Perceptions and Attitudes of Parents and Healthcare Professionals Toward Infant Massage in NICU
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Purpose:
The aim of this study was to explore the cultural, organisational and contextual factors within a Lebanese NICU environment that could act as facilitators and barriers for future implementation of massage.

Methods:
A qualitative exploratory investigation was adopted. This study was guided by the Normalization Process Theory NPT to understand implementation and address the observed difficulty in implementing new interventions in clinical settings. A purposive sample of Lebanese NICU HCPs and parents were recruited from three university hospitals with data generated through focus group discussions and observational notes. Framework analysis was used for analysis and interpretation of findings.

Results:
The findings confirm that despite the participants’ interest in implementing massage intervention in general, parents’ participation in the NICU is almost absent except for breastfeeding. Participants in both groups highlighted parents’ fear and anxiety. Nurses are mainly in charge and parents are passive observers. Transportation difficulties, living far from the NICU, physical condition of the mother/infant, household obligations, unavailability of helpful staff, and fear of transmission of infection were reported by parents as major barriers to future implementation. On the other hand, HCPs highlighted staff attitude and resistance, workload and time constraints among other barriers that relate to them directly and to the context and organization. Communication, gradual implementation, and encouragement and support were major facilitators identified by parents for sustainable implementation. In comparison, contextual and organizational factors, such as human resources, having extra staff and a protocol for teaching nurses and training parents to guarantee a smooth application, commitment to practice, openness to innovation were the main facilitators identified by HCPs.

Conclusion:
Adopting infant massage as a complex intervention in the Lebanese NICUs without preparation would be premature. Good communication between parents and health care providers is a key element to facilitate early bonding and parent-infant interaction. Missing the opportunity to involve parents in NICU care put the family in a difficult situation to adapt to the new challenges after their infant’s discharge. The findings of this study will advance current knowledge on understanding the factors that determine applicability, acceptability and feasibility of massage implementation in the NICU setting. It will also inform the design of future RCTs.
Title:
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Applicable category:
Clinical, Academic, Students, Leaders, Researchers

Keywords:
massage, neonatal intensive care unit and premature infant

Abstract Summary:
The findings of this study will shed the light on the facilitators and barriers for future implementation of moderate pressure massage in the NICU. It will advance current knowledge on understanding the factors that determine applicability, acceptability and feasibility of massage implementation in the Lebanese NICU setting.

References:

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