

Individual Motives or Organisational Support? Exclusive Breastfeeding Behaviour Among Women Workers in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Objective – This study aims to measure the knowledge and attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding among women workers in Indonesia as well as their expectation to the company's supports to enable the practice.

Methodology/Technique – This research is cross sectional and was conducted in three manufacturing companies located in West Java, which the percentage of exclusive breastfeeding only reached 35.3% compared to the national percentage which reached 55.7 %. Research was conducted in HF, CI and CMW involving 290 respondents.

Findings – The results showed that respondents do not understand the definition of exclusive breastfeeding. In addition, the main supports expected by women workers to be provided by the company include: longer maternity leave and designated nursery room with sufficient facilities.

Novelty – This research suggests that companies should have a thorough policy and facilities for working mothers to enable them giving exclusive breastfeeding for their babies. As the number of women entering the workforce is steadily increasing, this kind of policy would be a necessary benefit provided by the companies.

Type of Paper: Empirical

Keywords: Exclusive breastfeeding; Women workers; Manufacturing; Theory of Planned Behaviour; Perceived Organizational Support, Indonesia.

JEL Classification: J13, J16, J40.

1. Introduction

The number of women entering the workforce in Indonesia continues to increase from year to year, both in the formal and informal sectors. Currently, women comprise 50.9% (ILO, 2015) of the total workforce in Indonesia, most of them are in young to middle age of 15-24 years old (Indonesia Statistics Office, 2014) who usually have young children. This condition requires the attention of policy makers and corporate management about the supports needed by the women workers, including the support of giving opportunity to provide exclusive breastfeeding for their infants. Data from the Ministry of Health shows that Indonesia has reached 55.7% of exclusive breastfeeding number (Ministry of Health, 2016). However, there is no sufficient data regarding the proportion of women workers giving exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia. Therefore, the study

* Paper Info: Received: February 10, 2017

Accepted: July 17, 2017

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aims to measure the knowledge and attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding among women workers in Indonesia as well as their expectation of the company supports to enable the practice.

For women workers, challenges of exclusive breastfeeding may come from the employment sector. Many women workers do not give exclusive breastfeeding for their infants breastfeed after returning to work due to long working hours, no places for breastfeeding or pumping and no designated breast milk storage (World Health Organization [WHO], 2013). Previous studies show that employment condition has influenced the (dis)continuity of the women workers giving exclusive breastfeeding to their infants (Tsai, 2013; Danso, 2014; Lo, 2003; Jeffrey Hill et al., 2004)).

This research aims to know describe and explain the knowledge and attitudes of the working mothers towards exclusive breastfeeding as well as to explore the organisational supports needed by the women workers to enable them to give exclusive breastfeeding for their infants. This research will examine this phenomenon from two perspectives: from the women workers, themselves and from the organization where they work. Theory of Planned Behaviour is used to examine the behaviour of working mothers in giving breastfeeding, which includes: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, perceived behavioural control, which then shape behavioural intention. On the other hand, Perceived Organization Support is used to examine the organization support towards exclusive breastfeeding.

2. Research Material and Methodology

2.1. Female participation in the Indonesia labour market

In the past three decades, there has been a consistent improvement in women's participation in Indonesia labour market. This is shown by the data of Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) of women that there is a steady increase from year to year. Women in Indonesia today become one of the pillars in supporting the national economy, particularly manufacturing sector, given the figure that the proportion of women workers is around 80 percent of total manufacturing workers (World Bank, 2012). This is supported by the data from the International Labour Organization showed that in the professional sector, the female workforce in Indonesia tends to be dominant (57.2% in August 2014). The highest number of women work in professional area is in women who work as a teacher and care givers.

It is undeniable that alongside with the improvement in women's level of education, especially in urban areas, they now have bigger and wider opportunity to actively participate in the labour market. This opinion is supported by the work of Sulistyaningsih and Rumondang (2005) which suggests that the LFPR of women is affected by increasing education, increasing demand for women workers and increasing overall national productivity.

2.2. Breastfeeding behaviour of women workers

In Indonesia, the increasing number of women in the workforce must be accompanied by policies and practices in the workplace that address the needs of women by concerning equally important role in their family, as a mother. Exclusive breastfeeding for infants aged 0-6 months is one of the rights of a mother, including those who work. Exclusive breastfeeding will provide many positive impacts, especially for the infants/children, which in return, will impact to better health rate of a country.

Exclusive breastfeeding starts from when a baby is born until she reaches the age of 6 months and can be continued until the child reaches two years old. This practice can prevent the child from infections and ensure optimal infant health (WHO, 2013). In addition, a systematic review presented by the WHO states that 3 of 8 studies found exclusive breastfeeding have a positive impact on intellectual development of children in school (WHO, 2007).

Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is used to examine the behaviour of women workers in giving breastfeeding. TPB proposes that a person's behaviour is driven by behavioural intention, which consists of three functions: (1) Attitude toward behaviour, which refers to the degree to which a person has a favourable

or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question; (2) subjective norms, which refers to the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour; and (3) behavioural control, which refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour and it is assumed to reflect past experience as well as anticipated impediments and obstacle (Ajzen, 1991).

2.3. Organizational support for exclusive breastfeeding

Perceived Organisational Support (POS) theory refers to employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). In this research, POS is used to see the degree of the company's support to their employees in terms of giving exclusive breastfeeding.

Supports provided for working women who intend to give breastfeeding in the workplace can be in many forms. Some of them are the company's policy to support them in giving exclusive breastfeeding, which also serves to educate workers about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding; providing designated facilities for breastfeeding or pumping breast milk; providing flexible working time for mothers who breastfeed their children during working hours; providing longer maternity leave (than that regulated in the Employment Act No. 13 Year 2003); providing childcare facilities; providing breast pumps; recruit professional lactation specialist to provide support and learning for nursing mothers (Shealy, Li, Benton- Davis, Grummer-Strawn 2005).

This study uses mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative. While quantitative study aims to provide a description of the knowledge and attitudes toward exclusive breastfeeding, the qualitative study aims to explore the women workers' understanding of exclusive breastfeeding, the factors influencing their attitude and behaviour of giving exclusive breastfeeding and their experience as well as their expectation for organisation support in giving exclusive breastfeeding. The research is conducted in three manufacturing companies in West Java, HF CI, and CMW by involving 290 respondents. Data was collected through a survey by distributing questionnaires to women workers who have babies aged 6 months - 5 years in three manufacturing companies in West Java where women workers are majority. 90 questionnaires were collected from HF, 100 questionnaires were collected from CI and another 100 questionnaires were collected from CMW. In addition, interviews were also conducted to 8 informants from HF, 11 informants from CI and 7 informants from CMW.

3. Results

The majority of the respondents were 31-45 years old (79.4%) and were graduated from high school (91.4%). Most of them have worked at the company for more than six years (83.1%) as operators (79.8%).

The surveys show that many respondents claimed that they gave exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months for their child, but some of them also answered that they gave additional milk/food to their 0-6 month babies. This finding indicates that there are respondents who do not understand the definition of exclusive breastfeeding.

The surveys also show that the respondents have positive attitudes toward exclusive breastfeeding. First, they believe that exclusive breastfeeding would impact to better baby's health as breast milk contains nutrition (73.7%), which will give their child immune from diseases and infections. The respondents also believe that exclusive breastfeeding will make a greater bonding between mother and children (71.6%), which in turn will enhance better psychological development. Furthermore, they also have positive attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding in terms of economic saving as exclusive breastfeeding helps them save the money from buying additional milk which costs around 300-600 thousand Rupiah per month (around USD 25-50 per month) while their monthly income in average is around 5 million Rupiah (around USD 400).

The interviews dig deeper to this phenomenon by exploring the conditions and challenges faced by the informants in giving exclusive breastfeeding. Most informants did not continue giving exclusive breastfeeding after returning to work when their babies were around 1-5 month-old (as the law provides three-month maternity leave: 1,5 month before and 1,5 month after giving birth). The informants stated several reasons why

they stopped giving exclusive breastfeeding. The absence of written company policies has made the informants hesitant to ask for permission to their supervisors to breastfeed or to pump. Even if their supervisors give permission, the time given was not clear which made some of the informants perceived they only had very limited time. Furthermore, not all companies in this research have provided facilities that support exclusive breastfeeding. The informants pumped breast milk in medical clinic or prayer room. However, pumping does not only need a nursing room but also designated refrigerator and washing basin which are still difficult to be found by the informants. Lastly, the informants gave up exclusive breastfeeding because their breast milk was getting lesser when they returned to work. They further stated that this is caused by limited time to pump and work-related stress.

4. Discussion

Manufacturing in Indonesia has been the major sector employing women, particularly those who are in young age who mainly have young children. Therefore, policies at a company's level which address the women's issues are needed, including that of giving opportunity for the women workers to give exclusive breastfeeding for their babies as the implementation of the Exclusive Breastfeeding Act No. 33 of 2012 introduced by the Ministry of Women Empowerment, the Ministry of Manpower, and the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, the policies should be developed to show that they care to the well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2001) of the women workers particularly those who have babies.

The respondents show positive attitudes towards exclusive breastfeeding, which is a good indicator for the intended behaviour. Furthermore, the campaign done mainly by the Ministry of Health, along with the Breastfeeding Act, have served as the subjective norms, which encourage the behaviour. It is then the perceived behavioural control, which would play the critical part in really shaping the behavioural intention: how the women workers perceive the ease of giving exclusive breastfeeding that would make them more confident to perform this behaviour. In this case, the respondents expect that their companies provide policies and interventions, by introducing written policies in order to support breastfeeding/pumping at work as well as provide sufficient work environment and facilities, as shown in the table below.

Table 1. Perceived Organisation Support

Organisation Support	Perceived Organisation Support (%)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A written policy about exclusive breastfeeding	3.7	7.4	10.7	54.7	23.5
Flexible time policy	3.3	7.0	9.5	59.7	20.6
Designated breastfeeding room	1.6	9.1	9.1	63.4	16.9
Designated refrigerator to keep breast milk	1.6	4.1	4.1	67.1	23.0
Sufficient maternity leave	2.9	13.2	5.8	62.1	16.0

5. Conclusion

The respondents in the study have a positive perception of exclusive breastfeeding, that exclusive breastfeeding have a positive impact on their children and for themselves. Respondents also express the expectation of support from the company, by providing facilities and written policies, which support exclusive breastfeeding.

This research suggests that companies should have a thorough policy and facilities for working mothers to enable them giving exclusive breastfeeding for their babies. As the number of women entering the workforce is steadily increasing, this kind of policy would be a necessary benefit provided by the companies. Supports

from supervisors and colleagues are also determinants for the working mothers in giving exclusive breastfeeding and hence, supporting work climate should be created.

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