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## Tiny Tusks Internship: Marketing Towards Breastfeeding: How Marketing Can Either Help or Hinder How Breastfeeding is Perceived

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**Tiny Tusks Internship: Marketing Towards Breastfeeding: How Marketing Can Either  
Help or Hinder How Breastfeeding is Perceived**

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### **Introduction**

Tiny Tusks Breastfeeding and Infant Support is a program run by faculty and students in the Eleanor Mann School of Nursing program that allows for breastfeeding mothers in attendance at the University of Arkansas sporting events to have a place to pump or provide care to their infant. The Tiny Tusks tent and the one permanent lactation room are the only areas in the Arkansas Razorbacks stadiums and arenas to allow a clean, private area for breastfeeding mothers to pump for their infant. The Tiny Tusk room offers a rocking chair, a changing table, as well as activities for older children while their mother is using the room. This program was made possible through a grant that was donated from the Women's Giving Circle at the University of Arkansas. This past year, Tiny Tusks was available at football games, basketball games, and gymnastics meets. However, due to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing, the overall attendance at these events was less than past years. Despite this, Tiny Tusks was still able to provide this area for mothers as well as educate others about our purpose.

By simply being a part of the Tiny Tusks team during the 2020-2021 school year, I was able to learn many different things about breastfeeding in general as well as breastfeeding at public events. It was interesting to learn that prior to the Tiny Tusks program, breastfeeding mothers would have to pump in the restroom. This would not provide them with a clean, private area as the Tiny Tusk room does. Breastfeeding for many people is a taboo topic, so it is not discussed openly as much as it should be. Mothers should not have to pump in the public restroom, since this is not where other game attendees would eat their concession stand hotdog or popcorn. Tiny Tusks has allowed me to gain experience with breastfeeding mothers and to be more understanding of their situation. As a nurse, you will encounter patients or even coworkers who are breastfeeding and need time to pump. Not every public place will have a private area for

mothers to breastfeed, so this experience has helped me to understand why it is important to talk about breastfeeding.

### **Reflection**

Tiny Tusks has faced many challenges this year by having to adapt to COVID-19 requirements. While at the Razorback games, we had many different duties to perform. At each game we would have a couple of students taking temperatures of the game staff to ensure that no one was potentially sick. We would also walk around the stadiums and arenas with signs reminding people to wear their masks and to continue practicing social distancing. Both of these tasks were newly implemented this year in accordance with COVID-19. At the Tiny Tusks room, we would assist any mothers who came by to use the room and we would also answer any questions that people walking by might have had.

This year not only were we able to provide breastfeeding mothers a private room to pump at athletic events, but we were also able to volunteer at many different COVID-19 vaccination events. We were able to help administer hundreds of vaccines to faculty, as well as staff, at the University of Arkansas. We also worked closely with J.B. Hunt to help administer vaccines to the 1-B group of the Northwest Arkansas community. Although these vaccine clinics did not correlate to Tiny Tusks, it was important for us to get out and serve the community during this time of need. These clinics did however allow for further growth and development of teamwork that I will continue to use throughout my career as a nurse.

### **Challenges**

As previously mentioned, one of the many challenges Tiny Tusks faced this year was COVID-19. This meant that the maximum capacity for each football game was 17,000 fans instead of the normal capacity of 76,400. Since the overall number of fans was limited, this

lowered the potential number of breastfeeding mothers that would be in attendance. It can also be assumed that not as many breastfeeding mothers would be in attendance as to not put their infant at risk or themselves at risk for potentially catching COVID-19. Even though this was a challenge this past year, it was important for Tiny Tusks to still be present and visible for all athletic events so that we could be available for any breastfeeding mothers that were also in attendance. Even if only one person were to utilize the room each game, Tiny Tusks would still be making a difference in the breastfeeding community.

### **Lessons Learned**

The coursework that prepared me for this honors internship were Maternal Child and Family as well as Community Health. In Maternal Child and Family, we were able to learn about breastfeeding and its importance. Through this course I was also able to learn that mothers who are breastfeeding their child may need to pump when away from their child for extra milk and to also prevent breast engorgement. Breast engorgement can lead to a bacterial infection known as mastitis. Other complications of breast engorgement include abscesses and clogged milk ducts. Community Health allowed us to learn how to best serve the community and different ways to approach the community based on its needs. From the vaccination clinics that we were able to attend, I was able to learn how to educate people on the importance of vaccination adherence as well as the many benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Review of Literature**

#### **Methods**

I conducted a thorough systematic review of research using multiple sources to find twelve journal articles about the benefits of breastfeeding and how breastfeeding is marketed

towards society. The three databases used to find these sources were CINHALL, JSTOR, and Google Scholar. The key words used in my search included “breastfeeding, marketing, and the benefits of breastfeeding”. In order for the source to be eligible for this research, it needed to be a breastfeeding article written in English. The article also had to be published within the past five years in order to ensure that all data was up to date. After compiling all twelve articles that would be used, a table was created to state the author, year of which the source was published, title of the source, conclusion, and any additional comments about the source.

## **Results**

When a woman breastfeeds her baby, there are many health benefits for both mother and baby. These health benefits are both short- and long-term. Some long-term benefits for the baby include a higher performance on intelligence tests and cognitive development, a reduced risk of obesity, and a reduced risk for diabetes mellitus type 2 (Binns et al., 2016). As far as cognitive development, IQ scores see a significant increase compared to children who were not breastfed. The long-term benefits for the breastfeeding mother include “reduced rates of ovarian cancer, reduced premenopausal breast cancer, and reduced obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease” (Binns et al., 2016). Breastfeeding is also proven to prevent and control infections such as respiratory tract infections and ear infections. There is no doubt that breastfeeding can benefit both mother and baby. After all, breastmilk is often referred to as “liquid gold” due to the many health benefits it can provide.

Marketing breastfeeding not only means promoting the benefits of breastfeeding, but it also requires the elimination of discouraging mothers to breastfeed. This discouragement is shown through hospitals and different formula companies advertising formula feeding. These marketing tactics that support formula feeding “often position them as ‘better’ than the optimal

dietary options for infants and young children including breastmilk” (Harris & Pomeranz 2020). Some hospitals also support this marketing tactic by sending new mothers’ home with coupons and samples of different formulas. By discharging new mothers to their home with formula and coupons for formula, this places formula feeding at the forefront of their mind instead of breastfeeding. Marketing should instead focus on the elimination of the need for formula feeding in most instances and stress the benefits associated with breastfeeding. In order for this marketing tactic to be effective, workplace, community, city, and state levels will need to be involved. For example, working mothers might feel more comfortable breastfeeding their baby if they know that when they return to work, they will be allotted time as well as a private space to pump their breastmilk. If this is not provided through the workplace level, they might see formula feeding as being a more convenient alternative for them.

Alongside marketing the benefits of breastfeeding comes advocating for breastfeeding mothers. The World Health Organization/United Nations Children’s Fund Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding came together to create the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative. This initiative implemented ten simple steps that hospitals should take in order to promote successful breastfeeding. A study was conducted, and the data showed that “adherence to the BFHI *Ten Steps* has a positive impact on short-term, medium-term, and longer-term BF outcomes” (Pérez-Escamilla et al., 2016). Some of the BFHI *Ten Steps* include staff training for proper implementation, breastfeeding within the first thirty minutes of birth, not providing the infant with anything other than breastmilk unless medically required, and more. The tenth and final step recommends that support is provided to the breastfeeding mother. This can range from support groups to community support. This tenth step is believed to be the “key for sustaining short-term breastfeeding benefits” (Pérez-Escamilla et al., 2016). This is why it is not only

important to educate the mothers about the benefits of breastfeeding, but to also educate society as a whole so that they can help to support breastfeeding mothers' decisions.

A major barrier that many women struggle with when breastfeeding is embarrassment from society when having to breastfeed in public. There is negative social stigma that is commonly associated with breastfeeding, as breasts have been romanticized in the media. In order to change this stigma, it is important to not only send a positive message about breastfeeding, but it is also important that the message is “adapted to address genuine concerns of the target population” (Morris et al., 2020, p. 5), the target population being society as a whole. Optimum breastfeeding doesn't only involve the mother and the baby, it also includes nurses, employers, family, and friends. These people can have an impact on the woman's decision to breastfeed whether they realize it or not. Policy changes, supportive care from healthcare professionals and support from partners and family can improve breastfeeding outcomes. To help promote and market breastfeeding, it is important to start educating the mother on the benefits early on in her pregnancy. Nurses can help accomplish this by providing knowledge, information, and resources that can help to support the mother's decision. Public knowledge of breastfeeding is often based on advertisements that they see. Therefore, it is important to ensure that these campaigns demonstrate a diverse and realistic approach to breastfeeding in order to market to the larger population. By implementing these changes, there should be a positive impact of how society views and supports breastfeeding mothers.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of Journals

<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Akik	2017	Barriers to breastfeeding in	In Lebanon, a majority of the infants first meal after birth is chosen by	Implementation and promotion of breastfeeding requires



		Lebanon: A policy analysis	the hospital, and most of the time it is not breastmilk.	hospitals to be compliant and supportive of breastfeeding mothers.
Binns	2016	The Long-Term Public Health Benefits of Breastfeeding	When a mother breastfeeds her baby, there are both long- and short-term benefits for the baby as well as the mother.	It is important to promote the benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby to help increase the rate of breastfeeding. If people are made more aware of these benefits, they are more likely to breastfeed.
Brahm	2017	Benefits of breastfeeding and risks associated with not breastfeeding	There are many benefits associated with breastfeeding that would benefit both mother and baby. There are also many risks that can occur when not breastfeeding.	Many people do not believe that breastfeeding can have an impact on the economy as well as the environment, even though it has a huge impact. It is important to educate society about these negative impacts as well as the benefits that come along with breastfeeding.
Burgio	2016	Breastfeeding Education: Where Are We Going? A Systematic Review Article	Baby Friendly Hospitals must have staff that are properly educated and trained on how to educate and promote breastfeeding among mothers.	The trained staff must also be sure to include the partner in their teachings as this is shown to provide the mothers with emotional support.
Harris	2020	Infant formula and toddler milk marketing: opportunities to address harmful practices and improve young children's diets	Marketing formula towards mothers can lead to a decrease in mothers who choose to breastfeed their baby.	Promoting products such as formula are very harmful to the rates of breastfeeding women.
Khoury	2016	Improving Breastfeeding Knowledge, Attitudes,	Training for promoting and education for breastfeeding towards mothers should not	When the staff was provided with an intervention about breastfeeding, their

		and Practices of WIC Clinic Staff	only include the clinic staff, but should also include the clinic administrators. These administrators can help to change policies and procedures that would benefit the promoting of breastfeeding.	knowledge and attitudes towards breastfeeding saw an increase over the staff who was not intervened.
Maria	2017	Breastfeeding Campaigns and Ethnic Disparity in Brazil: The Representation of a Hegemonic Society and Quasiperfect Experience	Breastfeeding campaigns in Brazil appear to only target certain racial and socio-economic groups.	In order for breastfeeding campaigns to reach a larger audience and make a greater impact, campaigns should be more diverse. Most campaigns also advertise very unrealistic ideas.
Morris	2020	Exploration of the factors influencing attitudes to breastfeeding in public	The way that society as a whole views breastfeeding can have an influence on a mother's decision to breastfeed. Because of this, it is important to change the way that the public views breastfeeding into a more positive view.	Marketing should not only be aimed towards breastfeeding mothers, but also towards the public to increase public support for breastfeeding.
Pérez-Escamilla	2020	Breastfeeding in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century: How we can make it work	Promoting breastfeeding also means to target the societal influences on a mother's decision to breastfeed such as friends, employers, and legislators.	When hospitals are promoting formula feeding, it makes a mother's choice to breastfeed more difficult.
Pérez-Escamilla	2016	Impact of the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative on breastfeeding and child health outcomes: a systematic review	A study was conducted to determine if hospitals that practice the BFHI <i>Ten Steps</i> improves their breastfeeding rates or not.	A vast majority of the hospitals that used the BFHI <i>Ten Steps</i> saw short-, medium-, and long-term benefits and outcomes from this program. Breastfeeding rates

				among these hospitals saw a larger increase than hospitals that did not use this program.
Rollins	2016	Why invest, and what it will take to improve breastfeeding practices?	Breastfeeding is known to improve the child’s cognitive score. By not breastfeeding, there is lower intelligence that is congruent with “economic losses of about \$302 billion annually” (Rollins et al., 2016).	Promoting breastfeeding over formula will require many investments into the economy, but in the long run, it will benefit the economy more than formula feeding and prevent economic losses to counteract the downsides of not breastfeeding.
Sinha	2015	Interventions to improve breastfeeding outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis	In order to promote breastfeeding rates among mothers, counseling must take place in a multitude of settings that include but are not limited to health care systems, homes, and the community.	Baby friendly hospitals that promoted breastfeeding exclusively appeared to be the most effective way to promote breastfeeding towards mothers.

**Discussion**

How breastfeeding is marketed towards not only women, but also towards society as a whole, can make an impact on the perception of breastfeeding. Many marketing tactics include the benefits of breastfeeding for baby as well as mother. Not only should these campaigns target women, but they should also target employers, students, and men in order to create a conducive and accepting society. In order for promotion of breastfeeding to be successful, it is also important to eliminate the support of formula feeding through samples and coupons after birth. The BFHI *Ten Steps* is also another successful way to implement the support of breastfeeding in

hospitals. This requires proper staff training and education as well as support from all levels of within the hospital, including policy changes, not just the nursing staff.

### **Conclusion**

Breastfeeding has many health benefits for mother and baby, so it is important to market these benefits in order to increase the rate of breastfeeding among mothers. Tiny Tusks is contributing by marketing these benefits of breastfeeding by running social media accounts such as Facebook and Instagram. These social media platforms are able to help spread knowledge about the importance of breastfeeding to not only mothers, but to anyone willing to learn more about breastfeeding. The accounts stay up to date with current information about breastfeeding as well as events that are going on in the local community. Women should not feel uncomfortable when deciding whether or not to breastfeed their child. It is important to make them feel comfortable by not only providing them with the knowledge they need, but also by providing them with a supportive society through different marketing strategies. In order for marketing of breastfeeding support to be successful, it is important to also limit the number of formula marketing tactics as this causes breastfeeding rates to decrease. Marketing advertisements must also be more inclusive and diverse in order to provide a more realistic image that is more inclusive to all breastfeeding mothers.

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