

**THE EFFECT OF PEER COUNSELLING ON INCREASING  
EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING IN LUBUK PAKAM  
AND TANJUNG MORAWA SUB-DISTRICTS,  
DELI SERDANG, NORTH SUMATERA**

**Mahdiah<sup>1)</sup>, Albiner Siagian<sup>2)</sup>, Evawany Y Aritonang<sup>2)</sup>,  
Namora Lumongga Lubis<sup>2)</sup>**

<sup>1)</sup>Nutrition Program, Health of Polytechnics, Medan

<sup>2)</sup>Faculty of Public Health, Universitas Sumatera Utara

**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Counseling is a highly recommended method of nutrition and breastfeeding education. This study aimed to analyze the effect of nutrition and breastfeeding peer counseling on increasing exclusive breastfeeding in Lubuk Pakam and Tanjung Morawa Sub-districts, Deli Serdang, North Sumatera.

**Subjects and Method:** This was a randomized control trial (RCT). A sample of 64 pregnant mothers was selected for this study and divided into two groups: (1) 32 pregnant mothers in the peer counseling group; (2) 32 pregnant mothers in the control group. The peer counseling was carried out 8 times. The dependent variables were knowledge, attitude, and exclusive breastfeeding. The independent variable was nutrition and breastfeeding peer counseling. The data were collected by questionnaire and analyzed by t-test and chi-square.

**Results:** The baseline scores of knowledge, attitude, and exclusive breastfeeding were comparable between the two groups. After peer counseling, the peer counseling group (mean= 13.08; SD= 11.59) showed higher knowledge than the control group (mean= 0.39; SD= 7.92), and it was statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). After peer counseling, the peer counseling group (mean= 10.52; SD= 10.77), showed better attitude than the control group (mean= 3.54; SD= 6.87), and it was statistically significant ( $p = 0.005$ ). After peer counseling, the peer counseling group (40.6%), breastfed more than the control group (14.1%), and it was statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** Peer counseling is effective in exclusive breastfeeding.

**Keywords:** exclusive breastfeeding, peer counseling, knowledge, attitude

**Correspondence:**

Mahdiah. Nutrition Program, Health of Polytechnics, Medan, North Sumatera.