

Factors Affecting Breastfeeding Knowledge, Attitudes, and Self-Efficacy Among Postpartum Women

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Background

This study examined the effectiveness of prenatal education in promoting breastfeeding among pregnant women. Specifically, the objective was to understand the effect of prenatal education on the breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy of pregnant women, and to explore the factors contributing to successful breastfeeding.

Methods

A retrospective design was adopted by sourcing data from pregnant women who attended prenatal check-ups at a teaching hospital in Taiwan from May 2023 to April 2024. This study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase (before childbirth), nurses arranged face-to-face interviews with the expectant women by surveying their breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy during the first prenatal visit. Moreover, 7 breastfeeding education sessions were completed before childbirth. In the second phase, nurses conducted telephone follow-ups 1 month postpartum to monitor the breastfeeding methods used by the mothers and administered a second round of survey on breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy.

Results

From May 2023 to April 2024, this study enrolled 255 participants with an average age of 32 years. One month after childbirth, the breastfeeding rate was 80.39%. The prenatal education effectively enhanced the scores related to breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy ($p < 0.001$). Although positive correlations were observed between breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy, these factors were not correlated with the breastfeeding rate. Notably, family support emerged as a primary factor that affected breastfeeding among the mothers 1 month postpartum (adjusted odd ratio = 4.523, $p < 0.01$).

Conclusion

Overall, prenatal breastfeeding education was observed to improve the expectant mothers' breastfeeding knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy. However, prenatal education alone did not increase the breastfeeding rate. Family support and the establishment of a comfortable, supportive environment are recommended to facilitate and sustain breastfeeding activity.

Relation to Health Promoting Hospitals

Breastfeeding promotes the physical recovery of postpartum women and enhances their psychological health. Because of these benefits, a supportive environment should be established to encourage breastfeeding behavior among women.

Key Words: Breast feeding, Knowledge, Attitude, Self-efficacy