

Experiences of breastfeeding in a rural Iowa Latinx community

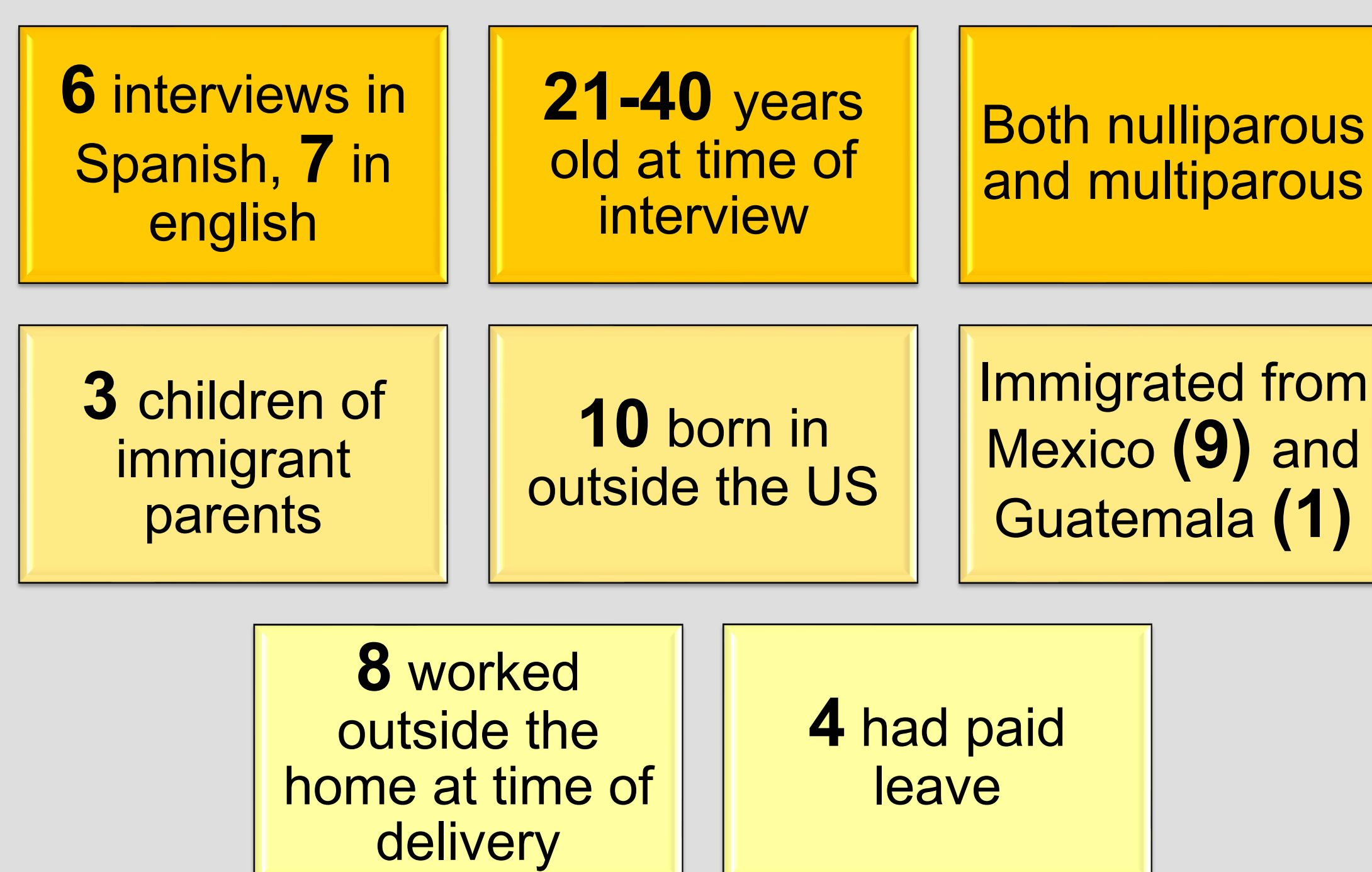
Objectives

- To gain an understanding of the experiences of breastfeeding and milk expression among Latina mothers in rural Iowa.
- To identify potential barriers- economic, social, employment-related and educational- to expressing milk and feeding of expressed milk in a rural Iowa Latinx population

Data Source/Population

We conducted 11 interviews and used thematic analysis to identify factors common to participants experience with breastfeeding and expression of breast milk.

All participants were patients at a rural Iowa clinic associated with a major academic medical center.



Results

- Attitudes toward and experiences of breastfeeding and milk expression varied greatly between individuals.
- Challenges and barriers included: [List these](#)
- Pumping exposure varied from exclusive pumping to minimal awareness of the concept.
- Unrealistic expectations and misconceptions included: [List a few](#)
- Desired ↑ breastfeeding or pumping education/resources prenatally and native language in-person lactation support post-partum.

Lessons Learned

- The breastfeeding experiences of Hispanic and Latina women in rural Iowa are diverse and no single educational strategy will be appropriate for every mother.
- In order to support women in meeting their breastfeeding goals, healthcare providers must help manage expectations surrounding the normal physiologic process of lactation and provide education on the options for successful breastfeeding including the role of milk expression.
- Wide variation in knowledge of the expression of breast milk suggests that this topic is not being routinely or comprehensively covered in the prenatal breastfeeding education offered at this particular clinic .
- As in other areas of healthcare, an attempt to address the needs of an entire population must be flexible enough to acknowledge variability of individual experiences.

Practice implications

Providers should strive to create equitable access to education and resources while acknowledging the great variability experience. Taking an overly reductionist approach towards patient needs based on ethnicity, race or socio-economic group does a disservice to the individual.

Theme	Representative Quotations
Barriers to Breastfeeding	<p>Pain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Entonces... y yo... he... sangraba y me molestaba mucho. Y entonces traté por varios meses. Pero este... pues ya después era mucho el dolor y... y no busque la ayuda ni pregunta ni nada. Entonces, como, renuncia ya. (Interview 7 Transcript, Pos. 17)” <p>Concerns about milk supply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Uhm, when she’s at the breast, she’ll go for a little bit, maybe like 4 minutes and then she’ll start crying. Like, I don’t know, she, she gets desperate, kind of. (Interview 12 Transcript, Pos. 15)” <p>Difficulties with latch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...no sabía la forma de como él... y... para pegarse, y como hacer la, la correcta posición y todo. Entonces... y yo... he... sangraba y me molestaba mucho... Entonces, como, renuncia ya. Me di por vencida.” (Interview 7 Transcript, Pos. 17)”
Barriers to Expressing Milk	<p>Logistical: “...tenia que ir como dos o tres veces y pues estaba muy, muy lejos, el cuatro donde tenía que ir para sacar la leche, pero, pues, tenía que hacerlo. (Interview 4 Transcript, Pos. 46)”</p> <p>“I think it was more difficult when we were out because I couldn’t just like breastfeed right there. (Interview 11 Transcript, Pos. 37)”</p> <p>Pain “it was just painful ‘cause I had cracked nipples (Interview 14 Transcript, Pos. 78)”</p> <p>Lack of physical connection “I guess, you didn’t have that connection with that baby if you, like put him, liked latch himself. That’s the only worse thing, I guess. I didn’t have that experience that much. (Interview 13 Transcript, Pos. 60)”</p>
Healthcare Support	<p>All but one participant said healthcare workers could offer more support</p> <p>“Pues, a lo mejor, ofreciendo más información sobre extraer leche durante el embarazo para que si... para que se les haga mas fácil. (Interview 9 Transcript, Pos. 69)”</p> <p>Participants had suggestions of the type of support they wanted</p> <p>“I wish at the University they have somebody for lactation consultant on during the weekend. (Interview 14 Transcript, Pos. 42)”</p> <p>“Or actual giving them... Like I said they gave out a breast pump. Even though it was manually it still helped out a lot. (Interview 11 Transcript, Pos. 53)”</p>

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