The Use of Videoconferencing for Lactation Consultation: An Online Cross-Sectional Survey of Mothers’ Acceptance in the United States

Abstract
Background: Suboptimal breastfeeding duration and exclusivity rates are a public health concern. Therefore, there is a need for identifying effective tools for use in interventions targeting specific barriers to optimal breastfeeding outcomes. Research Aims/Questions: To assess the relationship between acceptance of remote lactation consultation using videoconferencing and 1) maternal demographic factors, 2) technology acceptance subscales, 3) maternal learning style preferences, and 4) other potentially explanatory maternal factors.
Methods: This was a cross-sectional, online study. English-speaking mothers of at least 18 years of age, with an infant aged four months or younger, and who reported initiating breastfeeding, were eligible to participate. Mothers were recruited from 27 randomly selected states. One hundred and one mothers completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 71%. The main outcome was acceptance of videoconferencing use for lactation consultation.
Results: No significant differences were found in acceptance by maternal demographic factors or learning style preferences. Acceptance was significantly related to ‘perceived ease of use’ \(r=0.680, p<0.001\), ‘perceived usefulness/extrinsic motivation’ \(r=0.774, p<0.001\), ‘intrinsic motivation’ \(r=0.689, p<0.001\), desire for control of privacy \(r=-0.293, p<0.01\), and mother’s perception of the infant father’s/maternal partner’s acceptance of videoconferencing for lactation consultation \(r=0.432, p<0.001\). Only ‘perceived usefulness/extrinsic motivation’ and maternal age remained in the final regression model \(R^2=0.616, p<0.001\). Though ‘perceived usefulness/extrinsic motivation’ was positively associated with acceptance, maternal age was inversely related. Conclusion: This sample of mothers indicated general acceptance of videoconferencing for lactation consultation, with younger mothers and those perceiving it to be more useful demonstrating greater acceptance.