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Women's intentions to exclusively breastfeed: The Israeli perspective

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The aim of the present study was to identify factors associated with Israeli women's intention to exclusively breastfeed EBF their next baby based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), within the context of Israeli ethnic and cultural diversity. The study is a correlational quantitative study. Women were recruited at lectures on women's health at an urban setting in central Israel during September-December 2013. The lectures were organized by a local nursing school and were open for the general public. A convenience sample of 200 Hebrew-speaking women of childbearing age, who had at least one child over six months old which had been EBF for at least one month, was taken for study. The women completed a closed questionnaire based on the TPB. In the multivariate analysis, behavioral beliefs, behavioral attitudes, knowledge of EBF and EBF duration of the previous child predicted 35.3% of Israeli women's intentions to EBF in the future. In addition, study findings revealed the importance that women attributed to their spouses' opinion concerning EBF. Muslim Arab women expressed higher intention to EBF than Jewish women. The findings of this study will constitute the basis of a nurse-administered intervention program for promoting EBF in Israeli society. In the context of this program, nurses' interventions will emphasize the benefits of EBF for mothers and infants, and provide women and their spouses with tools and information to support EBF. Nurses' interventions will also take into account the influence of ethnicity and culture, as well as the duration of women's previous EBF experiences.

Biography

Merav Ben Natan is the Director of the Pat Matthews Academic School of Nursing, Hillel Yaffe Medical Center in Hadera, Israel. She is also an Instructor at the Department of Nursing at Tel Aviv University. She also serves as the Chairman of the Committee on Elder Abuse and Violence of the Israel Ministry of Health and as the Chairman of the Israeli Nursing Research Association. She has published more than 70 articles in various professional journals.

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