Assignment 1: Outline

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Facilitating Inquiry

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**My Topic**

The topic I have chosen for my research proposal is exclusive breastfeeding in Canada. Exclusive breastfeeding is defined as “no other food or drink, not even water, except breast milk (including milk expressed or from a wet nurse) for 6 months of life, but allows the infant to receive ORS, drops and syrups (vitamins, minerals and medicines)” (World Health Organization, 2017). Exclusive breastfeeding is important because it reduces infant mortality and morbidity and reduces the mothers risk of certain diseases such as breast cancer (Victora et al., 2016). It is also the World Health Organizations global public health recommendation for all infants worldwide, in order for them to achieve optimal growth, development and health (WHO, 2017).

**The Problem**

Despite the well-established benefits associated with exclusive breastfeeding and that it is the recommended best practice, in Canada the rates of exclusive breastfeeding are only 25.9% (Government of Canada, 2012). The discrepancy between the recommendation and the rate does not exist because Canadian mothers are uninterested in breastfeeding, as 89% of them initiate breastfeeding soon after their child is born, but rather something is preventing them from continuing for 6 months (Statistics Canada, 2015). The Canadian Community Health Survey asked what led to mothers stopping breastfeeding before the 6-month mark and the most common reasons were: not enough breast milk and difficulty with the technique of breastfeeding (Statistics Canada, 2015). The mothers who did breastfeed until 6 months were often older, more educated and had higher incomes (Statistics Canada, 2015). This is a worldwide trend, in rich countries, higher income mothers are much more likely to exclusively breastfeed than their lower income counterparts (Victora et al., 2016). The problem therefore, relates to how to support the 89% of Canadian mothers who intend to breastfeed to do so for the recommended 6 months, and what relationship education and income have with exclusive breastfeeding.

**Thesis Statement**

If the government and the health system in Canada provided more access to lactation consultants for mothers, the rates of exclusive breastfeeding would increase significantly.

**Research Question**

In mothers with infants 0-6 months of age, does increased access to lactation consultants, result in increased rates of exclusive breastfeeding, when compared with current practice, over the six months following childbirth?

**Keyword: Lactation Consultant**

**Lactation consultant definition. “**An International Board Certified Lactation Consultant® (IBCLC®) is a healthcare professional who specializes in the clinical management of breastfeeding” (International Lactation Consultant Association, 2017).

**Proposed Outline: Assignment 2 Research Proposal**

**Introduction**

* Description of the topic I will be studying, defining any relevant key terms
* Explore the problem: provide an explanation of significance: why the research is important and needs to be done
* Problem statement
* Thesis statement

**Literature Review**

* Discuss the purpose of the literature review
* Present the methods of the literature review: key search terms, inclusion/exclusion criteria, number of articles included, what databases were searched
* Present the findings and conclusions of the pertinent articles, highlighting any themes that arose
* Compare the different findings, how were they similar, how did they differ
* Analyze the validity of the findings: sample size, methods, biases etc.
* Summarize the overarching themes related to the most valid and persuasive arguments
* Identify any gaps on the topic that the research did not address
* Highlight how the research that is being proposed fits into the context provided/fills gaps

**References**

Government of Canada. (2012). *Duration of exclusive breastfeeding in Canada: Key statistics and graphics (2009-2010).* Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-nutrition-surveillance/health-nutrition-surveys/canadian-community-health-survey-cchs/duration-exclusive-breastfeeding-canada-key-statistics-graphics-2009-2010.html>

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Statistics Canada. (2015). *Breastfeeding trends in Canada.* Retrieved from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-624-x/2013001/article/11879-eng.htm

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