

## RE-THINKING CHILD HEALTH SECURITY: AN INTROSPECTION OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING PRACTICE IN YONSO AREA COUNCIL

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### ABSTRACT

Ghana has over the years adopted various health measures including exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) with the view of promoting the health security of the child which is a major concern of human security. Interestingly, the EBF concept has been received with a mixed reaction. While some nursing mothers practice EBF, others do not. Against this background, an exploratory study was conducted in the Yonso Area Council, a rural community in the Ashanti Region between June, 2015 and August, 2015, to establish among others, the level of nursing mothers' knowledge on EBF and inhibiting factors to the practice of EBF. Data gathered through interview of 91 nursing mothers revealed that, the knowledge of nursing mothers on EBF and its effects on the health security of the child has been very high mainly due to health education from the Ghana Health Service. However, such high level of knowledge has not translated into full adoption of the concept by all nursing mothers in the study locality due to unemployment, erroneous understanding and inadequate family support. The paper advocates for a more health education and economic reforms to empower the rural poor, especially women, as a means of promoting and sustaining EBF practice and its concomitant child health security in Ghana, especially in the rural setting.

**Keywords:** Yonso Area Council; Child; Human Security; Child Health Security; Exclusive Breastfeeding.