



Understanding the Lived Experience of the Parents with Children Admitted to NICU



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Introduction

Until today, studies have not looked into the residual communication demands and gaps that parents feel, while also relating these to the many tasks of communication in newborn care

- Lorie et. al, 2021

The incidence of anxiety among mothers' of babies to NICU was as high as 42% during the first month after birth and 26% from one month to one year after delivery.

A study published in the Journal of Perinatology found that as many as 40% of parents whose children were admitted to the NICU reported experiencing clinically significant symptoms of PTSD

- Malouf et al, 2024

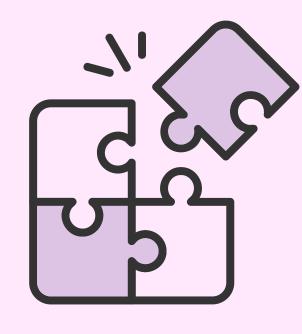
- Lasiuk & Norris, 2020

Methodology



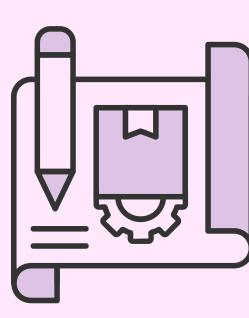
Research Instrument

Face-to-Face
Interview guided
by an aide
memoire
validated by
experts and
psychometrician



Sample

A sample of six (6) adult parent with children admitted in NICU was chosen by purposive sampling technique



Research Design

Qualitative,
DescriptivePhenomenology



Validation Technique

MemberCheckingOgyReflexivity

- Trustworthiness
- Confirmability
- Credibility
- Dependability
- BracketingResonance



Mode of Analysis

Colaizzi's Seven Step Descriptive Phenomenology



Ethical Considerations

Ethical Clearance
from MCU Ethics
Review Boards: ICF,
Confidentiality,
beneficence,
respect for human
dignity, and
principle of justice

Conclusion

- The journey of NICU parents was marked by emotional strength, resilience, and love, highlighting human resilience and the lasting power of family bonds not just hardship.
- Parents faced ongoing anxiety and fear of loss but drew strength from hope, faith, and a positive mindset, with partner support being crucial to their resilience.
- The study highlighted the value of a family-centered NICU approach, where emotional support, education, and engagement helped parents prepare for discharge and caregiving.
- Though challenging, the NICU experience led to profound family growth, strengthening their bonds through perseverance, sensitivity, and enduring love.

Findings & Discussion

Parents encountered different ranges of challenges and emotional hurdles upon receiving the news that their infant required specialized medical care. The experience became a true test of unity, as couples worked together to care for their baby and support one another emotionally. These created different coping strategies that they used as powerful tools to manage everyday life in the NICU.



Figure 2. The Three Ps of NICU Parenting

Theme 1: Parental Pain

Anxiety

"I struggled with anxiety and sleepless nights, constantly worrying about my child's health" (P1)

Fear Of Loss

"I always remember whether my child would survive or not from that situation" (P5)

Theme 2: Partnership in Parenting

Resilience

"I remained composed and focused on providing support during this challenging time" (P1)

Prioritization

"I focused on addressing immediate concerns while managing daily responsibilities as best as I could. Prioritizing tasks helped me stay organized during this challenging time." (P1)

Theme 3: Pathways to Perseverance

Shared Experience

"We have unity and teamwork in taking care of our baby." (P2)

Mutual Support

"I feel that I always need someone to talk to the whole day, and cry with me." (P2)