



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BREASTFEEDING HISTORY AND THE INCIDENCE OF PICKY EATING IN PRESCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Picky eater behavior is an eating problem characterized by a lack of desire to try new food variations that often occurs in preschool-aged children. Picky eaters can be influenced by many factors, one of which is the early experience of eating including breastfeeding. The introduction of various flavors through breast milk transmission can make children later become more familiar with new flavors. This study aims to determine the relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children. This study used a cross sectional approach. The sample was 157 respondents who were taken using proportionate random sampling technique at 3 kindergartens in Pekanbaru. The instruments used to obtain data on picky eater behavior in this study were Child Eating Behavior Questionnaire (CEBQ) and Breastfeeding History Questionnaire. This study used univariate and bivariate analysis with chi-square statistical test. The results of the analysis showed that there were 60 respondent children who had picky eater behavior and 97 respondent children who had non-picky eater behavior. A total of 110 respondent children have a history of exclusive breastfeeding, 4 respondent children have a history of predominant breastfeeding and 43 respondent children have a history of partial breastfeeding. The results of the chi square statistical test showed that there was a significant relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children with p value = 0.001 ($< \alpha$ 0.05).

Keywords: breastfeeding history; picky eater; preschool children

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INTRODUCTION

Preschool children are a category of children aged 3 to 6 years, known as the golden period for children in their growth and development where in this period physical growth tends to slow down, while psychosocial and cognitive development increases. Children at this stage often show great curiosity and become more able to communicate (Mansur, 2019). At this age, special attention is needed to children's nutritional intake, as it is important to support their growth and development. During this period, children tend to ignore mealtimes because they are more interested in playing activities, which results in a lack of nutritional intake necessary for children (Syahroni et al., 2021). There are still many phenomena in the community, where preschool children have difficulty eating. One of the eating problems in children is picky eater behavior which also affects the nutritional status of children (Hakiki, 2023). Compared to other age groups, preschool children more often show picky eater behavior. Supported by Horst et al., (2014) 57% of parents who have children aged 36-48 months say that their children are picky eaters. The prevalence of picky eater problems varies widely in several countries. Research by Xue et al., (2015) in China, children who showed picky eater behavior were 59.3%. In research by Kumar et al., (2018) in India, around 58.9% of children showed picky eater behavior. In addition, it was found that the highest prevalence of picky eaters was found at the age of 3 to 5 years. As happened in Taiwan, 72% of children are picky eaters (Chao, 2018). While in Indonesia the prevalence of picky eaters is 52.4%

(Hardianti et al., 2018). Based on research by (Subecca et al., 2023) in Pekanbaru, it was found that 65.7% of children experienced picky eaters.

Picky eater refers to the behavior of children who only accept certain types of food and are reluctant to try new types of food (Nurmalasari et al., 2020). Children can be considered picky eaters if they show characteristics such as consistently rejecting food based on taste, texture, temperature, or aroma. Signs of food rejection can include unpleasant facial expressions, closing the mouth, and even vomiting. There may also be a history of trauma to the gastrointestinal tract or a history of food allergies or certain physical conditions associated with the child's food selection (Rufaida & Lestari, 2018). Picky eater can be influenced by many factors, one of which is the initial experience of eating including exclusive breastfeeding (Zahrani, 2021). According to WHO (2018), breastfeeding patterns include exclusive, predominant, and partial. Children who are breastfed get a variety of flavors according to their mother's diet, so the child has received exposure to different flavors than children who are not breastfed or given food other than breast milk or only drink formula milk (Zahrani, 2021). The introduction of various flavors through breast milk transmission can make children later become more familiar with new flavors so that the risk of food rejection is lower. A cohort study showed that children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding tended to have a higher vegetable intake compared to children without a history of exclusive breastfeeding (Specht et al., 2018). Some studies also show that infants who are not exclusively breastfed tend to become picky eaters later in life (Pramesty, 2019).

Based on the results of preliminary studies conducted by researchers in March and April 2024 at 3 kindergartens in Pekanbaru City, namely Al-Azhar 54 Kindergarten, Al-Izhar Kindergarten and Siti Sawiah PAUD with 26 respondents, 16 respondents said that their children showed picky eater behavior. Of the 16 children, there were 9 picky eaters with partial breastfeeding history, and 7 with exclusive breastfeeding history. Picky eater behavior is characterized by children not wanting to try new foods even to the point of melting food, difficulty eating, refusing to eat vegetables, preferring sweet and savory foods. Based on the description above, it can be seen that children, especially preschool children, still have a high frequency of picky eaters and considering the many benefits of breast milk for children, so researchers are interested in conducting research related to "The Relationship between Breastfeeding History and the Incidence of Picky Eater in Preschool Age Children"

METHOD

The research was conducted at Al-Azhar 54 Kindergarten, Al-Izhar Kindergarten and Siti Sawiah PAUD Pekanbaru. This research used quantitative research design with correlation research method and cross sectional approach. The population in this study were parents with preschool-age children in Al-Azhar 54 Kindergarten, Al-Izhar Kindergarten and Siti Sawiah PAUD Pekanbaru. The sample in this study amounted to 157 respondents who were taken with proportionate random sampling technique. This study measured 2 variables, namely the breastfeeding history variable and the picky eater variable measured using the Child Eating Behavior Questionnaire (CEBQ). Data was collected by distributing questionnaires filled out by the child's parents. The statistical test used was the chi square test. This research has passed the ethical test on May 20, 2024 Number: 726/UNI19.5.1.8/KEPK.FKp/2024. The picky eater behavior questionnaire used in this study was adopted from the Children Eating Behaviour Questionnaire (CEBQ) Wardle et al., (2001) from research (Cerdasari et al., 2017). This questionnaire has been shown to have good internal consistency, tested reliability, stability over time. The validity test results are $r_{count} > r_{table}$ with a range of r_{count} 0.56-0.90 which means that of the 24 statements there are no invalid questions found, so it is concluded that the questionnaire is valid. The reliability test results obtained Cronbach's

Alpha > 0.60 with a value of 0.74-0.91, it can be concluded that the statements in the questionnaire are reliable. Picky eater is determined by CEBQ questionnaire which measures 2 categories of food avoidance such as feeling full quickly (SR), eating slowly (SE) and fussy and picky eating (FF) in questions number 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24 and food approach categories including eating enjoyment (EF) and eating response (FR) in questions number 1, 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 19, 23. This questionnaire uses a Likert scale with the answer options never (TP) rated 1, rarely (JR) rated 2, sometimes (KK) rated 3, often (SR) rated 4, and always (SL) rated 5 for all question items. The objective criterion is called a picky eater if the average score of food avoidance is greater than the average food approach, and is called not a picky eater if the average score of food approach is greater than the average score of food avoidance.

RESULT

Table 1.
Mothers Characteristics (n= 157)

Mothers Characteristics	f	%
Age		
Age 21-40 years	132	84
Age 41-55 years	25	16
Education		
Elementary School	2	1
Junior High School	12	8
Senior High School	69	44
Diploma/University	74	47
Work		
Housewife	99	63
Private employees	17	11
Entrepreneur	26	17
PNS/TNI/POLRI	8	5
Etc	7	4
Tribe		
Minang	75	48
Malay	34	22
Java	37	23
Batak	8	5
Etc	3	2

Most of the mothers were aged 21-40 years with 132 respondents (84%). Based on the level of education, the majority of respondents had a diploma / college education as many as 74 respondents (47%), the most respondents' occupations were housewives totaling 99 respondents (63%), and the largest tribe was the Minang tribe as many as 75 respondents (48%).

Table 2.
Child Respondent Characteristics (n= 157)

Child Respondent Characteristics	f	%
Age		
Age 3 years	19	12
Age 4 years	22	14
Age 5 years	49	31
Age 6 years	67	43
Gender		
Laki-laki	85	54
Perempuan	72	46

Table 2. shows that the respondent children in this study totaled 157 people. Most of them were 6 years old, totaling 67 children (43%), and most of them were male, 85 children (54%).

Table 3.
Breastfeeding History (n= 157)

Breastfeeding History	f	%
Exclusive breastfeeding	110	70
Predominant breastfeeding	4	3
Partial breastfeeding	43	27

Based on table 3, it is known that the majority of children have a history of exclusive breastfeeding, namely 110 children (70%).

Table 4.
Picky Eater Behavior (n= 157)

Picky Eater Behavior	f	%
Picky Eater	60	38
Non Picky Eater	97	62

Table 4 shows that most children have non-picky eater behavior, namely 97 children.

Table 5.
Relationship between Breastfeeding History and Picky Eater Incidence

Relationship between Breastfeeding History and Picky Eater Incidence							
Breastfeeding history	Incidence of <i>Picky Eater</i>				Total		<i>P Value</i>
	<i>Picky Eater</i>		<i>Non Picky Eater</i>				
	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Exclusive breastfeeding	32	29	78	71	110	100	0,001
Predominan breastfeeding	1	25	3	75	4	100	
Partial breastfeeding	27	63	16	37	43	100	

Table 5 shows the analysis of the relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children, it is known that children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding have an incidence of picky eaters as many as 32 children (29%) and non-picky eaters as many as 78 children (71%). Children with a predominant breastfeeding history only 1 child (25%) had picky eater behavior and 3 children (75%) were non-picky eaters, while children with partial breastfeeding history had an incidence of picky eaters as many as 27 children (63%) and 16 non-picky eaters (37%). The results of the chi square test obtained p value = 0.001 ($< \alpha$ 0.05) means that H_0 is rejected, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children.

DISCUSSION

Mothers Characteristics

Age

The results of research on 157 maternal respondents found that most of the mothers' ages were at 21-40 years with 132 respondents (84%). Comparable to Nadya (2019) where the majority of mothers range their age in early adulthood, namely 21-40 years of age. Mothers at this stage of adulthood are generally able to solve various problems that arise, to be able to face challenges, especially paying attention to children's nutritional intake and understanding the growth and development of children according to their age. According to the researcher's assumption, age can affect the breastfeeding process, and the age of the mother determines maternal health related to the state of pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, and even the care and feeding of the baby. In early adulthood, a woman's reproductive organs are optimized to perform their functions, including breastfeeding.

Education

The results of research on 157 maternal respondents showed that most respondents had a diploma / college education totaling 74 respondents (47%). This is comparable to Manurung et al., (2023) explaining that most of the respondents' education was college as many as 30 people (63.8%). Parents, especially mothers with higher education, tend to have broader knowledge. Highly educated mothers are more skilled in providing food to children. In addition, it is also easier to understand information about nutrition and apply it to their children (Muthohiroh et al., 2021).

Occupation

According to the results of research on 157 maternal respondents, the results showed that the majority of respondents' jobs were housewives, totaling 99 respondents (63%). Comparable to Farwati & Amar (2020) where most mothers' employment status is housewife or not working, namely 83.33%. Reinforced by Ramadani & Sembiring (2023) that 55, 6% of mothers do not work. One of the factors that influence children's eating behavior is the employment status of parents Farwati & Amar (2020). Parents, especially working mothers, have limited time with children, which has an impact on children's eating patterns (Noviana, 2019). Working mothers can influence children to become picky eaters because of the important role of parents, especially mothers, when preparing and providing meals. Working and non-working mothers differ in interaction time and adjustments to their children's eating habits. Thus, the status of working mothers is likely to affect children's eating behavior (Pangestuti & Prameswari, 2021).

Tribe

According to the results of research on 157 maternal respondents, the results showed that the most tribe was the Minang tribe, namely 75 respondents (48%). In line with Manurung et al., (2023) which states that the largest tribe is Minang, namely 29.8%. According to data from the Pekanbaru Mayor's Office, the largest ethnicity in the city is Minangkabau, with a population of 415,499 people or around 38% of the total population. In Minang kabau culture, the rules of customs are still highly upheld and continue to be a guideline, including for breastfeeding mothers.

Cultural factors in the community environment affect the way a person responds to health needs including the application of feeding children. Similar to the theory of culture-based nursing or transcultural nursing, which says culture, values, and beliefs affect individual health behavior Culture affects individual beliefs and the formation of lifestyles that can control individuals when behaving (Rachmawati, 2019). Based on the results of the study, the majority of mothers provide exclusive breastfeeding to their children, the introduction of various flavors through breast milk transmission can make children later become more familiar with new flavors so that the risk of food rejection becomes lower.

Child Respondent Characteristics

Child Age

According to the results of research on 157 maternal respondents, the results showed that most of the respondents' children were 6 years old, namely 67 children (43%). According to research by Nurmalasari et al., (2020) at preschool age, children usually start eating the same food as other families. However, their appetite and food choices are not yet regular, so children often become picky eaters. According to the researcher's assumption, preschool-age children tend to show picky eating behavior more often. This is because at that age, children already have favorite foods and the ability to choose and reject foods that they do not like. Supported by Horst et al., (2014), 57% of parents who have children aged 36-48 months say their children are picky eaters.

Gender

According to the results of research on 157 maternal respondents, the results showed that most of the children were male, totaling 85 children (54%). In general, boys are stronger in refusing to eat than girls. This may be due to boys being more stubborn than girls Anggraini et al., (2016). However, this study is different from the research of Ostberg & Hagelin (2020), which says girls experience more picky eaters than boys. Based on the research of Li et al., (2017) states that picky eater behavior is not influenced by gender (Li et al., 2017).

Breastfeeding History

This research is in line with Pengastuti's research (2021) which shows that preschool children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding are 77 children (86.5%) and 17 children (13.5%) who are not exclusively breastfed, it appears that the number of children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding is higher than the history of not exclusive breastfeeding. Research by Taylor & Emmett, (2020) shows that exclusive breastfeeding from 0-6 months of age plays an important role in the development of flavor acceptance in infants. Infants who are accustomed to the various flavors of breast milk tend to have better acceptance of various solid food flavors during the weaning process. This is because breastmilk contains a variety of flavors from foods consumed by the mother, so infants who are exposed to the taste of breastmilk have better taste adaptability. Thus, breastfeeding can speed up and facilitate the weaning process, as infants are more open to different types of food and new flavors. In addition, education also affects mothers' knowledge on breastfeeding. Where in this study the majority of mothers' education is diploma or college. The researcher argues that the higher a person's level of education, the greater the ability they have. This level of education affects the mother's attitude in receiving and processing information about breastfeeding. This also applies in the context of exclusive breastfeeding.

Meanwhile, mothers who provide predominant and partial breastfeeding to their infants due to the reason for the lack of milk supply, which is a contributing factor to the failure of exclusive breastfeeding (Subekti & Faidah, 2019). In children who are predominantly breastfed, there is 1 child who shows picky eater behavior and in children who are partially breastfed there are 27 picky eaters. This occurs because there are still some beliefs that babies who are only given breast milk before the age of 6 months will not feel full and will become fussy, so many mothers choose to provide additional food. It can be seen from the results of the study that most of the respondents were ethnic Minang who gave team porridge, rice porridge, or formula milk to their babies before the age of 6 months. Another reason why mothers predominantly and partially breastfeed their infants is due to inadequate milk supply, which is a contributing factor to the failure of exclusive breastfeeding. (Subekti & Faidah, 2019) Based on the results of the study, children who were predominantly breastfed had 3 non-picky eaters and children who were partially breastfed had 16 non-picky eaters. This is likely due to the mother's diet during pregnancy, good feeding parenting and a supportive environment. The immediate environment, such as parents and family, is the main factor shaping children's eating behavior.

Picky Eater Behavior

Based on table 4, the results show that most children have non-picky eater behavior, namely 97 children (62%), and picky eater behavior as many as 60 children (38%). In accordance with Farwati & Amar (2020) where most preschool children do not experience picky eaters, namely 31 children (51.7%) and picky eaters, namely 29 children (48.3%). Another study that is also in line is the research of Haryanto et al., (2023) which describes 32 children who

experience picky eaters, while non-picky eaters are 37 children. Picky eater is the behavior of children who are reluctant to consume varied foods and often reject certain types of food. In accordance with Taylor & Emmett's research (2020), which explains picky eaters or picky eaters are problems in children who are characterized by refusing food, both familiar and unfamiliar. Children tend to limit the consumption of various types of food, especially vegetables and fruits, which are good for their nutrition and development. The study also showed that this kind of eating pattern can have a negative impact on children's health in the long run. Based on the research conducted, preschool-age children who do not experience picky eaters because the average parent provides exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months to their children. Comparable to Specht et al., (2018) explained the lower likelihood of picky eaters if given exclusive breastfeeding. According to researchers, breastfeeding history affects picky eater behavior in children, because children who are not exclusively breastfed for 6 months are not exposed to a variety of flavors through breast milk.

Bivariate Analysis

The results of the analysis of the relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children found that children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding had an incidence of picky eaters as many as 32 children (29%) and non-picky eaters as many as 78 children (71%). Children with a predominant breastfeeding history only 1 child (25%) had picky eater behavior and 3 children (75%) were non-picky eaters, while children with a partial breastfeeding history had a picky eater incidence rate of 27 children (63%) and 17 non-picky eaters (37%). The results of the chi square test obtained p value = 0.001 ($< \alpha$ 0.05) means that H_0 is rejected, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool children.

Comparable to Marlina et al., (2020) showed a significant relationship between breastfeeding and picky eater behavior in children. In addition, children who are not exclusively breastfed for 6 months are at three times greater risk of becoming picky eaters than children who are exclusively breastfed. Breastfeeding and introducing complementary foods after 6 months of age are likely to reduce picky eating. Children who were breastfed for less than 2 months had higher food fussiness scores than children who were breastfed for 6 months or more (Taylor & Emmett, 2019). This finding is also comparable to Specht et al. (2018) with 263 samples of children aged 2-6 years in Denmark who also showed that there was a significant association of exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months with the incidence of picky eaters in children. Children with a history of exclusive breastfeeding tend not to behave as picky eaters because the taste preferences of the food they receive are broader. Therefore, children tend not to refuse food because the taste of the food they receive is considered familiar because there is a transmission of the taste they have received since infancy through breast milk, so the risk of rejection of food is lower (Pramesty, 2019).

The majority of preschool children in this study had a history of exclusive breastfeeding and tended not to have picky eater behavior. However, some children who were exclusively breastfed in this study were also picky eaters. This may be due to other confounding factors that can make children become picky eaters including education, occupation, and ethnicity. Meanwhile, children who were partially breastfed had higher picky eater rates compared to non-picky eaters. This is because children with a history of partial breastfeeding are given breast milk along with food/beverages other than breast milk such as formula, porridge or other foods as prelactal food/beverages. According to the researcher's assumption, children who are not exclusively breastfed for 6 months have been introduced to additional food too early, so that it can affect picky eaters in the future. This is in line with Galloway's theory in

Cerdasari et al., (2017) which states that picky eaters in children are caused by too early introduction of additional food. In contrast, children who are exclusively breastfed for 6 months tend not to experience picky eaters because they are accustomed to the variety of flavors through breast milk.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, it can be concluded that the majority of mothers are aged 21-40 years, with the average education level of mothers having a diploma / college education. Most mothers' occupations are housewives and the largest tribe is the Minang tribe. The average child is 6 years old and the largest gender is male. Most respondents provide exclusive breastfeeding to their children at the age of 0-6 months. Preschool age children in Al-Azhar 54 Kindergarten, Al-Izhar Kindergarten and Siti Sawiah Baitussalam PAUD Pekanbaru mostly have non-picky eater behavior. There is a relationship between breastfeeding history and the incidence of picky eaters in preschool-age children with $p \text{ value} = 0.001$ ($001 < \alpha 0.05$).

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