USE OF MUSIC THERAPY IN THE PREGNANCY-PUERPERAL CYCLE BY BRAZILIAN NURSING PROFESSIONALS: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

USO DA MUSICOTERAPIA NO CICLO GRAVÍDICO-PUERPERAL POR PROFISSIONAIS DE ENFERMAGEM BRASILEIROS: UMA REVISÃO DA LITERATURA

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ABSTRACT

DISCIPLINARU

Introduction: Strengthening the bond between mother and baby is extremely important for healthy development. Music therapy has been applied as a therapeutic alternative in obstetric nursing. Objective: To analyze, in the light of national literature, nursing practices with music therapy in the pregnancy-puerperal cycle Methodology: This is a literature review, carried out between August and October 2023, using the Virtual Health Library (VHL) for the bases LILACS and BDEnf, in addition to Google Scholar. Of the 600 articles initially identified, four met the inclusion criteria. Results: The studies analyzed, published between 2018 and 2022, showed that the use of music therapy during the pregnancy-puerperal cycle is beneficial for the woman and the baby. The highlighted benefits of music therapy include reducing anxiety, improving vital parameters, promoting a respectful and humanized birth, as well as positive impacts on the maternal-fetal relationship and neonatal behavior. Conclusion: Music therapy is a promising approach in obstetric nursing, offering a non-invasive, low-cost intervention with the potential to improve care during the pregnancy-puerperal period. The method contributes not only to the physical and emotional well-being of the pregnant woman, but also to the healthy development of the fetus and the promotion of a more humanized birth experience.

Keywords: music therapy; pregnancy; postpartum period; women's health; complementary therapies.

RESUMO

Introdução: O fortalecimento do vínculo entre a mãe e o bebê é de extrema importância para um desenvolvimento saudável. A musicoterapia vem sendo aplicada como uma alternativa terapêutica em enfermagem obstétrica.

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Objetivo: Analisar à luz da literatura nacional as práticas de enfermagem com musicoterapia no ciclo gravídicopuerperal Metodologia: Trata-se de uma revisão de literatura, realizada entre agosto e outubro de 2023, utilizando a Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (BVS) para as bases LILACS e BDEnf, além do Google acadêmico. Dos 600 artigos inicialmente identificados, quatro atenderam aos critérios de inclusão. Resultados: Os estudos analisados, publicados entre 2018 e 2022, evidenciaram que uso da musicoterapia durante o ciclo gravídico-puerperal é benéfico para a mulher e o bebê. Os benefícios da musicoterapia destacados englobam a redução da ansiedade, melhoria dos parâmetros vitais, promoção de um parto respeitoso e humanizado, além de impactos positivos na relação materno-fetal e no comportamento neonatal. Conclusão: A musicoterapia é uma abordagem promissora na enfermagem obstétrica, oferecendo uma intervenção não invasiva, de baixo custo e com potencial para aprimorar o cuidado durante o período gravídico-puerperal. O método contribui não apenas para o bem-estar físico e emocional da gestante, mas também para o desenvolvimento saudável do feto e a promoção de uma experiência de parto mais humanizada.

Palavras-chave: musicoterapia; gravidez; puerpério; saúde da mulher; terapias complementares.

INTRODUCTION

Music is one of the main and oldest ways of manifestation of the individual, whether particular and/or sociocultural, with the most varied purposes. For this reason, its therapeutic characteristics have been studied in the most diverse population groups (WULFF *et al.*, 2017).

Music therapy is defined as the use of music and/or its constituent elements, such as sound, rhythm, melody and harmony by a qualified professional, who will act individually or in a group, in a therapeutic process that aims to promote well-being and achieve the physical, emotional, mental, social and cognitive needs (BRUSCIA, 2016).

It is known that the gestational period is an extremely delicate moment for both mother and family, but it is the maternal figure who experiences much more significant changes, both physical, physiological, social, family and psychological, being exposed to various stressful situations, besides living with serious mental impairments, which consequently may affect the fetal health (ESPER; FURTADO, 2010).

Pregnancy, due to natural physical mechanisms, subject women to several events that can cause the appearance of various types of emotional disorders, such as depression, postnatal psychosis, mood changes and mainly anxiety (PRIMO; AMORIM, 2008).

The risks are not only limited to the mental and physical health of the mother, but also directly affect the fetus, that is, any change in the state of homeostasis of the mother generates effects on it. Problems such as stress, anxiety and depression can negatively affect the development of the baby at any stage of gestational life. It may even trigger hemodynamic disorders, changes in height, weight and high number of cesarean deliveries (BETEGÓN *et al.*, 2017). Moreover, there is an increased risk of miscarriage, premature labor and obstetric complications (FASLOW; ROBINSON; WHITEHEARD, 2008).

DISCIPLINARUM

The use of music therapy has proven beneficial and is increasingly on the rise in the scientific community, being studied and applied as an alternative therapy for improvement of emotional, cognitive, psychological, physiological and social aspects during the pregnancy-puerperal cycle of many women (GONZALES *et al.*, 2017).

In Brazil, alternative care such as music therapy is part of public policies to support and provide health care for women, such as the National Program for Integral Care of Women's Health (PAISM - *Programa Nacional de Atenção Integral à Saúde da Mulher* in Portuguese), considered as a strong element in the advancement and improvement of the quality of care concerning maternal and child health. The same arose with the proposal of integral health care for women in the pregnancy-puerperal cycle, to promote improvement of prenatal care, childbirth and puerperium (BRAZIL, 2006).

It is extremely important that pregnant women understand pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium as unique moments in life, which naturally pass through numerous physical, emotional and social changes which require reorganizations, and health professionals should understand the relevance of using different alternative methods (such as music therapy) that provide a comforting, empathetic and healthy moment for mother and baby (ALVES *et al.*, 2017). The method can be used in pregnancy, pre-birth, delivery and postpartum, however the literature reports more often the benefits of its use in pregnancy and during natural childbirth. Additionally, authors emphasize that music promotes the tranquility and concentration of the team who provides care, as well as a considerable increase in reasoning, thus raising the capacity of self-confidence, reducing the levels of stress experienced in the work routine in health services (TABARRO *et al.*, 2010; CAITANO *et al.*, 2014).

Therefore, the study aims to understand, from scientific evidence available in the national literature, how music therapy has been studied and applied in the routine of nursing services that assist women in the pregnancy-puerperal cycle.

METHODOLOGY

Literature review on nursing practices with music therapy in the pregnancy-puerperal cycle in the national context. The following steps were carried out (MENDES; SILVEIRA; GALVÃO, 2008): a) identification of the theme and selection of the guiding question; b) search in the literature through the delimitation of descriptors; c) establishment of criteria for inclusion and exclusion of articles to be selected; d) definition of the information to be extracted from the selected studies; e) evaluation of the studies included in the review; f) interpretation of the results; g) presentation of the integrative review.

Initially, there was the identification of the theme "Nursing practices in music therapy" and the guiding question: What are the nursing practices with music therapy in women during the pregnancy-puerperal cycle listed in the national literature and what are the benefits of its use by these



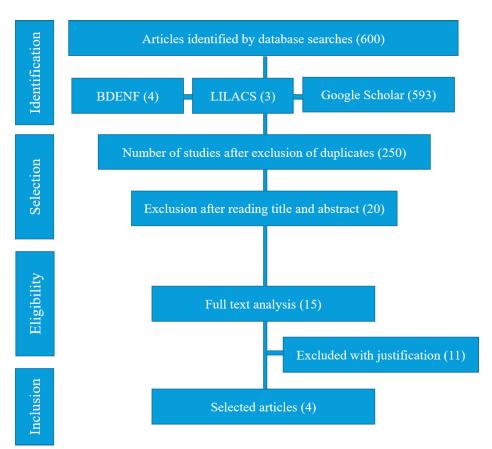
professionals? The research question was elaborated through the PICo strategy, which is an acronym of the words P-Population; I-Interest; Co-Context.

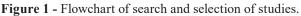
The search was carried out between August and October 2023. The articles were selected by online access using the Virtual Health Library (VHL) for the LILACS (Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature) and Nursing Database (BDEnf), as well as studies available on Google Academic.

The inclusion criteria established were: primary research article; studies presenting nursing practices in music therapy with women in the pregnancy-puerperal cycle in the national context; published in Portuguese, in the last five years (2018 to 2022), available in open access, complete. Any other manuscripts were excluded (for example, editorials, reviews, books and book chapters, experience reports, theses, dissertations and monographs).

The descriptors used in the search were: Nursing, Music Therapy, Pregnancy, Childbirth and Puerperium, using the Boolean operator "AND" between the first three and "OR" between the last two. For better presentation of the results, information was extracted about authors, year of publication, scientific journal, type of study, main results and conclusions.

The database search returned 600 articles, after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, four studies met the scope of this review (Figure 1).





Source: Created by the authors



RESULTS

The included studies were analyzed in a systematic way, taking into account author, year, journal, title, study objective and methodology. The selected studies sought to expose the contributions of music therapy during the pregnancy-puerperal cycle. All studies were published in specific journals of the nursing area from 2018 to 2022 (Chart 1).

Author/Year/Journal	Title	Study Objective	Methodology
ARAÚJO et al., 2018.	Non-pharmacological methods in home birth	To discuss about the non-pharmacological methods for pain relief in the home birth	Qualitative study, reflective
Rev enferm UFPE		methods for pain rener in the nome birth	analysis
DUARTE et al., 2019.	Care technologies in obstetric	To identify the care technologies used by	Descriptive,
	nursing: contribution for the	obstetric nurses in a Normal Birth Center	exploratory,
Cogitare enferm.	delivery and birth	obstetrie nurses in a Normai Birth Center	qualitative
			Interventional
PEREIRA et al., 2021.	Effect of music therapy on vital	To evaluate the effect of music therapy on	before-and-
	parameters, anxiety and sensations	the vital parameters, anxiety and sensations	after study
Rev baiana enferm.	experienced in the gestational period	experienced during the gestational period	with a mixed
			approach
PRATA et al. 2022	Non-invasive care technologies used by obstetric nurses:	To describe the therapeutics contributions of the use of non-invasive care	Qualitative and descriptive
Escola Ana Nery	therapeutics contributions	technologies offered by obstetric nurses during labor.	study.

Chart 1 - Description of the studies included in the review, according to author, year, journal, title, objective and methodology.

Source: Created by the authors

Regarding the results and conclusions of the articles analyzed, numerous positive repercussions related to music therapy during the pregnancy-puerperal period were reported (Chart 2).

Chart 2 - Presentation of the main results and conclusions found in the studies.

Author	Results	Conclusion
ARAÚJO et al., 2018.	Music therapy is a qualified technique to reduce anxi- ety, distress, stress, fear and panic in women during labor, and is intended to provide relief from painful stimuli, increasing the level of energy and vigor, re- sulting in a decrease in heart rate, respiratory rate and generating pain relief.	Music therapy can provide relief for women by reduc- ing stress. The use of music during labor and delivery becomes an act of humanization for women.
DUARTE et al., 2019.	The participants expressed that the care practices they develop are based on scientific evidence and that they use non-pharmacological and non-invasive methods for pain relief, such as: spray bath, massage, Swiss ball, half-moon stool, horse, aromatherapy, music therapy, free movement and/or wandering, dim light and a welcoming environment with their companion throughout the process.	It is therefore concluded that the technologies used by obstetric wards in the field of labor and birth can favor women's autonomy in the parturition process, how- ever, they must be offered to each woman as a care option, and not as a practice imposed on parturients.



PEREIRA et al., 2021	There was an improvement in pulse rate, respiration, heart rate and oxygen saturation, demonstrating the effectiveness of music on these vital signs.	Music therapy promoted positive effects, favored the reduction of anxiety levels, had an impact on the child's mobility and had a significant effect on improv- ing pulse, breathing, heart rate and oxygen saturation, without impacting fetal heart rate or systolic and
PRATA et al. 2022	It is used to relieve pain and promote relaxation, to activate labor, assist in the descent of the presentation and correct fetal positioning.	diastolic blood pressure. Obstetric nurses use different non-invasive techniques with women during the birthing process in the birthing center, which have specific indications and objective contributions that substantiate their therapeutic use.

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DISCUSSION

As shown in the results, four studies were included in this review, following the proposed inclusion criteria. The following chart (Chart 3) lists the main benefits indicated in the literature regarding the practice of music therapy during the pregnancy-puerperal period.

Chart 3. Main benefits of music therapy during pregnancy-puerperal period.

BENEFITS				
Pain relief	Monitoring of vital signs (breathing, heart rate			
Reduction of anxiety and fear in the parturient	and oxygen saturation)			
Leading role in parturition	Promotes comfort, de-medicalized, respectful and			
Inhibition of stressful stimuli during childbirth	woman-centered care			
Ensures a respectful and humanized birth	Promotes female autonomy			
Impacts the child's mobility	Better neonatal behavior			

Source: Created by the authors

There are many benefits of using music therapy during the pregnancy-puerperal period. Music therapy helps in the reduction of biopsychosocial disorders caused by pregnancy, and can be a means to avoid drug therapies and with a good cost benefit. It is also stressed that it brings benefits not only to the woman, but also in establishing her bond with the fetus and other people of she lives together, also promoting health benefits for the fetus and the newborn. In view of its positive effects, music can be an effective method to be included in the strategies for pregnant women's health in prenatal care, baby birth and health promotion (ALVES *et al.* 2017; DUARTE *et al.*, 2019; PEREIRA *et al.*, 2021).

Noninvasive nursing care technologies (NINCT) are understood as structured knowledge that materializes in actions that the nursing professional develops in a shared way with the parturient to favor the parturition with a minimum of intervention and invasion on the body, stimulate her protagonism and promote the pleasurable experience of childbirth (PRATA *et al.*, 2022). Among these practices, music therapy is included as a means of facilitating the process of care for women during labor and delivery, and its objectives involve a de-medicalized, respectful and

woman-centered care that is based on an interactional process with intentionality, production of subjectivities and negotiated actions for the achievement of therapeutic objectives in parturition, respecting the rights of women as integral beings, protecting the physiology of the female body and especially humanizing care.

The use of music in health services is a non-invasive approach with reduced cost when compared to other therapies, besides bringing benefits to the pregnant woman in physiological, emotional, intellectual and social aspects. Since it does not offer any risk or side effects, this technique can offer a potential approach to health promotion, both of the pregnant woman and the fetus (GONZÁLES et al., 2017).

Music has the ability to arouse emotions, feelings and memories without the rationalization of those who experience it, that is, it is an element capable of causing sentimental and emotional transformations without effort or intellectual commitment. Therefore, it causes several benefits to women during the gestational period, whether related to the bond, or related to the health of the woman, psychological and physical aspects during and after childbirth (CARVALHO, 2011; LIMA, 2015).

Other studies also list benefits to maternal health in the prenatal period, indicating that listening to music promotes the reduction of stress of pregnant women, improvement in sleep quality, improvements in neonatal behavior, as well as in brain development, mainly in the motor and sensorineural cerebral cortex of the child (LIU et al. 2015; OLIVEIRA et al. 2016; ALVES et al. 2017; DUARTE et al., 2019; PEREIRA et al., 2021).

The studies included in this review were categorical in indicating that music therapy is a qualified technique to reduce anxiety, distress, stress, fear and panic of women in labor, contributing to the relief of painful stimuli, increasing the degree of mood and vigor, causing a decrease in heart rate, respiratory efforts and pain. Results similar to those found by Silva et al. (2012).

The study by Pereira et al. (2021) sought to evaluate the effect of music therapy on vital parameters, anxiety and sensations experienced during gestational period and concluded that music is an effective, non-pharmacological and low-cost technology. In its results, the means of vital parameters were improved after the musical intervention, promoting a feeling of relaxation. It favored the reduction of anxiety, had an impact on child mobility and had a significant effect on improving pulse rate, breathing, heart rate and oxygen saturation without impacting cardiofetal beats and systolic and diastolic arterial pressures.

Corroborating the findings of this review, Gonzalez et al. (2017) evidenced the alteration of fetal heart rate from listening to music performed with their mothers, demonstrating the intrinsic relationship between emotional changes caused by music in pregnant women and its intrauterine reflex. Furthermore, studies such as the one by Carvalho (2014) point out that the use of music therapy favors the establishment of bonds and creates a favorable environment for communication between mother and newborn.

DISCIPLINARUM

The literature lists that music therapy improves maternal-fetal relationship and interferes with neonatal behavior in children whose mothers heard music during pregnancy. It helps in the higher frequency of breastfeeding and the higher rates of breastfeeding in the postpartum period. Besides improving the maternal-fetal relationship, it contributes to reducing levels of stress during gestation, improves sleep quality and minimizes sleep disorders (OLIVEIRA *et al.*, 2016; VIANNA *et al.*, 2011; LIU *et al.*, 2015).

In addition, this practice promotes humanization in the embracement (nursing-pregnant woman relationship), helping comfort and reducing anxiety, fear, distress of the parturient and consequently pain. It is emphasized that the use of non-pharmacological methods makes labor less painful, and thus, the woman begins to endure more pain, besides allowing the parturient to experience her protagonism and act inhibiting the stressful stimuli of childbirth. The use of music during labor and delivery for women becomes an act of humanization, exalting women with all their human greatness (RODRIGUES *et al.*, 2012; LIMA, 2015; ARAUJO *et al.*, 2018; PEREIRA *et al.*, 2021).

The literature documents that adherence to complementary therapies is an alternative for preventing mental illness in pregnant women, whose music therapy provides disengagement and reflection, improving biopsychosocial well-being (FANCOURT 2017; HEPP *et al.* 2018; VAN *et al.*, 2016). Thus, songs heard during pregnancy can affect the baby after birth, improving the mood, sleep and reducing the frequency of crying (VAN *et al.*, 2016). Other authors such as Guida, Lima and Pereira 2013, also reinforce that the use of these technologies, without doubt, guarantees women's safety, besides favoring relaxation for a more physiological process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the studies included in this review, it can be seen that music therapy has been effective, being one of the main non-pharmacological methods used throughout the pregnancy-puerperal period. It is a non-invasive, low-cost and easy to apply approach that guarantees one of the fundamental principles for women's health care: humanization.

This approach has reduced cost when compared to other therapies, besides being a completely natural method and bringing physiological, emotional, intellectual and social benefits to the pregnant woman. Moreover, since it does not offer any risk or side effects, this technique can offer a potential approach to health promotion, both of the pregnant woman and the fetus. In addition, the results presented in this review may help in the formulation of assistance actions that use music therapy, as well as subsidize public policies and collaborate with future studies.



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