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**Addressing Parents' Needs at Neonatal Intensive Care
Units in Gaza Governorates: Toward
Family-Centered Nursing Care**

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Family-Centered Nursing Care**

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Thesis Approval

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Dedication

All the warm feelings and respect to my father and my mother who are praying and encouraged me all the time

My sincere gratitude to my wife and my children who supported me all the time through this study ...

Special thanks to my brothers for their encouragement, which provided me with energy to complete my study

I would like to express my appreciations to all the nurses who are working in Neonatal Intensive Care Units in Gaza Strip for their cooperation and support.

Mustafa Saidam

Declaration

I certify that this thesis submitted for the degree of Master, is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and this study (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Signed:

Mustafa Saidam

Date: / /

Acknowledgement

First of all, praise to Allah, the lord of the world, and peace and blessings of Allah be upon our prophet Muhammad, all thanks for Allah who granted me the capability to accomplish this thesis.

I had the great fortune to complete this study under the supervision, guidance and valuable instructions of Dr. Akram Abusalah.

I would like to convey my warm thanks to all NICUs' nurses for their cooperation in data collection.

To my friends, and all those who contributed to the completion of this study, thank you very much.

Mustafa Saidam

Date: / /

Abstract

Having a baby admitted to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) is a distressing event for parents associated with feelings of guilt, stress, and anxiety. The purpose of this study was to assess needs of the parents during hospitalization of their newborns at NICUs in governmental hospitals of Gaza Strip. The study utilized descriptive, analytical, cross-sectional design. The sample of the study was a convenient sample, consisted of 117 parents (95 mothers and 22 fathers) selected from four governmental hospitals in Gaza Strip; namely Al Shifa, Alnassr, European Gaza Hospital, and Nasser hospital. The researcher adapted the Neonatal Intensive Care Units Family Needs Inventory (NFNI) questionnaire and translated to Arabic language. Reliability of the questionnaire was tested and Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.969 and split-half correlation was 0.901. The results showed that half of parents aged between 25–30 years old, two-thirds of them are not working, one-third have bachelor degree, majority of them have income of less than 1000 NIS, and about half of them have a family size of 4 – 6 persons. In addition, about two-thirds of neonates were males, 40% of them were premature babies, 43% of them stayed in NICU for 4–6 days. The results also showed that parents rated assurance as the highest need (82.2%), followed by information need (78.4%), proximity need (76.8%), comfort need (73.6%), and the lowest was support need (68.6). The parents of newborns admitted to NICU on Nasser hospital in Khanyounis reported higher score of the five needs compared to parents from the other hospitals. Also, parents who have bachelor degree, higher income expressed higher score of assurance need. Moreover, parents who have big families exhibited higher value of proximity need, and parents whose newborn admitted to NICU for 1–3 days expressed higher score of comfort need, and parents of newborns on breastfeeding reported higher score of all the needs. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences between the needs of fathers and mothers. Also, there were no statistically significant differences in parents' needs related to work, age, medical diagnosis of neonates, and gender of neonate. The study concluded that addressing parents' needs at NICU is very important in order to provide a high-quality holistic care for the parents and their babies, which is in accordance with the family-centered philosophy of care.

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List of Abbreviations

CCFNI	Critical Care Family Need Inventory
FCC	Family-centered care
GS	Gaza Strip
LBW	Low Birth Weight
MoH	Ministry of Health
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NFNI	Neonatal Family Needs Inventory
NMR	Neonatal Mortality Rate
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WB	West Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

The presence of families within neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) is considered an integral part of their babies' care. Family-centered care (FCC) is the provision of care that is respectful and responsive to the parents' fundamental needs, values and preferences; it is considered an essential part to implement successful evidence-based practices in NICU (Staniszewska et al., 2012). To improve the provision of family-centered care, it is very important to assess the parents' needs since it is the major component of family-centered care, thus it is important and essential for the NICU nurses to identify these needs (Alves et al., 2016).

During the hospitalization period, parents spend long time in the hospital, which make them away from their other children, and that will be stressful to the parents (Lasiuk et al., 2013). Further stressors include as well the arranged and controlled opportunities of parents' interaction with their infants, inability to support infant's care, fear of infant survival and development, the intensified feelings of love, hope, fear, and loss (Alsaiani et al., 2019). Thus, the availability of good support is considered a critical point for the parents to cope with their feelings of grief and confusion; however, they do not know how to ask some help from the nurses and other health care providers; so, can be prevailed that they are often unsure of their own needs (Skene et al., 2012).

Also, the presence of parents in NICUs continuously, is pivotal to allow the family and/or the parents in participating in the care of their babies thus to improve the outcome (Guimaraes, 2015). In addition, other family members including siblings and grandparents should also visit the hospitalized babies. The participation of parents in the care as well as