

Ineffective Breastfeeding Management with Lactation Counseling For Postpartum Mothers

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Article Info	Abstract
<i>Article History Submitted, Accepted, Published,</i>	<i>Breastfeeding is one of the adaptation processes experienced by mothers after giving birth, namely in a period that lasts for 6 weeks or 42 days after giving birth. Ineffective breastfeeding is usually common in mothers after giving birth and will have a negative impact on the mother and baby if not addressed immediately. Poor breastfeeding, such as incorrect positioning and attachment, can cause impaired infant growth and maternal health problems, such as breast pain or infection. This writing aims to describe the management of ineffective breastfeeding in postpartum mothers with lactation counseling. The method used by the author is a descriptive method through a nursing care approach that includes assessment, nursing diagnosis, nursing intervention, nursing implementation and nursing evaluation by providing lactation counseling management by providing correct breastfeeding techniques and lactation massage to overcome the problem of ineffective breastfeeding in clients. The results of ineffective breastfeeding management were carried out for 3 days on the client. Data collection techniques were carried out using interview techniques, physical examinations, and observations. The assessment found that the client's breast milk dripped, the client's baby cried after breastfeeding, the client felt pain in the breast when her baby was breastfeeding. The conclusion at the time of management was that the stages were obtained to overcome the client's problems according to time, the client experienced an increase in breast milk production and understood the correct way to breastfeed, and did not cause other complications due to the problem of ineffective breastfeeding in the client. Suggestions for respondents in dealing with the problem of ineffective breastfeeding in postpartum mothers include using lactation counseling with correct breastfeeding techniques and lactation massage.</i>
<i>Keywords: Post partum, ineffectve breastfeeding, location counseling</i>	

Introduction

The postpartum period, or postpartum, is the 6-week (42-day) period following the delivery of the placenta until the reproductive organs return to their normal state (Yuliana & Hakim, 2020). Physiological and psychological changes are normal during the postpartum period, however mothers who are unable to adapt are at risk of experiencing disorders (Rahmadhani, 2020). After giving birth, changes occur in the reproductive organs, digestive system, urinary system, endocrine system, vital signs, and cardiovascular system, particularly related to reproduction and lactation (Yuliana & Hakim, 2020).

Lactation management is a series of actions to ensure successful breastfeeding. A mother's lack of understanding can lead to failure in exclusive breastfeeding. With proper management, children's nutritional needs are met, their immune system is increased, and their growth and development are supported. Lactation itself is a physiological process after giving birth, but various factors can inhibit the production or release of breast milk, which leads to the problem of ineffective breastfeeding (Ermiati et al., 2024).

Ineffective breastfeeding occurs when the breastfeeding process is not optimal, resulting in the baby not receiving enough breast milk. This is often caused by incorrect positioning and attachment, which can interfere with the baby's growth and cause problems for the mother, such as breast pain or infection (Alemie et al., 2023). Other problems resulting from poor milk flow, such as abscesses, engorged breasts, blocked milk ducts, and even breast milk deficiency syndrome, can also arise. One of the keys to successful breastfeeding is a mother's self-confidence, known as breastfeeding independence. This confidence influences her decisions,

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efforts, mindset, and emotional responses to breastfeeding challenges. Support from healthcare professionals and family members also strengthens this confidence. Therefore, efforts such as lactation counseling and training are crucial to improving breastfeeding success (Kurniawaty et al., 2023).

Lactation counseling plays a crucial role in improving breastfeeding knowledge, skills, and success (Ngadiarti et al., 2021). Education about breastfeeding, infant nutrition, the benefits of breast milk, breastfeeding physiology, and latching positions and techniques is an effective intervention that can be delivered by healthcare professionals or lactation counselors. Research shows that counseling has a significant impact on increasing breastfeeding. Counseling sessions ideally last 30-90 minutes to be effective. The use of media such as leaflets, flipcharts, props, and videos also supports mothers' visual understanding (Suksesty et al., 2016). In addition to counseling, lactation massage can also be used as a breastfeeding support technique. This massage is performed on the head, neck, back, spine, and breasts to stimulate the hormones prolactin and oxytocin. Lactation massage is beneficial for reducing pain, stress, and anxiety, as well as improving mood, milk production, and the mother's physical and emotional readiness during the postpartum period (Muawanah & Sariyani, 2021). This way, the oxytocin hormone and breast milk flow will be released more quickly (Ibrahim, 2024).

According to the UNICEF & WHO (2023), the global exclusive breastfeeding rate only reached 44% for infants aged 0–6 months, still far from the target of 50%. This low figure impacts the quality of future generations, where in 2019 it was recorded that 144 million toddlers experienced stunting, 47 million were wasted, and 38.3 million were obese. In Indonesia, although regulations such as Government Regulation No. 33 of 2012 concerning exclusive breastfeeding exist, their implementation has not been optimal. The WHO recorded the exclusive breastfeeding rate in Indonesia at 42% (2021). The Central Statistics Agency (BPS) reported a gradual increase: 66.99% (2020), 69.2% (2021), and 71.58% (2022). However, the 2023 Indonesian Health Survey showed the national figure was only 55.5%, and Central Java 64.4%, still below the Ministry of Health's target of 80% (Sahira & Kisnawaty, 2025). In 2024, the Indonesian Nutritional Status Survey recorded the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding at only 19.8%, slightly below the target of 20.1%. The WHO targets that by 2025, at least 50% of babies will receive exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months. In Purworejo, specifically the Kaligesing Community Health Center, 10 babies were still found to be lacking breast milk in the past month (April 10-May 10), mostly due to breastfeeding problems in the mothers. This study aimed to assess the UV-protective activity of the ethanolic extract of Sukun leaves both in vitro and in vivo to support its application as a natural photoprotective compound.

Materials and Methods

This study used a descriptive method with a case study approach to explore ineffective breastfeeding management in postpartum mothers through lactation counseling and lactation massage. The approach used was nursing care, including assessment and evaluation. The terminology includes ineffective breastfeeding management as an effort to overcome breastfeeding barriers, as well as lactation counseling as providing support and education on correct breastfeeding techniques. The unit of analysis was postpartum mothers in Sudorogo Village who experienced breast milk production disorders and met the inclusion criteria, such as postpartum mothers with G1P1A0 status in Sudorogo Village who were willing to become respondents. Data collection was conducted over three days (May 23-25, 2025) through interviews, observations, and physical examinations using a maternity nursing assessment format. The procedure began with a preliminary study and informed consent, through to the implementation and documentation of the intervention. Data analysis was carried out by comparing the assessment results with relevant theories. Data validity was maintained through direct observation and repeated measurements. This study has received ethical approval from the (Ethics Committee of Ngudi Waluyo University and upholds) the principles of confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to voluntary participation of respondents.

Results and Discussion

Based on the case management of “Ineffective Breastfeeding Management in Postpartum Mothers with Lactation Counseling in Sudorogo Village”, the intervention was carried out for three consecutive days, from May 23-25, 2025, with one client as a sample. The author evaluated the suitability between the theory and practice of nursing care which includes assessment, diagnosis, intervention, implementation, and evaluation in postpartum mothers with ineffective breastfeeding problems.

The assessment was conducted on May 23, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. WIB at the client's home, a 22-year-old postpartum mother with a primary complaint of dripping breast milk. Subjective data showed the client was anxious, breastfeeding 5-6 times per day, the baby often cried after breastfeeding, breast pain, and perineal discomfort. Objective data showed the baby was not latched on well, breast milk was still dripping, and the client appeared to lack confidence. The

client is a primigravida (G1P1A0) with a history of normal delivery on May 19, 2025, at the Kaligesing Community Health Center. The baby was born spontaneously with a birth weight of 2900 grams and early breastfeeding (IMD) was performed. The client received basic breastfeeding education from health workers, but still lacked understanding of breastfeeding techniques and baby care. The client's psychological condition was quite good, with emotional support from her husband. However, the client experienced disturbed sleep patterns and concerns about breast milk production. Physical examination showed tender and painful breasts, as well as post-stitch perineal pain. In general, the results of the study indicate the problem of ineffective breastfeeding which needs to be addressed through appropriate education and nursing interventions.

The nursing diagnosis was ineffective breastfeeding related to inadequate milk supply. Nursing interventions included education on proper breastfeeding techniques and lactation massage to stimulate oxytocin. The program was implemented over three consecutive days. The first day focused on identifying problems and initial breastfeeding education. The second day included reinforcement of breastfeeding techniques and advanced lactation massage. By the third day, the client had begun to understand breastfeeding techniques and milk was flowing freely from both breasts. Evaluation showed significant improvement: the baby's suckling strengthened, breastfeeding frequency increased, pain decreased, and the client gained more confidence. The intervention continued with self-education to help the client maintain successful breastfeeding at home.

Nursing assessment is the initial stage in the nursing process to collect subjective and objective data as a basis for determining nursing diagnoses and interventions (Ibrahim, 2024). In this case, the assessment was conducted on Friday, May 23, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. WIB in Sudorogo Village on a postpartum mother with ineffective breastfeeding problems. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and a simple physical examination conducted directly by the author. During the assessment, the client stated that her breast milk only dripped. According to the authors, this condition can be caused by prolactin hormone disorders due to stress, fatigue, infrequent breastfeeding, or improper attachment. Lack of breastfeeding stimulation causes the body to not respond to increase milk production. This is in line with Aprianti and Sri (2023), who stated that only dripping breast milk indicates suboptimal milk production and release, which can hinder the success of exclusive breastfeeding.

The second subjective data showed the client feeling anxious because her breast milk was only dripping. According to the authors, this anxiety is normal for postpartum mothers due to hormonal changes and concerns about the baby's health. This anxiety can inhibit the hormones prolactin and oxytocin, thus disrupting milk production and release (Amalia et al., 2023).

The third subjective data indicates that the client breastfeeds her baby 5-6 times in 24 hours. This frequency is still less than the recommended minimum of 8 times a day, which can lead to decreased milk production, nutritional deficiencies in the baby, and the risk of dehydration. Low breastfeeding frequency also inhibits the stimulation of the hormone prolactin, which is important for milk production. According to Nursanti (2012), breastfeeding less than 8 times a day can reduce the effectiveness of the hormone prolactin and interfere with the success of exclusive breastfeeding. The more frequently the baby breastfeeds, the more optimal milk production and release will be.

The fourth subjective data showed that the client's baby often cried after breastfeeding. This was suspected to be due to low milk production, which led to the baby not feeling satisfied. According to Samman et al (2020), crying after breastfeeding is generally caused by insufficient milk supply. To address this, mothers can improve breastfeeding techniques, increase breast stimulation with massage or warm compresses, and consult a lactation counselor if needed. The fifth subjective data item states that the client experienced breast pain while breastfeeding. This condition is generally caused by improper attachment, nipple injury, or breast engorgement. Pain can arise from pressure on swollen breast tissue. If left untreated, this pain can lead to premature cessation of breastfeeding (Fauziah & Musiin, 2022). Therefore, proper breastfeeding techniques and breast care are essential (Putri & Ardhiyanti, 2022).

The sixth subjective data showed the baby urinating approximately 6-7 times per day. According to the authors, this frequency is considered insufficient, as newborns ideally urinate ≥ 8 times per day as a sign of adequate breast milk intake and good hydration. According to Widyastutuk et al (2021) urinating < 8 times can indicate dehydration or a lack of breast milk, especially if the urine appears concentrated.

Objective data supports the problem of ineffective breastfeeding. It has been found that babies do not suck strongly when breastfeeding and stop frequently. This can be caused by the baby's physical condition, incorrect breastfeeding position, or a weak suckling reflex, which results in a lack of stimulation and milk production (Maghfuroh et al., 2021; Widyastutik et al., 2021). Furthermore, the baby is also unable to latch on properly to the mother's breast. Ineffective latching is often triggered by flat nipples or incorrect breastfeeding positioning. This can lead to various disorders such as sore nipples, engorgement, and obstructed milk flow (Jafrizal et al., 2024). Furthermore, clients appear to lack confidence in breastfeeding. This can

be caused by anxiety about milk production, pain during breastfeeding, and a lack of social support. Lack of confidence can reduce the success of exclusive breastfeeding (Melinsi et al., 2023).

Nursing diagnoses were established based on analysis of assessment data. In this case, the primary diagnosis was ineffective breastfeeding, characterized by complaints of only dripping breast milk, breastfeeding frequency of less than 8 times a day, frequent crying after breastfeeding, pain during breastfeeding, and lower than normal urination frequency. Objective data supported this, such as weak suckling, ineffective attachment, and a lack of maternal confidence. This diagnosis aligns with the characteristics of the Indonesian National Breastfeeding Association (PPNI) and serves as the primary focus of nursing interventions (PPNI, 2017).

The client's primary priority was ineffective breastfeeding, as it directly relates to the infant's physiological needs, such as nutrition and hydration. Based on Maslow's theory, these needs must be met first to support the infant's growth and development. If breastfeeding is ineffective, the infant can experience dehydration, malnutrition, and developmental disorders. This issue is considered a higher priority than the mother's discomfort after delivery, as insufficient breast milk directly impacts the infant's health. Therefore, the author developed nursing interventions including: identifying breastfeeding problems, educating on proper breastfeeding techniques, and providing lactation massage to stimulate breast milk production. All interventions were implemented over 3 x 24 hours and designed according to SMART principles and PPNI standards, with the hope that the client's breastfeeding effectiveness would increase and the infant's needs would be optimally met.

The author began the implementation by identifying the client's breastfeeding problems through interviews and direct observation. The client complained of only dripping breast milk, frequent crying after breastfeeding, breastfeeding only 5-6 times per day, and pain during breastfeeding. Objectively, the baby did not suck strongly, had difficulty latching on, and the mother appeared to lack confidence. The author provided lactation counseling according to PPNI (2017) standards by listening to complaints, providing appropriate breastfeeding education, and providing emotional support to the mother. This counseling aims to increase breastfeeding confidence, comfort, and success (Ngadiarti et al., 2021).

The second implementation involved teaching the client proper breastfeeding techniques. The goal of this intervention was to stimulate milk production, improve the baby's sucking reflex, and prevent nipple pain or soreness. The author taught proper positioning and attachment according to the Indonesian National Nurses Association (PPNI) procedures (2018), such as ensuring the baby's body is facing the breast and the baby's mouth is wide open during breastfeeding. Correct breastfeeding techniques have been shown to support successful breastfeeding and increase maternal comfort and confidence. Subjective responses indicated the client's willingness to learn, even though she did not yet fully understand proper breastfeeding techniques (Fitriani et al., 2025; Lestari, 2019).

The third implementation conducted by the author was lactation massage to help address the problem of ineffective breastfeeding. This massage aims to stimulate milk production by activating the hormones prolactin and oxytocin, while also providing comfort for the mother (Muawanah & Sariyani, 2021). The author performed the massage from the head, neck, back, spine, and breasts according to the procedure. The results showed that the client was willing to accept the lactation massage and felt more comfortable afterward.

The client's initial evaluation continued to report only dripping breast milk, crying after breastfeeding, and pain during breastfeeding. The evaluation showed improvements in several indicators, but not yet significant: attachment, suckling, confidence, and breastfeeding frequency were still relatively low. Therefore, the breastfeeding status was deemed unresolved, and intervention was continued. According to the authors, this was due to the client's lack of experience as a new mother, physical discomfort, and emotional factors such as anxiety. Continued education is crucial, as proper breastfeeding technique is key to successful breastfeeding (Rinata & Sari, 2017).

In the second evaluation, significant improvements were observed in several breastfeeding indicators, such as attachment, frequency, milk letdown, and client confidence. However, the client's breastfeeding status was considered partially resolved due to lingering discomfort and suboptimal technique. The client demonstrated a better understanding of breastfeeding techniques after lactation counseling and massage and began to experience increased milk production. The authors assessed that continued support, including from the husband and healthcare providers, was needed to strengthen breastfeeding success (Pakilaran et al., 2022). Therefore, the intervention was continued to the third day.

The third evaluation of the client's breastfeeding status was deemed resolved. All indicators showed maximum improvement, including attachment, breastfeeding frequency, milk droplets, and client confidence. The client understood proper breastfeeding techniques, and the baby suckled effectively and appeared satisfied after feeding. The three days of lactation counseling and massage support proved effective in helping the client overcome ineffective breastfeeding

issues. The client was also educated on how to continue self-care at home, with the understanding that breastfeeding guidance is still needed if difficulties arise (Zahra et al., 2023).

Conclusion and Suggestion

The Nursing care for a postpartum mother with ineffective breastfeeding problems begins with an assessment that reveals complaints of only dripping breast milk, frequent crying after breastfeeding, limited breastfeeding frequency, and pain during breastfeeding. Objective data supports this condition, with the baby's ineffective attachment and apparent low maternal self-confidence. The primary diagnosis is ineffective breastfeeding related to inadequate milk supply. Interventions are carried out over 3 x 24 hours, including identifying breastfeeding problems, educating on proper breastfeeding techniques, and providing lactation massage to stimulate oxytocin to increase milk production. Implementation is carried out according to plan and shows a gradual positive response. Evaluation on the third day shows that the problem has been resolved: breast milk is flowing, the baby no longer cries after breastfeeding, and the mother appears more confident and enjoys breastfeeding. With this success, the client is advised to continue independent care at home and is educated that breastfeeding guidance remains important if difficulties arise.

The author is advised to continue improving their knowledge of lactation counseling, conduct regular evaluations, and collaborate with other counselors. Future authors are encouraged to develop research with broader designs and techniques. Educational institutions should provide updated reference books on ineffective breastfeeding. Clients are expected to be able to independently apply breastfeeding techniques and lactation massage and receive support from their husbands and families throughout the breastfeeding process.

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