








STRING LITERATURE TO SUPPORT MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN ADMITTED TO A NEONATAL UNIT DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to build string literature to support mothers with children hospitalized in a neonatal unit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Method: a methodological research study conducted in June 2020, in two stages: 1. Bibliographic survey, in which searches were conducted in the Portal of Good Practices in Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (*Portal de Boas Práticas em Saúde da Mulher, da Criança e do Adolescente*) of the Fiocruz Foundation and in the SciELO, BDEF and LILACS databases. An instrument was used for data analysis; 2. Elaboration of the string, with textual elaboration and production of the stanzas. **Results:** the string built, "*Mainha e Seu Milagre*" ("Mum and Her Miracle"), consists of 13 "septilhas", stanzas with seven verses, and addresses in its content the emotions of mothers with children hospitalized in a neonatal unit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion: the string aims at providing support to the health institutions that have a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit regarding the mental health of the mothers and at offering guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DESCRIPTORS: Health Technology; String Literature; Neonatal Intensive Care Unit; Maternity; Infections by Coronavirus.

LITERATURA DE CORDEL PARA APOYAR A MADRES CON HIJOS INTERNADOS EN UNIDADES NEONATALES DURANTE LA PANDEMIA DE COVID-19

RESUMEN:

Objetivo: elaborar literatura de cordel para apoyar a madres con hijos internados en unidades neonatales durante la pandemia de COVID-19. **Método:** investigación metodológica realizada en junio de 2020, en dos etapas: 1. Levantamiento bibliográfico, en el cual se realizaron búsquedas en el Portal de Buenas Prácticas en Salud de la Mujer, del Niño y del Adolescente, de la Fundación Fiocruz, y en las bases de datos SciELO, BDEF y LILACS. Se utilizó un instrumento para el análisis de los datos; 2. Elaboración del cordel, con elaboración textual y confección de las estrofas. **Resultados:** el cordel elaborado, "*Mainha e seu Milagre*" ("Mamá y su Milagro"), está compuesto por 13 septillas, estrofas de siete versos, y aborda en su contenido las emociones de madres con hijos internados en unidades neonatales durante la pandemia de COVID-19. **Conclusión:** el cordel pretende servir de apoyo a las instituciones de salud que disponen de Unidades de Cuidados Intensivos Neonatales en lo que concierne a la salud mental de las madres y a las pautas de orientación durante la pandemia de COVID-19.

DESCRIPTORES: Tecnología en Salud; Literatura de Cordel; Unidad de Cuidados Intensivos Neonatales; Maternidad; Infecciones por Coronavirus.

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INTRODUCTION

The world is experiencing a Public Health Emergency due to the pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV Coronavirus, which causes the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) respiratory disease⁽¹⁾.

There is still no consolidated evidence of the vertical transmission of SARSCoV-2, and the virus is not found in the samples of amniotic fluid, umbilical cord, swab of the newborn's throat, or in breast milk⁽²⁾. However, a study conducted with Chinese children showed that, specifically in relation to COVID-19, children under 1 year old present higher rates of severe complications than older children⁽³⁾.

In view of the rapid dissemination of the virus, a series of measures for confronting COVID-19 was enacted. The Ministry of Health (*Ministério da Saúde*, MS) recommends that neonatal units should not be closed or reduced; however, care measures must be adopted to prevent crowding⁽²⁾.

Mothers of premature infants present feelings of fear and insecurity; on the other hand, there are also feelings of pleasure and increasing self-confidence derived from the bond and support by the health team⁽⁴⁻⁵⁾. The separation of the mother from the child caused by the hospitalization of premature newborns (NBs) is a difficult period for the entire family and, currently, there is the aggravation of the adoption of restrictive prevention measures against the infection by COVID-19. In this context, the role of the health professionals is of great responsibility and sensitivity in welcoming the parents, providing adequate guidelines on care, contributing to coping with fears, anxieties and doubts⁽⁶⁾.

In order to improve the care provided to the mother-baby binomial, the idea of using educational technology arises in order to, in addition to informing, reassure the mothers in the face of the circumstances experienced. Technologies are care tools, which strengthen the interventions and the work of the team, mediating in a playful manner the achievement of self-care and the empowerment of people to promote their health⁽⁷⁾.

The educational technology chosen was string literature, which has its origins in orality, standing out as a result of it, since it was through tales, oral narratives and singing that the first leaflets emerged, considering rhythm and rhyme as essential elements and striking of this type of text. In addition, string literature is an innovative, differentiated and democratically accessible mechanism for the health education process⁽⁸⁾.

It was assumed that string literature can act as a support to mothers in the face of situations directed with the arrival of a premature baby during a pandemic. Accordingly, this study aimed to build string literature to support mothers with children hospitalized in a neonatal unit during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research is relevant for providing, in a ludic manner, information and support to mothers of children hospitalized in neonatal units in the midst of the pandemic caused by the SARSCoV-2 virus.

METHOD

This is a methodological research study, which consists of a process of development/creation of a new product, in this research being the construction of an educational technology in the modality of string literature⁽⁹⁾.

The process of building educational material used in this research involved the following stages⁽¹⁰⁾: submission of the project to the research ethics committee; bibliographic survey

and elaboration of the educational material, which were conducted in June 2020 (Figure 1).

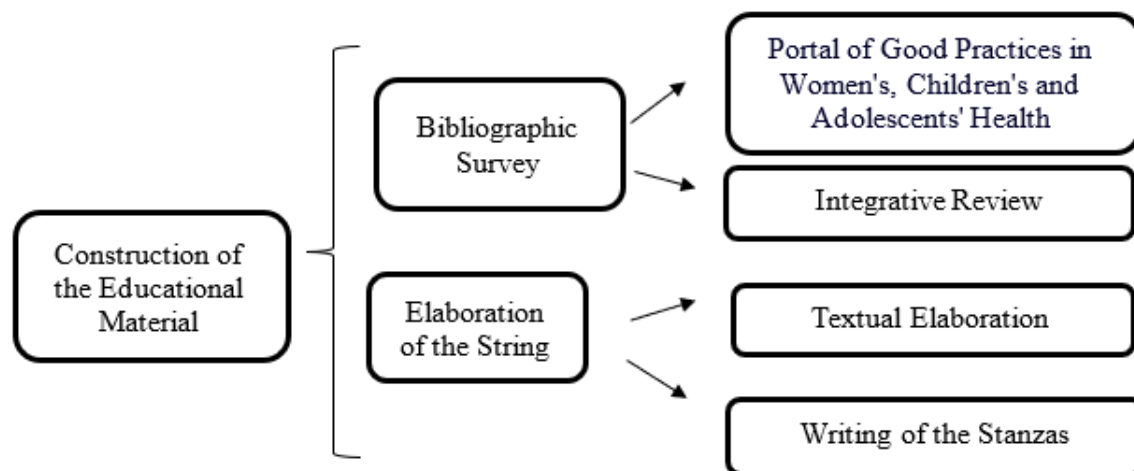


Figure 1 - Flowchart on the construction of the educational material. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil, 2020
Source: Authors (2020)

Given the context of the pandemic, the Ministry of Health outlined specific recommendations for the neonatal units, which should be followed by the professionals, the patients and the family members. Thus, in the bibliographic survey stage, it was decided to perform the search in the Portal of Good Practices in Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health of the Fiocruz Foundation, an entity linked to the Ministry of Health, on the recommended guidelines for neonatal units during the pandemic.

This flow was followed in the research: Portal of Good Practices – Care for the Newborn – Care for the Newborn in the context of the Infection by the new Coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) (*Portal de Boas Práticas – Atenção ao Recém-Nascido – Atenção à Saúde do Recém-nascido no contexto da Infecção pelo novo Coronavírus (SARS-CoV-2)*), with technical note of the MS No. 10/2020-COCAM/CGCIVI/DAPES/SAPS/MS(2) being followed, which addresses the guidelines for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), the Unit of Conventional Intermediate Care (UCINCo), and the Kangaroo Intermediate Care Unit (UCINCa) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Subsequently, an integrative review was conducted in the following databases: Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO); Nursing Databases (*Bases de Dados em Enfermagem*, BDEF) and Latin American and Caribbean Literature on Health Sciences (*Literatura Latino-Americana e do Caribe em Ciências da Saúde*, LILACS), with the following guiding question: What feeling do mothers of children hospitalized in Neonatal Intensive Care Units have?

To conduct the search in the databases, the following controlled descriptors from MeSH/DeCS (Medical Subject Headings/*Descritores em Ciências da Saúde*) were used: Infant, Newborn (*Recém-nascido*), Intensive Care Units (*Unidades de Terapia Intensiva*) and Hospitals, Maternity (*Maternidade*). The Boolean operator and was used and the following crossing were performed: Infant, Newborn and Intensive Care Units and Hospitals, Maternity *Recém-nascido* and *Unidades de Terapia Intensiva* and *Maternidade*.

The inclusion criteria were as follows: articles available online, in full and free of charge, in the English, Spanish and Portuguese languages, and published in the period

from 2014 to 2020. Articles that did not address the theme and duplicate publications were excluded.

To select the studies, we initially searched the database in which 105 articles were found. Then, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied, titles and abstracts were read for prior assessment and confirmation that the articles contemplated information on the theme under study, leaving 28 articles. Subsequently, the articles were carefully read in full in order to identify key ideas and guidelines directed to the study object, which provided a final sample of eight articles.

In data collection, the instrument used was a version adapted and validated by Ursi(11) and evaluated in the selected publications according to the classification proposed by Melnyk and Fineout-Overholt⁽¹²⁾. The selection, extraction and analysis of the results stages were conducted independently by two reviewers.

In the stage for the elaboration of the string, two steps were carried out: textual elaboration and writing of the stanzas. Initially, the textual elaboration of the content was constituted by MS technical note No. 10/2020-COCAM/CGCIVI/DAPES/SAPS/MS⁽²⁾ and by the integrative review on the feelings and difficulties faced by mothers of premature infants in the ICU to support the construction of the stanzas and verses of the string. Afterwards, the stanzas were wrote, with consultation of scientific articles, videos on YouTube and to string literature specialists for the elaboration and construction of the poem, in order to turn it into a reliable and attractive material.

The stanzas were elaborated, consisting in structuring the content through verses and rhymes, using words from the Northeastern daily life to have a closer relationship with the target audience of the string. The contents included in the stanzas were selected using an instrument created by the researchers themselves containing two guiding questions: feelings of the mothers with their children hospitalized in neonatal units, and main guidelines recommended in neonatal units during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University for International Integration of the Afro-Brazilian Lusophony, under Opinion No. 4,205,958.

RESULTS

The string was entitled: "*Pequeno Milagre de Mainha*" ("Mum's Little Miracle"), addressing in its content the emotions of mothers with their children hospitalized in a NICU during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as information about the care required. Two steps were followed for the elaboration of the string: a bibliographical survey and the elaboration of the string itself.

For the bibliographic survey, Chart 1 highlights relevant data for the construction of the string, which were taken from technical note No. 10/2020-COCAM/CGCIVI/DAPES/SAPS/MS⁽²⁾.

Chart 1 - Relevant data for the construction of the string, which were taken from Technical Note No. 10/2020-COCAM/CGCIVI/DAPES/SAPS/MS of the Ministry of Health. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil, 2020

SUBJECT MATTER	GUIDELINES FOR NEONATAL UNITS (NICU, UCINCo, UCINCa)
Health care of the newborn in the context of the infection by the new coronavirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skin-to-skin contact must be encouraged and carried out exclusively by the asymptomatic mother who does not have home contact with a person with flu-like syndrome or proven respiratory infection by SARS-CoV-2.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast milk must be guaranteed, considering that there is no evidence of disease transmission through this route.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is noted that symptomatic mothers and fathers or household contacts of a person with flu-like syndrome must not enter the NICU/UCINCo until the transmissibility period of SARS-CoV-2 has ended (14 days).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that the institutions evaluate the suspension of entry to the NICU, UCINCo, UCINCa of anyone other than the father or mother.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the impossibility of access and/or permanence of the father and mother, the family may indicate an asymptomatic substitute caregiver aged between 18 and 59 years old that is not a household contact of a person with flu-like syndrome or proven respiratory infection by SARS-CoV-2.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UCINCa must not be closed or reduced and must take care to prevent agglomerations and guarantee access only to asymptomatic people who are not a household contact of a person with flu syndrome or proven respiratory infection by SARS-CoV-2.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptomatic or contacting mothers cannot be referred to the UCINCa until they become asymptomatic and have passed the transmissibility period of COVID-19 (nearly 14 days). They must be supported and assisted in providing milk for their own child.

Source: Authors (2020)

After this analysis, an integrative review was carried out on the emotions of mothers with their babies hospitalized in neonatal units. Chart 2 presents the references included in the integrative review.

Chart 2 - Characteristics of the studies on the emotions of mothers with their babies hospitalized in neonatal units. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil, 2020 (continues)

AUTHOR/ YEAR	TITLE	TYPE OF STUDY/ LEVEL OF EVIDENCE	MAIN RESULTS
Frigo, et al., (2015) ⁽¹³⁾	<i>Percepção de pais de recém-nascidos prematuros em UTIN</i>	Qualitative, exploratory and descriptive study/ Level 6	Impotence in the face of the child's hospitalization; Hopes regarding hospital discharge; Mother's insecurity regarding breastfeeding.
Vieira, et al., (2015) ⁽¹⁴⁾	<i>Vivências de mães de bebês prematuros no contexto da espiritualidade</i>	Descriptive and qualitative study/ Level 6	Fear, insecurity, guilt and concern in the face of hospitalization; Spirituality brought well-being, comfort, hope and health.

Rolim, et al., (2016) ⁽¹⁵⁾	<i>Imaginário de mães acerca da hospitalização do filho na UTIN</i>	Qualitative, exploratory and descriptive study/ Level 6	Fear of the fragility and risk situation to which the child is exposed; Insecurity about care; Anxiety about the disease, treatment, and recovery, among others.
Almeida, et al., (2018) ⁽¹⁶⁾	<i>Cotidiano de mães acompanhantes na UTIN</i>	Qualitative, descriptive and exploratory study/ Level 6	After the hospitalization of the premature newborn in the NICU several feelings arise in the mothers, such as sadness, guilt, fear, hope, and frustration.
Lelis, et al., (2018) ⁽¹⁷⁾	<i>Acolhimento materno no contexto da prematuridade</i>	Qualitative, exploratory and descriptive study/ Level 6	Frustration, suffering, sadness and tension due to the child's hospitalization; Feeling of belonging and victory, satisfaction and joy, and certain discomfort due to the experience of the Kangaroo method.
Rocha, et al., (2018) ⁽¹⁸⁾	<i>A experiência da mulher hospitalizada com o recém-nascido na UTIN</i>	Qualitative and exploratory study/ Level 6	Impotence of the puerperal woman facing her own condition and that of her child; Anxiety for news and the expectation of a reunion with her newborn.
Lima e Smeha, et al., (2019) ⁽¹⁹⁾	<i>A experiência da maternidade diante da internação do bebê em UTI: uma montanha russa de sentimentos</i>	Qualitative, and exploratory-descriptive study/ Level 6	Fear, insecurity, fear of the baby's death, helplessness and guilt, sensation of loss of control of the situation, concern for the other children, and the need for support of the mother and husband.
Santos, et al., (2019) ⁽²⁰⁾	<i>Papel materno durante a hospitalização do filho na UTIN</i>	Descriptive, exploratory and qualitative study/ Level 6	Negative feelings such as fear, sadness, anguish, helplessness and insecurity in taking care of the baby; but also, happiness that the baby survived.

Source: Authors (2020)

From this review, it was observed that the feelings of the mothers with children hospitalized in neonatal units are mostly negative, showing the need to conduct interventions in order to reassure them, as well as to strengthen feelings related to hope and self-confidence. The studies also showed the importance of the support provided to these mothers, both by the family and by the professionals.

From the articles analyzed, it was possible to evidence that the main interventions developed are to promote contact, establish and strengthen bonds, in which the mothers are encouraged to participate in the care of the baby and supported to breastfeed.

From the results of the bibliographic survey, the stanzas that composed the body of the string were elaborated, presenting the content through verses and rhymes. The shape of the string was made up of 13 septilhas, stanzas with seven verses, arranged as follows: the second, fourth and seventh verses rhyme with each other, as well as the fifth verse rhymes with the sixth, and the first and third are free verses promoting a logical and concise sequencing (Chart 3).

Chart 3 - String stanzas demonstrating the textual content used. Fortaleza, CE, Brazil, 2020 (continues)

SOURCE	STANZAS	TEXTUAL CONTENT
TECHNICAL NOTE NO. 6/2020-COCAM/CGCIVI/DAPEIS/SAPS/MS	3	<p><i>E ainda veio a pandemia da Covid</i> (And then there was the Covid pandemic) <i>Para causar mais aflição.</i> (To cause more distress.) <i>Todos devem tomar cuidado</i> (Everyone must be careful) <i>Pra não ter contaminação.</i> (Not to be contaminated.) <i>É uma doença muito contagiosa</i> (It is a very contagious disease) <i>E para os bebês, perigosa,</i> (And for babies, dangerous,) <i>Carecendo maior atenção!</i> (In need of more attention!)</p>
	5	<p><i>Neste período de isolamento</i> (In this period of isolation) <i>Pode ser colocado em prática</i> (Can be put into practice) <i>O contato pele a pele</i> (Skin-to-skin contact) <i>Só por mãe assintomática</i> (Only by an asymptomatic mother) <i>E sem contato com alguém doente,</i> (And without contact with someone sick,) <i>Pois tem que tá muito ciente</i> (Because you must be very aware) <i>Pra evitar uma situação drástica.</i> (To avoid a drastic situation.)</p>
	6	<p><i>Se a mãe apresenta sintomas</i> (If the mother has symptoms) <i>Ou é contato de alguém com síndrome gripal</i> (Or is in contact with someone with flu syndrome) <i>Não pode visitar seu bebê na UTI</i> (She cannot visit her baby in the ICU) <i>Mas tem uma opção bem legal</i> (But she has a really cool option) <i>Durante os 14 dias de isolamento,</i> (During the 14 days of isolation,) <i>Pra não perder nenhum momento</i> (To not miss a moment) <i>Pode fazer chamada virtual</i> (She can make a virtual call)</p>
	7	<p><i>Caso tenha sintomas da Covid</i> (If she has Covid symptoms) <i>Ou teve contato com alguém doente,</i></p>

		<p>(Or had contact with someone sick,) <i>Ocês têm o direito</i> (She has the right) <i>Nesse momento que está ausente</i> (In that moment that she is absent) <i>De indicar um cuidador</i> (To appoint a caregiver) <i>De 18 a 59 anos como colaborador</i> (Aged 18 to 59 years old as a collaborator) <i>Para visitar seu pinguinho de gente.</i> (To visit her tiny one.)</p>
	8	<p><i>O leite materno pro bebê é vida</i> (Breast milk for baby is life) <i>Toda gotinha é essencial!</i> (Every droplet is essential!) <i>Ele fica cada vez mais forte,</i> (He gets stronger and stronger,) <i>É um alimento pra lá de especial</i> (It's a special food) <i>Seu pequeno herói fica valente,</i> (Her little hero gets brave,) <i>Pra enfrentar o que vier pela frente</i> (To face what comes ahead) <i>E em breve sair do hospital.</i> (And soon leave the hospital.)</p>
	9	<p><i>Tem uma notícia só o mi,</i> (There is news that just me,) <i>Pra ocê não se aperrear:</i> (So that you don't worry:) <i>O leite da mãe não passa o vírus</i> (Mother's milk doesn't pass on the virus) <i>Não vai ter perigo em amamentar,</i> (There will be no danger in breastfeeding,) <i>Pode ser através da ordenha do leite</i> (It can be through milking) <i>E até que tudo se ajeite</i> (And until everything settles down) <i>O Banco de Leite Humano vai lhe ajudar.</i> (The Human Milk Bank will help you.)</p>
	11	<p><i>Quando for visitar seu bebê</i> (When visiting your baby) <i>Não se aperrei com os procedimentos</i> (Don't stress about the procedures) <i>Tem que higienizar tudo</i> (You must clean everything) <i>Para aproveitar os momentos,</i> (To enjoy the moments,) <i>Pra garantir a segurança</i></p>

		<p>(To ensure safety) <i>E o bem da sua criança,</i> (And the well-being of your child,) <i>Esse é o entendimento!</i> (That is the understanding!)</p>
INTEGRATIVE REVIEW	1	<p><i>Daquela espera tão bonita</i> (Of that beautiful wait) <i>Uma peleja aconteceu,</i> (A fight took place,) <i>O bebê foi muito avexado</i> (The baby was very impatient) <i>E antes do tempo nasceu,</i> (And before time was born,) <i>Precisando de cuidados especiais</i> (In need of special care) <i>Das UTIs neonatais,</i> (From the neonatal ICUs,) <i>Causando preocupação nos seus.</i> (Causing concern in his relatives.)</p>
	2	<p><i>Alguns bebês também nascem</i> (Some babies are also born) <i>Com alguma malformação,</i> (With some malformation,) <i>Com dificuldades para respirar,</i> (With difficulty breathing,) <i>Ou problemas no coração.</i> (Or heart problems.) <i>Aí precisam ficar no hospital,</i> (Then they need to stay in the hospital,) <i>Internado na UTI neonatal</i> (In the neonatal ICU) <i>Em tratamento para sua recuperação.</i> (In treatment for recovery.)</p>
	4	<p><i>A vontade de segurar o fi é grande</i> (The desire to hold the child is great) <i>Mas seu estado ainda é delicado,</i> (But his condition is still delicate,) <i>Pra ele ficar bom e ir pra casa</i> (For him to get well and go home) <i>Vai precisar de muito cuidado,</i> (He will need a lot of care,) <i>E de um lugar bem quentinho</i> (And a very warm place) <i>Ele ainda é só um tiquinho,</i> (And he is still tiny,) <i>Mas será forte como um soldado!</i> (But he will be strong as a soldier!)</p>

10		<p><i>A internação do filho provoca</i> (The hospitalization of the child causes) <i>Ansiedade, medo e tristeza.</i> (Anxiety, fear and sadness) <i>A mãe, o pai e a família</i> (The mother, the father and the family) <i>Vivem um bocado de incerteza</i> (Have a lot of uncertainties) <i>Torcendo e orando por saúde,</i> (Cheering and praying for health,) <i>Querendo tomar alguma atitude</i> (Wanting to take some action) <i>Pro filho melhorar com certeza!</i> (For the sure improvement of the child!)</p>
12		<p><i>Não é fácil ver seu bebê</i> (It's not easy to see your baby) <i>Naquela situação</i> (In that situation) <i>Porém é necessário</i> (But it is necessary) <i>Mesmo que lhe cause aflição,</i> (Even if it causes some pain,) <i>Em breve grande alegria</i> (Soon great joy) <i>Vai tomar conta dos seus dias</i> (Will take over your days) <i>Tenha fé e convicção.</i> (Have faith and conviction.)</p>
13		<p><i>Tão esperado o momento</i> (So long awaited the moment) <i>De reencontro com a família</i> (Of reunion with the family) <i>E a alta do bebê</i> (And the baby's discharge) <i>É de grande valia</i> (Is of great value) <i>Hora de agradecer</i> (Time to thank) <i>Bó comemorar a vitória sem esquecer</i> (Let's celebrate the victory without forgetting) <i>Que em tudo Deus auxilia!</i> (That God helps is everything!)</p>

Fonte: Autores (2020)

The string entitled "Pequeno Milagre de Mainha" in its complete and sung version is available in the following link⁽²¹⁾: <https://youtu.be/rKSNnT6b5DE>.

DISCUSSION

The articles analyzed in the integrative review evidenced that the mothers of NBs admitted to the NICU are fragile, with feelings of fear, sadness and guilt. These findings are similar to the qualitative research study conducted in Bahia with 13 mothers that pointed out that the maternal experience was marked by intense suffering, with the presence of feelings of fear and negative beliefs about prematurity; however, this distress was overcome when the mothers perceived their son's recovery, enhancing the bond between them, in addition to increasing confidence in the health team and in the environment of the neonatal unit⁽²²⁾.

In the face of prematurity, mothers tend to feel insecure about breastfeeding. Therefore, it is indispensable to support breastfeeding, bringing to light the benefits it promotes for the baby's health and development. It is worth mentioning that there is no evidence of transmission of the new coronavirus through breast milk⁽²⁾; therefore, breastfeeding must also be encouraged to favor the bond between the mother-child binomial⁽²³⁾.

In times of reduced visits due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is the professionals' responsibility to maintain the psychosocial support of the NICU to the family members, seeking alternative methods and showing that the use of technologies can favor the emotional state of parents who are distant from their children⁽²⁴⁾.

Support to the family members by the NICU health team is essential; the provision of humanized service must not be limited to the relationship with the NB, as the interaction, teachings and encouragement of the family members is essential for them to feel that they are part of the care process⁽²⁵⁾. Thus, the creation of reliable educational technologies facilitates fixation and learning through guidelines and support, and it is important that the professionals create them seeking to increasingly qualify the assistance provided.

Several researchers have encouraged the use of string literature as a health education strategy because it is attractive, facilitates learning, is low-cost, and is written in accessible and dynamic language. A study that developed string literature on HIV/AIDS to carry out health education pointed this technology as accessible to the target audience, with simple words and pertinent information, and its use should be increasingly encouraged⁽²⁶⁾.

Another research study that elaborated and used string literature as a strategy for popular education in health for men in the context of Bahia's semi-arid region showed that this technology is an important educational element with the capacity to stimulate self-care practices, promote health, prevent diseases, and value the specificities of each audience in its particularities⁽²⁷⁾.

In the context of neonatology, the creation of educational technologies that address the COVID-19 pandemic is still scarce. However, the creation of this type of technology must be encouraged, given that an analytical documentary research study carried out in "*Biblioteca de Obras Raras Átila Almeida*" ("*Átila Almeida Library of Rare Works*") and in the Collection of Popular Literature in Verses emphasizes string literature as a great health promotion tool, capable of strengthening decisions, stimulating healthy habits, warning about the risks of harmful practices to health and encouraging better quality of life⁽²⁸⁾.

Among the study limitations, the absence of a specialist in string literature stood out, since the construction of the string was in charge of the researchers themselves. However, the scientific support enabled them to develop skills in the elaboration of this educational technology.

CONCLUSION

The study enabled the creation of an educational technology in health, as it is a playful, simple and objective way of informing and providing support. Through the simple lines of the string, a message of welcome and perseverance is transmitted to the mothers of infants hospitalized in neonatal units during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This string aims to provide support to the health institutions that have NICUs regarding the mothers' mental health, as well as guidelines in relation to the rules of the units during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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