

Abstract

MATERNAL ROLE ATTAINMENT AND MOTHERS OF PRETERM INFANTS

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Purpose: The purpose of this poster presentation is to highlight preliminary findings obtained from a study of Maternal Role Attainment and Mothers of Preterm Infants. This study is a supplement to the research that examines preterm infants' readiness to bottle-feed and bottle-feeding outcomes of hospitalized infants. The health status of the mother, it is hypothesized, may influence the mother's ability to recognize the premature infant's cues to feed. Indeed, the interaction between mother and baby has been documented to be of importance to the infant's growth and development. The research proposed in this application is intended to provide information about the mother's status so that clinical interventions and educational programs can be proposed/implemented that adequately address the needs of mothers caring for preterm infants during this critical period of their life.

Methods: Postpartum mothers of preterm infants received one survey with seven instruments consecutively numbered from 1 to 115 and a demographic data sheet. The seven instruments measured maternal social support, everyday stressors, postpartum depression, maternal attitude, well-being, maternal responsiveness, and self-esteem over a three-month period. Descriptive statistics along with repeated measures, correlational statistics and MANOVA will be used to analyze the data.

Findings: Descriptive and correlational data include Post-conception age of the infant at the time of maternal survey, maternal age, maternal marital status, age, education, number of children, employment, previous history of depression and major support. Preliminary findings for this study will be analyzed during December 2003 and January 2004.

Discussion: Maternal Role Attainment as the theoretical guidepost, suggests that mothers become more comfortable with their mothering abilities as time progresses. The literature suggests that certain variables affect maternal role attainment.

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