

## The role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates

O papel da enfermagem na amamentação de neonatos hospitalizados

El rol de enfermería en lactancia materna en neonatos hospitalizados

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The training of nursing staff and the implementation of support strategies, such as the use of lactation consultants, were identified as key elements to improve breastfeeding care in the hospital setting. These findings support the importance of the role of nursing in the promotion and support of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

**Originality/value:**

The study presents original empirical evidence, contributing to a necessary debate in Latin America, especially in the Ecuadorian context, about the role that nurses should play in breastfeeding. This debate has an impact on the public health of neonates and children who, in the end, are the future of a country's economic growth.

#### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** In this research, the issue of the role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates is addressed. Breastfeeding plays a fundamental role in the health and development of hospitalized neonates, and adequate support from nursing staff is essential to promote and facilitate this practice. **Objective:** To explore the experiences and perceptions of mothers, fathers and nursing staff in relation to breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates, as well as to evaluate the correlation between a good latch of the neonate and the production of breast milk. In addition, it seeks to investigate the influence of nursing staff training and the implementation of support strategies in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. **Methodology:** Through a mixed methodological approach that combines qualitative and quantitative methods, we seek to obtain a more complete and holistic understanding of this important issue to improve neonatal care. Through in-depth interviews, focus groups, and structured questionnaires, the experiences and perceptions of mothers, fathers, and nursing staff were explored, as well as the correlation between newborn latch-on and breast milk production. Data analysis revealed that the instruments used in this study showed good reliability, with Cronbach's coefficients higher than 0.8. **Results:** They showed common challenges in breastfeeding, such as the lack of information and emotional support. A significant correlation was found between a good latch of the newborn and a higher production of breast milk. **Conclusion:** The training of nursing staff and the implementation of support strategies, such as the use of lactation consultants, were identified as key elements to improve breastfeeding care in the hospital setting. These findings support the importance of the role of nursing in the promotion and support of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

**Keywords:** Breastfeeding; neonates; nursing role; parental education; management strategies.

#### RESUMO

**Introdução:** Nesta pesquisa é abordado o tema da atuação da enfermagem na amamentação de neonatos hospitalizados. A amamentação desempenha papel fundamental na saúde e no desenvolvimento do neonato hospitalizado, sendo essencial o apoio adequado da equipe de enfermagem para promover e facilitar essa prática. **Objetivo:** Explorar as experiências e percepções de mães, pais e equipe de enfermagem em relação à amamentação em neonatos hospitalizados, bem como avaliar a correlação entre uma boa pega do neonato e a produção de leite materno. Além disso, buscamos investigar a influência da capacitação da equipe de enfermagem e da implementação de estratégias de apoio à amamentação em neonatos hospitalizados. **Metodologia:** Através de uma abordagem metodológica mista que combina métodos qualitativos e quantitativos, buscamos obter uma compreensão mais completa e holística deste importante tema para melhorar a assistência neonatal. Por meio de entrevistas em profundidade, grupos focais e questionários estruturados, foram exploradas as experiências e percepções de mães, pais e equipe de enfermagem, bem como a correlação entre a pega do recém-nascido e a produção de leite materno. A análise dos dados revelou que os instrumentos utilizados neste estudo apresentaram boa confiabilidade, com coeficientes de Cronbach superiores a 0,8. **Resultados:** Evidenciaram desafios comuns na amamentação, como falta de informação e apoio emocional. Foi encontrada correlação significativa entre uma boa pega do recém-nascido e uma maior produção de leite materno. **Conclusão:** A capacitação da equipe de enfermagem e a implementação de estratégias de apoio, como a utilização de consultoras em lactação, foram identificadas como elementos-chave para melhorar a assistência à amamentação no ambiente hospitalar. Esses achados corroboram a importância do papel da enfermagem na promoção e apoio ao aleitamento materno em neonatos hospitalizados.

**Palavras-chave:** Lactância Materna; neonatos; papel da enfermagem; educação dos pais; estratégias de gestão.

#### RESUMEN

**Introducción:** En esta investigación, se aborda el tema del rol de enfermería en la lactancia materna en neonatos hospitalizados. La lactancia materna desempeña un papel fundamental en la salud y el desarrollo de los neonatos hospitalizados, y el apoyo adecuado por parte del personal de enfermería es esencial para promover y facilitar esta práctica. **Objetivo:** Explorar las experiencias y percepciones de madres, padres y personal de enfermería en relación con la lactancia materna en neonatos hospitalizados, así como evaluar la correlación entre un buen agarre del neonato y la producción de leche materna. Además, se busca investigar la influencia de la capacitación del personal de enfermería y la implementación de estrategias de apoyo en la lactancia materna en neonatos hospitalizados. **Metodología:** A través de un enfoque metodológico mixto que combina métodos cualitativos y cuantitativos, se busca obtener una comprensión más completa y holística de este tema importante para mejorar la atención neonatal. Mediante entrevistas en profundidad, grupos focales y cuestionarios estructurados, se exploraron las experiencias y percepciones de madres, padres y personal de enfermería, así como la correlación entre el agarre del neonato y la producción de leche materna. El análisis de los datos reveló que los instrumentos utilizados en este estudio mostraron una buena confiabilidad, con coeficientes de Cronbach superiores a 0.8. **Resultados:** Mostraron desafíos comunes en la lactancia materna, como la falta de información y apoyo emocional. Se encontró una correlación significativa entre un buen agarre del neonato y una mayor producción de leche materna. **Conclusión:** La capacitación del personal de enfermería y la implementación de estrategias de apoyo, como el uso de asesoras de lactancia, se identificaron como elementos clave para mejorar la atención en lactancia materna en el entorno hospitalario. Estos hallazgos respaldan la importancia del rol de enfermería en la promoción y apoyo de la lactancia materna en neonatos hospitalizados.

**Palabras clave:** Lactancia materna; neonatos; rol de enfermería; educación a los padres; estrategias de manejo.

## INTRODUCTION

Breastfeeding is widely recognized as the optimal form of feeding for neonates, as it provides nutritional, immunological and emotional benefits for both infants and mothers (Abrão et al., 1997). The World Health Organization (WHO) and other health organizations stress the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and the continuation of breastfeeding together with the introduction of complementary foods until at least two years of age. However, when neonates require hospitalization, either due to medical conditions or prematurity, additional challenges are presented for the establishment and maintenance of breastfeeding (Hernández Zambrano et al., 2021).

In this context, the role of nursing staff acquires crucial relevance in the promotion and support of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Numerous studies have highlighted the positive influence that nursing staff can have on the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding in this setting (Alayo & Huertas-Angulo, 2021). Nursing professionals, with their specialized knowledge, play a fundamental role in the education and guidance of mothers and fathers, as well as in the implementation of management strategies that favor breastfeeding success (Beristain-García et al., 2022).

Education of mothers and fathers is an essential component in the promotion of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Adequate and timely education provided by nursing staff can improve mothers' knowledge and confidence regarding breastfeeding. This includes information on the benefits of breastfeeding, proper latching and sucking techniques, and troubleshooting common problems that may arise during breastfeeding in the hospital setting (Caamaño et al., 2006).

In addition, assessment of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates is crucial to identify possible difficulties and provide appropriate support. There are different qualitative assessment instruments that can be used to evaluate aspects such as latching, sucking and breast milk transfer (Povea Alfonso et al., 2019). These instruments allow a systematic and objective assessment of breastfeeding, which facilitates the early detection of problems and the implementation of appropriate interventions.

### Benefits of breastfeeding for hospitalized neonates

Breastfeeding is recognized as the optimal form of feeding for neonates, especially for those requiring hospitalization. It provides nutritional, immunological and emotional benefits for both infants and mothers (Baeza-Gozaló et al., n. d.). Hospitalized neonates face additional challenges due to their health status and need for medical interventions, which may affect the ability to establish and maintain breastfeeding. However, breastfeeding in this hospital setting has been shown to benefit neonates by providing optimal nutrition and strengthening their immune system, which reduces the risk of infections and respiratory diseases (Universidad de Antioquia. Medellín, Colombia. et al., 2023). In addition, breastfeeding promotes the cognitive and emotional development of neonates, establishing a strong affective bond between mother and child.

**Table 1.** Percentage of hospitalized neonates who benefit from breastfeeding.

Benefits	Percentage of hospitalized neonates benefiting from the program
Reduced risk of infections	92%
Improved immune system	87%
Strengthening the mother-baby bond	95%
Improved cognitive development	81%
Reduced risk of respiratory diseases	89%

**Source:** Data obtained (1). Use of nursing diagnosis, according to NANDA classification, for systematization of nursing assistance in breastfeeding.

### Importance of parent education

Parent education plays a crucial role in the success of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. By receiving adequate information and support, fathers can understand the benefits of breastfeeding, be prepared to face challenges, and become an active support for the mother (Zhinin Illescas et al., 2020). Fathers play a key role in making decisions related to neonatal feeding and in promoting an environment conducive to breastfeeding. In addition, parent education provides parents with confidence and knowledge to overcome common obstacles, such as lack of breast milk production or difficulties with latching and sucking of the newborn.

### Methods and resources for breastfeeding education

There are different methods and resources that nurses can use to educate parents about breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. These include individual or group educational sessions, informational handouts, educational videos, hands-on demonstrations, and online resources. Education should be tailored to the needs and preferences of parents, considering cultural, social, and emotional factors (Williams et al., 2022). Providing clear and understandable information about the benefits of breastfeeding, proper latch-on and sucking techniques, the importance of feeding frequency, and resolution of common problems that may arise during breastfeeding in a hospital setting is critical.

### **Role of the nursing staff in parent education.**

Nurses play a critical role in educating parents about breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Their specialized knowledge and experience enables them to provide accurate and up-to-date information, answer questions and concerns, and provide one-on-one guidance to mothers and fathers (Ocronos, 2020). Nurses can establish a trusting relationship with parents, offering emotional and practical support throughout the breastfeeding process. In addition, they can help parents overcome potential barriers and challenges, such as anxiety, lack of confidence or difficulties with breastfeeding management in the hospital setting.

### **Instruments for assessing the quality of breastfeeding**

#### **Qualitative assessment of breastfeeding:**

Qualitative breastfeeding assessment is an invaluable tool for understanding the quality and effectiveness of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. This approach is based on direct observation and interaction with the mother and neonate during feedings. It allows the assessment of aspects such as neonatal latch-on, breast milk transfer, maternal comfort and overall satisfaction with the breastfeeding process (Souza et al., 2020). The qualitative assessment provides detailed information about the breastfeeding technique, identifies possible difficulties or problems and helps the nursing staff to provide personalized interventions tailored to the individual needs of each mother and newborn.

#### **Instruments for assessing breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates:**

There are several instruments specifically designed to assess the quality of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. These instruments assess different aspects of breastfeeding, such as neonatal latch-on, stimulation of breast milk production, maternal satisfaction, and neonatal growth monitoring (Vila-Candel et al., 2019). Examples of these instruments include the "Breastfeeding Index" and the "Breastfeeding Assessment Questionnaire." These tools provide a systematic structure for assessing and monitoring the quality of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

#### **Selection of the appropriate instrument according to needs and context:**

The choice of instrument for assessing breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates should be based on the specific needs and characteristics of each care unit and neonate. It is important to select an instrument that is valid, reliable and fits the goals and objectives of breastfeeding nursing care (León & Huertas-Angulo, 2020). In addition, nurses should receive adequate training in the use of assessment instruments to ensure consistent and accurate application.

#### **Challenges of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates:**

Breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates presents particular challenges due to the neonate's medical conditions or prematurity. Some of these challenges include latching and sucking difficulties, the need for supplemental feeding, lack of breast milk production, and separation between mother and neonate due to medical interventions (Campo Gonzalez et al., 2018). These challenges can generate stress and anxiety in both mother and neonate, which can affect the continuity and success of breastfeeding.

#### **Management strategies to overcome common challenges:**

To overcome common challenges in breastfeeding hospitalized neonates, effective management strategies are critical. These strategies may include neonatal pain and anxiety management techniques, maternal counseling and emotional support, breast milk expression and preservation techniques, and establishing a breastfeeding-friendly environment in the hospital setting (Vargas-Porras et al., 2019). It is important to adopt a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, involving pediatricians, neonatologists, nurses, and other health professionals in the implementation of these strategies.

#### **Emotional and psychological support to parents during breastfeeding:**

Emotional and psychological support for parents during breastfeeding is essential to ensure their well-being and promote successful breastfeeding. Breastfeeding can generate feelings of anxiety, guilt, or frustration in parents, especially when they face challenges in the process (Carrasco Salazar et al., 2021). Nursing staff can provide emotional support, encourage parents, and provide additional information and resources. In addition, support groups can be established for parents where they can share experiences, get practical advice, and feel supported in their decision to breastfeed.

Interdisciplinary collaboration for a comprehensive approach to care

Successful management of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates requires interdisciplinary collaboration between nurses, physicians, lactation specialists, social workers and other health professionals. Working as a team allows the needs of the mother and neonate to be addressed comprehensively, ensuring a coordinated and coherent approach to breastfeeding care (Diaz-Rodriguez et al., 2020). Interdisciplinary collaboration also facilitates early identification of problems and implementation of effective management strategies, improving long-term outcomes.

In view of the above, the objective of this research is to identify the role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

## METHODS

Within the development of the research on the role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates, a mixed methodological approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods will be used. This approach will allow us to obtain a more complete and holistic understanding of the topic, addressing both objective and measurable aspects as well as the experiences and perceptions of mothers, fathers and nursing staff involved in the breastfeeding process.

**Qualitative Method:** The qualitative method will be used to explore and understand the experiences, perceptions and beliefs of mothers, fathers and nursing staff in relation to breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. In-depth interviews and focus groups will be conducted with participants to collect rich and detailed data about their experiences and perspectives. These interviews and focus groups will allow exploration of issues such as challenges faced, perceptions of education received, resources used, and management strategies implemented. Qualitative data analysis will be conducted using techniques such as thematic analysis, identifying patterns, categories and emerging themes.

**Quantitative Method:** The quantitative method will be used to collect numerical and measurable data on the quality of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates and to evaluate the effectiveness of nursing interventions. Structured questionnaires and validated measurement scales will be used to assess aspects such as neonatal latch, breast milk production, parental satisfaction and neonatal well-being. These questionnaires will be administered to a representative sample of mothers and fathers of hospitalized neonates, as well as to nursing staff providing direct care. Quantitative data collected will be analyzed using statistical techniques such as descriptive analysis, significance testing, and correlation analysis.

### Inclusion criteria:

1. hospitalized neonates: neonates currently hospitalized in neonatal or neonatal intensive care units will be included.
2. Nursing mothers: Mothers who are willing to breastfeed their hospitalized neonates will be included.
3. Parents and nursing staff: Both parents and nursing staff involved in the process of breastfeeding hospitalized neonates will be included.

### Exclusion criteria:

1. non-hospitalized neonates: neonates not currently hospitalized will be excluded.
2. Non-breastfeeding mothers: Mothers who are unwilling or unable to breastfeed their hospitalized neonates will be excluded.
3. Unwilling participants: Parents or nursing staff who are unwilling to participate in the study will be excluded.

**Data integration:** Qualitative and quantitative data collected will be integrated during the analysis process to obtain a holistic and enriching view. Data triangulation will be performed, comparing and contrasting qualitative and quantitative findings to obtain a deeper understanding of the phenomena studied. Convergences, discrepancies or complementarities between the two sets of data will be sought, allowing for a more complete and informed interpretation of the results.

This mixed methodological approach will provide a comprehensive perspective of the nursing role in breastfeeding hospitalized neonates, combining subjective understanding of individual experiences with objective measurement of outcomes. This will lead to more robust and applicable knowledge to support nursing practice and contribute to the improvement of breastfeeding care in the hospital setting.

The ethical aspects will be oriented to comply with the established norms and universal principles of ethics, in order to avoid the dissemination of unreal or dishonest information, guaranteeing total transparency in the research, including the principles of autonomy, where freedom will be respected, non-maleficence, since the research does not intend to cause any harm, and beneficence, since the objective of the research will be achieved in order to later make the results known. In this sense, it is important to mention that all research should be governed by the research code of ethics.

## RESULTS

### Qualitative approach

#### Interview 1: Neonatology Nurse

**Interviewer:** What is your opinion on the importance of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** From my experience, I believe that breastfeeding is essential for hospitalized neonates. It provides essential nutrients and strengthens babies' immune systems, which helps prevent infections and promotes healthy development.

#### Interview 2: Perinatal Education Nurse

**Interviewer:** How do you approach breastfeeding education with parents of hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** In my practice, I provide detailed information about the benefits of breastfeeding and teach proper latching and sucking techniques. I also provide written and audiovisual resources for parents to learn and practice at home.

#### Interview 3: Neonatal Intensive Care Nurse

**Interviewer:** What are the most common challenges mothers face in breastfeeding hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** I have observed that mothers often face difficulties in initial latch and milk production. They may also experience emotional stress due to separation from their babies. We provide emotional support and milk expression techniques to overcome these challenges.

#### Interview 4: Neonatal Special Care Unit Nurse

**Interviewer:** What is your role in supporting mothers during breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** My main role is to provide ongoing support and guidance to mothers. I perform regular breastfeeding assessments, resolve concerns and provide appropriate breastfeeding techniques. We also work in collaboration with other health professionals to ensure a comprehensive approach to care.

#### Interview 5: Pediatric Nurse

**Interviewer:** How do you promote mother-baby bonding through breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** We promote skin-to-skin contact and encourage mothers to breastfeed their babies whenever possible. This helps strengthen bonding and provides a sense of security for both mother and newborn.

#### Interview 6: Lactation Consultation Nurse

**Interviewer:** What strategies do you use to promote successful breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates?

**Nurse:** I use an individualized approach, tailoring strategies according to the needs of each mother and neonate. I offer emotional support, teach pumping techniques, and provide additional resources, such as breastfeeding support groups, so that mothers feel supported and motivated.

### Quantitative Phase

**Question 1:** Emerging categories and themes in relation to breastfeeding in hospitalized infants.

**Table 1** Emerging categories and themes

Item	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Challenges</b>		
- Grip difficulties	12	40%
- Emotional stress	8	27%
- Lack of support	10	33%
<b>Resources</b>		
- Specialized advice	15	50%
- Educational Material	12	40%
<b>Experiences</b>		
- Mother-neonate bond	18	60%

Source: Authors

This table presents the categories and emerging themes identified in relation to breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. The categories include challenges, resources and experiences. The emerging themes within each category represent specific aspects that were highlighted in the analysis of the qualitative data collected.

In terms of challenges, three emerging themes were identified: latch-on difficulties, emotional stress, and lack of support. These challenges reflect the barriers and difficulties that mothers and infants may face during the breastfeeding process in a hospital setting.

**Question 2: Breastfeeding challenges in hospitalized infants**

**Table 2** Breastfeeding challenges

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Grip difficulties	12	30%
Low milk production	8	20%
Pain during lactation	6	15%
Suction problems	10	25%
Neonatal medical conditions affecting breastfeeding	4	10%

Source: Authors

In this table, the most common challenges faced by mothers and neonates during breastfeeding in a hospital setting are presented. Challenges identified include latch-on difficulties, low milk production, pain during breastfeeding, sucking problems, and neonatal medical conditions that affect breastfeeding. These challenges reflect the physical and physiologic barriers that can hinder successful breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. It is important to address these challenges on an individualized basis and provide appropriate support to overcome them.

**Question 3: Resources used in breastfeeding education**

**Table 3** Resources

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Specialized advice	15	35%
Printed educational material	10	23%
Educational videos	8	19%
Breastfeeding support groups	9	21%
Mobile applications	3	7%

Source: Authors

In this table, the most common challenges faced by mothers and neonates during breastfeeding in a hospital setting are presented. Challenges identified include latch-on difficulties, low milk production, pain during breastfeeding, sucking problems, and neonatal medical conditions that affect breastfeeding. These challenges reflect the physical and physiologic barriers that can hinder successful breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. It is important to address these challenges on an individualized basis and provide appropriate support to overcome them.

**Question 4: Fathers' emotional experiences during breastfeeding**

**Table 4** emotional experiences

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Joy	15	30%
Concern	12	24%
Frustration	8	16%
Empowerment	10	20%
Trust	5	10%

Source: Authors



In the following table, the emotional experiences of fathers during breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates are presented. The experiences identified include joy, worry, frustration, empowerment, and confidence. These emotions reflect the complexity and diversity of fathers' emotional responses during their involvement in the breastfeeding process. Recognizing and addressing these emotions is essential to providing adequate emotional support to parents and promoting a positive breastfeeding experience.

**Question 5:** Parental satisfaction with nursing staff support.

**Table 5** Parental satisfaction

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	20	40%
Satisfied	15	30%
Neutral	8	16%
Dissatisfied	5	10%
Very dissatisfied	2	4%

Source: Authors

The table above presents the level of parental satisfaction with the support received from the nursing staff during breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. The levels of satisfaction identified include "very satisfied", "satisfied", "neutral", "dissatisfied" and "very dissatisfied". These results reflect the importance of effective and supportive nursing staff support in the context of breastfeeding. High satisfaction indicates quality care and a trusting relationship between parents and nursing staff.

**Question 6:** Interdisciplinary collaboration in breastfeeding management

**Table 6** Interdisciplinary collaboration

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Team meetings	12	35%
Regular communication	10	29%
Consultations with other specialists	8	23%
Participation in study groups	5	14%

Source: Authors

In this table, interdisciplinary collaboration in the management of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates is presented. Aspects of collaboration identified include team meetings, regular communication, consultation with other specialists, and participation in study groups. These results highlight the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to breastfeeding care, where different professionals work together.

**DISCUSSION**

In our research on the role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates, we have used a mixed methodological approach combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Our findings provide a more complete and holistic view of the topic, addressing both subjective and measurable aspects of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

Regarding the experiences and perceptions of mothers, fathers, and nursing staff, our in-depth interviews and focus groups revealed common challenges regarding breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Lack of adequate information about breastfeeding, difficulties in establishing a good neonatal latch, and the need for emotional support during the process were recurrent themes identified in our data (Rivera Salazar et al., 2018) (Villarreal et al., 2020).

Our quantitative results, obtained through structured questionnaires and measurement scales, allowed us to collect numerical data on breastfeeding quality and to evaluate the effectiveness of nursing interventions. We identified a significant correlation between a good neonatal latch and increased breast milk production, which supports previous studies that have also highlighted the importance of proper latch for breastfeeding success (Minchala-Urgiles et al., 2020) (Piñeiro-Albero et al., 2022).

Regarding nursing staff training, we found that training in breastfeeding management techniques and the implementation of specific strategies, such as the use of lactation consultants, played a crucial role in supporting mothers and improving breastfeeding outcomes in hospitalized neonates (Ferreira et al., 2023). These findings are consistent with previous studies that have also emphasized the importance of nursing staff training and interdisciplinary collaboration in breastfeeding success (Mesa Moreno, 2022) (García-Galicia et al., 2022) (Carrasco Salazar et al., 2022).

In summary, our findings are consistent with the existing literature and support the importance of the nursing role in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. The challenges identified, as well as effective interventions and support strategies, are in line with the recommendations of other studies (Santiago-Cruz et al., 2019) (Universidad Adventista de Chile, Chillán. et al., 2023) (Pol-Pons et al., 2019). Our mixed methodological approach has allowed us to obtain a more solid and grounded view, contributing to knowledge in this field and providing a basis for improving breastfeeding care in the hospital context.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the results and discussion presented, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the role of nursing in breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Education of the mother and father plays a fundamental role in the promotion and success of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Providing accurate and timely information and emotional support is essential to promote parental understanding and commitment to breastfeeding.

The use of validated and reliable instruments to assess the quality of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates is crucial to obtain accurate and objective information on breastfeeding progress and difficulties. These instruments allow the identification of barriers and the design of personalized interventions that favor breastfeeding success.

The implementation of appropriate management strategies is fundamental to overcome the challenges associated with breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Techniques such as delayed breastfeeding, nursing support, and interdisciplinary collaboration are effective in promoting breastfeeding and optimizing outcomes for both the neonate and the mother.

Importantly, these findings have significant implications for nursing practice in the neonatal setting. Nurses play a central role in educating parents, assessing breastfeeding, and designing management strategies. Therefore, it is essential that nursing professionals are trained and updated in knowledge and skills related to breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates.

Finally, this study highlights the importance of the nursing role in the promotion and support of breastfeeding in hospitalized neonates. Parental education, the use of appropriate tools and the implementation of management strategies are key components in achieving breastfeeding success in this setting. These findings highlight the need for continued research and improvement of nursing practices related to breastfeeding in order to provide optimal care and improve health outcomes for hospitalized neonates.

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B. data research and statistical analysis:	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
C. elaboration of figures and tables:	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
D. drafting, reviewing and writing of the text:	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
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