

Reflections on Labor and Delivery Internship

Healthcare Influences on Breastfeeding

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Introduction

- This research was inspired by clinical experience as a nurse intern on a labor and delivery unit.
- Breastfeeding is extremely beneficial for the health of both mothers and babies. Despite this fact, not enough mothers are breastfeeding.

Purpose

The purpose of this literature review was to determine if the attitude and knowledge hospital staff has about breastfeeding influences how successful mothers are in initiating and continuing breastfeeding.

Research Design and Methods

- A literature review was conducted to analyze what interventions have an influence on breastfeeding success.
- The following search terms were used: "breastfeeding or breast-feeding or infant feeding or lactation or lactating", "nurses or nursing staff or nurse", "support", "baby friendly hospital initiatives", and "breastfeeding outcomes" using The Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) and MEDLINE.
- Search results were limited to nursing journals, reviews, and systematic reviews. Search results were also limited to articles published within the last five years.
- The search results produced a total of 36 articles. 22 studies were excluded. 14 studies were determined to be relevant to this research and included in the study.

Results

- Education
 - It was found that a common deficiency exists in breastfeeding education received by hospital staff.
 - Properly educated staff caused a 14.95% increase in the rate of exclusively breastfed infants.
- Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiatives
 - Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiatives have a 40% higher rate of exclusive breastfeeding than hospitals without Baby-Friendly accreditation.
- Healthcare Support
 - At least one face-face interaction with a specialized lactation consultant results in better breastfeeding outcomes at 6 months postpartum.

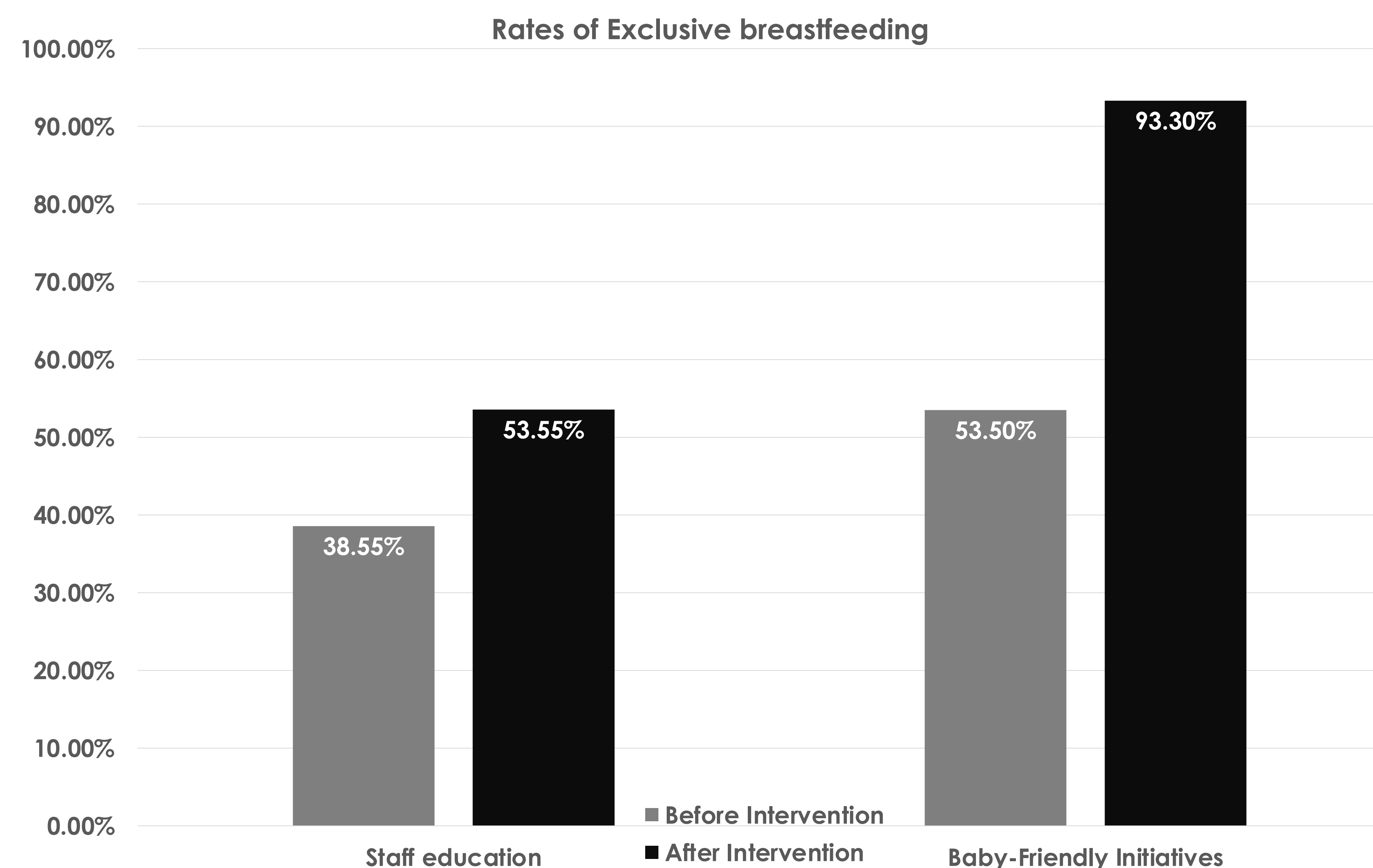


Figure 1. Rates of Exclusive Breastfeeding

Acknowledgements

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Discussion

- It is critical that healthcare staff in the women and infants' field are educated and prepared for the challenges that accompany breastfeeding.
- The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative has been particularly successful in increasing rates of breastfeeding.
- Limitations
 - The individualistic nature of breastfeeding makes it difficult to determine if hospital interventions or home support caused the mothers to continue breastfeeding.
- Implications for further research
 - Study designs were heterogenous due to the wide range of interventions researched. Future studies should focus on one intervention to obtain more accurate results.

Conclusions

- Both the knowledge and attitude of healthcare staff impact the success of breastfeeding.
- Healthcare professionals should implement supportive breastfeeding interventions in order to promote the health of women and infants.

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