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SUPPORTING EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING THROUGH EARLY BREASTFEEDING INITIATION

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ABSTRAK: HUBUNGAN INISIASI MENYUSU DINI DENGAN PEMBERIAN ASI EKSLUSIF PADA BAYI

Pendahuluan: Inisiasi menyusu dini (IMD) dan pemberian ASI eksklusif merupakan praktik penting dalam mendukung pertumbuhan dan perkembangan bayi secara optimal. Meskipun IMD telah banyak dilakukan, namun keberhasilan pemberian ASI eksklusif masih tergolong rendah, termasuk di UPT Puskesmas Delitua.

Tujuan: Mengetahui hubungan inisiasi menyusu dini dengan pemberian ASI eksklusif pada bayi usia 0–6 bulan di Wilayah Kerja UPT Puskesmas Delitua Kabupaten Deli Serdang Tahun 2024.

Metode Penelitian: Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain deskriptif analitik dan rancangan cross sectional. Populasi penelitian adalah ibu yang memiliki bayi usia 0–6 bulan dan membawa bayinya imunisasi di UPT Puskesmas Delitua, sebanyak 118 responden. Teknik sampling menggunakan total sampling. Instrumen penelitian berupa kuesioner dan data rekam medis. Analisis data dilakukan secara univariat dan bivariat dengan uji Chi-Square.

Hasil: Sebanyak 57,6% ibu telah melakukan IMD, namun hanya 35,6% yang memberikan ASI eksklusif. Hasil uji Chi-Square menunjukkan terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara IMD dengan pemberian ASI eksklusif (p = 0,024).

Kesimpulan: Terdapat hubungan yang signifikan antara inisiasi menyusu dini dengan keberhasilan pemberian ASI eksklusif. Peningkatan edukasi dan dukungan dari tenaga kesehatan sangat diperlukan untuk mendorong praktik IMD dan ASI eksklusif, khususnya bagi ibu bekerja.

Saran: Penelitian selanjutnya perlu menelaah faktor-faktor lain yang memengaruhi rendahnya keberhasilan ASI eksklusif setelah IMD, terutama tantangan yang dihadapi ibu bekerja. Selain itu, tenaga kesehatan perlu memperkuat edukasi, dukungan, dan penyediaan fasilitas guna meningkatkan praktik ASI eksklusif.

Kata kunci: Inisiasi menyusu dini, ASI eksklusif, bayi, ibu menyusui

ABSTRACT

Background: Early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) and exclusive breastfeeding are essential practices to support optimal infant growth and development. Although EIBF has been widely implemented, the success rate of exclusive breastfeeding remains low, including at the Delitua Health Center.

Objective: To determine the relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding among infants aged 0–6 months in the working area of UPT Delitua Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024.

Methods: This study employed a quantitative approach with a descriptive analytic design and a cross-sectional method. The population included mothers with infants aged 0–6 months who brought their babies for immunization at UPT Delitua Health Center, totaling 118 respondents. The sampling technique used was total sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and medical records. Data analysis was conducted using univariate and bivariate methods with the Chi-square test.

Results: A total of 57.6% of mothers practiced EIBF, but only 35.6% exclusively breastfed their infants. The Chi-square test showed a significant relationship between EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding (p = 0.024).

Conclusion: There is a significant relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding and the success of exclusive breastfeeding. Enhanced education and support from healthcare workers are crucial to promoting EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding practices, especially for working mothers.

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Suggestion: Future studies should explore other factors influencing the low success of exclusive breastfeeding after EIBF, particularly the challenges faced by working mothers. Moreover, health workers need to strengthen education, support, and the provision of facilities to improve exclusive breastfeeding practices.

Keywords: Early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding, infants, breastfeeding mothers

INTRODUCTION

Having a healthy child who grows and develops appropriately according to age is the dream of every parent. Breastfeeding from an early age is the right decision because breast milk (ASI) is the best food for babies. Breast milk is the exclusive food for infants and should be provided to every newborn immediately after birth, as it is their right. Breast milk contains high nutritional value and does not require any additional ingredients. Exclusive breastfeeding is sufficient to meet the nutritional needs of infants for the first six months and provides immunity against various diseases.

Through exclusive breastfeeding, babies receive the best source of nutrition and protection, especially during their first month of life when they are vulnerable to illness. Globally, both developed and developing countries recognize infant and child mortality as major health issues. Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) is defined as the number of infants dying within the first 28 days of life, typically born between 38–42 weeks of gestation. According to WHO (2021), the global IMR in 2020 was approximately 2.35 million. In the ASEAN region, the highest IMR in 2020 was in Myanmar (around 22.00/1000 live births), while Singapore had the lowest (about 0.80/1000 live births) (ASEAN Secretariat, 2021).

UNICEF (2020) reports that most infant deaths occur in developing countries, with 2.5 million deaths recorded annually before reaching one month of age. In Indonesia, based on the 2020 Long Form SP2020, the IMR was 16.85 per 1,000 live births. Papua Province had the highest rate (38.17/1,000), and Jakarta had the lowest (10.38/1,000) (BPS, 2023). In Medan, the IMR reached 15.09 per 1,000 live births (BPS, 2020).

Reducing child mortality is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 3 of the SDGs aims that by 2030, all countries reduce neonatal mortality to below 12 per 1,000 live births and under-five mortality to below 25 per 1,000 live births (Yuda Husada & Fitri Yuniansih, 2020).

The success of exclusive breastfeeding is significantly influenced by Early Initiation of Breastfeeding (EIBF). EIBF refers to the act of allowing the newborn to breastfeed immediately after birth by letting the baby find the mother's nipple independently. EIBF is performed by placing

the baby in a prone position on the mother's chest for skin-to-skin contact for at least one hour after delivery. Successful EIBF requires no barriers between mother and baby during this time (Ministry of Health RI, 2021).

EIBF is a crucial factor that influences exclusive breastfeeding success. The World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) recommend EIBF for newborns as a means to reduce neonatal mortality by up to 22%, especially in developing countries. According to UNICEF (2022), the EIBF rate was 58.2% in 2019 but declined to 48.6% in 2021. According to Statistics Indonesia (BPS), the percentage of infants under 6 months who received exclusive breastfeeding reached 73.97% in 2023, showing an increasing trend over the last five years. This national percentage rose 2.68% compared to 72.04% in the previous year (BPS, 2024). EIBF contributes significantly to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), now transformed into the SDGs, which aim to reduce child mortality, hunger, and poverty.

A study by Mawaddah (2018) found a significant relationship between EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding success in infants aged 0–6 months, with a p-value of 0.001. This indicates a strong association (p < 0.05). The odds ratio (OR) was 9.17 (95% CI), meaning infants who did not receive EIBF were 9.17 times more likely not to be exclusively breastfed compared to those who did.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research employed a quantitative method with a descriptive analytic design and a cross-sectional approach. The study population consisted of 118 respondents. The sampling technique used was total (saturated) sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire designed to measure the study variables. Data analysis involved univariate statistics, presented descriptively, and bivariate analysis using the Chi-square test.

RESEARCH RESULT Univariate Analysis

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1
Shows the distribution of respondent characteristics in the working area of the Delitua Public Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024.

Variable	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)		
Age				
18–25 years	25	21.2		
26–30 years	51	43.2		
31–35 years	33	28		
>35 years	9	7.6		
Parity				
1	63	53.4		
2	18	15.3		
>3	37	31.4		
Type of Delivery				
Vacuum	8	6.8		
Cesarean Section	44	37.3		
Normal	66	55.9		
Employment Status				
Working	74	62.7		
Not Working	44	37.3		

Based on Table 1, out of 118 respondents, the majority were aged 26–30 years, totaling 51 respondents (43.2%). In terms of parity, most respondents had their first child, with 63 individuals (53.4%). Regarding the type of delivery, the majority of respondents had given birth through normal vaginal delivery, amounting to 66 individuals (55.9%). In terms of employment status, most of the

respondents were working mothers, with a total of 74 individuals (62.7%).

Exclusive Breastfeeding

Table 2

Description of the Exclusive Breastfeeding Variable in the Working Area of UPT Delitua Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, 2024

Exclusive Breastfeeding	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
No	76	64.40%
Yes	42	35.60%

Based on Table 2, out of 118 respondents, 76 mothers (64.4%) did not provide exclusive breastfeeding to their babies.

Early Initiation of Breastfeeding (EIBF)

Table 3
Description of Early Initiation of Breastfeeding

Early Initiation of Breastfeeding	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Not Performed	50	42.40%
Performed	68	57.60%

Variable

Based on Table 3, out of 118 respondents, 50 mothers (42.4%) did not perform early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF).

Bivariate Analysis

The Chi-Square test result showed a Pearson Chi-Square value of **5.087** with a **p-value** of **0.024** (p < 0.05), indicating a significant relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) and the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

Tabel 4
The Relationship Between Early Initiation of Breastfeeding and Exclusive Breastfeeding

Early Initiation of Breastfeeding	Exclusive Breastfeeding					
	Yes		No		Total	p-value
	N	%	N	%	-	•
Not Performed	38	76%	12	24%	50	0.024
Performed	38	56%	30	44%	68	

DISCUSSION

Based on the descriptive analysis of breastfeeding mothers with infants in the working area of the Delitua Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, it was found that the majority of respondents were aged 26–30 years (43.2%), had

their first child (53.4%), experienced normal vaginal delivery (55.9%), and were working mothers (62.7%). Most of the respondents did not exclusively breastfeed their infants (64.4%), while a majority had performed early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) (57.6%). From the descriptive

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analysis, it can be concluded that most mothers with infants in the Delitua Health Center area had performed EIBF. However, despite having practiced EIBF, many of them did not continue exclusive breastfeeding until the infant reached six months of age. The study also revealed that mothers who performed EIBF were generally first-time mothers. This suggests that awareness of the importance of EIBF is relatively good, particularly among new mothers. However, even though they successfully initiated breastfeeding early, many faced challenges in maintaining exclusive breastfeeding.

One of the main factors contributing to the low rate of exclusive breastfeeding is that the majority of mothers in this study were working mothers. Time constraints, job demands, and the lack of breastfeeding or pumping facilities in the workplace serve as significant barriers to providing optimal exclusive breastfeeding. In addition, other factors such as insufficient education on lactation management for working mothers and a lack of support from the surrounding environment also play a role in the low success rate of exclusive breastfeeding. These findings highlight the importance of broader support for breastfeeding mothers, especially those who are employed, to help them sustain exclusive breastfeeding practices. Efforts such as the provision of lactation rooms in the workplace, more supportive maternity leave policies, and ongoing breastfeeding education must be enhanced to improve the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in this area.

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enhanced to improve the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in this area.

The Relationship Between Early Initiation of Breastfeeding and Exclusive Breastfeeding Among Infants at Delitua Health Center

Based on the analysis of the relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) and exclusive breastfeeding among infants at the Delitua Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2025, it was found that there is a significant relationship between EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding. This indicates that mothers who performed EIBF mostly continued with exclusive breastfeeding. These results are consistent with the descriptive analysis, which showed that a majority of mothers who practiced EIBF also provided exclusive breastfeeding to their infants.

This study is supported by research conducted by Mawaddah (2018) entitled "The Early Relationship Between Initiation Breastfeeding and Exclusive Breastfeeding Among Infants in the Working Area of Kereng Pangi Health Center. Katingan Hilir Subdistrict, Katingan Regency". The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding and the success of exclusive breastfeeding among infants aged 0-6 months. In line with this, research by Li et al. (2021), titled "Factors associated with exclusive breastfeeding practice among mothers in nine community health centres in Nanning City, China: a cross-sectional study", found that early initiation of breastfeeding has a positive association with exclusive breastfeeding practices.

Additionally, a study by Lestari et al. (2024) entitled "The Relationship Between Early Initiation Breastfeeding (EIBF) and Exclusive Breastfeeding at Sonomartani Health Center, Kualuh Hulu Subdistrict, Labuhan Batu Utara Regency", also concluded that there is a significant relationship between EIBF and breastfeeding. The presence of this significant relationship indicates that mothers who perform EIBF have a greater opportunity to provide exclusive breastfeeding. These mothers generally understand the benefits of EIBF for both the infant and the mother, as well as the overall benefits of exclusive breastfeeding.

Early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) provides numerous benefits for infants, including reducing the risk of neonatal death due to

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hypothermia, providing antibodies from colostrum, allowing the infant to ingest beneficial bacteria that colonize the gut and compete with pathogenic bacteria, improving blood glucose levels within hours after delivery, and lowering the intensity of jaundice by promoting early excretion of meconium (Rismawati, 2021).

Breast milk is not only a vital source of nutrition for infants but also offers essential health benefits for both the mother and the child. Supporting and promoting the practice of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life is a crucial step to ensure that every baby receives the full benefits of breast milk and can grow with optimal health and strength (Khotimah et al., 2024). Early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) and exclusive breastfeeding provide substantial benefits for both infants and mothers. For infants, EIBF helps reduce the risk of death due to hypothermia, enhances immune protection through colostrum, and supports the development of the digestive and metabolic systems. Meanwhile, exclusive breastfeeding ensures optimal nutrition, promotes growth and development, and reduces the risk of infections and diseases. For mothers, EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding strengthen the emotional bond with the baby, aid in postpartum recovery, and reduce the risk of bleeding and other health complications.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF) and exclusive breastfeeding among infants at UPT Delitua Health Center, Deli Serdang Regency, in 2024, several conclusions can be drawn. The majority of respondents were mothers aged 26-30 years, having their first child, who underwent normal delivery, and were mostly working mothers. Most of the respondents had practiced early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF); however, only a small portion succeeded in providing exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months. In addition, the statistical test results showed a significant relationship between early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding. Mothers who practiced EIBF were more likely to successfully provide exclusive breastfeeding compared to those who did not.

SUGGESTION

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies on the factors contributing to

the low success rate of exclusive breastfeeding among mothers who have already performed early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF). It is also important to explore the specific challenges faced by working mothers in maintaining exclusive breastfeeding. Health workers are advised to continuously enhance education, motivation, and support for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers regarding the importance of implementing EIBF and the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding. Furthermore, support in the form of adequate breastfeeding facilities and ongoing counseling should be strengthened, particularly for working mothers who often face barriers sustaining exclusive in breastfeeding practices.

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