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A Study of Factors Influencing Mothers' Willingness to Become Breast Milk Donors: Scoping Review

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ABSTRACT

Background: Breast milk donation is a practice that provides significant benefits to premature infants and infants with certain medical conditions. However, mothers' willingness to donate breastmilk is still influenced by various factors, including altruistic motivation, social support, and practical and cultural barriers.

Purpose: This study aimed to identify the factors that influence mothers' willingness to become breast milk donors using a scoping review approach.

Methods: This study used a scoping review method based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines with the PCC framework. Data were collected from various academic databases, including Scopus, PubMed, Wiley, ScienceDirect, and Crossref. The articles analyzed were primary research published in English and Indonesian between 2019–2024.

Results: From the 9 articles analyzed, the main factors influencing mothers' willingness to donate breastmilk were altruistic motivation, personal experience, and family support. Mothers who lost a baby were more likely to donate breastmilk as a way to cope with grief. The main challenges included lack of information, social stigma, and practical barriers such as access to facilities and breast milk bank procedures.

Conclusion: Mothers' willingness to donate breastmilk is influenced by emotional, social, and cultural factors. More widespread education, supportive policies, and the use of technology are needed to increase mothers' participation in breast milk donation programs in a sustainable manner.

Keywords **:** ASI Donor, Factors Affecting Mothers, Influencing Factors

BACKGROUND

Over the past six years, exclusive breastfeeding in Indonesia increased from 52% in 2017 to 68% in 2023, but challenges remain at the newborn stage. The 2023 National Health Survey found only 27% of newborns were breastfed in the first hour, and 14% had skin-to-skin

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contact immediately after birth. Early initiation of breastfeeding is critical for infant survival, while delays can be fatal. UNICEF and WHO recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months to support infant development and protect against disease (WHO, 2024)

Breastfeeding remains a global challenge, with only 44% of babies worldwide receiving exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, according to WHO 2015-2020 data. In Indonesia, this figure is even lower, at only 4%. Research shows that many mothers mistakenly choose formula milk without understanding its disadvantages compared to breast milk. Cultural factors, such as fathers' decision to not understand the benefits of breastfeeding, as well as mothers with many children who feel unable to breastfeed, exacerbate the situation. This emphasizes the importance of education and equality for mothers in breastfeeding practices (Hak et al., 2023)

Breastmilk is the best nutrition for all babies. If breastmilk is not available, health organizations recommend the use of donor and stored breastmilk for newborns who are premature or have medical problems. Donor breastmilk is rarely available in resource-limited settings, where preterm birth and newborn mortality rates are high (Magowan et al., 2020) . Donor breastmilk is a recommended alternative for providing meaning to preterm or low birthweight infants when maternal breastmilk is not available or insufficient in quantity. Globally, vulnerable infants' need for donor breastmilk exceeds supply (Kaech et al., 2022)

Mothers who wish to donate breast milk must meet the requirements of physical and mental health, breastfeeding infants ≤ 6 months of age with adequate milk supply, free from contraindications to breastfeeding, history of transfusion or transplant within 12 months, infectious diseases (HIV, Hepatitis B/C, HTLV-2, CMV, syphilis), risky behavior, illegal drug use, smoking, or alcohol consumption. The breasts must be healthy without mastitis or infection, and must undergo laboratory tests for infectious diseases, which can be repeated after 3 months if needed. (Ananda Omesh, 2018)

Research shows that the factors influencing mothers' willingness to become breast milk donors are Altruism or the desire to help other babies is the main motivation for participants to donate milk. Many of them had personal experience with children who received donor human milk (DHM) during neonatal care, which encouraged them to "pay back" by donating milk (Olsson et al., 2021) . Overall, these factors suggest that social support, personal motivation, knowledge and access to information play an important role in mothers' willingness to become human milk donors (Wambach et al., 2019) .

Breastfeeding after the loss of a baby is an emotionally painful experience, but many mothers find meaning in donating breastmilk. It is a form of honoring and remembering the baby who has gone, a confirmation of maternal competence, and a way of benefiting other babies in need. Breast milk donation also helps mothers cope with grief, creates a meaningful legacy, and provides a sense of purpose, with family and community support reinforcing their decision (Waldby et al., 2023) . This study discusses the factors that influence a mother's willingness to become a breast milk donor after losing her baby (death). These factors include motivation to donate breastmilk as a way to cope with grief, support from family members, and support from health professionals. In addition, the decision to donate is also influenced by the complexity and individuality of the grieving process (Tran et al., 2023) .

Motivation to donate breastmilk is often a combination of interacting emotional, social and informational factors, creating a strong drive for mothers to contribute to supporting the health of other babies. Mothers are willing to donate breastmilk because they are driven by altruism to help other babies, positive cultural and religious support, and knowledge about breastmilk banks. These motivations are both personal and influenced by the social context and information received (Bhoola & Biggs, 2021).

Based on the above background, the purpose of the *scoping review* is to map the *literature* and *review evidence* related to the factors that influence the willingness of mothers to become breast milk donors.

METHODS

Design and Setting

Scoping review is a common and popular review used to analyze research evidence, the purpose of this scoping review is to provide an overview in the literature, in addition to mapping the existing literature in an area of interest in terms of volume, nature, and main research characteristics (Pham et al., 2014). This scoping review was prepared with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines (Page, McKenzie, et al., 2021). Framework as a guide for conducting scoping reviews. The framework used in this scoping review adapts from (Munn et al., 2018). Formulating 5 steps of scoping review (1) Formulating review questions, (2) Selecting research articles, (3) Article Selection, (4) Extracting and mapping data, (5) and Summarizing

Formulate Review Questions

To identify the scoping review questions, the PCC framework was used. To organize and resolve the focus of the review, the Population, Concept, and Contex (PCC) model was used in formulating the research questions. The use of PCC helped in defining key concepts included in the focus of the review, creating appropriate search terms to describe the problem, and defining inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The research question was, "What are the factors that influence mothers' willingness to become breast milk donors?

Table 1. Framework Research Question

P (Population)	C (Concept)	C(Contex)
Breastfeeding mothers/mothers who donate breast milk	Factors influencing willingness to become a breast milk donor	Health policy, social environment, related facilities in breast milk donation, economy, culture

Participants and Sampling

Identifying Relevant Articles

This stage involves identifying relevant studies and developing a decision plan for where to look, which terms to use, which sources to search, time span, and language. Completeness and breadth are important in the search to identify relevant articles in this review, so the first step is to determine the inclusion and exclusion criteria from the framework that has been made so that the data sought does not widen and focus on the context being sought, as for the inclusion and exclusion criteria in this scoping review are as follows:

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Table 2. Identifying relevant articles

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
1. The relevant article discussed "factors affecting mothers' willingness to become breast milk donors".	1. Articles that contain opinions
2. Articles published in 2019–2024	2. Book review / article review
3. Articles published in English and Bahasa Indonesia	3. Publication manuscript
4. Primary research or original articles	
5. Full text	

Article Selection

The article search in this review used the Sciencedirect, Pubmed, Scopus, Wiley, Crossref databases and the search was conducted in 2025 with the year of publication of the article between 2019–2024 and using English or Indonesian with a search strategy using keywords and Boolean as follows: Study AND Factor OR Influencing factor AND Mothers OR Lactating women AND Willingness OR Intention AND Breast milk donor OR Human milk donation OR Milk banks.

The findings of the number of articles and the filter process will be discussed in the PRISMA Flowchart which is the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and MetaAnalyses, used to help authors provide a more complete report, which allows readers to have all the information needed to assess the relevance of the results (Page, Moher, et al., 2021) . PRISMA is considered appropriate because it is easy to use and can improve the quality of reporting publications and data are filtered according to the criteria that researchers determine. The stages of data filtering are as follows:

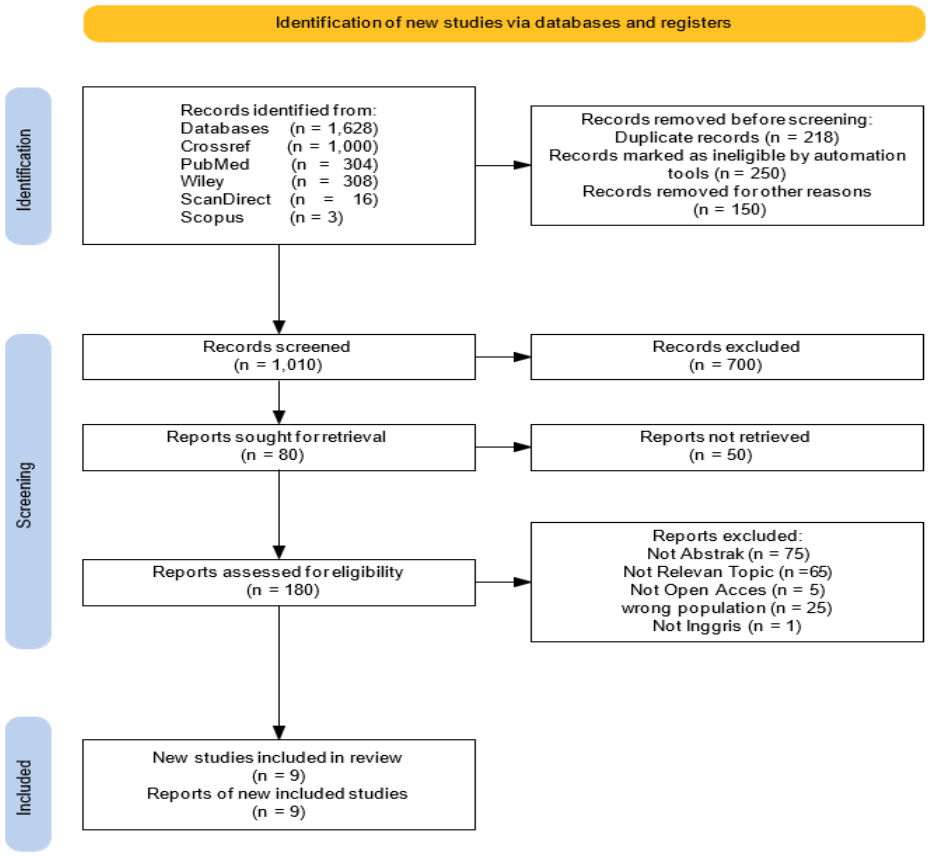


Figure 1. PRISMA diagram

Instruments and Data Collection

Critical Appraisal

The tool chosen to assess article quality is the Joana Brigs checklist from the Joana Brigs Institute. All articles on research methods use a quantitative design as many as 8 consisting of mixed methods 2 articles, Qualitative 4 articles, and 2 articles using cross sectional methods

Each research method has a different critical appraisal checklist. Assessing the quality of articles is done through critical appraisal using MMAT and Joana Brigs Institute (JBI) because the types of research in the JBI assessment tool are very complete. The researcher categorized the value of the article based on the total score obtained from the critical appraisal results. This aims to determine the quality of the articles reviewed. Critical appraisal is used to systematically and quickly assess the relevance of an article and transform professionals in making important clinical decisions for the next step (Al-Jundi & Sakka, 2017). In the critical appraisal process, 8 articles were found to fit the topic and meet the inclusion criteria. Qualitative, cross-sectional, and mixed method studies are some examples of the study designs used. Each research method has a different critical appraisal. The authors used A, B, and C scales to assess the quality of the eight articles received at the Critical Appraisal stage. The articles were categorized as Good (Grade A), Fairly Good (Grade B), and Poor (Grade C).

Table 3. Article Quality Based on Critical Appraisal

No.	Article reference	Types	Grade
1	(Olsson et al., 2021)	Mixed methods	A
2	(Bhoola & Biggs, 2021)	Quantitative Cross-Sectional	A
3	(Tran et al., 2023)	Qualitative	A
4	(Hosseinzadeh et al., 2023)	Quantitative Cross-Sectional	B
5	(Waldby et al., 2023)	Qualitatuf	A
6	(Mampane & Wolvaardt, 2024)	Qualitative	A
7	(Brown et al., 2024)	Mixed method	A
8	(Blomqvist & Olsson, 2024)	Qualitative	A
9	(Sighaldeh et al., 2023)	RCT	A

Data Charting

Based on the 9 articles that have been selected, data charting is then carried out to group several points or parts of the article including research title, author, year of publication, country of origin, research objectives, research design, sample size, and results or findings from the study.

Table 4. Data Charting

No.	Title / Author / Year	Country	Destination	Methods	Results
1	Paying it Forward (Olsson et al., 2021)	Sweden	Explore Swedish women's experiences of donating breastmilk and	Mixed methods (prospective survey, content	The main motivation is to help premature babies, but there are challenges

No.	Title / Author / Year	Country	Destination	Methods	Results
			understand their motivations and challenges.	analysis)	such as lack of information and time.
2	Factors Affecting Postnatal Mothers' Decision (Bhoola & Biggs, 2021)	South Africa	Explore the factors that influence mothers' decision to donate breastmilk at a human milk bank.	Cross-sectional (prospective descriptive study)	Knowledge about milk banking is low; social and economic factors play a role in the decision to donate breastmilk.
3	Bereavement and Breastmilk Donation (Bhoola & Biggs, 2021)	Vietnam	Analyzing the experiences of mothers who have lost babies in donating breast milk as a way of coping with grief.	Qualitative (explorative descriptive case study)	Breast milk donation helps mothers who have lost a baby find meaning in their experience.
4	Knowledge and Attitudes of Iranian Mothers (Hosseinzadeh et al., 2023)	Iran	Examined Iranian Muslim mothers' attitudes and knowledge about breast milk donation.	Cross-sectional (cluster random sampling)	Mothers had positive attitudes, but knowledge about milk banking was low, requiring further education.
5	Mothers, Milk, and Mourning (Waldby et al., 2023)	Australia	Analyze the meaning of breastmilk for mothers who have lost a baby and its impact on the grieving process.	Qualitative (in-depth interviews and focus groups)	Breast milk donation can help grieving mothers; professional support is essential.
6	Donor Human Milk Bank Acceptability (Mampane & Wolvaardt, 2024)	South Africa	Explore the acceptance of donor breast milk in Limpopo and the factors that influence it.	Qualitative (phenomenological, in-depth interviews)	Acceptance of donor breastmilk can be improved by education and addressing cultural concerns.
7	Disparities in Milk Donation (Brown et al., 2024)	English	Explore mothers' motivations for donating breastmilk and the challenges they	Mixed method (descriptive statistics and thematic analysis)	Breastmilk donation has a positive impact on a mother's mental well-

No.	Title / Author / Year	Country	Destination	Methods	Results
			face.		being, but the inability to donate can be frustrating.
8	Experiences of Breast Milk Donors (Blomqvist & Olsson, 2024)	Sweden	Understand women's experiences of donating breastmilk to increase support for donors.	Qualitative (descriptive, semi-structured interviews)	Better information and support is needed to increase breastmilk donation.
9	Educational Intervention on Milk Donation (Sighaldeh et al., 2023)	Iran	Assessing the effectiveness of educational interventions based on the theory of planned behavior to increase breast milk donation.	Randomized Controlled Trial	Results are not yet available, research is still in the planning and implementation phase.

Data Analysis

Data from the included studies were charted using a standardized data charting form developed for this review. The charted items were the article title, authors, year of publication, country of origin, research objectives, research design, sample size and main findings related to mothers' willingness to become breast milk donors (Table 4). Data charting was performed by the first author and checked by the co-authors, and any discrepancies were resolved through discussion.

The charted data were synthesized in two stages. First, the characteristics of the included studies, namely country, study design and methodological quality, were summarized descriptively as frequencies and percentages (Figures 2–4). The critical appraisal results (Table 3) were used to describe the quality of the available evidence. Second, the findings of each study were analyzed thematically: findings describing factors that influence mothers' willingness to donate breast milk were coded, compared across studies and grouped into themes and sub-themes, which were then mapped to the contributing articles (A1–A9) (Table 5). The themes were subsequently interpreted narratively in relation to the wider literature in the Discussion.

Ethical Considerations

This scoping review used data from previously published studies and did not involve direct contact with human participants or the collection of identifiable personal information; therefore, ethical approval and informed consent were not required. All sources were cited appropriately, and the findings of the included studies were reported as presented by their original authors.

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RESULTS

Article Characteristics by Country

Articles used in the scoping review were taken from 3 developed countries 4 articles from developing countries, 2 articles from Sweden, 1 article from the UK, 1 article from Australia, 2 articles from Iran, 1 article from Vietnam, and 2 articles from Africa.

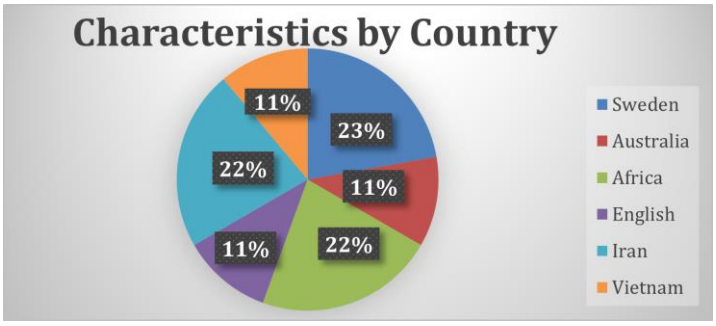


Figure 2. Characteristic Diagram by Country

Characteristics by Study Design

The research design of the article consists of quantitative, qualitative, randimized controlled trial, and mixed method research designs. Of the 9 articles selected, 2 articles used a mixed method design, 2 articles used a cross sectional design, 4 articles used a qualitative design and 1 article used a randimized controlled trial.

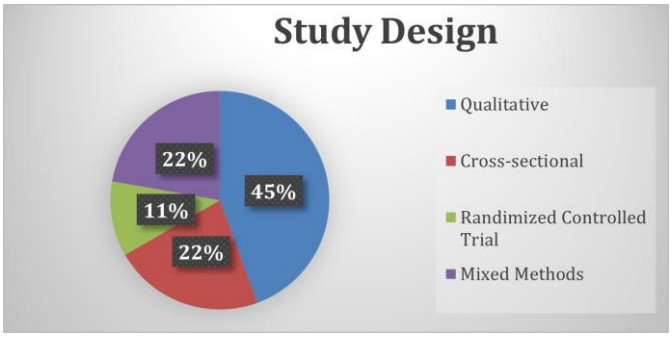


Figure 3. Characteristics by Study Design

Characteristics Based on Article Quality

Based on the quality of articles carried out through critical appraisal using MMAT and *Joana Brigs Institute* (JBI), 8 articles with grade A and 1 article with grade B were obtained.

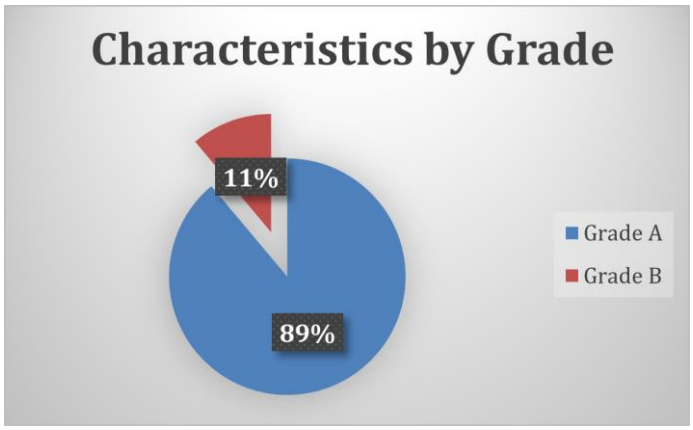


Figure 4. Characteristics Based on Article Quality

Theme Mapping

Table 5. Theme Mapping

NO	THEME	SUB THEME	ARTICLE
1	Motivation and Support in Breast Milk Donation	a. Donation Motivation (Saving babies, treatment)	A1, A7, A9
		b. Support Needed (Information, medical assistance)	A1,A7,A9
2	Emotional and Social Impacts on Breast Milk Donors	a. Coping with Grief through Breast Milk Donation	A2,A4
		b. Influence of Social Support and Health	A2,A4,A9
3	Acceptance and Knowledge of Breast Milk Donation	a. Knowledge of Milk Banks and Breast Milk Donation	A3,A5,A9
		b. Cultural influences on acceptance of donor breast milk	A3, A5, A9
4	Socio-Demographic and Practical Impacts on Breast Milk Donation Decisions	a. Socio-Demographic Influence on Donation Decision	A6, A8, A9
		b. Practical and Emotional Barriers to Breast Milk Donation	A6,A8,A9

DISCUSSION

Motivation and Support in Breast Milk Donation

a. *Donation Motivation (Saving babies, treatment)*

Mothers who donate breastmilk generally have strong altruistic motivations, with the primary goal of helping babies in need, particularly those born prematurely or ill. Although challenges such as time constraints and lack of information are often faced, the desire to save the baby's life remains the main motivating factor (A1).

Some mothers felt that donating breastmilk gave meaning to their lives and helped them deal with the emotional challenges of postpartum. They also felt motivated to continue breastfeeding knowing that their milk could benefit other babies (A7).

Breastmilk donation was also perceived as a form of support for infants who cannot get breastmilk from their own mothers, especially in neonatal intensive care units. Positive attitudes towards breastmilk donation reflect the realization that donors can provide great benefits to vulnerable infants (A9).

Research by Ulfiana et al (2024) shows that economic motivation can also be a supporting factor, although not the main one. Some mothers see economic compensation as an additional incentive in the breast milk donation process. In addition, personal experiences, such as having excess breast milk, also play a role in the decision to become a donor (Arifin & Daniella, 2018) .

It can be concluded that the main motivation for mothers to donate breastmilk is driven by altruism and awareness of the health benefits for vulnerable infants, but personal experience and economic incentives also play a role, so information support, facilities, and social appreciation need to be strengthened to increase participation in breastmilk donation programs in a sustainable manner.

b. Support Needed by Breast Milk Donors

Breastmilk donors need various forms of support, from clear information on donation procedures, to adequate medical assistance, to psychological support from health professionals.

Many mothers reported difficulty in obtaining sufficient information on how to become a donor, access to necessary contacts, and breastmilk delivery procedures (A1).

Supporting facilities such as home milk collection services or milking equipment can increase donor participation. Appreciation and good communication from health workers also play an important role in maintaining donor motivation (A7).

Health workers play a crucial role in providing accurate information about the benefits and procedures of breastmilk donation. Adequate education and community-based information campaigns can increase the number of mothers willing to participate in breast milk donation programs (A9).

Research Putri & Fikhriyah (2022) shows that lack of access to information is a major barrier for potential breastmilk donors. Therefore, various initiatives have been undertaken to provide better access to breastmilk donation information and services, including through online platforms such as *Lactashare* (Putri & Fikhriyah, 2022) .

It can be concluded that comprehensive and accessible support, in the form of information, medical facilities, and appreciation from health workers, is a crucial factor in increasing the participation of mothers as breast milk donors, so a broader education strategy and innovative digital -based services are needed to overcome access barriers and strengthen the breast milk donation system.

Emotional and Social Impacts on Breast Milk Donors

a. Overcoming Grief through Breast Milk Donation

For mothers who lost a baby, donating breastmilk became a way to give meaning to their loss. This process helped them deal with their grief more positively and gave them a sense of contributing to the lives of other babies (A3).

Some mothers felt that donating breastmilk was a way to stay connected to their departed child and provide a valuable legacy through their breastmilk. This process also provided structure and purpose during the difficult times after losing a baby (A5).

Research by Arifin & Daniella (2018) found that donating breastmilk after infant loss can provide a sense of purpose and emotional satisfaction. However, psychological factors can also be a challenge, as some mothers feel emotionally burdened when having to donate breastmilk after losing a baby, so family support and health professionals are needed (Qudriani & Umriaty, 2023) .

It can be concluded that donating breastmilk after the loss of an infant can be a meaningful emotional healing process, helping mothers find purpose and connection with their departed child, but the psychological challenges that come with it underscore the importance of family and healthcare support in ensuring that this decision is voluntary and does not add to the emotional burden for the mother.

b. Influence of Social Support and Health

Social support from family, friends and health professionals strongly influences a mother's decision to donate breastmilk. In some cultures, family involvement in decision-making is a key factor in acceptance and sustainability of breastmilk donation (A3).

Health worker support in lactation care for bereaved mothers is essential to help them deal with emotional and psychological challenges. Education about the importance of donor

breastmilk at health centers also contributes to increasing the number of mothers willing to donate their breastmilk (A5).

Social norms and family support have a major influence on mothers' decision to donate breast milk (Putri & Fikhriyah, 2022) . Health professional support in lactation care for bereaved mothers is also an important aspect in increasing the number of breast milk donors (Qudriani & Umriaty, 2023) .

It can be concluded that social support from family, community and health professionals plays an important role in improving mothers' decision to donate breastmilk, where cultural norms and family involvement can be a determining factor in the sustainability of donation, so more educational interventions and professional support are needed to create an enabling environment for sustainable breastmilk donation practices.

Acceptance and Knowledge of Breast Milk Donation

a. Knowledge of Milk Banks and Breast Milk Donation

Mothers' knowledge of milk banks and breastmilk donation was low, although their attitudes towards these practices were positive. Factors influencing the level of knowledge include education, income, breastfeeding experience, and encouragement to donate breastmilk (A4). In addition, many mothers were unaware of donor milk banks in health facilities and few understood the benefits and procedures, suggesting the need for further education (A6). Another study also revealed that poor access to information about milk banks was a major barrier to mothers' participation as donors (A9).

Several other studies have also confirmed these findings. Wijayanti et al (2023) found that increasing mothers' awareness of breast milk banks can be achieved through community-based socialization programs. In addition, a study by Putri & Fikhriyah (2022) confirmed that access to information through online platforms such as Lactashare can increase mothers' interest in donating breastmilk. The study by Wijayanti et al (2023) also mentioned that education-based communities such as Pos ASI Donor can help improve mothers' understanding of the benefits of human milk banks.

It can be concluded that the low level of knowledge of mothers about milk banks and breast milk donation, despite their positive attitudes, suggests that community-based educational interventions, utilization of online platforms, and improved access to information at health facilities are needed to increase mothers' participation in breast milk donation programs more widely and effectively.

b. Cultural Influences on Acceptance of Donor Breast Milk

Culture and religious beliefs play an important role in the acceptance of donor breastmilk, especially in countries with strong religious values. In the Islamic context, the concept of *milk* kinship is a major consideration in a mother's decision to receive or donate breastmilk (A4). In many societies, mothers are more comfortable receiving breastmilk from family members than from unknown donors, indicating the importance of trust in this practice (A6).

In addition, the study (A9) confirmed that misperceptions about human milk banks can hinder acceptance of donor breast milk, so culture-based education programs are needed to improve community understanding. Another study by Ulfiana et al (2024) showed that faith-

based interventions and socialization in local communities can increase maternal acceptance of donor human milk. Another study by Wiguna et al (2024) revealed that some religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism also support this practice as part of humanitarian values and social solidarity.

It can be concluded that acceptance of donor breastmilk is strongly influenced by culture, religious beliefs, and the level of trust of the community, so cultural and religious-based education, as well as appropriate community socialization, are needed to eliminate misperceptions and increase participation in breastmilk donation programs more broadly and inclusively.

Socio-Demographic and Practical Impacts on Breast Milk Donation Decisions

a. Socio-Demographic Influence on Donation Decision

A mother's decision to donate breastmilk is influenced by various socio-demographic factors, including age, education level, economic status and breastfeeding experience. The study (A7) revealed that older and highly educated mothers were more likely to donate breastmilk than younger or less educated mothers. In addition, socio-economic characteristics also play a role in a mother's decision to participate in a breast milk donation program, although not always significantly (A2).

The success of breast milk donor programs is greatly influenced by various factors, including family support, health workers, and government policies. Support from spouse and family is very important in increasing mother's confidence to donate breast milk (Astuti & Sustiwi, 2022) . The involvement of health workers in providing education and information about breast milk donation can increase the participation of mothers in this program. Training for health workers on the benefits of breast milk donation and lactation management techniques can help overcome mothers' concerns and ensure that the breast milk donation process goes well (Shiddiqoh et al., 2025) . In addition, research by Qudriani & Umriaty (2023) revealed that partner and family support is also a crucial factor in a mother's decision to donate breast milk.

It can be concluded that mothers' decision to donate breast milk is influenced by socio-demographic factors such as age, education, and family support, so community education, involvement of health workers, and the role of family and partners are key factors in increasing mothers' participation in breast milk donation programs.

b. Practical and Emotional Barriers to Breast Milk Donation

Although many mothers have good intentions to donate breastmilk, they often face a variety of practical and emotional obstacles. Practically speaking, breastmilk donation can be a laborious process, especially for mothers who have other commitments, such as working or taking care of their own children (A7). In addition, constraints such as limited access to breastmilk storage and delivery facilities are also commonly reported barriers (A2).

From an emotional aspect, some mothers experience concerns that donating breastmilk may reduce the supply for their own babies. In addition, the cost of supporting equipment such as breast pumps and storage containers is often a limiting factor (A9). Another study by Wijayanti et al (2023) also revealed that social stigma against breast milk donation remains a significant barrier in some communities. The study by Putri & Fikhriyah (2022) emphasized

that a technology-based approach could be a solution in overcoming logistical barriers for breast milk donors.

It can be concluded that although many mothers want to donate breastmilk, practical barriers such as time constraints, storage facilities, and logistical access, and emotional barriers such as concerns about milk supply and social stigma, are still major challenges, so technological support, wider education, and policies that facilitate access and convenience for potential breastmilk donors are needed.

Limitations

This review has several limitations. The search was limited to five databases (ScienceDirect, PubMed, Scopus, Wiley and Crossref), to full-text primary studies, and to articles published in English or Indonesian within the specified period; therefore, relevant studies indexed in other databases, published in other languages or available only as grey literature may have been missed. Only nine studies met the inclusion criteria, and they varied in design, setting and outcome measures. Most were qualitative or cross-sectional, so the relationships between the identified factors and mothers' willingness to donate cannot be interpreted causally, and one included study was a trial protocol without outcome data (A9). In addition, the included studies were conducted in Sweden, the United Kingdom, Australia, Iran, Vietnam and South Africa, and none was conducted in Indonesia. The findings should therefore be applied cautiously to the Indonesian context, where religious considerations such as milk kinship and the availability of human milk banks may differ. Finally, as a scoping review, this study mapped the range of influencing factors rather than estimating their relative strength.

Implications for Nursing Practice

The findings suggest that nurses and midwives play a key role in increasing mothers' participation in breast milk donation. During antenatal care, postnatal care and lactation counselling, they should provide accurate information about donor eligibility, health screening, milk expression, storage and delivery procedures, as well as the benefits of donor milk for preterm and sick infants. Because support from partners and families strongly influenced mothers' decisions, education should also involve family members. In Muslim communities, concerns about milk kinship should be addressed in a culturally and religiously sensitive manner, for example through collaboration with religious leaders and transparent donor–recipient records. For mothers who have lost a baby, breast milk donation can be offered as one option within compassionate lactation care, without pressure and with adequate psychological support. Practical barriers can be reduced by providing breast pumps and storage containers, home milk collection services and digital platforms that connect donors with milk banks. At the institutional and policy levels, training for health workers and the development of donor milk services with clear screening standards are needed.

Future research should evaluate the effectiveness of education-based interventions to increase milk donation, explore the perspectives of recipient families, and examine the sustainability of breast milk donation in Indonesia using larger and more diverse samples.

CONCLUSION

Breast milk donation is a practice that has great benefits for the health of infants, especially premature infants or those who cannot receive breast milk from their own mothers.

However, the level of maternal participation in breast milk donation programs is still influenced by various factors, including altruistic motivation, social support, limited information, cultural, and socio-demographic and emotional constraints. Low knowledge about milk banks and donation procedures, social stigma, and practical barriers such as access to facilities and time are key challenges that need to be overcome to encourage more mothers to donate their breastmilk on an ongoing basis.

To increase participation in the breast milk donation program, a broader approach to public education is needed, including community-based campaigns, socialization through health workers, and the use of digital technology such as online platforms to expand access to information. In addition, policy support that facilitates access to donor milk storage and distribution facilities, as well as strengthening the role of health workers and communities in supporting donor mothers, are strategic steps in ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of breast milk donation programs globally.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Sri Annisapada Jamaru: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing - original draft. **Mufdlilah:** Supervision, Validation, Writing - review and editing. **Farida Kartini:** Supervision, Validation, Writing - review and editing. All authors read and approved the final manuscript and agree to be accountable for all aspects of the work.

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. All research processes were conducted independently without any financial, commercial, or personal relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

DECLARATION OF AI USE

The authors did not use AI tools in preparing this manuscript.

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