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THE PATERNAL INFLUENCE IN THE PROCESS OF BREASTFEEDING: AN INTEGRATIVE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

BrenaJessyca Lima Ribeiro*¹, Natália Santos de Almeida², Lydia Vieira Freitas dos Santos³, Alana Santos Monte⁴, AnnyFayma Lopes Chaves⁵ and Camila Chaves da Costa⁶

¹Nurse. Graduated in Nursing by the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil; ²Nurse. Specialist in Obstetric Nursing. Master degree student by the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil. Member of the Group of Research and Extension in Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (PROSSER- UNILAB); ³Nurse. PhD in Nursing in the field of Health Promotion. Professor of the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil. Vice Coordinator of the Group of Research and Extension in Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health; ⁴Nurse. PhD in Nursing in the field of Health Promotion. Professor of the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil. Member of the Group of Research and Extension in Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (PROSSER- UNILAB); ⁵Nurse. PhD in Nursing in the field of Health Promotion. Professor of the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil. Member of the Group of Research and Extension in Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (PROSSER- UNILAB); ⁶Nurse. PhD in Nursing in the field of Health Promotion. Professor of the Universidade da Integração Internacional da Lusofonia Afro-Brasileira (UNILAB), Redenção, Ceará, Brazil. Member of the Group of Research and Extension in Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health (PROSSER- UNILAB)

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*Corresponding author: BrenaJessyca Lima Ribeiro,

ABSTRACT

The purpose is to analyze the influence of the paternal figure for the handling of breastfeeding. It is about an integrative review, made in the following database: LILACS, MEDLINE and PUBMED, during February and March 2018, with the following guiding question "In what way the paternal figure may influence and/or contribute for the success of breastfeeding?". The inclusion conditions were: be written in the Portuguese, English or Spanish language; and be fully available and for free. The following data were excluded: editorial, monograph, dissertation or thesis; and articles that were duplicated. After the selection and analysis of the complete articles, 13 studies fit the research proposal. The articles had as publication interval the years of 2005 to 2017. From the 13 works, 76.9% were developed in the American Continent, being 61.5% in Brazil and 15.4% in the USA; 15.4% were developed in Oceania and 7.7% in the Asian continent. Therefore, studies mentioned the forms that the father could contribute, with a highlight to the psychological support, gathering information and orientation about the theme, support in the activities, household tasks and financial support. It shows the importance of the educative process so that the fathers may contribute adequately and efficiently, allowing an active involvement in breastfeeding.

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INTRODUCTION

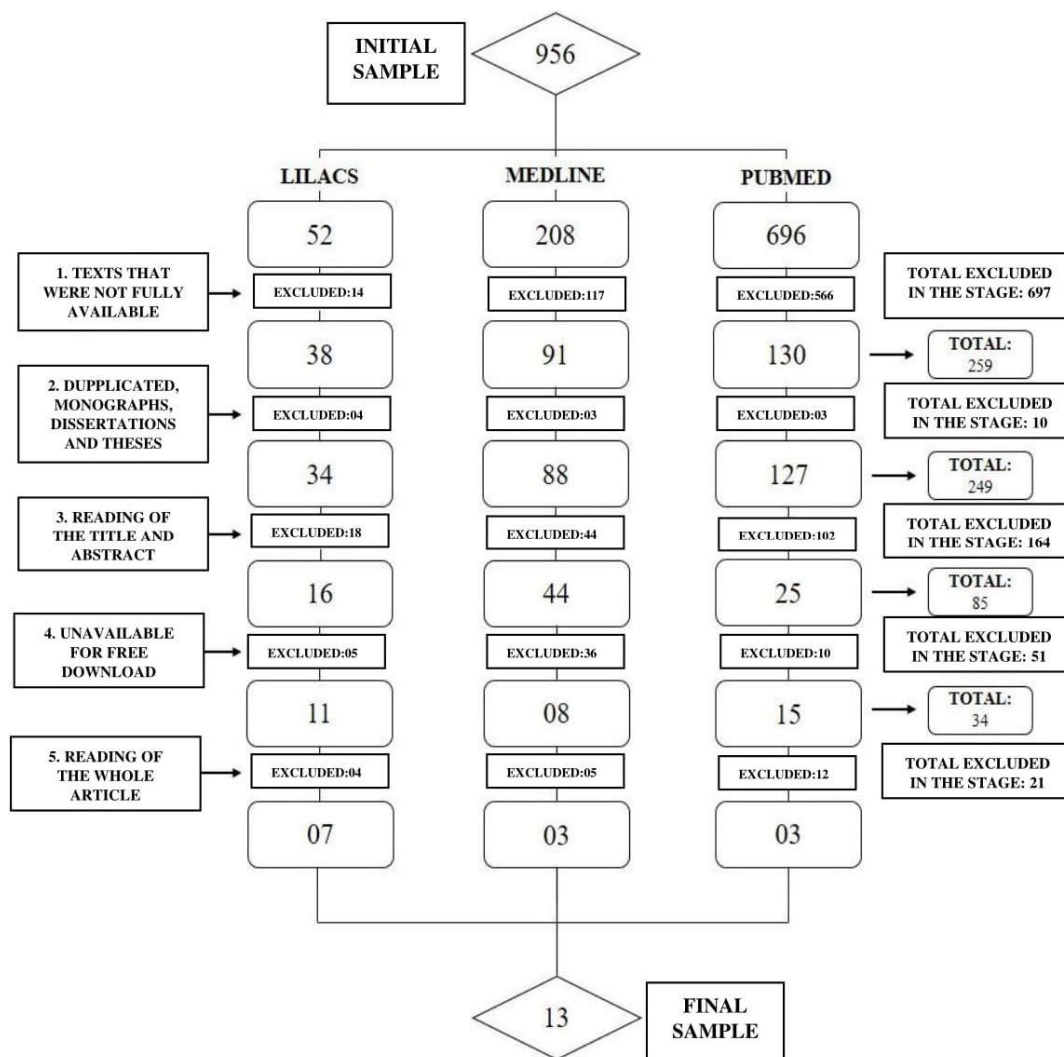
The practice of maternal breastfeeding is an activity that cooperates to the process of the bond making, affection, protection and nutrition to the child, in addition, to constitute the most important and effective intervention for the reduction of infant morbimortality, allowing a relevant impact in the

promotion of integral health of the binomial mother and child (BRASIL, 2015a). The maternal breastfeeding has several benefits that go since passive immunization, nutrition and healthy development of the nursing mother, going through the prevention of pathologies in the mothers, up to benefits extended to the family as a whole in relation to the practical and economical character from the breastfeeding's

accomplishment. For this reason, the recommendation is to, exclusively breastfeed the baby until six months and, as a complement, until two years old (BRASIL, 2015b e SILVA et al., 2017). Recently, one recognizes that the paternal involvement in breastfeeding is of extreme importance to the occurrence of the breastfeeding's continuity, due to daily difficulties that may occur during breastfeeding. In this context, one supports that the bond must not be exclusively binomial (mother-child), but the trinomial term (mother-child-father), actively encompassing the father in the process as well as the family as a whole. This must occur since the prenatal period, because the father's presence since the gestation supports in the preparation for motherhood and fatherhood, thus stimulating the breastfeeding for a longer period. Therefore, one comprehends that the knowledge of the fathers regarding breastfeeding and the support in the decision making closer to the mothers may also be relevant (LIMA; CAZOLA; PÍCOLI, 2017). That way, it is fundamental to analyze the repercussions that this participation brings to the handling of breastfeeding. In the current literature, this is a subject that has been approached, intending to understand the influence of the paternal figure to support in the process of breastfeeding. Consequently, one needs to analyze what is being studied about the theme to construct an apparatus of the contributions regarding the support of the man to the breastfeeding. Thus, this study has the purpose of analyzing the influence of the paternal figure in the handling of breastfeeding highlighting the scientific literature.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

It is about an integrative review of the literature, where one seeks to comprehend the father's influence on the success of breastfeeding, with an emphasis on the way that fathers contribute so that the breastfeeding occurs effectively. The development of an integrative review is given through some stages, namely: (1) elaboration of the guiding question; (2) search or sampling of the literature, highlighting the inclusion conditions; (3) data gathering; (4) critical analysis of the included studies; (5) discussion/interpretation of the results; and; in conclusion, (6) presentation of the review/ synthesis of the knowledge (MENDES et al., 2008 e SOUZA et al., 2010). Based on the aforementioned method, initially, the following guiding question was formulated: "In which way the paternal figure may influence and/or contribute to the success of breastfeeding?". The search was made in February and march of 2018, in three bibliographic databases of health sciences: LILACS (Latin-American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature), MEDLINE (Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System Online) and PUBMED (Publisher Medline). The used descriptors in the three databases were: aleitamentomaterno AND pai (LILACS) and the correspondent in English: Breastfeeding AND father (MEDLINE and PUBMED). It is worth t highlight that the gathering was made by pairs. The study's established inclusion conditions were: be written in Portuguese, English or Spanish; and be fully available and for free and that responds to the



In Figure 1. It is shown the stages of inclusion and exclusion of the studies, accordingly with availability and reading

study's guiding question. In contrast, the used exclusion conditions were: be an editorial, monograph, dissertation or thesis; and articles that were duplicated. This way, the study's selection was made with the following eligibility conditions: (1) to verify if the text was fully available; (2) to observe if it were: duplicated, monographs, dissertations and/or thesis; (3) reading of the title and abstract to identify if the article could respond the guiding question; (4) availability for free download; and (5) reading of the full study. In Figure 01, the study's inclusion and exclusion conditions are shown, in accordance with the availability and reading. In this opportunity, accordingly with image 01, the initial total of the studies found were 956, considering the three databases, without the application of the inclusion and exclusion conditions, using only the descriptors, without any filter. After verifying if the articles were fully available, 259 studies remained. From these, four were duplicated, there were two monographs, one dissertation, and three theses, thus remaining 249 works. With the reading of titles and abstracts, 164 were excluded and 85 studies remained.

Therefore, 34 articles were available for free download. At last, after the reading of the whole article, there were 13 studies that could respond to the guiding question.

RESULTS

Articles were analyzed. For a better organization, the obtained data by the articles' revision were divided into frameworks, where the first one represents the standard elements about the studies. According to what is possible to observe in Chart 01, most of the studies – 10 (77%) – date back to the last 10 years. From these, half (5), corresponding to 38.5% of the total, are from the last five years. From all the articles, the oldest one is from 2005 and the newest from 2017. Therefore, the studies of the integrative review showed the predominance of Brazilian works, and they are presented in Figure 02. From these, most of them (6 articles) were developed in the Northeast region, which is equivalent to 75% of the studies that were developed

Chart 1. Description of the studies selected in the databases

Title	Authorship/Year	Journal	Research place	Sample
Maternal breastfeeding: the father's contribution	BRITO et al (2005)	Revista Baiana de Enfermagem	Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil.	50 fathers of infants
Father's opinions regarding breastfeeding	BRITO; OLIVEIRA (2006)	Revista Rede de Enfermagem do Nordeste (RENE)	Natal, Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil.	13 fathers/ men
The participation of fathers in the breastfeeding process: experiences, knowledge, behaviors and emotions	PONTES et al (2008)	Jornal de Pediatria (Rio de Janeiro)	Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.	17 couples/ families
The paternal involvement in the process of breastfeeding: Incentive proposals	PONTES et al (2009)	Rev. Bras. Saúde Matern. Infant.	Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.	17 couples/ families
Supporting mothers to breastfeed: the development and process evaluation of a father inclusive perinatal education support program in Perth, Western Australia.	TOHO-TOA et al (2010)	Health Promotion International	Perth, Australia.	295 fathers/ men
Mothers' experience of fathers' support for breastfeeding	NICKER-SON et al (2012)	Public Health Nutrition	Northeast of USA	19 mothers
Education and Support for Fathers Improves Breastfeeding Rates: A Randomized Controlled Trial	MAY-COOK et al (2013)	Perth, Australia.	Perth, Australia.	295 fathers/ men
Reasons for the success of exclusive breastfeeding in the fathers' perspective	CABRAL et al (2013)	Rev. Eletr. Enf.	Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.	8 couples/ families
Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration in First-Time Mothers: Exploring the Impact of Father Involvement in the Early Postpartum Period	HUNTER; CATTE-LONA (2014)	Health Promotion Perspectives	Monroe County, Indiana, USA.	146 puerperal
Exploring Fathers' Role in Breastfeeding Practices in the Urban and Semi urban Settings of Karachi, Pakistan	MI-THANI et al (2015)	The Journal of perinatal education	Karachi, Pakistan	12 fathers/ men
Paternity and breastfeeding: Nurse's mediation	RÉGO et al (2016)	Acta Paul Enferm	Fortaleza, Ceará, Brazil.	8 couples/ families
Women's opinion about the father's participation of breastfeeding	FERRAZ et al (2016)	Arq. Cienc. Saúde UNIPAR	Chapecó, Santa Catarina, Brazil.	115 puerperal
The father's participation in the process of breastfeeding	LIMA et al (2017)	Cogitare Enferm.	Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.	56 couples/ families

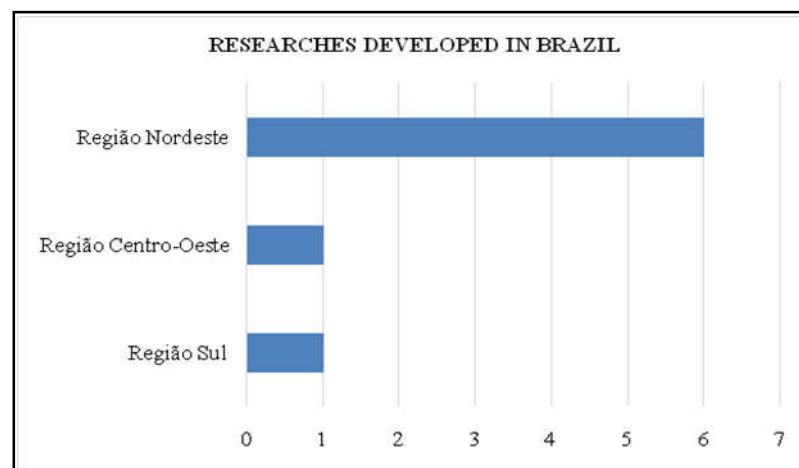


Figure 2. Shows the periodic of publication of the works made in Brazil

Chart 2. Description of the studies' objectives and results

TITLE	OBJECTIVES	RESULTS
Maternal breastfeeding: the father's contribution	To verify the father's conception and contribution in the breastfeeding process.	To support and encourage the mother in the breastfeeding process; take care of the child, accomplish household tasks, accompany during medical consultations, fulfill the financial needs.
Father's opinions regarding breastfeeding	To verify the father's opinion about breastfeeding.	To provide financial resources, help in household tasks and take care of the child.
The participation of fathers in the breastfeeding process: experiences, knowledge, behaviors and emotions	To identify experiences, knowledge, behaviors and feelings of the fathers in the breastfeeding process.	To support healthy breastfeeding since the prenatal period to improve the milk production; provide emotional and psychological support; accompany in the prenatal visits, buy food and materials indicated for the stimulation of milk production (prenatal); Put and take withdraw the child from the mother's lap during breastfeeding time; put the child to burp after the feeding; accomplish the cleaning of the mother's breasts.
The paternal involvement in the process of breastfeeding: Incentive proposals	To build a proposal that will support the man's participation in the breastfeeding process.	To encourage the maintenance of maternal breastfeeding; give financial support, actively participate in the whole pregnancy, time of childbirth and puerperium period, in educative actions, recreational workshops.
Supporting mothers to breastfeed: the development and process evaluation of a father inclusive perinatal education support program in Perth, Western Australia.	To describe the development and evaluation of the process of a program that involves education and perinatal support for the fathers to aid their companions during breastfeeding.	To participate in activities of health education.
Mothers' experience of fathers' support for breast-feeding	To examine the experience of mothers and how they have been receiving support from the fathers during breastfeeding.	To give emotional support.
Education and Support for Fathers Improves Breastfeeding Rates: A Randomized Controlled Trial	To investigate the effects of a lecture involving prenatal and post-natal for the fathers.	To participate in activities of education and health.
Reasons for the success of exclusive breastfeeding in the fathers' perspective	To comprehend the motives attributed by the fathers for the success of exclusive breastfeeding during the child's first six months.	To give psychological support and to take care of the child and help the mother in positioning the child at her breast.
Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration in First-Time Mothers: Exploring the Impact of Father Involvement in the Early Post-Partum Period	To examine the relationship between the father and the support to the beginning and the duration of breastfeeding with first-time mothers.	To give emotional support.
Exploring Fathers' Role in Breastfeeding Practices in the Urban and Semi urban Settings of Karachi, Pakistan	To explore the father's perceptions about breastfed babies.	To give support on the following activities: household tasks, financial support, a search of information with qualified professionals.
Paternity and breastfeeding: Nurse's mediation	To identify how the father perceives his contribution to the support and stimulation of breastfeeding based on learning.	To provide comfort and calmness to the woman and encourage breastfeeding; give support on household tasks and the ones related to the child (bath and hygiene, washing of clothes, changing diapers, sunbaths, taking the baby to the mother for breastfeeding, putting the baby to burp) and participate in prenatal and post-natal groups that handle the theme.
Women's opinion about the father's participation of breastfeeding	To know the father's contribution in the process of maternal breastfeeding, accordingly with puerperal.	To give support on the following activities: psychological support to the mother; household tasks, positioning of the baby in the mother's lap for breastfeeding, a search for orientation with health professionals.
The father's participation in the process of breastfeeding	To identify the father's participation in the process of breastfeeding in a state maternity from the Center-West region of Brazil.	To give support on the following activities: Psychological support, the assistance of the companion during prenatal consultations, aid in the baby's positioning at the mother's arms; seek/receive orientations with health professionals.

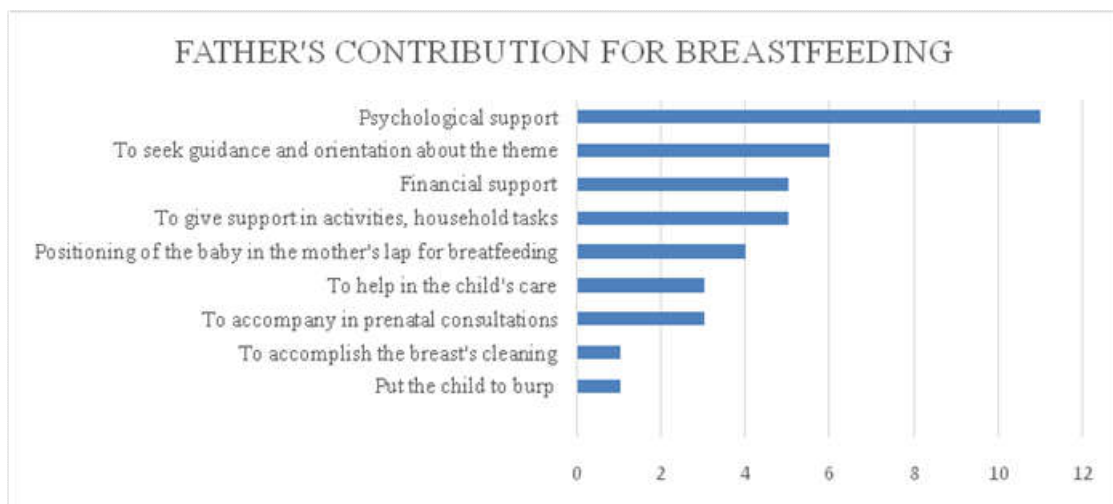


Figure 3. Here are shown the results of the father's contribution for breastfeeding found in the presented articles

in the country. In this perspective, the city of Recife, in the state of Pernambuco was that development place of three (considering the Brazilian studies) of these researches; the city of Natal, on Rio Grande do Norte, represented two (25%) works; Fortaleza, in the state of Ceará, was the city where the other study from the Northeast was made. In addition to this, one work was made in the center-west region (Campo Grande-MS) and another in the South region (Chapecó-SC). One hopes that the predominance of Brazilian articles has occurred due to the selection of the databases, due to their wide publication of Brazilian articles, one believes that the inclusion of new databases may result in new articles published on other countries. From the articles developed in the exterior, two were made in Australia (both on Perth), two were made in the United States of America, corresponding, each one, to 15.4% of the total. At last, one (7.7%) was made in Pakistan. On a broader way, considering the continents were the researches occurred, 10 (76.9%) were on the American continent, two (15.4% in Oceania and one (7.7%) in Asian territory. Regarding the participants' study, the public varied between mother/puerperal (23%) and fathers (38.5%) of infants or from the couple (38.5%). In this opportunity, considering only the studies where the sample was made only by male genitors, the average of participants was of 133 fathers, varying between 12 and 295. In the researches the only involved the maternal figure, the sample's average size was 93, varying between 19 and 146 mothers. At last, in the works that approached the couple, the average was of 21 couples (42 genitors), varying between 8 and 56 dyads. It is worth to highlight that this difference of the sample's size is due to the differences in the kind of approach of each study, most of the works with couples was qualitative, meanwhile, when they were only with one of the genitors, the researches would tend to be quantitative. In chart 02 the objectives and results offered in the articles from the revision are displayed. Therefore, in figure 03 the results found on the articles about the father's contribution to the breastfeeding are shown. On four (30.8%) studies were shown the results or repercussions of the paternal contribution.

This way, one may observe that the results mentioned, basically points out to the improvement of the indicators and the effectiveness of breastfeeding as the father's participation in the process occurs. That way, one observes that the breastfeeding's durability is higher, and the woman feels more capacitated and inspired, when she receives her partner's support, thus including an improvement in the family's relationship as a whole. Therefore, one also quotes with a high emphasis on the importance of health education guided towards the fathers, with respect to a higher safety and support from them during breastfeeding, contributing to the process' success. Moreover, one of the studies showed that as the age and economical level of the parents' increases, better are the results related to breastfeeding. It is worth to highlight that a specificity quoted on some articles that includes a negative point in the form of the father's contribution is the idea of a patriarchal society that still exists and is very present on some realities, leading to extreme authoritarianism on the part of the fathers due to the imposition in the way that the mothers should proceed with breastfeeding. To conclude, on some articles' statements, mothers refers to the feeling of being alone, abandoned by their husbands, that only seeks to give care to the baby, forgetting the emotional and psychological support to their partner, thus hindering the family relationship and, as consequence, the breastfeeding itself.

DISCUSSION

The studies showed forms of collaborations for the fathers to be developing to support their partners during breastfeeding. The one that was most quoted was psychological support. In this regard, the support was based on encouragement, motivation, affection, respect, and companionship. Therefore, the attitude of emotional support and incentive to the mother, in addition, to contribute for a better relationship between the couple, allows a higher bond between father and son, as well as, a higher peace of mind, calmness and determination for the mother, easing the continuation of breastfeeding more efficiently (RÊGO *et al*, 2016). In a qualitative study accomplished with 40 fathers, in Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, showed through the dialog of the genitors, that the follow-up and support to the women was one of the most quoted forms of involvement, corroborating with the actual study that shows the importance of such contribution form. (RESENDE *et al*, 2014). In this sense, having knowledge about the benefits of breastfeeding for the child and the mother, as well as, discovering ways of support and care to the mother with more confidence and security, will enable the fathers to feel more capable and qualified to contribute (CIRINO *et al*, 2016). This way, one observes an increase in the success of breastfeeding, on both, durability and quality that is proportional to the involvement ratio of the father in the process (HUNTER; CATTELONA, 2014). Studies quoted the child's care as a form of paternal participation. Resende *et al* (2014), highlights that this is the way of help that is most mentioned by the fathers. In this context, one understands that the fact of giving standard care to the infant allows a higher period of rest and calmness to the mother. However, Cabral *et al* (2013), states that some mothers are not so sure about the fathers' capacity to exert this role, mentioning the excess of protection with the child and the fear of losing the protagonist role in the process, as a factor that hinders the father's insertion in the care. Another relevant factor is that the destination of excessive care from the fathers to their child may generate a feeling of loneliness and abandonment in the mother when the same attention is not given to her (PONTES *et al*, 2008).

Another paternal contribution that arose in the studies was the support in domestic chores. In the same way that the support in the child's care, to help in domestic chores, gives the mothers more time to dedicate to their child and breastfeeding, as well as, to rest, thus providing a more tranquil and harmonic environment (RÊGO *et al*, 2016). However, in one of the studies was reported a fact that hinders this kind of help by part of the fathers, that refers to the desire of contributing with the cleaning and tidiness of the houses, however, cultural questions of the society have a very dim view to the execution of this activity by males (MITHANI *et al*, 2015). This may justify itself in countries if a strict culture in relation to values and gender roles, as an example of this, there is the study made in Pakistan. Other ways of contribution reported in the researches were the provision of financial resources. Although it was frequently mentioned, this participation is not very much related to the breastfeeding itself. However, the studies refer that this may configure itself as something positive, in a sense of allowing the provision to the mother of a more adequate and nutritive nourishment, as well as, it may mean a higher calmness and satisfaction to the mother, with respect to the accomplishment of wishes and wills in a moment of the sensitivity's deepening (PONTES *ET AL* 2009). However, it is worth to highlight that in order to the supply of financial needs

to occur, in most of the times, the father has to exert some labor activity, having to dispose of his time for this, which may compromise the rest of the care and involvement with the mother and child (LIMA *et al.*, 2017 e FERRAZ *et al.*, 2016). Another participation referred by around 1/3 of the studies was the child's positioning in the mother's lap in the moment of breastfeeding. In this perspective, the correct position is of extreme importance for the success of breastfeeding, thus it must take a few relevant techniques into account, such as: The child must have the whole areola in its mouth and not only the nipple, the baby and the mother must be facing towards each other or "belly with belly", one must observe the suction through the movement of the baby's cheeks, among others. For this reason, the father being oriented about this care enables that there is a higher and more correct collaboration by his part, thus helping the mother in this positioning (CIRINO *et al.*, 2016 e CABRAL *et al.*, 2013). The remaining collaborations mentioned were in relation to accompany the mother in at medical consultations, which configures itself as psychological support in the sense that it refers to a form of companionship and division of responsibilities. Other contributions that were quoted as the fathers' participation were: support after the feeding, more specifically, putting the child to burp and accomplish the sanitization of the mother's breasts to remove humidity. This last "contribution" draws attention due to the non-existence of recommendation of the breasts' sanitization after the feeding, because the ideal is to only hydrate around the nipples with a drop of the mother's milk. This may indicate a certain limitation of the fathers' knowledge, which may negatively interfere and this highlights to the necessity of a continuous capacitation of the parents to the success of breastfeeding (CIRINO *et al.*, 2016; RÊGO *et al.*, 2016 e PONTES *et al.*, 2008).

Final Considerations

In this sense, one highlights the importance of the educative process for the fathers to contribute in a more adequately and effectively, allowing an active involvement during breastfeeding. This educational follow-up must involve the couple and must have its beginning since the prenatal period in consultations, groups, workshops, and lectures and it must continue up to the postnatal period. The form of follow-up must comprehend instructions, orientations and technical and practical information about the care with the child, mother and more directly with the breastfeeding; however, it cannot lose the focus in the couple's psychological support, thus seeking a healthy relationship that will allow a higher insertion of the father in the process. Therefore, the multi-professional health team must be well articulated to offer assistance and educative subsidies for the family, as an example, we have the male prenatal, where, in addition to the orientations about the care for breastfeeding and care with the child he also will accomplish care for his own health. The study's revision showed that most of the works with couples were qualitative. When they were only with one of the genitors, they tend to be quantitative, thus arising a new suggestion for the next studies, quantitative studies with couples, seeking to obtain a good amount of standardization in this population. Other activities during puerperium may also be assumed by the father, which were not quoted in the studies, as an example we have the care with the older child, in case the couple has one.

Given the importance of the paternal acting during puerperium, one highlights the need of public politics, guided towards an addition in the paternity leave, because this father in most of the times remains only with 05 consecutive days with his family or the private companies and government offices should have projects guided towards these fathers, such as vacation advance or reduction in his working hours, to allow them to give support to the puerperal, thus seeking the success of breastfeeding.

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