

THE EFFECT OF LACTATION COUNSELING ON BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS AMONG POSTPARTUM MOTHERS

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ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Menyusui merupakan proses fisiologis yang memberikan nutrisi kepada bayi secara optimal. Salah satu factor yang berpengaruh pada rendahnya pemberian ASI eksklusif enam bulan adalah rendahnya pengetahuan ibu tentang manfaat ASI bagi bayi dan manfaat menyusui bagi ibu.

Tujuan: Untuk mengetahui pengaruh konseling laktasi terhadap keberhasilan menyusui ibu nifas di wilayah kerja Puskesmas Naras Kota Pariaman.

Metodologi: Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian *quasi experiment* dengan desain *post test only none quevalent control*. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan di Wilayah Kerja Puskesmas Naras Kota Pariaman yang berjumlah sebanyak 30 orang (15 kelompok kontrol dan 15 kelompok perlakuan). Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan cara wawancara dan observasi langsung. Alat ukur yang digunakan adalah kuesioner. Data dianalisis secara univariat dan bivariat dengan menggunakan uji *paired t test*.

Hasil Penelitian: Hasil penelitian yang ditemukan nilai adalah rata-rata ibu yang tidak diberikan konseling laktasi adalah 2.80. nilai rata-rata ibu yang diberikan konseling laktasi adalah 6.67. dan hasil penelitian ini adalah terdapat pengaruh konseling laktasi terhadap keberhasilan menyusui ibu nifas di wilayah kerja Puskesmas Naras Kota Pariaman dengan nilai *p-value* 0.000.

Kesimpulan: terdapat pengaruh konseling laktasi terhadap keberhasilan menyusui ibu nifas di wilayah kerja Puskesmas Naras Kota Pariaman dengan nilai *p-value* 0.000.

Saran: Disarankan bagi ibu nifas yang menyusui untuk mengikuti sesi konseling laktasi secara aktif baik selama kehamilan maupun setelah persalinan, guna memperoleh informasi dan dukungan praktis dalam proses menyusui

Kata Kunci : Ibu Nifas Menyusui, Keberhasilan, Konseling

ABSTRACT

Background: Breastfeeding is a physiological process that provides optimal nutrition for the baby. One of the factors influencing the low rate of exclusive breastfeeding for six months is the lack of mothers' knowledge about the benefits of breast milk for babies and the benefits of breastfeeding for mothers..

Purpose: To determine the effect of lactation counseling on the breastfeeding success of postpartum mothers in the working area of Naras Public Health Center, Pariaman City. .

Method : This type of research is a quasi-experimental study with a post-test only non-equivalent control group design. The study was conducted in the working area of Naras Public Health Center, Pariaman City, involving a total of 30 respondents (15 in the control group and 15 in the treatment group). Data were collected through interviews and direct observations. The instrument used was a questionnaire. Data were analyzed univariately and bivariately using the paired t-test.

Results: he results of the study showed that the average score of mothers who did not receive lactation counseling was 2.80, while the average score of mothers who received lactation counseling was 6.67. The findings indicated that there was a significant effect of lactation counseling on the breastfeeding success of postpartum mothers in the working area of Naras Public Health Center, Pariaman City, with a *p-value* of 0.000.

Conclusion: There is a significant effect of lactation counseling on the breastfeeding success of postpartum mothers in the working area of Naras Public Health Center, Pariaman City, with a *p-value* of 0.000.

Suggestion: It is recommended that breastfeeding postpartum mothers actively participate in lactation counseling sessions both during pregnancy and after childbirth in order to obtain information and practical support for the breastfeeding process..

Keywords: Breastfeeding Postpartum Mothers, Success, Counseling.

INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is a natural process that provides significant benefits for both mothers and babies, in terms of physical as well as psychological health. Breast milk (ASI) is the most perfect source of nutrition, naturally designed to meet the growth and developmental needs of infants. It contains proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, and antibodies that help protect babies from various infectious and chronic diseases (1). Through breastfeeding, babies develop a stronger immune system from an early age, reducing the risk of illnesses such as diarrhea, respiratory infections, and allergies. In addition, breastfeeding helps strengthen the emotional bond between mother and baby, which plays an important role in the child's psychological development, including a sense of security and healthy attachment. (2).

The benefits of breastfeeding are not only experienced by the baby but also have positive impacts on the mother's health. Breastfeeding helps accelerate postpartum recovery, reduces the risk of bleeding, and lowers the long-term risk of diseases such as breast and ovarian cancer (3). In addition, the breastfeeding process can provide emotional comfort for mothers, help reduce stress levels, and naturally strengthen the maternal role (4). Given its importance, the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF recommend exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of a baby's life, without the addition of any other food or drink. After six months, breastfeeding should be continued along with nutritious complementary foods until the age of two years or beyond, to ensure that the baby's nutritional needs are optimally met during this critical period of growth (5).

However, not all mothers are able to breastfeed optimally from the early days after birth. Although breastfeeding is a natural process, in reality many mothers face challenges during the initial stages, such as difficulties with latching, pain, perceived low milk production, and psychological pressure due to a lack of support from their surroundings (6). If these challenges are not addressed promptly, they can cause mothers to feel anxious, frustrated, and even decide to stop breastfeeding prematurely (7). Therefore, it is important to create a supportive environment for breastfeeding mothers emotionally, physically, and through the provision of accurate information.

One of the interventions proven effective in helping mothers overcome these challenges is lactation counseling. Lactation counseling is a professional support process provided by trained healthcare personnel, such as breastfeeding

counselors or midwives, to help mothers understand proper and effective breastfeeding techniques (8). This counseling includes education on comfortable breastfeeding positions, proper latching techniques, and the management of common issues such as sore nipples, blocked milk ducts, or babies who have difficulty sucking. Through a personal and empathetic approach, lactation counseling also helps build mothers' confidence in their breastfeeding abilities, which is an important factor in ensuring the continuity of long-term breastfeeding.(9).

More than just providing information, lactation counseling also plays a role in offering psychological support to mothers during the breastfeeding period. This process creates a safe space for mothers to express their concerns or discomforts, helping them feel that they are not alone in their journey (10). This counseling can also be tailored to each mother's condition and individual needs, whether she is breastfeeding for the first time or has previous experience but still encounters difficulties (11).

Lactation counseling has been proven to have a positive impact on breastfeeding success. This success can be seen through several indicators, including the frequency of breastfeeding according to the baby's needs, the duration of exclusive breastfeeding up to six months, and the continuation of breastfeeding until the age of two years (12). In addition, mothers who receive lactation counseling tend to have higher levels of satisfaction with their breastfeeding experience, as they feel more prepared both physically and emotionally (13).

In Indonesia, the success rate of breastfeeding still faces various complex challenges. According to data from UNICEF and WHO, the coverage of exclusive breastfeeding for infants aged 0–6 months in Indonesia is only around 66.4% at six months of age. This figure meets the target set by the World Health Organization (WHO), which is at least 50%. Although there has been an improvement, many infants still do not receive exclusive breastfeeding for the full six months. In fact, exclusive breastfeeding is crucial to support optimal infant growth and development and to prevent various infectious diseases and metabolic disorders in the future (14).

Meanwhile, the coverage of exclusive breastfeeding in Pariaman City is only 47%, which is far below the national target of 70%. One of the reasons for this low breastfeeding success rate is the lack of education and limited access to professional lactation counseling services in various

healthcare facilities, including large-scale hospitals (15).

Field observations show that even at Naras Community Health Center (Puskesmas Naras) in Pariaman City, which is equipped with modern facilities and trained healthcare providers, various obstacles are still encountered by postpartum mothers in breastfeeding their babies. Some of the main challenges frequently reported include a lack of understanding about the benefits of breast milk, improper breastfeeding techniques, pain or discomfort during breastfeeding, and insufficient support from medical staff as well as family members.

In such conditions, the need for a more proactive and systematic approach to providing education and lactation support becomes essential. This type of intervention can begin during pregnancy, continue with intensive guidance during the hospital stay, and be followed up with post-discharge services through home visits or tele-counseling. (16).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design, aimed at determining the effect of lactation counseling on breastfeeding success among postpartum mothers. The design employed is a pretest-posttest control group design,

in which the researcher compares breastfeeding outcomes between two groups: the experimental group, which receives the intervention in the form of lactation counseling, and the control group, which does not receive the intervention. The population in this study consists of all breastfeeding mothers who have recently given birth within the working area of the Naras Community Health Center (Puskesmas Naras) in Pariaman City.

The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, with a total sample of 30 participants.

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to respondents to measure mothers' perceptions and experiences related to lactation counseling and breastfeeding success during the first seven days postpartum. A Likert scale was used to assess the level of breastfeeding success based on the mothers' perceptions.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Univariate Analysis

Table 1 shows that out of 15 respondents, the average knowledge score of postpartum mothers who received counseling was 6.67 with a standard deviation of 0.816. The lowest knowledge score was 5, and the highest score was 8.

Table 1
Overview of Breastfeeding Knowledge Among Postpartum Mothers Who Received Counseling

Variabel	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Given Counseling	15	6.67	0.816	5	8

Table 2
Overview of Breastfeeding Knowledge Among Postpartum Mothers Who Did Not Receive Counseling

Variabel	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Not Given Counseling	15	2.80	0.775	2	4

Based on Table 2, out of 15 respondents, the average knowledge score of postpartum mothers who did not receive counseling was 2.80 with a standard deviation of 0.775. The lowest knowledge score was 2, and the highest score was 4.

Bivariate Analysis

Bivariate analysis is used to test the research hypothesis and to examine the relationship between research variables using the T-test.

Table 3
The Effect of Lactation Counseling on Breastfeeding Success Among Postpartum Mothers

Breastfeeding Success	N	Mean	SD	P-value
Given Counseling	15	6.67	0.816	0,000
Not Given Counseling	15	2,80	0.75	

Based on Table 3, the statistics show the mean and standard deviation of breastfeeding success before and after receiving counseling. The average breastfeeding success score in the group that received counseling was 6.67 with a standard deviation of 0.816, while the group that did not receive counseling had an average score of 2.80 with a standard deviation of 0.75. The p-value was 0.000, indicating that lactation counseling has a significant effect on breastfeeding success among postpartum mothers.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to determine whether lactation counseling has an effect on mothers' breastfeeding success. Based on the data analysis, it was found that the majority of mothers who received lactation counseling were able to provide exclusive breastfeeding consistently. This is supported by the statistical results using the t-test, which showed a p-value < 0.000, indicating that lactation counseling has a significant effect on breastfeeding success.

A mother's good level of knowledge increases the likelihood of providing exclusive breastfeeding. A mother's understanding of the importance of breastfeeding will improve if she receives adequate information and support during pregnancy and the childbirth process.. (17) According to Bloom's Theory, a mother's knowledge about breast milk (ASI) serves as an important cognitive foundation that influences her attitudes and breastfeeding behavior. Good knowledge enhances a mother's confidence, readiness, and success in providing exclusive breastfeeding. This is consistent with a study conducted by Ambarwati, which showed that the knowledge of mothers who received intensive lactation counseling was higher than that of the control group. The increase in knowledge occurs because counseling positions the mother as an active subject rather than an object, which encourages greater interest and engagement in the counseling process (18).

The intensity of counseling is also one of the factors that influences the improvement of mothers' knowledge. The more frequent the contact between the mother and the counselor, the more often the mother receives information, which indirectly enhances her knowledge. Another benefit of frequent counseling sessions is the repetition of information, which supports the mother's understanding of the material provided. Information or knowledge that is delivered repeatedly can increase a person's knowledge retention (Notoatmodjo, 2015).

According to Sitjiningsih, achieving the ability and success in breastfeeding requires adequate knowledge of proper breastfeeding techniques. Therefore, a mother needs someone who can guide her in caring for her baby, including in the breastfeeding process. Those who can assist her are usually individuals who have a significant influence in her life or whom she respects, such as her husband, family members, relatives, breastfeeding support groups, as well as doctors or healthcare professionals (20).

A common problem experienced by mothers is the inability to achieve proper latching, which leads many of the mothers in this study to experience issues such as sore nipples, low milk output, and a fussy baby. For the breastfeeding process to run smoothly, a mother must have adequate breastfeeding skills so that breast milk can flow effectively from the mother's breast to the baby. Good breastfeeding skills include proper positioning and correct latching of the baby onto the breast. This is consistent with a study by Sari (2014), which states that correct latching can only be achieved when the positioning is also appropriate. Therefore, the key to successful latching is ensuring that the baby's body and the mother's body are aligned, with the baby's entire body facing the mother.

One of the efforts to increase exclusive breastfeeding can be carried out through promotional activities such as education and early breastfeeding counseling for pregnant women, especially those in their third trimester, so that mothers are better prepared to provide breast milk as early as possible without giving any prelacteal foods or drinks. The results of this study show that mothers who successfully provided breast milk only—without any additional food—for one week after delivery were those who received full support from their families, particularly their husbands. This is consistent with Hector's research, which states that the home environment also influences the success of exclusive breastfeeding. The role of the family in supporting mothers to continue breastfeeding until the baby reaches six months of age is crucial. If only the mother has the intention to breastfeed without family support, the success of exclusive breastfeeding is unlikely to be achieved (22).

According to the researcher's assumption, counseling is considered an educational intervention that can provide understanding, skills, and motivation to breastfeeding mothers, especially during the early postpartum period, which is a crucial phase in determining the success of

exclusive breastfeeding. This assumption is reinforced by field findings showing that mothers who received counseling were better prepared to face various breastfeeding challenges, such as latching techniques, breastfeeding frequency, and ways to manage common problems like nipple pain or low milk production. The researcher believes that the knowledge and skills provided through counseling can enhance a mother's confidence (self-efficacy) to continue breastfeeding even when encountering difficulties.

Second, the researcher also assumes that the difference in breastfeeding success between mothers who receive counseling and those who do not is influenced not only by internal factors, such as the mother's knowledge and personal experience, but also by direct support from healthcare professionals who provide structured and continuous education. Counseling plays an important role in creating a sense of being supported, valued, and psychologically motivated, which positively affects the mother's attitude, confidence, and commitment to providing optimal breastfeeding. Breastfeeding success is essentially the result of the interaction of various factors, including maternal motivation, the baby's condition, family support, cultural environment, and access to accurate health information. In this context, counseling serves as an information bridge that can reduce knowledge gaps and enhance mothers' understanding of breastfeeding practices in accordance with WHO and Ministry of Health standards and recommendations. Therefore, mothers who receive counseling tend to be better prepared, more confident, and more capable of overcoming various challenges during the breastfeeding process.

CONCLUSION

1. The low level of knowledge about breastfeeding among mothers who did not receive lactation counseling.
2. An increase in knowledge about breastfeeding among mothers who received lactation counseling.
3. Lactation counseling has an effect on breastfeeding success among postpartum mothers in the working area of Naras Community Health Center (Puskesmas Naras), Pariaman City.

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