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ISSN (Print): 1573-4048  
ISSN (Online): 1875-6581

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### Research Article

## Is Maternal-fetal Attachment Education Effective in the Success of Breastfeeding? A Randomized Clinical Trial Study

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Volume 22, Issue 3, 2025

Published on: 22 July, 2025

Article ID: e15734048365938

DOI: 10.2174/0115734048365938250712060650

Pages: 50

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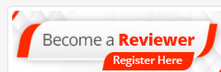
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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Breastfeeding represents the most enduring investment in the physical, cognitive, and social development of children. Maternal-fetal attachment (MFA) is suggested to be a predictor of breastfeeding. The study aimed to evaluate the impact of a maternal-fetal attachment (MFA) training program on breastfeeding success among nulliparous women in Iran.

**Methods:** This clinical trial study was conducted on 70 pregnant women referred to two maternity clinics in Tehran, Iran. Using the randomized sampling method, two perinatal care services in the north of Tehran were selected for recruiting the subjects into control and intervention groups. The eligible women completed the demographic and reproductive, and Cranley's MFA questionnaire. Then, the intervention group received two MFA education sessions, while the control group received routine prenatal education. Cranley's MFA questionnaire was filled up again one month after the educational intervention. The breastfeeding success questionnaire and the Breastfeeding practice-related questionnaire were also completed in the 8th week of postpartum. Data were analyzed by using SPSS 22 and parametric and non-parametric tests.

**Results:** Seventy women aged  $30.67 \pm 3.69$  years participated in the study. There was no significant difference in MFA scores between the intervention and control groups prior to the intervention ( $89.03 \pm 7.83$  vs  $89.66 \pm 11.3$ ;  $p = 0.7$ , respectively). However, a significant difference was observed between the intervention and control groups one month after the MFA education intervention ( $89.91 \pm 8.23$  vs  $97.86 \pm 9.72$ ;  $p < 0.001$ , respectively). The results also revealed a significant difference between the intervention and control groups in terms of breastfeeding success at eight weeks postpartum ( $64.71 \pm 9.99$  vs  $71.11 \pm 11.05$ ;  $p < 0.001$ , respectively).

**Discussion:** Maternal-Fetal attachment education is effective on the success of breastfeeding. This finding could be used in breastfeeding promotion programs, meaning that providing MFA education can help breastfeeding promotion among mothers.

**Conclusion:** MFA education not only improves maternal-fetal attachment behaviors but also increases the success of breastfeeding, and so, it is suggested to be integrated into the maternal-child health services.

Clinical Trial Registration Number: IRCT20120122008801N22; Registration date: 05/03/2018

**Keywords:** Prenatal education, maternal-fetal attachment, breastfeeding, pregnancy, clinical trial, parametric and nonparametric tests.

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2

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