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Congress: The First International & 4th National Congress on health Education & Promotion, 2011

Title: Effectiveness of “Hands-on” and “Hands-off” Educational Methods on Breastfeeding Self-Efficacy among Primiparous Mothers

Authors: Azhari S, Baghany R, Akhlaghi F, Ebrahim zade S

Abstract: Background and Aim: Exclusive breastfeeding is very important for an infant’s growth and development. Self-efficacy is a modifiable psychological variable in sustained breastfeeding that is defined as a mother’s confidence in her perceived ability about successful exclusive breastfeeding. Self-efficacy beliefs function as an important set of human motivation, affect, and action which operate on action through motivation, cognitive and affective intervention process. Teaching strategies, based on Bandera’s self-efficacy theory and adult learning principles were incorporated in this research’s design. Regarding the importance of education in increasing breastfeeding self-efficacy and exclusive breastfeeding, the current study was conducted in order to compare the effectiveness of two educational methods, i.e., “Hands on” and “Hands off” on breastfeeding self-efficacy in primiparous mothers.

Materials and Methods: In the present clinical trial, 136 nursing mothers were randomly assigned to one of the three groups. Participants in the experimental groups received one of the structured one-on-one educational sessions (i.e., hands off or hands on) within the first two hours of giving birth. Mothers in control group received usual postpartum care. Follow-up assessments were conducted one, four, and eight weeks after the birth. Data collection was done through interview forms, examination and observation, checklist of breastfeeding status, breastfeeding self-efficacy and daily-feeding form.

Results: Women who were educated through hands-off technique reported higher self-efficacy exclusive breastfeeding than those receiving hands-on education or usual postpartum care at all measurement points after the intervention.

Conclusion: The hands-off education possibly is a better technique than hands-on technique.

Key words: breastfeeding self-efficacy, hands off, hands on, social cognitive theory

Presentation: Oral