

MATERNAL KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE, AND EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING IN LABUHANBATU, NORTH SUMATERA

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ABSTRACT

Background: World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended that exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) be given to infants from birth up to 6 months and continued breastfeeding with appropriate complementary food until the child celebrates the second year birthday without water, food or drink. The only exceptions are rehydration salts and syrups that contain medicine. Breast milk promotes sensory and cognitive development, and protects the infant against infectious and chronic diseases. Exclusive breastfeeding reduces infant mortality due to common childhood illnesses such as diarrhea or pneumonia, and helps for a quicker recovery during illness. This study aimed to determine knowledge, attitude, and their associations with EBF in Labuhanbatu, North Sumatera.

Subjects and Method: This was a cross sectional study conducted in the catchment area of Puskesmas (community health center) Sukamakmur, Bilah, Labuhanbatu, North Sumatera. A sample of 68 lactating women was selected for this study. The dependent variable was EBF. The independent variables were maternal knowledge and attitude toward EBF. The data were collected by questionnaire and analyzed by a multiple logistic regression.

Results: Women with better knowledge (OR= 4.52; 95% CI= 2.27 to 7.58; p= 0.001) and favourable attitude (OR= 6.17; 95% CI= 3.54 to 9.10; p= 0.038) were more likely to breastfeed exclusively than counterparts with poorer knowledge and unfavourable attitude.

Conclusion: Maternal knowledge and attitude positively affect exclusive breastfeeding.

Keywords: knowledge, attitude, exclusive breast feeding, women

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