



**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREAST ANATOMY KNOWLEDGE AND LACTATION MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES ON BREAST MILK PRODUCTION IN BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS**

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**ABSTRACT**

The success of exclusive breastfeeding depends heavily on the mother's understanding of breast anatomy and the application of proper lactation management techniques. This study aims to analyze the relationship between breast anatomy knowledge and lactation management techniques on breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers. The study used a quantitative cross-sectional design involving 65 breastfeeding mothers with infants aged 0–6 months. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, in which participants were selected based on predetermined inclusion criteria relevant to the study objectives. Data collection was conducted using a structured and validated questionnaire covering knowledge of breast anatomy, lactation management techniques, and indicators of breast milk production. Data analysis was performed using the Spearman correlation test and multiple logistic regression. The results showed a significant relationship between breast anatomy knowledge and breast milk production, as well as a significant association between lactation management techniques and breast milk production. Simultaneous analysis indicated that both variables collectively contributed 62.8% to breast milk production, with lactation management techniques demonstrating the most dominant influence.

Keywords: breastfeeding mothers; exclusive breastfeeding; knowledge of breast anatomy; lactation management techniques; milk production

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**INTRODUCTION**

Breast milk is the optimal nutrient for babies that provides important bioactive components for growth and development. Although the World Health Organization and various global health organizations recommend exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of life, the achievement of optimal breastfeeding practices still faces complex challenges in various countries including Indonesia. Recent data shows that only 66.4% of babies in Indonesia will receive exclusive breastfeeding by 2024, although this figure represents an increase from 52% in 2017, but there are still many mothers who cannot breastfeed exclusively for six months (Asi et al., 2022). The success of breastfeeding is highly dependent on a variety of interrelated factors, including the mother's knowledge of breast anatomy and the application of proper lactation management techniques.

A deep understanding of breast anatomy plays a crucial role in supporting successful lactation. Contemporary research has changed the paradigm of our understanding of the structure of the breast during lactation, where 65% of glandular tissue is located in the first 30mm of the nipple with a relatively superficial duct. Recent ultrasound studies have shown that breast milk production in 24 hours does not correlate with the number of glandular tissues, the number of milk ducts, or the diameter of the ducts, but rather is influenced by complex interactions between the baby's appetite, the frequency and effectiveness of breast emptying, as well as maternal anatomy (Emilda, 2020). These findings indicate that accurate knowledge of breast anatomy can help mothers understand

physiological mechanisms Lactogenesis and optimize their breastfeeding practices. Anatomical comprehension includes an understanding of the structure of the alveoli as a unit of milk production, the ductal system that drains milk, as well as the role of myoepithelial cells in the process Milk Ejection Reflex which is triggered by the hormone oxytocin.

In addition to anatomical knowledge, evidence-based lactation management techniques are an important determinant in the success of breast milk production. Lactation management includes a variety of interventions such as early breastfeeding initiation, skin-to-skin contact (skin-to-skin contact), attachment techniques (latching) correct breastfeeding frequency, and effective breast milk expression methods (Karlinah et al., 2025). Research shows that adequate nipple stimulation and optimal breast emptying during each breastfeeding session are essential to maintain breast milk production, with mothers advised to empty the breast every 2-3 hours to maintain milk supply. These physiological mechanisms are regulated by the system supply and demand, where the hormone prolactin is stimulated by emptying the breast and prevents accumulation feedback inhibitor of lactation (FIL) which can reduce milk production. The proper position of the hands when breastfeeding or pumping is also crucial because pressure on the ducts and tissues can hinder the flow of milk and cause blockages that lead to engorgement and decreased milk production (R. Pranajaya & Rudiyaniti, 2013).

The phenomenon of insufficient milk production (insufficient milk supply) is one of the main reasons for early breastfeeding cessation in various populations. Studies in Indonesia show that factors such as maternal education level, knowledge of the benefits of breastfeeding, previous breastfeeding experience, and support from the environment have a significant effect on the sustainability of breastfeeding practices (Miftakhul, 2020). Qualitative research in Central Java identified that urban mothers face various barriers to breastfeeding including the perception of insufficient breastfeeding (perceived breast milk insufficiency), attachment difficulties, and the baby's refusal to breastfeed, which prompts them to give formula milk as a substitute. This condition indicates the need for comprehensive interventions that improve maternal knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of lactation as well as practical skills in lactation management.

The relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques to milk production has been the focus of research in recent years. Effective education on correct breastfeeding techniques has been shown to significantly reduce the incidence of nipple abrasions and improve the knowledge and skills of breastfeeding mothers. Research in Jakarta shows that although 75% of mothers think they are exclusively breastfeeding, in reality only 32% actually practice it, indicating a gap between theoretical knowledge and actual practice. Recent studies emphasize the importance of education focused on a holistic understanding of lactation physiology, including hormonal roles in Lactogenesis mechanism Milk Ejection Reflex, and practical strategies to optimize breast milk production (Veronica Anggreni Damanik, 2020). By understanding the relationship between independent variables (knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques) and dependent variables (breast milk production), this study can make an important contribution to the development of evidence-based interventions to improve the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

Based on the background that has been described, the formulation of the problem in this study is: (1) What is the level of knowledge of breastfeeding mothers about breast anatomy? (2) How is lactation management techniques applied to breastfeeding mothers? (3) Is there a relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers? (4) Is there a relationship between lactation management techniques and breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers? (5) Is there a simultaneous relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques on milk production in breastfeeding mothers?. This study aims to: (1) Identify the level of knowledge of breastfeeding mothers about breast anatomy,

(2) Identify the application of lactation management techniques in breastfeeding mothers, (3) Analyze the relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and breast milk production in breastfeeding mothers, (4) Analyze the relationship between lactation management techniques and milk production in breastfeeding mothers, (5) Analyze the simultaneous relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques on breastfeeding mothers. milk production in breastfeeding mothers.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques with breast milk production among breastfeeding mothers. The results of this research are expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, this study can enrich scientific knowledge in the field of maternal and neonatal health, particularly regarding the relationship between breast anatomy knowledge and lactation management techniques on breast milk production, and can serve as a reference for future research on similar topics. Practically, the findings of this study can be used as a basis for developing educational programs and health interventions to improve the success of exclusive breastfeeding, provide valuable insights for healthcare workers in delivering more effective lactation counseling, and assist breastfeeding mothers in enhancing their understanding and skills related to breast anatomy and optimal lactation management to support adequate breast milk production.

## **METHOD**

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design to analyze the relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques on breast milk production. The study population consisted of breastfeeding mothers with infants aged 0–6 months within the working area of the Health Center, with a total sample of 65 respondents selected using a Systematic Random Sampling technique. The inclusion criteria included mothers who were in the active lactation period, willing to participate, and able to communicate well, while the exclusion criteria involved mothers with medical conditions that could interfere with lactation or those with cognitive limitations. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire that had undergone a validation process. The instrument consisted of three main components: a breast anatomy knowledge questionnaire assessing understanding of alveolar structures, ductal systems, and the milk ejection reflex; a lactation management techniques questionnaire evaluating latching practices, breastfeeding frequency, and breast milk expression methods; and a breast milk production questionnaire measuring milk adequacy based on indicators such as infant weight gain, urination frequency, and infant satisfaction after feeding. Prior to use, all instruments underwent validity and reliability testing. Content validity was established by consulting the questionnaire with experts in midwifery and lactation to ensure the relevance and clarity of each item. Empirical validity testing was conducted using the Corrected Item–Total Correlation method on 30 breastfeeding mothers with similar characteristics. All items were declared valid, as the calculated correlation values exceeded the critical *r*-table value at a 0.05 significance level. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha. The results showed that the breast anatomy knowledge questionnaire had an alpha value of 0.82, the lactation management techniques questionnaire had 0.78, and the breast milk production questionnaire had 0.80. These values indicate that all instruments were reliable and suitable for use in the study. Data analysis employed the Spearman correlation test to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables, as well as logistic regression to determine the combined effect of the two independent variables on breast milk production (Yunita Lestari, 2021). The study received ethical approval from the local Health Research Ethics Committee, and all respondents provided written informed consent prior to participation.

## **RESULT**

### **Characteristics of Respondents**

This study involved 65 breastfeeding mothers who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria that have

been set. The distribution of respondents' characteristics showed quite diverse variations in terms of age, education level, employment status, parity, and infant age. The respondent characteristic data is presented in full in the following table.

Table 1.  
Characteristics of Research Respondents (n=65)

Characteristic	Category	f	%
Mother's Age	20-25 years	18	27.7
	26-30 years	26	40.0
	31-35 years old	15	23.1
	>35 years old	6	9.2
Education	Elementary/Junior High School	8	12.3
	High School/Vocational School	35	53.8
	Diploma/S1	22	33.9
Work	Not working	38	58.5
	Work	27	41.5
Parity	Primipara	28	43.1
	Multipara	37	56.9
Infant Age	0-2 months	22	33.8
	3-4 months	25	38.5
	5-6 months	18	27.7

Based on table 1, the majority of respondents were in the age range of 26-30 years (40.0%), which is the optimal reproductive age. The highest level of education was high school/vocational school with 35 respondents (53.8%), followed by higher education with 22 people (33.9%). Most of the respondents were housewives who did not work outside the home as many as 38 people (58.5%), while 27 respondents (41.5%) had working status. Judging from the experience of childbirth, there were slightly more multipara mothers, namely 37 people (56.9%) compared to primipara 28 people (43.1%). The distribution of infant age is quite even, with the largest proportion in the 3-4 month group of 25 babies (38.5%).

### Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

#### Breast Anatomy Knowledge

The respondents' level of knowledge about breast anatomy was measured using a structured questionnaire that included an understanding of the structure of *the alveoli*, the ductal system, the mechanism of *milk ejection reflex*, as well as the role of the hormones prolactin and oxytocin in the lactation process. The measurement results are categorized into three levels based on the scores obtained.

Table 2.  
Distribution of Breast Anatomy Knowledge Level (n=65)

Knowledge Level	f	%
Good (76-100)	23	35.4
Sufficient (56-75)	28	43.1
Less (<56)	14	21.5

The data in table 2 shows that the majority of respondents have sufficient knowledge about breast anatomy as many as 28 people (43.1%), followed by the category of good knowledge as many as 23 people (35.4%), while 14 respondents (21.5%) still have insufficient knowledge. These findings indicate that there is still a gap in understanding among breastfeeding mothers regarding the structure and physiology of the breasts which is actually very important to support the success of lactation.

#### Lactation Management Techniques

Lactation management technique variables were assessed through several important aspects including Early Breastfeeding Initiation (IMD) practices, attachment techniques, breastfeeding frequency, breast milk expression methods, breastfeeding positions, and *on-demand feeding practices*. The assessment was carried out by observing and asking about the practices carried out

by the respondents during the breastfeeding period.

Table 3.

t	f	%
Good (76-100)	26	40.0
Sufficient (56-75)	25	38.5
Less (<56)	14	21.5

Based on table 3, the application of lactation management techniques in the good category was found in 26 respondents (40.0%), while 25 respondents (38.5%) were in the adequate category, and 14 respondents (21.5%) still applied less than optimal techniques. These results illustrate that although most mothers have implemented the technique quite well, there are still more than one-third of respondents who need more intensive guidance and mentoring in lactation management practices.

### Breast milk production

Breast milk production is measured based on three main indicators, namely infant weight gain according to WHO standards, the frequency of urination of the baby at least 6-8 times per day, and the satisfaction of the baby after breastfeeding which is characterized by the baby being calm and asleep. The category of milk production is divided into two groups, namely sufficient and insufficient.

Table 4.

Categories of Breast Milk Production	f	%
Enough	41	63.1
Not Enough	24	36.9

Table 4 shows that most of the respondents have sufficient milk production, namely 41 people (63.1%), but there are still 24 respondents (36.9%) who experience insufficient milk production. This figure shows that the problem of insufficient milk production is still a significant challenge and requires serious attention from health workers.

### Bivariate Analysis

#### The Relationship of Breast Anatomy Knowledge with Breast Milk Production

The analysis of the relationship between breast anatomy knowledge and breast milk production was carried out using the Spearman correlation test because the data were ordinal-scale. The results of the cross-tabulation and statistical test are presented in the following table.

Table 5.

Anatomical Knowledge	Sufficient Milk Production	Insufficient Milk Production	Total	<i>p-value</i>	<i>R</i>
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
Good	19 (82.6)	4 (17.4)	23 (100)	0.002	0.456
Enough	18 (64.3)	10 (35.7)	28 (100)		
Less	4 (28.6)	10 (71.4)	14 (100)		

The results of the analysis in table 5 show a significant relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and breast milk production ( $p\text{-value} = 0.002 < 0.05$ ). The value of the Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.456 indicates the strength of the relationship in a positive direction, which means that the better the knowledge of the anatomy of breastfeeding mothers, the better the milk production produced. Of the 23 respondents with good knowledge, as many as 82.6% had sufficient milk production, while in the lack of knowledge group, only 28.6% had sufficient milk production.

#### The Relationship of Lactation Management Techniques to Breast Milk Production

The relationship between the application of lactation management techniques and milk production was also analyzed using the Spearman correlation test to determine the closeness and significance

of the relationship between the two variables.

Table 6.

The Relationship of Lactation Management Techniques with Breast Milk Production (n=65)

Lactation Management Techniques	Sufficient Milk Production	Insufficient Milk Production	Total	<i>p-value</i>	<i>R</i>
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)		
Good	22 (84.6)	4 (15.4)	26 (100)	0.001	0.523
Enough	16 (64.0)	9 (36.0)	25 (100)		
Less	3 (21.4)	11 (78.6)	14 (100)		

Table 6 shows very significant results with a *p-value* of 0.001 (< 0.05), which means that there is a statistically significant relationship between lactation management techniques and breast milk production. The value of the correlation coefficient of 0.523 indicates the strength of the relationship that is moderate to a positive direction. The data showed that respondents with the application of good lactation management techniques had a proportion of adequate milk production of 84.6%, while in the group with poor application, only 21.4% had sufficient milk production. These findings reinforce the importance of applying proper lactation management techniques in supporting optimal milk production.

### Multivariate Analysis

#### Simultaneous Relationship of Knowledge of Breast Anatomy and Lactation Management Techniques to Breast Production

To determine the simultaneous relationship of the two independent variables to breast milk production, multiple logistic regression analysis was performed. This analysis aims to identify which variables contribute the most dominant to breast milk production.

Table 7.

Multiple Logistic Regression Analysis Results (n=65)

Independent Variables	Coefficient (B)	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% CI	<i>p-value</i>
Breast Anatomy Knowledge	1.856	6.395	2.145-19.058	0.001
Lactation Management Techniques	2.124	8.366	2.687-26.047	0.000
Constant	-4.256	-	-	0.000

*Nagelkerke R Square* = 0.628 (62.8%)

The results of the logistic regression analysis in table 7 show that the two independent variables simultaneously have a significant relationship with breast milk production. Lactation management techniques have the *highest Odds Ratio* value of 8,366 (95% CI: 2,687-26,047, *p*=0,000), which means that mothers with the application of good lactation management techniques have an 8,366 times greater chance of having sufficient milk production compared to mothers with less application. Meanwhile, knowledge of breast anatomy also showed a significant association with OR of 6,395 (95% CI: 2,145-19,058, *p*=0.001), indicating that mothers with good knowledge had a 6,395 times greater chance of having sufficient milk production. *The Nagelkerke R Square* value of 0.628 indicates that the two independent variables are able to explain 62.8% of the variation in breast milk production, while 37.2% is explained by other factors outside of this study model. These findings confirm that both knowledge of breast anatomy and lactation management techniques have an important role in determining the success of breast milk production, with lactation management techniques contributing to a slightly more dominant role.

## DISCUSSION

### Characteristics of Respondents

The characteristics of the respondents in this study showed a fairly representative distribution with the majority being in the productive age range of 26-30 years (40.0%) and the level of secondary to upper education. These findings are in line with the results of research that show that demographic factors such as education level and employment status have an influence on breastfeeding practices. Respondents with high school/vocational and tertiary education reached 87.7%, which should provide better knowledge capital in understanding the importance of lactation. However, the results

of the descriptive analysis showed that there were still 21.5% of respondents with a lack of knowledge of breast anatomy, indicating that the level of formal education did not always correlate directly with a specific understanding of lactation physiology. A higher proportion of multipara mothers (56.9%) should be an advantage because previous breastfeeding experience can help mothers be more skilled, but the data show that experience alone is not enough without adequate knowledge of anatomy and correct techniques.

### **Level of Knowledge of Breast Anatomy in Breastfeeding Mothers**

The results showed that the majority of respondents had sufficient (43.1%) and good (35.4%) knowledge about breast anatomy, but there were still 21.5% with less knowledge. These findings underscore the importance of comprehensive lactation education for health students and mothers-to-be. Breastfeeding education programs have been shown to significantly improve breastfeeding knowledge, positive attitudes, and skills among nursing, midwifery, and medical students (Anderson et al., 2023). In-depth understanding of structure Alveoli, ductal system, and mechanisms Milk Ejection Reflex is crucial because it provides a basis for physiological understanding of how breast milk is produced and flowed. Nurses and healthcare workers working during the perinatal period are uniquely positioned to educate families and offer evidence-based interventions to promote optimal breast milk supply. When the mother understands that breast milk production works based on the principle supply and demand, they will be more motivated to breastfeed regularly and effectively empty the breast (Triansyah et al., 2021).

### **Application of Lactation Management Techniques in Breastfeeding Mothers**

The application of lactation management techniques in this study showed quite good results with 40.0% of respondents in the good category and 38.5% in the adequate category. However, there are still 21.5% of respondents with less than optimal implementation. Strategies to promote breastfeeding success can be done through the provision of structured lactation education and support. Lactation education and support programs such as SATUPAS have been shown to significantly increase breast milk production, frequency of breast expression, and the success of partial breastfeeding (Yao et al., 2021). Evidence-based interventions such as early skin-to-skin contact, regular breast emptying, and professional lactation support are essential to be implemented in the first few hours after birth. Although the guidelines recommend breast milk expression within the first hour of birth, the reality is that most of the first expressions occur much later due to various organizational barriers and competing clinical tasks. Practical techniques such as back and breast massage were also shown to significantly increase milk production on days three to seven compared to the control group (Kilci Erciyas & Kavlak, 2024).

### **The Relationship between Breast Anatomy Knowledge and Breast Milk Production**

The results of bivariate analysis showed a significant relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and breast milk production ( $p=0.002$ ;  $r=0.456$ ). These findings are in line with the theory that physiological understanding of lactation mechanisms may affect mothers' confidence and their breastfeeding practices. Milk production is intricately regulated by endocrine and autocrine control mechanisms, where the hormones estrogen and progesterone play an important role in this process (Natalia et al., 2022). When the mother understands how the hormone prolactin is stimulated by breast emptying and how oxytocin triggers Milk Ejection Reflex, they will be more consistent in implementing correct breastfeeding practices. The data showed that 82.6% of respondents with good knowledge had sufficient milk production, while only 28.6% in the knowledge group lacked. This significant gap confirms that breast anatomy education should be an essential component of lactation preparation programs.

### **The Relationship of Lactation Management Techniques with Breast Milk Production**

The relationship between lactation management techniques and milk production showed a stronger correlation ( $p=0.001$ ;  $r=0.523$ ) compared to the variable of knowledge. This indicates that the

correct practical application of the technique has a direct impact on breast milk production outcomes. Systematic management such as Five-Step Systematic Therapy (FSST) has been proven to be effective in overcoming the problem of duct blockage and mastitis that can inhibit breast milk production. Oxytocin massage techniques and breast care have also shown a significant influence on increasing milk production based on the frequency and duration of breastfeeding (Jin et al., 2024). Respondents with the application of good techniques had a proportion of adequate breast milk production of 84.6%, indicating the effectiveness of practical interventions. Concerns about breast milk supply, infant nutritional intake, and weight gain are the most common reasons for early breastfeeding, so the implementation of proper techniques from the beginning is crucial.

### **Simultaneous Relationship of Knowledge and Management Techniques to Breast Milk Production**

Logistic regression analysis showed that the two variables simultaneously contributed 62.8% to the variation in breast milk production. Lactation management techniques have Odds Ratio higher (8,366) than anatomical knowledge (6,395), indicating that practical applications have a slightly more dominant influence. However, the combination of the two has an optimal impact. These findings reinforce the argument that lactation education programs should be holistic, not only focusing on theoretical knowledge transfer but also involving clinical practicum to improve skills (Pados & Camp, 2024). Implementing evidence-based practices in the first few hours after birth and connecting families with lactation support in the first 14 days can help families achieve their breastfeeding goals. About 10-15% of mothers experience Low milk supply which poses a significant challenge to exclusive and sustainable breastfeeding (Sandhi et al., 2023), so comprehensive interventions that integrate practical knowledge and skills are essential to address this problem.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study found that the majority of breastfeeding mothers had a good knowledge of breast anatomy and had applied lactation management techniques adequately, although there were still a small percentage of respondents who needed improved understanding and skills. The results of the analysis showed a significant relationship between knowledge of breast anatomy and breast milk production, where mothers with a better understanding of breast structure and function tended to have more optimal milk production. Similarly, the correct application of lactation management techniques has been shown to have a strong correlation with adequate milk production.

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