

# Occupational Deprivation and Maternal Well-being of Mothers of Preterm Infants: How the NICU Experience Shapes Motherhood Roles and Occupations

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## Purpose

To gain insight on the experience of mothers when their infant had a NICU stay and assess how occupational therapists can be of assistance to the mothers during this experience.

## Introduction

- Becoming a mother is an experience that presents a multitude of choices, roles, responsibilities, and stress
- When an infant is born preterm, many of the facets of motherhood are altered or taken away
  - 1 in 10 infants are born preterm
  - More than 80% are unexpected
- Many mothers are not prepared for the experience and could benefit from prior education to better understand their roles and rights within the NICU
- Incorporating parental collaboration and facilitating skill development for moms into NICU protocol are important ways to decrease occupational deprivation and increase maternal role fulfillment from an occupational perspective (Holloway, 1994)

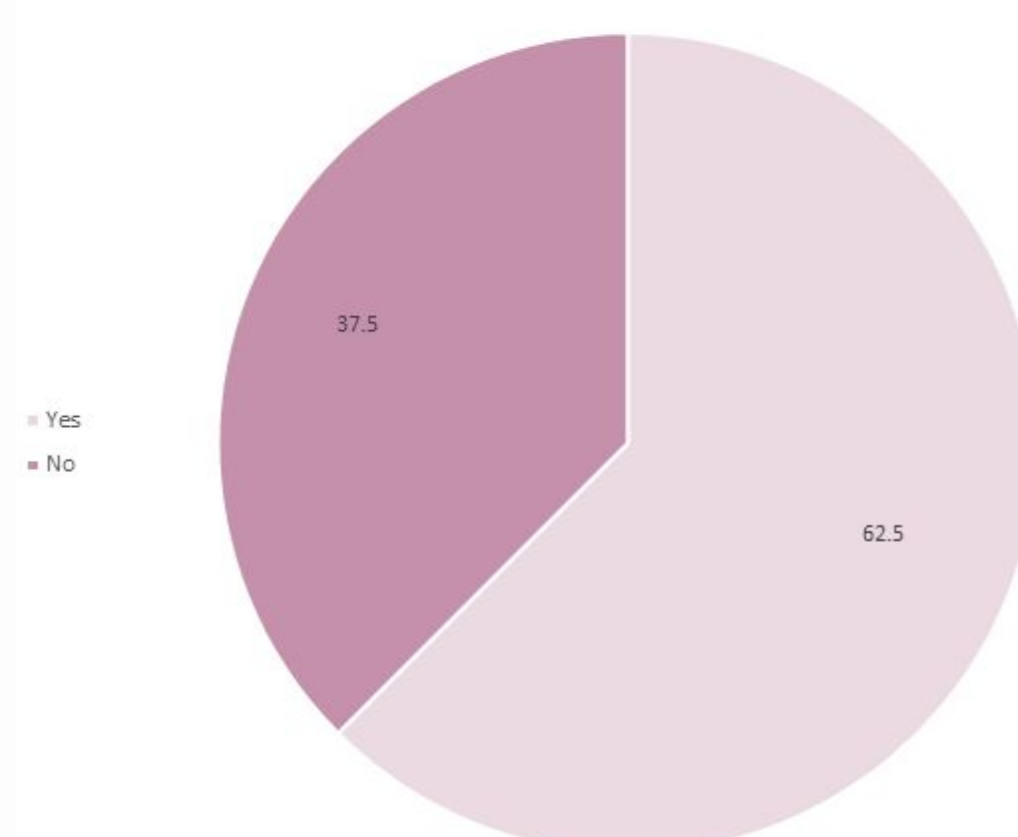
## Methods

- Created 38 question survey distributed via QuestionPro
  - Demographics, NICU stay, maternal occupations, and maternal mental health;
- Optional semi structured interview
- Inclusion Criteria
  - Infants born less than 37 wks gestation
  - Minimum 7 day stay in the NICU
  - Mom over the age of 18
  - Fluent in English
  - Access to the internet
  - Exclusion Criteria: Mothers who had instances of infant drug exposure or have experienced death of their infant
- 16 eligible participants
  - 25% completed an optional interview
- Data was analyzed with qualitative and quantitative measures via Microsoft Excel and QuestionPro data retrieval tools

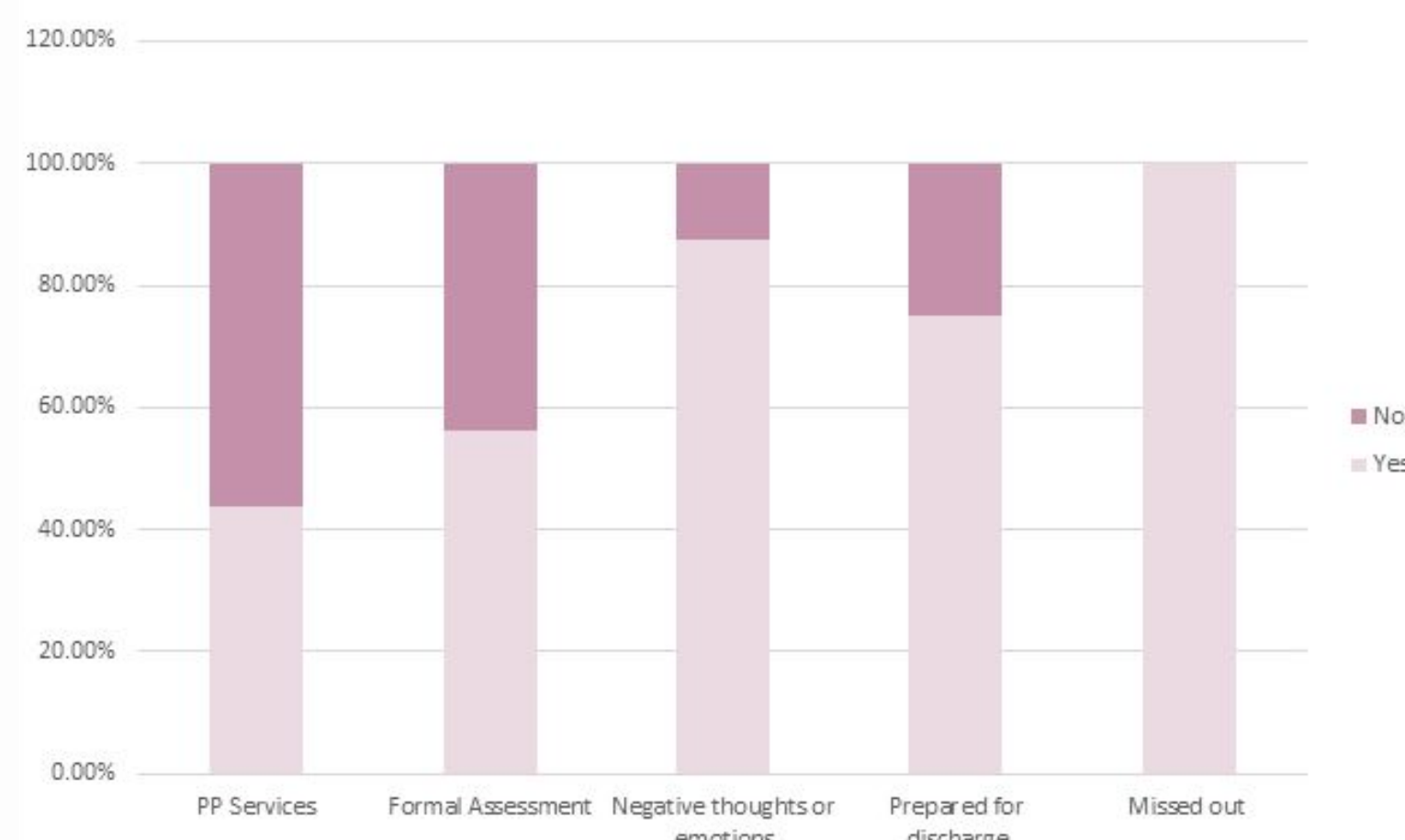
## Results

- Less than 50% of mothers received care for postpartum wellness
- 25% of mothers lacked confidence in maternal occupations upon discharge
- Mothers reported high impact on infant care tasks, co-occupations
- Supplementary interviews revealed stress was prevalent, additional support and resources would have been beneficial to assist the crucial time spent with their infant in the NICU

### Mother Could Perform Occupations



### Maternal Well-being

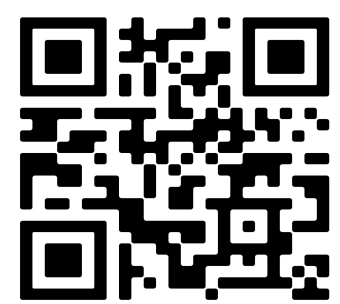


## Discussion

- Lack of education on potential for NICU hospitalization
- Stress during the NICU stay can impact maternal health and infant relationship
- More recognition on maternal mental health is needed
- Lack of parental inclusion in the infant care can lead to increased negative feelings

## Conclusion

Occupational therapists have a unique skill set that can decrease occupational deprivation and increase maternal well-being in the NICU. Given the results further research is needed to elaborate on the correlation between maternal well-being and occupational deprivation in the NICU.



References

