



The Relationship Between Mother's Level of Knowledge and Attitude Towards Exclusive Breastfeeding

^KFebri Adriati¹, Rizka Dita Hidayati²

¹D III Midwifery Study Program, STIKes Panca Bhakti Lampung

²S1 Midwifery Study Program, STIKes Panca Bhakti Lampung

Email Corepondence author (^K): febri@pancabhakti.ac.id

ABSTRACT

In Indonesia, the percentage of mothers providing exclusive breastfeeding is 69.7%. This figure has surpassed the national target of 45% in the performance report of the Ministry of Health for 2020–2021. However, it is still considered a standard figure compared to the Ministry of Health's strategic plan target for the 2020–2024 period, which is 69%. The benefits of exclusive breastfeeding can protect infants from gastrointestinal infections, which can lead to severe malnutrition, one of which is stunting. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between mothers' knowledge and attitudes toward exclusive breastfeeding at Karisma Maternity Clinic, Panjang, Bandar Lampung. This study is an analytical survey with a cross-sectional study design, conducted at Karisma Maternity Clinic, Panjang, Bandar Lampung, in September 2024. The results of this study indicate a relationship between mothers' knowledge and attitudes and the provision of exclusive breastfeeding at Karisma Clinic, Panjang, Bandar Lampung.

Keywords: Knowledge; Exclusive Breastfeeding; Attitude

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INTRODUCTION

Breast milk contains essential nutrients vital for an infant's health, growth, and development. The World Health Organization ¹ (WHO) recommends that mothers worldwide provide exclusive breastfeeding to infants for the first six months to achieve optimal growth, development, and health. This means no other food or fluids, including water, are given except for breast milk ².

In Indonesia, the rate of mothers providing exclusive breastfeeding is 69.7%. This figure exceeds the national target of 45% as reported in the Ministry of Health's 2020–2021 performance report. However, it is still considered standard compared to the Ministry of Health's strategic plan target for the 2020–2024 period, set at 69%. Overall, 20 provinces in Indonesia have exclusive breastfeeding rates below the strategic plan's target ³. Globally, around 40% of infants are exclusively breastfed, a figure expected to rise to 50% by 2025. However, this is still far from the global target of 100% recommended by UNICEF. According to a study conducted in Ghana, the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding for infants under six months peaked in 2008 at 62.8% and decreased to 42.9% in 2017 ⁴. In the last four surveys, the proportion of infants aged 6 to 11 months receiving age-appropriate breastfeeding remained stable, ranging from 79.3% in 2008 to 81.1% in 2017. Age-appropriate breastfeeding among children aged 12 to 23 months dropped from 77.8% in 2003 to 61.2% in 2017. Conversely, a study in Ethiopia found that 47% of infants received exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months, and 81.8% were breastfed within one hour of birth ⁵.

The benefits of exclusive breastfeeding include protecting infants from gastrointestinal infections, which can lead to severe malnutrition and contribute to stunting ⁶. Stunting is irreversible and results from inadequate nutrition and recurrent infections during the first 1,000 days of a child's life ⁷. Stunting before age two predicts poorer cognitive and educational outcomes in childhood and adolescence. It has immediate and long-term consequences, including increased morbidity and mortality, negative impacts on child development and adult health, and contributes to the cycle of malnutrition, hampering economic development ⁸.

Stunting is a global health problem and affected more than one child under five years old in 2020. This number continues to grow substantially due to limited access to nutrition, diet, and essential nutrition services ⁹. Children under five are the most vulnerable to stunting, with over half of stunted children under five globally (about 55%) coming from Asian countries. According to the WHO, Indonesia has the third-highest prevalence of stunting in Southeast Asia ¹⁰.

The success of exclusive breastfeeding implementation is influenced by various factors, including maternal employment status, knowledge about breastfeeding, childbirth methods, parity, perceptions of insufficient breastfeeding, attitudes towards breastfeeding, breastfeeding self-efficacy, and intentions ¹¹.

To support the successful implementation of exclusive breastfeeding, the researcher is interested in studying the relationship between mothers' knowledge and attitudes toward exclusive breastfeeding at the Karisma Maternity Clinic in Panjang, Bandar Lampung.

METHOD

This research uses an analytical survey with a cross-sectional study design. The research was conducted at the Karisma Maternity Clinic in Panjang, Bandar Lampung, in September 2024. The population used in this study consisted of mothers with children aged 6 to 24 months at the Karisma Maternity Clinic in Panjang, Bandar Lampung, totaling 33 mothers. The sample in this study employed the total population, amounting to 33 mothers with children aged 6 to 24 months. Data collection was carried out using questionnaires for mothers with children aged 6 to 24 months at the Karisma Maternity Clinic in Panjang. The data analysis in this study used bivariate analysis with the Chi-Square statistical test at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

RESULTS

Table 1. The Relationship between Mother’s Knowledge Level and Exclusive Breastfeeding

Knowledge Level	Exclusive Breastfeeding				Total		P-Value
	Yes		No				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Sufficient	25	75,8	3	9,1	28	84,9	0,000
Insufficient	0	0	5	15,1	5	15,1	
Total	25	75,8	8	24,2	33	100	

The table of the relationship between knowledge level and exclusive breastfeeding indicates that among 33 mothers with children aged 6–24 months, 25 mothers (75.8%) provided exclusive breastfeeding, while 8 mothers (24.2%) did not. The majority of the 33 mothers, specifically 25 mothers (75.8%), who provided exclusive breastfeeding had sufficient knowledge, whereas 5 mothers (15.1%) who did not provide exclusive breastfeeding had insufficient knowledge. Using the Chi-Square statistical test, a P-Value of 0.000 was obtained, so $p < \alpha$ (0.005), which means H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating a relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding.

Table 2. The Relationship between Mother’s Attitude and Exclusive Breastfeeding

Attitude	Exclusive Breastfeeding				Total	P-Value
	Yes		No			
	n	%	n	%		
Sufficient	25	75,8	6	18,2	31	94
Insufficient	0	0	2	6	2	6
Total	25	75,8	8	24,2	33	100

DISCUSSION

The Relationship Between Mothers' Knowledge Level and Exclusive Breastfeeding

The results of this study show that among 33 mothers with children aged 6–24 months, 25 mothers (75.8%) provided exclusive breastfeeding, while 8 mothers (24.2%) did not. The majority of these 33 mothers, specifically 25 mothers (75.8%) who provided exclusive breastfeeding, had sufficient knowledge, whereas 5 mothers (15.1%) who did not provide exclusive breastfeeding had insufficient knowledge.

Using the Chi-Square statistical test, a P-Value of 0.000 was obtained, so $p < \alpha$ (0.005), which means H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating a relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding. This shows that knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding influences the practice of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers. The better the mother's knowledge level, the more likely she is to practice exclusive breastfeeding.

The findings on the relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding align with research conducted by Irianto in 2022, which stated a significant relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding ($p = 0.047$)¹². Sihite (2024) found that there was a relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding at the Pratama Murni Clinic in Sibuluan. A person can acquire knowledge from various experiences and sources, including electronic and print media. Frequent interactions with others, friends, or healthcare workers can expand their knowledge. High knowledge levels among respondents impact exclusive breastfeeding practices¹³.

The Relationship Between Mothers' Attitude and Exclusive Breastfeeding

The results of this study indicate that among 33 mothers with children aged 6–24 months, 25 mothers (75.8%) provided exclusive breastfeeding, while 8 mothers (24.2%) did not. Of these 33 mothers, 25 (75.8%) with a sufficient attitude provided exclusive breastfeeding, while 2 mothers (6%) with an insufficient attitude did not. Using the Chi-Square statistical test, a P-Value of 0.010 was obtained, so $p < \alpha$ (0.005), which means H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating a relationship between mothers' attitude and exclusive breastfeeding. This shows that the mother’s attitude affects

exclusive breastfeeding. The better the mother's attitude, the more likely she is to practice exclusive breastfeeding.

The findings on the relationship between mothers' attitudes and exclusive breastfeeding align with research conducted by Yunus & Katili in 2024, which found a significant relationship between mothers' attitudes toward exclusive breastfeeding¹⁴. Behavior is a determining factor in whether a mother is prepared to provide exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers with a competent attitude toward exclusive breastfeeding tend to act more consistently¹⁵.

Moreover, Hermaxplained that there is a relationship between mothers' attitudes and exclusive breastfeeding, as it is a factor determining willingness or readiness to provide exclusive breastfeeding. If the mother has a strong attitude towards exclusive breastfeeding, her behavior becomes more consistent in providing exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers who, from the start, intend to provide only breast milk to their infants will make various efforts to ensure the success of exclusive breastfeeding¹⁶.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that a P-Value of 0.000 was obtained, so $p < \alpha$ (0.005), which means H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating a relationship between mothers' knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding. Additionally, a P-Value of 0.010 was obtained, so $p < \alpha$ (0.005), which means H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating a relationship between mothers' attitude and exclusive breastfeeding.

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