Breastfeeding in African American Women

Abstract Information

Presentation Preference: SNRS Podium Presentation
Willing To Submit Poster?: Yes
Abstract Categories: Interest Group: Parent-Child
Thematic Areas: Perinatal/Neonatal/Infancy

Introduction:
This study explored issues related to initiating and sustaining breastfeeding in African Americans. African American women start breastfeeding less often than Caucasians (61% vs. 76%), and continue breastfeeding at lower rates (29% vs. 43% at 6 months) (CDC, 2007). Since breastfeeding has health benefits, a lower breastfeeding rate is a health disparity for African American infants, who already have higher infant mortality rates.

Method(s):
This study was guided by Leiniger's Theory of Culture Care Diversity and Universality (Leininger & McFarland, 2006). Purposive sampling was used to recruit African American women who were now breastfeeding or had breastfed within the past year. Three focus groups were conducted (n=15). A semi-structured question guide was used, discussion was audiotaped, transcribed verbatim, and field notes were used as context for analysis. Saturation was achieved by the third group. Each group was analyzed separately using the questions as categories; all data were combined to examine themes across groups and categories. Both researchers analyzed the data and came to agreement.

Results:
Categories included reasons to start and stop breastfeeding, advice that was helpful/not helpful, and unique cultural aspects of breastfeeding. Themes were perceived lack of information about benefits and management of breastfeeding, difficulties breastfeeding in public, and lack of a support system for continued breastfeeding.

Discussion:
Participants wanted to breastfeed, but didn't receive adequate information to continue. They wanted support groups of other African American women to share information and resources. Nurses must provide information early in pregnancy
about the benefits of breastfeeding and breastfeeding management techniques in a supportive group educational setting. If nursing interventions were developed to encourage African American women to choose to initiate and continue breastfeeding, African American infants would experience the health benefits of breast milk.

Research Completed: Yes

Abstract History:
- This material has been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at this or another scientific meeting.
- Details: preliminary results presented as student poster at SNRS Feb 2008

Financial Disclosure:
Have a financial arrangement or affiliation with commercial companies whose products may be mentioned in this material? No

FDA Disclosure:
Cleared: Yes

Non-Exclusive License:
Accepted Terms: Yes

Submitted By:
plewall@uncg.edu