

Lactation Management and Acupressure Technique Training to Enhance Breast Milk Production among Breastfeeding Mothers

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Abstract

Purpose: This community service program aimed to improve the knowledge, practical skills, and confidence of breastfeeding mothers in lactation management and acupressure techniques as a natural approach to enhance breast milk production and support the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

Methodology: The program was conducted in Taeno Bawah Hamlet, Ambon City, Indonesia, and involved 30 breastfeeding mothers with infants aged 0–6 months old. The intervention consisted of health education on breastfeeding physiology and lactation management, demonstrations of acupressure techniques, guided hands-on practice, interactive discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and the distribution of educational leaflets. Participants' knowledge and practical skills were assessed using pre- and post-intervention evaluations.

Results: The program was successfully implemented with full attendance and active participation. Participants showed improved knowledge of lactation management, acupressure skills, confidence, and motivation, with the mean score increasing from 45 to 90.

Conclusions: Lactation management education combined with acupressure technique training effectively improved breastfeeding mothers' knowledge, practical skills, and confidence in supporting successful breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding practices.

Limitations: The program was conducted in a single community with a relatively small sample size and without long-term follow-up to evaluate sustained behavioral changes or breastfeeding outcomes.

Contributions: This program provides a practical, low-cost, and replicable model integrating lactation education and acupressure training to support exclusive breastfeeding.

Keywords: *Acupressure, Breastfeeding, Lactation Management*

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1. Introduction

Breast milk is the ideal source of nutrition for infant growth and development. The United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend that infants be exclusively breastfed for at least the first six months of life ([Asnidawati, 2021](#)). The WHO has set a

global target of achieving a minimum exclusive breastfeeding rate of 50% in every country by 2025 ([Basu 2020](#); [Cristina 2020](#)). In Indonesia, the highest exclusive breastfeeding coverage in 2021 was reported in West Nusa Tenggara Province (81.46%), whereas the lowest was reported in Gorontalo Province (52.75%) ([Badan Pusat Statistik, 2022](#)). Exclusive breastfeeding practices are influenced by various factors, including family support particularly from husbands and healthcare providers, maternal knowledge, maternal educational level, maternal age, breastfeeding experience, breastfeeding position, maternal return to work, maternal physiological and psychological conditions, insufficient breast milk production, early initiation of breastfeeding, primiparity, and breastfeeding self-efficacy ([Mercan, 2021](#); [Nankumbi, 2019](#)).

According to WHO and UNICEF data from 2018, the global exclusive breastfeeding rate remained relatively low at only 41%. In Indonesia, the 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) reported that the exclusive breastfeeding rate was only 37%. In Maluku Province, the exclusive breastfeeding coverage in 2021 was only 49.9%, representing a substantial decline from 76.9% in 2020. This failure to achieve the target was primarily attributed to inadequate education on exclusive breastfeeding for pregnant women. The low coverage of exclusive breastfeeding has contributed to the high prevalence of undernutrition among children under five years of age in the Maluku Province.

Based on the 2021 Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey (SSGI), the prevalence of stunting, wasting, and underweight among children under five years of age in Indonesia was 24.4%, 7.1%, and 17.0%, respectively. Although these figures have gradually declined over the years, they remain far above the national targets of reducing stunting to below 20% and wasting to below 5%. Maluku Province is one of the regions experiencing acute-chronic nutritional problems, with stunting and wasting rates exceeding both the national targets and averages ([Kemenkes, 2021](#)). Among the provinces in Indonesia, Maluku ranks eleventh in terms of stunting prevalence (28.7%). Maluku was among the three provinces with the highest prevalence of wasting (12%) and underweight (26.4%). A similar situation was observed in Central Maluku Regency, which reported some of the highest rates of stunting (29.8%), wasting (17.7%), and underweight (32.6%) in the province ([Kemenkes 2021](#)). These findings indicate that greater efforts by the government and healthcare professionals, particularly midwives, are needed to improve the exclusive breastfeeding coverage in Maluku.

Lactation or breastfeeding is a physiological process that stimulates breast milk production through the release of prolactin and oxytocin. During pregnancy, prolactin levels increase; however, milk secretion does not occur because it is inhibited by the high estrogen concentration. Breastfeeding is a unique and beneficial interaction that supports the growth and development of infants. However, initiating breastfeeding is not always easy, and many women encounter difficulties during the early postpartum period. One of the most common problems during the first few days after childbirth is delayed or inadequate breast milk production. Therefore, mothers require comprehensive postpartum healthcare services to ensure that both maternal and infant needs are adequately met throughout the postnatal period ([Maritvi 2023](#)).

Exclusive breastfeeding contributes to approximately 30.1% of the prevention of stunting among children under five years of age, emphasizing the importance of adequate nutritional intake during early childhood. Exclusive breastfeeding also plays an important role in preventing acute malnutrition, including wasting ([Umar et al., 2024](#)). Breastfeeding practices are influenced by multiple factors, including maternal knowledge, socio-cultural and economic conditions, physiological factors, and health education provided by healthcare professionals ([Niar, 2021](#)). Psychological factors also play an important role in influencing breast milk production among postpartum mothers ([Rosnani 2019](#)). In addition, physical conditions resulting from childbirth complications or maternal fatigue may reduce milk production, thereby increasing the likelihood of failure to exclusively breastfeed ([Nufus, 2019](#); [Pujiastuti, N., Sutjiati, E., & Retnowati, L. 2021](#)). These challenges can be addressed through education on lactation management and non-pharmacological interventions, one of which is the application of acupressure techniques for breastfeeding mothers ([Nurhasanah & Masluroh., 2022](#); [Frisilia, M., & Handriani, E. 2022](#)).

Lactation encompasses the entire breastfeeding process, from breast milk production to infant suckling and swallowing. Lactation management refers to the comprehensive care and support required to ensure successful breastfeeding. Poor lactation management may result in reduced breastfeeding rates, which can contribute to the increased prevalence of malnutrition and undernutrition, thereby elevating the risk of infant mortality ([Mariani, 2022](#)). Furthermore, previous studies have reported that acupressure is an effective non-pharmacological intervention for addressing insufficient breastmilk production. It is believed to stimulate prolactin and oxytocin receptor activity, thereby enhancing breast milk secretion and facilitating milk ejection ([Nurhasanah 2022](#)).

Acupressure involves the application of finger pressure to specific points on the body, stimulating the posterior pituitary gland and influencing the hormonal function involved in breast milk production ([Liliana, 2020](#)). Acupressure also increases systemic endorphin levels. Stimulation of acupressure points promotes the release of substances capable of inhibiting pain signals transmitted to the brain. The physiological mechanisms underlying acupressure may involve both neural pathways and humoral transmitters, although these mechanisms have not yet been fully elucidated ([Indrayani, Choirunnisa, & Nurani, 2023](#)). Acupressure is a non-invasive intervention that is simple to perform, associated with minimal adverse effects, and capable of strengthening the therapeutic relationship between mothers and midwives. A study conducted by Savabi concluded that acupressure is an effective method for increasing breast milk volume among breastfeeding mothers ([Asnidawati, 2021](#)).

However, although previous studies have demonstrated the potential benefits of lactation management education and acupressure in improving breastfeeding outcomes, these interventions are often implemented separately, and evidence regarding their integration into community-based educational and skills training programs remains limited. In particular, practical interventions are needed that not only improve mothers' knowledge of lactation management but also equip them with skills that can be independently applied at home to address common breastfeeding difficulties. This gap is particularly relevant in communities where access to continuous breastfeeding support from healthcare professionals is limited.

Therefore, this community service program was designed to integrate lactation management education with practical training in acupressure techniques for breastfeeding mothers in Dusun Taeno Bawah, Ambon. The novelty of this program lies in combining evidence-based lactation education with hands-on acupressure training, enabling mothers to acquire both knowledge and practical skills that can be independently applied at home. This integrated approach is important for the target community because it provides mothers with simple, noninvasive, and potentially accessible strategies to support breast milk production while strengthening their confidence in managing breastfeeding challenges. Through interactive education, demonstration, direct practice, and mentoring, the program is expected to enhance mothers' knowledge, practical skills, confidence, and readiness to adopt appropriate breastfeeding practices.

2. Research Methodology

The community service program was implemented using the Community Partnership Program *Program Kemitraan Masyarakat* (PKM) approach through educational sessions, training, demonstrations, hands-on practice, and mentoring for breastfeeding mothers. This participatory approach is widely recognized as an effective strategy for improving community knowledge, practical skills, and health-related behaviors through active learning and community engagement ([World, 2021](#); [Kementerian, 2023](#)). The target participants were 30 breastfeeding mothers with infants aged less than six months, residing in Taeno Bawah Hamlet, Ambon City. The program was conducted in May 2026 in collaboration with the Head of Poka Rumah Tiga Primary Health Center, Coordinating Midwife of Taeno Bawah Hamlet, community health volunteers (cadres), and the community service team.

The program began with a preparatory phase, which involved coordinating with the Head of Poka Rumah Tiga Primary Health Center, the Coordinating Midwife, and local health cadres to obtain permission, establish implementation procedures, and identify eligible participants. During this phase, the team also developed program instruments, including pre- and post-test questionnaires, educational leaflets, and an educational video demonstrating acupressure techniques to enhance breast milk

production. Educational media, such as leaflets and videos, have been shown to improve participants' understanding and facilitate the adoption of health-promoting behaviors ([World, 2021](#); [Kementerian, 2023](#)). Furthermore, the community service team prepared all the necessary materials for implementation, including duplicating questionnaires, developing presentation materials, preparing educational videos, producing banners, and arranging the equipment and supplies required for the program.

The implementation phase commenced with the administration of a pre-test to assess the participants' baseline knowledge of lactation management and acupressure techniques. This was followed by health education delivered through interactive lectures, group discussions, and educational video presentations covering the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, principles of lactation management, and benefits of acupressure in promoting breast milk production. Interactive educational methods combined with demonstrations and guided practice have been reported to enhance knowledge retention and improve participants' practical competencies ([Bastable, 2021](#); [World, 2021](#)). After the educational session, the team demonstrated acupressure techniques at specific acupoints associated with stimulating lactation in the participants. Participants were then given the opportunity to practice the techniques under the direct supervision and guidance of the community service team until they could perform them correctly.

Upon completion of the educational and practical sessions, the participants completed a post-test using the same questionnaire to evaluate improvements in knowledge. In addition, the participants' practical skills in performing acupressure techniques were assessed using a structured observation checklist developed prior to the program. The pre-test–post-test design is commonly used to evaluate the effectiveness of educational interventions by measuring changes in participants' knowledge and skills before and after program implementation ([Polit & Beck, 2021](#)). The pre- and post-test results, together with the practical skill assessments, were compared to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention in improving the participants' knowledge and skills related to lactation management and acupressure.

The final phase consisted of monitoring and evaluating program implementation. The community service team documented all activities through photographs and videos, prepared a comprehensive activity report, and summarized the participants' knowledge and skill assessment results before and after the intervention. Follow-up monitoring was conducted to assess the sustainability of lactation management practices and the application of acupressure techniques among breastfeeding mothers after program completion. Continuous monitoring and follow-up are essential components of community-based health promotion programs to ensure the sustainability of behavioral changes and intervention outcomes ([World, 2021](#)). This follow-up is expected to support the successful practice of exclusive breastfeeding and contribute to addressing the problem of insufficient breast milk production within the community. The instruments used in this community service program included educational leaflets, an acupressure educational video, pre- and post-test questionnaires, and a structured observation checklist for assessing participants' practical skills. The equipment and materials used included a laptop, an LCD projector, a camera for documentation and video recording, program banners, and other supporting equipment required throughout the educational and training activities.

3. Results and Discussion

A community service program on lactation management education and acupressure technique training to improve breast milk production was conducted in May 2026 in Taeno Bawah Hamlet, Ambon City, involving 30 breastfeeding mothers with infants younger than six months of age. All participants attended the entire program, which consisted of a pre-test, educational sessions, acupressure demonstrations, supervised hands-on practice, and a post-test. Program evaluation was conducted to assess the knowledge and practical skills of breastfeeding mothers regarding lactation management and acupressure techniques before and after participation. The findings demonstrated that the intervention substantially improved participants' knowledge and practical skills.

Before the educational intervention, the pre-test results showed that the mean knowledge score for lactation management and acupressure techniques was 45. This result indicates that most participants had limited knowledge of lactation management, the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, proper breastfeeding techniques, signs of adequate breast milk intake, and the benefits and procedures of acupressure for enhancing breast milk production. Following the educational sessions using leaflets and instructional videos, the participants attended demonstrations and supervised hands-on practice of acupressure techniques conducted by the community service team. The participants then completed the post-test using the same questionnaires. The findings revealed that the mean knowledge score increased to 90, representing an improvement of 45 points compared with the pretest. This substantial increase indicates that the combination of educational lectures, printed leaflets, educational videos, demonstrations, and practical training was highly effective in improving breastfeeding mothers' knowledge of lactation management and acupressure techniques.

In addition to improving their knowledge, the participants' practical skills in performing acupressure techniques also improved substantially. The pre-test skills assessment revealed that none of the participants were familiar with the acupressure points used to stimulate breast milk production or could perform the acupressure technique correctly. Following the demonstration and supervised hands-on practice conducted by the community service team, the post-test assessment showed that all participants could accurately identify the appropriate acupressure points and correctly perform the acupressure technique according to the recommended procedure. These findings indicate that combining demonstrations with supervised practical training is highly effective in improving breastfeeding mothers' practical competence in independently performing acupressure.

Throughout the program, the participants demonstrated a high level of enthusiasm and active engagement. They actively participated in discussions, asked questions, and repeatedly practiced acupressure techniques until they could perform them correctly. Continuous supervision and constructive feedback from the community service team enabled the participants to refine their skills and achieve optimal practical competence. As shown in Figure 1, the mean knowledge scores of breastfeeding mothers increased substantially after the educational intervention on lactation management and acupressure techniques, indicating the effectiveness of the program in improving participants' knowledge.

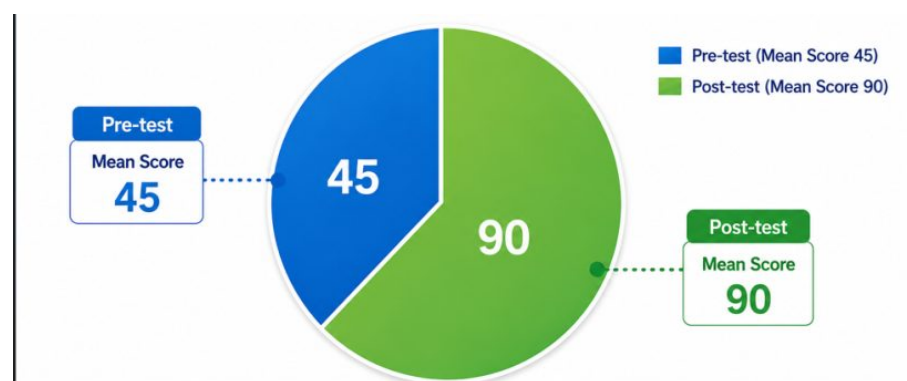


Figure 1. Mean knowledge scores of breastfeeding mothers on lactation management and acupressure techniques before and after the educational intervention

The results of this community service program demonstrated that lactation management education combined with acupressure technique training significantly improved the knowledge and practical skills of breastfeeding women. The mean knowledge score increased from 45 in the pre-test to 90 in the post-test. This improvement indicates that an educational approach integrating health counseling, educational leaflets, instructional videos, demonstrations, and hands-on practice is effective for enhancing mothers' understanding of lactation management and acupressure techniques. These findings are consistent with those reported by [Sandhi et al. \(2023\)](#), who concluded that breastfeeding educational interventions significantly improve participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practical skills, particularly when combined with hands-on practice rather than relying solely on lecture-based teaching.

The improvement in participants' knowledge also suggests that delivering educational content through multiple learning media enables breastfeeding mothers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of lactation management. [Similarly, Umar et al. \(2024\)](#) demonstrated that community-based socialization on exclusive breastfeeding strengthened participants' understanding of breastfeeding and wasting prevention. The educational materials covered the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding, proper breastfeeding techniques, signs of adequate breast milk intake, and non-pharmacological strategies to enhance breast milk production. These findings are consistent with those of [Mahfuzi and Novita \(2024\)](#), who reported that lactation management education significantly improved breastfeeding mothers' knowledge and breastfeeding self-efficacy. Similarly, studies on comprehensive breastfeeding education have demonstrated that systematic educational interventions enhance maternal knowledge and improve breastfeeding practices among postpartum women ([Mahfuzi & Novita, 2024](#)). The increase in knowledge observed in this program was further supported by the use of a multimodal learning approach that combined health counseling, educational leaflets, instructional videos, demonstrations, and practical training. The integration of multiple educational media enabled participants to receive information through different learning channels, making the material easier to understand, retain, and apply in their daily practice. In addition to improving knowledge, this approach also enhanced mothers' confidence in breastfeeding their infants (breastfeeding self-efficacy). These findings are supported by [Sembiring et al. \(2024\)](#), who reported that breastfeeding education combined with continuous mentoring and multiple educational media effectively improves breastfeeding self-efficacy and the success of exclusive breastfeeding. Evidence indicates that community-based interventions can promote healthier practices and encourage appropriate healthcare-seeking behaviors among communities and families ([Qomaruddin et al., 2026](#)).

In addition to enhancing knowledge, this program successfully improved breastfeeding mothers' practical skills in performing acupressure techniques. Before training, the participants were unfamiliar with the locations of the acupressure points and were unable to perform the techniques correctly. Following demonstrations, supervised hands-on practice, and continuous mentoring, all participants accurately identified the appropriate acupressure points and correctly performed the techniques according to the recommended procedures. These findings support the results of a systematic review conducted by [Sandhi et al. \(2023\)](#), who concluded that educational interventions incorporating demonstrations, skills laboratories, and clinical practice produce greater improvements in practical skills than theoretical instruction alone.

The success of the training program was further supported by the use of demonstrations and repeated practice, allowing participants to acquire knowledge through experience. Throughout the training process, the participants received theoretical information and immediate feedback from the community service team, enabling prompt correction of technical errors. This approach has been proven effective in improving participants' practical competence, as reported by [Prihanti et al. \(2024\)](#), who found that breastfeeding counseling training significantly improved participants' knowledge, attitudes, and practical skills through a combination of educational sessions and practical exercises.

Acupressure has been increasingly recognized as a non-pharmacological intervention to promote breast milk production by stimulating specific acupoints associated with the release of prolactin and oxytocin. Previous studies have indicated that acupressure has the potential to enhance milk secretion among postpartum mothers and is considered a relatively simple, safe, and easy-to-perform intervention following appropriate training ([Witucki Brown et al., 2022](#)). These findings are further supported by [Kusrini et al. \(2025\)](#), who reported that stimulation of specific acupressure points can increase the release of prolactin and oxytocin, which play essential roles in breast milk synthesis and ejection. Furthermore, combining acupressure with lactation management education produced better outcomes than implementing either intervention alone. Therefore, integrating lactation management education with acupressure training represents an effective non-pharmacological strategy for supporting successful exclusive breast-feeding.

The high level of enthusiasm demonstrated by the participants throughout the program also contributed to its success. Participants actively engaged in discussions, asked questions, and repeatedly practiced acupressure techniques, indicating that participatory learning methods effectively enhance learning motivation. Active participation throughout the educational process facilitated more

effective knowledge transfer and skill acquisition, enabling participants to better understand and apply their acquired knowledge in their daily lives. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of active learning approaches in improving the competencies of healthcare professionals and breastfeeding mothers ([Sandhi et al., 2023](#)).

Overall, the findings of this community service program indicate that lactation management education combined with acupressure technique training is an effective strategy for improving the knowledge and practical competencies of breastfeeding women. Improvements in knowledge and skills are expected to encourage mothers to adopt appropriate breastfeeding practices, independently perform acupressure techniques when experiencing insufficient breast milk production, and support the successful implementation of exclusive breastfeeding. Similar community-based educational programs should be implemented on a broader and more sustainable scale, involving healthcare professionals and community health volunteers to expand educational coverage and achieve greater improvements in maternal and infant health outcomes in the future.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The community service program on lactation management education and acupressure technique training successfully improved the knowledge and practical skills of breastfeeding mothers in supporting breast milk production. The evaluation results demonstrated that the mean knowledge score increased from 45 in the pre-test to 90 in the post-test, indicating a substantial improvement in participants' understanding of lactation management, the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, and the application of acupressure as a non-pharmacological intervention to promote breastmilk production. In addition, the participants' practical skills improved considerably. Before the training, most participants were unfamiliar with the acupressure points and were unable to perform the technique correctly. After demonstrations, guided hands-on practice, and continuous mentoring, all participants accurately identified the appropriate acupressure points and correctly performed the acupressure techniques. These findings indicate that integrating health education, demonstrations, practical training, and mentoring is an effective community-based strategy for enhancing breastfeeding mothers' competencies and supporting successful exclusive breastfeeding.

4.2 Research Limitations

This community service program has several limitations. First, it was conducted in a single community with a relatively small sample size of 30 breastfeeding mothers, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other settings. Second, the evaluation focused primarily on changes in participants' knowledge and practical skills using a pre-test and post-test design without a comparison group. Third, the program did not include long-term follow-up to determine whether the participants consistently applied lactation management and acupressure techniques or whether these interventions resulted in sustained improvements in breast milk production and exclusive breastfeeding practices.

4.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Research

Future community service programs and research should involve larger and more diverse populations across multiple communities to improve the generalizability of these findings. Longitudinal follow-up is recommended to evaluate the sustainability of participants' knowledge, skills, breastfeeding behaviors, and exclusive breastfeeding outcomes after the intervention. Future studies should incorporate comparison or control groups and assess objective breastfeeding indicators such as breast milk production, breastfeeding frequency, infant growth, and exclusive breastfeeding rates. Furthermore, integrating digital educational media, mobile health applications, and community-based mentoring programs may strengthen the effectiveness and sustainability of lactation management and acupressure interventions in promoting maternal and child health.

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