

## Literature Review: Providing Exclusive Breast Milk to Babies During the Pandemic COVID-19

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction** Breastfeeding is the best solution for babies and children, especially in a pandemic situation. Breast milk remains the best nutrition that can protect babies and toddlers from various diseases, including during the COVID-19 outbreak. Changes in breastfeeding patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic need to be understood by breastfeeding mothers, both those suspected of being infected with COVID-19 and mothers who choose not to breastfeed directly. **Objective:** The aim of this research is to review literature, articles, and research documents regarding providing exclusive breast milk to babies during the pandemic COVID-19. **Method:** The method used in writing this article is a review of research results related to providing exclusive breast milk to babies during the pandemic COVID-19. The type of data used is secondary data. The data sources in this literature review study were obtained by searching scientific research articles from 2021 to 2022 using data bases such as Google Scholar and Science Direct. **Result:** Mothers knowledge regarding providing exclusive breast milk to babies during the pandemic COVID-19 shows that there are still many who do not know the procedures for giving breast milk. Breastfeeding mothers have greater concerns during the pandemic regarding adequate protection for their children, especially when it comes to breastfeeding their babies. This creates problems for mothers by raising doubts or concerns about whether the mother's breast milk is still safe to give to her baby. **Conclusion:** Based on the results of the study, there is a significant increase in knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding during the COVID-19 period after being given socialisation. Suggestions for future researchers to examine the characteristics of mothers who provide exclusive breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** babies, covid-19, exclusive breast milk

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has damaged many aspects of human life around the world. One important aspect with affected components is infant care and nutrition, especially when infants are still exclusively breastfed, in line with the theory that explains that breastfeeding infants is the best way to improve the quality of human resources from an early age. (Sudargo & Kusmayanti, 2019) . Breast milk is the most perfect food for babies, breastfeeding means providing high-value nutrients needed for the growth and development of the brain and nerves, immune substances against some diseases and realising emotional bonds between mother and baby, in the research explained that. Breast milk is the primary source of nutrients essential for infant growth and development. In a pandemic, parents should ensure that exclusive breastfeeding of newborns is one of the ways to prevent infectious diseases, malnutrition, and infant mortality and that babies continue to receive the full benefits of exclusive breastfeeding (Ibrahim & Rahayu, 2021). According to the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2010 as many as 1.5 million toddlers 0-6 months died as a result of giving extra food before the time it should be.

Breastfeeding is the best solution for babies and children, especially in a pandemic situation like now. The many benefits of breastfeeding for both babies and mothers must be widely understood and known to breastfeeding mothers (Rizyana & Ulva, 2022). Breast milk remains the best nutrition that can protect infants and toddlers from various diseases, including during the COVID-19 outbreak. Changes in the pattern of breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic that must be understood include, among others, mothers suspected of having contracted Covid-19 and deciding to give breast milk directly to the breast are required to use a surgical mask and before breastfeeding the baby must wash their hands first (Kusumaningrum & Tri, 2021). Whereas mothers who choose not to give breast milk directly, must wear a surgical mask and before pumping or giving expressed breast milk and during close contact with the baby they must wash their hands first. However, there are still many mothers who do not know about the importance of breastfeeding for babies (Bakhtiar, 2020).

According to data from the website of the Indonesian Pediatrician Association, a number of scientific evidences show that breastfeeding which is given exclusively for the first 6 months of life can meet the nutritional needs of babies to grow and develop (Nurhidayati & Saleha, 2021). Some examples include, colostrum in breastfeeding on days 1-5, rich in protein, and breast milk lactose as a source of carbohydrates is absorbed better than what is found in milk other than breast milk (Anissa & Dewi, 2021). In addition, there are many benefits that can be obtained later for babies and mothers from exclusive breastfeeding, including preventing illness in infants, helping the baby's brain and physical development, benefits for mothers from exclusive breastfeeding are overcoming feelings of trauma and preventing breast cancer (Setiawan, 2022). Breastfeeding is the best solution for babies and children, especially in a pandemic situation like now. The many benefits of breastfeeding for both babies and mothers must be widely understood and known for breastfeeding mothers. Breast milk remains the best nutrition that can protect infants and toddlers from various diseases, including during the COVID-19 outbreak (Rochmawati et al., 2021)

COVID-19 is a serious problem and is being faced by the whole world (Ali Rahman et al., 2023). Understanding about COVID-19 does not only need to be done for people who are infected, everyone must understand so that they are able to take appropriate actions, including mothers who are breastfeeding (Martin, F, L, 2020). However, parents with infants and children have other concerns regarding adequate protection for their children, especially regarding breastfeeding (Sulistiyowati et al., 2021)As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic,

access for mothers to consult about breastfeeding activities in hospitals, health clinics, and through visits to homes and at Baby-Friendly Hospitals has been disrupted. Inaccurate information circulating about the safety of breastfeeding has reduced the number of breastfeeding mothers because mothers are afraid of transmitting disease to their babies (Imanikusuma, 22 C.E.). For mothers who are confirmed or suspected COVID-19 patients, UNICEF and WHO continue to encourage continued breastfeeding during the pandemic without separating mothers from their babies, while still paying attention to appropriate transmission control measures. The facts show that breastfeeding is very safe, the virus has never been found in breast milk. So that mothers should continue breastfeeding their babies (Martin, F, L, 2020). Even if they have symptoms of the corona virus, mothers can still breastfeed. For conditions during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the public is strongly encouraged to stay at home, and must wear masks.

### Objective

The aim of this research is to review literature, articles, and research documents regarding providing exclusive breast milk to babies during the pandemic COVID-19.

### Method

This research design is a literature study that aims to determine the description of exclusive breastfeeding for infants during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The type of data used is secondary data. The data sources in this literature review research were obtained through a trusted journal search site, namely Google Scholar, in the period 2021 to 2022.

The analytical method used is content analysis of this document journal using online research journals obtained through trusted journal search sites with the following inclusion criteria:

- a. Online research journals on exclusive breastfeeding.
- b. The online research journal used is within the last 3 years.
- c. National and international class online research journals.
- d. There is an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) number in both printed and electronic versions.
- e. There is a DOI (Digital Object Identifier) in research journals.

### Result

The following are the results of a literature review of 6 articles related to exclusive breastfeeding during the COVID-19 period:

Table 1. Analysis of Literature Review Result

	Author	Title	Population	Method	Result
1	Nur Masrurroh, Lailatul Khusnul Rizki, Nadia Ayu Ashari, Irma	Analysis of Breastfeeding Mothers' Behaviour in Providing Exclusive Breastfeeding during the COVID-19	50 mothers breastfeeding infants aged 6-12 months.	The research method used is mixed method with concurrent embedded strategy.	Chi-square test found that knowledge affects the behaviour of mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding (p=0.001). The p value of 0.005 (<0.05) means that attitude affects the behaviour of mothers in exclusive breastfeeding.

		Pandemic in Surabaya			Then from the breastfeeding pattern, the analysis results obtained a p value of 0.001 (<0.05), which means that breastfeeding patterns affect the behaviour of mothers in providing exclusive breastfeeding (Masruroh et al., 2022). The results showed that the factors associated with exclusive breastfeeding practices were IMD practices and prelacteal feeding (p = 0.015; OR = 6.232 and p < 0.001; OR = 0.034) (Purwanti & Sujono, 2022).
2	Rachma Purwanti, Mentari Suci Ramadini Sujono	Factors Associated with Exclusive Breastfeeding Practices for Children aged 6-24 Months During the COVID-19 Pandemic.	104 mothers with children aged 6-24 months.	The method used was a cross-sectional design.	The results of the implementation of community service activities for lecturers of the Almuslim University Diploma III Midwifery Programme lecturers, namely: it was found that out of 6 mothers who had babies aged 0-6 months are able to repeat the information we have provided carefully and promise to follow our advice where exclusive breastfeeding is very important.
3	Nurhidayati, Siti Saleha, Zulfa Hanum, Agustina	Exclusive Breastfeeding Education for Mothers with Infants Aged 0-6 Months During the COVID-19 Pandemic in Paya Meuneung Village, Peusangan Subdistrict, Bireuen Regency in 2021	6 Mothers who have babies aged 0-6 months.	Socialisation and demonstration.	carefully and promised to follow our advice where exclusive breastfeeding is very beneficial for the baby and also for the mother herself. beneficial for the baby and also for the mother herself (Nurhidayati et al., 2021).
4	Eni Folendra Rosa	Android-Based Breastfeeding Counselling for Exclusive	100 mothers who had infants aged 3-4 months and	The research method used is an experiment with an	Multivariable analysis showed that the intervention group that was provided with

	Breastfeeding Success during the COVID -19 Pandemic	have not been given supplementary food.	accontrolled trial design.	Android-based breastfeeding counselling provided exclusive breastfeeding 3.3 times more, therefore the action taken by providing android-based breastfeeding counselling is the right thing to do in times of large-scale social restrictions that result in the right thing to do during large-scale social restrictions that result in the lack of access to health services. mothers' lack of access to health services.	
5	Rochmawati, Arini Kusmintarti, Veronica Fary, Liana Elfaristo, Estu Lovita Pembayun, Sri Hayuningsih, Kasyafiya Jayanti, Gracea Petricka, Sisilia Prima	Improving the Capacity of Breastfeeding Mothers through Health Counselling Health Counselling on Exclusive Breastfeeding During the COVID-19 Pandemic	20 Breastfeeding mothers.	The method used is counselling.	The result is an increase in knowledge with the hope that this increase in knowledge can change the character of the mother when giving exclusive breastfeeding and have a significant impact on the success of exclusive breastfeeding and always prioritize health rules for mothers and babies during the COVID-19 hit (Rochmawati et al., 2021).
6	Loli Kambara, Bintang Agustina Pratiwi, Riska Yanuarti, Oktarianita, Nopiawati	Knowledge and Attitude of Breastfeeding Mothers about Exclusive Breastfeeding during the COVID-19 Pandemic	The research population was all breastfeeding mothers who had babies aged 0-6 months in the working area of the Lingkar Timur Health Center, Bengkulu City, totaling 59 people.	Purposive sampling technique.	The results of the univariate analysis showed that the average score of knowledge before education was 11.76 and after education was 15.69, while the average attitude score before education was 78.93 and after education was 98.80. The results of the bivariate analysis showed that there was a significant difference in knowledge (P value = 0.000) and attitudes (P Value = 0.000) before

being given education and after being given exclusive breastfeeding education. Education should continue to be carried out, especially during the pandemic, so that mothers continue to be enthusiastic about giving exclusive breastfeeding.

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## Discussion

Research (Masruroh et al., 2022), in addition, self-efficacy of breastfeeding mothers also influences exclusive breastfeeding behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, breastfeeding mothers' self-efficacy also affects exclusive breastfeeding for infants aged 0-6 months. Supporting factors for exclusive breastfeeding include family and health worker support, high knowledge and easy access to information. Meanwhile, inhibiting factors are misperceptions about breastfeeding, lack of intention and inappropriate cultural practices regarding breastfeeding.

In the article (Purwanti & Sujono, 2022), which explained that Early Breastfeeding Initiation (IMD) and prelacteal feeding are 2 factors associated with exclusive breastfeeding practices. Both contributed 70.2% to the achievement of exclusive breastfeeding practices.

In another article, it was explained that the proportion of exclusive breastfeeding in mothers who received android-based breastfeeding counselling was greater than in mothers who did not receive android-based counselling. (Nurhidayati et al., 2021). This is due to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic that was happening at that time.

In the research (Rosa, 2022), Multivariable analysis showed that the intervention group that was given android-based breastfeeding counselling provided exclusive breastfeeding 3.3 times more, therefore the action taken by providing android-based breastfeeding counselling is the right thing to do when large-scale social restrictions result in less mothers getting access to health services.

Based on the results and discussion, the research on Improving the Capacity of Breastfeeding Mothers Through Health Counseling Regarding Exclusive Breastfeeding During the COVID-19 Pandemic can be concluded that in general breastfeeding mothers have a good understanding and knowledge regarding exclusive breastfeeding during the COVID-19 pandemic which can be seen from the increase in posttest knowledge and the hope that they will apply and meet their children's breastfeeding needs by providing exclusive breastfeeding and maintaining maternal and infant health protocols during the pandemic. This is done in order to achieve the best nutritional status in children during the first 6 months of life so as to strengthen the immune system and reduce the risk of contracting various diseases that can attack babies. Both diarrhoeal diseases, pneumonia, and other diseases caused by infection (Rochmawati et al., 2021).

The results of another study explained that there were significant differences in the knowledge and attitudes of mothers before and after being given counseling on exclusive breastfeeding to breastfeeding mothers during the COVID-19 pandemic in the working area of the Puskesmas Lingkar Timur Bengkulu City (Kambera et al., 2021).

An analysis of 5 articles from national journals with the theme of exclusive breastfeeding for infants during the COVID-19 pandemic, showed that during the COVID-19 pandemic, most parents are more aware of the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for their babies. The information obtained about the benefits of breast milk and immunity that provides protection from infection becomes more significant given the risk of corona virus infection.

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, there is a significant increase in knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding during the COVID-19 period after being given socialisation.

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