

## **Efficacy of Radio Campaign in Promoting Exclusive Breastfeeding among Women in Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi State**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated the influence of radio campaign programme in promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi state. A descriptive survey design was employed, and data were collected from 388 participants using structured questionnaires. The study was anchored on the Health Belief Model (HBM). Findings reveal a significant influence of the radio campaign on promoting behavior change, with a majority of participants adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices after exposure to campaign messages. Base on the findings, the study concluded that the result of the study underscores the persuasive influence of mass media campaigns, particularly radio, in disseminating health information and fostering positive health behaviors among diverse populations. Recommendations include sustaining and expanding radio campaigns, tailoring messaging for long-term behavior change, integrating follow-up support mechanisms, enhancing community engagement, and collaborating with healthcare providers.

**Keywords:** Influence, Radio Campaign, Exclusive breast feeding

### **Introduction**

In recent years, the use of mass media campaigns, particularly radio programs, has gained recognition for its potential to influence health behaviours, including breastfeeding practices. Radio campaigns have been successful in disseminating health-related information to a wide audience, especially in areas with limited access to other forms of media (Adebayo, 2019). Exclusive breastfeeding, defined as feeding infants with breast milk alone for the first six months

of life without any additional food or drink except for vitamins, minerals, or medicines, is widely acknowledged as a critical determinant of infant health and survival (WHO, 2021). Despite global recommendations and emphasis on the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, many regions face challenges in achieving optimal rates. Nigeria, including the Abakaliki Metropolis in Ebonyi State, is no exception. The country has struggled with suboptimal rates of exclusive breastfeeding due to various cultural, socioeconomic, and informational barriers (Agu, 2018).

However, the specific impact and effectiveness of radio campaign programs in promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi State remain underexplored. Understanding the reach, content, and reception of these radio campaigns is crucial for assessing their influence on knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding exclusive breastfeeding among women in this region.

In Nigeria, exclusive breastfeeding rates have been persistently below the recommended levels. According to the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) conducted in 2018, only about 29% of infants less than six months of age were exclusively breastfed (NPC & ICF, 2019). Mass media interventions, particularly radio campaigns, have shown promise in positively influencing health behaviors and knowledge uptake among diverse populations. These campaigns often employ a variety of approaches, including health education segments, testimonials, and interactive sessions, aiming to inform, persuade, and motivate listeners toward adopting healthier practices (Wakefield, 2020).

However, the specific impact of radio campaigns on exclusive breastfeeding practices in the context of Abakaliki Metropolis remains an area requiring deeper empirical exploration. Understanding the preferences, perceptions, and effectiveness of these radio programs among women in this region is crucial to tailor communication strategies effectively. Exclusive breastfeeding is acknowledged as a cost-effective and natural means of providing infants with optimal nutrition, protection against infections, and supporting their overall growth and development (Victora, 2016). However, despite the numerous benefits, cultural beliefs, misinformation, and socio-economic factors often impede the practice of exclusive breastfeeding in various regions, including Ebonyi State.

The utilization of mass media channels, particularly radio, as a tool for behavior change communication has gained attention in public health interventions. Radio campaigns possess the potential to reach a wide audience, including individuals from diverse socio-economic

backgrounds and remote areas, making them a valuable medium for health promotion initiatives (Sood, 2012). In the context of maternal and child health, radio campaigns have been implemented worldwide to disseminate information, raise awareness, and influence health behaviors. These campaigns frequently employ a mix of educational content, testimonials from respected community members or healthcare professionals, and engaging programming to encourage positive health practices (Sood, 2012; Kharbanda, 2018).

Exclusive breastfeeding promotion in the Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi State presents a multifaceted challenge rooted in cultural norms, limited access to accurate information, and socio-economic disparities. While prior studies have identified these factors, the persistence of low exclusive breastfeeding rates underscores the complexity of the issue. Cultural beliefs and practices often shape infant feeding choices, impacting the acceptance and adherence to exclusive breastfeeding. The normalization of early introduction of complementary foods or prelacteal feeding practices, as identified by Oche (2017), hampers the establishment and continuation of exclusive breastfeeding within the community. Despite the recognized benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for infant health and development, the Abakaliki Metropolis in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, faces persistently low rates of exclusive breastfeeding among women. Previous studies conducted in this region have highlighted several contributing factors to this issue.

Oche (2017) identified cultural beliefs, inadequate knowledge about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, and socio-economic constraints as major barriers. Similarly, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) of 2018 (NPC & ICF, 2019) corroborated these findings, reporting exclusive breastfeeding rates well below the recommended levels. Moreover, the dissemination of accurate and comprehensive information regarding the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding remains inadequate, leading to misconceptions and varying levels of awareness among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. The Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS, 2018) emphasizes this information gap, revealing a substantial disparity between recommended breastfeeding practices and actual behaviors.

Socio-economic challenges further compound the issue, with disparities in access to healthcare, employment situations, and family support influencing a woman's ability to practice exclusive breastfeeding optimally. These challenges often intersect, contributing to the perpetuation of suboptimal breastfeeding practices despite existing interventions.

## **Problem Statement**

While various interventions, including health education campaigns, have been implemented, the specific impact of radio campaign programs on promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in this region remains inadequately explored. Adebayo (2019) conducted a study in Northwestern Nigeria, emphasizing the positive impact of radio dramas on breastfeeding practices but did not specifically focus on the Abakaliki Metropolis.

The existing knowledge gap lies in the lack of in-depth exploration regarding the effectiveness and influence of radio campaign programs on exclusive breastfeeding practices among women specifically in the Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi State. Understanding the reach, content relevance, and reception of these radio campaigns within this cultural and socio-economic context is crucial for devising tailored and impactful interventions. This research aims to address this gap by delving into the specific impact of radio campaign programs on exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. By examining the content, reach, and reception of these programs, this study intends to bridge the existing knowledge gap and provide insights to improve communication strategies for promoting exclusive breastfeeding in this particular region.

## **Objectives of the Study**

1. To evaluate level of exposure to radio campaign programmes promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis.
2. To assess the effectiveness of radio campaign programmes in fostering exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis.

## **Research Questions**

1. What is the level of exposure of radio campaign programs promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis?
2. How is effective is radio campaign programs in fostering exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis?

## **Research Scope**

This work focuses on Ebonyi Broadcasting Corporation (EBBC) health programmes – Every child breastfed. This is because it is one of the major radio programmes that have full coverage of Abakaliki metropolis.

### **Communication Interventions for Health Promotion in Nigeria**

Communication interventions play a pivotal role in promoting health behaviors and improving health outcomes, particularly in resource-constrained settings like Nigeria. These interventions leverage various channels, including mass media such as radio, to disseminate health information, raise awareness, and influence behavior change (Sood, 2012). In Nigeria, where access to healthcare services may be limited, communication interventions serve as essential tools for reaching diverse populations and addressing public health challenges. Mass media campaigns have been deployed to promote a range of health behaviors, from family planning and immunization to exclusive breastfeeding practices (Adebayo, 2019).

Radio, in particular, has emerged as a powerful medium for health promotion due to its wide reach, accessibility, and affordability. Radio campaigns can effectively deliver targeted health messages to communities, including those in rural or remote areas with limited access to other forms of media (NPC & ICF, 2019). These communication interventions are often grounded in behavior change theories, such as the Health Belief Model and the Theory of Planned Behavior, which emphasize the importance of addressing knowledge, attitudes, and perceived barriers to facilitate behavior change (Sood, 2012).

While challenges persist, including cultural norms, socio-economic disparities, and literacy levels, communication interventions continue to demonstrate promise in addressing public health issues and improving health outcomes in Nigeria. By leveraging the reach and influence of mass media channels like radio, these interventions have the potential to drive meaningful behavior change and contribute to the overall health and well-being of communities across the country. Communication interventions for health promotion in Nigeria have evolved in response to the country's dynamic socio-cultural landscape and the growing need for targeted approaches to address health disparities. These interventions encompass a range of strategies, including community engagement, interpersonal communication, and mass media campaigns, each tailored to the specific needs and challenges of the target population (Iloh, 2020).

Radio campaigns, in particular, have gained prominence for their ability to reach large audiences across diverse geographic and socio-economic contexts. Studies have shown that radio programs can effectively deliver health messages, educate communities about preventive health practices, and stimulate discussions on health-related topics (Adebayo, 2019). In the context of maternal and child health, radio campaigns have been instrumental in promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices, maternal healthcare-seeking behaviors, and immunization uptake. These campaigns often employ creative formats such as dramas, jingles, and talk shows to capture listeners'

attention and convey health messages in a culturally relevant and engaging manner (Onyebuchi-Iloh, 2020).

### **Radio Campaigns as a Medium for Communicating Maternal and Child Healthcare**

Radio campaigns have emerged as a powerful medium for disseminating information and promoting health behaviors, particularly in maternal and child health. In Nigeria, where access to healthcare services may be limited, radio campaigns play a crucial role in reaching diverse audiences and addressing key maternal and child health issues. According to Adebayo, (2019), radio campaigns have been widely utilized to communicate maternal and child health messages, including promoting exclusive breastfeeding, antenatal care attendance, and immunization uptake. These campaigns leverage the wide reach and accessibility of radio to deliver targeted health messages to communities, regardless of geographic location or socio-economic status.

Studies have shown that radio campaigns can effectively influence knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to maternal and child health. For example, Onyebuchi-Iloh (2020) conducted a study in South-East Nigeria evaluating the effectiveness of a radio campaign on exclusive breastfeeding among nursing mothers. The findings revealed a significant increase in knowledge and practice of exclusive breastfeeding among participants exposed to the radio campaign.

Radio campaigns utilize various formats, including dramas, talk shows, and jingles, to engage listeners and convey health messages in a culturally relevant and relatable manner. These campaigns often feature local personalities, community leaders, and healthcare professionals to enhance credibility and trust among listeners (Adebayo, 2019). Despite their effectiveness, radio campaigns face challenges such as funding constraints, infrastructure limitations, and the need for sustained efforts to achieve lasting behavior change. Additionally, the impact of radio campaigns may vary depending on factors such as program content, timing, and audience engagement (Onyebuchi-Iloh, 2020).

However, radio campaigns serve as a valuable medium for communicating maternal and child health messages in Nigeria. By harnessing the power of radio to reach diverse audiences and deliver targeted health messages, these campaigns have the potential to improve maternal and child health outcomes and contribute to overall population health. Radio campaigns serve as an accessible and cost-effective means to disseminate crucial maternal and child health information across diverse communities in Nigeria. With the ability to reach remote and underserved areas where access to healthcare facilities may be limited, radio campaigns play a vital role in bridging information gaps and empowering women and caregivers to make informed decisions about maternal and child healthcare. Furthermore, radio campaigns have the advantage of being able to deliver messages in local languages and dialects, ensuring that health information are culturally relevant and easily understood by the target audience. This cultural sensitivity enhances the effectiveness of the campaigns and fosters trust and engagement among listeners (Adebayo, 2019). In addition to promoting exclusive breastfeeding, radio campaigns address a wide range

of maternal and child health issues, including antenatal care, postnatal care, immunizations, and family planning. By addressing multiple aspects of maternal and child health, these campaigns contribute to comprehensive healthcare education and support holistic approaches to improving health outcomes for mothers and children (Onyebuchi-Iloh, 2020).

### **Evaluation of Radio health Campaign Programs in Nigeria**

Radio campaign programs in Nigeria have been instrumental in disseminating information and promoting behaviour change across various sectors, including health. Evaluating the effectiveness of these campaigns is crucial for understanding their impact on targeted outcomes and informing future programmatic decisions. Adebayo, (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study to assess the impact of a radio drama program on promoting exclusive breastfeeding in Northwestern Nigeria. Through surveys and qualitative interviews, they found that the radio drama significantly increased knowledge and uptake of exclusive breastfeeding among participants. This study highlights the importance of evaluating radio campaigns to understand their reach and effectiveness in promoting health behaviors.

Similarly, Onyebuchi-Iloh, (2020) evaluated the effectiveness of a radio campaign on exclusive breastfeeding among nursing mothers in South-East Nigeria. Their study revealed a significant improvement in exclusive breastfeeding practices among mothers who were exposed to the radio campaign compared to those who were not. This underscores the role of radio campaigns in influencing behavior change and improving maternal and child health outcomes. Evaluation methods for radio campaign programs often include audience surveys, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews to assess knowledge, attitudes, and behavior change among target populations. These evaluations provide valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of radio campaigns and help identify areas for improvement.

Furthermore, ongoing monitoring and evaluation are essential to track the progress of radio campaign programs over time and ensure that they remain relevant and effective in addressing the evolving needs of communities. Regular feedback from program participants and stakeholders enables program managers to make informed decisions and optimize resource allocation for maximum impact. In addition to specific studies focusing on exclusive breastfeeding promotion, broader evaluations of radio campaign programs in Nigeria have also been conducted. These evaluations provide insights into the overall effectiveness of radio

campaigns in promoting various health behaviors and addressing public health challenges. For instance, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NPC & ICF, 2019) includes assessments of exposure to mass media campaigns, including radio, and their impact on maternal and child health outcomes. The survey provides nationally representative data on the reach and influence of radio campaigns, offering valuable insights into their contribution to health promotion efforts in Nigeria.

Overall, evaluations of radio campaign programs in Nigeria contribute to the evidence base for effective health communication strategies and inform policy and programmatic decisions aimed at improving public health outcomes. By systematically assessing the reach, effectiveness, and impact of these campaigns, stakeholders can optimize resources, tailor interventions to local contexts, and accelerate progress towards achieving health-related goals.

### **EBBC Care-giver Programme on Breast feeding in Ebonyi state**

The EBBC (Every Baby, Breastfed) Care-giver programme is a radio campaign initiative aimed at promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices among caregivers and mothers in Nigeria. While literature specifically evaluating the EBBC Care-giver programme is limited, its conceptual framework aligns with established principles of behaviour change communication and community engagement. The EBBC (Every Baby, Breastfed) Care-giver Programme represents a significant initiative aimed at promoting breastfeeding practices among caregivers and mothers in Nigeria, including Ebonyi State. The EBBC Care-giver Programme is designed to disseminate information, provide support, and encourage exclusive breastfeeding practices among caregivers and mothers. Although the program's implementation details may vary across different regions, its core objectives remain consistent: to improve breastfeeding knowledge, increase breastfeeding initiation rates, and support mothers in sustaining exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of infancy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study was anchored on the Health Belief Model (HBM), developed by social psychologists Hochbaum, Rosenstock, and Kegels in the 1950s, with subsequent modifications and extensions by other scholars. The Health Belief Model (HBM) is a widely used theoretical framework for understanding health-related behaviors and guiding health promotion interventions. It posits that



individuals' health-related behaviors are influenced by their perceptions of susceptibility to a health threat, the severity of the threat, the benefits of taking action to reduce the threat, and the barriers to taking action. Additionally, cues to action and self-efficacy play crucial roles in determining whether individuals engage in health-promoting behaviors. The HBM suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in a health-promoting behavior, such as exclusive breastfeeding, if they perceive themselves and their infants as susceptible to health risks associated with formula feeding and the severity of these risks. The EBBC radio campaign can highlight the health risks associated with not exclusively breastfeeding, thereby influencing women's perceptions of their child's health susceptibility and severity.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design to gather quantitative data regarding participants' exposure to the program, breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and practices. The descriptive survey allows for the systematic collection of data on participants' exposure to the EBBC Care-giver Programme and their breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and practices. The study was conducted in the Abakaliki Metropolis of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The Abakaliki Metropolis, as an urban center, presents a diverse population with varied socio-economic backgrounds, cultural practices, and healthcare access, making it a suitable setting for examining the influence of the EBBC Care-giver Programme on exclusive breastfeeding practices. The population of the study comprises women of childbearing age (typically defined as 15-49 years by the national bureau of statistics NBS 2022) residing in the Abakaliki Metropolis who are either pregnant or have given birth within the past two years. This population segment is particularly relevant as they are directly involved in breastfeeding practices and are likely to benefit from interventions aimed at promoting exclusive breastfeeding. According to National Bureau of statistics (NBS 2023 population projection) the populations of women within this age bracket is 156,467. This study strived to include a diverse sample representing different demographic characteristics, including age, education level, marital status, and socio-economic status, to ensure adequate representation and generalization of the findings. Two-step sampling techniques of stratified and random sampling techniques were utilized to collect data from 388 respondents obtained using Taro Yamane formula.

## Data Analysis

**Table 1: Are you exposed to EBBC radio campaign programs promoting exclusive breastfeeding among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis?**

Response	Frequency	%
Yes	250	64.4
No	130	35.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The majority of participants report exposure to the EBBC radio campaign promoting exclusive breastfeeding. This suggests a relatively high level of penetration of the radio campaign within the study population. The significant proportion of participants who report no exposure highlights potential gaps in campaign reach or effectiveness, which could be further explored through qualitative inquiries.

**Table 2: Frequency of exposure to EBBC Radio Campaign on breastfeeding**

Response	Frequency	%
Daily	200	52
Less than five times a week	133	34
Once a week	25	6
Seldom	20	5
Never	10	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

Among participants exposed to the EBBC radio campaign, the majority report listening to the program daily or several times a week. This indicates a high level of engagement with the radio campaign among those who have been exposed to it. The relatively lower frequency of listening reported by some participants may suggest variations in program consumption patterns, which could influence the effectiveness of message retention and behavior change.

**Table 3: How is the content of EBBC radio campaign programs on exclusive breastfeeding educating women in the Abakaliki Metropolis?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Benefits of exclusive breastfeeding to the child	200	52
Tips for overcoming exclusive breastfeeding challenges	197	49.15
Medical and nutritional supports for nursing mothers	177	43.65
Alternatives to exclusive breastfeeding	80	21
Others	120	31

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The most common content in the EBBC radio campaign programs is information on the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, tips for overcoming breastfeeding challenges and medical and nutritional support for nursing mother which are frequently featured in the EBBC health programmes. These findings suggest that the radio campaign covers a range of topics related to exclusive breastfeeding, addressing both the benefits and challenges while providing practical advice and support to mothers.

**Table 4: Language and Cultural Relevance of EBBC Radio Campaign Programs**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Campaign programmes delivered in indigenous language	200	52
Inclusion of cultural relevant health contents	288	74.31
Representation of cultural perspectives	88	22.16

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The majority of participants (52%) report that the EBBC radio campaign programs are delivered in local languages, enhancing accessibility and understanding among the target audience. About half of the participants (74%) perceive the inclusion of culturally relevant content in the campaign programs, indicating efforts to address local customs, beliefs, and practices related to breastfeeding. A significant proportion of participants (22%) recognize the representation of diverse cultural perspectives in the campaign content, fostering inclusivity and resonance with the multiethnic population of the Abakaliki Metropolis. These findings suggest that the EBBC radio campaign programs prioritize language and cultural relevance, which is essential for effectively engaging and mobilizing community members around exclusive breastfeeding practices.

**Table 5: What is the level of influence of EBBC radio campaign programs on the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions among women in Abakaliki Metropolis regarding exclusive breastfeeding?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
High influence	150	39
Moderate influence	120	31
Low influence	60	16
No influence	58	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The majority of participants report that the EBBC radio campaign significantly (39%) or moderately (31%) increased their knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. A smaller proportion of participants report a slight increase in knowledge (16%), while some report no change (15%).

**Table 6: Influence of EBBC health Campaign on Attitudinal change of nursing mothers on issue of exclusive breastfeeding**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive change	122	30
No change	298	51
Negative change	68	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The majority of participants report a positive change in attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding as a result of the EBBC radio campaign (51%). A significant proportion of participants report no change in attitudes (30%), indicating that the campaign may not have influenced attitudes for all participants. A smaller proportion of participants report a negative change in attitudes (18%), suggesting that the campaign may have inadvertently reinforced negative perceptions or beliefs about exclusive breastfeeding in some cases.

**Table 7: form of influence EBBC radio campaign programs has on the respondents' health behaviour**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
High adoption of exclusive breastfeeding practice	200	52
Considered adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices	100	26
No change recorded	60	16
Relapsed from exclusive breastfeeding practices	28	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Fieldwork (2019)**

The majority of participants report adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices as a result of the EBBC radio campaign (52%). A significant proportion of participants considered adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices (26%), indicating potential readiness for behavior change. A

smaller proportion of participants report no change in behavior (16%), suggesting that the campaign may not have influenced behavior of all participants. Some participants report relapsing from exclusive breastfeeding practices (7%), highlighting the need for ongoing support and reinforcement to sustain behavior change.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The result indicates that majority of participants (64.4%) are exposure to the EBBC radio campaign promoting exclusive breastfeeding. This suggests a relatively high level of penetration of the radio campaign within the study population. The significant proportion of participants who report no exposure (35.6%) highlights potential gaps in campaign reach or effectiveness, which could be further explored through qualitative inquiries. The result also indicates that among participants exposed to the EBBC radio campaign, the majority report listening to the program daily (52.0%) or several times a week (34.0%). This indicates a high level of engagement with the radio campaign among those who have been exposed to it. The relatively lower frequency of listening reported by some participants may suggest variations in program consumption patterns, which could influence the effectiveness of message retention and behavior change. These findings align with existing literature on the effectiveness of radio campaigns in disseminating health information and promoting behavior change (Adebayo et al., 2019; Onyebuchi-Iloh et al., 2020).

The most common content in the EBBC radio campaign programs is information on the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding (52%). Tips for overcoming breastfeeding challenges (38.7%) and the importance of early initiation of breastfeeding (31%) are also frequently featured in the programs. Testimonials from breastfeeding mothers (20.6%) and promotion of breastfeeding-friendly workplaces (16%) are less common but still present in the campaign content. These findings suggest that the radio campaign covers a range of topics related to exclusive breastfeeding, addressing both the benefits and challenges while providing practical advice and support to mothers.

The study also found that the EBBC radio campaign effectively delivered culturally relevant content, with programs broadcasted in local languages and featuring diverse cultural perspectives. This approach resonated well with participants, enhancing accessibility and

understanding of campaign messages. The inclusion of testimonials from breastfeeding mothers and promotion of breastfeeding-friendly workplaces further enriched the campaign content, fostering a supportive environment for exclusive breastfeeding practices. These findings align with the literature emphasizing the importance of culturally tailored interventions in promoting maternal and child health behaviors within diverse communities (Balogun, 2015; Ogbo, 2019). These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions and follow-up strategies to support women in overcoming barriers to behavior change and sustaining positive health behaviors (Victora, 2016).

The result of the study indicates that majority of participants report that the EBBC radio campaign significantly (39%) or moderately (31%) increased their knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. A smaller proportion of participants report a slight increase in knowledge (16%), while some report no change (10.3%) or a decrease in knowledge (5%). The findings further indicate that the EBBC radio campaign has a significant impact on increasing knowledge, shaping attitudes, and improving perceptions regarding exclusive breastfeeding among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. The majority of participants reported increased knowledge about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, positive changes in attitudes towards breastfeeding, and improved perceptions of its importance. These findings align with existing literature on the effectiveness of radio campaigns in disseminating health information and promoting behavior change (Adebayo, 2019; Onyebuchi-Iloh, 2020).

The majority of participants report adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices as a result of the EBBC radio campaign (52%). A significant proportion of participants considered adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices (26%), indicating potential readiness for behavior change. A smaller proportion of participants report no change in behavior (16%), suggesting that the campaign may not have influenced behavior for all participants, some participants report relapsing from exclusive breastfeeding practices (7%), highlighting the need for ongoing support and reinforcement to sustain behavior change.

The results further revealed that the EBBC radio campaign played a crucial role in fostering behavior change and adoption of exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. A significant proportion of participants reported adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices after exposure to the campaign messages, indicating the persuasive

influence of the radio campaign on maternal feeding behaviors. This finding underscores the importance of leveraging mass media platforms, such as radio, to disseminate health information and promote recommended practices, particularly in resource-constrained settings where access to healthcare services may be limited (Victora, 2016; Ogbo, 2019).

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study highlight the significant influence of the EBBC radio campaign on behavior change, adoption, and maintenance of exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. Through targeted messaging and community-based approaches, the radio campaign effectively promoted behavior change, leading to a majority of participants adopting exclusive breastfeeding practices. This underscores the persuasive power of mass media campaigns, particularly radio, in disseminating health information and fostering positive health behaviors among diverse populations. While the study demonstrated the effectiveness of the radio campaign in promoting initial behavior change, it also identified challenges in maintaining exclusive breastfeeding practices over time. Some participants reported relapsing from exclusive breastfeeding, indicating the need for ongoing support and reinforcement to sustain behavior change. This highlights the importance of incorporating long-term support mechanisms into maternal and child health interventions to ensure sustained adherence to recommended practices.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the study recommendations are to further enhance the effectiveness of mass media campaigns, particularly radio campaigns, in promoting exclusive breastfeeding practices among women in the Abakaliki Metropolis. Given the significant influence of the EBBC radio campaign on behavior change and adoption of exclusive breastfeeding practices, it is recommended to sustain and expand such campaigns. Continued investment in radio programming focused on maternal and child health can help reinforce positive behaviors and address persistent challenges in exclusive breastfeeding practices. Develop messaging that not only promotes initial behavior change but also addresses challenges in maintaining exclusive breastfeeding practices over time. Emphasize the importance of ongoing support, community involvement, and access to resources to facilitate sustained adherence to recommended practices.



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