

Health Counseling about Exclusive Breastfeeding to Improve Breastfeeding Success and Improve Infant Health Level

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ABSTRACT

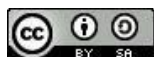
One of the main causes of low exclusive breastfeeding is the lack of knowledge of mothers about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding. Many mothers do not fully understand the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and prefer to give formula milk, even though exclusive breastfeeding is the best choice for babies. Not a few mothers also find it difficult to provide exclusive breastfeeding, either because of medical problems, work, or ignorance about the right way to breastfeed. The aim of this community service is to optimize breastfeeding knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding to increase the success of breastfeeding and improve the baby's health status. This activity was carried out by providing counseling on exclusive breastfeeding by providing a Pre-Test before being given counseling and a post-test after being given counseling. Then conducting a demonstration of how to breastfeed properly and correctly. This counseling was carried out at the Al Kautsar Clinic, Setro Village, Prambon Sidoarjo which was attended by 20 breastfeeding mothers. The results before being given counseling were 8 participants (40%) with Good knowledge and after the activity there was an increase to 15 participants (75%) with Good knowledge. It is hoped that more emphasis will be placed on providing exclusive breastfeeding to increase the success of breastfeeding and improve the health of babies.

Keywords: breastfeeding, counseling, exclusive, infant

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INTRODUCTION

The Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is an indicator to measure the level of public health. The main cause of infant death is infectious diseases, namely upper respiratory tract infections (ARI) and diarrhea. One effort to reduce the infant mortality rate (IMR) is to provide exclusive breast milk (ASI). Exclusive breastfeeding plays a role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, targeting by 2030 to reduce the neonatal mortality rate by at least 12 per 1,000 live births and deaths in children

under 5 years of age by at least 25 per 1,000 live births, this can be achieved by implementing exclusive breastfeeding properly (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2021).

Data Coverage of exclusive breastfeeding under 6 months worldwide based on United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) data in 2022 is 48% (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 2022). Even though the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding are very clear, the level of exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia is still low. Based on data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2020, the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia only reached 66.1%, far from the national target of 80%. This figure shows that there are still many mothers who have not given exclusive breast milk to their babies during the first 6 months of life. This is certainly a big problem because it can have an impact on the long-term health of the baby and mother. One of the main causes of low levels of exclusive breastfeeding is mothers' lack of knowledge about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding. Many mothers do not fully understand the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and prefer to give formula milk, even though exclusive breastfeeding is the best choice for babies. Not a few mothers also find it difficult to provide exclusive breastfeeding, either due to medical problems, work, or because they don't know the right way to breastfeed. The impact of low coverage rates for exclusive breastfeeding has the potential to increase the infant mortality rate by 55% (World Health Organization, 2018). The impact of low levels of exclusive breastfeeding in babies 0-6 months can aggravate diseases such as upper respiratory tract infections (ARI) and diarrhea. The low prevalence and short breastfeeding period will increase the risk of morbidity and mortality in babies in developing countries, especially ARI and diarrhea, in addition, failure to provide exclusive breastfeeding to babies can cause nutritional disorders and can disrupt the process of organ and hormone maturation (Putri et al., 2021). Exclusive breastfeeding is a health behavior that can be influenced by many factors, one of the other causes is related to the mother's knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. Knowledge is a very important domain for forming a person's actions from experience and research has proven that behavior that is based on knowledge will persist longer than behavior that is not based on knowledge (Roesli, 2013). Mothers' lack of knowledge about the benefits of breast milk causes mothers to be easily influenced and switch to formula milk. A high level of knowledge determines whether it is easy for mothers to understand and absorb information about exclusive breastfeeding. The higher the mother's level of knowledge, the higher the mother's ability to absorb information about exclusive breastfeeding (Fatimah & Oktavianis, 2017). Mothers' lack of understanding and knowledge about breast milk causes mothers to be easily influenced and eventually switch to using formula milk. Mothers' low knowledge about breastfeeding is considered normal because the information or advice given by health workers is also felt to be lacking. Only a small percentage of mothers receive correct information or advice about breastfeeding (Noorbaya et al., 2017). Exclusive breastfeeding for newborn babies is one of the preventive measures against infectious diseases, malnutrition, and infant and toddler mortality. However, there are a number of mothers who are reluctant to provide exclusive breastfeeding until the age of six months, due to various reasons such as the perception of low breast milk production, the baby's difficulty in breastfeeding, unsupportive nipple conditions, work demands, modern lifestyle, and the influence of formula milk promotion. In addition, mothers' lack of knowledge about the benefits of breast milk and correct breastfeeding techniques also contributes to the switch to formula milk. (Sabriana, Riyandani, Wahyuni, & Akib, 2022).

The research results of Tarigan, Ompusungu, and Napitupulu (2022) found that knowledge is one of the factors that influences exclusive breastfeeding among breastfeeding mothers in the

Kabanjahe Health Center Working Area, the majority of breastfeeding mothers who exclusively breastfeed have good knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding, while the majority of respondents who do not provide exclusive breastfeeding have poor knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. The research results of Lubis & Harahap (2021) show that there is a significant influence between maternal knowledge and exclusive breastfeeding, mothers with low knowledge tend not to provide exclusive breastfeeding 1.32 times more than mothers with high knowledge.

METHODS

Community service activities in the Setro Village area, Prambon District, Sidoarjo Regency will be carried out in February 2025 at the Al Kautsar Clinic Prambon Sidoarjo. The activities carried out are Health Education regarding Exclusive breastfeeding to increase breastfeeding success and improve the baby's health status. Participants in Health Education Activities (counseling) regarding Exclusive breastfeeding to increase breastfeeding success and improve the baby's health status as many as 20 breastfeeding mothers located in Setro Village, Prambon District, Sidoarjo Regency

RESULTS

The community service program in the form of health checks, counseling and health education regarding "Health Education about Exclusive Breastfeeding to Increase the Success of Breastfeeding and Improve the Degree of Health of Babies at the Al Kautsar Clinic", can increase public knowledge about the meaning of exclusive breastfeeding, the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, the correct way to breastfeed, the position of the breastfeeding mother, signs of correct breastfeeding technique, techniques for releasing the baby's suction, and several ways to burp a baby after breastfeeding. This is evident from the recap of the questionnaire results before and after the counseling was given. Before the counseling was given, 8 participants (40%) had good knowledge and after the activity there was an increase to 15 participants (75%) with good knowledge. This shows that participants are very enthusiastic about increasing their knowledge about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.

Table 1. Knowledge before providing counseling/counseling

No	Knowledge	Amount	Presentation
1.	Good (Score 80 to 100)	8	40 %
2.	Fair (Score 50 to 79)	2	10 %
3.	Less (Value < 50)	10	50 %
Amount		20	100 %

Half of the respondents before being given education had knowledge in the less category, namely 10 respondents (50%).

Table 2. Knowledge after being given counseling/counseling

No	Knowledge	Amount	Presentation
1.	Good (Score 80 to 100)	15	75 %
2.	Fair (Score 50 to 79)	5	25 %
3.	Less (Value < 50)	0	0 %
Amount		20	100 %

Most respondents after being given education, had knowledge in the good category, namely 15 respondents (75%).

DISCUSSION

Community service programs in the form of health checks, counseling and health education on "Health Education on Exclusive Breastfeeding to Increase the Success of Breastfeeding and Improve the Health of Babies at Al Kautsar Clinic", can increase public knowledge about the meaning of exclusive breastfeeding, the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, the correct way to breastfeed, the position of the breastfeeding mother, signs of correct breastfeeding techniques, techniques for releasing the baby's suction, and several ways to burp the baby after breastfeeding. This is evident from the Recapitulation of Questionnaire results before and after counseling. Before counseling, there were 8 participants (40%) with Good knowledge and after the activity there was an increase to 15 participants (75%) with Good knowledge. This shows that participants are very enthusiastic about increasing their knowledge about the importance of exclusive breastfeeding.

Providing education that is done either face-to-face or directly and using other educational media has the potential to help individuals to increase their knowledge about Exclusive Breastfeeding. Providing education about Exclusive Breastfeeding is expected to improve participants' knowledge because knowledge is a factor that can impact an individual's attitude and behavior. In addition to providing education, participants are also taught how to provide good and correct breastfeed (Astuti, 2025).

CONCLUSION

Community service activities regarding exclusive breastfeeding to increase the success of breastfeeding and improve the health status of babies. Health education activities (counseling) regarding exclusive breastfeeding to increase the success of breastfeeding and improve the health status of babies are aimed at residents in the working area of Al Kautsar Clinic. A total of approximately 20 breastfeeding mother participants were involved in this activity. From the results of the counseling, residents were very cooperative and enthusiastic and understood the content of the material and at the end of the session there was question and answer time. Several questions were received from residents. Counseling was given to 8 participants (40%) with good knowledge and after the activity there was an increase to 15 participants (75%) with good knowledge. This shows that participants are very enthusiastic about increasing their knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding. Continuously carry out and develop similar activities to increase public knowledge about other health problems, especially those related to preventing IMR. Activities are not only in the form of counseling, but can be carried out in the form of other activities such as baby checks and special exclusive breastfeeding classes. Periodically evaluate the level of knowledge of pregnant

women and also open discussion facilities through electronic media applications. Collaborating with related parties such as community health centers and other professions (doctors and nutritionists, etc.) in an effort to improve health holistically.

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