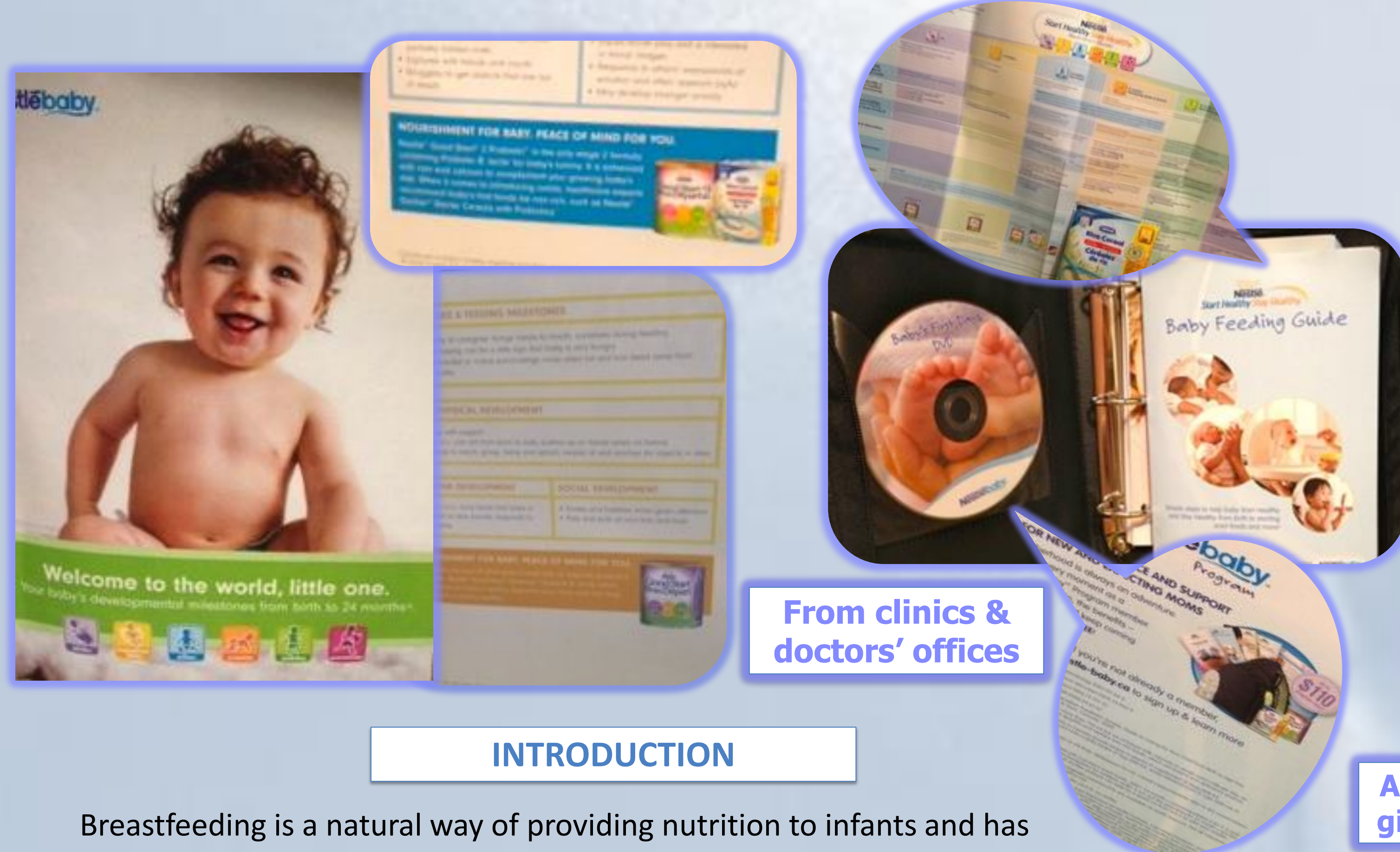


Looking for Ads in All the Right Places

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RESEARCH QUESTION

What types of baby formula marketing do pregnant women and new mothers encounter in Ottawa?



From clinics & doctors' offices

INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is a natural way of providing nutrition to infants and has many positive health benefits for mother and baby [1]. Health Canada recommends exclusive breastfeeding for six months and then to introduce healthy foods while continuing to breastfeed for a minimum of two years [2].

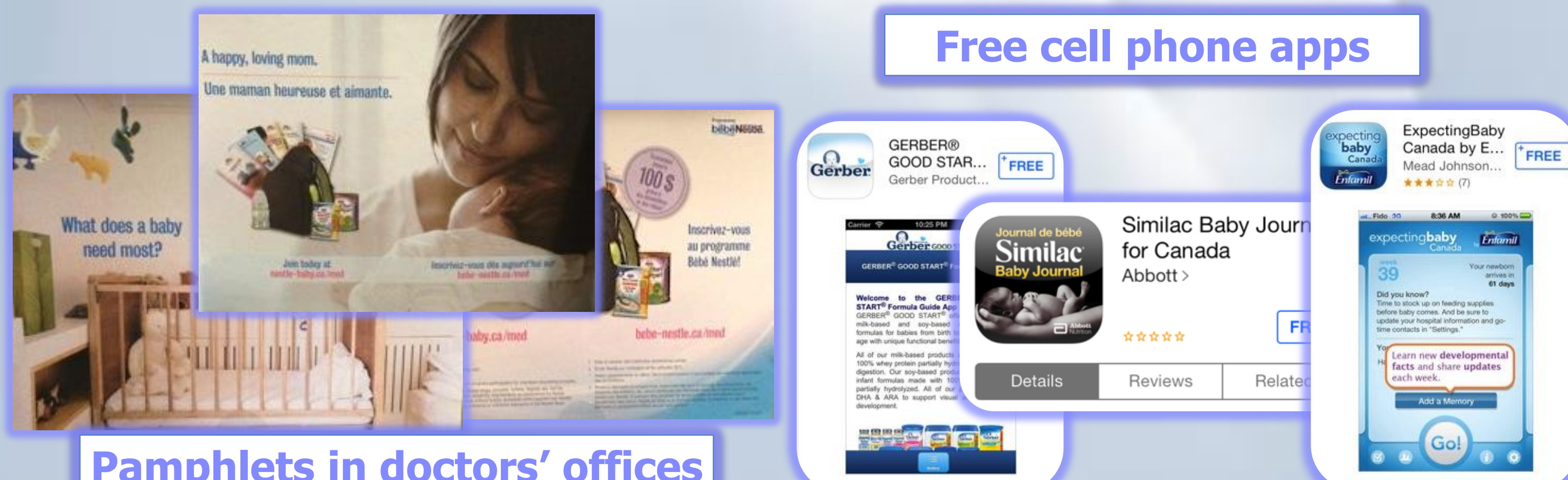
In Canada, breastfeeding initiation rates are about 87% [3], but 21% of mothers stop by 1 month and 46% have weaned their babies by 6 months [4]. Of the babies who continue to breastfeed, by 4 months only 44.2% of these babies are exclusively breastfed and by 6 months the percentage drops to 25.9% [3].

While the reasons for weaning or using formula supplements are complex, direct marketing of infant formula to mothers contributes to supplementation which can lead to premature weaning [5, 6].

Given the detrimental effects of baby formula marketing on breastfeeding rates, the World Health Assembly adopted the World Health Organization's (WHO) International Code for Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (the Code) in 1981 to promote, protect, and support breastfeeding [7]. WHO does not enforce the Code, it is up to member states to enact a law. There is no law in Canada to enforce the Code and prevent such marketing.

This study was conducted to determine the formula advertising & marketing strategies pregnant women and new mothers in the city of Ottawa encounter.

Free cell phone apps



Pamphlets in doctors' offices

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Parry et al. (2013) completed focus groups & concluded formula marketing seems to decrease maternal confidence. [5]

Howard et al. (2000) conducted an RCT (n=547) comparing a formula company to educational packs about infant feeding provided at the first prenatal visit & found the group exposed to the formula promotion materials had significantly more weaning in the first 2 weeks [6]

Rosenberg et al. (2008) analyzed surveys & determined commercial hospital discharge packs are one of several factors that influence breastfeeding duration & exclusivity [8]. Although Ontario hospitals do not provide discharge packs with formula, Toronto Public Health (2010) surveyed first-time mothers & found 39% of the breastfeeding mothers surveyed had received formula at discharge [9].

Sobel et al. (2011) found babies more likely to get formula if mothers recalled advertising messages or if a doctor/mother/relative recommended it [10].

METHODS

Literature Review

- used uOttawa online databases e.g., Medline
- found breastfeeding statistics
- looked for research about ads & marketing formula r/t breastfeeding rates
- looked up WHO Code and Baby Friendly Initiatives

Site Visits in Ottawa

- visited public areas looking for products containing formula advertising & marketing including ads and free samples or free bottles
- looked for informational pamphlets & magazines (ads & coupons)
- visited pharmacies, doctor's offices & family health clinics, hospital

Internet Searches using Google

- searched sites designed & used by new mothers or pregnant women
- targeted formula company websites

Searched Social Media Websites & Smart Phone Apps

- Facebook advertisements
- apps sponsored by formula companies

Advertisements in a magazine given away at a doctor's office



Advertisements from Facebook



RESULTS

Giveaways & Ads from Local Businesses

- gift bags containing magazines & booklets with numerous formula advertisements & a free baby bottle
- formula informational pamphlets in store aisles
- ads for formula in grocery flyers

Pharmacies

- pamphlets along aisles
- a large poster at the entrance of the store with a free draw to enter to win numerous baby products including formula samples

Internet Searches

- formula companies' clubs & programs

Facebook Advertisements

- advertisements for sign-up bonuses & giveaways containing formula samples

Pamphlets in Clinics & Doctors Offices

- informational pamphlets in waiting areas & in the doctor's office containing feeding options (which include different brands & types of formula)
- parenting magazines in the waiting areas & free packages have many formula advertisements
- "Baby Feeding Guide" created by a formula company

Cell Phone Apps

- free apps sponsored by formula companies that allow mothers to track their feedings – includes company logo as advertising
- apps contain pictures & descriptions of different formulas offered



Giveaways and ads from local businesses

CONCLUSION

- Formula companies implement numerous strategies as a means to expose Ottawa's pregnant women & new mothers to their products
- Found advertisements at health centres, businesses, & pharmacies, as well as with several internet searches
- Accumulated variety of products revealing formula advertising & marketing strategies
- We were overwhelmed with formula ads & offers prompted by our internet searches (i.e., our searches triggered the topic)

In the end, we believe we answered the question, "What types of baby formula marketing do pregnant women & new mothers encounter in Ottawa?" with many examples of the types of marketing & advertising that Ottawa women encounter.

Pamphlet from a pharmacy



Formula companies clubs & programs



Authors, Acknowledgements, & References

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