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## Breastfeeding experiences of Taiwanese mothers of infants with neonatal jaundice in a baby-friendly hospital environment

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**Background:** The rise in the breastfeeding rate comes with an increase in the prevalence of neonatal jaundice in ethnic Chinese babies.

**Objective:** The objective of this study was to explore the breastfeeding experiences of mothers of infants with neonatal jaundice.

**Method:** In-depth qualitative interviews and content analysis were conducted with nine mothers of newborns with neonatal jaundice and breastfed their babies during the first year postpartum.

**Results:** Mothers' experiences can be described in four phases and six themes. (1) Prenatal stage: Build breastfeeding belief, i.e., breastfeeding is best and a natural behavior, without awareness of neonatal jaundice; (2) Stage after neonatal jaundice started to appear: Including two themes, questioning beliefs in breastfeeding and happiness about being a mother. Mothers lacked knowledge and ignored the threat of neonatal jaundice, mainly focused on their physical discomforts and worrisome about insufficient breast milk, they also felt an intimate mother-infant bond through breastfeeding; (3) Stage when newborns had neonatal jaundice: Including two themes, neonatal jaundice and phototherapy caused negative emotions and regaining original beliefs about breastfeeding. They struggled through emotional swings and inconsistent advices about whether phototherapy and formula supplementation is needed. Then they decided neonatal jaundice is only temporary then retrieved initial beliefs of breastfeeding; (4) Stage after neonatal jaundice faded and mothers continued breastfeeding: Insist and adapt.

**Conclusions:** When their babies had neonatal jaundice, women experienced physical discomfort, external pressures and negative emotions concurrently. It is essential for health professionals to provide assistance and for family to provide support during this time.

### Biography

Kuei-Hui Chu has completed her PhD from National Yang-Ming University. Her professional interests include women's health, child health and neonatal care.

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