Abstract

The purpose of this study was to assess the factors that influence breastfeeding initiation for Black mothers in Central Ohio and to suggest an educational intervention to increase breastfeeding initiation and duration. Breastfeeding surveillance has been conducted in Ohio in the past, but to date inadequate data exist that examines reason behind low rates of infant breastfeeding among Black mothers in Ohio. For this reason, the researcher sought to conduct a study to assess breastfeeding initiation for Black mothers in Central Ohio. The project used a self-administered infant feeding survey composed of two parts, a researcher-developed Infant Feeding Questionnaire and the Iowa Infant Feeding Assessment Scale (IIFAS), as the data collection instruments. Seventy-four women participated in the project data from participants who completed both parts of the survey (n=44) were specifically used to examine any association between introducing breast milk within the first 3 days of the infant’s life and continued infant breastfeeding. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) framework was used to address the seven (7) objectives of this practicum. Recommendations and interventions were suggested to help increase breastfeeding initiation. In all, the project practicum maintains if no attempt is made to introduce the infant to breast milk within the first few days of birth, there is a higher chance the infant will not be given breastmilk in the future. Essentially, this project practicum lends insight into infant feeding attitudes among Black women in Central Ohio and the results of this project practicum offers recommendations to strengthen attitudes toward breastfeeding such as creating a breastfeeding plan, providing educational awareness, and shining a positive light on breastfeeding.