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Mothers' experiences and perceptions [of] Kangaroo Mother Care during hospitalization of their preterm babies in an academic hospital in Johannesburg

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DECLARATION

I, Titus K. Tarus, declare that this research report is my own work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university. All references used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of referencing.

Signature _____ 1st February, 2008.

Titus Kipchumba Tarus

Human Research Ethics committee (Medical). Clearance certificate: M060409

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated with admiration to the mothers who participated in this study for courageously and generously sharing their experiences.

To you all

I am deeply grateful.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to understand the mothers lived experience and perception towards 24-hour Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) during hospitalization of their preterm babies. A qualitative design was used and phenomenological methods used to collect data. Nine in-depth unstructured interviews were with purposely-selected participants. The meaning of their experience was analyzed using Collaizzi's (1978) steps to phenomenological data analysis. Data analysis revealed major three themes: (a) "it is a bond between me and my child" (b) nurse-parent interaction, and (c) "it is tiring and exhaustive". However, the study found that all the mothers in spite of exhaustion, reported some high level of satisfaction with KMC because it allowed them to be closer to their babies. hence giving them the opportunity to observe their growth and become fully involved in the care. KMC was additionally noted have provided a comforting and warm environment for the babies, thus enabling them to grow faster and this in turn increased maternal satisfaction. Recommendation was made regarding further research preferably quantitative study to establish relationship between production of breast milk and the use of KMC. The principle of 24-hour KMC should also be incorporated and emphasized in all levels of educational training as this practice has been found to have numerous benefits both to the mothers and to their preterm babies.