

FACTORS INHIBITING MOTHERS IN PROVIDING EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING TO INFANTS AT PMB NURLELA LUBUK PAKAM SUBDISTRICT DELI SERDANG REGENCY IN 2024

Marliani¹, Mia Anggraini², Imran Saputra Surbakti³, Nila Astria⁴, Lusiatusun⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} STIKes Mitra Husada Medan

<mailto:marlianidady@gmail.com>

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ABSTRACT

Background: Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life is recommended by WHO and UNICEF to ensure optimal infant growth and development. However, exclusive breastfeeding coverage in Indonesia, including Deli Serdang Regency, remains low. Several factors can hinder exclusive breastfeeding, including maternal knowledge, occupation, and the role of healthcare workers. **Objective:** To determine the factors inhibiting exclusive breastfeeding among mothers with infants at PMB Nurlela, Lubuk Pakam Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024. **Methods:** This study used a cross-sectional design with a quantitative approach. The sample consisted of 30 mothers with infants aged 0–12 months who did not exclusively breastfeed. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using univariate analysis to describe the frequency distribution of each variable. **Results:** The majority of respondents were aged 20–35 years (53.3%), had a senior high school education (46.7%), and worked as housewives (43.4%). Most respondents had a moderate level of knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding (43.3%), rated the role of healthcare workers as good (83.3%), and did not exclusively breastfeed (66.7%). Statistical tests showed that maternal knowledge ($p = 0.006$), occupation ($p = 0.003$), and the role of healthcare workers ($p = 0.006$) were associated with exclusive breastfeeding practices. **Conclusion:** Maternal knowledge, occupation, and the role of healthcare workers are significant factors inhibiting exclusive breastfeeding at PMB Nurlela. Efforts to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates should focus on continuous education, workplace support for breastfeeding mothers, and optimizing the role of healthcare workers.

Keywords: Exclusive Breastfeeding, Maternal Knowledge, Occupation, Healthcare Workers' Role

PENDAHULUAN

Breast milk (ASI) is the most complete and optimal nutrition for infants. It is a living, dynamic fluid containing a variety of nutrients tailored to the baby's needs and is natural rather than synthetic, making it safe and fully beneficial. A mother's responsibility after giving birth is to breastfeed her baby. From the beginning, mothers should learn to breastfeed (Rina Werdayanti, 2015).

Breast milk contains lactoferrin, which binds iron, preventing its loss in the intestines. It also has protective substances against several diseases. According to Rulina Suradi et al. (2010), exclusive breastfeeding for at least the first six months is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, and the Indonesian Pediatric Society (IDAI). Exclusive breastfeeding means the baby receives only breast milk without any additional food or drink, except for prescribed medicine if necessary.

The benefits of breast milk for the baby include fulfilling nutritional needs, improving immunity, enhancing intelligence, and strengthening mother–infant bonding. It protects against allergies, contains fatty acids essential for brain development, and supports healthy jaw formation. For mothers, breastfeeding reduces postpartum bleeding, lowers anemia risk, delays pregnancy, aids uterine involution, reduces breast cancer risk, and is economical and practical.

However, some mothers believe breastfeeding permanently changes breast shape, discouraging them from exclusive breastfeeding. Advertising of formula milk also

influences mothers to substitute breast milk. Limited knowledge of the benefits and purposes of exclusive breastfeeding is another barrier (Eni Purwanti, 2016).

To reduce infant morbidity and mortality, UNICEF and WHO recommend exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months, continued up to two years, with early initiation within the first hour after birth and breastfeeding on demand (WHO, 2018).

Despite these recommendations, exclusive breastfeeding coverage remains low. The 2017 Indonesia Demographic and Health Survey (IDHS) reported 52% coverage for infants under six months. In Deli Serdang, based on the 2020 Provincial Health Office profile, only 33.85% of infants under six months were exclusively breastfed. At PMB Nurlela, only 27.8% of infants received exclusive breastfeeding.

Given these conditions, this study aims to investigate the factors inhibiting exclusive breastfeeding among mothers at PMB Nurlela, Lubuk Pakam Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024.

METODE PENELITIAN

This quantitative study used a descriptive cross-sectional design. The research was conducted at PMB Nurlela, Lubuk Pakam Subdistrict, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024. The sample consisted of 30 mothers with infants aged 0–12 months who did not exclusively breastfeed. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed using univariate analysis.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Research Results

Respondent CharacteristicsKarakteristik Responden

The research, entitled "Factors Inhibiting Mothers in Exclusive Breastfeeding at the Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024," involved a sample of 30 individuals. The distribution of respondents based on their characteristics is shown in the following table:

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics Distribution at the Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

No.	Data Characteristics	Data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Age	< 20 year	5	16,7
		20-35 year	16	53,3
		>35 year	9	30,0
2	Education	Elementary School	2	6,6
		Middle School	8	26,7
		High School	14	46,7
		College	6	20,0
3	Work	Housewife	13	43,4
		Farmer	7	23,3
		Self-Employed	6	20,0
		PNS	4	13,3
		Total	30	100

Based on the table above, it can be seen that of the 30 respondents, the majority of respondents are aged 20-35 years, as many as 16 people (53.3%), respondents with age >35 years are 9 people (30.0%), while those aged <20 years are 5 people (16.6%).

Based on education, the majority of respondents have high school education as many as 14 people (46.7%), those with junior high school education as many as 8 people (26.7%), those with college education as many as 6 people (20.0%), while those with elementary school education as many as 2 people (6.6%). Based on occupation, the majority of respondents have housewife jobs as many as 13 people (43.4%), self-employed as many as 6 people (20.0%), have farmer jobs as many as 7 people (23.3%), while jobs as civil servants as many as 4 people (13.3%).

Univariate Analysis

Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Knowledge in the Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Knowledge in the Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

No	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Good	8	26.7
2	Sufficient	13	43.3
3	Less	9	30,0
Total		30	100

Based on table 4.2, it can be seen that the majority of respondents had sufficient knowledge, as many as 13 people (43.9%), 8 people (26.7%) were in the good knowledge category, while 9 people (30.0%) had insufficient knowledge.

Frequency Distribution of Health Worker Roles in Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Health Worker Roles in Nurlela PMB, Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

No	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	25	83.3
2	No	5	16.7
Total		30	100

Berdasarkan tabel diatas dapat dilihat bahwa mayoritas peranan petugas kesehatan baik yaitu sebanyak 25 orang (83,3%) dan minoritas dengan peranan petugas Kesehatan tidak baik sebanyak 5 orang (16,7%)

Distribution of the frequency of exclusive breastfeeding at the Nurlela Childcare Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

Table 4 : Distribution of the frequency of exclusive breastfeeding at the Nurlela Childcare Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

No	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1	Awarded	10	33.3

No	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
2	Not Awarded	20	66.7
	Total	30	100

Based on the table above, it is known that the majority of respondents did not provide exclusive breastfeeding, as many as 20 people (66.7%), while those who provided exclusive breastfeeding were 10 people (33.3%).

DISCUSSION

Maternal Knowledge as a Barrier to Exclusive Breastfeeding

The results of a study examining maternal knowledge as a barrier to exclusive breastfeeding at the Nurlela Community Empowerment Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024 indicated that maternal knowledge was a barrier to exclusive breastfeeding. The majority of respondents (43.3%) had sufficient knowledge, with a P value of 0.006 ($P < 0.05$).

Mothers' lack of knowledge about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding included not knowing that breast milk can boost a baby's immune system, increase intelligence, strengthen the bond between mother and child, protect babies from allergies, and prevent breast cancer. This lack of knowledge was also influenced by cultural factors, including infrequent visits to community health centers (Puskesmas) and a lack of information provided by health workers about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for both mother and baby. Visits to the Integrated Health Post (Posyandu) significantly influence exclusive breastfeeding. This study found that some mothers rarely visit the Posyandu and do not receive adequate health education and counseling on exclusive breastfeeding, particularly the benefits. Posyandu visits should be conducted regularly until the baby is one year old. Good nutrition during breastfeeding significantly impacts the health of both mother and baby. It is important to note that nutritional needs during breastfeeding, such as calcium, iron, and folic acid, increase. Mothers should also pay attention to breast care during breastfeeding, which is crucial to maintaining the baby's hygiene and health. The husband's support and role during breastfeeding are key factors in supporting mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding to their babies.

During Posyandu visits, mothers gain knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for both mother and baby. Furthermore, mothers can obtain information and provide advice to health workers, family, neighbors, and friends about the nutritional needs during breastfeeding, ensuring that both mother and baby's nutritional needs are met. Of the 22 respondents (39.8%), 34 respondents had good knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and its benefits for mothers and babies. Most mothers argued that formula milk can replace breast milk, thereby ensuring the baby's nutritional needs are met.

Public knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding is still very limited. Mothers often give solid foods to babies just a few days or weeks old, such as mashed rice or bananas. They argue that milk production is low or low, and they discard colostrum and replace it with honey, sugar, water, or other foods. Colostrum contains many nutrients that are essential for babies (Ambarwati, 2008).

This lack of knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding is also influenced by the promotion of food products and formula milk. These advertisements encourage mothers to replace exclusive breastfeeding with formula milk to meet their baby's nutritional needs. Furthermore, advances in technology and sophisticated

communication, along with the intense promotion of formula milk as a breast milk substitute, ultimately lead to the choice of formula milk. The low level of understanding about the importance of breast milk during the first 6 months of a baby's life is due to the lack of information and knowledge that mothers have about the nutrition and benefits contained in breast milk.

Mother's Occupation as a Barrier to Exclusive Breastfeeding

The results of a study of mothers' knowledge of factors hindering exclusive breastfeeding at the Nurlela Childcare Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024 indicated that mother's occupation was a factor hindering exclusive breastfeeding. The majority of mothers (13 women) were housewives (43.4%), with a P value of 0.003 (P 0.04). The large amount of time mothers spend outside of work, such as farming, civil servants, contract workers, and private employees, prevents mothers from exclusively breastfeeding their babies and provides formula. Furthermore, the distance between the workplace and home is also a factor preventing mothers from exclusively breastfeeding. Work is an activity or activity a person does to earn income to meet their living needs. The work a mother does at home, at work, in the office, and in the fields always presents a challenge to exclusively breastfeeding her baby. Work causes mothers to seek shortcuts by providing formula milk to meet their baby's nutritional needs. This is a valid reason and is very detrimental to the baby's growth.

The Role of Health Workers as a Factor Inhibiting Mothers in Exclusive Breastfeeding in 2024

The results of this study examined mothers' knowledge of factors inhibiting mothers from exclusively breastfeeding at the Nurlela Infant and Child Health Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024. The results of this study indicate that the role of health workers is one of the factors inhibiting mothers from exclusively breastfeeding their babies. The majority (83.3%) played a role in the role of health workers, with a P value of 0.006 (P < 0.5).

The inactive role of health workers in providing information and counseling about exclusive breastfeeding has left many mothers unaware of its benefits, such as preventing breast cancer, enhancing the bond between mother and baby, and boosting the baby's immune system.

Health workers, including doctors, midwives, and nurses, also play a role in promoting exclusive breastfeeding. This aligns with the role and authority of midwives, as outlined in the decree of the Minister of Health of the Republic of Indonesia. The decree mandates that all health workers provide counseling on exclusive breastfeeding from the time of prenatal care. The key to successful breastfeeding is a strong desire within the mother to breastfeed her baby. This desire can arise from within herself or from her environment. Therefore, psychologically, a mother supported by her husband or family will be more motivated, as this support is crucial for a mother to provide exclusive breastfeeding to her baby (Rina Werdayanti, 2015).

Exclusive breastfeeding is the provision of only breast milk for six months without additional fluids such as formula, orange juice, honey, water, tea, or plain water, or without other solid foods such as bananas, milk porridge, biscuits, or rice porridge. For some mothers, breastfeeding is a natural and instinctive act, as they believe it doesn't require learning. Breast milk is the best food for babies, because it contains the

most appropriate nutrients for the needs of babies who are in the growth and development stage, especially exclusively for 6 months. The survival of babies who are given breast milk for 6 months is higher compared to babies who do not get breast milk exclusively. The cumulative probability of survival of babies according to the duration of breastfeeding is giving breast milk for 0 months, survival is 71%, giving breast milk for 1-2 months is 91%, 3 months is 94%, 4 months is 95%, 5 months is 96%, and 6 months or more is 99% (Rina Werdiyanti, 2015)

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the inhibiting factors for mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding to infants at the Nurlela Infant and Child Health Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024, it can be concluded that:

1. Knowledge is a factor inhibiting mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding to infants at the Nurlela Infant and Child Health Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024, with a P value of 0.006 ($P < 0.05$).
2. Occupation is a factor inhibiting mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding to infants at the Nurlela Infant and Child Health Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024, with a P value of 0.003 ($P < 0.04$).
3. The role of health workers is a factor inhibiting mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding to infants at the Nurlela Infant and Child Health Center (PMB) in Lubuk Pakam District, Deli Serdang Regency in 2024, with a P value of 0.006 ($P < 0.05$)

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