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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Influence of maternity leave on exclusive breastfeeding[☆]

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KEYWORDS

Exclusive breastfeeding;
Maternity leave;
Women and work

Abstract

Objectives: To describe the profile of women with children aged under 4 months living in the Brazilian state capitals and in the Federal District according to their working status and to analyze the influence of maternity leave on exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) among working women.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study with data extracted from the II National Maternal Breastfeeding Prevalence Survey carried out in 2008. Initially, a descriptive analysis of the profile of 12,794 women was performed, according to their working status and maternity leave and the frequency of maternity leave in the Brazilian regions and capitals. The study used a multiple model to identify the influence of maternity leave on EBF interruption, including 3766 women who declared they were working and were on maternity leave at the time of the interview. The outcome assessed in the study was the interruption of the EBF, classified by the WHO.

Results: Regarding the working status of the mothers, 63.4% did not work outside of their homes and among those who worked, 69.8% were on maternity leave. The largest prevalence among workers was of women older than 35 years of age, with more than 12 years of schooling, primiparous and from the Southeast and South regions. The lack of maternity leave increased by 23% the chance of EBF interruption.

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58**PALAVRAS-CHAVE**Aleitamento materno exclusivo;
Licença maternidade;
Mulher e trabalho

Conclusion: Maternity leave contributed to increase the prevalence of EBF in the Brazilian states capitals, supporting the importance of increasing the maternity leave period from four to six months.

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Influência da licença maternidade sobre a amamentação exclusiva**Resumo**

Objetivos: Descrever perfil das mulheres com filhos menores de 4 meses residentes nas capitais brasileiras e no Distrito Federal segundo situação de trabalho e analisar a influência da licença maternidade sobre a sobre o aleitamento materno exclusivo entre as mulheres trabalhadoras. *Métodos:* Trata-se de um estudo transversal com dados extraídos da II Pesquisa Nacional de Prevalência do Aleitamento Materno realizada em 2008. Inicialmente foi realizada análise descritiva do perfil das 12.794 mulheres participantes do estudo segundo situação de trabalho e de licença maternidade, bem como a frequência de licença maternidade nas regiões brasileiras e capitais. Em seguida, para identificar a influência da licença maternidade na interrupção do AME, realizou-se modelo múltiplo, onde foram incluídas 3.766 mulheres que declararam trabalhar e estar em licença maternidade no momento da entrevista. O desfecho adotado no estudo foi a interrupção do AME, classificado de acordo com a definição da OMS.

Resultados: Em relação à situação de trabalho, 63,4% das mães entrevistadas no Brasil não trabalhavam fora do lar e dentre as que trabalhavam fora, 69,8% usufruíam da licença maternidade. Verificou-se maior concentração de mulheres que trabalhavam fora entre aquelas com mais de 35 anos, mais de 12 anos de escolaridade, primíparas, das regiões Sudeste e Sul. Não estar em licença maternidade aumentou em 23% a chance de interrupção do AME.

Conclusão: Constatou-se que a licença maternidade contribuiu para aumentar a prevalência do AME nas capitais brasileiras, reforçando a importância da ampliação da licença maternidade para 6 meses.

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Introduction

Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) offers many benefits for the health of infants and their mothers.¹ However, it is estimated that only 37% of children under 6 months of age are exclusively breastfed worldwide, a reality that is far from that recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO), which has established an EBF prevalence goal of 50% by 2025.² In Brazil, the II Maternal Breastfeeding Prevalence Survey (Pesquisa Nacional de Prevalência de Aleitamento Materno [PPAM]), carried out in 2008, found that 41% of children under 6 months of age were exclusively breastfed.³ Considering this scenario, identifying factors and strategies that may contribute to increase EBF is a worldwide challenge. Among the factors associated with early interruption of EBF, maternal work outside of the home has been identified as an obstacle.⁴⁻⁸

The International Labor Organization (ILO), in the beginning of the 20th century, held in Washington their third convention on women's employment before and after childbirth. In 1935, Brazil ratified the recommendations of this convention, which guaranteed return to work at six weeks of postpartum and two half-hour breaks to breastfeed during the working day.⁹ In 1988, the Brazilian Constitution established the women's right to a maternity leave lasting 16

weeks (120 days),¹⁰ longer than the 14-week international maternity leave recommendation (ILO n. 183/2000).¹¹ In 2008, Law n. 11,770 was passed, giving women the option to extend the maternity leave to 180 days (24 weeks).¹²

Concerns about maternal work and breastfeeding have increased due to the growing participation of women in the labor market,^{13,14} making it impossible for women to stop working for an unpaid period to dedicate themselves to the care of their children, which can lead to changes in the childcare and feeding patterns.

Thus, it becomes essential to identify the impact of maternity leave on breastfeeding protection, aiming to strengthen and create new public policies. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the profile of women with children aged under 4 months residing in the Brazilian capitals and in the Federal District according to their working status and to analyze the influence of maternity leave on EBF among women working outside of the home.

Methods

This is a cross-sectional study, whose data were obtained from the II PPAM carried out in 2008. This survey collected information from children under 1 year of age who were brought for the second phase of the 2008 multi-vaccine

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