

**Preliminary Findings**

# Maternal experiences & feeding practices in Malaysia during the COVID-19 Pandemic

**Dr Nurul Husna Mohd Shukri**

Dept. of Nutrition, Fac of Medicine & Health Sciences,  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

**Co-researchers:**

**Dr Gan WY<sup>1</sup>, Dr Nurzalinda Z<sup>1</sup>, Ms Nuruljannah MN<sup>1</sup>, Dr Maiza Tusimin<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Dept of Nutrition, FMHS, Universiti Putra Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Prince Court Medical Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



# Why focusing on mothers & infants?



## Postpartum period

Postpartum period is a **sensitive & critical period**



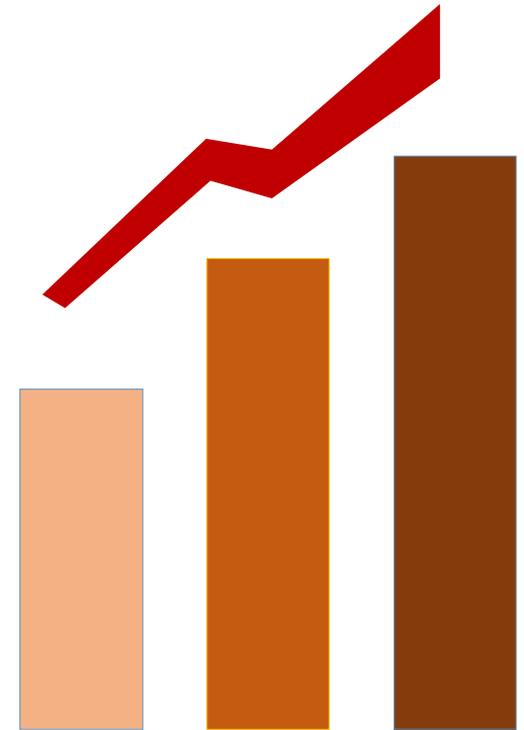
## Rate of psychological distress

Expected to increase due to physical & social isolation, changes in health & economic burden

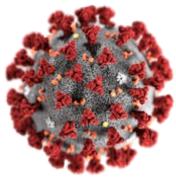


## Postnatal mental illness

Reduced mother-infant bonding, decreased odds of BF & delays in emotional development of infants.



**Distress symptoms increased**



# Impact of COVID19 ?

Restriction movements, lockdown & strict SOP - rapid change in life & support system

## Malaysian Adults

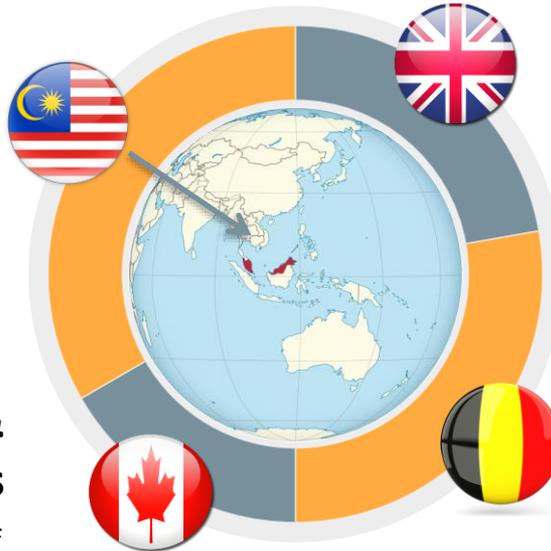
- Younger adults reported worse mental health: Insomnia, anxiety & distress
  - Women's burdens (in Asia) are escalating & worsening.

*Dai, Zhang et al., 2020 & McLaren et al., 2020*

## Canada Pregnant Mums & Mums of 1-year infants

- Increase in self-reported levels of depression & anxiety
- Reductions in social & physical activity

*Davenport et al., 2020*



## UK Mothers with infants

- Lack of face-to-face support & reduced practical & emotional support.
- Mostly feeling down, lonely, worried, irritable
- Positive: More time to focus on baby as delayed return to work

*Vazquez-Vazquez et al., 2020  
Dib et al., 2020  
Brown & Shenker, 2020*

## Belgium pregnant & BF mothers

- An increased likelihood of depressive symptoms & anxiety
- 1 in 2 experienced depressive or anxious symptoms

*Ceulemans, Hompes, & Foulon, 2020*

# COVID-19 Mom-Baby Study Malaysia

How is the **impact** of pandemic on mother-infant experiences as well as infant feeding practices?



To ascertain differences in **maternal-infant experiences** (prior MCO vs during MCO)

**Research Question**

**Study AIM**

**Objective**



To investigate the COVID-19 impact on maternal emotion & experiences (delivery and postnatal experiences of mother-baby dyads).



# Mom-Baby COVID-19 Study : Methodology

## CALLING ALL MOTHERS IN MALAYSIA

Special for Mothers with babies under 18 months



### JOIN AN 'ONLINE' SURVEY

To investigate how our mothers are doing in facing this challenging Covid-19 pandemic.



### BENEFITS

To understand the mothers' challenges & emotion, where future support and assistance can be improved!



### JOIN & SHARE!

Join our survey at: <https://forms.gle/r9jPiaaJjUJcwkeBA>

Please **share** with other moms, thank you!

Any questions please contact our researchers (Ms Jannah) at [2013moms@gmail.com](mailto:2013moms@gmail.com)

Kajian ini telah mendapat kelulusan Jawatankuasa Etika Penyelidikan Melibatkan Manusia UPM.

Respondents  
**1053 mothers**

Data analysis  
**July to 1st Oct 2020**

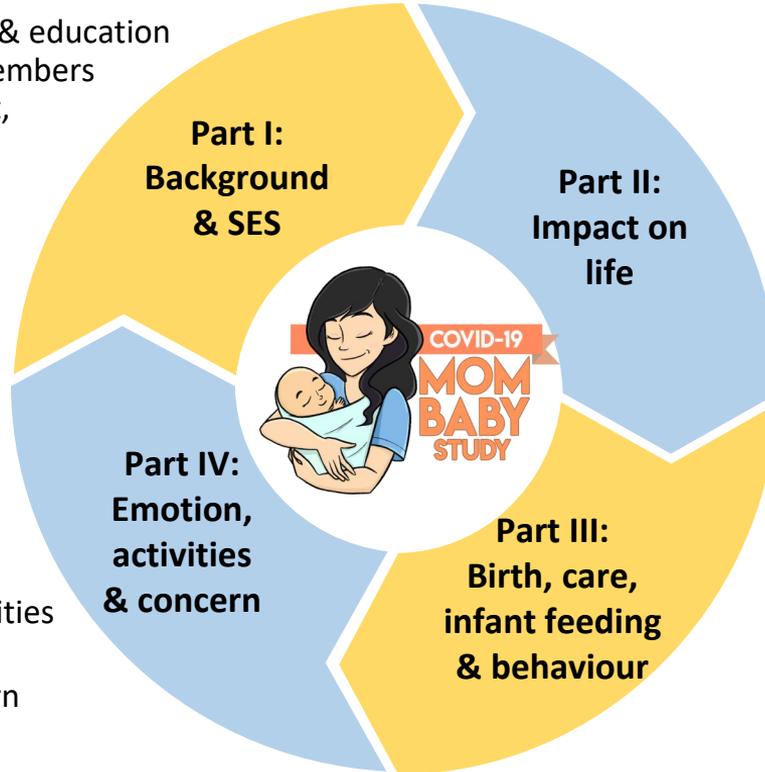
Medium  
**Google form**



# Online survey content: COVID-19 Mom-Baby Study



- Age, ethnicity, income & education
- Household & family members
- Infant sex, birth weight, gestational age at birth



- Household work, finance & health
- Symptoms of COVID-19
- Household ability on financial
- Employment status

- Mother's mood
- Changes in activities
- Maternity care
- Maternal concern

- Neonatal experience at birth
- Sources of information & feeding support
- Changes in feeding practices
- Access to childcare support
- Infant behaviour & appetite



# Preliminary findings (n=1053)

## Birth before vs during pandemic

Mothers gave birth  
before MCO (B-MCO)  
**n=720 (67.8%)**

Mothers gave birth  
during MCO (D-MCO)  
**n=333 (31.1%)**

# Summary & Recommendations



## Impact on household ability

A higher proportion of mothers DMCO experiencing moderate to high impact on household and financial ability



## Impact on mothers

New norm of life has affects mother's experiences both during delivery & after birth, which could influence maternal distress.



## Impact on support system

Mothers D-MCO experiencing less support at birth & need more help in practical aspects in breastfeeding

Improving BF support, especially 'face-to-face' on practical latching at birth

The effectiveness of online contact is uncertain, esp on practical aspects, hence requires further evaluation.

Suggest to screen maternal mental health & strategies prevention.  
This including intervention in coping method for mothers, particularly during the pandemic.

**Limitations:** Cross-sectional studies, need a more diverse population & not formally assess/diagnose depression or anxiety.

☺ *THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION* ☺  
*THANK YOU TO MOMS WHO JOINED THE STUDY!*  
*THANK YOU FOR SHARING THE SURVEY LINK*  
*PLEASE KEEP SHARING & PLEASE FOLLOW US!*  
*TAKE CARE & BE KIND*

*FROM US: Dr Nurul Husna, Dr Gan WY, Dr Nurzalinda, Dr Maiza, Ms Jannah*



Fb account: Moms Study  
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