

# Improving Breastfeeding Exclusivity and Enhancing Self-Efficacy Among Latina Mothers Through a Prenatal Breastfeeding Education Program

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## Introduction & Background

### Introduction

- Breastfeeding has been shown to protect both infants and mothers against a variety of diseases<sup>1</sup>
- Per the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, increasing breastfeeding worldwide could save up to 823,000 lives per year among children age five years old and younger<sup>2</sup>
- Healthy People 2020 breastfeeding objectives<sup>3</sup>
  - Increase the rate of breastfed infants from 76.1% to 81.9%
  - Increase the rate of exclusive breastfeeding through 6 months from 16.5% to 25.5%
- Breastfeeding rates in the United States<sup>4</sup>
  - Breastfeeding initiation among infants born in 2015 was 83.2%
  - Breastfeeding exclusivity at 3 months was 46.9% and 24.9% at 6 months
- There is a major reduction in breastfed infants, indicating the need for support among mothers who initiate breastfeeding

### Background

- The American Academy of Pediatrics, WHO, and UNICEF recommend exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life<sup>1,5</sup>.
- Breastfeeding rates among Latinas<sup>6</sup>
  - Breastfeeding initiation was 81.9%
  - Exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months was 18.2%
- Latinas face racial and ethnic disparities in breastfeeding initiation and duration<sup>7,8</sup>
- Breastfeeding reduces the incidence and risks of chronic diseases, such as diabetes, in both mothers and infants<sup>1</sup>
- Latino children and youth continue to be one of the nation's fastest-growing population, therefore it is important to provide the necessary resources to Latina mothers<sup>9</sup>

## Purpose & Aims

The purpose of this project is to enhance maternal breastfeeding self-efficacy and promote breastfeeding exclusivity among Latina mothers by implementing a prenatal breastfeeding education program and providing postnatal lactation support.

### Aims

- Increase breastfeeding exclusivity among Latina mothers in the mother-baby unit after delivering breastfeeding education when comparing pre-implementation exclusivity data to post-implementation exclusivity data.
- Improve breastfeeding exclusivity among Latina mothers by delivering breastfeeding education in Spanish with evaluation of exclusivity rates during inpatient stay, at 2-weeks, and at 4-6 weeks postpartum.
- Enhance Latina mothers' self-efficacy by implementing a breastfeeding education program in Spanish and assessing their self-efficacy at pre- and post-session and at 2-weeks postpartum.

## References

## Methods

**Design:** Human subjects research study to evaluate the effect of a prenatal breastfeeding program through pre- and post-intervention assessments by applying the Tri-Core Breastfeeding Model<sup>10</sup>

**Setting:** Tertiary academic center in an urban setting in Baltimore city

### Evidence-Based Intervention

- A breastfeeding education curriculum from InJoy Health Education<sup>11</sup> was used to deliver the material in Spanish
- Offered in one two-hour educational session in the prenatal period (classes were offered throughout the implementation phase)
- Assessed maternal breastfeeding self-efficacy and breastfeeding exclusivity
- Followed-up with participants at 2-weeks and 4-6 weeks postpartum

### Measures

- Spanish version of the Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form (BSES-SF)<sup>12</sup>
  - A validated and reliable 14-item Likert Scale measuring maternal breastfeeding confidence

### Inclusion Criteria

- (a) Spanish-speaking Latina women residing in the project region; (b) giving birth in the month of October, November, and December of 2019; (c) available for follow-up telephone encounters; and (e) minimum 18 years of age

**Sample:** Seven Spanish-speaking pregnant Latinas

## Results

### Feeding Practices among the Participants

- All participating mothers reported having experienced breastfeeding problems
- It was statistically significant when comparing the mothers' current feeding method with their previous feeding experience of other children ( $p < 0.05$ )

### Breastfeeding Exclusivity Among the Mother-Baby Unit and the Participating Mothers

- There was no significant association between both groups ( $p = 1$ )

### Breastfeeding Exclusivity Among the Participating Mothers

- One of the participating mothers breastfed exclusively in the hospital
- None of the participants breastfed exclusively at 2-weeks and 4-6 weeks postpartum

### Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form Scores

- The median score increased from 34 on the pre-score to 56 in the post-score ( $p < 0.05$ )
- There was no significant difference in the scores across the three time points (pre-intervention, post-intervention, and at 2-week postpartum)

### Summary of Maternal Descriptive and Breastfeeding Characteristics (N=7)

Variable	Value
Age of mother (years), mean (SD)	24 (5.09)
Gestational age (weeks), mean (SD)	34.3 (4.35)
Years living in the United States, mean (SD)	4.4 (4.54)
Nationality [n (%)]	
Guatemalan	1 (14.3)
Honduran	6 (85.7)
Anticipated feeding plan [n (%)]	
Partial breastfeeding (BF and formula)	7 (100)
Cultural rules or beliefs [n (%)]	
Yes	3 (42.9)
No	4 (57.1)

Note: SD, standard deviation

### Comparison of Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form Scores Among the Participating Mothers Pre- and Post-Implementation and 2-weeks Postpartum (N=7)

BSES-SF	Median	IQR (%)	p
Pre-score	34	37	
Post-score	56	40	0.43 <sup>a</sup>
2-weeks postpartum score	42	24	0.54 <sup>b</sup>

a. Wilcoxon-signed rank test

b. Friedman test

Note: IQR = interquartile range

## Conclusions

- The project findings revealed no effect of prenatal breastfeeding education on breastfeeding exclusivity among the participating mothers
- However, it did improve the BSES-SF post-intervention scores and increased the rate of any breastfeeding
- This project can provide significant clinical utility for healthcare professionals, lactation consultants, and educators
- Further research should focus on developing and implementing culturally tailored interventions for Spanish-speaking mothers, specifically looking at breastfeeding barriers
- Clinicians and lactation consultants should follow-up with mothers to assess for any breastfeeding problems
- Additional breastfeeding resources and educational programs should be easily accessible for Spanish-speaking women

## Dissemination

The data and results of this study will be shared with the director of nursing for maternal child health, the nursing manager of the mother-baby unit, and the lactation consultants. The physicians and program coordinator of the CenteringPregnancy program will also be informed about the results to determine if the breastfeeding education can also be implemented into their program. There are plans on publishing this project in a peer-reviewed journal to contribute to the healthcare literature among Latinos.

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