

# Relationship of Knowledge of Breastfeeding Mothers with Breast Milk in Perlis Village, Langkat Regency

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**Abstract.** Breastfeeding is the ideal way of giving food to babies aged 0-6 months. Breast milk has a balanced composition that is good for growth and meets the nutritional demands of newborns. This study aimed to evaluate the association between breastfeeding moms' knowledge about breastfeeding and breastfeeding. This study is a cross-sectional observational analytic study. Breastfeeding moms with kids aged 4 to 12 months comprised the study's sample. Based on the study results, it was found that breastfeeding mothers had good knowledge of breastfeeding by 45.7%, exclusive breastfeeding by 68.6%, and mothers who had low education and gave exclusive breastfeeding by 60.8%. There was a significant association between a mother's nursing knowledge and breastfeeding and breastfeeding (sig. < 0.05). Breastfeeding mothers have various educational backgrounds and different levels of knowledge, but the majority practice exclusive breastfeeding.

**Keywords:** knowledge about breastfeeding; breastfeeding; breastfeeding mothers

## 1 Introduction

Nutrients have a significant role in the continuity of children's growth, development, and health. The best source of nutrients for babies in their first life is breast milk (ASI). Breast milk is the single greatest nourishment for newborns since it provides the entire nutritional content and is perfect for the growth and development of a baby. The amount of breast milk consumed, including energy and other nutrients in breast milk, will determine the growth and development of the baby. (Sugiarti, 2011)

In children, breastfeeding in infants is closely related to under nutrition and over nutrition (obese). Based on the 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) results, 17.7% of children under five experienced severe malnutrition and undernourishment, 30.8% of toddlers were concise and short, 10.2% of toddlers were toddlers skinny and thin, and 8% of toddlers were obese (RI, 2007). To reduce child morbidity and mortality, Breastfeeding for at least six months is recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (Organization, 2003).

According to Riskesdas statistics from 2018, the proportion of infants aged 0-5 months who are exclusively breastfed in Indonesia is 37%. <sup>2</sup> This number is still lower than the WHO objective, which requires breastfeeding coverage of up to 50 percent, which shows that very few babies are getting exclusive breastfeeding. Although breastfeeding and breastfeeding are very beneficial, it is estimated that 85% of mothers do not give breast milk optimally. It appears that exclusive breastfeeding, as recommended by WHO (2002), is still rarely practiced by mothers

in various countries due to various factors, such as social, cultural, economic, and political (Kristiyanasari, 2009).

Langkat Regency is one of 33 regencies/cities in North Sumatra Province with exclusive breastfeeding coverage, which is still low at 20.5 percent, below the 2018 Strategic Plan target of 37.8 percent and North Sumatra Province's achievement of 40.7%. Perlis Village is one of the Langkat Regency communities having a 24 percent exclusive breastfeeding rate and a high stunting rate of 2.6% (Langkat, 2018).

Mother's sociocultural factors influence breastfeeding practices, including age, education, knowledge, attitudes, and mother's occupation (Widiyanto, 2012), (Baskoro, 2008). If the mother's practice of breastfeeding is not good, it can cause problems in breastfeeding patterns.

## 2 Method

This was an observational analytic cross-sectional research. The population consists entirely of nursing moms who have babies aged 4-12 months who are breastfed, totaling 35 people. The variables in this study were the independent variable, the independent variable is the mother's nursing knowledge, and the dependent variable is, breastfeeding. Interviews, questionnaires, and observations were used to assess the mother's knowledge of breastfeeding and breastfeeding practices. Using the Spearman Rank, find the link between the independent and dependent variables.

## 3 Result and Discussion

Perlis Village is one of the villages in Brandan Barat District, Langkat Regency. This village is located on the West coast of Pangkalan Brandan is 3 km from the capital of the West Brandan sub-district. The population of Perlis Village is around 5,270 people with 1,518 families. The area of Perlis Village is 301.70 Ha, with a population density of 862.52 people/km<sup>2</sup>. Part of the area of Perlis Village is water, so many people's houses are above the water surface (houses on stilts) (Langkat, 2018).

### 3.1 Characteristics of Mothers

The distribution of age and education of breastfeeding mothers is presented in table 1, It reveals that the majority of breastfeeding women (52.4 percent) are between the ages of 20 and 30, and 65.7 percent of nursing mothers have a poor level of education.

**Table 1.** Frequency Distribution of Age and Education of Breastfeeding Mothers in Perlis Langkat Village

No.	Mother's Characteristics	n	%
1	Age		
	< 20 years	4	11.4
	20 – 30	18	51.4
	31 – 40	13	37.2
	Total	35	100

2	Education		
	Low	23	65.7
	High	12	34.3
	Total	35	100

### 3.2 Breastfeeding Mother's Knowledge

Distribution of knowledge breastfeeding mothers are presented in table 2 which shows that Breastfeeding moms' knowledge of breastfeeding is 45.7 percent, with 45.7 percent having strong knowledge.

**Table 2.** Frequency Distribution of Knowledge of Breastfeeding Mothers in Perlis Langkat Village

Knowledge	n	%
Good	16	45.7
Enough	10	28.6
Less	9	25.7
Total	35	100

### 3.3 Breastfeeding

The distribution of breastfeeding to infants aged 4-12 months is presented in table 3 which showed that the vast majority of women nursed their children exclusively, which was 68.6%.

**Table 3.** Distribution of the Frequency of Breastfeeding to Infants Age 4 – 12 Months in Perlis Langkat Village

Breastfeeding	n	%
Exclusive	24	68.6
Not exclusive	11	31.4
Total	35	100

### 3.4 Relationship of Mother's Knowledge with Breastfeeding

The relationship of knowledge of breastfeeding mothers based on nursing Table 4 reveals an essential link between breastfeeding moms' knowledge and breastfeeding for infants aged 4-12 months ( $p < 0.05$ ). 87.5 percent of mothers who exclusively breastfeed have adequate breastfeeding expertise. Following this, mothers who lack knowledge mostly do not give exclusive breastfeeding, 77.8%.

Based on the Spearman Rank non-parametric correlation test table, it is known that the correlation between the knowledge variable and breastfeeding shows a negative correlation number of -0.518, which indicates that breastfeeding depends on knowledge about breastfeeding. The correlation coefficient is quite strong between knowledge about breastfeeding and breastfeeding.

Knowledge of cognition is an essential domain in molding one's behaviors. Many research has demonstrated that knowledge-based conduct lasts longer than non-knowledge-based behavior (Notoatmodjo, 2012). The results of this study are in line with research conducted by (Novitasari et al., 2019) and (Risnayanti et al., 2018), demonstrating that moms with more knowledge are more likely to provide exclusive breastfeeding, and mothers with less knowledge are less likely to breastfeed exclusive. (Novitasari et al., 2019), (Risnayanti et al., 2018).

Education, information gained through social media, individual experience, and the surrounding environment are all factors that impact a person's knowledge, and age (Budiman, 2013). Research conducted by (Polit & Beck, 2008) Exclusive breastfeeding is influenced by education, employment, economic variables, and marital status in rural Ghana (Polit & Beck, 2008). Education is a tool for obtaining information in order to improve the quality of one's life (Firmansyah, 2012). Women who completed high school were 70% more likely to breastfeed than those who did not, and mothers who completed college were four times more likely to breastfeed than mothers who completed high school. The greater the degree of education, the greater the amount of knowledge received. This is also consistent with Nukepza et al. (2018)'s research in Ghana, which found that the frequent practice of exclusive breastfeeding is driven by a lack of information about exclusive breastfeeding. The majority of moms do not receive information regarding exclusive breastfeeding from their health care providers. (Nukpezah et al., 2018).

The findings of this study differ from those of prior studies in that 60.8 percent of moms with low levels of education exclusively breastfeed their newborns. This is possible because of the mother's individual experience, namely that the breastfed baby is not the first child, so the success of breastfeeding in the previous child becomes the motivation for the mother to give exclusive breastfeeding to the next child. In addition, there is support from the family, environment, and health workers to provide exclusive breastfeeding.

## 4 Conclusion

Breastfeeding mothers have various educational backgrounds and different levels of knowledge, but the majority practice exclusive breastfeeding. For infants aged 4 to 12 months, there is a substantial association between a mother's nursing expertise and exclusive breastfeeding (sig. <0.05). This aspect of knowledge includes the benefits of giving colostrum and exclusive breastfeeding and the importance of breastfeeding to support optimal growth.

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