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## **SARINTHORN MUNGHAMANE**

Senior lecturer/ nurse in Maternal and Newborn Nursing & Midwifery , Thailand

## **WILAWAN DHANAWAN**

Senior lecturer/ nurse in Pediatric Nursing, Thailand

## **SIRIPORN CHUDJUAJEAN**

Senior lecturer/ nurse in Maternal and Newborn Nursing & Midwifery , Thailand

# **EXPERIENCES OF FULL-TIME WORKING MOTHERS WHO EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFEED FOR SIX MONTHS**

### **Abstract:**

This research was conducted with the objective of investigating the experiences of full-time working mothers who exclusively breastfeed for six months. This study employed phenomenology in line with the concept of Husserl. The informants for the study comprised thirteen full-time working mothers who with exclusive breastfeeding experience over the past two years and success in exclusive breastfeeding for six months. Data was collected by conducting in-depth interviews and content analysis under the method of Colaizzi (1978).

The findings on the experiences of the full-time working mothers who exclusively breastfed for six months were categorized into the following three groups: 1) The meaning of breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months was a) exclusively breastfeeding for six months is symbolic of the perfect family; b) exclusively breastfeeding for six months is best for the baby; c) exclusively breastfeeding for six months is a maternal role and duty, combined with feelings of maternal pride, breastfeeding joy, mother-child contentment, maternal kindness, self-worth and attachment; 2) the reasons for exclusively breastfeeding for six months were three-fold a) intention and determination; b) previous experience and witnessing examples; c) supportive encouragement and motivation and 3) the management of exclusively breastfeeding for six months comprised the following: a) planning for exclusive breastfeeding; b) period of return to work; c) management of problems and barriers to exclusive breastfeeding occurring during the preparation period for returning to full-time work. These research findings provide understanding about the perceptions, feelings and experiences of full-time working mothers who exclusively breastfeed for six months, which may be used as a guideline for the development of a holistic nursing practice guideline aimed at effectively promoting successful exclusive breastfeeding for six months.

### **Keywords:**

experiences, full-time working mothers, exclusively breastfeed

**JEL Classification:** I19, A39, J13