

## **Social Media Influence on Exclusive Breastfeeding Among Expecting Mothers in Port Harcourt**

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### **Abstract**

While social media have the potential to help expecting and lactating mothers learn the profits of, and steps to actualise exclusive breastfeeding, studies in health communication in Nigeria have failed to adequately interrogate the role of digital media in the actualisation of exclusive breastfeeding. This study bridges that gap by exploring the use of social media for the actualisation of exclusive breastfeeding in Rivers State. This study reports on the response from a quantitative survey of breastfeeding mothers (N=200) in three General Hospitals in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Findings suggest that breastfeeding mothers in Port Harcourt that reported receiving information about and learning about exclusive breastfeeding through social media platforms are more likely to report actualising exclusive breastfeeding, controlling for all other factors in the model. Based on the findings, we conclude that social media are the most efficient means of communicating exclusive breastfeeding information and messages following the availability and portability of internet-enabled mobile phones. We therefore recommend that social media be adopted as the flagship media for communicating exclusive breastfeeding in Port Harcourt metropolis.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Exclusive Breastfeeding, Rivers State, Health Communication, Media, Breastfeeding Mothers