

# HUSBAND SUPPORT AND EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. However, nearly 2 out of 3 infants are not exclusively breastfed for the recommended 6 months—a rate that has not improved in 2 decades. Several factors have been found to be associated with exclusive breastfeeding (EBF), in developed countries; social class, level of education, age of the mother, lack of parental support, living with partner, employment status, parity, place of delivery, and smoking during pregnancy. This study aimed to determine the relationship between husband's support and exclusive breastfeeding.

**Subjects and Method:** This was a cross-sectional study conducted in Kandangmas village, Kudus, Central Java. The sample consisted of 32 mothers who had children aged 7-9 months. The dependent variable was exclusive breastfeeding. The independent variable was husband's support. The instrument was a questionnaire. The data were analyzed using OR and chi-square.

**Results:** Husband's support increased the likelihood of exclusive breastfeeding (OR= 3.84;  $p= 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** Husband's support has a positive effect on exclusive breastfeeding.

**Keywords:** husband's support, exclusive breastfeeding

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## BACKGROUND

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Exclusive breastfeeding has many benefits, namely having immune substances so that it helps prevent disease in infants and breast milk is in accordance with the baby's digestive organs so it does not cause allergies. This is due to the presence of important antibodies present in colostrum and breast milk. Incessant formula milk campaign and lack of knowledge about breastfeeding. For the mother this means losing confidence in being able to provide the best care for her baby and for the baby it means not only losing a vital food source, but also losing the optimal way of care. This situation causes the low

coverage of exclusive breastfeeding (Roesli, 2005).

In addition to the knowledge factor, breastfeeding is also influenced by community culture. Culture is often the basis of people's behavior, especially those related to infant feeding patterns. One side of the culture supports breastfeeding but on the other hand the culture prevents exclusive breastfeeding because of wrong views about colostrum and formula milk. Gender roles also affect breastfeeding, husbands are less supportive of mothers to breastfeed because of their view that breastfeeding is a woman's duty. The husband's attitude often makes mothers not breastfeed their

babies for fear of changing their appearance. They are afraid of sagging breasts and not beautiful anymore. Exclusive breastfeeding is very dependent on family support, especially the husband's support (Sarwono, 2006).

Based on the above phenomena. Researchers are interested in examining whether there is a relationship between husband's support and exclusive breastfeeding for infants in Kandangmas Village, Kudus Regency.

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## SUBJECTS AND METHOD

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### 1. Study Design

This research is a cross-sectional study conducted in the village of Kandangmas, Kudus, Central Java.

### 2. Population and Sample

The population in this study were all mothers who had children aged 7-9 months in Kandangmas Village, Kudus Regency in December 2020, totaling 32 subjects. In this study, the sampling technique used is total sampling.

### 3. Variable

The dependent variable is exclusive breastfeeding. The independent variable is husband's support.

### 4. Operational Definition of the Variables

**Exclusive breastfeeding** is breast milk that is given to babies from birth for 6 months, without adding and/or replacing with other foods or drinks, including water (Susanti, 2004).

**Husband's support** is a function of the relationship that functions on the nature of the interactions that take place in various social relationships as evaluated by the individual (Fitriyani, 2010).

### 5. Instrument

The instruments used in this research are as follows: 1). Husband's support questionnaire, and 2). Instrument B is an exclusive breastfeeding questionnaire to determine the relationship between husband's support and exclusive breastfeeding for infants in Kandangmas Village, Kudus Regency.

### 6. Data Analysis

Univariate analysis was used to describe the characteristics of the subjects such as age, and education. Bivariate analysis was performed using the chi-square test with the reported relationship being the odds ratio (OR).

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## RESULTS

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### 1. Characteristics of Subjects

Most of the subjects (43.8%) were 21-40 years old with a junior high school education level (40.6%) and most of the subjects were multiparous (62.75%) (Table 1).

### 2. Univariate Analysis

Most of the husband's support was included in the less category as many as 12 subjects (37.5%). The majority of mothers who gave exclusive breastfeeding and non-exclusive breastfeeding were 16 (50%) subjects.

**Table 1. Sample Characteristics**

Sample Characteristics	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
18-20	12	37.5%
21-40	14	43.8 %
41-55	6	18.7 %
<b>Educational Background</b>		
PS	2	6.3%
JHS	20	62.5%
SHS	8	25.0%
Bachelor	2	6.2%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	32	100%
Male	0	0%
<b>Husband Support</b>		
Lacking	12	37.5%
Enough	11	34.4%
Good	9	28.1%
<b>Exclusive Breastfeeding</b>		
Yes	16	50.0%
No	16	50.0%

**Table 2. Frequency distribution of husband's support and exclusive breastfeeding**

Subjects Characteristics	Frequency (N)	Percentage(%)
<b>Husband support</b>		
Lacking	12	37.5%
Good	9	28.1%
<b>Exclusive Breastfeeding</b>		
Yes	16	50.0%
No	16	50.0%

**3. Bivariate Analysis**

The results of the chi square analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between husband's support

and exclusive breastfeeding for infants in Kandangmas Village, Kudus Regency ( $p = 0.001$ ).

**Table 2. Chi-square test results between husband's support and exclusive breastfeeding**

Variable	Exclusive Breastfeeding		p
	No	Yes	
<b>Husband's support</b>			
Lacking	12	0	0.001
Enough	4	6	
Good	0	10	

**DISCUSSION**

Husband's support as many as 12 subjects (37.5%) with husband support is not good. Here the husband's

support is not good because the husband has never received information about the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, so the husband is not

responsive to exclusive breastfeeding for the baby. Unfavorable husband support can also be influenced by the economic level and education of the subject's family. This study explains that most (65.6%) subjects with basic education.

Family support is a form of encouragement and motivation to pay attention to the problems faced by family members. Family support refers to social support that is seen by family members as something that can be accessed or provided for the family, where family members perceive that supportive people are always ready to provide help and assistance if needed.

There were 16 subjects (50.0%) who did not exclusively breastfeed for the reasons: 11 subjects (68.7%) stated that they had to work to increase their income, 1 subject (6.3%) said that breastfeeding alone was not enough, 1 subject (6.3%) subjects are afraid that their breasts will sag so that their husbands don't love them anymore and 3 subjects (18.7%) stated that by giving extra food to babies so they grow up fast. As a result of giving food other than breast milk given to infants, for example, giving additional food too early by itself will reduce breastfeeding time so that stimulation of the breast is reduced and plasma prolactin levels decrease. The provision of additional food must be regulated by considering several factors including age and the type of food provided, which can be in the form of solid food such as milk porridge. Giving additional food too early will cause digestive disorders in the baby because the baby's digestive organs and enzymes have not been

able to metabolize food that is not in accordance with their abilities.

Exclusive breastfeeding efforts must get the support of husband and family, so that the process of breastfeeding the baby is more optimal. Husband's support is very useful for mothers because it provides motivation, provides attention and problem solving, provides a calm feeling of security and comfort for mothers. Husband support is a function of the relationship that functions on the nature of the interactions that take place in various social relationships as evaluated by the individual. Social support includes individual or family evaluations of whether interactions or relationships are beneficial and to what extent they are.

This study shows that there are 4 subjects (36.4%) with good family support but not exclusive breastfeeding. This is because husband and family have a big influence on the breastfeeding process for babies. Although psychologically the husband pays less attention to the psychological condition of the breastfeeding mother, the husband has physical attention such as the husband participating in preparing equipment for the breastfeeding process (53%) and the husband paying attention to the mother's food intake which increases milk production. This is evidenced by the duties of the family in health, namely: 1) Recognize the health problems of each member; 2) Take a decision to take the right action; 3) provide care to family members who are sick and unable to help themselves because of disability or too young; 4) Maintaining an atmosphere at home that is favorable to the health and per-

sonality development of family members; and 5) maintain a reciprocal relationship between families and health institutions, which demonstrates the good use of existing health facilities.

The study also showed good family support, all subjects exclusively breastfed because the benefits of family support were 1) Provide encouragement/ motivation to family members who have problems; 2) Provide attention and problem solving for family members; and 3) Providing a sense of security and comfort for family members.

Therefore, mothers should increase their knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and husband's support as well as experience in its implementation by conducting more literature studies. This study concluded that most of the husband's support was lacking as many as 12 subjects (37.5%). Exclusive breastfeeding and non-exclusive breastfeeding were 16 (50%) subjects. there is a significant relationship between husband's support with exclusive breastfeeding. This study recommends providing health education about exclusive breastfeeding to the public that breastfeeding is exclusively for their babies until the age of 6 months, and socializing the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding and husband's support through seminars or presentations of research results in forums.

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#### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION**

Nurlaily Prasetyawati collects and analyzes data. Fitriana Kartikasari reviews documents.

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#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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