



The Impact of Breastfeeding Education among Pregnant Women and Breastfeeding Mothers

Maria N. Richardson, OTS¹, Tonia Taylor, PhD² and Beneta Burt, CEO²
 University of Mississippi Medical Center¹ and The Mississippi Urban League²



OVERVIEW OF CAPSTONE SITE

POSTER OVERVIEW: This project examines the impact of breastfeeding education among pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers within the Jackson, MS.

Overview of Capstone Site: The Mississippi Urban League has partnered with Baby Café, a child and maternal health support group that provides free breastfeeding education services and peer support. In the past, there would be weekly sessions with expecting mothers and breastfeeding women. The program specifically targets low-socioeconomic women who are predominantly African-American women. The age ranges include 18–40-year-old women. The group meets once a week, every Thursday from 11:00am – 1:00pm

LITERATURE SUMMARY

- Breastfeeding is widely recognized in the scientific and health care communities worldwide as the optimal feeding choice for infants because of the numerous health benefits for both mothers and infants (Spencer, B., Wambach, K., & Domain, E. W., 2014).
- Mississippi has the lowest rates of breastfeeding of all states with cessation starting at 6 months and at 1 year (Alakaam, A., Lemacks, J., Yadrick, K., Connell, C., Choi, H., & Newman, R., 2018).
- Many new mothers do not reach their breastfeeding goals. Breastfeeding self-efficacy is a modifiable determinant influenced by prior and new breastfeeding experiences and increased knowledge. (Nilsson, I. M., Kronborg, H., Rahbek, K. & Strandberg-Larsen, K., 2020).

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Over the summer, virtual meetings were conducted with the capstone advisor and the needs assessments were developed from the population. Based on the needs assessment data collected, goals and objectives were developed from literature review sources. The participants consisted of pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, ages 18-40 within Jackson, MS and the surrounding areas. The data from the needs assessment was collected through an interview with capstone mentor to gain education of the population.

PROJECT GOALS / OBJECTIVES

- Increase participant education of the benefits and resources for breastfeeding through the use of weekly educational sessions.
- Develop a pre assessment and post assessment evaluation tool to assess the education of the population
- Created a program that focuses on breastfeeding education for young mothers
- Delivered a finalized manual for distribution to facility.
- Assisted in the reduction negative attitudes surrounding the act breastfeeding.
- The capstone student will advocate for more opportunities and support to help young breastfeeding mothers

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT and/or IMPLEMENTATION

For recruitment, flyers were placed at hospitals, clinics, WIC distribution centers, and community centers. Recruitment flyers were posted on Facebook to aid in virtual recruitment. Fifteen participants signed-up with three participants being compliant in attendance throughout the program. Meetings on topics of: Breastfeeding and COVID-19, Breastfeeding and Nutrition, Breastfeeding and Lead Prevention, and Breastfeeding Self Care. Three consistent barriers were decreased education on topics, lack of needed resources, and decreased social support.

This led to the creation of the Honor-A-Mother program which aided in the development of a social support network because it allowed participants to have a safe place to share ideas, promote breastfeeding and talk about motherhood.

Example Picture: Honor-A-Mother Program posts

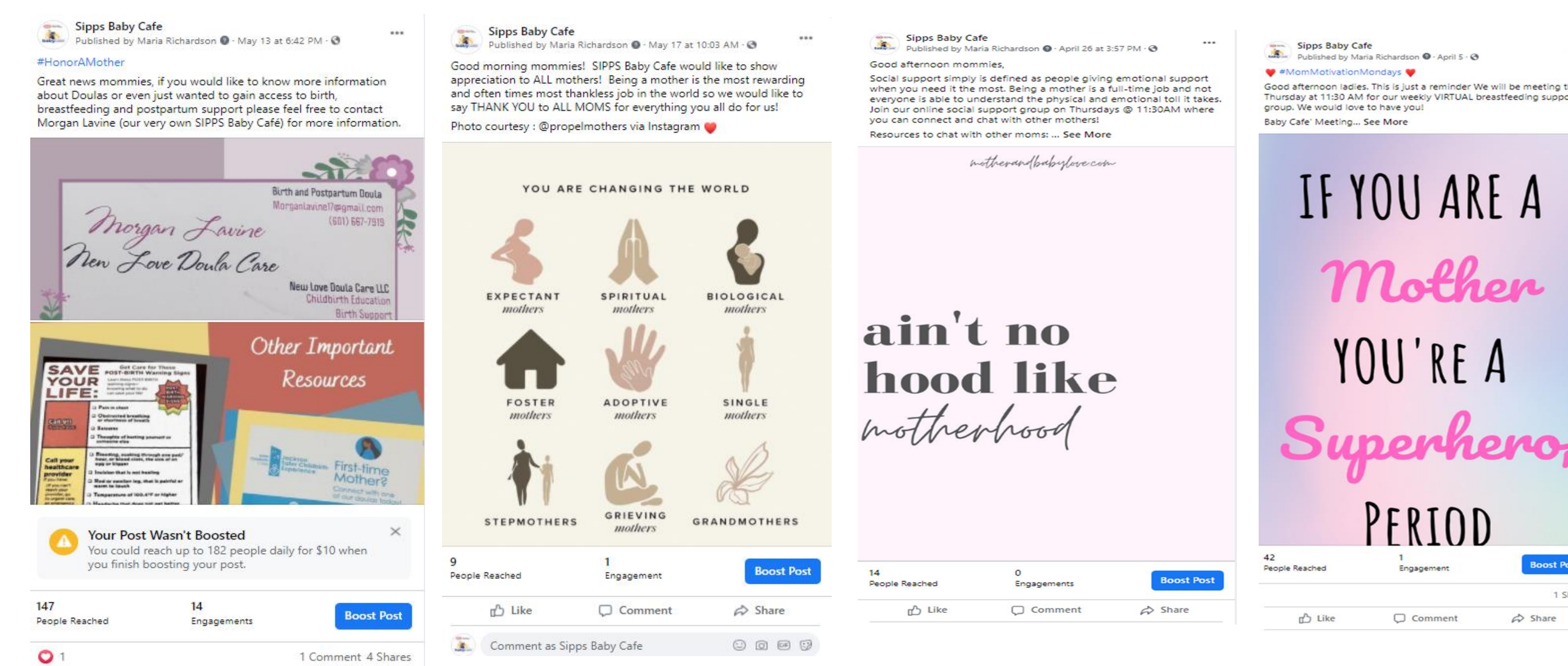


Table 2
 Categories and response quotes from focus group interviews after education

Categories	Participant Responses
Social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I feel like I can come to SIPPS Baby Café and talk about my problems to other moms, and they understand.” “Sometimes I feel like the other moms that come understand what I go through here.” “I feel like these women actually care.”
Available resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “If I need help, I can go to the WIC office and go online and see what types of resources they have?” “Thank you for all the places you told me I could get help from; I know how to get what I need now.”
Breastfeeding education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “I am watching what I do and what foods I put in my body.” “I know that I need to breastfeed frequently and keep doing it for me and my baby’s health.” “I practice using my breast pumps so I can be prepared.”

PLAN FOR PROJECT EVALUATION

- To measure the effectiveness of my capstone project, I plan to conduct focus group interviews, a pre-test/post-test survey and a quality improvement survey.
- A pre-test was given to track previously known information to establish a baseline which was utilized at the initial meeting.
- A post-test measured the participant’s progress by comparing what they knew before to what they learned over time in the program and was given at the last meeting.
- A quality Improvement survey used to see how we could improve as our program (whether it was service delivery, or information methods) We asked participants improvements, suggestions and comments to further assess the program, and this was administered at the half-way mark between initial date and end date.
- Focus group interviews were utilized throughout the program to gather information about a variety of topics related to breastfeeding, social support, nutrition and were discussed in an openly manner.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

This capstone project was designed to determine the impact that increased breastfeeding education had on pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. The participants' responses suggest that education and resources about breastfeeding combined with social support services may have a positive impact on maternal and child health.

Occupational therapists can help this community by examining the physical, social, emotional, and cultural aspects of breastfeeding and developing strategies to improve breastfeeding success as well as maternal and child health. Because feeding can be classified into activities of daily living, and child-rearing and health management can be classified into instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), the knowledge gained from this study is relevant to occupational therapy. Occupational therapy bridges the gap by identifying the needs of the organization and developing a plan to focus on the most important aspects to achieve the desired outcome.