

Mother's Profile in Formula-Feeding Their (Less Than Six Month) Infants in Semarang

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Abstract. Babies given the infant formula in their first six months would likely encounter higher infant death risk than those who are given the exclusive breast milk. This likely could happen since mothers were not well-informed about the advantages of breastfeeding, appropriate lactation technique, and sporadically rapid infant formula product marketing in the society. This study aimed to identify mothers' profiles in formula-feeding their (less than six months) infants in Semarang especially in *Puskesmas Bangetayu Kota Semarang*. This study also employed explanatory observation retrospective design. The population of this study was 150 mothers of babies less than six months with formula feeding. From the population, there was 60 mother taken as the sample of the study and the data was analyzed using Chi-Square test. Upon conducting the study, it could be known that there were 48 mothers (60%) who formula-feed their babies (less than six months) in *Puskesmas Bangetayu* were 21-35 years old, 27 mothers (45%) were only graduated from elementary school, 36 mothers (60%) were housewives, and 27 mothers (60%) were low-informed about the advantage of breast milk. It is suggested that mother should improve their knowledge and get enough information about breastfeeding since the regular antenatal care (ANC).

INTRODUCTION

Exclusive breastfeeding is the best food for newborns to 2 years infants. By about six months of age, babies are ready to have their first nutritious food to support their growth and development. Although many people acknowledge the advantage of breastfeeding, the tendency of breastfeeding among mothers nowadays is low. This could be observed by mothers who enthusiastically feed the babies with various foods earlier (less than six months). In other hand, there are several reasons raised, such as working mom, influence of advertisement, social cultural factors, low education level, and lack of husband's support for breastfeeding mothers.¹

Every year there are at least 1-1.5 million babies died due to mothers ignorant to breastfeed their babies exclusively. This is also supported by mother's lack of information about the importance of breastfeeding for their babies. It will lead mothers to formula feed their infants that relatively dangerous for baby's health. Besides, the sporadic advertisement of formula milk also trigger mother to formula feed their less than 6 months old-babies. In fact, parents should be wisely careful when choosing the formula for their infants because pediatrics always emphasizes that breast milk is the best food for infants.

Formula fed-babies have 25 times higher death risk in their first six months of life than those who get exclusive breast milk. They also have tendency to suffer from diarrhea, colon infection due to fungi and bacteria, and mouth ulcer as well.

Medical practitioner plays important role to give information about the advantage of breastfeeding. Based on the Indonesian Health Demography Survey in 2002, there was 28% mother breastfed their babies and increased by 32% in 2007. Along with the breastfeeding process, the provision of formula feeding was also increase from 17% to 27.9% in 2002 and 2007 respectively.

According to the interview conducted to support the study, it is found that 7 of 10 mothers do not have any awareness of formula feeding impact for baby (under than 6 months). That is why, writers would like to identify mothers' profiles in formula feeding their (under 6 months) babies in *Puskesmas Bangetayu Kota Semarang*.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

This study employed explanatory observation retrospective design. The population of this study was 150 mothers of babies less than six months with formula feeding in *Puskesmas Bangetayu Semarang*. From the population, there was 60 mothers taken as the sample of the study and the data was analyzed using Chi-Square test.

FINDING

Mothers of formula feeding babies (<6 months) in *Puskesmas Bangetayu* was becoming the respondent in this study. The respondent's profile was categorized by age, education, profession and information that could be illustrated by the following table:

Table 1. Mothers' profiles of formula feeding babies (< 6 months)

No	Keterangan	Frekuensi (n)	Persentase (%)
Usia (tahun)			
1.	< 20	6	10
2.	21-35	48	80
3.	36-40	6	10
Pendidikan			
1.	Pendidikan Dasar	27	45
2.	Pendidikan Menengah	22	36.7
3.	Pendidikan Tinggi	11	18.3
Pekerjaan			
1.	Pedagang	0	0
2.	Karyawan swasta	20	33.3
3.	Buruh	3	5
4.	Pegawai Negeri Sipil (PNS)	1	1.7
5.	Ibu Rumah tangga (IRT)	36	60
Pengetahuan			
1.	Baik	18	30
2.	Cukup	15	25
3.	Kurang	27	45
Total		60	100

It can be inferred from the table that there were 60% (48 respondents) of 21-35 year old mother. Another thing to be underlined that 27 respondents (45%) were mother who only passed their study at Elementary and Junior High School Level, 11 respondents (18.3%) were university graduated, and the other was only passed their Senior High School level. The next thing to be identified from the table was the profession of the respondent, the number one highest profession of mother who formula fed their babies was housewives and the lowest one was civil servants. The table also describes about respondent's knowledge about the advantage of breastfeeding were good (30%) and at least 45% respondents have the average knowledge.

Previous study identified that the implementation of exclusive breastfeeding for babies less than 6 months was relatively low. It was due to several urgent factors such as mothers' education, knowledge and experiences to the success of breastfeeding their babies. While Early Initiation Breastfeeding (IMD) is strongly determine the success of breastfeeding. Therefore, the massive TV advertisement about formula milk will discourage mother to breastfeed their babies especially for those who has low education level.

As the result of the study that there were several factors that trigger mother in formula feeding their babies, such as mothers' education level, information, and profession. The influential level for mother who formula feed their babies due to lack of information about the advantage of breastfeeding during both in regular ante natal care

and after delivery. In the other hand, the mass media rarely expos the advantage of breastfeeding support the formula feeding among the society. After that, it is also known that experience also plays important role to gain the information.

Mother, who provide breast milk for their babies are those who are well-educated about the advantage of breastfeeding and not really interested in the marketing tricks of formula milk in the media, and vice versa. Also, mother with higher information and knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding will have better understanding than those who do not have much information. This should be such interference for medical workers to all mothers that they must let their babies get the golden colostrums, avoid pre-lactal feeding to infants (under 6 months) and breastfeed their babies for at least six months. This study elaborated much that both education-based information and experience-based information could determine the formula or breastfeeding the babies (<6 months).

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded from the study that mothers' profiles who formula feed the babies (under 6 months) in Puskesmas Banget Ayu Kota Semarang was influenced by the age. It could be indentified that at least 60% (48 respondents) mothers aged 21-35 years old found to formula feed their babies, 45% (27 respondents) mothers who were passed from elementary and junior high school level, 60% (36 respondents) mothers' profession was housewives, and 45% (27 respondents) did not get enough information about breastfeeding.

It is suggested that mothers would improve their knowledge and information about the advantage of exclusive breastfeeding. This should be socialized for all mothers by medical workers since the antenatal care to delivery process. In other hand, government should also provide non-commercial advertisement related to the advantages of breastfeeding.

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