

Abstract

Problem Statement: Human milk is a natural and recommended source of nutrition that can assist to reduce infant mortality and provide several maternal health benefits (American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP], 2012; World Health Organization [WHO], 2002). The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative developed the “Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding” that was implemented in local hospitals to increase the initiation and duration of breastfeeding; however, statistics portray that additional strategies should be utilized to promote and support breastfeeding for optimal outcomes (WHO, 2017). Despite the available resources that new mothers are offered, women need continuous guidance and reassurance to overcome their personal barriers to increase their personal efficacy of breastfeeding.

Purpose: The purpose of this pilot project was to explore the influence of a professionally mediated Facebook peer group to improve breastfeeding outcomes at a local Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) clinic. The Facebook group was designed to increase mothers’ confidence levels and breastfeeding knowledge through social networking among women of similar backgrounds.

Methods: Quantitative data were collected using the Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy-Short Form (BSES-SF) and one extra question regarding breastfeeding education through pre- and post-questionnaires to determine if the Facebook group influenced their confidence and awareness in breastfeeding.

Results: The paired samples *t*-test was used to determine if the means of the two sets of observations differed when the same groups of individuals were tested before and after the intervention. The BSES-SF and the breastfeeding education scores increased from pre- to post-

intervention indicating that the women had more breastfeeding confidence and knowledge after participating in the Facebook group. However, the differences were not statistically significant.

Conclusion: With a considerably small sample size ($N=2$) collected in this project, the overall data is difficult to be conclusive. The results did not show statistically significant differences; however, they were clinically significant from pre- to post-intervention. This pilot project can be used as a valuable resource for future research conducted using larger sample sizes regarding breastfeeding in underserved populations.