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From Clicks to the Bank: Malaysia's Online Milk-Sharing Lessons for Inclusive Global Policies on Human Milk Donation

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Abstract

Background: Donor human milk is essential for supporting the health and survival of preterm and medically fragile infants. However, limited awareness, religious sensitivities, and sociocultural barriers mean that many countries, including Malaysia, face persistent challenges in encouraging public participation in formal human milk donation. In contrast, milk-sharing facilitated through online breastfeeding communities has gained considerable attention among Malaysian mothers. Understanding this practice could offer insights into community-based engagement, cultural negotiation, and religiously compliant human milk-donation initiatives. Aim: This article draws on lessons related to milk-sharing and translates them into actionable recommendations for policymakers and healthcare professionals. Methods: A qualitative descriptive design was employed, incorporating content analysis of online breastfeeding community posts and in-depth semi-structured interviews with Malaysian mothers involved in informal milk sharing. Results: Strategies include partnering with online breastfeeding communities, co-designing religiously sensitive

outreach materials, developing digital tool kits, and fostering inclusive, culturally respectful donor recruitment models. Conclusion: Human milk donation efforts can become better aligned by utilising breastfeeding communities and digital networking. © The Author(s) 2026

Abstrak Latar Belakang: Susu ibu penderma amat diperlukan untuk membantu memastikan kesihatan dan kelangsungan hidup bayi pramatang serta bayi yang mempunyai masalah kesihatan. Namun begitu, tahap kesedaran yang terhad, sensitiviti agama dan halangan sosiobudaya menyebabkan banyak negara, termasuk Malaysia, berdepan dengan cabaran yang terus-menerus berlaku dan mengurangkan penglibatan awam dalam program pendermaan susu ibu secara formal. Namun, amalan perkongsian susu yang diusahakan oleh komuniti susu ibu secara dalam talian telah menarik banyak perhatian para ibu di Malaysia. Dengan memahami perkara ini, penglibatan berasaskan komuniti, rundingan budaya dan inisiatif pendermaan susu ibu yang mematuhi kehendak agama akan dapat digembleng. **Tujuan:** Artikel ini menghimpunkan pelajaran berkaitan perkongsian susu dan menterjemahkannya kepada beberapa syor yang boleh dilaksanakan oleh pembuat dasar dan ahli professional dalam bidang kesihatan. **Kaedah:** Kajian dengan reka bentuk kualitatif deskriptif telah dijalankan, merangkumi analisis kandungan berkenaan hantaran dalam komuniti susu ibu secara dalam talian dan temu bual mendalam separa berstruktur membabitkan ibu-ibu di Malaysia yang terlibat dalam perkongsian susu secara tidak formal. **Keputusan:** Strategi-strategi yang dikenal pasti termasuk jalinan kerjasama dengan komuniti susu ibu secara dalam talian, usahasama dalam mereka bentuk bahan hebahan yang menuruti sensitiviti agama, pembangunan kit alat digital, selain mempromosikan model merekrut penderma yang inklusif serta menghormati budaya. **Kesimpulan:** Usaha pendermaan susu ibu boleh diselaraskan dengan lebih baik dengan cara memanfaatkan komuniti susu ibu dan perangkaan digital. © The Author(s) 2026

Author keywords

breastfeeding; delivery of healthcare; human milk; Malaysia; milk bank; preterm; vulnerable newborn

Indexed keywords

MeSH

Breast Feeding; Female; Humans; Infant, Newborn; Internet; Malaysia; Milk Banks; Milk, Human; Mothers; Qualitative Research

EMTREE medical terms

breast feeding; breast milk; female; human; Internet; Malaysia; milk bank; mother; newborn; psychology; qualitative research

Corresponding authors

Corresponding
author

N.A. Jamil

Affiliation

Department of Special Care Nursing, Kulliyyah of Nursing, International
Islamic University Malaysia, Kuantan Campus, Pahang, Kuantan, 25200,
Malaysia

Email address

nurulakmaj@iium.edu.my

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