiopia exclusively breastfeed their child for the first six months. Although the decision to breastfeed a child is ultimately a choice of mothers, this choice is influenced by multi-level factors including social-cognitive variables.

**Objectives:** to describe the breastfeeding behaviour of primiparous mothers during their prenatal period in terms of intentions/goals, outcome expectancies, self-efficacy and socio-structural factors and assess their EBF practices as well as identify the social-cognitive predictors of EBF practices.

**Methods:** a prospective longitudinal health facility study among 232 primiparous women. Structured and semi-structured questions were for data collection. SPSS-21 was used for data management. Findings at the 95% confidence interval and P-value of 5% were reported as statistically significant.

**Results:** about 97.9% of the respondents had intended to breastfeed their child after delivery, while about 51.4% of them intended EBF. There were positive and statistically significant correlation between each of breastfeeding self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and socio-structural factors, with EBF practice. However, only breastfeeding self-efficacy and outcome expectancies were statistically significant predictors of EBF among primiparous women when controlled for confounding variables.

**Conclusions and Recommendations:** health programmes aimed to improving EBF among primiparous mothers should look beyond providing health information alone. Improving mothers' breastfeeding self-efficacy and outcome expectancy is strongly recommended.

